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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

DATE CHANGE!! Summer Camp 2016 at Camp Patterson!!!!

The 2016 4-H Summer Camp dates have been changed! We are sorry for any inconvenience this may have caused!!

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

Youth Camp: Grades 3-6
June 13-15: Blue Earth, Brown, Faribault, Le Sueur, Nicollet
June 15-17: Freeborn, Mower, Rice, Steele, Waseca
June 20-22: Carver, Scott, McLeod, Sibley

Teen Camp Grades 6-8
June 22-24: Blue Earth, Brown, Faribault, Le Sueur, Nicollet, McLeod, Sibley, Carver, Scott, Freeborn, Mower, Rice, Steele, and Waseca.

You won't want to miss out on camp 2016! It will be three packed days full of fun activities and adventures! Camp is located at Camp Patterson on Lake Washington in Madison Lake, MN. Save the date on your calendar and join us for summer camp!

Check the Brown County Extension website for camp registration info and flyers!

CAMP COUNSELORS – DATE CHANGE FOR CAMP PATTERSON

If you applied to be a camp counselor please note the date change.

Youth Camp: Grades 3-6
June 13-15: Blue Earth, Brown, Faribault, Le Sueur, Nicollet
June 15-17: Freeborn, Mower, Rice, Steele, Waseca
June 20-22: Carver, Scott, McLeod, Sibley
Teen Camp
June 22-24: Blue Earth, Brown, Faribault, Le Sueur, Nicollet, McLeod, Sibley, Carver, Scott, Freeborn, Mower, Rice, Steele, and Waseca.

If you have problems with these dates please contact your local Extension office.

Fruit, Cheese, Frozen Foods Fundraiser

The big Brown County 4-H Fundraiser is underway this February and March. Proceeds from the sale of fruit, cheese, and frozen foods will be made available to all Brown County 4-H members and families. This money is used to help pay for 4-H members to attend camps, leadership retreats, state fair, and other activities. It takes all of the 4-H members working hard to make this fundraiser successful. All clubs receive a percentage of the proceeds from this fundraiser as well, so not only will you be helping Brown County 4-H, but also your local 4-H club. Having an annual fundraiser is also a great way to promote 4-H.

You can pick up more order forms at the Brown County Extension Office if you need more. March 2nd all order forms must be in to the Brown County Extension Office. March 19th fruit and frozen food will be delivered to the extension office. Once again this year we need ONE check for fruit from each club and ONE order form from each club.

Federation Meeting

We will be having a Federation Meeting on March 21st at 7:30. I ask that all clubs have at least one representative at this meeting.

County Committee Sign-Up

The start of a new 4-H year is the perfect time to sign up to serve on a county committee. Committees that you can sign up for are: Lunch Stand, Livestock, Clothing, Awards Day, and Shooting Sports/Wildlife. Some committees are more active than others. Committee work is what makes things happen in the Brown County 4-H Program. Committee membership is open to youth and adult leaders. Please contact the office for more information.

Project Meetings

Project meetings are a great way for 4-H members to learn more about their projects. Project meetings can happen in the club or on the county level. If you have ideas for project meetings that you would like to see, or if you or someone you know is interested in teaching a project meeting, please let Alisa know. The fall and winter months are a great time to hold project meetings and now is the time to get those meetings scheduled.

4-H Ambassadors

All 4-Hers 7th grade and older are invited to become a 4-H ambassador. The 4-H Ambassador program is made up of the older 4-Hers that help to plan county wide events such as the awards banquet, county fair, and other fun activities throughout the year. If you are interested in becoming a 4-H Ambassador or would like more information about Ambassadors please call Alisa or Brynn at the Extension Office.
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](http://4-H.umn.edu/events/youth-day-at-the-capitol).

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/](http://mnyouth.net/work/red-wagon-awards/).

Cloverbud Activity Days

There is a **Cloverbud Activity Days** scheduled for **Saturday April 9**. The Cloverbud Activity Day will be held at the Extension Office Sleepy Eye from **10:00-11:30**. Cloverbuds are youth in Kindergarten through second grade. At the Cloverbud Activity Day, youth will experience projects, songs, games and a lot of fun. Registration is appreciated to help plan for the day, but is not required. There is no cost to attend this event and it is open to youth who are not enrolled as 4-H members. A minimum of 5 cloverbuds must sign up for this event to take place.

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).

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!

**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](http://z.umn.edu/cwfinauguration).

**County Fair 2016**

The dates for the 2016 Brown County Fair have been announced. The dates are **August 10th - 14th**. It is never too early to get those dates on your calendar.

**Winter Weather Watch**

Winter in Minnesota means snow, ice and poor driving conditions. If the weather causes cancellations or postponements of 4-H events, listen to one of the local radio stations: 107.3 in Sleepy Eye and KNUJ 860 in New Ulm. We’ll try to give ample notice of weather-related changes.

**Spotlight on Stark Happy Hustlers**

The Stark 4-H Club held their February meeting at the Brown County Extension Office on Saturday, February 13. Before the business meeting, each member was able to make a blueberry or cherry pie with the help of the speaker Arlene Dietl. Each member learned how to mix the ingredients for the pie crust and how to roll out a pie crust. Each member went home with a yummy pie to bake and eat. Lunch was served. During the business meeting, it was decided to go to the Garage in Springfield for pizza and bowling as the winter fun activity. Members volunteered to bake cakes and serve at the Divine Providence Birthday Party on Wednesday, February 17. The fruit and frozen food sale was discussed. The next meeting of the Stark 4-H Club will be held on Saturday, March 5.

**4-H Volunteer Corner**

**Screened Volunteers**

I am looking for any individuals that are interested in becoming 4-H screened volunteers. There are several reasons for becoming a volunteer. We screen volunteers to protect not only our youth but also those volunteering with our kids. In the event that someone would accuse a volunteer of something, that volunteer, club, county has the University of Minnesota legal counsel to assist them through the process.
1. If you plan on transporting youth for 4-H we need to have you screened; while the liability still follows the personal car in the event of an accident you still need to be screened.

2. If you ever want the opportunity to chaperon an event (good example is the State Fair or County Fair) we don’t always have the time to complete your screening process before the event takes places.

3. You cannot co-sign club checks, serve as club leader, coach, livestock/general exhibit superintendent etc. until your screening is complete.

The process to becoming a screened volunteer is three simple steps. Once you become a screened volunteer, you will not have to be re-screened for three years. The three steps are as follows:

1. **STEP A - Application**
2. **STEP B - Background Check**
3. **STEP C - Volunteer Orientation:** View the 30-minute 4-H volunteer orientation and submit a survey response, which will let staff know you have completed the orientation process.

These steps can be found on the website: http://www1.extension.umn.edu/youth/mn4-h/volunteer/#application

If you have any questions about this process please feel free to contact the Brown County Extension Office at 507-794-7993.

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**March**

2  Deadline to turn in fruit and frozen food orders

5  Regional Project Bowl, Foley

11 Youth Day at the Capitol application deadline

12 Regional Project Bowl, Hastings

17-19 M4-HAVA 2016 Annual Conference, Fergus Falls

19 Fruit and Frozen Food Delivery

19 Regional Project Bowl, Bemidji

19 Regional Project Bowl, Redwood Falls

21 Federation Meeting, 7:30 p.m.

29 Youth Day at the Capitol

**April**

1 Minnesota Alliance with Youth Red Wagon Award nomination deadline

2 Regional Project Bowl, Snow date

2 Camp Counselor Training, Mankato Historic Courthouse

9 Cloverbud Activity Day

9-14 National 4-H Conference, Washington, D.C.

15 Minnesota 4-h Foundation college scholarship applications due

16 State Project Bowl, Sauk Rapids

17 County livestock PDC training webinar

23-24 4-H Shooting Sports & Wildlife Leader Certification training, Mora

**May**

15 Animal ID deadline

15 2016 4-H Rube Goldberg Challenge registration due

**June**

13-15 Youth Camp Session 1- (NOTE: DATE CHANGE)

22-24 Teen Camp  (NOTE: DATE CHANGE)

**July**

2-9 Citizenship Washington Focus

**August**

10-14 Brown County Fair

24-28 State Fair Livestock Encampment

25-Sept 5 Minnesota State Fair