UPCOMING HOLIDAYS – OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED!
- President’s Day – Monday, February 15th

RICE COUNTY 4-H CALENDAR

February
1 – Exchange Meeting, 7:30 p.m. 4H Building
5 – Ambassadors – Feed My Starving Children
6 – Beef Weigh-in, 9-11 a.m. Hoover Farm
   (snow date – February 14th)
6 – Project “LOVE” Sewing Workshop, 9:30 a.m., 4-H Building
9 – Horse Quiz Bowl Practice, 6:30 p.m., Culver’s, Northfield
15 – Application Deadline for 4-H Summer Intern Positions
15 – Youth Application Deadline for State 4-H Beef Committee
16 – Market Beef (steers & heifers) & Dairy Steer ID’s Due!
20-21 -- BLU, Rochester
23 -- Horse Quiz Bowl Practice, 6:30 p.m., Culver’s, Northfield
28 – Swine Workshop, 1 p.m., 4-H Building

March
4-5 – Lock-In, 4H Building, see article for details
5 – Rabbit Meeting, 4-H Building
7 – Ambassador Meeting, 6:30 p.m., 4H Building
7 – Exchange Meeting, 7:30 p.m. 4H Building
12 – Clowning Workshop, 10-12 noon, 4H Building
21 – Awards & Recognition Meeting, 6 p.m., 4H Building
21 – Auction Committee Meeting, 7 p.m., 4H Building
17-20 – MAVA, Fergus Falls
19 – Easter Egg Hunt, 4-H Building

2016 RICE COUNTY FAIR
- The 2016 fair will be July 18-24.

ARE WE MEETING TONIGHT?
With the winter months upon us listen to KDHL for meeting cancellations.
LQA&E

4-H members grade 6th and above in beef, dairy, goat, llama, poultry, rabbit and sheep; and members 3rd grade and above in swine need to have been LQA&E certified to participate at the State Fair prior to the 2016 Rice County Fair. Certification is good for three fairs. If you have not been certified or need to be re-certified for this upcoming fair season here are the Rochester West Region locations:

- April 2, 2016 - 9 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. - Steele County
- June 11, 2016 - 9 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. - Freeborn County

Pre-registration is required! Each session is limited to the first 100 registered participants. There is no cost to pre-registered 4-H members in Freeborn, Mower, Rice, Steele and Waseca counties. Members from counties other than the Rochester West Region will be $25. IF YOU DO NOT PRE-REGISTER AND IF THERE IS SPACE AVAILABLE A $25.00 registration fee will be assessed regardless of what county you are from.

If you unable to attend one of the above sessions, it is your responsibility to check the State 4-H website for other locations at http://www1.extension.umn.edu/youth/mn4-H/events/LQAE-Training-Materials.html

Sewing Workshop-PROJECT LOVE

Project "LOVE" is in need of your help! There are a few different options for families who would like to learn and give. First, what is Project LOVE? It started with our most recent donation from JoAnn Fabrics. They gave us over a hundred teddy bears when they were reorganizing and cleaning out their inventory, as they do every month. These bears are soft teddy bears that allow you to record a short saying to play back. They need somebody to love them! We are going to supply the bears with some accessories including books and a bag and donate them to youth in the community with the help of Rice County Public Health and Rice County Social Services. There are a few ways you can contribute so please read all descriptions!

**Bags:** If you already know how to sew and don’t care to attend the workshop, you are invited to stop by the Extension Office to get material and instructions to sew the bags on your own time. It is asked that all finished bags are returned by February 12th.

**Books:** Because February is "I LOVE to read" month, that is when this project will be completed, with the delivery of our items. The bags will have a book or more in them to give to youth around the county. If you could donate new or gently used books for kids birth - age 6, please bring them to the Extension Office by February 12th.

Thanks for your contributions and I look forward to seeing this project take shape and bring joy to children in the county.

Clowning Workshop

A Clowning workshop will be held on Saturday, March 12th at the 4-H Building. Working with makeup to apply your clown face will be 10-11 a.m. and how to make figure balloons will be 11-12 noon. Call the Extension Office by Friday, February 27th to register for one or both of the workshops.
**LOCK-IN**

Are you looking for a night of fun? And a way to include your friends who aren't in 4-H? We have the solution! On Friday, March 4th Rice County 4-H will be hosting the 5th annual lock-in. From 6:00-8:00 p.m. youth in K-5th grades are invited to attend with a non 4-H friend for some games, fun and pizza supper. From 8:30 p.m. to 7:30 a.m. Saturday morning (March 5th), youth 6th grade and above are invited and encouraged to bring a non 4-H friend. You will be busy taking part in games, socializing and fun snacks will be provided. There is no cost to you, just a request that you register with the Extension Office at 332-6109 by Monday, February 29th. This is a promotional activity so be sure to invite those friends who aren’t in 4-H and show them what a good time we can have! Non 4-H members will have to fill out an enrollment form due to the new “Safety of Minors” policy. Contact Kelly (332-6109) as soon as possible if you’re interested in being a chaperone.

**UPCOMING WORKSHOPS**

*Watch upcoming newsletters for details, but mark your calendars….*

Swine - February 28th, 1 p.m., 4-H Building - overview on how-to-guide the animal, questions/answers

Dairy Goat - March 19th, 12-2 p.m., Rice County Fairgrounds - breeding characteristics, anatomy, tattoos and animal ID, selecting a goat, dairy characteristics

Dairy - April

Dog Rally - April 9th

Rabbit - April 30th - tattoo & fair ID

Sheep - June

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**You should be a Camp Counselor!!!**

Summer is right around the corner and it is time to think about being a 4-H Camp Counselor at Camp Patterson! If you are in ninth grade or older and want to develop your leadership skills, help campers have a great experience at camp, make new friends from other counties, and have a lot of fun, then you should consider becoming a camp counselor. 4-H members who have been camp counselors claim it is one of the best leadership experiences of their lives! The deadline to apply is February 26, 2016 and you can find the electronic Camp Counselor application here.

**Sign up today!!!Summer Camp 2016 at Camp Patterson!!!!**

It is hard to believe that we are already thinking camp! Bring on the warm weather, the swim suits, the campfire songs and the sun!! This will be three days of action packed fun! Meet new friends, learn new skills, and make great memories. The 2016 4-H Summer Camp is set for the following counties:

(Note: If the date of your county camp does not work, you can always attend a different session).

**Youth Camp Sessions (Grades 3-6):**

Session 1 - June 6-8:  Blue Earth, Brown, Faribault, Le Sueur, Nicollet

Session 2 - June 8-10:  Freeborn, Mower, Rice, Steele, Waseca

Session 3 – June 13-15  Carver, Scott, McLeod, Sibley

**Teen camp Session (Grades 6-8):**

Session 4 - June 15-17:  Blue Earth, Brown, Faribault, Le Sueur, Nicollet, McLeod, Sibley, Carver, Scott, Freeborn, Mower, Rice, Steele, and Waseca.

NOTE: At the 6th grade level, a 4-H member may attend only one camp session – either Youth Camp or Teen Camp, but not both.

Camp is located at Camp Patterson on Lake Washington in Madison Lake, MN. Details and registration information will be in the March newsletter! Save the date on your calendar and join us for summer camp.
We Want Your Shoes!

Your gently worn shoes, that is! If you're like most people, your closet’s probably home to multiple pairs of shoes you no longer wear. Here’s your chance to dust them off and put them to good use. When you drop off your gently worn shoes, you’ll be helping Rice County 4-H Exchange raise needed funds as well as people less fortunate throughout the world. Drop off location: 4-H Building on the Rice County Fairgrounds, 1900 Fairgrounds Drive, Faribault, MN.

World Wear Project has made shoes available to people living in developing countries such as Cameroon, Mozambique, Tanzania, Chile, Honduras and currently we are sending to El Salvador. The Shoe Box Program boxes should be filled with wearable men’s, women’s, and kid’s shoes. Shoes can include all wearable leather tennis shoes, casual shoes and dress shoes. These may include, but is not limited to, trainers, basketball, jogging/running, tennis, and aerobic shoes, boots, heels, flats, etc. Nike, Reebok, Adidas, New Balance, ASICS, Puma, Saucony, Brooks, Wilson, Prince, K-Swiss, Avia, Fila, Etonic, Lotto, Skechers, Mizuno, Vans, DC, Converse, just to name a few. We do not purchase winter boots or any shoe with metal cleats. Shoes should be in wearable condition, no stains, holes or overly worn. They must be in mated pairs with rubber bands and/or tied laces.

Message from Dorothy

Dear 4-H families and volunteers,

This month, hundreds of 4-H’ers from around the state will participate in one of our five 4-H Building Leadership and Understanding (BLU) youth leadership conferences.

The annual regional youth conferences are planned and facilitated by our Minnesota 4-H State Ambassadors. The ambassadors use a youth-teaching-youth approach to teach their peers about leadership and engage participants in hands-on activities, games, small group discussions, and a dance during each event. This year’s topic is called, "Find Your Element." The focus will help youth explore how they can live out the passions in their lives. The 4-H BLU conferences are one important way that we provide youth with hands-on opportunities to learn and practice leadership skills.

If you aren’t familiar with 4-H BLU, or the statewide 4-H Youth Exploring Leadership and Learning Outloud! (YELLO!) youth conference in June, I encourage you to explore these wonderful leadership opportunities for youth (and adult volunteers!)

Go to our web site at www.4-H.mn.edu/events/blu/index.html and www.4-H.mn.edu/events/yello/index.html.

Sincerely,

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

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!

### Are you looking for work experience in the youth development field?

This year, we are offering 54 county-based 4-H summer intern positions throughout the state of Minnesota. Internships will provide an excellent opportunity to learn more about University of Minnesota Extension and explore job opportunities in 4-H Youth Development. Most positions will be for ten or eleven weeks, with flexible starting dates.

Candidates must have a high school diploma, and at least two years of undergraduate study is preferred. Candidates must apply on-line through the University of Minnesota job site. The application materials will include a standard application, résumé, cover letter, list of three references and a college transcript. The **summer intern position is available here**. The application deadline is **Feb. 15**.

For more information, please contact Michele VanDyke at [mvandyke@umn.edu](mailto:mvandyke@umn.edu).

### M4-HAVA 2016 Annual Conference

Please consider attending the 31st annual Minnesota 4-H Adult Volunteer Association Conference being held **March 17-19** at the Bigwood Event Center/Best Western Inn in Fergus Falls, Minnesota. This year’s theme is Keen, Green, and Lean in 2016.

The M4-HAVA Conference is a great place for volunteers to learn about what is happening throughout the state and new trends going on in 4-H. You will meet other volunteers who are really excited about 4-H, leave with an arsenal of new activities and ideas from the 32 workshops offered to take back and share with your clubs and counties, and recognize outstanding volunteers and clubs during the annual banquet.

For more information on registration for the 2016 M4-HAVA Conference, Blue Ribbon Awards, and Membership visit [www.4-H.umn.edu/volunteer/m4-hava/](http://www.4-H.umn.edu/volunteer/m4-hava/).

### Judging 4-H exhibits at Minnesota county fairs

Minnesota 4-H depends on the skills, talents and dedication of hundreds of adults who judge 4-H projects at county fairs across Minnesota. In support of 4-H judges, Minnesota 4-H offers online training, toolkit resources and more. To learn more, or if interested in becoming a 4-H judge, visit [www.4-H.umn.edu/county-fair/judges/](http://www.4-H.umn.edu/county-fair/judges/).

### 2016 4-H Rube Goldberg Challenge: Crush and recycle a can!

The 2016 4-H Rube Goldberg Challenge is to create a machine that will crush an empty
aluminum soft drink can and put it into a recycling container!

The third annual challenge asks teams of youth to design overly complex contraptions that accomplish this year’s designated task using everyday items that interact in a series of chain-reactions. Teams compete in contests at their county fair, and then will be eligible to compete at the Minnesota State Fair.

Teams are encouraged to register by May 15, 2016 and get started on their machines!

To learn more about the 4-H Rube Goldberg Challenge and how to register, go to: www.4-h.umn.edu/events/engineering-design-challenge/index.html.

NOTE: No paper registration this year. Team leaders, members and youth coaches will sign up through 4HOnline accounts. Adult volunteer leaders must register before their team members can register.

What do Minnesota 4-H first year member parents have to say?

In October 2015, the first-year member parent survey was administered to parents of new members in the 2014-2015 program year. We do this survey annually to learn more about the experiences of our families new to the 4-H program. This survey asks parents to give feedback on items such as how welcoming their experience was, if their child had opportunities for learning, and if policies were challenging.

What did we learn this year?:

- A quarter of parents felt that enrollment and membership policies were challenging.
- 94% of parents said the topics their child worked on were of interest to them.
- 80% of parents agreed that their child became really good at something they worked on.
- We have a large number of youth who are experiencing 4-H for the first time in their family. Over 45% of our survey respondents had never had exposure to the 4-H program in their family history.

Currently teams of educators are looking at this information and thinking about how we can improve the 4-H program to help all our members.

Thank you first year member parents for responding to this survey!