The staff at the Mercer County 4-H Office is proud to announce several new and improved resources for clubs and leaders!

A new Mercer County 4-H web site is being developed for easy access to the most recent and pertinent 4-H information. Please use this resource to manage your 4-H calendar and to promote 4-H among your friends.

The new bi-monthly newsletter will also be available through the new web site. The newsletter is your forum, so please forward your updates, photos and achievements!

Checkout our new web site at: http://mercer.njaes.rutgers.edu

**A Note from Staff**

Hello everyone,

As you have probably already heard, we have a new 4-H Program Assistant, Kaitlin (Kate) Everett. Her position duties include supporting new and existing clubs and leaders, coordinating county wide events, and developing our overall club program.

The successful promotion of our club program will have multiple benefits, including the ability to offer greater and more diverse opportunities to our current members and to service a larger percentage of area youth.

This is an exciting time to be involved in Mercer County 4-H! Open-houses, potlucks, lock-ins and family camp weekends are all possibilities. Let’s make sure our family, friends and neighbors know how much fun 4-H can be, and how it ‘makes the best better’!

If you have any 4-H club program suggestions or questions please contact Kate at keverett@njaes.rutgers.edu. Thank you!

Chad Ripberger  
County 4-H Agent  

Kaitlin Everett  
4-H Program Assistant
Upcoming Events

South Jersey Teen Conference (SJTC) will take place on March 13-15, at the Quality Inn located in Maple Shade, NJ. This year, teens in grades 8 and up, from the 10 southern NJ counties will explore the theme: ‘S.E.T. Your Mind to 4-H.’ Good luck to all who are attending!

NJ Junior Breeder Symposium is scheduled for March 21 at Rutgers University, Cook Campus. The cost is $12.00 for the day-long workshop, including lunch. You must register by March 10. For registration forms, contact the 4-H office. Rutgers Day will be April 25, also at Cook.

State Presentations will be held on June 6, at Rutgers University and open to individuals, 8th grade and above, who score high enough during county presentations to qualify. Presenting at and scoring well in State Presentations is a high honor. Try your best to qualify!

Presentation Workshop

A presentation workshop will be offered at the 4-H Office on:

**Friday, April 3 from 7:30 to 9:00 pm**

We will review: (1) the 4 different types of presentations; (2) the 3 basic parts of a presentation; (3) visual aids and (4) appropriate appearance.

If your club is interested in attending, please RSVP to Kate by March 27 at keverett@njaes.rutgers.edu. Individuals may also attend.

Public Presentations

County 4-H Public Presentations will be held at the County 4-H Office:

**Friday, April 24 & Friday, May 1 from 7:00 to 9:00 pm.**

Youth must register by April 10 by emailing Kate or calling the office.

All 4-H members are highly encouraged to present at the county level. Register now!! Members should choose their own topics, learn as much as they can about that topic, organize their thoughts on the topic into an introduction, presentation, and summary format, and practice.

This is a learning experience so we don’t expect perfection, but we do expect a good effort! Remember, appearance matters when giving a speech, so look tidy and bring visuals. All members presenting at the county level will receive a ribbon and certificate. The three top scoring presenters will receive 4-H apparel. **We look forward to your presentations!**
Did You Know...
There is More to Mercer County 4-H than Clubs

4-H Youth Development takes on many forms in Mercer County. In 2008, School Enrichment and After-school Programs reached over 6,000 youth. Programs include Get Moving Get Healthy, 4-H HIP-HOP Dance Crew, Horses and Youth (HAY), 4-H 4-REEL Digital Filmmaking, Design It, Junior Master Gardeners ® and Afterschool Adventure. Trainings for teens and adults are also available through the 4-H office for a small fee. Trainings offered include babysitting, teambuilding, character education, and others. If you are interested in learning more about these programs call the 4-H office at 609.989.6833.

National 4-H Opportunities for Teens

Here are some national opportunities that you should take advantage of if you are eligible:

**National 4-H Congress** brings together 4-H delegates from all over the country. Therefore, it is highly competitive. Youth in 10-12 grades may apply now. Eligible members will receive an application form in the mail. The trip is in late November in Atlanta, Georgia. Refer to the website for details: www.national4-hcongress

**Citizenship Washington Focus (CWF)** is a national 4-H leadership program held in July at the National 4-H Center near D.C. It is opened to 4-H members in grades 9-12. Applications are due to the office by 2/27. Refer to the website for details: www.4hcwf.org.

**National 4-H Conference** is held near D.C., aimed at teens and focused on leadership skills. Conference is in late March.

NJ State 4-H Summer Camp is Open to Everyone!

4-H Summer Camp, held at Lindley G. Cook Camp in Stokes State Forest, is a great opportunity to get to know 4-H members (and non-4-Hers) from Mercer and surrounding counties. During your stay, you are sure to make new friends and have fun around the lake and campfire. There are six weeklong sessions available, beginning in early July and ending in mid-August. All have fun themes and great counselors. You can sign up for as many weeks as you like, but its best to act quickly because there are discounts for early birds. There are also discounts when siblings attend! Family and friends who are not involved in 4-H may also attend. Parents and 4-H members should utilize the camp registration forms available online. Have fun at camp!!!

Check-out the web site: nj4hcamp.rutgers.edu
2009 4-H Club Updates

Please join 4-H staff in welcoming three new 4-H clubs!

New clubs include: **The Boltin’ Colts 4-H Horse Club** in Robbinsville, **The 4-H Stars Community Club** in Trenton, and **The New Sewing Club** in Lawrence. All three clubs are accepting new members!

Together, these new clubs consist of approximately 30 4-H members, ranging from first through fifth grades and 8 adult volunteer leaders!

If you are interested in learning more about these clubs, or if you are interested in starting a new club, please contact Kate at the 4-H office.

The 91st 4-H Fair Theme

This year’s fair will mark the 91st Mercer County 4-H Fair!

Due to the overwhelming success of last year’s fair, we will be returning to Howell Living History Farm in Hopewell Township on August 1 and 2.

Check out their website at: [howellfarm.org](http://howellfarm.org).

Last year’s theme was ‘Mercer County 4-H... Looking Back, Moving Forward.’ We are now accepting new theme submissions to be used in the fair project catalog and ad book.

It will also be used in the club displays at the fair.

Please submit your ideas for the theme by March 6. Email to keverett@njaes.rutgers.edu or drop them off at the office.

Thank you!

Fair Catalog Available

This year’s fair catalog will be available online.

We hope the easy access of the catalog will increase project entries in traditionally under-represented classes.

In addition, it is our hope that Clubs, leaders, and individual members become more involved in the fair planning process.

If you wish to display a project at the fair, but do not see a division or class for it in the catalog, please let us know.

No matter what kind of club you are involved in, you have some kind of ‘project’ to show for it. Be proud of your work and show it off!
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**Get to Know Mercer County 4-H Staff!**

Chad Ripberger, Mercer County 4-H Agent  
LouAnn Mastromarino, 4-H Program Assistant

Sharon Gore, 4-H Program Associate  
Kate Everett, 4-H Program Assistant

Miss Harmon, 4-H Program Associate  
Tari Benning, 4-H Program Secretary
If you volunteer to be a club leader, co-leader, or parent helper you will be directly, and positively, affecting the quality of life of those youth by offering them greater opportunities.

If you (or your parent) already are a volunteer, you can help by recruiting other caring adults to start new clubs or support existing clubs.

Volunteers can also serve as instructors, fundraisers and advisory board members. Regardless of the subject or lesson…

Almost any skill, interest or expertise can be translated into a 4-H club and finding youth to fill new clubs is never an issue!

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For more information on volunteering, or for promotional materials, please refer to our web site or contact Kate at keverett@njaes.rutgers.edu or 989.6833.