

# Greetings Virginia 4-H!

August 2015



## Bi-Annual News brief

This news brief is an attempt to keep you better informed and provide relevant and current information that you can use in your programming. I hope you will find this helpful and I welcome your feedback as we progress.

Thanks for all you do,

Sam Fisher



## RESEARCH



We are partnering with Clemson University and South Carolina this summer to conduct surveys of parents whose children attend camp in 2015. Data from our last parent surveys in 2002 has served us well in helping support what we as youth development professionals already know— Camp makes a difference!

This year the surveys are being sent to parents by email approximately one week after the camp experience. This time lapse gives parents an opportunity to observe any behavioral changes their children may exhibit since their camping experience. A follow-up email is then sent approximately two weeks after camp. We have asked Agents to assist us by emailing these surveys to parents of your campers.

At the conclusion of the summer, the surveys will be tallied and the results shared in multiple formats. There will be a comprehensive report of all three states as well as an individual state report. There is also an opportunity to share data within each 4-H Center service area and individual Units. Dr. Barry Garst, former Va. Camping Specialist and current professor at Clemson University, will join us in the fall to share results of the study.

If you have questions or if I can assist you in any way with this process please feel free to contact me. Look for emails from me with the information for the parents and links to the surveys. Thank you in advance for assisting in this important research activity.



## 4-H Center Spotlight

### Jamestown 4-H Center welcomes Sue Williams as new Center Director

Sue comes to us from Wernersville, PA where she served as an Associate Executive Director at South Mountain YMCA Camps. Sue started her camping career in 4-H in 1995 with Cornell Cooperative Extension and is excited about getting back to her “roots”. She has a strong background in budgeting, administration, facility management and was the Keystone Section American Camp Association Standards Chair. Sue has moved to the Williamsburg area with her two Labrador Retrievers *Cricket* and *Dixie*.

## Important Dates:

- **Aug. 25-26 Outdoor Adventure Training at Holiday Lake**
- **Sept 23-24 VAE4HA Conference at Airfield 4-H Center**
- **Nov. 12-15 4-H Symposium at Natural Bridge**
- **Jan. 18-20 Master Camp Director Training (location TBA)**



## Risk Management



Beginning this year in VCE we began the process of performing criminal background checks on all volunteers and staff who supervise children in our programs. This is an American Camp Association (ACA) standard for our 4-H Camps and required by Virginia Tech for all overnight camps on campus. It is also the standard of what is considered reasonably prudent for youth serving agencies. Evidence that this process makes a difference has been documented by the ACA. “Of the 40,000 checks conducted in an ACA pilot program, 6.1% of all participants were found to have criminal records that rendered them unfit to work with children! (this included convictions of criminal sexual conduct with a child, aggravated criminal assault, rape, homicide, and other “serious” felonies.)”\* That’s over 2,200 individuals with access to children!

Remember—criminal background checks are not just for camping programs. Please visit the following website for current information and guidance on the VCE Background Screening Requirements: <http://www.intra.ext.vt.edu/support/volunteer/index.html>

For additional questions contact either Sam Fisher or Jeremy Johnson at the State Office.

\*ACA-Call to Action 11/19/14—Child Protection Improvement Act <http://www.acacamps.org/publicpolicy/CPIA>



### PROGRAM TIPS



#### Making the Camp Connection

Camp, whether Junior camp or day camps, can be a great recruitment tool for strengthening current and building new Unit Clubs. For some youth, the camp experience is their first introduction to 4-H and for others it is an opportunity to continue to grow and expand their learning opportunities. By capitalizing on those popular camp classes and creating opportunities back in the Units, the reach of your efforts is expanded. Volunteers and youth who wish to follow their passion or continue to explore a new skill will bring that excitement back to the Units.

For example: A Unit offered sewing at camp, the volunteer and youth enjoyed it so much the Agent offered a couple of workshops in the county as a follow-up. The volunteer was a little unsure at first, but with good participation and at the urging of participants, a sewing club was formed. As the club has progressed through the years, the volunteers and members have expanded their knowledge and experience to include competing at local fairs, district contests, and even 4-H Congress.

The potential to capitalize on the excitement and interest generated by a camp class can instill in youth is limitless—examples abound with opportunities evolving from such things as shooting, archery, environmental education, robotics, cooking, equine, aerospace, and map & compass. With the current explosion of the “maker” movement there is a great opportunity to continue that excitement in individual Units. Of course this works both ways, camp classes can also be a retention or strengthening tool for your existing programs. I encourage you to look at the possibilities in both areas and talk with your 4-H Center Program Directors. They can be great resources when planning your camp and Unit programs.



### Ultimate Camp Resource—it’s not just for camp!

Looking for games/activities to fill in during club meetings, trainings, day camps or group down time? Need some fresh new ideas for teen trainings? From ice breakers, skits, games, and art projects—ultimate camp resource has a wealth of information to share. It even gives you an opportunity to share your favorite activity. Enjoy!!

Go to: <http://www.ultimatecampresource.com/site/camp-activities/camp-games.html>