

## Community Pride Flourishes in Idaho

### *Program Description*

The Idaho Community Pride Program involves 4-H members in meaningful activities and experiences that result in the learning of citizenship skills for youth and improvement or betterment for the community. The purpose of the Community Pride program is to stimulate increased participation of young people in community affairs and concerns. A 4-H community Pride activity involves youth and adults working together to identify community needs, plan a project to address a need, and then carry out the project. Community Pride projects help youth build skills, attitudes, and knowledge necessary to successfully participate in real community issues. Each 4-H club is encouraged to choose and carry out at least one Community Pride project every year. A major corporation donates money to be used for grants to help clubs finance worthy projects.

Community Pride projects range from something as simple as visiting nursing homes or walking dogs for an animal shelter to more complex projects such as working with the EPA to bring water to a community arena or helping construct and provide identification signs for a native plant arboretum. In 1998 the Equine Equestrians 4-H Club in Twin Falls County chose to help remodel a local Head Start facility as their Community Pride project. The building used by the Head Start program was not up to code and would have to be vacated if the work was not done. Fourteen 4-H members, ages 8-17, and their parents worked together to lay linoleum, do some plumbing, patch and paint walls, hang

wallpaper and do yard work. Even the children attending Head Start helped by making handprints on fabric for new curtains. To raise funds for the project, the club applied for a Community Pride Grant, held raffles and bake sales and arranged for area businesses to donate materials. At Christmas time club members supplied gifts, such as doll clothes they had made, to the children who attended Head Start and their siblings -- almost 100 children.

### *Impact of the Program*

Each year hundreds of people in many Idaho communities reap the benefits of 4-H Community Pride projects: flower boxes on main street, wild bird habitat and outdoor classroom at a local high school, new trees at a community park, a hiking trail with native vegetation planted and identified, renovated community building, picnic area at a fairgrounds, water at an arena, and a safe building for children who attend Head Start.

4-H members learn new skills and establish working relationships with others in their communities. This is what some of them learned, "This project helped me better understand how helping your community can increase your community's pride." "We now have a better learning and working environment. The center is warmer and cleaner since all of the work has been completed." "We learned we can make a difference by building something that will offer people comfort for a long time." "One of the most important benefits is knowing that good things can be done for someone or something else. Working together is the best way to make good

friends while making an impact of beautification on a small community.” “The project was of great educational value. Students got involved in research involving wild birds, suitable plants and grasses; they used math skills to estimate size and quantities, they learned a great deal about presentations and interpersonal communication, and they learned a lot about planting and plant maintenance. As a result of this initial effort, a much larger wildlife habitat has been started in conjunction with the County Park, the County Commissioners and the Department of Fish and Game.”

### ***For More Information***

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