HUTCHINSON COUNTY ONE DAY 4-H

RELEVANCE

4-H is a program that focuses on youth development skills in leadership, community service, and life skills. Activities in 4-H help develop youth as future leaders in business and the community. For our 2009 One Day 4-H Project, we chose to give back to others in our community by helping the Rainbow Room. The Rainbow Room serves youth and senior adults who are removed from their homes for their own safety. The Rainbow Room of Borger initiates, develops and supports a donation room that supports Child Protective Services and Adult Protective Services to make the largest positive impact possible on the victims of abuse and neglect in the Borger and surrounding areas. The Rainbow Room wants to make transitions to a new environment easier; without sacrificing needs. Often children and senior adults are removed from their home without being able to take any personal belongings with them; therefore it is comforting to adults and children alike to have a stuffed animal they can hold onto. The Rainbow Room’s Mission is “to provide caseworkers the additional resources, products and support necessary to accomplish their job as easily and effectively as possible.” The Rainbow Room lends a helping hand to children and senior adults during the Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas Holidays. There were 12,107 children that were removed from homes in 2009 in the State of Texas. There were 283,922 child abuse and/or neglect cases reported in 2009. Of those cases reported there were 100,762 confirmed cases of child abuse and/or neglect in the State of Texas.

RESPONSE

As a result of learning about the Rainbow Room and its mission and purpose, the Hutchinson County 4-H Council decided to hold a Teddy Bear Drive at our Annual Pumpkin Patch Sale. During the 4-H Council meeting the Teddy Bear Drive was presented and recommended to our project clubs as a way to aid the Rainbow Room to help others in our community. The proposal was voted on by the clubs and unanimously approved. After the council meeting, a notice was put in the 4-H Newsletter to give all the club members and families the information on the drive. The date for the Teddy Bear Drive was set for Saturday, October 10, 2009 - One Day 4-H statewide. The local newspapers were notified of the event and Posters for our Annual Pumpkin Patch Sale contained information on the drive as well.

4-H members and friends donated bears, other stuffed animals, and funds to purchase additional bears and materials for this project. White material was purchased and stamped with a 4-H Clover. This material was cut into bandanas and tied on the necks of the donated stuffed animals to allow the child or senior adult to know who was helping to comfort them during this difficult time.
Chloe Burleson, Skylar Moneymaker, Chelby Burleson, and Cally Burleson represented the 4-H members from Hutchinson County in presenting stuffed animals to the Rainbow Room in Borger Texas in October of 2009.

RESULTS

As a result of the Teddy Bear Drive, four members of our Clubs presented 38 stuffed animals to the Rainbow Room Board during their meeting on October 21, 2009. The Borger News Herald was at the event and an article was on the front page of the newspaper, stating how the 4-Hers were giving back to the community through the Rainbow Room.

Since the article appeared in the newspaper we have collected 13 more bears and continue to receive calls about making a donation to the project. This will be an ongoing project that will continue to grow. We learned that through small efforts, individuals can make a big difference to others during the difficult times in their lives. Due to the confidentiality of the Rainbow Room clients, we will never know the recipients of our bears, but we do know that we have benefited from lending a helping hand to another person in their time of need. We also learned that “abused and neglected children do not deserve abused and neglected things.”

Working together to make a difference!
90% of animal disease and sickness takes place when an animal is under stress. The losses due to these microbial and viral afflictions are a major factor in the bottom line number of the profit/loss margins. County 4-H members incur losses to projects each year due to the animal health issues. These microbial and viral strains can be held in check if proper sanitation and cleaning techniques are used when animals are most at risk due to stress.

In 2009, after the Throckmorton County Jr. Livestock Show, 21 of the 101 animals that were exhibited required some type of health related service. These included vet referrals, actual administration of drugs to animals, slow growth from county to major show time due to illness, death loss, and loss of profits.

Of the 21 animals that received services, there were 16 pigs, 4 goats and 1 sheep. The cost of these services totaled $478.27.

The Throckmorton County Youth in Agriculture Board identified the sanitation and cleaning of the county show barn as an area of attention to be addressed.

Two county wide workdays on the cleaning and sanitation of the county show barn were declared. This response was due to the number of animals contracting diseases or sickness following the county show. The TCYA Board determined that the county show was the one event when the most stress was inflicted on county youth projects.

The following activities were developed in support of the program in Throckmorton County:
- Identification of Pathogens (October 2009)
- Disassembly of animal pens (November 2009)
- Bedding Removal and Disinfection of soil (November 2009)
- Re-bed and lime pen area (December 2009)
- Reassembly of animal pens (December 2009)
- Survey of exhibitors to determine animal losses (January 2010)
The county 4-H groups in cooperation with the local FFA chapter provided a labor force to conduct these activities. Cooperation among groups, adult leaders, and advisors was a driving force in the success of this activity. The work was done over a two weekend period in which goal setting, cooperative leadership, and good work habits were incorporated into activity.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Participants of this activity received positive feedback from oral and written communication regarding satisfaction of outcomes. The outcomes of this activity include the following:

- Odor elimination from removal of old soiled bedding and re-bedding with new shavings. Air quality improvement was noticed.
- Dust level cut drastically, again improving air quality in animal holding areas.
- Removing bedding and leveling sanded area made pens go together in more uniform manner and all gates work properly for exhibitors.

With these positive outcomes came the ensuing results:

- At the 2010 Throckmorton County Jr. Livestock Show, animal health issues were cut more than 75%. The number of animals that required health related services was cut from 21 to 4. These included vet referrals, actual administration of drugs to animals, slow growth from county to major show time due to illness, death loss, and loss of profits.
- Total dollar amounts dropped from $478.27 in 2009 to $75.09 in 2010.
- Stress level on animals lowered resulting in a smoother ran show. Less stressed animals handle with more ease.
- An unexpected positive result was that participants and visitors to the county show revealed that the improvement in air quality had a positive impact on their health related issues including less allergy and asthma problems, less sinus infections due to dust levels, and an overall more pleasant atmosphere at the show.

Special appreciation goes out to Trey Carrington, County Judge, and to County Commissioners for their support and provision of equipment for this activity.
Relevance:

Service is a huge part of the Tom Green County 4-H Club; funding certain service projects is often an obstacle for the club. Some projects actually help implement other projects!

Issue 1: One main goal of the Texas Forestry Service is to introduce new trees to the State of Texas; seeds are needed to complete this goal.

Issue 2: Frequent campus blackouts occur within our independent school system, which provide a safety issue for both the students and faculty.

Response:

Every Fall our club gathers and collects acorns at local parks in Tom Green County. Sorting trays are used as we remove the “trash” from the acorns, then the acorns are placed in a barrel of water to determine if the acorns are suitable to plant. The bad acorns float and the good acorns sink. These acorns are sold to the Texas Forestry Service, which are then replanted throughout Texas. The proceeds are then used to fund other service projects such as “Let 4-H Light Your Way”. Flashlights are purchased for the Independent School District, and are distributed to every teacher. These flashlights are used in case of an emergency such as a school wide blackout, which occur frequently.
Results:

This year, the Tom Green County 4-H Club sold 500 pounds of viable Chinkapin Oak acorns to the Texas Forestry Service. According to Tom Green County Horticulturist, Allison Watkins, this should equate to approximately 25,000 acorns with an estimated success rate of 85%. This means that the Texas Forestry Service should be able to introduce 21,250 trees to Texas based on acorn collection from the Tom Green County 4-H Club!

Proceeds from the acorn project were used to purchase 139 flashlights for the “Let 4-H Light Your Way” project. This provides a flashlight for every school teacher in every campus: elementary, middle, and high school. Decals are put on each flashlight with the “Let 4-H Light Your Way” logo. In addition to providing an asset to the safety of school students and faculty; this project also serves as a way to promote 4-H within our school! In fact, just this past week, our school had a total blackout, and the 4-H flashlights were put into operation!
Relevance
According to The Center for Public Policy Priorities and Orchard Communications, 1 in 4 Texas children live in food-insecure households. This means that the occupants of a household live in hunger or fear of starvation. Texas has the 2nd highest rate of food insecurity in the nation. Over 3.1 million people in Texas don’t always know where they will get the groceries or money for their next meal. Approximately 874,000 Texans may suffer from outright hunger. The North Texas Food Bank is on a mission to deliver food to Texan families suffering from hunger and food insecurity.

Response
Every year, the State Fair of Texas holds a canned food drive on Agriculture Awareness Day, previously known as Youth Leadership Day. Previously Leon County answered the call for canned goods by asking local 4-H Clubs to collect canned goods at the September meetings. While this method worked, the Leon County 4-H Council knew that more could be collected.

With the restructuring of the State Fair Youth Leadership Day into Agriculture Awareness Day, a few challenges presented themselves. Specifically, the day of the week for the activity changed from Saturday to Tuesday and it would be a challenge for the school to allow a large number of 4-H members to be released from school to participate. A new plan was formed to include more 4-H members and potential 4-H members. Leon County decided to do its part by recruiting second and third graders from Leon, Centerville, and Buffalo School Districts as well as the Leon County 4-H Council members. Students were asked to bring cans when the group attended Agriculture Awareness Day. Local clubs were still asked to collect canned goods as well.

Results
Over 400 youth and adults in attendance from Leon County brought over 1,200 pounds of canned goods. This put Leon County in first place at the Agriculture Awareness Day, and contributed to 22% of the total of 5,255 pounds, which was 3,000 pounds more than last year! These goods were distributed to families throughout the North Texas area.

To make it easier to keep up with the group, all participants wore the same custom 4-H T-shirt. Leon County 4-H T-shirts were donated by Leon County Farm Bureau for all participants, both youth and adults totaling over $1,000.

Not only did Leon County provide food for families, Leon County 4-H Council provided food for thought! The second and third grade students were given the opportunity to see the event for which they collected canned goods and were able to reflect back on their experience when they returned to school. For some, this was a first experience with 4-H. As a result 89% more third graders enrolled in 4-H in Leon County in 2009.

References
Reasons why this is a great service opportunity!

- All 4-H members, adults and volunteer leaders are able to collect tabs—there are no age requirements or barriers.
- Cans are everywhere and often used at many of the 4-H events/activities.
- It is a great way to make a connection and learn about others in your community and those involved in 4-H.
- Opportunity to learn about a service that is provided in your community and the number of people served.
- No initial start up costs.
- The opportunity to help others when it is needed the most and that person(s) has no one to ask for help.

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Cooperative efforts of Travis County and the Texas AgriLife Extension Service have made the Travis County 4-H program possible. Educational programs serve people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, disability or national origin. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.

Giving frees us from the familiar territory of our own needs by opening our mind to the unexplained worlds occupied by the needs of others.

~ Barbara Bush
Ronald McDonald House

- Ronald McDonald House (RMH) has a worldwide mission to serve families in a way that hospitals cannot provide.
- RMH offers families a place to eat and sleep near the hospital in which their child is receiving care.
- RMH asks families to contribute $10.00 a night per stay (if able—that is a reduced rate from the $85.00 actual cost).
- RMH allows siblings to stay so that families can be together.
- Families are allowed to cook and made to fee as though they are at home.
- RMH survives on donations.

Why Ronald McDonald House?

- Connection with 4-H Family that utilized the RMH with their second child’s medical needs.
- Connection with family of former local Ag teacher whose son received care from RMH.
- Opportunity to not only serve the Austin/Travis County community, but the entire state.

Impacts

- Families received free nights stay at the Ronald McDonald House (~ 13 nights were made available through donated tabs).
- Youth gained an understanding of the Ronald McDonald House and how it supports families in need during medical matters.
- Youth gained knowledge of why tabs are collected as opposed to the can itself. (tab is cleaner aluminum and worth more).
- Promotion of service project has reached collegiate organizations and businesses to inquire as to how they could be part of the tab collection program or start their own project.
- Families were provided the flexibility to cook at their leisure while staying at the Ronald McDonald House.

Results

- Donated over 200 lbs of tabs @ .68 cents a pound
- ~$136.00 monetary value
- Non-perishable food items were donated to provide families with snacks while staying at RMH (~50 lbs of food)
- Partnership developed with Travis County Extension Education Association members (tab collection)
- Partnership with Travis County Farm Bureau (annual Food Check Out Program—food donations & delivery)
- County involvement with local 4-H clubs

Future Goals

- Continue Tab Collection
- Prepare meals for families at house
- Promote the RMH and opportunities to serve within the community
LCRA Clothing
Community Service Project

Relevance:
LCRA, Lower Colorado River Authority, provides thousands of dollars worth of gifts to the less fortunate children in the Fayette and Surrounding Counties during Christmas time. With this they are giving hundreds of children gifts. Numerous hours are spent identifying these children and finding out their interests and needs. They also spend countless hours delivery these gifts. In order to save time and money, LCRA uses homemade draw string bags to wrap the gifts. LCRA is one of the largest companies in Fayette County that employees hundreds of people. They are continuously giving back to the community.

Response:
Fayette County 4-H members are known for livestock and family and consumer type projects. LCRA recognized that 4-H members in Fayette County have a talent for sewing and could potentially assist with this project. LCRA donated all the fabric and drawstrings.

Fayette County 4-H members took this task on, even boys. Throughout the 4-H year, Fayette County 4-H members and volunteers sewed these large bags to wrap the Christmas gifts in. This also gave older 4-H members a chance to serve as teen leaders and teach younger 4-H members how to sew and put a bag together. They sewed these bags at home, during clothing workshop, at club meetings, at day camps, etc.

This served as a clothing project as well as a service learning project. 4-H members not only gave back to the community by providing these bags they also learned valuable lessons, how to sew, parts of a sewing machine, etc. This served as a great leadership opportunity for older 4-H members to assist younger members. Many 4-H members were also exposed to a new project area.

Results:
As a result of their actions, Fayette County 4-H members sewed over 300 drawstring bags to be used during Christmas time. LCRA has asked that we sew bags again this year for Christmas. Our goal is to exceed the 300 bags, so more children can be able to celebrate Christmas time with a Christmas Gift.
A young 4-H member is learning how to use a sewing machine and sew a bag. His main project in 4-H is Beef so he was exposed to a new project.

4-H members are pinning the bags together so they can be sewn together.

An older 4-H member is assisting a younger 4-H member.

Presenting the bags to LCRA.
During these hard economic times, families are needing assistance with basic necessities more and more. The Alice Food Pantry depends on the generosity of individuals and organizations in Jim Wells County for support to assist those in need.

The Jim Wells County 4-H Council planned, organized, and executed a canned food drive to help support the Alice Food Pantry during One Day 4-H, October 10, 2009. Council officers contacted the local HEB and Walmart to get their support to set-up a table at the door asking for canned food donations or monetary donations. Walmart allowed 4-H Council to set-up a collection table and man the booth. Council members asked 4-H club members to work shifts collecting the items, while others took photos of the event. The 4-H’ers collected items from 9:00 a.m. until noon.

The 4-H members during this short time collected 300 pounds of food and $160 in monetary donations. The Alice Volunteer Services, Inc. who manages the food pantry said they could purchase 1000 pounds of food with the money. Therefore, in total, 1300 pounds of food was donated to the Alice Food Pantry.
Emily Kalinec of Premont receives canned goods from local residents.

Donny Guerra, Kyle Erwin, and Avery Phillips of Alice receive a bag of canned goods.

4-H Council President Kyle Erwin assisted with taking the donated food items and monetary donations to the Alice Food Pantry.