



VIEW*S*&VISIONS

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4-H Expands Focus to Include Service Learning

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Pamela L. Paletta serves as the 4-H Youth Development and Family Consumer Science Educator for Penn State Cooperative Extension in Washington County, Pennsylvania. She is a past president of the Pennsylvania Association of Extension 4-H Agents.

Ms. Paletta has worked in extension as a youth educator for 27 years in Washington County. She has helped young people in more than 40 4-H clubs, 50 schools and 14 school districts in Washington and Allegheny Counties. She also works with the Better Kid Care program, reaching 65 day care programs in Washington County.

She received a Master of Extension Education degree from Penn State University and earned a bachelor's degree in home economics and secondary education from West Liberty State University.

The Washington County 4-H program has over 45 clubs reaching 940 youth ages 7 to 18 years of age. The program also reaches over 2,000 school enrichment youth by presenting 4-H programs in afterschool settings and during school hours. The 4-H program has over 200 4-H projects including: Embryology, Meet the Plants, Rocketry, Robotics, Photography, Leadership, Service Learning, and many other miscellaneous projects. Washington County has over 200 4-H leaders providing skills and knowledge to the 4-H members.

4-H may be known for going to the fair and showing your animal, but these days 4-H is also known for its community service work. From singing Christmas Carols at the local nursing home to cleaning pens at the Washington County Humane Society, 4-H has become an organization that focuses on service learning. Over 90 percent of the 4-H clubs in Washington



County have a community service project as part of their club activity. This may include: collecting personal supplies for nursing home patients, gift wrapping Christmas gifts, cleaning the fairgrounds for the fair, collecting blue jeans and donating them to the Christian Outreach, painting and decorating the City Mission.

The service learning project in which all clubs are encouraged to participate is the county-wide Annual Food Bank Drive, held each March. In 2011, Washington County 4-H Clubs collected 2,885 pounds of food for the Washington County Food Bank. Members collected can goods, cleaning products and other food items for the Food Bank at the request of the Washington County Farm Bureau. To add a little incentive, Farm Bureau offered prizes to the three 4-H clubs who collected the most donations.

The Marcellus Shale Coalition also supported 4-H, by matching the donation from Washington County Farm Bureau. The members of the Marcellus Shale Coalition have been very supportive of the 4-H program. For example, donations from CONSOL Energy have supported such 4-H activities as the Achievement Recognition Ladder Award Program, transportation and educational/registration for 4-H members to attend regional, state, and national 4-H events,



4-H Clubs in Washington County, Pennsylvania, collected 2,885 pounds of food during the Annual Food Bank Drive for the Washington County Food Bank



renovation of the 4-H Building at the Washington County Fairgrounds and support of the 4-H Forever Endowment Fund.

The Washington County 4-H program also has benefited from the support of Range Resources, another member of the area's oil and gas industry. For the past four years, Range Resources has purchased animals at the annual 4-H/FFA Livestock Sale and, in 2010 and 2011, gave each of the animal exhibitors a cash award of \$100. Range Resources also encourages its vendors to support the Livestock Sale.

Thanks to this support of the Livestock Sale from many members of the oil and gas industry, 4-H members were able to donate back to many local organizations such as Washington City Mission, St. Jude's Hospital, Epilepsy Foundation, Juvenile Diabetes Association, American Cancer Society, Children's Hospital Cancer Unit, Make-A-Wish Foundation, American Diabetes and many other local programs. The money donated by Range Resources to the 4-H member helps teach youth about giving back to the community, as they sell their animal at the 4-H/FFA Livestock Sale and donate a percentage of their proceeds to a local non-profit organization.

Due to the financial support of the Range Resources and other members of the Marcellus Shale Coalition, our local 4-H members can afford to attend such events as the National 4-H Shooting

Invitational, where they won first place in each of the last two years. Developing leadership skills and community service has become a focus for the 4-H programs across the state, and two young teens also were able to attend the National 4-H Congress in Atlanta, Georgia, over the past four years, with all but \$100 of their fee provided by Range Resources and other industry supporters.

The youth of Washington County, Pennsylvania who are active in 4-H have benefited greatly from the support of members of the oil and gas industry in our area. Many other programs that are working to improve the quality of life in our community also have become the beneficiaries of the oil and gas industry's support through contributions, volunteer activities and the willingness of business leaders to serve on boards and advisory councils. ♾

CONTRIBUTING TO THE VITALITY OF OUR COMMUNITIES



Kimberly S. Croyle
Morgantown, WV

Kim co-chaired the Citizens for Schools 2012 campaign, which led to an overwhelming victory for Monongalia County's school excess levy in October 2011. This outcome will reap benefits for the children and entire Morgantown community for years to come.



Charles M. Love, III
Charleston, WV

Charlie has served as president of both the West Virginia Bar Association and the West Virginia State Bar and is a permanent member of the 4th Circuit Judicial Conference. He is a past chairman of the West Virginia State Bar Ethics Committee and the West Virginia University College of Law Visiting Committee. He served as an officer and member of the board of trustees of the Herbert J. Thomas Memorial Hospital and is a past chairman and CEO of the West Virginia Housing Development Fund (1981 to 2003). He recently completed his term as a member of the board of advisors to the West Virginia University Eberly College of Arts and Sciences.