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Message from Dorothy

Dear 4-H families and volunteers,

Over the last few years, you may have heard or read about how youth need “social-emotional” or "soft" skills to succeed in learning, school, work and life. More and more, the value of these skills - including confidence, self-control, caring, and problem solving - is being examined to understand how they are acquired, and where and how they are being taught.

Youth learn these skills in a variety of environments – at school, in youth programs and at home.

The Search Institute recently released a study called, “Don’t Forget the Families,” which highlights the power of family relationships as a critical, but often neglected, factor in developing these skills. A key finding is that parent-child relationships are 10 times more powerful than race, ethnicity, family composition, and family income in predicting whether children are developing these skills.

The Search Institute has created a useful booklet called “Bringing Developmental Relationships Home: Tips and Relationship Builders for Families,” with activities and tips that families can use to help youth develop these important skills and strengths: http://www.search-institute.org/downloadable/SearchInstitute-DontForgetFamilies-Activities-10-13-2015.pdf.

I encourage families to explore how you can help youth develop social emotional skills that will prepare them to succeed.

Sincerely,

Dorothy M. Freeman
Associate dean and state 4-H director

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Project Workshops

Presented by Benton County Ambassadors

The Benton County Ambassadors have planned two project workshops for Spring 2016. Registration details will be sent via email and available online soon. Here are the dates and general information for the upcoming workshops. All three are project based and will have community leaders teaching. The workshops are geared for grades 3-7. The cost for each workshop is $10.

4-H Wildlife Education

Saturday, March 12, 2016
9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
Sauk Rapids Middle School

Spend the morning with Benton County 4-H and explore the wildlife around you. Participants will spend the morning learning about area wildlife, how to identify wildlife and protect their natural environments. The local sportsman club will also have members in attendance and will be working with the participants to build their own wood duck houses and/or blue bird houses to place in the community.

Registration deadline: Monday, March 7, 2016

Exploring Horticulture with 4-H

Saturday, May 21, 2016
9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
Sauk Rapids Middle School

Benton County 4-H and the local Extension Master Gardeners would like to teach you about horticulture and its endless opportunities. Participants will spend part of the morning outside learning about plants and flowers. They will also have the opportunity to learn about gardening, landscaping and general horticulture. Participants will bring home their own little plant and be on their way to having a green thumb.

Registration deadline: Monday, May 16, 2016
2016 LQA&E Training

Benton County is offering its Livestock Quality Assurance and Ethics (LQA&E) training on Saturday, March 12 from 8:15 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Foley Intermediate School. Pre-registration is required by Monday, March 7, 2016.

A letter has been sent to all members that are enrolled in a livestock project area and that need to update their training. LQA&E certification needs to be updated every three years and is required for individuals who are planning on attending the state fair.

We also need more adult volunteers or youth leaders to be trained to teach LQA&E. If you are interested, please contact Heidi at 320-968-5077 or hjanders@umn.edu

2016 Auction Plaque Design Contest

Every year buyers from the county fair 4-H auction receive a plaque with a picture of the youth with their animal as a thank you. You have the opportunity to create the plaque design for this year. If you like to draw, sketch, paint or do graphic design this is the contest for you.

The deadline to submit your design is April 22, 2016. The winner will have their design printed on the plaque and will receive a $100 cash prize. Details on the contest can be found on the county 4-H website.

Leader’s Council Meeting & Committee Meetings March 20

The March committee meetings will be held on Sunday, March 20, 2016 at the First Presbyterian Church in Foley.

The committees that will be meeting this month are listed below with the start time for each meeting. Feel free to attend other meetings if you are interested in joining or learning more about other areas. Other meetings may be added to this schedule at a later time.

4:30 p.m. Small & Exotic Animals Committee Meeting
5:00 p.m. Ambassador Meeting
6:00 p.m. Livestock Committee Meeting
7:00 p.m. Lunchstand Committee Meeting
7:00 p.m. Auction Committee Meeting
7:00 p.m. March Leader’s Council Meeting

Summer Camping Save the Dates!

Save the dates for the Camp Benton 2016. Overnight camp will be held the week of June 27-July 1.

Benton County 4-H Scholarships for Seniors

Benton County 4-H will once again be offering three scholarships to Benton County 4-H seniors. Any senior may apply for a scholarship. The scholarships are awarded to those who show leadership and are active members within the county and the community. A letter and application for each of the following scholarships were sent out in February.

• Leader’s Council Scholarship
• Brian Kaeter Memorial Scholarship

For information concerning these scholarships, please contact Heidi at 320-968-5077 or hjanders@umn.edu
Fashion 101 Workshop!

**Flyers and location will be available soon!**

4-H members interested in learning more about fashion, wardrobes, accessorizing and more are invited to attend Fashion 101 on April 23 from 8:45 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Fashion 101 will teach youth members about how to buy clothes that are budget friendly, look good for your body and will last for a long time. We will also have sessions on general clothing and skin care and learn about posture, poise & modeling. These skills can be used for all youth and will help them prepare for the clothing or fashion revue project area if interested.

Please call the Extension Office at 968-5077 for more information.

**Interested in Participating in the Lama Project**

Interested in trying out a new 4-H project for 2016? Cheryl Pflipsen has a few extra lama’s available for lease this year. The lama project is very hands on and includes vet care, learning about what the animals are used for (companion, fiber, guarding, etc.) and includes many community service opportunities. If you are interested in participating and exhibiting lama’s this year, please contact her at tcanpflipsen@gmail.com or by calling 320-310-7804.

**Morrison County Animal Selection & Nutrition Workshop**

All area youth are invited to an animal selection & nutrition workshop in Morrison County.

Dr. Jake Reed and Stacey Butler will be sharing how to utilize the genetic potential of your animals through nutrition options for your animals, utilizing resources you have available. They’ll share the newest studies on how to gain that competitive edge through nutrition. Join a panel of livestock producers, with experience in 4-H showing beef, swine, sheep, dairy cattle and dairy goats. They will share what they look for in selecting that next show ring champion.

The event will be held on Thursday, March 3 at 6:30 p.m. at the Sobieski Co-op & Creamery. The meal will begin at 6:30 p.m. with the presentation to follow at 7:00 p.m. Please register by Tuesday, March 1. More details on this event can be found via the flyer here - [http://z.umn.edu/morrisonclinic](http://z.umn.edu/morrisonclinic)

**2016 SS&W Spring Leader Certification Trainings: Two Sites!**

The Minnesota 4-H Shooting Sports & Wildlife program development committee invites you to attend a 4-H Shooting Sports & Wildlife Leader Certification! The committee recommends that leaders attend the entire certification weekend every five years. Now is your chance to attend!

The training is designed for adults and youth (9th grade and older) that lead or would like to lead training in shooting sports or wildlife. Classes will be offered in the disciplines of coordinator, archery, rifle/pistol, shotgun, muzzleloading, and wildlife. This training meets the 4-H project leaders’ requirements for certification and recertification. Although there is range time allocated in the schedule, the majority of the training is classroom work to become an effective instructor, not to practice your own shooting skills.

**April 23-24, 2016**
St. Mary’s Church and Kanabec County Gun Club, Mora

**April 23-24, 2016**
Worthington Regional Office, Worthington

Registration materials will be available online Feb. 1 at [www.4-h.umn.edu/events/shooting-sports-certification/](http://www.4-h.umn.edu/events/shooting-sports-certification/). Deadline to register is **April 8, 2016**. Disciplines fill quickly, so make sure registration forms are sent in early!
Scholarships for College-Bound 4-H Youth

Are you entering college this fall? Did you know that each year the Minnesota 4-H Foundation awards over $20,000 in scholarships to college-bound 4-H’ers? Applications are due April 15, 2016. Visit the Minnesota 4-H Foundation website (http://z.umn.edu/sga) to learn more. Direct questions to Erin Kelly-Collins (erinkc@umn.edu/612-624-7667)

Minnesota Alliance with Youth Red Wagon Awards: Due April 1

The Red Wagon Awards honor young people in grades 6-12 in Minnesota that have shown resilience and overcome obstacles to achieve academic gains, give back to their community and grow to become leaders among their peers.

In 2016, the Alliance will be honoring three Minnesota youth and one youth-led community service club, each nominated by caring adults, peers or partners in their local community. Each individual winner will receive a $500 education scholarship, and the winning youth service group will receive $500 to support the work of their group. Any young person or youth-led service group in grades 6-12 in Minnesota is eligible for nomination.

The nomination form is available online through April 1.

The award winners will be honored at the 2016 Alliance fundraiser and Red Wagon Awards celebration event on June 23 at Macalester College. For nomination criteria and additional information about the Red Wagon Awards, visit mnyouth.net/work/red-wagon-awards/.

Youth Day at the Capitol with Minnesota 4-H!

Enrolled Minnesota 4-H members are invited to attend a Youth Day at the Capitol (YDAC) event with the Minnesota Alliance with Youth from 9:30 a.m. - 5 p.m. on Tuesday, March 29, 2016!

The YDAC will provide both training and engagement opportunities for youth in grades 6-12 to participate in the legislative process. Screened volunteer chaperones will also be needed. The application process will open on Feb. 18, and the deadline to apply is March 11. Additional details are available at 4-h.umn.edu/events/youth-day-at-the-capitol.

Presidential Inauguration Focus

Minnesota 4-H will be selecting a group of 50 youth from across the state to attend the 2017 presidential inauguration in January. The application material will be posted in early March and will be due in mid-April, with selection occurring in May. This will be a competitive application process, and open to Minnesota 4-H members in grades 9 through one year past high school, as of January 2017. More information will be posted Mar. 1 at http://z.umn.edu/cwfinauguration.

Calendar

MARCH

• 5 Regional Project Bowl, Foley
• 12 Benton County Livestock Quality Assurance & Ethics Training
• 12 Project Workshop #2 – Theme Wildlife
• 13 1st Camp Counselor Meeting, Extension Office
• 19 Regional Project Bowl, Bemidji & Redwood Falls
• 20 Leader’s Council Meeting
• 20 Committee Meetings
• 25 Office Closed at noon – Good Friday
• 29 Youth Day at the Capitol
### APRIL
- **1** Minnesota Alliance with Youth Red Wagon Award nomination deadline
- **2** Regional Project Bowl, Snow date
- **9** Camp Counselor Training
- **9-14** National 4-H Conference, Washington, D.C.
- **16** State Project Bowl, Sauk Rapids
- **17** County Livestock PDC Training Webinar
- **23** Fashion 101 Workshop
- **23-24** 4-H Shooting Sports & Wildlife Leader Certification Training, Mora & Worthington
- **24** Committee Meetings
- **30** Demonstration, Food Revue & Performing Arts Judging Day

### MAY
- **7** Goat & Sheep ID Work Day
- **14** Engineer It Workshop – Foley Intermediate School
- **15** Animal I.D. Deadline
- **21** Project Workshop #3 – Theme Horticulture
- **29** Leader’s Council & Committee Meetings

### JUNE
- **22** Clothing Camp
- **27-July 1** Camp Benton
- **26** Committee Meetings

### JULY
- **2-9** Citizenship Washington Focus
- **20** Clothing Judging Day
- **23** County Dog Show
- **24** Committee Meetings
- **28** Pie Day

### AUGUST
- **1-7** Benton County Fair