Dear 4-H Families;

A quote attributed to Thomas Jefferson, though likely from someone else is still accurate nonetheless. It goes: “An informed or educated citizenry is crucial to the survival of our democracy”. I remember the first time I was able to vote in a national election. It was in 1976 and I had the opportunity to vote for Jimmy Carter. Now, Jimmy Carter was and still is one of the most ethical and respected individuals of this generation. However he was rather ineffectual as a President, and I wish that I and lots of others in our country had been able to make a better decision as to our National leadership. That was my first experience of learning that just because they “say something” doesn’t mean they’re going to, or be able to do it. I share these two observations with you because as 4-H’ers there are several opportunities to become “better informed”. The first of these is our upcoming regional energizer, Making the Best Better, being hosted right here in our own area on Saturday, January 23. A copy of that flier is included with this newsletter. The other items are:

MU Extension Legislative Day, March 2, Jefferson City. This day will be an opportunity to meet with our Legislators, see the legislative process up close and personal and spend time in a truly beautiful state capital building. Stay tuned for details about transportation etc.

Youth Civic Leadership Summit (YCLS), March 4-6, This fun packed weekend will give youth age 14-18 hands on tools to develop programs and leadership styles to impact your local community. Cost for this event is $135, which is partially reimbursed by our county council. To register go to: http://4h.missouri.edu/YCLS/main

Teen Conference: March 12-13. This overnight event in Columbia is for Youth 11-13. Cracking the Code of Leadership is designed to build leadership skills, bolster self-confidence and learn more about opportunities that exist within 4H. Cost for this event is $169, and you can register at www.4Honline.com.

State 4-H Congress: June 1-4 on the University of Missouri campus, exploring leadership, creating friendships and learning about career opportunities. Youth select their leadership and can run for State Council offices. Open to all youth ages 14-18. $160 is the fee, there is a $60 partial opportunity scholarship available, in addition to council support. An event that looks really good on your college applications and a great way to explore college life, this is the must attend event of the year! Go to http://4h.missouri.edu/statecongress/congressregist for registration details.

While I was not a 4-H’er growing up, my wife was and my daughters were as well. They all say that while projects, and local fairs were good, the outstanding parts of their experience had to do with state and national events. These truly show a side of our country that you won’t get from our own backyards. Let 4-H take you places you never thought you could go, and become something far beyond what you ever thought you could become. I hope that 2016 helps you move one more step in becoming a leader and informed citizen to ensure a bright future for our country. Have a great 2016!

Mike Coffey, 4H Youth Specialist.
CLUB NEWS

The **Hooves, Paws and Claws 4-H Club** had a Christmas party at Raegan and Jackson’s house. We made reindeer food. We played games and ate cookies. We made a reindeer puppet. It was fun. This month Raegan and Russell are going to do demonstrations and Jessi is going to teach a story telling game. I am excited to go to the Newton County 4-H Carnival. We are all working on quilts. Our next meeting is Monday, January 11 at the Goodman School.

*Russell Hilton*, Reporter

The **Cornerstone 4-H Club** met on Monday, December 7, at 6:15 at the Southwest City Library. Brandie Keith called the meeting to order. There were 11 members, 2 leaders, and 10 others present. Maelee led the American pledge while Cynthia led the 4-H pledge. The minutes of the last meeting were read and approved. The treasurer’s report was read. Tyler made a motion to accept it and Tatum seconded it. In old business Cynthia thanked everyone for participating in the Southwest City Christmas parade. The club won first place in their division and received a plaque. We also reminded everyone that in the spring we would be working with the school in the garden to raise money. In new business, there will be a cooking class next Monday night where we will make soap and taco salad. Tyler gave a demonstration on how to shoot a bow, told everyone how to be safe with a bow, and showed the different parts of a bow. The meeting was adjourned.

*Macy Reece*, Reporter

**ATTENTION: Club Reporters:**

Send your 4-H Club news to:

Lynda DuMond at dumondl@missouri.edu

Or mail to: P.O. Box 336– Pineville, MO 64856

COUNTY NEWS

**4-H Club Meetings (Date, Time, Location)**

Listed below are dates, times and location for 4-H Club meetings in McDonald County.

- **Crossroads**— To be determined
- **Cornerstone**— 1st Monday of every month, SW City Library, 6:00 PM
- **Hooves, Paws and Claws**— 2nd Monday of every month, Goodman School, 5:30 PM
- **Splitlog**— 2nd Monday of every month, Splitlog Baptist Church, 6:00 PM.

**Republican Dinner Fund Raiser**

Thursday, March 24 McDonald County 4-H will be catering a dinner for the Republican Club. We have done this every year at their request and it puts money in our account to sponsor kids to camp and other 4-H events. We cater several events each year to keep our program well funded. Ask your club leader how you can help.

**Newton County 4-H Carnival**

Everyone is invited to a fun family night at the Annual Newton County 4-H Carnival. Carnival games, food, and a basket auction will take place. This event funds the Newton County 4-H program. The carnival will be held on January 30, 2016 at the Roy Jean Carter Memorial Fair-grounds in Neosho starting at 4:00 PM. Come join us for fellowship and good family fun!

**Regional News**

**Member/Leader Trainings**

There will be two member/leaders trainings in 2016 for families to attend. Both events are the same, just in two different locations for the convenience of all our families in the SW region of Missouri. Making the Best Better will be hosted by Newton County and be held at Crowder College in Neosho on Saturday, January 23. Bright and Bold will be held on Saturday, January 30 in Ozark in Christian County. Watch your mail for registration for this event. There will be classes for club officers, parents, leaders, Clover Kids, Shooting Sports Safety training, Volunteer orientation... just to name a few. Lots of useful information for new 4-H families, as well as, those who have been involved for years.
Regional Rep. Interviews

Horse Quiz Bowl
Regional Representative applications are due into the extension office by the end of December. To find your application go to 4h.missouri.edu/doc/council-regional-rep-application.pdf. Interviews will take place on February 27 at MSU. Regional Horse Bowl will also take place on this date at MSU. County teams from all over the SW Region will be competing at Horse Bowl.

State 4-H Congress
It will be here before you know it! This year State 4-H Congress will be held on June 1-3, 2016. Registrations will open in 4Honline on March 1, 2016. Deadline for registration will be April 15. This event is designed for Missouri 4-Her’s ages 14-19. The Missouri State 4-H Council plans and implements Congress and it is held on the University of Missouri campus.

What you'll do at State 4-H Congress
- Learn the life skills of a super leader, connecting with experts in quality workshops and learning opportunities!
- Experience campus living — residence halls, cafeterias, classrooms, you name it!
- Elect your representatives on the State 4-H Council!
Get to know other 4-H youth from across Missouri...and HAVE FUN!

YCLS
Youth Civic Leaders Summit will be March 4-6, 2016 at Windermere Conference Center in Roach, Missouri. Looking to ignite something among teens and adults in your club, council, program or community? Find that SPARK at YCLS 2016! The Youth Civic Leaders Summit is a statewide energizer for teens ages 14-18 years old and adult leaders who are engaged in Leadership and Service, and want to make a difference in their communities and their world. Cost for this opportunity is $135.00. Members in good standing get half back from the county 4-H council— so out of pocket is only $67.50. Transportation, lodging, and meals at the conference are included. Deadline to register for YCLS is February 1, 2016.

Last year, McDonald County had a YCLS team of young men who led the organization of a stream cleanup on Elk River. It was very successful with many teens from across the region participating in the float trip and making the river better for the community by their hard work. We would love to have a team again this year. If you are interested, e-mail Lynda at dumondl@missouri.edu. Sign up for this event is open on www.mo.4honline.com.

Teen Conference
Teen Conference for youth ages 11-13 will be held in Columbia in February 12-13, 2016. This is the first over night state trip for many of our teens and sponsored by the State 4-H Council. Registration deadline is January 31, 2016. Register for this event in 4HOnline.

Attention Shooting Sports Enthusiasts
Did you know- The Missouri Department of Conservation maintains five staffed and 70 unstaffed shooting facilities around the state to provide safe, family-friendly places to practice shooting and archery skills. Missouri has a rich history of hunting and shooting sports and is a national leader in public range development. For more information about MDC shooting ranges, including location, hours and driving directions, visit http://mdc.mo.gov/node/6209.
Bird Feeders

You will Need:
Lard
Bird seed
Plastic disposable cups
Jute cording

1. Put a small hole in bottom of a disposable cup. Thread 2 ft of jute cording through the hole and tie a knot to hold it in place on the outside of the cup.
2. Melt the lard in a pan. You will need 1 part melted lard to 2 parts bird seed. Remove from heat.
3. Pour seed into pot with melted lard and mix.
4. Spoon mixture into cup keeping the jute cord in the center. Pack down to remove any air space.
5. Let cool. Once the lard or suet has set up, tear the cup away and hang this tasty treat in a tree for the birds.

(frogsandsnailsandpuppydogtails.com)