Thoughts for the New 4-H Year
Dr. Denise Legvold

Whew….we made it! It was hot and it was tiring, but summer 4-H activities were rewarding as usual. Thank you for the extra effort you made as Extension was in the midst of reorganization. You are awesome! Did you know that after three years of declining 4-H membership in clubs, we achieved a slight increase this past year? You made that happen!

Our new organization took effect July 1st. Your multi-county Unit probably has some new faces. County Directors, 4-H Youth Development Educators, 4-H Extension Program Coordinators, and Community Workers, as well as clerical support are all anxious to partner with you to deliver a high quality 4-H program in your county. Be ready to discuss a few changes as we focus our programming in order to increase program quality and allot resources for program expansion.

A state initiative that will change the face of 4-H in Illinois is new metropolitan youth programming in nine of our Extension Units. We expect garden projects, science adventures, and youth being civically engaged as teachers, leaders, and organizers to emerge as new programs.

I look forward to another exciting year in Illinois 4-H. Thank you for the important role you play as a caring adult in our positive youth development program.

State Fair Online

State Fair Online video and map exhibits accepted until August 12th!
https://webs.extension.uiuc.edu/4hstatefaironline/
Join us to see the live showcase of these exhibits at the 1st Annual Illinois 4-H Film Festival and Map Gallery, August 20th in the University of Illinois Extension Building on the Illinois state fairgrounds. Great prizes! Free awards luncheon that day at the State Fair in Springfield.

4-H Shooting Sports

The summer months have reports of many 4-H clubs holding various shooting events throughout the state being enjoyed by the participants, instructors and family members.

As an update for the program – in the two years that we have been established the following has occurred: we have trained 306 adults to become certified leaders in the various disciplines; 70 counties in Illinois are now ‘eligible’ for the program; approximately 1,800 youth are enrolled in the Shooting Sports disciplines this 4-H year; our funding has increased through grants and the generosity of many wildlife organizations and shooting industry.

We will have one adult certification training this fall – October 28-30, Memorial 4-H Camp, Monticello, IL. We will need to put a maximum number on the number who will be able to participate in each shooting discipline – either 20 or 25 to be determined by the State Instructors and State Advisory Committee. Registration materials will be available following State Fair.
Salute to Excellence nominations are being sought from counties for the Volunteer of the Year Award (less than 10 years) and the Lifetime Volunteer of the Year Award (10 or more years). One winner in each category will be chosen for the Illinois Extension regional awards and then one state winner in each category will be named and sent to the national competition. Deadline for county nominations are due September 26th. Contact your local Extension office if you would like to nominate a 4-H leader for one of these two awards.

The 2011 North Central Region Volunteer e-Forum will be held November 7, 17, and 22 via distance technology. 4-H leaders will be encouraged to gather at local Extension offices to join other leaders from the 12 North Central states. Sessions will evolve around Positive Youth Development (Quality Matters in Chocolate and 4-H and The Teen Brain: A Work in Progress), 4-H Program Management (Keeping Your Cool While Working with Youth and Reducing the Risks at 4-H Club Meetings), and New & Emerging Curriculum (Get Connected in Your 4-H World, 4-H Science, and Community Service Learning). Sessions will last from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. Registration materials will be available from your local Extension office in September.

Attention 4-Hers, 15 to 18 years* of age - you’ve put a lot into your 4-H project…now let it pay you back. The 4-H Clover Challenge Grant is a new opportunity open to members who have completed all levels of a project area relating to corn, soybeans, or small grains OR all levels of a foods, nutrition or animal science project that is tied to the use of corn, soybeans, or small grains. Members selected will work with a mentor in taking their project to the next level and share their advanced project with others in at least two ways: through a presentation, video, GPS map, poster or any other approved communication method. 4-H Clover Challenge Grants are sponsored by The Illinois Soybean Association and Pioneer Hi-Bred International. Each sponsor is offering five, $500 Clover Challenge Grants for 2011-12 4-H year. Additional information is available at http://4hfoundation.illinois.edu/financial_support. (* age as of 9/1/11)

On October 5, millions of young people across the nation will become scientists for the day during the fourth annual 4-H National Youth Science Day. The 2011 experiment, Wired for Wind will find youth exploring ways to engineer renewable energy technologies and the positive impact that they can have in communities across the country and the world. Engaged youth will use the engineering design process to design and test their own renewable energy turbine, experiment with different blade pitch angles to determine effect on performance and identify the best location for a wind farm in Illinois. To download youth and facilitator guidebooks go to www.4-H.org/NYSD. Check with your local Extension office to see how your club can participate.

Camp Whitetail will be held at 4-H Memorial Camp near Monticello, IL the weekend of Oct. 22-23. This is an adult/child “family” camp that offers people hands-on instruction in 4-H shooting sports as well as an opportunity to earn their IDNR Hunter Safety Certification card. The $49 per person fee covers lodging, meals, and all supplies and materials needed for the weekend. For more information, contact Curt Sinclair at 217-762-2741 or sinclair@illinois.edu

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