

Shelby County 4-H February Newsletter



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Project Manuals

4-H members must email Yolanda or call the Shelby County Extension Office to order project manuals. Please note: ZSuite 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. Project book requests should be sent to Yolanda by Friday, March 13. Let Yolanda know if you have any questions. Email: nation2@illinois.edu or call: 217-774-9546

Fair Dates

July 18 is judging for 4-H Foods and Photography beginning at 9 a.m. The Live Activity Floriculture display will be held at 11 a.m. The Horse Show begins at 4 p.m. All Livestock, Rabbits, and Poultry need to be in place by July 19 at 4 p.m. and the Sheep Show begins at 5 p.m. The fair will be held July 20-22, with clean-up on July 23. Fair books will be coming in late March with full details.



March 2 – Deadline to enroll to exhibit at the Shelby County 4-H

March 2 is the deadline for youth to enroll in the Shelby County 4-H program in order to exhibit at the Shelby County 4-H Fair. There's time to recruit a new member to join in on the fun!

State 4-H Club Award Winners

Congratulations to Shelby County 4-H Federation, Shelby Showstoppers, and Silver Spurs 4-H Clubs for their Community Service State 4-H Club Award. Congratulations to Moweaqua Rustlers 4-H Club for their Project Learning 4-H Club Award. Clubs will receive a \$75 cash prize.

State 4-H Experience Award Winners

Congratulations to Lilah Bonny for receiving an Emerald Project Learning Experience Award. Congratulations to Saebra Curl and Esmi Small on their Emerald Leadership Experience Award.

State 4-H Scholarship Award Winner

Congratulations to Lilah Bonny for being awarded a \$1,250 scholarship for her work in the Healthy Living/Nutrition scholarship area.

Building Bricks County Federation Challenge

Shelby County 4-H Federation wants to see your most creative brick build inspired by "Rooted in 4-H, Growing our Future", the 2026 Shelby County 4-H Week theme. Prizes will be awarded in each age division.

Eligibility:

- All enrolled 4-H members are encouraged to participate.
- The contest will run from February 1 – February 28.
- Photo builds should be uploaded:
<https://go.illinois.edu/BuildingBricksChallenge>
- Age divisions (4-H age, 9/1/25): Cloverbuds, 8-13, 14-18

Rules:

- Theme: "Rooted in 4-H, Growing our Future"
- Youth can only submit one build.
- Builds must be entirely from plastic building brick elements.
- All builds must be original (from the imagination of the youth who submits) and not built from a kit or inspired by the builds of others (including ones they see on the internet).
- Size: Build should fit on a standard 32x32 stud LEGO (or similar) baseplate (i.e. no larger than 10" wide and long). Build should also be 15" tall or shorter.

Upcycling Workshop

Want to learn more about interior design but not sure where to start? This workshop is for you! We will explore multiple options for upcycling your décor projects. This can include painting on wood and upholstery, reupholstering furniture, modifying pieces for new uses, and any other creative ideas that you might have! Be prepared for hands-on learning, while learning new techniques!

Bring your own project ideas - we'll have hands-on activities so you can try out new concepts and see your creations come to life! Additional workdays will be scheduled at the first workshop.

Don't miss this opportunity to learn, create, and connect with others who share your passion for design! The instructor will be Kim Denton, retired 4-H Youth Educator.

Kick-off meeting: March 7

Where: 4-H Center, Shelbyville

Time: 1-3 p.m.

Cost: \$10 paid at the time of the workshop

Register online at: <https://go.illinois.edu/UpcyclingWorkshop>

Shelby County 4-H Fair Book Cover Contest

Due February 23

Shelby County 4-H is looking for fair book cover entries! Shelby County 4-H Federation will award cash prizes to the top four covers. Entries must be submitted to the Shelby County Extension Office by 4:30 p.m. on February 23, 2026.

The following rules need to be followed:

- Drawings should be in dark ink or markers.
- Drawings should be on an 8 1/2" x 11" sheet of white paper.
- Include the fair dates of July 18-22, 2026.
- Include the words Shelby County 4-H & Jr. Fair in the design.

This contest is open to all enrolled Shelby County 4-H Cloverbuds and 4-H members. Electronic copies will be accepted, but must be sent as a PDF, not a screenshot. Hard copies are preferred and work better when copying designs. Contact Yolanda with questions.

Shelby County 4-H Week – March 14-21

The theme for Shelby County 4-H Week is “Rooted in 4-H, Growing our Future”.

- *March 14 – 4-H Fire-Up 9-11 a.m., 4-H Center*
 - Federation has a busy morning planned for first and second-year 4-H members!

- 4-H'ers will explore a variety of project areas through hands-on learning opportunities.
- There is no cost to attend.
- Registration closes on Thursday, March 5.
- **Register here: <https://go.illinois.edu/4-HFire-Up>**
- *March 14 – Skating Party 6:15-9 p.m. at Silver Stars Skating Rink in Mattoon.*
 - The 4-H Skating party is planned for Saturday, March 16 from 6:15 - 9:00 p.m. The rink rental is being paid by Shelby County 4-H Federation. There will be a \$1 charge for those needing skates. Families may bring in their own food and drink.
 - Bring your friends and family!
 - We encourage families to sign-up if they plan to attend at:
<https://go.illinois.edu/ShelbyCounty4-HSkatingparty>
- *March 15 – Public Speaking Contest, 6:30 p.m. 4-H Center*
 - 4-H'ers must be enrolled in the Public Speaking Project by March 2.
 - Entries must be submitted by March 9.
 - Contest rules can be found at
<https://extension.illinois.edu/media/8606/download?inline>
 - Entries can be submitted at
<https://go.illinois.edu/PublicSpeakingRegistration>
- *March 16 – International Night 6 p.m. Nazarene Church Gym*
 - Clubs should plan to prepare 2-3 food dishes to give samples to approximately 200. Clubs should consider decorating their table, creating poster displays, and wearing clothing from their country, etc.
 - Clubs need to be ready to serve at 6 p.m.
- *March 16 – Window Display judging*
 - Leaders should contact Yolanda with their window location.
 - Clubs should have their display up by March 14.
 - Information to include in your display: club name, members and leaders' names, club meeting dates and times, and how to join 4-H.
 - Federation is offering cash prizes.
- *March 17 – 4-H Member Showcase shared on Facebook*
 - Let's showcase our 4-H members! 4-H'ers need to send Yolanda a photo of their 4-H member/Cloverbud with their favorite 4-H project along with a statement about their project, a favorite 4-H event, etc.
 - Information needs to be sent by March 11. Email photo and write-up to nation2@illinois.edu.
- *March 18 – Community Service Day with your club*
 - Clubs must complete their community service project between March 14 – March 31 and submit a photo to Yolanda to receive \$25 from Shelby County 4-H Federation.
- *March 19 – Wear your 4-H shirt to school day and submit a photo*

- Federation will provide candy bars to each 4-H member and/or Cloverbud who submits a photo on March 19 for wearing their 4-H t-shirt to school to promote Shelby County 4-H.
- **IMPORTANT – Change the name of the picture to your 4-H’ers name so we know whose picture it is.**
Upload to the following: <https://go.illinois.edu/20264-HT-shirtDay>
- **March 21 – Spring Craft Day – 2 sessions, one for 4-H’ers and one for Cloverbuds.**
 - Cost is \$10 for each session and must be paid by March 13 to the Extension office. Checks can be made out to Shelby County 4-H.

Session 1 – 9-10:30 a.m. 4-H members ages 8-18 as of 9/1/25

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

Session 2 – 10:45-12:15 p.m. Cloverbud members ages 8-18 as of 9/1/25.

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

Youth for the Quality Care of Animals (YQCA)

All 4-H members enrolled in beef, dairy cattle, goats, swine, and sheep are required to take the YQCA training. This training is required to be taken each year. In-person training is \$3 and On-line training is \$12. Shelby County 4-H is offering 4 in-person training sessions. The training is set up to be completed in approximately one hour. All training sessions will be held at the 4-H Center in Shelbyville. Don’t wait to get signed up, class size is limited!

Families will need to register at the YQCA website, sign up for which training they would like to attend and pay the registration fee. *Youth will need to complete the Pre-Test before attending the training.* Youth will need to complete the Post-Test before printing the certificate.

Families must register online at YQCA at Link: yqcaprogram.org

- Tuesday, March 24 6:30-7:30 p.m.
- Thursday, April 23 6:30-7:30 p.m..
- Thursday, May 21 7-8:00 p.m.

The deadline to complete the training to be able to exhibit at the Shelby County 4-H & Junior Fair is Monday, June 1! No exceptions to this rule. *If completing the training online, email Yolanda a copy of the certificate.* If you need assistance or a copy of the instructions, please contact Yolanda for help.

Quality Assurance & Ethics Certification

First-time animal exhibitors enrolled in alpacas, llamas, cats, dogs, horses, rabbits, and poultry are required to complete the Quality Assurance and Ethics Certification (QAEC).

This rule applies to all 4-H members exhibiting live animals *and* poster exhibits in these project areas.

QAEC is a one-time training. Youth who have completed the certification in previous years do not need to retake it. All required members must complete QAEC by June 1. Members who do not complete the certification by the deadline will be removed from the project and will not be allowed to show at the fair.

The QAEC training can be accessed in the Clover Academy section of the ZSuite Enrollment System. ZSuite can be accessed at <https://4h.zsuite.org/>. Families can access directions for completing the course at <https://go.illinois.edu/TakeQAEC>.

Shelby County 4-H General and Trophy/Banner sponsors needed

Just a reminder that Shelby County 4-H would appreciate your sponsorships either as a general donation or as a trophy/banner sponsor for the 2026 fair.

Please consider supporting the youth in Shelby County 4-H.

General Program Donation \$25 _____ \$50 _____ Other _____

Trophy/Banner Award: We wish to sponsor a trophy/banner and have enclosed \$25. We would like to sponsor a trophy/banner/award in: (Sponsorships will be given on a first come/first serve basis). _____

Name of sponsor: _____

Make checks payable to: U of I Extension Money is due by March 2 for recognition in the fair book. Payment should be sent to: Shelby County Extension, 1125 W N 2nd Street, Shelbyville, IL 62565

Contact Yolanda via email at nation2@illinois.edu if you would like to receive a form to complete and mail with your sponsorship. We hope you will consider supporting the 400+ Shelby County 4-H members!

Upcoming dates to save

- April 18 – Multi County Livestock Clinic 9-12 p.m. at the 4-H Center. Details are being finalized and will be sent to families.
- April 25 - Cloverbud Fire-Up will be held at the 4-H Center from 9-11 a.m. Registration details will be sent later.

Farm Credit Service Grant Opportunities

Friday, February 27

Shelby County 4-H would like to ask clubs to consider applying for one of fifty \$500 grants which are available to 4-H clubs implementing valuable community improvements within their communities. Grants could focus on building improvements through painting and repairing, updating landscaping, purchasing a tree, constructing a welcome sign to your community, planting a garden, trees and flowers, etc. The deadline to submit a Farm Credit Illinois Community Improvement Grant is February 27, 2026.

For more information: <https://www.farmcrediti.com/Community>

Calendar:

March

- 2 – Enrollment deadline to exhibit at the Shelby County 4-H Fair
- 4 – Federation meeting, 7 p.m., 4-H Center
- 7-8 – JLC Conference, Crowne Plaza, Springfield
- March 14-21 – 4-H Week
- 24 – YQCA 6:30 – 7:30 p.m., 4-H Center
- 30 – Spring Clean-up at the fairgrounds, 6 p.m.

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.
- 23 – YQCA 6:30 – 7:30 p.m., 4-H Center
- 25 – Save the date – Cloverbud Fire-Up, 9-11 a.m. at the 4-H Center

May

- 4 – Last day to add/drop projects in ZSuite
- 21 – YQCA 7-8 p.m., 4-H Center
- 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
- 11 – Fair Clean-up
- 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: Diana Litteral

4-H Youth Educator: Krista Houk

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.