



Notice of Public Meeting

AGENDA

Committee:	Ag and Extension Education Sub Committee
Date:	Monday, August 17, 2026
Time:	8:30 a.m.
Location:	3 rd Floor County Board Room, 407 S. 2 nd Street, Alma, WI 54610
Remote Access:	https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/217920610213407?p=0BpTjHTUG4ElegG5U2

This meeting is open to the public, but portions of the meeting may be closed if this notice indicates that the committee may convene in closed session.

The following matters may be reviewed, discussed and acted upon at this meeting, and deviations from the order shown may occur:

1.	Call to Order
2.	Roll Call of Members
3.	Verification of Open Meetings Law Compliance
4.	Approve Agenda
5.	Approve Minutes from Previous Meeting
6.	Public Comment
7.	Educator Reports
8.	AED Update
	Financial Updates
	Personnel Updates
	Rural Health Transformation Grant Update
9.	Committee Chair Report
10.	Correspondence
11.	Future Agenda Items
12.	Next Meeting Date and Time
13.	Adjournment

Date: August 10, 2026

By: Roxane Weisenbeck, Administrative Assistant

Board Members: If unable to attend, please contact the Chair. If the Chair is unavailable, please contact the County Clerk's Office at 608-685-6209. If the Chair and the County Clerk are not available, please call the Administrative Coordinator at 608-685-6234.

Persons with Disabilities: Buffalo County shall attempt to provide reasonable accommodations to the public for access to its public meetings, provided reasonable notice of special need is given. If you require special accommodations to attend this meeting, please contact the County Clerk's Office at 608-685-6209.

Public Access to the Courthouse: The South Entrance will be the only access to the building after 4:30 p.m.

Persons who are members of another governmental body, but who are not members of this committee, may attend this meeting. Their attendance could result in a quorum of another governmental body being present. Such a quorum is unintended, and they are not meeting to exercise the authority, duties, or responsibilities of any other governmental body.

Buffalo County Minutes

Committee/Board: Agriculture and Extension Education Subcommittee

Date of Meeting: Monday, June 1, 2026

The meeting was called to order by Administrator, Lee Engfer at 8:32 a.m.

Board Members Present: Mr. Steve Nelson, and Mr. Robert Sendelbach. Absent: Mr. Gary Stanton

Others Present: Ms. Mary Campbell Wood, Dr. Kari Weiss, Ms. Bianca Mullen, Ms. Finley Noll, Ms. Payton Freund, Mr. Lee Engfer and Ms. Roxane Weisenbeck

Meeting verified with Open Meeting law compliance

Election of Chair & Vice Chair: Mr. Engfer called for nominations for Committee Chair. Motion by Mr. Nelson, second by Mr. Sendelbach to nominate Mr. Stanton as Committee Chair and cast a unanimous ballot. Motion carried.

Mr. Engfer called for nominations for Committee Vice Chair. Motion by Mr. Nelson, second by Mr. Sendelbach to nominate Mr. Sendelbach for Committee Vice Chair and cast a unanimous ballot. Motion carried.

Committee Vice Chair, Mr. Sendelbach led the remainder of the meeting.

Approve agenda: Mr. Engfer explained the new agenda format. Agenda approved.

Review/Discussion/Action ~ Minutes of the previous meeting: Motion by Mr. Nelson, seconded by Mr. Sendelbach to approve the minutes from the previous meeting. Motion carried.

Public comments Regarding Posted Agenda Items: None

Review/Discussion/Action ~ Annual Report: Dr. Weiss presented the 2025 Annual Report for the University of Wisconsin Madison Division of Extension Buffalo County. Stressing the effects of several educator vacancies as well as the loss of federal funding resulting in the loss of the Food Wise program. Extension took measures to absorb the cuts through reductions, realignment or operations. The organization is committed not to pass along this loss of funding to county partners.

Buffalo County Extension, in spite of the many transitions, carried out significant and meaningful programming in 2025.

Ms. Wood shared Human Development and Relations programming highlights.

- A Better Beginning for divorcing and separating families reached a milestone mark in 2025 serving 1000 individuals through this court ordered program.
- Moving Forward Jail Re-entry Program offered 65 classes to 191 learners in Buffalo, Trempealeau and Pepin County jails. Moving Buffalo County inmates to other locations has presented considerable challenges to the continuation and delivery of the re-entry program. The grant supporting this program expires in December of 2026.

Ms. Mullen shared Buffalo County 4-H program achievements.

- Through the dedication and commitment of 4-H volunteers, youth leaders, community partners and staff, the Buffalo County 4-H program maintained strong engagement in 2025.
 - 340 Youth Enrolled
 - 11 4-H Clubs
- The Wisconsin 4-H Thriving Survey results indicate a high quality 4-H program in Buffalo County. Youth experience strong relationships, seek new possibilities and feel supported by caring adults.

Dr. Weiss explained the end of the Food Wise program in Buffalo County due to the loss of federal funding. The Food Wise programs provided by April Duval, Food Wise coordinator, ended in September of 2025.

Dr. Weiss also reported that in 2025 the Buffalo/Pepin County Teen Court program transitioned the coordinator position to the Pepin County 4-H Educator. The program continues across counties to support youth in both Buffalo and Pepin Counties.

The 2025 budget actuals vs. budgeted were noted. The numbers are indicative of personnel transitions.

Area Extension Director Report: Dr. Weiss gave personnel updates. The new Regional Crops & Soils Educator, Grace Finnerty, will begin on June 8, 2026. She has chosen the Buffalo County Extension office as her home base. She will serve Buffalo, Trempealeau and Jackson counties.

Dr. Weiss introduced new 4-H staff. Payton Freund, 4-H Outreach Associate and Finley Noll, 4-H Summer Intern will work with Bianca Mullen, Associate 4-H Educator to round out the 4-H programming team.

Committee Chair Report: No report given.

Correspondence: Mr. Engfer stated that he had been in contact with the county insurance company regarding the possibility of continuing with the Pony Rides at the Fair. The County's liability policy does not provide coverage for Pony Rides. The Fair would need to provide coverage if allowed. 4-H policy restrictions would make it difficult for this to be a 4-H sponsored event.

Future Agenda Items: None stated at this time.

Next Meeting Date and Time ~ The next scheduled committee meeting is Monday, August 17, 2026, at 8:30 a.m.

Public comment not related to agenda items: None

Adjournment ~ The meeting adjourned at 9:10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roxane Weisenbeck, Administrative Assistant

Recent Happenings

Buffalo and Trempealeau County Dairy Breakfasts – June 20th: The dairy breakfasts provided a great opportunity for me to introduce myself to farmers in my region. I was able to let people know that the position has been filled after being vacant for over a year, share my contact information and extension resources, and ask farmers about their top concerns as part of my community needs assessment. Gathering farmer feedback on top priorities is an essential part of my first 6-12 months so that I can develop a plan of work around these areas. Local ag educators were able to help introduce me to many people, and I was even invited to participate in an interview with WAXX radio at the Trempealeau County breakfast.



Buffalo County Farm Visits – June 30th: Joe Bragger offered to give me a tour of his farm and introduce me to farmer neighbors Jimmy Ellis and Dennis Bork. Through these farm visits I was able to learn more about the work that Carl Duley had done, particularly his collaborations with local farmers on emerging crops. I was also able to collect feedback for the needs assessment and hear from the perspective of farmers who serve on the Montana board.



Buffalo County Farm Visit and Tour of Valley Near Gilmanton – July 6th: I joined the county conservation office staff for a DATCP compliance inspection as part of a state-wide baselining survey. I was then shown some of the surrounding area. This was a chance for me to hear more about the concerns of county conservation staff and learn more about the projects that farmers in the area have engaged in with extension in the past.



Buffalo County Crops and Soils June - July 2026 Program Report

Buffalo-Trempealeau Producer-Led Watershed Group Meeting – July 9th:

Visiting the watershed group was important for introducing myself so that I can hopefully build some collaborations with innovative farmers in the region in the future. At the meeting, I was able to hear more about and see some of the experimentation that members are engaged in, including a rye inter-seeding rate trial in corn and camelina relay cropped with beans. I also heard about their plans for a field tour day trip and a bit about their thoughts on what to focus on in the next year as they reviewed their grant application for the current cropping season.



Field Day Attendance – July 1st, July 10th, and July 13th : Attending field days in the area has helped me to gain a better understanding of the current on-farm and research station research and develop ideas for on-farm research options for my tri-county region. Field days included a Soil and Nutrient Management Field Day near Jackson Co, an Emerging Crops Field Day in Trempealeau Co, and a Cover Crop and Forage Field Day at the Marshfield Research Station.





Buffalo County Crops and Soils June - July 2026 Program Report

Outreach Event Planning: I have been working on planning the Soybean Gall Midge Field Day at UW River Falls on August 7th by reaching out to farmers to ask if we may scout their fields, developing a field site map, planning the scouting route, applying for CCA CEUs, and helping with field day event logistics, such as coordinating equipment. Buffalo County farms are a part of the scouting route and farmer hosts along with other farmers were invited to the event either directly or via my newsletter.

I am also working on a Beef Producer's Field Day on August 24th near Arcadia, WI. I was responsible for identifying the host site and coordinating logistics like the sign-up form, flyer, and on-site amenities.



I also sent out my first newsletter on 8/5/2026!

Meeting Coworkers and Collaborators: I have met with several coworkers and collaborators with the goal of bringing ideas for on-farm research and best management practices back to my counties or finding ways to share ideas that are already being implemented by a minority of farmers in the counties on a larger scale. It is vital to build these partnerships to be effective and offer the most value to farmers in my region.

Amber Radatz, Dennis Frame, and Sheri Schwert – Ag Water Quality: learn about ag water quality research in the state, the history of discovery farms in the region, and possibilities for future outreach and on-farm research around ag water quality

Jerry Clark and Cale Severson – Manure Applicator Training: learning about the manure applicator training program and getting on the list for offering it in these counties, especially Buffalo Co with a Land Conservation collaboration, in the coming year

Abby Augarten – On-Farm Research: learning about the on-farm research program, how to start on-farm research projects, and the potential opportunities in my region

Will Fulwider – Barley Research: learning about Will's barley research, hearing about the history of barley experimentation in the region, and joining his team to continue barley research, looking toward a focus on on-farm trials

Becky Brathel – Wisconsin Farmers Union

Butch Halama – WHTL Radio

Jenn Rittenhouse – Farm Bureau

Greg Olson – Sand County Foundation

Tom Brenner – Farmers 4 Health Watershed Group

Meetings with county board members, land conservation departments, and NRCS staff: exploring collaborations and building local connections

What are your suggestions for people to meet, ideas to explore, or top concerns that need to be addressed?



Buffalo County Crops and Soils June - July 2026 Program Report

Looking Forward

- Beef Producer's Field Day – Aug 24th
- Phosphorus Management Outreach Event – hope to set a date soon
- Watershed group field tour
- WWASH conference registration opens in September

Buffalo County Human Development and Relationships Educational Program Report

Mary Campbell Wood, M.S.

Professor of Human Development and Relationships

Buffalo and Pepin counties (100%) <https://parenting.extension.wisc.edu/>

Justice-Related



MOVING FORWARD Jail Reentry Program—offered 24 online classes ranging from 4 to 12 90-minute sessions: Adulting 101; Change Company, Companions Through the Wilderness-Healing from Loss and Grief (x4); Criminal and Addictive Thinking; Financial Literacy (x2); Gratitude; Parenting Inside Out (X2); Parenting with Love and Logic; Preparing for Release; Relationships; Socialization; Stop the Chaos; The Gifts of Apology and Forgiveness (x6); and Understanding Trauma. (112 participants).

As of mid-May, began transition to offering classes in the *Pierce County Jail* because Buffalo County Jail is no longer housing inmates, and is sending folks to Pierce and Dunn county jails for confinement and care rather than the Trempealeau County Jail. It seems this will be the semi-permanent arrangement. Have had several meetings to plan and coordinate continuation of educational programs and am getting the systems worked out. Regular monthly virtual educational programs are now being offered in both Pierce and Dunn counties.

The Literacy Link Program

Parenting Inside Out (listed above), and finalizing development of adapted curriculum, and **Making Reading Memories** Recorded book reading of incarcerated parents in the Pepin County Jail for their children, and then the recording and books are sent to the caregivers of the children to keep. I am on the state Literacy Link Leadership Team and a founding member of the initiative. Recorded 2 parents.

Accepted to present the development and research from the **Making Reading Memories** program at the **National Council on Family Relations Conference** in November.

Minnesota Model Jail Practices Learning Community 90-minute presentation and discussion with 2 other Extension colleagues, on work in justice-related WI and what we have developed. (Shared with 98 participants).

Presenting **The Literacy Link** program at the [Wisconsin Literacy Forward Conference](#), September 29th in Appleton

Healing from Loss and Grief



Companions Through the Wilderness – Healing from Loss and Grief classes

- *Community-Farming and Ag-related*, 1X monthly continuation (by request) of 5 members
- *Incarcerated individuals Pierce, Pepin and Dunn county jails* (41 men)

Chippewa Valley Grief Services Project—advisory committee member; held first organizational meeting.

Buffalo County Human Development and Relationships Educational Program Report

Parenting and Family Relationships

A Better Beginning for Separating and Divorcing Families



Monthly 2-part (5 hours total) court-ordered classes were held for 17 participants. This is a regular class, offered monthly. Intended outcomes for parents and children include:

- Increased family resilience and stability
- Improved co-parenting relationships, supporting children and protecting them from harmful effects of family conflict, divorce and transition
- Strengthened, more positive and effective communication between co-parents, and between children and their parents
- Decreased trauma and toxic stress

Strong Couples Program – WI leader for this online, self-paced program that includes 5 coaching sessions to give feedback on application of learning. I coordinate the program, lead monthly meetings, attend bi-weekly multi-state meetings, and also serve as a coach for couples.

Court-Ordered Parenting – ordered by Pepin County probation agent; working with one parent at this time. Intensive education and accountability, meeting bi-weekly.

Focus on Fathers A monthly statewide parenting program where participants learn skills to build their children's social and emotional learning. This series is designed to improve understanding of positive parenting practices, while providing social connections for fathers and father figures. I co-taught a **Fathers Teach Perspective** 90-minute class on June 9th

Other Activities

- Developed and submitted my 2026-2027 [Plan of Work](#)
- Attended bi-annual, half-day **Head Start Mental Health Services Advisory Committee** meeting
- **ADRC Community Resource Fair**, Extension display, July 15, Mondovi School

Looking Ahead August-September

- Working with Matt Roesler (Pepin County DHS/Sheriff Dept) to plan *Pepin-Buffalo professional development trainings for Law Enforcement, EMT and DHS professionals*
- [Strength in Service Summit](#) for Veterans, Law Enforcement, First Responders and EMTs, September 12, Eau Claire (I was invited to be part of the coalition team, based on my **Companions Through the Wilderness-Healing from Loss and Grief** and **The Veteran Experience** programs, and will also have an Extension display at the event)

Buffalo County Human Development and Relationships Educational Program Report



Extension

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Buffalo County Positive Youth Development June - July 2026 Program Report

Recent Happenings

Math and Science Night at CFC School – April 16th, 2026: Buffalo County 4-H was pleased to participate in the Math and Science Night held on April 16th at Cochrane-Fountain City (CFC) School. The event featured a variety of engaging, magic-themed stations that provided hands-on learning opportunities for youth and families. At the 4-H station, participants created “potion” sand art, allowing them to explore creativity while engaging in a fun, interactive activity. Youth selected from a variety of colored sands and layered them into small bottles to design their own unique take-home creations. This activity highlighted the 4-H focus on experiential learning through creativity and exploration. The station was facilitated by Bianca Mullen, Associate 4-H Educator, and Stephanie Foust, 4-H Volunteer. Approximately 70 students visited the 4-H station throughout the evening, demonstrating strong interest and engagement. Overall, the event provided a valuable opportunity to connect with youth and promote 4-H programming within the community.



4-H Dog Project Fun Day – April 18th, 2026: Youth participants gathered for the Paws and Tails: Dog Project Fun Day, an engaging and educational event designed to introduce and highlight the Buffalo County 4-H Dog Project. The program began with hands-on learning led by Buffalo County 4-H Dog Project leaders Sam and Kim, who provided valuable insight into dog training and project involvement. Sam’s dog, Mimic, played a key role in demonstrating essential dog project skills, including agility and rallying. Participants observed training techniques in action and gained practical tips for working with their own dogs at home. Youth also had the unique opportunity to interact directly with Mimic during portions of the demonstrations, enhancing their understanding through experiential learning. In addition to dog-focused activities, participants engaged in creative, hands-on projects. Youth designed personalized dog tags using the Buffalo County metal stamping STEM toolkit and constructed dog toys from recycled t-shirts, incorporating elements of both creativity and sustainability. Throughout the event, participants asked thoughtful questions, expanded their knowledge of the dog project, and expressed increased interest in future involvement. The Dog Project Fun Day successfully combined education, skill-building, and creativity, providing a positive introduction to 4-H project opportunities and encouraging continued engagement.





Extension

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Buffalo County Positive Youth Development June - July 2026 Program Report

Earth Day Event at YMCA Camp Pepin – April 22nd: Pepin County Land Conservation hosted a successful Earth Day educational event for junior high students at YMCA Camp Pepin, providing hands-on learning experiences focused on environmental stewardship and conservation. Approximately 160 students from Pepin County schools attended the event, participating in a variety of interactive, outdoor learning stations designed to build awareness and understanding of natural resource conservation. Buffalo County 4-H collaborated with Pepin County 4-H to support a shared learning station featuring a “Recycling Minute to Win It” activity. The event demonstrated the value of strong community partnerships and cross-county collaboration in delivering high-quality educational programming. It also provided a meaningful opportunity to connect with youth and promote 4-H’s role in supporting hands-on, experiential learning.



STEAM Aventure Days - June 26th & July 10th: Buffalo County 4-H offered two full-day STEAM Adventure Days on June 26 and July 10 at the Mondovi Arboretum Park, providing hands-on learning opportunities for youth in grades 5K–6. A total of 15 participants engaged in a wide range of science, technology, engineering, art, and math activities designed to spark curiosity and support experiential learning. Youth explored creative technology through 3D pens, experimented with science and chemistry concepts while making ice cream, and expressed artistic problem-solving through stained-glass-style art projects. These activities encouraged imagination, teamwork, and confidence as participants tried new tools and techniques. In addition to STEAM stations, youth connected with peers from across Buffalo County through group games and collaborative challenges. The outdoor setting at the arboretum provided an ideal environment for exploration, movement, and creativity. The program was facilitated with support from Buffalo County 4-H volunteers and youth leaders. Evaluation results reflected strong engagement across both sessions, with an **overall positive rating of 84.4%**. This high level of satisfaction demonstrates that youth not only enjoyed the activities but also felt successful, supported, and excited about their learning experiences. STEAM Adventure Days also served as an important outreach effort, strengthening connections with families and highlighting the role of 4-H in fostering curiosity, skill-building, and community.





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Buffalo County Positive Youth Development June - July 2026 Program Report

Buffalo County Dairy Breakfast – June 20th: Buffalo County Extension was proud to participate in the Buffalo County Dairy Breakfast on Saturday, June 20th. The event provided a wonderful opportunity to connect with community members and share the many programs and resources Extension has to offer. Guests were encouraged to stop by our booth and take part in the “Old MacDonald’s Matching Game,” an interactive activity designed to help participants better understand where everyday items and foods come from. The game sparked great conversations about agriculture, food systems, and the important role farmers play in our daily lives.



LEGO Challenge at MCYC – June 30th: Buffalo County 4-H staff visited the Mondovi Community Youth Center to facilitate an engaging LEGO Challenge for youth participating in the program. Young people were invited to take part in a creative building activity where each participant received a LEGOS of a specific color and was challenged to design a build inspired by that color. This simple prompt encouraged imagination, problem-solving, and hands-on exploration. Youth were highly engaged throughout the session, eagerly sharing ideas, comparing designs, and supporting one another as they built. Evaluation results reflected strong enthusiasm for the experience, with an **overall satisfaction rate of 82%** when combining positive and neutral responses. Youth showed the greatest excitement in sharing their creations with peers, with nearly half giving the highest rating to that part of the activity. Many participants also expressed interest in continuing to learn and build with LEGO, highlighting the appeal of hands-on, creative challenges. The challenge created a fun, collaborative environment that allowed participants to express creativity while practicing teamwork and communication skills. Through this outreach effort, Buffalo County 4-H connected with 46 young people, strengthening relationships with MCYC and expanding awareness of 4-H programming within the community. The activity demonstrated the value of accessible, drop-in experiences that spark curiosity and provide meaningful learning opportunities for young people.





Buffalo County Positive Youth Development June - July 2026 Program Report

Art in the Park – July 8th: Buffalo County 4-H hosted an Art in the Park program on July 8 at the Alma Legion, offering



younger youth an opportunity to explore a variety of hands-on art experiences. Nine participants engaged in creative activities designed to introduce different artistic mediums while encouraging curiosity, self-expression, and connection with peers. Youth experimented with pot painting, using color and design to personalize small planters; explored clay art, shaping and molding their own creations; and participated in a food-based learning activity by making dirt cups to understand the layers of soil. This blend of art and science allowed participants to learn through doing, reinforcing the 4-H commitment to experiential learning. The program also provided time for youth to interact, collaborate, and build relationships with one another in a welcoming, supportive environment. Evaluation results reflected strong engagement, with an **overall success rate of 86.1%** based on positive and neutral responses. This high level of satisfaction highlights the value of accessible summer programming that sparks

creativity and builds community connections in Alma.

Lakefront Explorers – July 14th in Collaboration with Pepin County 4-H: Buffalo and Pepin County 4-H collaborated to offer the Lakefront Explorers program on July 14 for youth in grades 3–8. Held on Lake Winona in Winona, MN, the afternoon provided hands-on opportunities for young people to build confidence and skills with water-based activities. Participants explored the art of kayaking, canoeing, paddleboarding, and liberty boating, gaining experience in balance and navigation. Youth also had the opportunity to swim, adding to the fun and allowing them to enjoy the lake in multiple ways. The variety of activities supported experiential learning and encouraged youth to try new challenges in a supportive environment.

Fifteen young people took part in the program, connecting with peers from across the county. Throughout the afternoon, youth demonstrated teamwork, curiosity, and enthusiasm as they explored the lake and encouraged one another.



Evaluation results reflected this strong engagement: 100% of participants reported they would bring a friend back with them next year, underscoring the program's success in creating a welcoming, enjoyable, and memorable experience. This collaborative effort strengthened regional partnerships and highlighted the value of accessible outdoor programming. Lakefront Explorers provided meaningful skill-building experiences while fostering community, confidence, and a sense of adventure among participating youth.



Extension

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Buffalo County Positive Youth Development June - July 2026 Program Report

4-H Make and Take Hub at the Buffalo County Fair – July 30th to August 2nd:

Buffalo County 4-H staff and volunteers hosted an interactive booth at the Buffalo County Fair from July 30 through August 2, providing youth and families with hands-on activities and opportunities to learn more about 4-H programming. The booth served as a welcoming space where young people could participate in quick, creative experiences while connecting with 4-H representatives. Youth enjoyed rock painting, button making, and 4-H temporary tattoos, all of which offered simple, engaging ways for visitors to express creativity and take home a small piece of their fair experience. These activities encouraged drop-in participation and helped spark conversations with families about the role of 4-H in supporting youth development. The booth also featured a display of photos showcasing programs and opportunities offered throughout the year, highlighting the hands-on learning available to youth across Buffalo County. In addition, families were able to browse promotional materials to learn more about membership and the benefits of being involved in 4-H. Throughout the four-day fair, the booth provided meaningful visibility for 4-H, strengthened community connections, and offered youth a fun and accessible way to engage with the program.



National Night Out – August 4th: Buffalo County 4-H participated in National Night Out on August 4, 2026, with a youth-focused booth facilitated by Payton Freund and Finley Noll. The booth offered hands-on activities including button making and rock painting, giving young people simple, creative projects to enjoy throughout the event. Throughout the evening, Payton and Finley connected with families and shared information about the many opportunities 4-H provides for youth in Buffalo County. Through this outreach effort, Buffalo County 4-H came into contact with around 500 youth, strengthening community relationships and highlighting 4-H's commitment to accessible, engaging experiences for local families.



Looking Forward

- September Leaders' Association Meeting
- LEGOS at the Library
- Annual Authorization for Community Clubs Due
- STEAM Discovery at MCYC
- 4-H Enrollment
- 4-H Record Books Due
- National 4-H Week