Sign Up Today for the 4-H Volunteer Training Series

There’s still time to register for the 2012 4-H Volunteer Training Opportunities for leaders. Six different topics will be offered during January through March. Each session is offered via the toll-free teleconference system so you can dial in from your own home. The sessions will begin at 7:00 p.m. and will each last one hour. The topics being offered include: Positive Youth Development, Communications within a 4-H Club, Community Service, Behavior Management, Parental Involvement, and Risk Management. To register, go to http://web.extension.illinois.edu/state4h/events/valuedvolunteer.cfm. A packet of materials will be mailed to each participant prior to the session. All 4-H volunteers are welcome to register. Contact your local Extension office if you have questions or need help with registration.

ISA Is Expanding!!

Get ready for a shake-up at the 2012 Illini Summer Academies!! We’re expanding the program by one day, starting on Sunday afternoon, June 24 and ending on Wednesday afternoon, June 27. ISA is open to any Illinois high school student, ages 14-18 by September 1, 2012 and offers youth a chance to explore college life, check out the University of Illinois, and get hands-on experience in classes and labs of a specific college department.

So get the dates of June 24-27 on your calendar now. Academies are still being finalized, but registration opens March 1. Our website will be updated at that time with all the 2012 information: http://web.extension.illinois.edu/state4h/events/summeracademies.cfm.

4-H Great Debate

March 23-24
Springfield

4-H Great Debate is an opportunity for high school aged 4-H members to participate in a mock debate in the Illinois House of Representatives Chambers. Participants will select up to three bills (predetermined by the planning committee) that they will debate either for or against during the debate. This is an excellent opportunity for youth interested in learning more about the Illinois legislative process and hands-on experience researching a particular topic of interest. During the event participants will hear from a legislative consultant and a current member of the Illinois House of Representatives. Contact your local Extension office for registration materials.

Our Private Partners

4-H is known for engaging Illinois youth in solving Illinois problems….and the private sector wants to help. But why? There is a growing emphasis on corporate social responsibility. The importance of out-of-school time is being elevated as significantly contributing to positive youth development. The quality of our 4-H program is well documented. Think about the corporations in your community. How might you and the youth you work with, partner with the private sector to solve problems in your community?

The 4th Annual State 4-H Robotics Competition

The 4th Annual State 4-H Robotics Competition will be held April 14, 2012 at UIUC campus. This event is free to all 4-H members, ages 9-14. Details for this year’s challenge will be posted February 1st on the Illinois State 4-H website in the events section. http://web.extension.illinois.edu/state4h/events/4hroboticschallenge.cfm. Specific questions? Contact Dr. Lisa Bouillion Diaz, lbdiaz@illinois.edu, 217-333-0910.
**Speaking for Illinois 4-H Trainings – Spring 2012**

The Illinois 4-H Youth Leadership Team is gearing up for two SFI4-H Trainings this spring, so if you have older 4-H members interested in helping their local Extension Unit with volunteer recruitment, donor solicitation, and reports to local and state elected officials, get them on board! This one-day training provides advanced public presentation skills and information on how to put together 4-H reports that impact Extension and 4-H funding. Our next training is set for **Saturday, March 3** in Breese (Clinton County). Registration is open at: [http://web.extension.illinois.edu/state4h/members/leadership_sfi4h.cfm](http://web.extension.illinois.edu/state4h/members/leadership_sfi4h.cfm).

**2012 Illinois State Fair Animal Exhibits**

Changes regarding the 2012 Illinois State Fair Animal Exhibits

Note: This list is only a NOTICE – everyone should read complete rules and regulations included in the 2012 ISF Jr. Department Premium book once printed copies are received or the book is posted on the ISF website: [http://www.illinoisstatefair.info/](http://www.illinoisstatefair.info/).

**Quality Assurance & Ethics Certification is no longer mandatory for State Fair exhibition.** However, the website should be available **February 1, 2012**. All State Fair beef, sheep, swine, horse, dairy, meat goat and poultry exhibitors are **encouraged but not required** to complete QA&E Certification via this site. We still strongly encourage that counties keep this as a local requirement.

**Junior show entries for the 2012 Illinois State Fair may be sent directly to the fair from the exhibitor.** They will not be **required** to come through local Extension offices but Extension staff can still choose to collect entries and review this information.

**All lambs and meat goats** to be exhibited at the State Fair **MUST** be taken to one of the statewide locations for weighing and tattooing. Each lamb will be tagged with an electronic ID tag (owner charged $2.00/lamb); tattooed; weighed; and recorded on Lamb Nomination Forms from Dan Jennings. Specific information regarding each of the weigh-in locations & procedures will be forthcoming.

**Horses** – Ownership and Lease papers that are due to local Extension offices by May 1 should be collected and **sent to Durinda Kirby at the Illinois State Fair by May 15** for verification of State Fair entries.

**Steers** - **ALL Steers must be weighed, tattooed and tagged starting January 28 to March 15, 2012.**

**Host Families Needed for Exchange Programs**

**Japanese Exchange Program:** The summer 4-H exchange program involves Japanese youth (ages 12-16) living with a family for approximately one month from July 25 through August 23, 2012. Families have opportunities to learn about Japanese life and culture and share their own culture. For more information about the Japanese and other hosting opportunities, visit [http://web.extension.illinois.edu/state4h/members/international](http://web.extension.illinois.edu/state4h/members/international) or contact your local Extension office. Consider expanding your intercultural knowledge and apply to host a Japanese youth this summer!