Dear 4-H Families,

Over the last several months, as I’ve written this monthly column I’ve been focusing mostly on our youth and trying to provide direction and motivation to you. These last six weeks I’ve been participating in an online course working to hone my skills at working with Volunteers. With that in mind, I wanted to write this month to our countless volunteers who are at the heart of 4-H. What we do as an organization could not happen without you.

So the first thing I wanted to say was THANK YOU for your dedication. We’ve got a good mix of those that have volunteered for years, and those that are fairly new to 4-H leadership. It takes a lot of us to make this program work and there will always be seasons of change as folks transition in and out of our program.

Second, I want say that I’ve enjoyed the last few months and the opportunities I’ve had to meet and begin to forge a working relationship with you. As we get to know each other, I hope we will have opportunities to explore what your like, what you feel you do well, and perhaps to identify some areas where you want to grow and get better at your leadership skills. For all of us, myself included, we never finish our education and learning new ways to be better at what we do.

Third, I want to dovetail on the concept of Making the Best Better. With having to give my time to programs in three counties, as well as regional and state initiative, I have to lean heavily on our county staff, Lynda and Anna. I feel blest to have these 2 ladies and their enumerable talents and to work alongside them. That said, I want to do all I can to work directly with club leaders and project leaders. If there are things you want to work on, or areas we need to grow and get better at, let all of us know please. As local Volunteers, you often have a perspective that we can easily overlook, and I value your input.

One of the areas I want to start working on as I begin to come up to speed is how we can add a component of Career Path and Job skill development to our 4-H’rs bag of tools. This is an up and coming focus of 4-H and Extension as we partner with our business communities to develop workforces to meet todays and tomorrow’s needs.

Finally, I want to say thanks for being a part of team 4-H!!! We don’t always do everything perfect, or achieve all our goals, but we continue to be one of the best organizations out there for grounding our youth and helping them prepare for a bright future.

See you all around the county,

Mike Coffey
4-H Youth Specialist
COUNTY NEWS

**County Fashion Revue**
Our County Fashion Revue will be held on April 9, 2016 at the Seneca Christian Church. Judging will begin at 9:00 AM and the show will follow at 2:00 PM. If you are enrolled in Clothing, Clothes You Buy, Quilting, Knitting or Crochet projects you will receive a registration for this in the mail. Registrations are due March 3.

**County Achievement Day**
Are you Ready? You have time to practice and prepare for the annual County Achievement Day to be held on Saturday, April 30. This is where 4-H youth compete in demonstrations, judging, public speaking, and personal development. Let's see a record number of youth participate in this event where you can polish your life skills and improve your 'game'!

**Sheep Shearing Workshop**
March 26, 2016 starting at 10:00 AM at the New Bethel School, 3 miles west of Anderson on Hwy F. Gary McLemore will shear and demonstrate shearing and teach those who are interested. Cost is $6 per sheep. To RSVP and for more details call Karen Almeter at 417-845-6855.

REGIONAL NEWS

**RATT Trip**
This year’s RATT (Regional Action-packed Trip for Teens) will be held Friday evening, April 8 – Saturday, April 9. It will be held in Springfield with Missouri State Collegiate hosting. Friday– Lock in at the Bond Center Saturday– Tours and workshops on campus at Missouri State University. Registration deadline is March 25. See enclosed flyer for more details. Limited to the first 55 registrants.
Poultry Workshop
March 20
2:00-5:00 p.m.
Ozark MO
Hands-on activities with birds and eggs.
$3.00 per person
Questions: Jennifer Hancock
417-581-3558

Dairy Cow Camp
May 25-27
For 4-H dairy members ages 8-18.
Rob Thom Dairy Farm, Springfield. See the enclosed flyer for more details.

4-H Camp
It will be here before you know it! SW Region
4-H Camp at Camp Smokey—Roaring River, Cassville, MO. Dates confirmed for camp are as follows:
Alumni Camp June 11-12
Member’s Camp 1 June 12-15
Member’s Camp 2 June 15-18
CK Camp June 18-19
Teen Camp June 19-23
Camp is always a highlight of the summer for 4-H members. Hold the date and plan to attend. More camp details to come soon! We will also be needing responsible teens to work as camp counselors at member’s camp and Clover Kids Camp. Applications will be coming soon.

Camp t-shirt design contest
Our theme this year is Hawaii. So come up with some cool designs and bring them to the Extension Office by April 15. Your design needs to be submitted on a plain piece of copy paper with your name signed on the back. Looking forward to seeing what you can create. Your design just might just be printed on every campers T-shirt!

STATE NEWS

4-H Foundation Scholarships
In 2016 thanks to generous donor support, the Missouri 4-H Foundation will offer approximately 54 college scholarships ($500 - $2,500/scholarship). 4-Hers who are current high school seniors and former 4-Hers who are college students are eligible to apply.

The scholarship guidelines and application is available on the Missouri 4-H website at http://www.4h.missouri.edu/recognition/. Check with your local Extension office for the local application due date. Applications are due in the State 4-H Office by April 1, 2016.

4-H Day With the Cardinals
Missouri and Illinois 4-H members, parents, volunteers and alumni will gather at Busch Stadium on Saturday, May 21, 2016 for the 15th annual 4-H Day with the Cardinals. The National League Central Champion Cardinals will be playing the Arizona Diamondbacks in a 1:15 p.m. game. Tickets for the game will be $25.00 each and includes a specially designed t-shirt featuring the 4-H Clover on the back and the Cardinals emblem on the front. Registrations due April 11. See enclosed ticket order form.

State 4-H Congress
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. The theme this year is “Cracking the Code of Leadership”
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. Cost is $225.00 Remember, members in good standing will be reimbursed half of this fee back! Cost includes lodging, transportation, food and sessions while on campus.

Public Speaking Academy
The 5th Annual Public Speaking Academy will be held on June 21-22. Extension faculty, staff and 4-h volunteers and College professors will provide educational workshops to help youth build skills and comfort with public speaking. This camp is open to 11-13 year old members. Registration is due May 16. For more information go to http://www.4h.missouri.edu/public-speaking-academy/
**Clover Kids Corner**

**Stained Glass Butterfly**

*Materials:* Wax paper, Crayon shavings - variety of colors, paper towels, iron, hole punch, string

*Directions:*
1. Place wax paper butterfly shape on a flat surface.
2. Put crayon shavings inside the butterfly shape (Sparingly, too much will not melt properly)
3. Cover with another piece of wax paper.
4. Iron the two layers together on low heat, placing a paper towel on top while ironing.
5. Cut our the butterfly shape and punch a hole at the top.
6. Thread string through the hole and hang in a sunny window.