

# Shelby County 4-H December Newsletter



## In this edition:

- Out of office/Office Closure
- Awesome Autumn Photography Contest Results
- Children's Donation Collection
- Project manuals
- Leaders Appreciation Dinner
- Recruiting a new member
- Market Animal Weigh-in
- Shelby County 4-H Week
- 2026 Fair Changes
- 4-H Records
- New projects for 2025-2026
- Officer Training
- Communications Workshop
- State opportunities
- 4-H Calendar



## Out of office

I will be taking vacation beginning on Friday, December 19 and will return on Monday, January 5. Emails will be answered as soon as I return.

Happy Holidays to all our Shelby County 4-H families! Looking forward to working with you all in 2026. Yolanda

## Office Closure

The Shelby County Extension Office will be closed beginning Monday, December 22 through Friday, January 2. The office will be open and ready to assist families on Monday, January 5.



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

## **Awesome Autumn Photography Contest**

Thank you to all the 4-H'ers who submitted photos for the Awesome Autumn Photography Contest! In total, there were 40 entries, with 37 being from Shelby County.

Results:

Cloverbuds – 1<sup>st</sup> place Ada Black, 2<sup>nd</sup> place Samantha Sindelar, 3<sup>rd</sup> place Bryar Shewmaker

8-13 years old – 1<sup>st</sup> place Harrison Law, 2<sup>nd</sup> place Boone Collins, 3<sup>rd</sup> place Evan Miller

14-18 years old – 1<sup>st</sup> place Tucker Hoyt, 2<sup>nd</sup> place Kyndall Bennett, 3<sup>rd</sup> place Cooper Elliott

Thank you to Shelby County 4-H Federation for sponsoring the contest.

## **Shelby County 4-H Hospital Collection for Kids**

At the 2025 Shelby County 4-H Achievement Night, more than 60 members came together to support the Sarah Bush Lincoln Pediatric Drive. Thanks to their generosity, over 800 toys, coloring books, Play-Doh, and more were collected for children in the hospital.

Brady and Alicia Rivas of the Shelby Sparklers 4-H Club proudly delivered the donations on November 24. Alicia shared, “It was a pleasure to collect all the toys for the children in the hospital and I would love to do it again next year. Thank you to all the people who donated to this toy drive.”

Brady added, “I do this each year to help the kids stay entertained during their stay in the hospital. I would like to thank everybody who contributed to this service project.”

A huge THANK YOU to everyone who donated to this wonderful cause—your kindness made a difference!

## **Project Manuals**

Do you have unused project manuals from years past? Well, clean out your closets, 4-H binders, etc. and return those to the Shelby County Extension Office to be recycled to another 4-H member. We appreciate your help!

4-H members must email Yolanda or call the Shelby County Extension Office to order project manuals. Please note: ZSuites is not set up to order project books.

Some projects require the manual to be completed as part of the 4-H exhibit, so be sure to check your project requirements when the 2026 fair book is released in March.

The first book order will be placed on Tuesday, January 6. Project book requests should be sent to Yolanda by Monday, January 5. Let Yolanda know if you have any questions. Email: [nation2@illinois.edu](mailto:nation2@illinois.edu) or call: 217-774-9546

## Leaders Appreciation

Monday, January 26

Shelby County 4-H Federation will be serving the annual Leaders Appreciation Dinner on Monday, January 26. Dinner will be served at 6 p.m. at the 4-H Center. RSVP's to Yolanda are due by January 18. Invites will be sent in early January.

## Recruiting a new 4-H member

Did you recruit a friend to join 4-H? If you said yes, then contact your club leader or Yolanda for a Recruitment Form. Complete the form ASAP. Completed forms should be given to Yolanda. Once she has received your Recruitment Form, she will confirm your friend has enrolled and paid their program fee and you will receive a prize! Members will be contacted when their prize is ready to be picked up. There is still time to get Recruitment Forms turned in!

## Market Animal Weigh-in

If you are exhibiting a dairy or beef steer, or a market heifer at the 2026 Shelby County 4-H & Junior Fair, you will need to attend the Market Animal Weigh-in. The Weigh-in will be held on Saturday, February 14, 2026, from 8-10 a.m. at the United Producers Sale Barn in Shelbyville.

4-H'ers must be enrolled in ZSuites and have paid their program fee to weigh steers or market heifers. Contact Yolanda if you will be attending by **Monday, February 9** so appropriate paperwork can be prepared.

## Shelby County 4-H Week – March 14-21

The theme for Shelby County 4-H Week is "Rooted in 4-H, Growing our Future". A big thank you to Kyndall Bennett for submitting the winning theme.

- March 14 – 4-H Fire-Up 9-11 a.m., 4-H Center This workshop will be for first- and second-year members.
- March 14 – Skating Party 6-9 p.m. at Silver Stars Skating Rink in Mattoon.
- March 15 – Public Speaking Contest, 6:30 p.m. 4-H Center

- March 16 – International Night 6 p.m. Nazarene Church Gym
- March 16 – Window Display judging
- March 17 – 4-H Member Showcase shared on Facebook
- March 18 – Community Service Day with your club
- March 19 – Wear your 4-H shirt to school day and submit a photo
- March 21 – Spring Craft Day – 2 sessions, one for 4-H’ers and one for Cloverbuds
- Note – We will not be holding Family Fun Night this year but will bring it back in 2026.

## **2026 Fair Changes – Shelby County 4-H & Junior Fair**

- Poultry Show – Each exhibitor may exhibit up to 24 chickens plus other poultry.
- Goat Show – Each exhibitor may exhibit up to 12 goats.

## **4-H Records – Activities September – December 2025**

Catch up on your year-end records. Here are the county activities that have been held from September through December 2025.

### **4-H Activities:**

- 10/4 – 4-H Fall Bash
- 10/9 – 4-H Club Scarecrow
- 10/11 – Scarecrow Daze Parade
- 11/22 – 4-H Achievement Night
- 12/6 – Winter Craft Day
- 12/14 – Greenery Workshop (2 activities – Wreath Making, Mug Workshop)

### **4-H Community Service:**

- 9/27 – Recycling Event at the Shelby County 4-H Fairgrounds
- 11/21 – Community Service Workshop
- 11/22 – Children’s donation for Sarah Bush Lincoln Pediatric Floor

## **New Projects for 2025-2026**

- Creating with Building Bricks - Focus on creating original builds with plastic building bricks like LEGO & MEGA BLOKS. This project lives under the STEM project umbrella.
  - 9 exhibit classes: Art, Building, Creature, Functional, Mechanical, Object, Scene/Storytelling, Vehicle, Virtual (art class replaces Visual Arts - Plastic Brick Art class offered previously).
  - 4-H members will be able to exhibit up to two projects at the county fair.
- Hay – Watch the fair book for exhibit opportunities coming in March.

- Updated Floriculture Resource with new learning & exhibit opportunities including:
  - Floral Design, Landscape Design, Plant Propagation, Flower Preservation, Ornamental Display, Floriculture Display
- Llama/Alpaca

## Unit opportunities:

### 4-H Officer Training

Saturday, January 17

Make Your 4-H Meetings Shine! Join us for a dynamic multi-county 4-H Officer Training Workshop designed to help youth leaders bring energy, creativity, and confidence to their club meetings!

This hands-on session will take place on Saturday, January 17, from 9-11:30 AM at the Lumpkin Family Center for Health and Education (1000 Health Center Dr., Mattoon). Please note: Entrance is located on the north side/back of the hospital.

Participants will dive into the responsibilities of key officer roles (President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer) through interactive activities and real-world scenarios. In addition to learning how to run effective meetings, youth will explore and build leadership skills!

This workshop is open to youth ages 8 to 18 as of September 1, 2025.

Whether you're a newly elected officer or just curious about leadership, this training will equip you with tools to succeed and inspire your peers.

Registration is required by Friday, January 9.

Register here: <https://go.illinois.edu/MultiCountyOfficerTraining>

### Confident Communicators 4-H Public Speaking

Saturday, February 21

Join us for our Confident Communicators 4-H Public Speaking Field Trip! For Coles, Cumberland, Shelby, and Moultrie-Douglas 4-H Members Ages 8-18 as of 9/1/25.

**Date:** Saturday, February 21, 2026

**Destination:** University of Illinois, Lincoln Hall

Transportation Schedule:

- 8:00 AM – Bus departs from Shelby County Extension Office, Shelbyville
- 8:40 AM – Bus departs from Cross County Mall Rural King, Mattoon
- 9:10 AM – Bus departs from Kirby Foods Grocery Store, Tuscola

#### Event Schedule:

- 10:00 AM – 12:30 PM – Public Speaking Workshop at U of I Lincoln Hall
- 12:30 – 1:00 PM – Lunch provided by the Department of Communications
- 1:00 – 1:30 PM – Guided Campus Tour
- 1:30 – 3:00 PM – Interactive Activity (TBA)
- 3:15 PM – Depart for home

#### Drop-Off Schedule:

- 3:45 PM – Drop-off at Kirby Foods Grocery Store, Tuscola
- 4:10 PM – Drop-off at Cross County Mall Rural King, Mattoon
- 4:45 PM – Drop-off at Shelby County 4-H Center, Shelbyville

#### Registration Details:

- Deadline: Friday, February 6, 2026
- Cost: FREE – All expenses are generously covered by a grant from Coles County Wind

Register here: <https://go.illinois.edu/ConfidentCommunicators>

Parent Attendance: Parents/guardians are welcome to attend if it would make their child more comfortable. Please indicate on the registration form if a parent/guardian will be joining.

#### Preparation Tips:

- Dress Warmly! We'll be walking outside during the campus tour, so wear layers and comfortable shoes.
- Stay Hydrated: Bring a refillable water bottle or cash to grab a drink if needed.
- Know Your Presentation Type - During the workshop, youth will begin preparing for their local 4-H public speaking contest. Participants should come knowing which type of presentation they'd like to work on:
  - Formal Speech
  - Illustrated Speech
  - Original Works
  - Oral Interpretation

More details about each speech division can be found here:

<https://4h.extension.illinois.edu/events/state-events/illinois-4-h-public-speaking-contest>

## State opportunities:

### Fashion Revue Registration is open

Saturday, January 24

4-H youth will showcase their skills in clothing construction, fashion design, and personal presentation in two competition levels: Junior (ages 8-13) and Senior (ages 14-18). Through interviews with judges and a public fashion show, youth build confidence, express individuality, and foster career exploration. Up to 75 participants will select one category to compete in: Constructed, Purchased, or Upcycle Your Style. More information can be found here: <https://4h.extension.illinois.edu/events/state-events/fashion-revue>

Registration is open through December 5!

## **IL 4-H Building Brick Build December Challenge: Habitat Challenge**

Youth ages 8 to 18: Compete in our virtual building brick challenge series to show off your original builds with plastic building bricks like LEGO and MEGABLOKS! For our challenges youth create their own original builds following the month's theme and size limits, then submit info on their build, along with photos of the build electronically. The December contest theme is "Habitats" - small, diorama-style scenes featuring a minifigure, built on an 8x8 plate base.

Each month, our favorite build (based on creativity, technical skills demonstrated, and alignment to theme) will be selected as the winner in 3 different age divisions:

- 8-10 year olds
- 11-13 year olds
- 14-18 year olds

Winners will receive prizes via mail. We'll also select one random participant submission per month to receive some swag. There is no cost to enter, but youth MUST be currently enrolled Illinois 4-H club members to participate.

Click here for additional information: <https://4h.extension.illinois.edu/events/state-events/illinois-4-h-building-brick-challenge-series>

## **Winter Break Family Build Challenge**

Does your family love building and creating together? This is the opportunity for you! Create a plastic brick build as a family over winter break (December 20, 2025-January 4, 2026) and submit it to our Winter Break Family Build Challenge. Builds need to fit the theme "Winter Wonderland". One entry per family. All participating families must have at least one currently enrolled Illinois 4-H member on them. See complete rules and enter on the [Building Brick Challenge Series website](#). If you need accommodation to participate, please contact the State 4-H Office.

## Summer Youth Camp at 4-H Memorial Camp

Summer Youth Camp dates for 2026 at 4-H Memorial Camp in Monticello, IL are set! Early Registration for 4-H Members will be January 12-25. General Registration opens February 2<sup>nd</sup>. Camp dates and additional information is available on our website.

<https://4h.extension.illinois.edu/events/4-h-memorial-camp/4-h-summer-camp-programs/4-h-memorial-summer-camp>

## IL 4-H Junior Leadership Conference (JLC)

March 7-8

Registration is now open for the 2026 Illinois 4-H Junior Leadership Conference (JLC), happening March 7–8, 2026, at the Crowne Plaza in Springfield!

This fun, hands-on event is open to 7th and 8th grade 4-H members who want to build leadership skills, meet new friends, and explore exciting 4-H opportunities.

- Registration Deadline: January 1, 2026
- Register in ZSuites
- Cost: \$200 (includes lodging, meals, and activities)
- Space is limited to the first 100 youth—register early!

More details can be found on the website.

<https://4h.extension.illinois.edu/events/leadership-conferences/junior-leadership-conference>

## Calendar:

### December

- 3 - Federation meeting, 6:30 p.m., 4-H Center
- 6 - Winter Craft Day, 9-12:30, 4-H Center
- 6 - Cloverbud Winter Craft Day, 1:15-2:45, 4-H Center
- 12 - Early Enrollment Incentive - enrollments must be entered and the program fee paid by this date
- 14 – Greenery Workshops 2 p.m., Green Works (Cowden)
- 23-31- Office closed for the holidays

### January

- 1-2 - Office closed for the holidays
- 7 – Federation meeting, 7 p.m., 4-H Center
- 17 - Officer Training 9 a.m. –12 p.m., Sarah Bush Lincoln Education Center Mattoon



- 19 - Office closed for the holiday

## **February**

- 4 – Federation meeting, 7 p.m., 4-H Center
- 13 – Fair Book Cover submission deadline
- 14 - Steer Weigh-in, 8 a.m. Shelbyville Sale Barn
- 14 - Bank Steer Pick-up, 10 a.m. Shelbyville Sale Barn
- 21 – Confident Communications Public Speaking Field Trip, 8 a.m.
- YQCA - TBD

## **March**

- 4 – Federation meeting, 7 p.m., 4-H Center
- 7-8 – JLC Conference, Crowne Plaza, Springfield
- March 14-21 – 4-H Week
- 30 – Spring Clean-up at the fairgrounds, 6 p.m.
- YQCA - TBD

## **April**

- 1 – Federation meeting, 7 p.m., 4-H Center
- 7 – Tailwaggers Registration at Show Arena 6-6:30 p.m., Class 6:30-7 p.m. Classes will continue for 8 weeks with graduation and continue until the fair.
- YQCA - TBD

## **May**

- YQCA – TBD
- 25 – Office closed

## **June**

- 1 – Fair Entries must be submitted in Fair Entry.
- 1 – Junior fair exhibitor cards and entries are due into the Extension office
- 1 – 4-H Scholarship applications are due into the Extension office
- 19 – Office closed

## **July**

- 3 – Office closed
- 17 – Lawn Mower and Tractor Driving contest

- 18 – 4-H Foods, Photography (a.m.), 4-H misc. Visual Arts (p.m.) 4-H Center
- 18 – Horse Show 4 p.m
- 19 – Move-in day, animals in place by 4 p.m.
- 19 – Sheep Show 5 p.m.
- 20-22 – Fair
- 23 Fair Clean-up

### **Aug**

- 16 – General project day at the Il State Fair

### **Office Information:**

#### **Staff:**

County Director: Jessie Streit

4-H Program Coordinator: Yolanda Nation

Office Support Assistant: Diane Litteral

Shelby County 1125 W North 2nd Street, Shelbyville, IL 62565, Phone: 217-774-9546

Office Hours: Monday-Friday 8 -12, 1-4:30

Find us on Facebook: Shelby County IL 4-H

Website: <https://extension.illinois.edu/ccdms/4-h-shelby-county>

If you need reasonable accommodation to participate, please contact the Shelby County Extension office.