

National Volunteer Week is April 21-27, 2013

By

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The 2013 National Volunteer Appreciation Week is April 21-27. This week was first established by President Nixon in 1974. The purpose was to recognize the millions of dedicated Americans who volunteer during the year in an effort to make the world a better place. Every year the current President and several other political figures issue proclamations recognizing the efforts of volunteers, and thanking them for their service.

National Volunteer Appreciation Week is a great time to express appreciation to our volunteers for their valued service to our community and to the lives of our young people. Hardee County has over fifty-five (55) adult volunteers who work tirelessly to promote, support, and help lead the youth of Hardee County in their 4-H individual and club projects. They give of their time, energy, and talents to help our 4-H youth complete projects that teach important life skills. There is a special sense of accomplishment in helping a new generation of young people grow and learn. Everyone has lived a unique life—traveling different roads, seeing different things. Everyone has experienced the world in their own way, giving each volunteer a unique blend of perspectives, knowledge, skills and talents.

Some of our volunteers devote their time to fundraising for Hardee County 4-H so that our members can attend workshops, trainings, conferences, and statewide events. Their fundraising efforts provide funding for our 4-H'ers to participate in these events by removing the financial barriers that might prevent a 4-H youth from participating in these unique educational opportunities.

Volunteering provides an opportunity to experience a sense of importance (feeling needed) and prestige, higher self-esteem, and increases social networking. Such involvement with others leads to increased life satisfaction and reduced depression. ([Effects of Volunteering on the Physical and Mental Health of Older People, Dr. Carolyn S. Wilken](#)) Volunteering is definitely a win-win situation for everyone involved, both adults and youth.

For more information about how you can become a 4-H volunteer or the 4-H program, contact the Hardee County Cooperative Extension Office at 507 Civic Center Drive or by calling 863-773-2164.