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Illinois Extension
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

University of Illinois Extension
Serving Fulton, Mason, Peoria & Tazewell Counties
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL, CONSUMER &
ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

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FULTON COUNTY 4-H

Winter 2025-26 Newsletter

Merry Christmas from Fulton County 4-H! As the end of 2025 draws near, I hope you can spend time doing things that bring joy to others. Finish raking leaves for a neighbor, make some cookies for a teacher or family friend, clean snow off someone's sidewalk or driveway, or help your family by cleaning your room without being asked. The possibilities are endless and may seem simple, but one act of kindness may mean the world to someone. Let's all commit to "pledging our hands to larger service" this winter.

Your questions and calls are especially important to me. I can be reached any of the following ways during regular business hours (8am-12pm & 1-4:30pm M-F). If you reach out using other communication tools, I will respond during our normal work hours. Thanks!

Krista Gray

Fulton 4-H Program Coordinator

Office phone: 309-547-3711

Email Krista: kristakg@illinois.edu

Teams phone Krista: 217-300-6714

Other ways to connect

Facebook:



Webpage:



Happy Holidays

The Extension office will be closed from Dec. 24, 2025 through Jan. 4, 2026. We will reopen Jan. 5 and resume regular office hours (Monday through Friday, 8am—12pm and 1—4:30pm).

FOR EVERYONE

Zsuite Enrollment

4-H enrollment/re-enrollment continues at <https://4h.zsuite.org> through the next few months. From December 1, 2025, until May 1, 2026, our local Extension unit is offering a deeply discounted program fee of \$5 for each youth enrolling in Fulton 4-H. This is a savings of 75% off the normal \$20 program fee! Please invite a friend to your next club meeting. 4-H offers projects and activities for everyone, whether it is a traditional 4-H club or a Special Interest club. We at Illinois Extension are committed to growing our membership!

Requesting 4-H Project Manuals

If you need any 4-H project manuals, please email me at kristakg@illinois.edu. Once your request has been filled, you will receive an email to pick up the order at the Extension office. If you prefer to have your club leader give them to you at your 4-H meeting, please let us know. Most project manuals have not updated since last year, so if this is your second year or more in the same project, you may use the manual you received previously.

4-H Show Book Cover Contest

Again this 4-H year, we will be accepting artwork submissions for the Fulton County 4-H Show Book. Even though the Show Book will not come out until the Spring of 2026, now is a wonderful time to start those creative juices flowing! Our 4-county unit theme this year is **"Red, White, and Blue and Clover too!"** Use your imagination with this theme! You may sketch, paint, make a photo collage, create something on the computer; the ideas are endless! Please consider participating; in addition to bragging rights, your name and photo will be included on the inside cover. We will also award prizes to the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place entries. Entries are due in our office by Friday, February 27, 2026.

Thank You Notes

If you received an award of any type at the annual Achievement Program, **PLEASE** make sure to send the donor of your award the thank you card that was included in your packet. Without the generosity of these donors, we would not be able to continue with the nice awards, trophies, plaques, medallions, and t-shirts the Achievement members receive. Please take a few moments and write your donor a note to show them your appreciation of what you received. A little thoughtfulness and appreciation mean a lot to these kind donors.

Volunteers Needed

We need a few 4-H livestock superintendents and are always looking for judges and department superintendents for each of the summer shows. If you would like to explore volunteerism in the Fulton 4-H program, please contact Krista at 309-547-3711 or by email at kristakg@illinois.edu.



Fulton County 4-H Scholarships

Are you graduating from high school this year? If so, scholarships in various amounts will be awarded to county 4-

H members at his or her graduation or awards program. For each scholarship, the recipient must be a current Fulton County 4-H member and must **actively** participate in 4-H events. **Preference given to 4-Hers who were achievement members of the previous 4-H year.** The application will include a place for the 4-H member to list accomplishments and career goals. Family financial information is not required. **SCHOLARSHIP DEADLINE is April 1, 2026.** The scholarships will be given to seniors in high school; therefore, individuals can only receive these scholarships once. To receive a 4-H Scholarship Application, contact the Fulton County Extension Office at 547-3711, or email kristakg@illinois.edu.

PROJECT INFORMATION

Visual Arts supplies

Fulton County 4-H is fortunate to have volunteers and organizations support our program. One of our partner organizations is Fulton County HEA. Not only does this organization generously supply funds to purchase awards, plaques, and gifts that the 4-H members receive during the Achievement Awards program, they have purchased art supplies for 4-H members to use as they create their Visual Arts projects. If you would like to stop by the University of Illinois Extension office in Lewistown to see what is available for use, please call or email one of us. We have a lot of supplies to choose from! Thank you, Fulton County HEA members!



Livestock project enrollment deadline

Monday, January 5, 2026, is the deadline to enroll in the following production livestock projects: Beef, Dairy, Goat, Sheep, and Swine. If you plan on exhibiting any of these livestock projects at the summer 4-H shows, you must be enrolled in the project in ZSuite by no later than January 5, 2026.

Steer Weigh In

All beef project members will receive a letter in the mail after the January 5, 2026, project enrollment deadline regarding the beef weigh in. The weigh-in is Saturday, February 7, 2026, from 8 to 10 a.m. at the Fairview Sale Barn in Fairview. Please mark this date on your calendar as this will be the only steer weigh-in this year in Fulton County.

Food Decorating Workshop

Join us for a fun and creative 4-H Food Decorating Workshop on Saturday, January 10th from 10am to noon at the Fulton County Extension Office, 15411 N. IL 100 Hwy, Lewistown, IL! In this hands-on session, youth will learn the basics of cupcake decorating using buttercream frosting, including how to pipe simple designs and create beautiful buttercream flowers. The cost is \$10 and the class is limited in number, so be sure to sign up right away! Participants will take home **four Valentine's-themed cupcakes** they decorate themselves—perfect for sharing or enjoying as a special treat!

- ◇ Learn buttercream piping techniques
- ◇ Create buttercream flowers
- ◇ Decorate 4 Valentine's-themed cupcakes to take home
- ◇ All supplies provided (bring an apron if you have one)

This workshop is perfect for beginners or anyone who loves to get creative in the kitchen. It is open to youth 8-18 (as of Sept. 1, 2025). Come ready to have fun, learn new skills, and make something sweet! Registration closes January 3rd. Register at <https://go.illinois.edu/4-HFoodDecoratingWorkshop>



4-H Federation News

4-H Federation has been meeting throughout September, October, and November, planning activities for Fulton 4-H.

In September, members met to build a scarecrow for the Lewistown Scarecrow Contest. "George Green" was welcomed by fellow 4-H Federation members to Fulton County 4-H.

At their October meeting, elections were held, along with a pizza party followed by a rousing game of JENGA! Officers for this year are Cole Ricker – President; Lee Tilton – Vice President; Alex Wetterauer – Secretary; and Holden Myers – Treasurer.

In November, all four Federations in Fulton, Mason, Peoria, and Tazewell counties met at the Extension office in Havana for a "Pass the Pork" supper prepared by 4-H staff, and bowling at the Paddlewheel Bowling Alley.

Stuff the Clover

Fulton 4-H Federation decided to sponsor a county-wide "Stuff the Clover, Stop the Hunger" food drive during the last half of November until December 13. All donations collected in the bin in the front foyer of the Farm Bureau Building/Extension Office will be donated to the First Baptist Church Food Pantry in Canton during the Federation's Christmas party.

More to Come

Watch for more information regarding a winter county-wide event for members and their families. Federation is open to all 4-H members aged 13-18 of the current 4-H year.



Above: Fulton County 4-H Federation members with their entry to Lewistown's Scarecrow Contest, "George Green."

Below, from left: Lee Tilton, Vice President, Cole Ricker, President, Holden Myers, Treasurer, and Alex Wetterauer, Secretary.



Winter Riddles

- #1 What is the name of Jack Frost's favorite aunty?
- #2 Where does a polar bear surf the web?
- #3 What's the most popular breakfast in the winter?
- #4 What is a penguin's favorite rapper?
- #5 How do you stay warm in the house during winter?
- #6 Why did Elsa fall off her sleigh?

- #7 What kind of Mexican food is most popular at the North Pole?
- #8 What's a snowflake's favorite game?
- #9 What falls in the winter but never gets hurt?
- #10 What do you call a reindeer with no eyes?

Answers on page 7

AWARDS & RESULTS

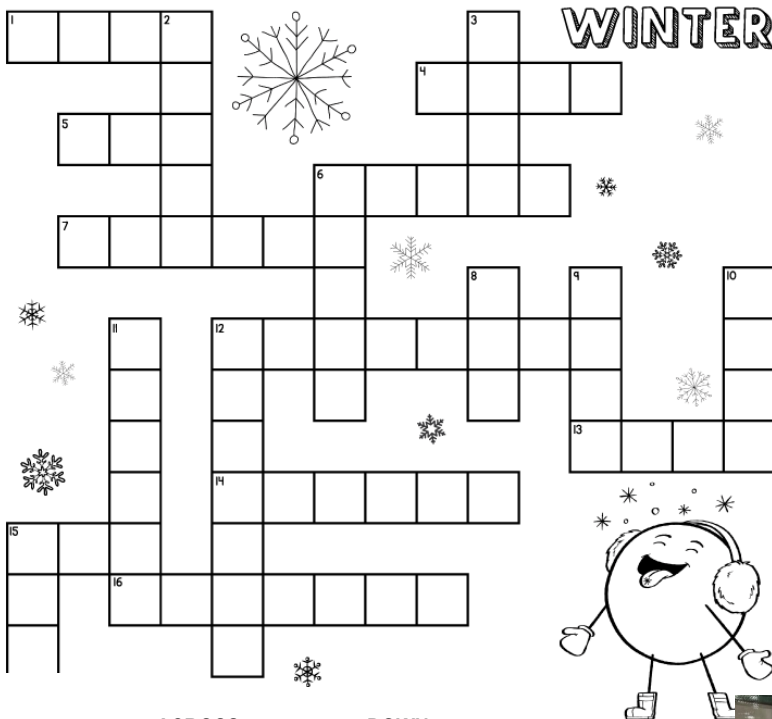
National 4-H Week Window Displays

National 4-H Week was observed October 5 - 11 and five of our county's 4-H clubs created colorful window displays inviting youth to 4-H. Our 4-county unit theme this year is "Red, White, and Blue and Clover too!". The Pleasant Spacemakers 4-H Club won first place with their display at the Community Medical Clinic in Astoria. Smithfield Up and Coming 4-H Club was awarded second place with their window display at Jule's Ice Cream & Coffee in Cuba. Honorable mention went to the Busy Bees 4-H Club with their display at MidAmerica National Bank in Lewistown; the Jolly Workers 4-H Club with their creative display at Prairie State Bank & Trust in Lewistown; and the Fairview Huskies with their poster display at Fairview State Banking Company in Fairview. The first and second place clubs were awarded monetary gifts from 4-H Federation, and the clubs receiving honorable mention were given bags of candy to share at their club meetings.



From top: Pleasant Spacemakers, Busy Bees, Jolly Workers

Below l to r: Smithfield Up & Coming, Fairview Huskies.



ACROSS

1. Soft, white pieces of frozen water that falls to the ground
4. Opposite of hot
5. To move on snow with long narrow strips attached to feet
6. Footwear in the winter
7. Dress warm so you don't ___
12. Children like to throw one
13. "The snow is 2 feet ___"
14. The coldest season of the year
15. Frozen water
16. "We like to go ___ on the pond in the winter"

DOWN

2. The color of fresh snow
3. Outerwear that keeps you warm
6. "The temperature fell ___ zero last night"
8. Head covering to keep warm
9. An outdoor winter toy for kids to slide down snowy hills
10. Be careful not to ___ and fall on the ice
11. Special shoes for ice
12. Frosty the ___
15. In the winter, roads can be ___

ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS & VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION

Thank you to everyone who attended our awards program at the Donaldson Center in Canton on October 19. Thirty-two 4-H members were honored for their accomplishments for the 2024-2025 4-H year.

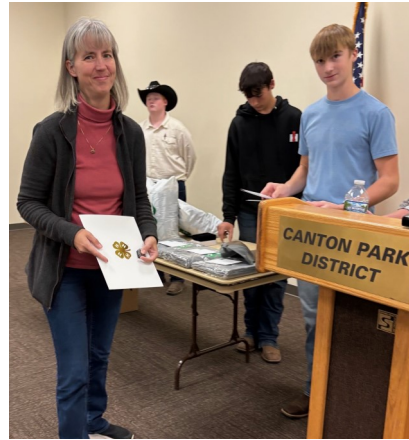
Volunteers recognized for milestone years of service included 15 years receiving the Pearl Clover – Robyn Hendel, Dusty Stephens, Crista Hartstirn, and Ellie Nolan; 10 years receiving the Gold Clover – Gina Stevenson; 5 years receiving the Silver Clover – Tera Grebner; and 1 year receiving the Bronze Clover – Hillary Pasley, Bonita Leady, and Dezaray Peters. All milestone years of service winners received a certificate and pin.

Tera Grebner, Heidi Brinklow, Crista Hartstirn, Scott & Melanie Patterson, and Brian & Cara Wickert retired from leading clubs this year and were presented with a special gift of thanks for their dedication to Fulton County 4-H.

Federation members assisted with the program and members of Fulton County HEA made and served delicious desserts to all in attendance.

Fulton County 4-H deeply appreciates the generosity of donors who provide funds to purchase awards, t-shirts, and gifts presented during the program. Thank you!

Photo below: Robyn Hendel. Photos next column: Gina Stevenson, "Best of" winners



Winter Word Search

F	S	N	O	W	M	A	N	Y	P	V	W	R	U	E
X	I	U	E	I	L	I	G	O	F	I	A	R	H	T
U	C	R	C	T	U	O	L	D	N	G	K	L	I	A
C	S	E	E	G	I	A	Z	T	S	O	R	F	B	R
C	N	O	N	P	R	H	E	O	M	H	Q	C	E	G
H	M	E	P	B	L	R	W	C	Y	P	K	M	R	I
I	P	O	E	E	K	A	L	F	W	O	N	S	N	M
L	O	A	G	T	O	Q	C	I	Z	U	C	P	A	U
L	R	Z	A	K	O	C	P	E	I	J	J	D	T	Z
Y	T	H	O	T	C	H	O	C	O	L	A	T	E	J



chilly
fireplace
frost
hibernate
hot chocolate
migrate

penguin
polar bear
snowflake
snowman
white
winter



IMPORTANT 4-H DATES

Put this page on your fridge so you don't miss a thing!

December

- 1- ZSuite enrollment of \$5 per youth until May 1
- 24-31 – Christmas break – Extension Office closed

January

- 1- 2 – New Year's Day - Extension Office closed
- 5 – Livestock (Beef, Dairy, Goat, Sheep, Swine) project enrollment deadline in ZSuite
- 10 – Food Decorating Workshop – 10 a.m. to noon at Extension office – registration deadline Jan. 3
- 19 – Martin Luther King Jr. Day - Extension Office closed

February

- 7 – Steer Weigh-in – Fairview Sale Barn
- 27 – Fulton County 4-H Show Book cover entries due

March

- TBD - Fulton Public Speaking Contest and Performing Arts Show
- TBD - Livestock Showmanship Clinic & YQCA training

April

- 1 – 4-H Scholarship applications due to Extension Office
- 25 – State Public Speaking Contest – Champaign

May

- 1 – 4-H enrollment deadline in ZSuite to be eligible to register and exhibit at 2026 summer 4-H shows.
- 1 – Project add/drop deadline in ZSuite
- 1 – Horse Lease/Ownership forms due
- 4 – FairEntry opens for ALL Fulton County 4-H Summer shows
- 25 -Memorial Day – Extension Office closed

June

- 8 – FairEntry closes
- 10 – Pet Show – Extension Office
- 19 – Juneteenth – Extension Office closed
- 20 - Clothing and General Show – Cuba Jr./Sr. High School

July

- 1 – Fulton County Fair paper entries/fees due at Extension Office
- 3 – Independence Day holiday – Extension Office closed
- 11 – Official 4-H Horse & Pony Show – Fulton County Fairgrounds Horse Arena
- 20-25 – Fulton County Fair – Dog and Livestock shows

August

- 13-23 – Illinois State Fair
- 16 – Fulton County General Projects show day at the State Fair

Answers to Winter Riddles on page 4: #1 Aunt Arctica #2 On the winter-net #3 Frosted Flakes #4 Ice-T #5 Go to the corner—it's always 90 degrees. #6 She let it go #7 BRRR-itos #8 Freeze tag #9 Snow #10 No eye deer



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Serving Fulton, Mason, Peoria & Tazewell Counties
Fulton County Office
15411 N IL 100 Hwy
Lewistown, IL 61542
Return service requested

FOOD DECORATING workshop



REGISTER
BY
1/31/26

Register at:
<https://go.illinois.edu/4-HFoodDecoratingWorkshop>

EARLY LIVESTOCK DEADLINES



**1/5/26: must be enrolled in
Beef, Dairy, Goat, Sheep,
Swine in Zsuites**

**2/7/26: Steer Weigh In @
Fairview Sale Barn**

See page 3 for complete details