The UMass Extension 4-H E-NewsBlast is sent to all 4-H families and volunteers in Massachusetts. Unless otherwise noted, all virtual programming is available to 4-H members everywhere, no matter where you live or what club or group you belong to!

Check these sites, and your local county Facebook page, for more details and for updates to programs:
https://ag.umass.edu/mass4h
https://www.facebook.com/Mass4H/

**Visual Presentations All Counties and Regions**

ALL county, regional and state Visual Presentations will be held virtually using Zoom. Details will be provided by your 4-H Educator when you register. Read below for details about each area. Youth can participate in other regions if they are unable to attend the VP date in their own.

**Judges:** If you would like to be a judge for the VP’s, please contact Kim Henderson at khenders@umext.umass.edu

**Plymouth County:**
- **Registration Deadline – Monday March 15.**
  - There are three ways to register:
    - Sign up on 4honline at https://v2.4honline.com , OR
    - Complete the registration form found on the UMass 4-H website, OR
    - Contact Cathy Acampora at acampora@umext.umass.edu.

**Worcester, Norfolk, Bristol counties Visual Presentations and Info Sessions**
- **VP’s will occur on Saturday, March 13th and Sunday, March 14th.** Opening ceremonies will begin at 9:30AM and the judging will start at 10AM.

**Dates for Additional VP Contests** are below. Contact your local educator for information about registration. All registered 4-H members can participate in any one of these events if you are not able to attend on the date in your county or region.

- *** This Saturday!! March 6 – Essex County
- March 13 – Middlesex County
- March 13 – Western MA (Hampshire, Hampden, Franklin and Berkshire Counties)
- April 10 & 11 – State VP Event (those qualifying at the county or regional level will be contacted)

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**2021 Massachusetts State 4-H STEAM Festival**

The STEAM festival entries are in! All items will be judged and virtual ribbons will be awarded at the Zoom Awards program taking place on Saturday, March 14 – Pi Day! Those who entered will receive an invitation and link to the awards event.

Thanks to all who entered!

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**4-H Now – Members’ 101**

4-H Members: get to know your 4-H program. When we say “4-H, more than you ever imagined,” it’s not just a slogan! There is so much more, including the history, the dedication to youth, and the connection to community. Attend the 4-H Now series and see how you can impact 4-H. By attending you can better understand the mission of 4-H, learn how you can help grow the program and share what 4-H means to you. Be a part of 4-H Now!

The Zoom sessions will be held on the following Wednesdays from 7-8PM: March 10 & 24; April 7 & 21. Contact VaShon Hiltpold at vwallace@umass.edu Put “4-H Now” in the subject line.
Winter Sowing Class – Make a Mini-Greenhouse

There is sewing, and then there is sowing! Although the words sound the same, they mean very different things. In this class, you will learn how to make a mini greenhouse using a gallon jug. This is an easy way to sow, or plant, your seeds! You will only need a plastic gallon jug, the kind from milk or juice. Sow your seeds the easy way without using electricity. There is less watering too!

The class takes place on March 11 at 7PM via Zoom. To sign up and obtain the link, contact Cathy Acampora at acampora@umext.umass.edu

4-H Paper Snowflake Contest

Construct a paper snowflake that stands out above all the others! It can be big...or small...plain...or bedazzled! Email your snowflake photo by next Friday - March 12th to waskiewicz@umext.umass.edu

Be sure your snowflake email includes your name, age and the category. List the category number you are entering next to your name. Your entry will be highlighted in a PowerPoint so that the 4-H community can enjoy a wintry look from the comfort of their screens while indoors. One snowflake per person.

Categories for recognition include:
1. Most Creative
2. Zaniest
3. Most Realistic
4. Most "4-H-Like"
5. People's Choice

Python Coding

The UMass Robotics Team will lead a Zoom Python session introducing coding using Python. Participants will write a short and simple simulator code using this programming language or use a "fill in the blanks" using pre-created code while learning the concepts. The session is designed for grades 7-12 and will be held next Thursday March 11 at 7:00PM.

Registration deadline is March 5. Email Tom Waskiewicz at waskiewicz@umext.umass.edu

JoAnn Fabrics and 4-H

JoAnn Fabrics and 4-H have partnered again! Donations to 4-H will be collected at registers between March 1 and April 30, with a percentage of the donations coming directly to Massachusetts 4-H. Anyone can also donate online at https://4-h.org/4HJOANN.

During this time, if you are a JoAnn/4-H Rewards Card member, you will be eligible for special discounts. On April 18, JOANN will be hosting a free, take home craft event in all stores. The kits will include LEGO DOTs and kids who participate in the stores will be able to create a bunny and chick and coloring pages. In each craft bag with be messaging about donating to 4-H and creating opportunity for all.

Life: Ready for YOUR World

For teens ages 12-18

It's inevitable, you will grow up and become an adult! This new series is set up to offer some important things everyone should know about life. There will be 3 sessions to this series; you are encouraged to sign up for all, but any single session or any combination of them can be signed up for too. The sessions will be held on Tuesday evenings from 7-8PM. To register go to https://forms.gle/U8sqNaAGbH2iH2Wm8 This program is a collaboration between Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island 4-H Programs.

Session 1 – Living
3/9 - Moving out & Moving in
3/16 - Clean, Neat & Organized
3/23 - You've got to EAT
3/30 - What's in your toolbox?
4/6 - Self Care

Session 2 - Finances
4/13 - Banking
4/20 – Expenses and Bills
4/27 - Budgeting
5.4 – Credit/Schmedit

Session 3 - Education/Career
5/11 - Exploring YOUR path
5/18 - Applying to college/jobs
5/25 - Volunteering & Networking

Life can be hard, let's try to make it a little easier with some important lessons.
Animal Science
Contact Carrie Sears with any questions or to register for any of the events below at ccsears@umext.umass.edu

Zoom Meetings & Workshops
Monday, March 8 – 7:30pm Ag Summit Team Action Plan Meeting
Thursday, March 10 – 7:00pm MA 4-H Dairy Advisory Meeting

State 4-H Horse Events –
State 4-H Roundup – Virtual Contest - Hippology & Horse Bowl – May 15
Horse Judging will be at a later date (aiming for an in-person contest)

Horse Contest Practices with the Coaches:
March 23 & March 30 – 7pm – Communication Presentation Tips from Coach Darlene Welch
March 8 & 15 – 7pm – Hippology Contest Practice with Coach Shari Morse

Horse Bowl and Judging – To Be Announced

Horse Verification Forms -
There is the possibility of a New England 4-H Show (former Eastern States 4-H Horse Show held during the September fair) on July 26-29. Youth will need to be 12 years of age (as of Jan 1, 2021) in order to show. Youth will apply as in the past and a horse verification will need to be supplied either prior or with your entry by the deadline date (TBD). Please watch for updates.

National 4-H Horse Communications Team:
For youth trying out for the National Communication Teams. Youth can present at the State 4-H Visual Presentations in the horse categories but must be actively enrolled in a horse club prior to the State 4-H Visual Presentations in order to be considered to be eligible for the National Communications Team. Youth can join clubs virtually now so this should not be a barrier for a youth if a club is not in their immediate area.

STEAM Bitmoji Classroom Part 2

The 4-H Bitmoji STEAM Classroom is for all ages; however, this year’s content is best suited for middle school to high-school aged youth (11-18 yrs.), and not recommended for Cloverbuds.

4-H Educator Lauren DuBois’s Bitmoji Classroom will be uploaded at noon on Mondays. This class will focus on Citizen Science. How can we become better advocates for our world?

Classes focus on recycling, upcycling, minimalism, green washing, biodiversity, water conservation, drones, reducing our carbon footprint and more! A better future starts with us, and it starts now with education and little changes we can make in our daily lives. Try out fun hands on activities and learn from experts in their field of study. All classrooms are self-paced and are accessible at your convenience. If you took part in previous STEAM Bitmoji Classroom activities, you will receive an email with information. If you want to sign up for the first time, email ldubois@umass.edu for an invitation link to join.

Pi Day Activity - Sunday March 14 at 3pm

Sunday March 14 is Pi Day! Take a break from visual presentations or other 4-H or school projects and join us to celebrate Pi Day. Remember to have a slice of your favorite pie as a snack! Also, take part in our fun poll about Pies at https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/W9NQKBG

Register at: https://umass-amherst.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJAqcOCvrj8jHtL3vzfNLHt_oY-JgWXhq5v

MATERIALS you will need:
1. Different sized circular objects. (Ex: jar lid, quarter, bucket, etc.) (for Pi Day fun, get different sizes of pies such as moon pie, oatmeal cream pie, etc.)
2. Ribbon (can also use twine or string)
3. Scissors
4. Ruler
5. Calculator

4-H Volunteer Conference – Saturday March 20

Theme: 4-H: Big Enough for Everyone!

All 4-H volunteers are invited to attend a free, virtual Spring Conference for volunteers across the northeast region. This event is sponsored by the Virginia Association of Adult 4-H Volunteer Leaders and is open to all Massachusetts 4-H volunteers at no cost!

The conference date is Saturday March 20. Times for sessions are 9AM-3PM. There are 14 workshops to choose from in three concurrent sessions. Check the conference homepage which contains detailed descriptions of each session and a complete schedule at https://sites.google.com/vt.edu/vaspringconference21/home
The conference opening keynote speaker is Meriel Martinez, Professional Development Coordinator from the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities. The closing speaker is Ethel Reeves, Director of Equity & Community Relations for Lynchburg, VA City Schools.

To register go to: https://forms.gle/CJENcC25dRRL1Jv88
All conference registrants will be provided links to view the recordings of each session. That way you can see a session you missed or were not able to attend!

Wacky Winter Wildlife Bitmoji Series

How do some of our local wildlife animals adapt to life in a New England Winter? In this 4 part series, learn how animals adapt and handle life in the snow and cold. The series will focus on some rodents, large mammals, reptiles, and birds commonly found in New England. The series begins on March 1. Contact Cathy Acampora to sign up and obtain your link at acampora@umext.umass.edu

"Climate, Carbon & Canopy"
Thursdays-April 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 - 7-8:30PM

This 5-week virtual workshop series will start with an exploration of the relationship between weather and climate, then investigate the relationships between the greenhouse gas, carbon dioxide, and climate change. In weeks 3 and 4, the workshops will delve into the global carbon cycle, our individual carbon footprints, and what actions businesses and communities can take to help address climate change. We will end our workshop series with an examination of how trees are part of the global carbon cycle and the role of trees in the moderating climate change. As part of the workshop, each participant will become a member of the Arbor Day Foundation and receive 10 tree seedlings to plant. You will need access to Zoom and be using Google Sheets in this workshop.

Grade Levels: Middle through High School; Elementary School with support
Cost: $10-this is for membership in the Arbor Day Foundation and for tree seedlings. It is not a 4-H fee. Checks should be payable to: Hampshire County 4-H Advisory Council and mailed to: Leory Barry, Treasurer, Hampshire County 4-H Advisory Council, PO Box 817 Belchertown, MA 01007

Earth Day and Arbor Day

Earth Day April 22nd and Arbor Day April 30th: Consider these community service ideas:

- Make a change in your daily habits to have a positive effect on climate change
- Look at the carbon footprint of your project, hobby, or shopping habits
  - Do you buy local?
  - Do you use seasonal fruits and vegetables that don't require shipping from far away?
  - Stop using straws and other plastics and one time use materials
  - Visit a thrift shop for clothes, toys, and books
  - Try doing a meatless Monday or other day of the week.
  - Cut down on potential excessive amounts of emails in your inbox, which uses server space and energy.
- Plant a tree
- Upcycle something you no longer need or have outgrown and don't forget you can enter it in the STEAM Festival

Career Exploration Series

Register to attend any of the sessions by contacting Angelica Paredes at angelica@umext.umass.edu. Be sure to provide her with the session you wish to attend, your name, club or school, county and state where you are enrolled if a 4-H member.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 17</td>
<td>Bob Metcalfe</td>
<td>Wildlife Tracker</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Bob Metcalfe is a naturalist and licensed guide with a lifelong interest in local wildlife and the habitat that is essential for their survival. He is an instructor at Boston Outdoor School, the education coordinator for The Saugus River Watershed Council and a member of the Maine Wilderness Guides Association. Through his business, New England Discovery, Bob offers programs in wildlife observation and photography, animal tracking and habitat exploration to adults and school children. <a href="http://www.newenglanddiscovery.com">www.newenglanddiscovery.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>April 7</td>
<td>James McDermott</td>
<td>Musician</td>
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<td>James McDermott has been chasing sounds for as long as he can remember. Since the age of six he has been obsessed with all things &quot;noise.&quot; Pots and pans to his first electric guitar and drum set, music has consumed his life. Throughout middle and</td>
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April 21

Dr. Jennifer Hayden Epperson

Executive Director, Kinship Radio Network, MN - Author

Helping others reach their potential is Jennifer’s passion. Currently, she serves as the Executive Director of Kinship Radio Network in Minnesota. Previously, she was Moody Radio’s Director of Research and Learning and has been station manager of both WRMB-89.3 FM (Moody Radio) and WFIF-1500 AM (Blount Communications) after getting her start in her native state of Rhode Island at WARV 1590-AM, Warwick. She is also the current Chairperson of the NRB’s (National Religious Broadcasters) Radio committee.

Jennifer has worked and taught in international contexts and spent five years as the Executive Producer of TWR’s Women of Hope radio program. In 2012, she completed a doctorate in organizational leadership and has taught leadership and radio on the university level. Jennifer released her first book, The Pioneer’s Way: Leading a Trailblazing Life that Builds Meaning for Your Family, Your Community, and You in October 2020.

Jennifer’s own 4-H experiences figure prominently in her book The Pioneer’s Way. As a long-time member of the 4-H public speaking program, she was the 1983 Rhode Island state public speaking delegate to the 4-H Congress in Chicago. She credits her 4-H experience with her present success, and yes, her very existence. Her parents, both 4-H members, met at the Rocky Hill Fairgrounds in Rhode Island.

May 5

David Fox

Carpenter, Electrical Engineer & Computer Design Engineer

Dave grew up in Bethesda, Md. His father, a forester, had a small poorly equipped shop in the basement where he fixed things. Dave learned about woodworking at a very early age by also ‘fixing things’ in that basement. He has always enjoyed making things, particularly of wood, and spent a lot of time in the shop making small pieces of wood out of larger pieces and bending nails! By the time he was ready for college, he had developed a fascination with electronics and tinkered with that more than woodworking. He went to Carnegie Mellon University and earned a degree in Electrical Engineering. After college he became a computer design engineer for over 20 years. Even as an engineer he always did woodworking in his spare time. Eventually, he grew tired of engineering and decided to switch careers and become a remodeling contractor. Running his own remodeling business and being the only employee kept him busy until retirement in 2016. Dave started a 4-H Woodworking Club around 2012, and it has been going ever since.

May 19

Sandra Choate

Lawyer

In her former position, a day at Sandy’s office was anything but routine! It could often involve meeting with lawmakers and their staff in the Capitol complex, being with government officials at any of the many agency headquarters located in Washington, D.C., or meeting with members of American Federation of Government Employees’ National Executive Council Board of Directors. On days she was not in the office, she traveled extensively around the country to Conferences and Seminars, to various federal agency offices and to AFGE members’ offices.

Sandy Choate returned to private practice specializing in the area of federal legislative law after almost 19 years as the Assistant General Counsel-Legislation for the AFGE, AFL-CIO. She has worked on a wide range of issues affecting federal employees and has over 30 years’ experience analyzing and drafting legislation; providing advice and guidance to Locals and federal employees particularly in the area of civil service law and regulations; and, has specialized expertise in the area of employment issues affecting federal firefighters.

She has headed or served on numerous task forces for agencies including the Office of Personnel Management and the Department of Defense. Prior to her work with AFGE, Attorney Choate was in private practice where she represented numerous trade associations as their legislative counsel.

She is a graduate of the American University with a B.S. degree in Business Administration/Financial Planning, and a Suma Cum Laude graduate of The George Mason University School of Law. She is a member of the D. C. and Virginia bars, the U.S. Supreme Courts, the U.S. Courts of Appeals for the Federal, D.C., Fourth and Eleventh Circuits, and the U. S. District Courts for D.C. and the Eastern and Western Districts of Virginia.
Odds and Ends

4-H & MA FARM BUREAU TRIVIA NIGHT!

Save the date of Monday, April 19th for the first Trivia Night with Co-hosts Dr. Weston Brown and Tom Waskiewicz. The Massachusetts Farm Bureau Promotion and Education Committee, 4-H, and Dr. Weston Brown are hosting a virtual trivia night on Facebook Live! Come test your knowledge of agriculture...from the comfort of your own home! Go to https://www.facebook.com/events/186501015497495/ to find out more.

There will be 4 rounds of 10 question each, all relating to agriculture. The live video will start at 6:45 p.m. to give everyone a chance to get situated. The questions will begin at 7:00 p.m. There will be a link to a google form that will be the answer sheet. The questions will be read aloud and presented on the screen, and you can answer on the google doc. At the end of the round, submit the sheet and it will be graded. Once you submit your answer sheet, click "Submit a new response" at the bottom of the page, and a new answer sheet will be generated for the next round. Dr. Brown will be keeping track of points and will announce the standings between each round, and the winners at the end.

Some tips to keep in mind: (1)Please keep team names the same each round! (2)A computer would be the best way to participate in this event!

Earth Day Every Day Webinar Series

A free Earth Day, Every Day webinar series, sponsored by Rutgers University Cooperative Extension, will start soon! The interactive, live sessions will be held on Monday evenings at 6:30PM and last for an hour. The focus will be on steps everyone can take to protect the environment. See how each person can take actions that make our homes more sustainable; from environmentally-friendly lawn care, to recycling, to conducting a home energy audit, and more.

For a list of workshops in the series and registration information, follow this link: https://envirostewards.rutgers.edu/Earth-Day.html

Virtual Experience for Equine Affaire Enthusiasts!

Equine Affaire will be a FREE virtual event this year on April 8-11, 2021

Log on with Equine Affaire for a new and exciting virtual equine event! Equine Affaire in Ohio is going entirely online at www.equineaffaire.com on April 8-11, 2021. You can also join the fun by following @equineaffaire on Facebook and Instagram. No tickets needed. The event will include digital learning, shopping, interviews and more

Meet the 4-H Team!

Each week we will feature some of the individuals who are part of the Massachusetts 4-H Team. This week say hello to two of the four people who work in the Plymouth County Extension 4-H Office

Molly Vollmer – Plymouth County Extension Director/4-H Educator

Molly grew up in the 4-H program on Cape Cod. She pursued a degree in biology in college, and then went on to complete a Master’s Degree in management.

Molly loves working with people of all ages and the diverse activities and programs that being a 4-H educator requires! She has been with the Plymouth County 4-H Program for almost 15 years! Her favorite part of her job is being at fairs with 4-H members and volunteers, putting the “hands-on” part of 4-H into action. Molly is very active in many different 4-H programs, especially the visual presentation county and state programs. She lives with her husband, 2 children, and assortment of pets on Cape Cod.

Valerie Schell is a 4-H Educator at the Plymouth County Extension 4-H program. She has a passion for horses and working with teens. Val has been working in the 4-H program for the past 8 years. Before working at 4-H she owned a Childcare Center for 20 years. She has always had a passion for youth and teaching.

Since starting at 4-H she has been the Horse Program Co-coordinator for Plymouth County, Teen Ambassador leader, Massachusetts 4-H teen retreat Coordinator, and Plymouth County Winter Workshops facilitator. From when she began her work with Plymouth County 4-H, Val took on the job to restart the Ambassador Club and the Winter Workshops program. Valerie is enthusiastic about improving both these programs on a continual basis.

The program that Val is most proud of and enjoys the most is the 4-H Teen Retreat. Each year Valerie gets to share two days with 40 teens from across the state, giving them opportunities to “Make the best better”. Although teen retreat is her favorite program, she enjoys her everyday work with 4-H leaders and youth around Plymouth County.

Valerie lives in Plymouth County with her two dogs Mia & Scout, and her horse Bentley.
4-H Office Contacts:

The 4-H Program is operating and available to answer questions. Reach out to your local office by email. Phone numbers are available at the 4-H Website at https://ag.umass.edu/mass4h/about/officelocations-contacts

State 4-H Office: Linda Horn, Interim Director lrhorn@umext.umass.edu
Carrie Sears, 4-H Animal Science Program Manager – ccsears@umext.umass.edu
Kim Pond – 4-H SET Program Manager – kima@umext.umass.edu
Deb Comeau – State 4-H Administrative Assistant – dcomeau@umext.umass.edu

Western MA (Franklin, Hampshire, Hampden and Berkshire Counties):
Tom Waskiewicz, 4-H Educator – waskiewicz@umext.umass.edu
Angelica Paredes, 4-H Educator – angelica@umext.umass.edu
Lauren DuBois, Urban 4-H Educator – ldubois@umext.umass.edu
Lizmarie Lopez Ortiz, Urban 4-H Program Assistant - llopezortiz@umext.umass.edu

Southeastern MA (Bristol and Norfolk):
Meg McDermott, 4-H Educator – memcdermott@umass.edu
Kim Henderson, Administrative Assistant – khenders@umext.umass.edu

Central MA (Worcester County):
Meg McDermott, 4-H Educator – memcdermott@umass.edu
Martina Jasiewicz, Administrative Assistant – mjasiewicz@umext.umass.edu

Northeastern MA (Essex, Middlesex, Suffolk):
VaShon Wallace-Hiltpold, Acting 4-H Educator – vwallace@umext.umass.edu
Pam LeFave, Program Assistant – plefave@umext.umass.edu
Debbie Beaubien, Administrative Assistant – debbieb@umext.umass.edu
Nancy McCarthy, Program Assistant – nmccarthy@umext.umass.edu

Plymouth County:
Molly Vollmer, 4-H Educator: mvollmer@umext.umass.edu
Valerie Schell, 4-H Educator: vschell@umext.umass.edu
Cathy Acampora, Administrative Assistant: acampora@umext.umass.edu

Barnstable County:
Dawn Johnson, Administrative Assistant: dawn.johnson@barnstablecounty.org

Massachusetts 4-H is an extension program at the University of Massachusetts. UMass 4-H follows the Massachusetts Governor’s regulations for the re-opening of the state as well as the governance of the University of Massachusetts. Although guidelines for numbers of people who can gather have relaxed a bit for the state, the University guidance still states that no in-person 4-H meetings or activities are to take place at this time. This means our clubs and groups still may not meet in person. We will continue to monitor the situation and will allow in-person club meetings and activities to occur when university guidelines have been completed. We hope that your groups will continue to meet virtually and use some of the many programs, contests, and links that we have to offer online.