



Windy Ridge Ranch

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RE: 4-H needs to receive continued support

To: Washington County Commissioners

I urge you to continue supporting the 4-H program in our county. It's a good investment. Here are five reasons why.

1. The youth involved in 4-H learn skills and acquire wholesome traits that add immeasurably to their lives.
2. Washington County and its various enterprises benefit directly from the 4-H program. The County Fair, an undeniably popular and cherished county-wide activity relies on the 4-H to provide the main attractions – the projects and the animals. The leadership learned by participants in 4-H becomes integrated into the fabric of our county as 4-H youth leaders become adult leaders in our schools, businesses, and other enterprises.
3. Many businesses including my own not only provide support to 4-H and often volunteer for 4-H, but we also serve the 4-H families as our customers and our businesses benefit directly from the expenditures of those involved in 4-H activities, many of which involve significant investment.
4. In my 25 years of involvement with as a leader in the 4-H program I have seen numerous kids immerse themselves in the program, spending countless hours engaged in positive activities --- the kind of activities not found in school, for example, learning how to care for animals under the direct supervision of experts (my own area of 4-H involvement). This is good nurturing.
5. Finally, consider this: Washington County's investment in the 4-H program brings with it a huge input of services to Washington County youth that are entirely free. The adult leaders and project volunteers devote countless man-hours to the education and guided development of the hundreds of youth that are in 4-H. Again, that's for free – and it's all because 4-H gets good people involved in doing good things for their community.

The county is getting an amazing return on its investment in 4-H.

Mark Ward