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*Clover Connection*

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What do you do when all the lights go off in your house and you suddenly find yourself sitting in the dark? First, I grabbed my phone that had been sitting next to me. Then, I realized I had no idea where my flashlight was. I used it back in July when I went to 4-H camp, but apparently it didn't make its way back to my house under the sink where it is typically stowed.

It's little moments like this that remind you to be prepared and to try to always have a plan for emergencies and in this case a minor inconvenience. Luckily it was almost 10:00 p.m. and I was heading for bed anyway. I was just crossing my fingers that the power would come back on before 6:00 a.m. so I wouldn't have to sit in the dark to do my daily extension radio report. Oh, yeah – along with not having my flashlight, I also was fresh out of batteries for my radio.

As luck would have it my power came back on in about half an hour. In the 4-H program we teach youth about particular project areas, but we also teach skills such as determination, critical thinking and preparedness. This 4-H Agent got a little reminder of the importance of being prepared.

With our new 4-H year kicking off, I wanted to take a moment to share some of the other opportunities and doors that can be opened by being involved in the 4-H program. Along with being engaged in a project area on the local/county level there are opportunities to participate on a regional and state level.

Sometimes when we hear about the State Fair, East Texas State Fair, Heart of Texas Fair, or even the San Antonio or Houston shows to name a few, we might think they are just for

exhibiting livestock. In reality, most of them have public speaking competitions; some have food competitions and horticulture contests. Some of the shows have even added robotics contests. For many of these, all you need to do to participate is be a registered 4-H (or FFA) member.

Participating in major show contests is a great experience and a way to meet new friends from all over Texas. It can also open the doors for scholarship and leadership opportunities. If you would like more information about how to join 4-H we've got information packets available in our office or we can email/mail one to you. Give us a call at 903-675-6130 to find out how you can get involved!

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