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.


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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Get Connected

There are a number of opportunities coming up and more that are on the horizon. As we continue into the 4-H year, I hope that you all have connected into a 4-H club and that if you have not yet (re)-enrolled in 4HOnline you will do so soon. If you are still looking for a 4-H club, see the list to the right.

If you have any questions or concerns please don’t hesitate to contact the Extension Office or a club leader.

Online enrollment for 4-H families

Enrollment for the new 4-H year opened up on Sept. 16 and Minnesota 4-H families are reminded and encouraged to visit mn.4HOnline.com to enroll/re-enroll both youth members and adult volunteers. The process is quick and easy; even families with multiple youth should be done in 10 minutes or less. Re-enrolling early ensures that critical communications will be received, especially as it relates to deadlines and project specific information. Detailed information about online enrollment and re-enrollment is available at www.4-H.umn.edu/4honline.

A note about projects: By signing up for a project in 4HOnline you are not committing to doing the project. Our office uses these lists to communicate to each group. If you think you might be interested, sign up!

As part of enrolling or re-enrolling, youth, their parents and adult volunteers will all be agreeing to the Minnesota 4-H Code of Conduct, which is available for review in its entirety, along with other policy and authorization statements at www.4-H.umn.edu/policy or by contacting your local Extension office.

If you are not yet an adult volunteer but are willing to share your time and talents to make a difference, 4-H needs you! The first step to becoming an adult 4-H volunteer is to complete the volunteer application process. Learn more at www.4-H.umn.edu/volunteer/#application.

Club Connection – Join today!

Looking to join a 4-H club? Here is a list of our current clubs in the county. Contact the Extension Office for club leader information.

**Almelund All Stars** meet 2nd Monday of month 7:00 pm at the Almelund Town Hall, Almelund
Club Leader: Ann Sandberg

**Club of the Dalles** meet 3rd Monday of month 7:00 pm at the Almelund Town Hall, Almelund
Club leader: Barb Sabo & Michelle Dietz

**Excelsior** meets 2nd Monday of month 7:00 pm at Chisago Lake Lutheran Church, Center City
Club Leader: Jenny Holt

**Height Seekers** meet the 3rd Monday of month at 6:00 pm at Chisago Lakes Area Library, Club Leader: Jen Penzenstadler & Sheila Hoff

**Mavericks** meet the 2nd Thursday of the month at 10:30 am at Kost Evangelical Church | Club Leader: Lisa Wurdemann & Shanda Leko

**Northern Lights** meet 3rd Monday of month at 6:30 (K-2) 7:00 pm (gr 3+) at the Living Branch Church, North Branch | Leader: Dawn Schlipp

**North Stars** meet the 3rd Monday of the month 7:00 pm at the Rushseba Town Hall
Club Leader: Janet Schweigert

**Panola Rockets** meet 3rd Monday of month 7:00 pm, at the Lindstrom Chamber of Commerce Bldg | Club Leader: Colleen Hueners

**Soaring Eagles** meet 1st Thursday of the month 1:00 pm at the Scandia Community Center in Scandia | Club Leader: Ann Rinkenberger
Highlights of the Month

4-H Food Show – Register now

WHEN: Saturday, April 9 (sign up by April 1)
TIME: 9:30 set up opens | 10:00 am judging begins (see schedule below)
WHERE: North Branch Senior Center, 38790 6th Ave, North Branch, MN

WHAT IS IT? Get your creative juices flowing and prepare your plate for the 2016 Food Show. This event is a great fit for 4-H members who are interested in food & nutrition and healthy lifestyles choices. To help you best prepare for the event please make sure you read through the Food Show Guidelines posted on our website and included in an email to all Food & Nutrition project members.

CATEGORIES INCLUDE:
• Food Review
• Breads Contest
• Decorated Foods Contest
• Soups
• Finger Foods

JUDGING PROCESS:
At the Food Show, conference judging will be held with each exhibitor. The judge will ask questions about the member’s food and recipe. The member should be able to say something about recipe choices, nutrition values, cost per serving etc.

Judging order and approximate times will be:
10:00 am - Food Review
10: 20 - Bread Contest
10:40 - Decorated Foods
11:00 - Finger Foods
11:20 - Soups

A final judging schedule will be released on April 2nd after all registrations are due.

New Awards Forms Available

Did you know that you can nominate 4-H members, volunteers and community organizations you partner with for awards?

Did you know that by participating in events at the club and county level YOU can receive awards?

To help you plan out the year and help you prepare what you might need to receive an award this year we are releasing the Awards Forms earlier.

Read through the Awards Summary sheet to see which awards you may be eligible for. All applications are due to the Extension Office by 4:30 pm on September 2, 2016.

The awards packet is available on the County 4-H website: New awards packet now available

Swine Grant Applications

If you are looking to get into the Swine project this year for the first time consider applying to receive a $100 grant that can be used towards supporting the costs of your project.

Paper based applications can be downloaded online: http://www3.extension.umn.edu/sites/default/files/download/Chisago%204-H%20Swine%20Grant%20Application.pdf

An Online Application is also available at: http://goo.gl/forms/xjralFvG06

Specific requirements must be met and are outlined on the application. Applications are due to the Extension Office by April 1st.
The Road to the Fair

The 2016 Chisago County Fair dates have been set. The fair will be held July 20th through the 24th at the Rush City Fairgrounds. See you there!

The Road to the Fair begins with these important dates and reminders.

4-H animal ID deadline May 15

All breeding beef, dairy, dog, dairy goats, meat goats, horse, lama, poultry, rabbit, sheep and swine animal projects need to be identified by May 15, 2015.

In most cases, Minnesota 4-H families have the option of identifying their animals online, with all data entry to be completed by midnight on May 15. If using the paper ID process, all forms must be postmarked or submitted to the county Extension office by May 15.

Detailed information is being sent to 4-H members who are currently enrolled in any of the above listed project areas. If you have not yet re-enrolled and/or need to update your project area enrollment, visit www.4-H.umn.edu/4honline or contact the Extension office immediately so that the proper ID information can be sent to you.

Additional animal ID information and forms can be found online at www.4-H.umn.edu/animal-ID.

Online Fair Entry Training Coming

Minnesota 4-H will be releasing a new Online Fair registration system this year that connects through your 4HOnline account. This process will be a more efficient registration system.

We will be holding Fair Entry trainings for families who want to learn more in May and June. Stay tuned for more information.

We will also be hosting a County Fair Orientation for new families who have never participated in the County Fair before.

Judges and Hires Available

We are currently looking for new judges for the County Fair and have some hired positions. If you would like to judge, contact the office.

FOOD STAND ASSISTANT: If you are interested in helping with our Cafeteria this year we will be hiring a Food Stand Assistant to work July 20-24. Your primary role will be checking in and training volunteers. Contact the Extension Office for more information.

SUMMER ASSISTANT: We are looking to hire a summer assistant who will work and support the Extension Office between June 6 and August 5th. Applications and descriptions are posted on the website and more information can be received from the Extension Office. Applications must be received by April 1st to be considered.

Sheep and Goat Weigh Day - May 7

Weigh Day for sheep and market goats will be on May 7th at Dorothy Goodroad’s Farm. Please watch the April newsletter and your ID mailing for more information.

Swine Weighing

Market swine are to be weighed and identified by the recommended ear notch system and Minnesota 4-H ear tag. County Fair market swine must be weighed and identified by May 15th by individual families. Contact the Extension Office to reserve a tag and tagger.
Fair Theme Announced

The Fair Theme this year will be “A Night at the Movies.” Consider what projects you can enter around this theme!

Quality Assurance I & II

A Quality Assurance I & II training will be held at the North Branch Area Library from 6:00 to 9:00 PM on March 22. Please eat before you come. Remember, anyone bringing an animal to the fair with the exception of pets, horses and dogs is encouraged to complete Quality Assurance training every 3 years. 4-H members grade 6+ are required to have Quality Assurance completed before County Fair in order to compete at the State Fair.

To register for either of these events call the Extension office or register online here. If you cannot attend these dates, other counties offer training. Locations are listed online here.

Auction Committee Sets Guidelines

4-H members who will be taking part in the Market Livestock auction at the County Fair should review the rules and guidelines set for 2016. They are available for download online or contact the Extension office for a mailed copy.

Across the County

Cold Doesn’t Slow Down 4-H

Youth and adults from Chisago and Sherburne 4-H joined together for an epic Winter Adventure at Snow Fest.

We started the day getting to know each other and setting the tone for the day. This also allowed the sun to come out and temperatures to rise to around -5F.

The cross country skiing warmed us up and provided a great time of quiet to appreciate the natural beauty of MN State Parks.

After lunch, youth took part in a compass navigation scavenger hunt! Both youth and adults then learned something new from the Park Naturalist as he taught about the parks history and the various uses of snowshoes over time. We then enjoyed using the snowshoes ourselves. It was a great day and we look forward to connecting more with local State Parks as the weather warms ahead.

Shooting Sports Information Night

The 2016 Shooting Sports and Wildlife begins in March. We'll be meeting as part of the Spring Kickoff Night on March 3 to overview what is in store for 2016. If you are new to Shooting Sports this is a great way to get introduced to the opportunities available. We'll be handing out a Shooting Sports Packet at the meeting that will overview the 2016 schedule and important policies information. This information packet is also available online:

Join us on March 3 at 7:00 pm at the SR Center, 38790 6th Ave in North Branch.

Note: The shooting sports program is available for kids in grade 3 (BB Gun and Wildlife) and grade 4+ (all disciplines).

Cheese Sale Pickup

The Cheese sales will be available for pickup on March 19 beginning at 10:00 am at 39236 Homestead Ave, North Branch. Please arrange a volunteer or two from your club to pick up these orders.
Animal Leasing Program

Did you know you can learn about animal care and showing without owning or keeping the animal at your home? Check out the Lease Fact Sheet on the MN 4-H website. We currently have families in Chisago willing to lease dairy cows, beef cows, swine, rabbits, poultry and alpacas. Contact the Extension Office for more information at 651-277-0150.

Rabbit Project meeting

The Cottontails will next meet on March 15th at 6:30 pm. Location TBD – stay in the loop on our Facebook page.

Horse Project Kickoff Night

If you are interested in learning more about horses and riding join us at the Kickoff night March 10th at 6:30 pm at the Almelund Town Hall.

Come ready to connect with other 4-H'ers who are passionate about horses and bring your ideas and interest of what you want to learn this year. We’ll be handing out a Horse Packet at the meeting that overviews important information, especially for those interested in taking part in the County Fair. If you cannot attend the Horse Packet will be available on the website by March 10th.

Management Board Meeting

The management board will meet March 8, at 7:00 pm at the Lake State Credit Union (6241 Main St, North Branch).

Photography Contest

Do you like taking photos? Looking to expand your portfolio for the County Fair? Then take part in this years Photography Contest.

Here’s how to play: Each month a theme is selected. Take a photo based on the theme and send it to Jeremy at jeremyf@umn.edu by the 25th of the month. Only one entry each month is allowed. All submissions will be posted on Facebook (unless you ask not to be) and are entered into a raffle prize drawing for a grand prize at next years awards Banquet.

The MARCH theme is: Birds and Buddies

The January winner for the Service theme is Cadence Eischens from the Soaring Eagles 4-H Club.

Robotics Programming Classes

On April 16 we will have an introductory programming class from 9am-11:30am at the library in North Branch. This will be appropriate for kids with no experience programming who are interested in joining an FLL team in the fall. Kids who have already participated will know all of the techniques. We will try to cover EV3 software basics, move blocks, loops, comments and sounds in this session. If time permits we will introduce sensors.

On April 23 we will have an intermediate programming class from 9am-11:30am at the library in Wyoming. This will be appropriate for kids who attended the first class as well as kids who participated in FLL and want to improve their programming. We will cover sensors, switches, MyBlocks, using the display, using the buttons and line following.

There will be no cost for these sessions. Space will be limited to ensure kids get hands-on experience with the robot. If there is enough interest we can repeat a class at a later date. Please RSVP to Jeremy Freeman (jeremyf@umn.edu) to reserve a spot on the list.
Upcoming Previews

Run Wild 5K
The awesome and spectacular Run Wild 5K is running up soon. Join us on June 4th at the beautiful and scenic Wild River State Park for this fun-raiser. This event is open to all and is a great way to get out and walk, run or stroll to raise funds for our program. A separate kid's fun run will be available for kids under 12.

Online and paper based registrations will be open soon. Registrations received before May 15 will get a discount! Stay tuned.

GREY – Make a Spark, Leave Your Mark
Growing Responsible Empowered Youth

What is GREY? GREY is an empowering one day youth leadership event hosted by Chisago County 4-H Ambassadors. This year’s theme “Make a Spark, Leave Your Mark” will focus on living a life of passion and purpose. Come and get involved with:

- Small group initiatives
- Activities and workshops
- Listening to a public speaker

How do I get involved? All youth grade 5 and up are invited. If you are not a current 4-H member an additional short-term 4-H form will need to be completed.

Registrations will be available online soon and will be e-mailed out to all members in grade 5+

2016 NE 4-H Livestock Show
The 2016 Northeast 4-H Livestock Show will be held September 17 & 18 in Brainerd. This is also the 82nd year of this show!

Blue ribbon winners in grades 3 and up at the county fair in beef, sheep, swine, market goat, poultry, rabbit and dairy steers are eligible to participate (animal/lot may not be exhibited at the State Fair). All participants in grades 6 and up must also be current in their LQA&E certification.

To participate, you must complete the registration forms and pay your fees at your county fair.

4-H and You: Statewide

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 at 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/cw INAUGURATION.
Calendar - Stay connected by following the Chisago County Calendar of events online! Bookmark this website to have instant access to all of the meetings and events: Chisago County 4-H Calendar

**MARCH**

- **3** Spring Kickoff Night, 5:30-8:00 pm @ North Branch SR Center
- **3** Shooting Sports Information Meeting, 7:00 pm @ North Branch SR Center *(see page 5)*
- **10** Horse Project Kickoff Night, 6:30 pm @ Almelund Town Hall *(see page 6)*
- **15** Shooting Sports BB Gun and Air Rifle Practices begin *(see page 5)*
- **15** Chisago County Cottontails meeting, 6:30 pm, Location TBA *(see page 6)*
- **17** Dairy Project meeting, 6:30 pm at North Branch SR Center
- **19** Cheese Sales pickup by Club Volunteers, 10:00 am @ Sue Humble’s House *(see page 5)*
- **22** Livestock Quality Assurance and Ethics Training (LQA&E 1 and 2), 6:00-9:00 pm @ North Branch SR Center *(see page 5)*

**APRIL**

- **1** Deadline for Swine Grant Applications *(see page 3)*
- **1** Deadline for Food Show Registration *(see page 3)*
- **1** Deadline for Summer Assistant Applications *(see page 4)*
- **9** Food and Bread Show, 10:00 – 12:00 @ North Branch SR Center *(see page 3)*
- **12** Management Board meeting, 7:00 pm at Lake State Credit Union *(see page 6)*
- **19** Chisago County Cottontails meeting, 6:30 pm, Chisago Lakes Area Library
- **21** Dairy Project meeting, 6:30 pm at North Branch SR Center

**MAY**

- **7** Sheep and Goat Weigh Day, TBA *(see page 4)*
- **7** GREY – Time and location to be announced, *(see page 7)*
- **16** Deadline for Animal ID including lease forms (to be eligible for State Fair) *(see page 4)*
- **16** Deadline for 4-H enrollment (to be eligible for State Fair)
- **16** Deadline for Rube Goldberg Registration
- **16** Early Deadline for PICCKM Camp
- **16** Early Deadline for Run Wild 5K