

Wow 4-H does that! Was the theme of our 4-H Award Ceremony this year. Over the past few years I have come to realize that many people are not fully aware of what 4-H actually does. There are many wonderful youth organizations, and I whole heartily support any group that is dedicated to the betterment of our youth, but the question I personally had was “What makes 4-H any different from any youth organization?”

The history of 4-H is an important factor in the reason why 4-H is very unique. The 4-H organization was established over 100 years ago with the thought of advancing agriculture to the youth of that day. A Corn and a Tomato club were the beginnings of the youth clubs we know as 4-H clubs today. Backed by land grant institutions like The University of Georgia, these clubs did research and experiments to make a better product. They actually were the beginnings of better crops for the generations that would come after them. You may ask, “What does that have to do with us today?”

A hundred years ago the focus was based mainly on agriculture because much the population was a more agrarian society. Just as our society has changed; So has 4-H. Many people still think that 4-H is mainly livestock and agriculture. I am proud to say that we do have a wonderful livestock club, but we are much, more. Georgia 4-H is backed by UGA, which means that we benefit from their experience and research. Did you know that we have a Taylor County Tech team? In fact, our tech team updated to Georgia State 4-H photography website. Who would have thought 4-H was involved in technology? Well let me tell you what 4-H is in Taylor County Georgia:

Project achievement	4 th - 12 th graders
Performing Arts Club	We have performed across the state of GA,
After school program	Sewing, canning, drum classes, dance class, singing classes, crafts, scrapbook and photography classes.
Community in Action	Rabies clinic, Picture with Santa, Serve the County Day, Andersonville Flag Retrieval, Ronald McDonald House, Nursing homes, Deerview Youth Home, Relay for life, etc
Horse Club	Horse Bowl Quiz, Trail Ride of St. Jude, Stable tours
Festival & Fairs	Cherry Blossom Festival, Countryside Festival, Georgia Strawberry Festival, Ga State Fair, Ga National Fair
Competitions	Photography, Food Product Development, Cotton Boll speech, Cotton Boll Jamboree, arts and crafts, State Fair Talent show, National Fair Variety show competition Egg Prep., Graphic design, Milkmake, Peanutrition , Pizza, Omelet competition, Egg Preparation, Craft shows, Scare crow contest, and more.
Recycling	Pop tops, Cans, Cell phones, ink cartridges, Campbell soup labels
SAFE	4H SAFE Program, this stands for (Shooting Awareness, Fun and Education)
Culinary Club MMM	Pizza, Omelet, Wild game, Egg Prep, ice cream Contest at the GNF, Food classes, Serve the County Days and a lot more
Ambassadors	Health Rocks—In school focus on not smoking, drinking or doing drugs taught how to and making healthy choices.

State Events	State Council, Sr. Conference, Fall Forum, and Project Achievements, Leadership - 4-H Day at the Capital, and 4-H State Congress
Youth Summit	Animal control Issue
Sewing Club	Entered in State and County Fairs won Best in show
TC Movin and Losin	Learning to create good habits of being active and lose bad nutritional habits.
Camps	State 4-H summer Camps, Local summer day camps
Tech Team (local and State)	One of our members won an international award

This gives you an idea of some of the things 4-H does. I have been told a few times that because we are a small community, we cannot be expected to compete with the larger counties in Georgia. I am excited to say that we have competed, and Taylor County is well known for our accomplishments in Georgia 4-H Here are some amazing things we have accomplished in the past few years

- State Volunteer of the year 2 years
- Program Assistant of the Year Ms. Robbie
- Secretary of the year
- Several Master 4Hers
- State Camp Counselor
- One of only 2 counties chosen to address the Rural Development council 2007
- Best in Category as well as over half our participants placing 1st -2nd or 3rd in the Georgia State Fair Craft show Craft Show
- Taylor County won 1st place 4 years in a row in the Still Photography category of State 4-H Photography Competition as well as more wins than any other County in the State.
- Won 1st place in District Leadership in Action Competition
- Numerous participants competed at State Congress for Project Achievement. 3 mastered
- Chosen 4-H State Ambassadors
- Taylor Co 4-H'er chosen to go to Porto Rico
- 3 on Clovers & Co, the State performing arts team last year 2 this year
- Won Cotton Boll 2nd in 07 1st district in 08 1st in speech at state
- Won Pizza Contest at the Georgia National Fair – 1st place 07,
- Won Food product Development Contest at State Competition—1st place 5 mastered. Tied of 2nd this year
- Taylor Co.Tech Team work on State 4-H website
- Started the Strawberry Photography competition
- Little-2-Cute competition
- Certified Teen Leader Program
- District officers for Southwest District

“Wow, 4-H does that!” Yes, we do! We can all be proud of the fact that even though Taylor County is a smaller community than some, we have made big accomplishments. When you support Taylor County 4-H, you get far more than you can imagine. Our 4-H'ers enjoy what they do, but more importantly they gain skills that will help them for a life time.

I believe you can see that 4-H has definitely given to and been an asset to Taylor County. Next week I will explain how you can help us on our Bus Campaign. I hope you will join with me to give a heartfelt thanks to the **Georgia Strawberry Festival for kicking off our 4-H Bus Campaign.**