



## Fulton County 4-H

### Fall 2026 Newsletter

Welcome to a new 4-H year! Fall is a season of new beginnings, fresh opportunities, and exciting adventures. As we kick off another year of Fulton County 4-H, be sure to read through this newsletter for important dates, enrollment reminders, upcoming events, and ways to get involved. We look forward to another year of learning, growing, serving our community, and making the best better—together!

### Ways to Connect

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#### Other ways to connect

Facebook:



Webpage:



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## General Show “Showcases” Youth Achievement

The Fulton County 4-H General Show was held June 20 at Cuba Junior/Senior High School, where 4-H members proudly exhibited projects they completed throughout the year. Exhibitors earned blue, red, and white ribbon ratings, with many also selected as Illinois State Fair Delegates and Alternates. Judges recognized outstanding exhibits by awarding

Best of Show honors in numerous project areas.

Congratulations to all of our exhibitors on another successful General Show! Thank you to our judges, superintendents, 4-H leaders, volunteers, parents, and families whose time, encouragement, and support helped make this year’s event a success.

Your dedication continues to provide meaningful learning experiences for Fulton County youth.

Mercer of the Pleasant Spacemakers. Congratulations Max!

## Fulton County 4-H Horse & Pony Show

Fulton County 4-H horse project members showcased their skills, sportsmanship, and dedication during the annual 4-H Horse & Pony Show held at the Lewistown Horse Arena. From halter classes to performance events, exhibitors demonstrated the many hours of hard work they have invested in caring for and training their horses and ponies throughout the year. Congratulations to this year's championship winners! Aubrey Yarger earned Grand Champion Halter Horse, while Taylor Johnson received Reserve Grand Champion Halter Horse. In the pony division, Kaden Bump was named Grand Champion Halter Pony, with Aaliyah Naff earning Reserve Grand Champion Halter Pony. Performance champions included Riley Weinmann and Sassy, who received Grand Champion Performance Pony, with Madelyn Chaffin and Murphy earning Reserve Grand Champion Performance Pony. Jaydalynn Markley and Cowgirl were named Grand Champion Performance Horse, while Lillie Ray and Royal received Reserve Grand Champion Performance Horse. Additional honors were awarded to Briley Mercer, who was named High Point Junior Exhibitor, and Riley Weinmann, who earned High Point Senior Exhibitor. Lauren Butler was also recognized as the recipient of the Jo Ann Block/Diane Simons Memorial Belt Buckle. Congratulations to all of our horse project members on a successful show season! Thank you to the Fulton County 4-H Horse Committee, volunteers, families, and everyone who helped make this year's Horse & Pony Show a memorable event. Your support and dedication continue to provide valuable learning experiences for our 4-H youth.

## Food Science Award Winner

The Chicagoland Food Science Foundation provided a \$50 Amazon Gift Card to the overall Food Science winner in Fulton County. This year’s winner for his “Science Fun with Kitchen Chemistry” exhibit at the General Show was Max



Photos: top-Krista Gray, bottom-Kaytlin Lehman



Photos: Anita Wilkinson



**Fulton County 4-H Awards \$6,000 in Scholarships**

Fulton County 4-H is proud to recognize seven outstanding graduating seniors who were awarded a total of \$6,000 in scholarships during their high school Senior Award ceremonies this spring. These scholarships honor 4-H members who have demonstrated outstanding leadership, community service, and dedication throughout their 4-H careers. Thanks to the generosity of our scholarship donors, these young leaders will continue their educational journeys while carrying the values they developed through 4-H.

This year's scholarship recipients include:

- Ella Eathington** – Recipient of the Merle L. Jenkins Agricultural Scholarship and the Gary Eathington Memorial Scholarship. Ella plans to attend the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign to study Agricultural Science with a focus on embryology and genetics.
- Isabelle Kemp** – Recipient of a Hilda Rock Memorial Scholarship. Isabelle will attend Oklahoma State University to study Agribusiness with an emphasis in Pre-Veterinary Business Management.
- Madeline Lettow** – Recipient of the Beverly Reffett Memorial Scholarship. Madeline plans to study Commercial Aviation at the University of North Dakota.
- Bryer Nelson** – Recipient of the Virginia Barnard Memorial Scholarship. Bryer will attend the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign to study Agriculture, focusing on communications and education.

- Anna Serven** – Recipient of a Hilda Rock Memorial Scholarship. Anna plans to major in Agribusiness at Purdue University.
- Caroline Spangler** – Recipient of a Hilda Rock Memorial Scholarship. Caroline will attend the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign to study Graphic Design with a minor in Advertising.
- Lily Terwilliger** – Recipient of a Hilda Rock Memorial Scholarship. Lily plans to attend Monmouth College to pursue degrees in Biology and Nursing.

These recipients represent the best of what 4-H strives to develop—leadership, service, responsibility, and a commitment to giving back to their communities. Throughout their years in 4-H, they served as club officers, mentored younger members, participated in community service projects, and developed skills that will continue to serve them well in college and beyond.

Congratulations to each of our 2026 scholarship recipients! Fulton County 4-H extends its sincere appreciation to the donors whose continued generosity makes these scholarships possible and helps support the next generation of leaders.

*Top Row: Ella Eathington - Photo Credit: Abby Stier (Double Nickel Photography), Isabelle Kemp - Photo Credit: Angie Williams, Caroline Spangler - Photo Credit: Abby Stier (Double Nickel Photography), Lily Terwilliger - Photo Credit: Abby Stier (Double Nickel Photography) Bottom Row: Bryer Nelson - Photo Credit: Ally Spangler Photography, Maddie Lettow - Photo Credit: Patricia Mingus Photography, Anna Serven - Photo Credit: Barbara Serven*





## Master Showmanship

Congratulations to Taylor Hendel of the Avondale 4-H Club! Taylor won the 2026 Fulton County Master Showmanship contest sponsored by Better Banks. Cash awards were presented to showmanship winners in each of the



following species – beef, sheep, and swine, in addition to the overall winner of the Fulton County Master Showmanship contest. Pictured are Alyssa Fidler, Taylor Hendel, Fulton County Fair Queen Caroline Spangler, and Zach Maher with Better



Banks. Taylor was promoted to and will compete in the Master Showmanship contest during the 2026 Illinois State Fair. Thank you, Better Banks, and Zach Maher, for sponsoring this contest.

Taylor went on to represent Fulton County **VERY WELL** during the Master Showmanship Contest on August 14 at the Illinois State Fair. Taylor earned and won Fifth overall, competing against showmen from all over the State. CONGRATULATIONS

## State 4-H Dog Show

4-H members from across the state recently demonstrated their skills during the Illinois 4-H Dog Show, held Aug. 22 at the Interstate Center in Bloomington. The show is open to 4-H members who are enrolled in the [Dog project](#) and have received a qualifying score at their local 4-H exhibition. The Illinois State 4-H Dog Show uses the American Kennel Club regulations as a guideline. Participants compete in Obedience, Showmanship, and Rally Obedience categories. Four members from Fulton County 4-H attended and



completed the Dog Obedience training workshops offered this summer by Wilson's Dog Training of Cuba, and all were promoted to the State 4-H Dog Show. Congratulations to Madelyn Chaffin of the Pleasant Spacemakers for bringing home a 2<sup>nd</sup> place rosette in Beginner Novice!

## 2026 Illinois 4-H Hall of Fame Inductee – Lonnie Van Pelt

Lonnie Van Pelt was inducted into the Illinois 4-H Hall of Fame during a special ceremony at the State Fair on Sunday, August 16. Lonnie is a 14-year Shooting Sports Instructor in the Fulton County 4-H program and since 2023 has held the title of State Instructor. Lonnie embodies what the 4-H Shooting Sports Program is all about; he is very knowledgeable and engages well with everyone he meets. Lonnie emphasizes safety to each youth participant and parent during safety meetings before the seasons start. He lets each person in attendance know that firearm safety is of utmost importance. When Lonnie is on the range and instructing these youth, they respect him and appreciate his vast knowledge of firearms. Lonnie makes learning fun! Parents also enjoy attending these sessions as much as their children! Lonnie is an excellent teacher, caring and compassionate, but firm when warranted. Youth cannot wait to "graduate" from the beginner range so that they can be in Lonnie's more seasoned group or shooters. Extension Specialist Curt Sinclair adds, Lonnie's knowledge, skills, and calm confidence just set the tone for any training or event he attends, and he attends a lot of those! He will agree to "go the extra mile" at the drop of a hint that 4-H needs help anywhere in the state!



In addition to being a 4-H Shooting Sports instructor and long-time volunteer, Lonnie works full time for Orbital Engineering, is married to Kristie, has 2 adult children and 3 grandchildren. Congratulations to Lonnie on his induction into the Illinois 4-H Hall of Fame!

*Photos l to r: Robyn Hendel, Cindy Chaffin, and Carissa Nelson*



### ZSuite set to open October 1

4-H enrollment/re-enrollment will start in ZSuite on October 1. Please visit <https://4h.zsuite.org/> to enroll in the 2026-2027 4-H year. You must enroll/re-enroll each 4-H year. **The annual 4-H program fee will be waived through November 30!** From December 1 – May 1, 2027, the program fee will be discounted from \$20 to \$5 (75% savings!) Please enroll/re-enroll early!

### Did you know....?

Youth can be a 4-H member of a Special Interest Club (SPIN) such as 4-H Shooting Sports, Junior Master Gardeners, Fulton County Outdoors, or Livestock Judging without being a member of a traditional multi-project club. One annual 4-H program fee covers membership in any of the SPIN clubs, multi-project clubs, or a combination of both. Some SPIN clubs, such as 4-H Shooting Sports, do charge a nominal supply fee in addition to the annual program fee, but NO ONE is denied membership for inability to pay. 4-H allows youth to participate in a specific area, or to experience year-round monthly club meetings, complete with officer elections, business meetings, community service opportunities, field trips, and holiday parties. One thing all of Fulton County 4-H clubs have in common is FUN! Check us out!

### Speaking of SPIN Clubs...

Fulton County 4-H staff is working with two volunteers who are in the planning stage of a Creating with Building Bricks Special Interest Club. Please be watching your email in October for more details regarding this SPIN club. Also be on the lookout for more information about Dog Obedience workshops. Brian Wilson and his staff from Wilson's Dog Training has graciously offered to teach these valuable lessons to dog project members and their furry companions again this year. We appreciate each person who leads and mentors the youth of Fulton County!

### Officer & Leader Training – November 21

The Fulton-Mason-Peoria-Tazewell 4-H Team will once again be offering an Officer & Leader training. All 2026-2027 club officers and leaders, please mark your calendar for Saturday, November 21. This unit-wide training will take place in Fulton County this year! Please mark your calendar to join us at Dickson Mounds Museum in rural Lewistown from 8:30 – 12:30 p.m. **All volunteers who attend this**

**meeting will receive 3 hours of continuing education to fulfill your yearly requirement.**

### National 4-H WEEK - October 4 - 10, 2026

**"Green and Growing for 125 Years"** – Fulton/Mason/Peoria/Tazewell Unit theme for 2026  
(Or use a theme of your choice)

Your club is invited to help publicize its activities and Fulton County 4-H during National 4-H Week, **October 4-10, 2026**, with the theme of **"Green and Gowing for 125 Years."** 4-H has a vast array of activities — many ways to build character and leadership, and many ways to care for others through community service. As a 4-H member, you are one of six million other youth who are 4-H members. Show how 4-H enhances the lives of 4-H members, their families, and communities. Fulton County 4-H is excited about what it has to offer and wants to let everyone know!

We want families to get involved in the 4-H Program!

Here's a few ideas:

- Put up a Window Display or Bulletin Board – displays must be in place by 8 a.m. October 5, 2026.
- Design a poster to be put up in store windows, in support of 4-H.
- Invite a new person to join your club — Do this one for sure!!!!!!
- Wear an article of clothing that has 4-H on it. — ***Wear 4-H T-shirts, green shirts, pins, etc.!!!***
- Thank your leaders -- send a thank you note; bake him/her some cookies.
- Talk to your local newspaper or radio station about a 4-H story or put an ad in the paper.
- Give a talk or demonstration to civic organizations about what 4-H has to offer.
- Plan a member recruitment drive for your club; **distribute fliers about 4-H to area schools.**

All Fulton County 4-H clubs are encouraged to participate in National 4-H Week. Federation will once again be awarding \$50 to the club with the 1st place window display and runner up will receive \$25. Please email or call Krista by October 2 if your club would like to participate. National 4-H Week falls during the Spoon River Scenic Drive so more people will be able to see these festive windows. Please consider participating!



**FULTON COUNTY**

**ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM**

## **VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION**

**Donaldson Community Center at Wallace Park, Canton**  
**Saturday, October 17, 2026 at 3 p.m.**

Dear 4-H families, volunteers, and donors,

You are invited to an afternoon event to celebrate  
"Green and Growing: 125th 4-H Anniversary"

We are celebrating the anniversary, by celebrating what makes  
4-H the best: YOU! We will be honoring achievement members,  
4-H leader anniversaries, volunteers, and the donors.  
Join us for an afternoon of refreshments and connections.

Krista Gray and Kaytlin Lehman  
Fulton 4-H Program Coordinators  
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accommodation to attend, call the registration office.

## Important Dates

### September

- 1 – 4-H New Year!
- 1 – Labor Day – Extension Office Closed
- 19 – State 4-H Archery Shoot – Pekin
- 26 – Federation Pizza party and scarecrow building – noon at the Extension office
- 26 – State 4-H Shotgun Shoot – Bunker Hill
- 28 – 4-H Leaders Fall Meeting – 6:30 p.m. at the Extension office

### October

- 1 – ZSuite begins for 4-H member & leader enrollment/re-enrollment
- 4-10 – National 4-H Week
- 5 – Go Green: Light up Murray Baker Bridge – Riverfront Park, East Peoria – 6:30 p.m.
- 17 – Achievement Program/Volunteer Recognition event – 3 p.m. at Donaldson Community Center – Canton

### November

- 21 – Officer & Leader Training – Dickson Mounds Museum, Lewistown 8:30 – noon
- 26-27 – Thanksgiving break - Extension Office closed
- 30 – Early Bird – FREE ZSuite enrollment ends

### December

- 1- ZSuite enrollment discounted rate of \$5 until May 1, 2027
- 24-31 – Christmas break – Extension Office closed

### January

- 1 – New Year's Day - Extension Office closed
- 4 – Livestock (Beef, Dairy, Goat, Sheep, Swine) project enrollment deadline in ZSuite
- 18 – Martin Luther King Jr. Day - Extension Office closed
- 2026 State Fair Results

### Livestock Projects at the State Fair

A total of 152 livestock projects from Fulton County 4-H were exhibited during the Illinois State Fair. Fulton County exhibitors were awarded high honors and are to be commended for all their hard work throughout the entire

4-H year. Congratulations to all of Fulton County's livestock exhibitors!

### 2026 State Fair Results – General Projects

A total of 35 non-livestock projects were exhibited at the Illinois State Fair on Sunday, August 16, 2026. All exhibitors received red, white, and blue project exhibit ribbons and 18 exhibitors earned medals for superior work. Fulton County 4-H is proud of each of these hardworking members!

Grace Bedwell – Veterinary Science; Knox Braun – Aerospace; Emmitt Buban – **Champion** – Cooking 201; Lauren Butler – Scrapbooking; Amelia Carley – Quilting; Madelyn Chaffin – Outdoor Adventures; Abigail Davis – **Reserve Champion** - Leather; Jaclynn Delpierre – **Reserve Champion** - Scrapbooking; Gabe Hanes – **Inspire Award** – Woodworking 2; Grace Hanes – **Inspire Award** - Sewing 3; Johanna Heuerman – Cooking 401; Aliyah Janssen – **Reserve Champion** - Video/Film – Commercial or Promotional; Benton Janssen – Computer Generated Art; Julia Jarvis – Photography 1; Breezi Kelly – **Inspire Award** – Advanced Food Decorating; Brittany Kline – **Reserve Champion** – Visual Arts Glass; Declan Kotewa – **Inspire Award** – Photography 3; Dexter Leady – **Champion** – Video/Film - Animated Video; Seth McClure – Woodworking 3; Brayton McCoy – Photography 3; Briley Mercer – **Champion** – Clothing Embellishment Applied; Max Mercer – **Reserve Champion** – Geology Rock Hounds 1; Aaliyah Naff – **Champion** – Horticulture – Propagated plants; Skylar Naff – Creating with Building Bricks; Carsyn Regan – Visual Arts Paper 3D; Kennedi Regan – Clay; Brady Robinson – Entomology 3; Miles Robinson – Small Engines; Caroline Spangler – **Reserve Champion** – Chalk/Carbon/Pigment; Cooper Stephens – **Reserve Champion** - Advanced Visual Programming; Lillie Stephens – **Champion** - Horticulture Outdoor Mixed Planter; Danni Stout – Animal Science; Layne Stout – Creative Writing; Sara Stufflebeam – **Champion** – Visual Arts Fiber; and Luke Wetterauer – **Reserve Champion** – Vegetable Gardening Display.



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**FULTON COUNTY**

**ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM**

**VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION**

**Saturday, October 17 at 3pm**  
**Donaldson Community Center**  
**at Wallace Park, Canton**

4-H families, volunteers, and donors...

**You are invited!**

See page 6 for more info



**National 4-H Week**  
**October 4—7, 2026**

**Green & Growing for 125 Years**

Pictured above is last year's Window Display winners, Pleasant Spacemakers; see page 5 for details on how to participate