



Mason County

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

4-H Roots

What do Julia Roberts, Jimmy Carter, Johnny Bench, Orville Redenbacher, Luke Bryan and Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis have in common? They all have roots in the 4-H Youth Development program. While many notable entertainers, athletes, and business individuals got their start in 4-H, it's the stories that local alumni share that we appreciate the most. Each year we have the opportunity to connect with folks that are eager to share their unique 4-H story. Each story has a common theme – a project experience that defined them, a 4-H volunteer leader who encouraged and supported them, and a friend they have bonded with for life. The countless stories of the impact that 4-H has had on the life of each of these alumni is a powerful testament to the 4-H motto “to make the best better” and it reveals just what happens when people dream big and work tirelessly to make those dreams come true. The impact that the 4-H Youth Development program has on a person is often not seen for many years after they have left the program, but regardless of how many years they have been out of the program most alumni will attribute many of their skills, relationships, and opportunities to something they learned, experienced, or developed through 4-H.

Recently, a Mason County 4-H alumni (1967) stopped into the office. He was passionate about 4-H and what the program has taught him. He shared with the 4-H staff some powerful stories:

“My favorite 4-H activities were the Mason County Fair, Demonstrations, 4-H camp at Panhandle Lake, and serving in the community. I have always been a competitor and the competition at the fair and demonstration contests were a natural for me. It taught me that you don't always win but as long as you try you don't lose. I spent a week every summer at Panhandle Lake playing and learning new skills and it was my first experience of being away from home. That prepared me for a lot of travel in my life time. Our local club took on a lot of community projects that taught us to respect our neighbors and our community. We cleaned up a forgotten cemetery, petitioned for road signs, and spoke at the Agate Grange to promote more activities for kids.

Youth who are going through the 4-H program now should try as many different activities as possible. It's a very good way to learn new skills, leadership, and to help your community. Over the years I had 14 different projects and I cannot tell you how often I have said 'I learned that in 4-H. I can do that.'”

The 4-H Youth Development program is open to all youth ages 5-19. You can join 4-H at any time of the year, however, some participation activities require a specific enrollment date. To find out more about 4-H in Mason County, to visit our website <https://extension.wsu.edu/mason>, call 360-427-9670 x681 or find us on Facebook (Mason County 4-H).

For more information regarding the Mason County WSU Extension office call [360-427-9670](tel:3604279670) Ext. 680, or visit our website at <http://mason.wsu.edu>

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