



Members of the Star Route 4-H Club of Westmorland attended the city council meeting Wednesday evening where they received a proclamation naming October 2-8, 2016 "National 4-H Club Week"

WESTMORLAND – Star Route 4-H Club of Westmorland received a proclamation from the Westmorland City Council, proclaiming the week of October 2-8, as "National 4-H Club Week" during Thursday's city council meeting.

"Star Route 4-H is an educational youth development program which builds character and greater public awareness in the youth in the city of Westmorland," said Mary Ann Smith, mayor of Westmorland.

Through the 4-H Club, the youth of Westmorland learn to become better citizens, broaden their interests and knowledge, develop self-confidence and self-discipline, develop leadership and organizational skills, stand on their own feet and be less dependent on others, serve family and friends through project skills, and help all members to better learn.

"I joined 4-H when I was in the womb," said Smith. "I am a fourth generation 4-H member and my children are the 5th generation. It's one of the best clubs in the nation that focus on leadership, citizenship and life skills."

4-H also provides the opportunity for young people to develop life skills through hands-on learning experiences, including educational workshops, camps, conferences, before and after school programs, as well as a place to make friends, share interests, and work together to make a positive difference in their community.

According to the 4-H Study of Positive Youth Development, a longitudinal study conducted by the Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development at Tufts University, the report shows youth engaged with 4-H are nearly two times more likely to get better grades in school, nearly two times more likely to plan to go to college, 41 percent less likely to engage in risky behaviors, and 25 percent more likely to positively contribute to their families and communities.

Ten-year-old Nayeli Chiang and sister Layla Chiang, 6, joined 4-H for the first time and both agreed it has been a great experience.

"I decided to join the 4-H Club because my dad showed me a picture of it and it looked interesting," said Nayeli Chiang. "I'm glad that other people are joining 4-H because it's interesting."

Ten-year-old, Emarie Johnson, said she has participated in 4-H for the last five years and has learned to develop speaking skills as well as projects.

"This is my fifth year participating in 4-H," said Johnson. "I have learned that you have to speak loud, even though it's hard in the beginning. It gets easier and easier every time."

Johnson displayed one of her many skills utilizing plastic bags which she used to create a mat.

"My mom taught me how to make the mat" said Johnson. "I used between 500 to 700 plastic bags to create the mat that I plan to give to the homeless."

Johnson added saying 4-H gives her an opportunity to interact with animals which she loves, because she plans to become a veterinarian when she gets older.

To celebrate, 4-H members handed out homemade cookies and cupcakes to all council members and attendees.



10-year-old Emarie Johnson created a mat utilizing 500-700 plastic bags that she plans to donate to the homeless.

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