

The art behind building a scarecrow:

Scarecrows come in all shapes and sizes but it will take more than old clothes and some hay to hang with this bunch. Be creative! The idea is to try to come up with something original. You should brainstorm with your group and come up with an idea of the kind of scarecrow you want to build before you begin construction. Will it be skinny or muscular? Will its arms be outstretched or bent? Will you have more than one scarecrow in your display?

Once you have your idea, here are some suggestions on how to proceed:

First, the skeleton: The arms, legs and torso of your scarecrow must be sturdy to withstand Mother Nature for more than 3 weeks. Wind, rain and sun can all wreak havoc on your scarecrow. You may elect to provide additional bracing. Jointed wooden skeletons (approximately 6' in height) are available at a cost of \$30 from the Dahlenega Woman's Club by calling Betty Petrie at 706-867-0958 or by emailing dwcscarecrows@gmail.com. The joints actually create different arm and leg positions based on how they are used. Keep in mind you have to dress your scarecrow, and some clothing will not stretch over the frame if the arms are outstretched or in a weird position.

Second, the body: Common household items can be used to fill out your scarecrow's body. Plastic water bottles, 2-liter soda bottles (if you want extra muscle) and even cheap plastic gardening pots fitted over the frame can be used to fill out a scarecrow's arms, legs and torso. All you will need to do is cut in some larger holes to fit over the frame. Rolled-up newspapers wrapped in plastic or bubble wrap also make good arms and fit well over the wood frame. Protecting the paper is important, however, since your scarecrow will likely get wet. Wadded up plastic bags ... LOTS of plastic bags ... are excellent filler for the clothing. Pool noodles or insulation foam used to wrap household pipes can also fill out arms and legs, particularly if you want skinny arms and legs. Dryer venting can be used if you're going for a metallic robot look. Shopping bags stuffed with newspapers or foam can help create a full torso. You can build them up with whatever you want as long as it's waterproof!

Now, the head: The head can really make a scarecrow special. A Clorox bottle, molding clay, and paint can become a face. A mannequin's head or even a "wig head" are good. Gourds create a comical look. Just paint it, add facial features and slap some hair or a hat on it. Speaking of hair, a cheap or recycled "mop head" spray-painted black or brown or yellow or red or any color you choose makes good hair. If you don't have a wig or you can cut strips of old fabric, paint them and fashion a hairstyle. Again, use your imagination! Get the cheap paint, it works just as well. A little bit of paint can transform anything!

Then the hands and feet: Cloth or leather gloves work best for hands. **Rubber and latex will disintegrate** too quickly in the sun. Aluminum foil or Styrofoam peanuts can be stuffed into the gloves to create fullness and fingers. Old shoes or boots of any kind will work.

And, finally, the clothing and accessories: Don't spend a lot on your scarecrow's clothing; check out your local thrift stores for what you'll need. The sun will fade them, especially cotton and linen. Polyester holds up better for color. The accessories you put on your scarecrow or around your scarecrow can be very important. Will your scarecrow be sitting in a chair? Will it be wearing jewelry? A hat? You can get as elaborate or as simple as you want. Just remember to be creative!

Think about your display: This year our suggested theme is music / mountain music. Think songs, instruments, artists, etc.

GOOD LUCK AND THANKS FOR PARTICIPATING!