To: 4-H Club Organizational Leaders
From: Ina Metzger Linville, Director, University of Missouri 4-H Center for Youth Development
Date: Fall 2014
Subject: 4-H for 2014-2015

First of all, Thank you, for giving your time and talents to help 4-H members! I hope the following information helps you get started. We anticipate another exciting year in 4-H.

Please read this carefully as it contains some important information about 4-H for the new program year. It will help your members, parents, and leaders be successful in 4-H. Information on any of these resources or programs is available from your local University of Missouri Extension Center and from your 4-H youth specialist or local 4-H staff.

Missouri 4-H Club Leader Kit
Each fall, every 4-H club receives a Missouri 4-H Club Leader Kit. This kit is intended to make your job simpler and to convey to you our thanks for your work as a 4-H volunteer. Please be sure that the information is passed on to the right person in your club. Be sure to look at Starting the New 4-H Year LG912 included in the kit.

Member Enrollment and Projects
Enrollment: Check with your local University of Missouri Extension Center for county enrollment due dates. In the Kit, you will find Instructions for Forms that walk through the enrollment process. The Clover also gives basic information about requirements for 4-H membership. Encourage every family to read these pages, as well as county newsletters and updates.

Ordering 4-H Project Literature: All 4-H project literature is available for purchase. Individuals or families will find an order form in the Clover to purchase 4-H project literature directly from Extension Publications. In the Kit, you will find the Missouri 4-H Literature and Merchandise Order Form LG911 to use if you wish to combine or prepare a club order.

Dues: By now every family in your county should be aware that membership dues are increasing from $8 per member to $20 beginning January 1, 2015. The decision was not made hastily or without considering consequences for families. The decision to increase dues is necessary to best position 4-H now and for the future. The good news is, if families pay their dues in a timely manner so club enrollments can be returned to your county extension offices by their established due date, families are still paying $8 per child enrolled this fall. So please encourage your families to be prompt!

The state dues help support a variety of statewide 4-H programs including volunteer screening and training. In addition, they pay a portion of the costs for 4-H literature and educational materials. Dues are collected at the county level with club enrollments. Check with your University of Missouri Extension Center for county details and due dates. Of course, if dues present a problem for an individual or family, talk with your local 4-H faculty or staff about scholarships or assistance.

Officers/Treasurer’s Resources: Look over the resources for 4-H Club Officers in the Clover or on 4-H website. Use them to help your club officers prepare for important leadership roles. Your club must use the Missouri 4-H Club Treasurer Record Book Y672, a copy of which is provided in your Club Kit. This publication provides the required financial policies and records for any 4-H organization (clubs, county councils, committees, etc.). In the Kit, you will find a memo that outlines those key policies for you to share with your group’s treasurers. Please review this with the treasurer and the adult that will be working with the member.
Volunteers

Missouri 4-H Volunteer Application Form (LG636): All persons who want to volunteer with 4-H must meet two criteria. The first is to complete an application and be screened each year. This insures that the individual is a “recognized Missouri 4-H volunteer” who is approved to work with the 4-H program. All new and returning volunteers must complete, sign and return the Volunteer Application Form LG636 or reenrollment form supplied by your local University of Missouri Extension Center. For returning volunteers, re-enrollment should be completed before December 31 to insure continuous recognition. As a club organizational leader, please treat the information in these applications confidentially. Handle the applications as quickly as possible by submitting them to your University of Missouri Extension Center.

Missouri 4-H Volunteer Orientation
The second criterion is all new 4-H volunteers, must complete a one-time orientation by January 1. Check with your local 4-H Specialist or Program Assistant about workshops in your area. Volunteers with computer access can do this at their convenience on-line. Your local extension office has log-in and password information. Volunteers who have attended, in general, have thoroughly enjoyed the information. Please encourage your volunteers who have yet to fulfill this obligation to attend or access orientation training. Having informed volunteers will help strengthen the 4-H program. I have seen many volunteers wear their 4-H name tags with pride.

Volunteer resources: There are many resources available to help you be successful as a 4-H volunteer. Review the volunteer section of the Missouri 4-H website at http://4h.missouri.edu/go/getinvolved/volunteer/ or contact your University of Missouri Extension office.

One special note is availability of the Volunteers…the foundation of youth development five-lesson internet-based course to learn the basics of working with youth. Lessons deal with group management, learning by doing, working with parents, child development and more. The course is available at http://4h.missouri.edu/getinvolved/volunteer/volunteertraining/

More Resources
Opportunities…recognition, trips, scholarships, contests and more: In addition to project information, the Clover contains information on recognition, 4-H scholarships, trips for members and volunteers, educational events, and other resources. Encourage 4-H families to read it from cover to cover.

Community Service: Missouri 4-H clubs are encouraged to help the community and serve others. A special recognition program is available to all 4-H clubs who keep records of their service and submit it to their local University of Missouri Extension Center using the Youth Service to Communities Form LG760 found on the CD, Missouri 4-H website and in the Clover. Your club can also apply for a cash grant from the Missouri 4-H Foundation for community service projects. The Missouri 4-H Foundation website has details at http://4h.missouri.edu/foundation/.

Websites: The World Wide Web can open up a whole new world of resources for 4-H families. The following websites may be useful to you:
- Missouri 4-H - Information on 4-H programs in Missouri—look for continual updates and information. http://4h.missouri.edu/
- National 4-H - This site is a place where members, volunteers and staff can connect. http://www.4h-usa.org
- National 4-H - National 4-H Headquarters at USDA/CSREES has information on 4-H organizations and rules. http://www.national4-hheadquarters.gov/
- National 4-H Council - Council is a private organization that raises money for 4-H and maintains the National 4-H Center in Washington, D.C. http://www.fourhcouncil.edu

THANK YOU!
Missouri 4-H is a leader in positive youth development, and you are integral in this great mission. Although this letter focused on the details of managing our program, let’s all keep our purpose in site “4-H … creating environments where young people are valued, contributing members of their community.” On behalf of all Missouri youth, thank you for the hours, energy and personal dedication that you bring to your job as club leader. Best wishes for a great year!