

Citrus County 4-H'ers Donate Winnings to Hospice and Other Local Causes



Hospice of Citrus and the Nature Coast Community Educator Anna Neptune (left) accepts the Citrus County 4-H Association \$1,000 donation from Kylie Philipps.

The Herry's Kids Pediatric Services program of Hospice of Citrus and the Nature Coast has received a \$1,000 donation from members of the Citrus County 4-H Association.

These funds represent part of the first-place \$5,000 prize won by local 4-H'ers in a World Changers national "Piggy Bank Tour" competition to raise money for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. "Since we asked our local community to support a national charity, we decided that we would bring the money back to Citrus County and split it five ways," explains Kylie Philipps, an alumna of the local 4-H Association who spearheaded the "Piggy Bank Tour" project in Citrus County and mentored its 4-H participants. Other local causes receiving a \$1,000 donation from the group are the Citrus Aid Cancer Foundation, Jessie's Place Child Advocacy Center, Citrus County Blessings and Pleasant Grove Elementary School.

Philipps grew up as a 4-H member in Citrus County, raising and showing pigs at local and state fairs for 11 years, and is now a student at the University of Florida. She learned about the competition at a national camp run by showpig.com, a co-sponsor of the competition along with World Changers. A paper mache piggy bank constructed at the camp in West Virginia was then sent on a 10,000 mile journey along the perimeter of the United States, passing from one camp participant to another for showing in each camper's own state to raise funds for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

When Philipps brought that piggy bank to Citrus County, it inspired 4-H members here to build their own piggy bank and make it part of the Citrus County community. With support from Mike Scott Plumbing, which donated materials and provided the use of tools, they constructed the frame of the pig, measuring some 6 feet long, 5 feet tall and almost 5 feet wide.

Taking this in-process piggy bank to schools, fire stations, Chamber of Commerce events and numerous fundraisers, the 4-H'ers gave their neighbors opportunities to learn about the project and its support of St. Jude Hospital, add strips of paper mache to the frame and make donations. When the community-layered paper mache process was completed, the 4-H'ers painted the more-than-life-size piggy bank and continued parading it around the community to raise funds.

"In the end," reports Philipps, "we raised a little over \$3,000 just in our county." Throughout the project, photos were taken and a portfolio of the activities was created, ultimately submitted to World Changers, which then selected the Citrus County entry as the first-place winner of its competition.

Hospice of Citrus and the Nature Coast, a not-for-profit charitable organization licensed in 1985, provides comprehensively responsive and compassionate end-of-life services to terminally ill patients and their families in North Central Florida. For more information, call 866-642-0962 or visit www.hospiceofcitrus.org.