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- Upcoming Events (Put me on your fridge!)



Are you a club leader or superintendent? Don't forget, there's a meeting on March 12 at 5:30 PM at the Extension office!



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

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



# TAZEWELL COUNTY 4-H NEWSLETTER SPRING 2026

## HAPPY SPRING!

Happy spring! We hope you're looking forward to warmer weather and upcoming opportunities as much as we are.

Since our last newsletter, both Abbie and Lynda have big things they are looking forward to! Abbie welcomed two new nieces to her family. She is looking forward to spending time with them in the coming weeks. Lynda is looking forward to celebrating a wedding and taking a trip! Her oldest daughter is getting married in April in Hawaii. Congratulations!

We're also looking forward to the return of Archery, Air Rifle, and Junior Master Gardener clubs. We hope to see you at our many upcoming 4-H events!

*Abbie & Lynda*

## YQCA AND QAEC

Do you plan to show an animal at this year's fair? Make sure to complete the appropriate **REQUIRED trainings by July 15, 2026** in order to be approved to show at this year's fair.

Beef, dairy cattle, swine, sheep, or goat exhibitors must complete the **yearly** Youth for the Quality Care of Animals (YQCA) training in order to be eligible to show at the fair. There will be several opportunities to do this training in person for little to no cost. YQCA can also be completed online at [yqcaprogram.org](http://yqcaprogram.org) for a fee of around \$12.

Horse, rabbit, poultry, dog, and cat exhibitors must complete their Quality Assurance and Ethics Certification (QAEC) **once** in their 4-H career in order to show at the fair. QAEC can be completed for free in the Clover Academy tab on Z-Suite.





## 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 pm at the Extension office in Pekin. 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 in 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 out for information about registering in FairEntry
- Review the [2026 Show Book pages](#) to plan out a speech that fits the project requirements.



Scan to view Public Speaking Show Book Pages



## ARCHERY SHOOTING SPORTS



Archery Shooting Sports will be back again this April with exciting new opportunities! We will be offering a beginner and advanced class that will each be able to have up to 14 participants. Once again, each session will be hosted at the Livestock Review Building. **All participants must be enrolled in 4-H via ZSuite and will need to turn in a medical form before they will be allowed to participate.**

<b>Monday, April 6, 13, 20</b>	<b>Thursday, April 9, 16, 23</b>
Beginner 5 - 6 PM	Beginner 5 - 6 PM
Advanced 6 - 7 PM	Advanced 6 - 7 PM

Again, we will be asking each participant to bring a \$10 program fee in cash or check to the first meeting. Participants will also be asked to make sure they can attend at least four of the six meetings. **Registration links for the program and more information will go out in an email at noon on Tuesday, March 3!**

## 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 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) or Lynda (lrs11@illinois.edu) by March 2. 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!

## ORDERING 4-H PROJECT MANUALS

The Extension office keeps an inventory of project manuals on hand for you to request at no cost to you. Requests for manuals can be made through the form linked below or on your dashboard in Z-Suite. Once Lynda or Abbie have received your request for books, they will fill your request as soon as possible. After your request has been filled, one of them will email to let you know they're ready to be picked up at the Extension office. If a book is only available in a free PDF version, the request system will automatically send you a copy.

Extension office hours: 8 am- 4:30 pm, closed from noon - 1 pm for lunch.

Request Form: [go.illinois.edu/fmptPubs](http://go.illinois.edu/fmptPubs)



# 4-H WORKSHOPS



## SPRING WORKSHOP SERIES

We invite you to join us for one or more of our Spring Workshop Series! Each workshop is designed to start with the basics of the topic being covered. One of these workshops may just help you get started on your next 4-H project! No experience or prior knowledge is required. Each will be hosted at the U of I Extension office, Tazewell branch. All workshops are appropriate for youth ages 8 - 18. Light refreshments will be provided at each workshop.

### WELDING

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21 | 3 - 4 PM**



Join Dan, one of our welding project judges, to explore topics such as welding safety, different types of equipment, and get some 4-H project tips. RSVP in the Events tab in ZSuite!

### SEWING

**TUESDAY, MARCH 3 | 5:30 - 7:30 PM | \$5 SUPPLIES FEE**



Join Ellen, Laurie, and Margret to learn all about how to get started in sewing and make a project to take home! If you have a sewing machine that can easily travel, please bring it so you can learn on your own machine. Don't have a machine? No problem! The Extension office will have a few you can borrow for the workshop. Register at this link: [registration.extension.illinois.edu/start/4-h-sewing-workshop-4](https://registration.extension.illinois.edu/start/4-h-sewing-workshop-4)

### FOOD DECORATING



**TUESDAY, MARCH 10 | 5:30 - 7:30 PM | \$5 SUPPLIES FEE**

Learn all about food decorating from Jesi, one of our 4-H Food Decorating judges! Learn about frosting techniques, piping, and much more. Register here:

[registration.extension.illinois.edu/start/4-h-food-decorating-workshop-1](https://registration.extension.illinois.edu/start/4-h-food-decorating-workshop-1)

### ENTOMOLOGY

**SATURDAY, MARCH 28 | 1 PM - 2:30 PM**

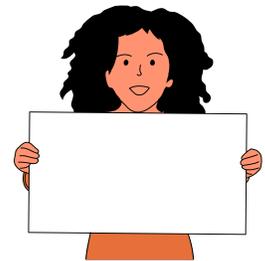


Learn about all things insects with local expert, Mark Dubois. Hear about how and where to find insects for your collection, how to preserve insects, and more. RSVP in the Events tab in ZSuite!

## BUILDING A BETTER 4-H POSTER

Big Ideas, Clear Displays! Building a Better 4-H Poster is happening March 18, 2026, from 7:00 – 8:00 pm via Zoom!

Ever wonder why some posters grab your attention right away? In this workshop, 4-H youth will learn simple design and presentation tips that help posters stand out and clearly tell a story. We'll talk about common mistakes, smart design choices, and easy ways to improve posters without starting over. Open to 4-H members age 8 – 18.



If you have any questions, please contact [Danielle Gapinski](mailto:des85@illinois.edu), (des85@illinois.edu) Extension Specialist - Creative and Cultural Arts. Register in the Events tab in ZSuite!

## OAK TREE SAVANNA PLANTING

If you're looking for an opportunity to get outside or to get in some volunteer hours, please join Tazewell 4-H and Tazewell Soil and Water for a day of planting and learning about Oak trees! For the first time since its start five years ago, Tazewell County will be receiving 25 oak trees to plant in a public space in the county. Every Tazewell 4-H family is invited to come help plant trees!

**The details are still tentative and are subject to change.** Timing will depend on when the trees arrive at our local Soil and Water Conservation office.



**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**SATURDAY, APRIL 11, 2026**  
**9:30 AM**  
**WESTSIDE PARK**  
**MINIER, IL**





## FEDERATION HAPPENINGS

The Hope Chest is a local faith-based nonprofit organization, dedicated to serve the community through their food pantry and thrift store. On December 18, our 4-H Federation group met and bought canned foods, soap, and shower items for their food pantry.

Afterwards, we went back to the Extension office to have hot chocolate and cookies. We also did a white elephant gift exchange where gifts ranged from expired condensed milk, and a slinky, to a headless stone turtle.

-Submitted by Federation Reporter, Rose Birkey

Become a leader in the Tazewell County 4-H community by joining Federation! This is a county-wide 4-H club open to 4-H members who are in 8th grade and above. This group meets throughout the year and gets involved in a variety of social events, service and leadership opportunities, and much more. Plus, you'll have the opportunity to make new friends from around the county. Federation members are required to be an existing member of another Tazewell County 4-H club.



## EMBRYOLOGY CHICK ADOPTION

Each year, Peoria and Tazewell counties team up to do a program called Embryology in the Classroom. Teachers and students get to hatch chicks in their classrooms and witness the beginning of new life! At the end of the project, some of the chicks will need homes as each classroom could have up to 18 chicks hatching. Sessions of the program wrap up on March 20 and May 15. Chicks will be available for adoption on those evenings. The best part is that all chicks are free! They are all White Leghorn and are straight run. These chickens are fantastic egg layers and could also be a future 4-H project! Are you or someone you know interested in adopting chicks? Put your name on the list at this link:

[registration.extension.illinois.edu/start/chick-adoption](https://registration.extension.illinois.edu/start/chick-adoption)

## 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!

## SHOOTING SPORTS LEADER TRAINING

If you love being outdoors, coaching, teaching firearm or archery safety, and support positive youth development, you might be a great candidate to be a Shooting Sports volunteer! While we are re-launching archery here in Tazewell County, there are still opportunities to coach Shotgun, Rifle, and Pistol shooting sports. In order to become a volunteer, you must be 21 years of age, complete the 4-H volunteer screening, attend a field day, and complete the online module.

**Spring Northern IL – Saturday, March 14, 2026**

Location: Kane Co. Fairgrounds in St. Charles, IL

**Spring Central IL – Saturday, May 16, 2026**

Location: 4-H Memorial Camp, Monticello, IL

**Fall Central IL – Saturday, October 24, 2026**

Location: 4-H Memorial Camp, Monticello, IL

If you are interested in becoming a 4-H Shooting Sports instructor, don't hesitate to reach out to Lynda or Abbie! One of them will help get your volunteer screening process started and complete a field day registration on your behalf.





# UPCOMING DATES AND EVENTS



## FEBRUARY

- February 20 - FairEntry open for Public Speaking registration
- February 21 - Welding Workshop
- February 27 - Unit-Wide Federation Game Night

## MARCH

- March 3 - Sewing Workshop
- March 10 - Cake Decorating Workshop
- March 12 - Leader and Superintendent Meeting
- March 14 - Spring Northern IL Shooting Sports Instructor Training
- March 14 - Central Region Horse Bowl and Hippology Contest
- March 18 - Building a Better 4-H Poster Virtual Training
- March 19 - Tazewell Public Speaking Contest
- March 20 - Chick Adoption
- March 28 - Entomology Workshop

## APRIL

- April 6, 9, 13, 16, 20, 23 - Archery Shooting Sports Beginner and Advanced Sessions
- April 11 - Oak Tree Savannah Planting (*Tentative*)
- April 17 - 18 - State Horse Speaking, Horse Bowl, and Hippology Contests
- April 25 - State 4-H Public Speaking Contest
- April 25 - 4-H National Day of Service

## OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS IN 2026

- May TBD - Air Rifle Shooting Sports
- May 1 - 4-H Enrollment ends for 25-26
- May 15 - Chick Adoption
- May 15 - FairEntry open for all fair projects
- May 16 - Central IL Shooting Sports Instructor Training
- June 1 - Horse Paperwork due
- July 25 - Fair Set-Up @ Mineral Springs Park
- July 27 - 29 - Tazewell County 4-H Show and Junior Fair
- August 16 - State Fair Day for Tazewell County





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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

**Abbie Phillips**, 4-H Program Coordinator

**Lynda Sharp-Lower**, 4-H Program Coordinator

**Earl Allen**, County Director

**Julann Schierer**, Office Support

