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- Upcoming Events (Put me on your fridge!)

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**Illinois Extension**  
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

University of Illinois Extension,  
Fulton-Mason-Peoria-Tazewell Unit



## TAZEWELL COUNTY 4-H NEWSLETTER WINTER 2025

### HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

Winter and snow are finally here! We hope you're staying warm and getting to spend some quality time with your family. Over the past couple weeks we've enjoyed getting in a few shopping trips and crafting gifts!

We're excited to pass along information about several winter state-wide 4-H events to keep you cozy and the creativity flowing through the snowy winter months. Check out the last page of the newsletter for more information!

If we don't see you before the holidays, we hope you had a wonderful Thanksgiving and have a blessed December holiday season!

*Abbie & Lynda*

### PUBLIC SPEAKING CONTEST

Mark your calendars for the first exhibit opportunity of the year!

**The 2026 Public Speaking contest will be on Thursday, March 19** starting at 4:30 in the auditorium at the Tazewell Extension office. **FairEntry will open for contest registration on February 20 and will close on March 13.**

What can you do to make sure you're ready for the contest?

- Enroll for 4-H in ZSuite and choose the public speaking project on the final step of your enrollment or add it if you've already enrolled.
- Look for information about registering in FairEntry and updated exhibit information.
- Review the 2025 Showbook pages for Public Speaking and prepare a speech that meets the state requirements.





## 4-H MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Melody and Creek with their 1st place ribbon and trophy.

A special shoutout to Melody England and her dog, Creek, who completed at the Illinois 4-H State Dog show on October 4 after earning a qualifying score at the Tazewell 4-H Show. Together, Melody and Creek earned the title of State Champion in Junior Dog Showmanship in their first year of 4-H. What

an amazing accomplishment! Congratulations Melody, you make Tazewell 4-H proud!

## UPCOMING SPIN CLUBS

Before we know it we will be on to the new year, which means the return of several of our SPIN clubs! All age eligible youth are invited to join.

### HORSIN' AROUND - JANUARY 2026

Members meet weekly from January through April to learn about horse care, terminology, anatomy, and much more. This is a great opportunity for youth to learn about horses without having a horse of their own and meet other horse lovers in Tazewell county! Members will also be prepared to attend the Illinois 4-H Horse Bowl and Hippology contests if they so choose. Contact Vera Betzelberger (309-231-6375) to get involved.

In addition, Shooting Sports will once again be offered along with Junior Master Gardener, Junior Master Naturalist, and Dog SPIN club. More information to come about these spring opportunities!

## NEW PROJECT SPOTLIGHTS

This year, Illinois 4-H has added three new projects that will be exhibit options for the 2026 4-H Show and Junior Fair.



### CREATING WITH BUILDING BRICKS

Create original designs with plastic bricks such as LEGO. Put your creativity, engineering skills, and construction skills to the test!

## NEW YEAR REMINDERS

- **Complete online enrollments** for 2025 - 2026. October 1, 2025 - May 1, 2026. [4h.zsuite.org](https://4h.zsuite.org)
- **Attend at least 1 club meeting** (4-Hers are ineligible to show at the fair if they do not attend at least one meeting. Parents are encouraged to attend meetings and volunteer when the leader needs help.)
- **Choose at least one project**
- **Order my project books** at [go.illinois.edu/FMPTPubs](https://go.illinois.edu/FMPTPubs)
- If doing a live animal project, **complete ethics training**
  - YQCA required annually if exhibiting Beef, Dairy, Goats, Sheep, or Swine
  - QAEC required once if exhibiting Cats, Dogs, Horses, Poultry, or Rabbits
  - *Must be completed by July 15*
- **Read the exhibit requirements for my projects in the show book**, which is made available to families in the spring
- **Complete the FairEntry registration** by the deadline to officially register for exhibit classes at the 4-H Show.
- **Prepare for show dates (July 2026).** Exhibitors must be present for in-person judging. Tazewell County 4-H Show dates are July 27, 28, 29, 2026

### LLAMA AND ALPACA



Learn practical knowledge such as anatomy, care, and purpose, and showmanship and training.

### HAY AND PASTURE



Hay and Pasture production is now a state-wide project. Learn more about this staple in the diets of livestock everywhere.



## LOCAL WORKSHOP OPPORTUNITIES

### T-SHIRT QUILT WORKSHOP SERIES



Join us for a two-part workshop to learn how to turn your 4-H t-shirts into a cozy keepsake. Part one will be on January 31 and February 14, 2026. Workshops will be held at the Extension office in Knox County. See the monthly 4-H email (sent on 11-17) for more details!

### LIVESTOCK DAY



Livestock Day 2026 is on February 16! We hope you will join us for a day filled with fun, practical livestock knowledge, and lots of learning! In addition, attendance of the whole event will fulfill the annual YQCA course requirement for those planning to show beef or dairy cattle, sheep, swine, and/or goats at the annual 4-H Show. See the monthly 4-H email (sent on 11-17) for more details!

## HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR SPOTLIGHT

If you are graduating from high school in the Class of 2026, then we want to celebrate YOU! Please send a Senior Picture to be included in the 2026 4-H Show Book. We would prefer an electronic version of your photo, but we can make a hard copy work, too. Please include the following information:

- Your name
- 4-H Club(s) – (include county clubs as well as State committees)
- If you have had a project focus or favorite project, what is it?
- In no more than 3 sentences, describe ONE of the following:
  - Something you learned during your years in 4-H
  - A favorite 4-H memory
  - Advice to younger 4-Hers
  - What are your plans for next year?
  - Are there any 4-H volunteers you would like to thank publicly?

Deadline is Friday, March 3, 2026. Deliver in person or email to Abbie ([abbiep@illinois.edu](mailto:abbiep@illinois.edu)) or Lynda ([lrs11@illinois.edu](mailto:lrs11@illinois.edu)).

## SHOW BOOK COVER CONTEST

Do you have a talent for design? Would you like a chance to have your skills featured on the cover of this year's show book? Now is your chance! You may sketch, paint, make a photo collage, or create something on the computer. The ideas are endless! Feel free to incorporate original photos in your design. Cover Contest rules:

1. Uses the theme "Red, White, and Blue and Clover Too"
2. Can be in color or in black and white
3. Design fills an 8"x8" space
4. Must be turned in via a format that is easy to print
5. No use of copyrighted material
6. Must be appropriate for 4-H

Extension staff will add the appropriate logos.

**Designs are due either in person or via email to Abbie ([abbiep@illinois.edu](mailto:abbiep@illinois.edu)) or Lynda ([lrs11@illinois.edu](mailto:lrs11@illinois.edu)) by March 1.** In addition to bragging rights, your name and club will be included on the inside cover. Extension staff will decide the winner and announce the winning design!



## 2026 PROJECT SELECTION GUIDE

Need some inspiration for your 4-H projects this year? Look no further than the Illinois 4-H Project Guide! Explore all the project areas you can dive into through 4-H. You can find it online or feel free to pick up a physical copy at the Extension office. New project information is included! Use the link below or scan the QR code to view.

### 4-H PROJECT SELECTION GUIDE





## ENROLLMENT FAQ'S

### THE NOVEMBER 30 DEADLINE HAS PASSED. AM I STILL ABLE TO ENROLL IN 4-H?

YES! Though the window to enroll in 4-H for free has closed, you can still enroll through May 1. However, a \$5 enrollment fee will apply for up to three household members. If there are more than three 4-H members in your household, you only need to pay for three of them (maximum \$15).

### WHO NEEDS TO ENROLL IN 4-H?

Only youth 4-H members and volunteers who have been through the official screening process. Parents do not need to enroll.

### WHAT IF I'M STILL DECIDING ON MY PROJECTS FOR THIS YEAR?

If you have already enrolled, you can still make changes to your projects through May 1.

## 2026 FAIR FUN PLANNING COMMITTEE

Do you want to have a say in what fun things are planned for the 2026 4-H Show and Junior Fair? We would love to have your input and urge you to consider joining our Fair Fun Planning Committee! This committee is responsible for planning fun things for fairgoers, coordinating volunteers to run fair events, and securing funds to make those things possible. Any commitment, big or small, would be welcome! This committee is open to parents, past 4-Hers, and current 4-Hers ages 14 and older. **This committee does not require screened volunteer status!** Committee meetings are typically in the afternoon or evening starting in the spring. Please reach out to Abbie and Lynda if you are interested in being on the Fair Fun Planning Committee!



## CALL FOR CLOVERBUD LEADERS

We are always looking for 4-H parents and alumni (ages 19+) who are interested in being a screened volunteer. This year, we are specifically looking for those who would be interested in being a Cloverbud club leader! Cloverbuds are ages 5 to 7 (as of Sept 1). Typically, Cloverbud clubs meet at the same time and place as a regular 4-H club but split off to do more age appropriate activities. If this sounds like something you or someone you know would be interested in, please let Abbie or Lynda know!



## REPORTING CONTINUING ED HOURS

Once again this year Illinois 4-H is requesting that each screened volunteer completes three hours of continuing education. Volunteers now have the ability report continuing education hours that are not taught by 4-H staff! The topic of your learning does need to relate to youth development or be applicable to your role as a 4-H volunteer.

How to report non-4H led hours ZSuite:

1. Go to [zsuite.4h.org](https://zsuite.4h.org) and log in
2. Choose your profile
3. Click on Events on the left side of your screen
4. Find the events called "Self Reported Continuing Education" - There should be three of these events each with 1, 2, and 3 hour reporting options
5. Fill out the registration form just as you if you were registering for an event
6. Make sure to attach some sort of proof of attendance at the end of the form (agenda, course outline, ect)

Any event that counts for continuing education that is taught by 4-H staff will be automatically recorded for you, so please do not fill out the form for those events.





# UPCOMING DATES AND EVENTS



## DECEMBER

December 1 - 31 - Virtual State Building Blocks Challenge\* -

[go.illinois.edu/4HBuildSeries](http://go.illinois.edu/4HBuildSeries)

December 11 - Illinois 4-H Financial Aid Virtual Workshop - Register in ZSuite\*

[go.illinois.edu/FinancialAidWorkshop](http://go.illinois.edu/FinancialAidWorkshop)

Dec 20 - Jan 4- Family Winter Break Building Bricks Challenge\*

[go.illinois.edu/4HBuildSeries](http://go.illinois.edu/4HBuildSeries)

December 24 - 31 - Extension offices closed for holidays

## JANUARY

Horsin' Around SPIN Club starts this month.

January 1 - Extension office closed for the New Year holiday

January 20 - Extension office closed for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

January 22 - State 4-H Fun with Food Science at Home\*

January 24 - State 4-H Fashion Revue (Register in ZSuite by Dec 5)\*

[go.illinois.edu/4HFashionRevue](http://go.illinois.edu/4HFashionRevue).

January 31 - T-Shirt Quilt Workshop (Part 1 - Register by Jan 15 in ZSuite)

## FEBRUARY

February 1 - State Horse Judging Contest\*

February 14 - T-Shirt Quilt Workshop (Part 2 - Register by Jan 15 in ZSuite)

February 16 - Livestock Day @ Rabers Packing Co.

February 20 - FairEntry Opens for Tazewell Public Speaking Contest Registration

## MARCH

March 1 - 4-H Show Book Cover Design entries due

March 3 - 4-H Senior Spotlight entries for the Show Book due

*\*Visit the Illinois 4-H Events page to learn more and find links to register for these state-wide 4-H events: [4h.extension.illinois.edu/events](http://4h.extension.illinois.edu/events)*





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**Return Service Requested**

## DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SHARE?

If you have something to share, we'd love to include you in our quarterly newsletter, whether it's praise for a job well-done, an announcement for a local event, club activities or something else you'd like to share with our Tazewell County 4-H friends and families. Send in your submissions to Abbie ([abbiep@illinois.edu](mailto:abbiep@illinois.edu)) or Lynda ([lrs11@illinois.edu](mailto:lrs11@illinois.edu)).

## TAZEWELL COUNTY 4-H STAFF

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