In This Issue

Calendar........................................................................................................................................4
Celebration of Achievement .................................................................2
Citizenship Washington Focus 2016 .........................................................3
Club activities..................................................................................................................2
Club charters ....................................................................................................................2
Fall volunteer training .................................................................................................2
Message from Dorothy ..............................................................................................3
Minnesota 4-H Week of Thanks ..................................................................................3
National Conference .........................................................................................................3
Plat book cover photo contest ....................................................................................2
Winter cancellation policy ...........................................................................................2
Volunteer corner ..............................................................................................................4
Volunteer re-enrollment form changes .........................................................................4
Youth in Action awards .....................................................................................................3

2015-2016 Aitkin County 4-H Council Meetings

Dates and locations:

**January 11**, McGregor High School Home Ec Room, 7:00 p.m.

**April 11**, Palisade Community Center, 7:00 p.m.

**June 29**, Aitkin County Fairgrounds, 6:00 p.m.

This information is also posted on the county 4-H website at
http://www.extension.umn.edu/county/aitkin.
2015 Celebration of Achievement

**Sunday, November 1, Aitkin Lanes, 12:30 p.m.**

Awards, pizza, dessert & bowling! Join us for a celebration of our members' and leaders' accomplishments. Membership pins, volunteer recognition, record awards and more. Please RSVP with Beth at 218-927-2538 or stran017@umn.edu by October 27.

Fall Volunteer Training

**All Together, Not All the Same!**

An inclusive and welcoming environment for individuals of all abilities and backgrounds is essential to 4-H. Many young people might need support through appropriate accommodations and adaptations in order to participate as 4-Hers. 4-H volunteers are critical to helping to make 4-H an empowering experience for youth with disabilities as they seek to make friends and gain valuable life skills. This video will help you learn more about how to make your 4-H Club a welcoming environment for all. [https://youtu.be/FHlb_KoQ_JM](https://youtu.be/FHlb_KoQ_JM)

**Date:** Tuesday, November 3

**Location:** Aitkin High School Home Ec Room

**Time:** 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

If the date above does not work for your team, please contact Beth in the 4-H Office to help find additional training dates, locations, and times; volunteers are welcomed at any location.

For more information or to register, please contact: Beth Haasken stran017@umn.edu, 218-927-2538

Club Charters

**Due to Aitkin Co 4-H Office by November 3!**

On Tuesday, November 3, club leaders that would like chartering help, have questions or just would like to work on them could meet before the fall volunteer training (see article above). Contact Beth if you want to do this or if you want to get together another time to go over club charter requirements.

Plat Book Cover Photo Contest

**Submit your photos by March 1, 2016**

Aitkin County 4-H is preparing to publish a new plat book in 2016. The cover photo is chosen from photos submitted by current Aitkin County 4-H members. Submit your photo by email to stran017@umn.edu. You can submit up to 5 photos per member. Those not chosen for the cover may be used on the inside pages of the plat book.

Club Activities or Events

If your club is planning an event or activity and you would like to invite other 4-H members, please let the Extension Office know and we can put it in the 4-H newsletter or send an email out. For example if you are planning a home environment project meeting and would like to invite other 4-H members in the home environment project area, the Extension Office can notify them for you!

Winter Cancellation Policy

County 4-H meetings and events will be cancelled if:

- schools are closed for the day or close early
- the temperature is -20F and/or the wind chill is -40F
- travel is not advised due to snow, wind or ice storms
- there are any doubts as to what the weather will do during an event.

Call the Extension Office at 218-927-2538. Any weather related 4-H cancellations will be on the 4-H office answering machine. We will try to make cancellation decisions by 3:00 p.m.
Message from Dorothy

Dear 4-H families and volunteers,

November is a time when we reflect and give thanks for the friends, family and communities that support us and give meaning to our lives.

I would like to thank each of you for supporting 4-H and helping make a positive difference in the lives of Minnesota youth.

Without the contributions of parents and volunteers, 4-H would not be able to provide the important learning experiences that guide youth in exploring new interests, developing new skills and finding their spark.

I give thanks for you each and every day.

Sincerely,

Dorothy M. Freeman
Associate Dean and State 4-H Director

Minnesota 4-H Week of Thanks

4-H families, volunteers and supporters are invited to join our 2nd annual Minnesota 4-H Week of Thanks November 18-25. Take a photo holding this sign (http://z.umn.edu/4hwot) and share it via Facebook, Twitter or Instagram during the week leading up to Thanksgiving. Be sure to include the hashtags #ThankYou #MN4H so we can see all your fabulous photos! The 4-H Week of Thanks is sponsored by the Minnesota 4-H Foundation. Please direct questions to Erin Kelly-Collins at mailto:erinkc@umn.edu.

Youth in Action Awards

National 4-H Council’s Youth in Action Awards recognize exceptional 4-H’ers who epitomize 4-H youth empowerment and leadership. It is a life changing experience! Winners receive a $5,000 educational scholarship and the opportunity to serve as a 4-H youth spokesperson. Counties of winning youth also earn a $5,000 grant.

Register here: n4h.convio.net/site/PageNavigator/2016_YIA_Webinar_Registration.html.

For qualifications, application rules, and information on past honorees, visit the Youth in Action Awards website at n4h.convio.net/site/R?=__HMmpFnxzImlIVDwzR-6NCO.

Applications must be submitted by 12:00 p.m. EST on Monday, November 30.

National 4-H Conference

Are you recognized as a youth leader in your county programs? Have you experienced leadership opportunities outside of your county? Minnesota will send four youth delegates to Washington D.C. in April 2016 with selection based on qualifications, contents of delegate nomination/recommendation forms and interview. All information is outlined on the 4-H events website under National 4-H Conference at www.4-h.umn.edu/events/national-conference/index.html. Deadline to apply is November 19.

Citizenship Washington Focus

Minnesota youth delegates will be heading to Washington D.C. for Citizenship Washington Focus (CWF) leaving on July 2, 2016 and returning to Minnesota on July 9. CWF is a week-long 4-H citizenship program that takes place at the National 4-H Youth Conference Center in Washington, D.C. Participants will learn from and meet young people from across the nation, strengthen their civic engagement understanding and skills, experience Washington D.C., and learn how to develop and implement a CWF Call to Action plan upon returning home.
Information about this great experience can be found on the 4-H events website under Citizenship Washington Focus at [www.4-h.umn.edu/events/citizenship-washington-focus/index.html](http://www.4-h.umn.edu/events/citizenship-washington-focus/index.html). You will find a flyer and information regarding the application process.

Pre-registration materials will be found on this website beginning January 15 with full application materials available February 17. This is a first-come first-served application process. Check with your county program coordinator to find out if there are any additional county requirements for this experience.

### Changes to Volunteer Re-enrollment Forms

As you are re-enrolling this fall, you might notice a change to volunteer re-enrollment forms and in 4HOnline. New this program year, we are asking adult volunteers to provide us with the same health information 4-H youth provide us during the enrollment process. In the past, a separate form was used to collect this information in conjunction with special events. To make things easier, you can now share this information once and it will be accessible when needed as you travel outside of your county for any 4-H related experiences. While this information is not required for individuals who will not travel outside of their county in their role as a 4-H volunteer, it is recommended as a best practice to ensure the safety of all of our volunteers. Many individuals travel to neighboring counties for 4-H club/group activities, regional events and volunteer training in addition to state events like YELLO or state fair.

If you have already completed your enrollment paperwork for the year, you may go into your records in 4HOnline and update your information to include the health fields. If you have not yet re-enrolled, you may share your information on the 4-H re-enrollment form.

### 4-H Volunteer Corner

#### Ensuring a safe 4-H environment

What makes some youth programs better than others? The answer is that high-quality youth programs ensure a safe environment, a place where everyone feels physically and emotionally safe. Physical safety refers to an environment that is free of hazards that can cause bodily harm. Emotional safety refers to an environment that is respectful, welcoming and values each individual. In order for youth to have a quality experience, volunteers must ensure that young people feel safe and supported.

To learn more, view *Ensuring a Safe 4-H Environment:* [www.4-h.umn.edu/volunteer/online-training/](http://www.4-h.umn.edu/volunteer/online-training/). This online training offers valuable information on how to create a 4-H environment that is physically and emotionally safe.

### Calendar

#### NOVEMBER

1. **Celebration of Achievement**
3. **Club charters due to county office**
3. **Fall Volunteer training, AHS, 6:30 p.m.**
5. **N Central Region Volunteer e-Forum: Heart of Community, 6:00-7:30 p.m.**
10. **N Central Region Volunteer e-Forum: Heart of Community, 7:00-8:30 p.m.**
18-25. **MN 4-H Week of Thanks**
19. **National Conference application deadline**
30. **Youth in Action awards application deadline**

#### DECEMBER

3. **N Central Region Volunteer e-Forum: Heart of Leadership, 6:00-7:30 p.m.**
4. **National service learning emcee deadline**
8. **N Central Region Volunteer e-Forum: Heart of Leadership, 7:00-8:30 p.m.**