



4-H County Council members make no-sew knot fleece blankets to donate to the community and soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan.

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Although each 4-H club or program is different, the four Essential Elements are common to all. The four Essential Elements are Belonging, Mastery, Independence, and Generosity. Lately County Council has been practicing generosity. Young people need to feel their lives have meaning and purpose. They need opportunities to connect to their communities and learn how to give back to others. As part of this process, they gain an understanding of others' needs and learn how to respond to those needs.

4-H County Council is made up of delegates from the 4-H clubs in Citrus County. During the November Council meeting, members made 14 no-sew fleece knot blankets to donate to others. One went to a male soldier stationed in Afghanistan, one to a female soldier in Iraq, some to a needy family in the community, and the rest to the Santa's for Seniors program.

Most of the 4-H'ers have never sewed anything before. So, this project was a good one that everyone could get involved in. When it was time to make the no-sew blankets, the youth broke up into small groups to each make a blanket. The young men naturally all ended up in the same group and had a good time working on their blanket. After a happy scissor error they also had a matching scarf to match the slightly shorter blanket. This was the blanket that was sent to soldier the Iraq. She has already mailed a thank you note back and she said, "Thank you so much for the blanket and scarf. It is starting to get cold here so it was perfect. You bring smiles to us and pride in our hearts for your thoughtfulness. We do what we do for your future."

These 4-H'ers gain a sense of pride in themselves for accomplishing a project, and for giving to others in need. The building of life skills is a product of 4-H clubs providing youth with the essential elements of Belonging, Mastery, Independence, and Generosity.

For information about how to start or join a club in your area, please contact your Citrus County Extension's 4-H Office by calling 527-5712 or email Amy Duncan the 4-H agent: [amy.duncan@bocc.citrus.fl.us](mailto:amy.duncan@bocc.citrus.fl.us) Citrus County Extension connects the public with the University of Florida/IFAS's knowledge, research, and resources to address youth,

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