Judy Mae Bingman has joined the staff at the State 4-H office to help us share the 4-H story. She’ll be working with local and state staff on marketing pieces for new 4-H members and clubs, as well as helping to expand promotion efforts of our long-standing programs. You may have already seen a bit of her work with the recent Illinois 4-H “It Can Wait” No Texting Campaign. Judy Mae started in Extension in 1983 in White County, but also has professional experience in magazine publishing, web design and inspirational writing. She’ll soon begin writing feature stories about our local 4-H members, volunteers and outstanding programs. Do you know a story which needs to be told? Email Judy Mae at jmbingma@illinois.edu.

This year, the National Science Experiment will be – 4-H Maps & Apps! Designed by Colorado State University Extension, this set of activities will turn young people into geospatial thinkers as they design and map their ideal park, use GIS mapping to solve community problems and contribute data about their community to the United States Geological Survey. Ask your local extension office for information on planned events in your county!

http://www.4-h.org/4-h-national-youth-science-day/

Each year, the Illinois Farm Bureau and their Affiliates help Illinois 4-H recognize 10 outstanding 4-H members by sponsoring the Illinois 4-H Premier LCP Award. Aimed at members age 17 or older by December 1, LCP stands for Leadership, Citizenship, and Professionalism. The application focuses on leadership positions the member has held; participation in county, state, and national events; 4-H goals they have set and reached; and reference evaluations.

Each county may submit two applications; however last year, we had fewer than 15 applicants! We KNOW there are top-notch youth out there that deserve this recognition and opportunity to hone their leadership skills. The top ten youth selected on the state level are invited to a 3-day leadership conference in April and are recognized with plaques at the Illini Summer Academies banquet in June. Applications will be available through your local Extension office or via the State 4-H website (Be sure you download the 2013-14 version!):

http://web.extension.illinois.edu/state4h/members/recognition_awards.cfm

Check with your local Extension office for the county deadline; the state deadline for submission is January 3, 2014.

Get your older 4-H members in on the action of helping talk to elected officials, improving their public presentation skills, and taking that step beyond their current level of activity – encourage them to talk to their local Extension Office about the Speaking for Illinois 4-H (SFI4-H) program! Sponsored by the Illinois State 4-H Youth Leadership Team, the next SFI4-H Training is set for Saturday, November 9 in Rock Island. Doors are opening for our SFI4-H trainees! For more information and to register in early October, see the SFI4-H web-page:

http://web.extension.illinois.edu/state4h/members/leadership_sfi4h.cfm
It’s not too early to start recruiting your 7th and 8th grade 4-H members for the 2014 Illinois 4-H Jr. Leadership Conference (JLC) in February! Help them to expand their leadership skills, learn more about various project areas, and focus on team-building. JLC has helped hundreds of 4-H members open their eyes to opportunities within the 4-H program – whether it’s helping younger members with projects, improving on their communication skills, or building officer talents – all while having fun and meeting youth from across the state. JLC is scheduled for **February 8-9, 2014** at the Decatur Conference Center & Hotel, Decatur. (This is two weeks earlier than past conferences!)

On-line registration will open by mid-November and will end in early January. Information will be posted on the JLC website: [http://web.extension.illinois.edu/state4h/events/juniorleadership.cfm](http://web.extension.illinois.edu/state4h/events/juniorleadership.cfm). Encourage your junior high members to take that next leadership step and join us for the weekend!

Save these dates and join other 4-H volunteers from the North Central Region to learn cutting-edge information. The online training sessions will engage volunteers in developing a personal Flight Plan for the future. Topics will include:

- **Monday, November 18, 2013 – OMG! You’ve Got 4-H Parents! Now What??**
  - An Ohio State study of parents, 4-H volunteers, and sports coaches showed that members’ 4-H enjoyment is positively correlated with support from parents and volunteer advisors.

- **Tuesday, December 3, 2013 – Engaging Teens & Older Youth**
  - The 2011 Wisconsin 4-H Youth Development leadership study found that participation in leadership activities strengthens youth skills like public speaking and communication, teamwork and conflict resolution that are increasingly important to employers.

- **Tuesday, January 14, 2014 – Using Technology to Enhance Your 4-H Experience**
  - Research from University of Minnesota found youth in 4-H have a higher level of comfort in using social media than adult 4-H volunteers. Social media can be compelling method to communicate with 4-H members, but volunteers need the skills to use it effectively.

- **Monday, February 2, 2014 – Exploring the Science of 4-H Projects**
  - National 4-H research shows that youth who have positive experiences with STEM-related projects are more likely to pursue education and careers in math, science and engineering.

Save the dates and watch for registration information from your Extension Unit!