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Steele County 4-H Calendar

February 2016
2  St. Mary’s After School
3  Owatonna Library After School
4  Ellendale After School
6  Beef Weigh-in, 9-11 AM, Beef Barn
15 Presidents Day Holiday – OFFICE CLOSED
16 4-H Market Beef ID’s DUE (due 2/16 because of 2/15 Holiday)
20 Family Cloverbud Outing – Rochester Children’s’ Museum
21 Ambassador Meeting, 4-6 PM, Extension Office
22 4-H Club Council Meeting, 7 PM, SCCC
26 Camp Counselor Application Deadline

March 2016
1  St. Mary’s After School
1  Shooting Sports Archery Kick Off, 6-7 PM, SCCC
2  Owatonna Library After School
3  Ellendale After School
6  Pasta Dinner/Silent Auction, 3:30-7 PM, OJHS
17 Livestock PDC meeting
19 Leader Appreciation
21 Ambassador Meeting, 6 PM, SCCC
21 4-H Club Council, 7 PM, SCCC

Did you know?

...our 4-H Calendar of events is posted on the Steele County Extension website? For a direct link to the calendar bookmark this link:
http://www3.extension.umn.edu/county/steele/4-h/article/steele-county-4-h-calendar. The website is updated on a regular basis. Check it out, you never know what you will learn!
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.umn.edu/events/blu/index.html and www.4-H.umn.edu/events/yello/index.html.

Sincerely,

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

4-H Enrollment

Hurry you don’t want to MISS OUT!!!! It is time for members and volunteers to enroll for the 2015-2016 4-H Year! If you have not enrolled or re-enrolled in your new project areas, you might be missing some important emails! So here are some things to help you through the enrollment process:

- The website at which to enroll/re-enroll is https://mn.4honline.com You’ll find Quick Start and Detailed Instructions there on how to enroll.
- If you have trouble re-enrolling, check your browser. You will need to use Internet Explorer 10 or higher, Chrome, Firefox, or Safari. If you still have trouble, call the Extension office at 444-7685 or complete a paper enrollment form available at the Extension office.
- Make sure you check the proper gender – male or female.
- Update your personal AND family profiles including street and email addresses. Most emails from the office are sent to family email addresses – make sure yours is correct.
- Update your project areas. The system will keep your old projects entered until you change them. We’ll be sending out livestock ID and project information soon so make sure you’re on the right lists.
- Be sure to work through each screen and complete all information.
- We no longer need a signed hard copy of the Authorization form BUT you must check and accept all items on that screen.

If you have any questions about enrolling or re-enrolling, please call the Extension Office at 507-444-7685.

Cloverbud Adventures

February Family Activity
Rochester Children’s Museum, Activity, and Pizza
Saturday, February 20
Call the Extension Office to sign up by Friday, February 12
2016 4-H COUNTY FAIR REGISTRATION

NEW IN 2016 – County Fair Exhibit Registration will be an online process this year too! You will receive instructions in June when the system is fully set up and working…but for now…KEEP IN MIND, you will only be able to register for County Fair exhibits if you are already enrolled or re-enrolled in 4honline. See the instructions for re-enrollment in this newsletter under the ‘2015-2016 4-H Enrollment article.

Ambassadors

Upcoming Meetings
February 21, Extension Office, 4- 6 PM
March 21, SCCC, 6 - 7 PM
April 24, Extension Office, 4 – 6 PM
May 23, SCCC, 6 – 7 PM

4-H Club Council

4-H Club Council Meetings
4th Monday of each month at 7 PM at the SCCC (unless announced otherwise)
Next Meeting ** Monday, Feb. 22, 2016
NOTE: March Meeting is a week earlier
*** Monday, March 21, 2016

Every Club should have at least one representative attend these meetings to bring information to Club Council and take information back to the club.

Leader Trainings Online
Did you know that all volunteers need to complete ONLINE VOLUNTEER TRAINING? Volunteers can easily access these trainings and get the support they need to make a difference in the lives of Minnesota youth through the 4honline website at https://mn.4honline.com. This series of dynamic, interactive 30-minute online training modules allows volunteers to build their volunteer skills and knowledge from home. Sign into your screen in 4honline and click on the Trainings tab to access the available sessions.

Project Information -Animal Science

PDC Plan for 2015-2016
The PDC (Project Development Committee) meetings are planned for the new 4-H year! Remember these meetings are open to all who would like to share in the planning, education, and rules review of each livestock species area. All meetings, except the October meeting, are held at the SCCC starting with food at 6:30 PM and lasting no later than 8:00 PM. This year, some new EDUCATIONAL pieces will be part of each PDC meeting. Here is our plan for the rest of 2016. . .

- Thursday, March 17 - SCCC – Tacos / Finalization of Fair Book Changes / Hollywood Squares
- Thursday, May 19 - SCCC – Pizza / Writing Bonus Trips / Wheel of Fortune
- Thursday, July 21 - SCCC – Subs / County Fair Planning / Telethon Call Night

Beef Identification
Market Beef Weigh-In has been set for Saturday, February 6 from 9-11 AM at the Beef Barn. You do not need to set up a specific time, but we do need to know you are coming! PLEASE call 444-7685 to let us know that you are coming and how many animals you will have to be ID’d! This is different from the past - you MUST call 444-7685 to let us know you are attending so, in case of bad weather, we can call you to cancel. If we do not know you are coming and it’s past 11 AM, we will leave.
Ak-Sar-Ben Beef IDs
If you are planning to exhibit a market beef animal at AK-SAR-BEN, your animal MUST BE ID’d by February 15 – come to the CENTRAL ID on February 6! You have a little longer to submit your DNA hair pulls for Ak-Sar-Ben but they should be brought to the Extension office by February 15 if possible too (that’s a holiday and the office will be closed so get it to the office earlier or put it in the drop box outside the office door by the 15th!) Hair pulls will be taken at the February 6 weigh in, so you can complete all the information and sign the official Ak-Sar-Ben envelope and return it to the Extension office all at the same time! Envelopes are available at the Extension office. Nose prints are no longer needed! If you have any questions, call the Extension Office at 444-7685.

LQA&E Trainings
LQA&E (Livestock Quality Assurance & Ethics) training is already starting up for the upcoming fair season! Here are the local training dates for this year! Remember, if you have not taken LQA&E training, or if the last time you took it was 2013 or before, you must take the training this year to be eligible for State Fair Livestock Exhibition and/or to Market Your Swine Project Animals. You can check the date of your last LQA&E training in 4honline.

* Steele County:
  Saturday, April 2, 9 AM-12 Noon - Call 444-7685 to register-we are almost full!

* Freeborn County:
  Saturday, June 11, 9 AM-12 Noon - Call 377-5660 to register

Events & Activities

Pasta Dinner & Silent Auction – March 6
It’s that time of year…time to “gear up” for our 12th Annual Fundraiser — the “4-H Pasta Dinner and Silent Auction”. This special event will be held from 3:30-7 PM at the Owatonna Junior High.

We ask that each 4-H family sell 10 tickets to the Pasta Dinner. All tickets are numbered and recorded; and you are responsible for the tickets given to you. By selling ALL 10 of your tickets, your family members qualify for 4-H activity discounts. Tickets have been sent out - if you have not received yours or if you need additional tickets, call or stop by the Extension Office. All money for sold tickets AND all unsold tickets must be turned in to the Extension Office by Monday, February 22. If you return all UNSOLD tickets AND all MONEY you collected for SOLD tickets to the Extension Office by Monday, February 22 deadline, your name will be entered into a drawing for 5 Meal Deals redeemable at the 4-H Grill during the 2016 County Fair. This drawing will take place at the Pasta Dinner. DO NOT THROW AWAY UNSOLD TICKETS!

Your club leader also has a “volunteer worker” sign-up sheet. Please check your schedule and sign up for the time that works best for your family to help at this fundraiser. We need lots of “helping hands” to make this event run smoothly. The proceeds from this fundraiser support “4-H Summer Programming”. This means that the ENTIRE 4-H program will benefit from this event! Let’s try to make it a HUGE Success and lots of FUN for everyone!

Silent Auction baskets and items are welcome as well. Each club is asked to donate a basket and if you, as a family would like to donate to
the auction as well, please bring your donations to the Extension office by Friday, February 26 so they can be recorded prior to the auction.

Softball
Yes, it’s COLD outside ~ but we are talking softball! We are also looking for some new Committee Members. Our first committee meeting will be scheduled for mid to late March at the Extension Office. If we are to continue with the softball program, we need additional committee members! HELP us out with this! Let the Extension Office know of anyone interested.

Clubs should be thinking about their teams and their coaches NOW. We will be having a Coach’s Meeting in April to review rules, teams and divisions! Remember, all coaches must be “screened volunteers”. If your coach has not yet submitted their volunteer paperwork, have them do it now! Call the Extension Office if you have any questions.

Adult Volunteer Appreciation - Saturday, March 19
Do you help out at livestock ID at county fair? Do you coach softball? Are you a club leader or do you help out in your club? Are you on a county committee? Do you attend club council livestock PDCs, leader trainings or any other county event? If so, the Adult Volunteer Appreciation Event is just for you! So mark your calendar now for March 19, from 5-10 PM!!!!!

REMEMBER – This is open to all adult volunteers, not just the club leaders! Call the Extension office now to reserve your place.

Shooting Sports & Wildlife
We are ready to get started with the Archery project area of the 4-H Shooting and Wildlife project! If you are currently in 4th grade or above and interested in archery, plan to attend the Kick Off Night on Tuesday, March 1 at the Steele County Community Center from 6 – 7 PM. This night, you will be learning about archery basics, rules, and equipment.

4-H Lock-in Date is set for Friday, April 8
This event is back by popular demand! Location and times are yet to be determined, but put the date on your calendar. Watch for more details to come.

4-H Family Movie Day – Sunday, April 17
The 4-H Family Movie night that was cancelled in December has been rescheduled for April 17 as an afternoon matinee. The movie we plan to see is The Jungle Book. More information will be available in the upcoming newsletters.

Summer Camp 2016 at Camp Patterson!!!!
It is hard to believe that we are already thinking camp! Bring on the warm weather, the swimsuits, 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 youth camp does not work, you can always attend a different session).

Youth Camp: 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: Grades 6-8  
All Teens - June 15-17: Blue Earth, Brown, Faribault, Le Sueur, Nicollet, McLeod, Sibley, Carver, Scott, Freeborn, Mower, Rice, Steele, and Waseca.

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!

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, make new friends from other counties, and have a whole lot of fun, then you should consider becoming a camp counselor. People who have been camp counselors claim it is one of the best leadership experiences of their lives! Camp dates are listed above. The deadline to apply is February 26, 2016. Sign up today!!! Applications are available at the County Extension Office or on the county 4-H website.

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/. Deadline to register is April 8, 2016. Disciplines fill quickly, so make sure registration forms are sent in early!

Summer Intern Positions Available

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.

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!
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/.

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/.

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?:

- Overall parents and youth feel welcomed into the program.
- 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!

State/Regional Calendar:

FEBRUARY

15 Application deadline for 4-H summer intern positions
15 Youth application deadline for state 4-H beef committee

MARCH

5 Regional Project Bowl, Foley
12 Regional Project Bowl, Hastings
17-19 M4-HAVA 2016 Annual Conference, Fergus Falls