

## Hee-Hawg Thank You

The leaves are falling and we are finally beginning to feel a chill in the air. Yes, it is beginning to feel like the holiday season. It is that time of year that amid the hustle and bustle of cooking, shopping, and parties, we are reminded to give thanks for our blessings. Well, this year the Rains 4-H Club has one very special THANK YOU we need to send out to the Lake Country Neighbors.

Over a year ago, these ladies approached Stephen Gowin and me about the needs of our 4-H Club. Feeling a bit overwhelmed, we weren't really sure where to start! However, we quickly put our heads together and thought about many supplies we needed for our various project meetings. It didn't take long to come up with a long list!

After looking at it and visiting with us about our club and all our great 4-H members, they voted to make the Rains 4-H Club the benefactor of their 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual "Thank Goodness I'm Not a Pig" Pig Roast. Within days, this motivated group of women sprang into action with committee meetings and assignments. Before we knew it they had t-shirt designs with sponsors ready to pay for them. Next, the food was planned, vendors secured, and entertainment lined-up. In a nutshell that sounds very easy and simple, but let me assure you it was far from it.

The Lake Country Neighbors worked diligently on this project for a year, without complaining or wavering, just simply wanting to help our kids. It all came together on a beautiful day in October that I know was not by accident, but by design. We served almost 500 people a delicious bar-b-que meal and even pulled pork cooked by Farmer's Electric Co-Op. They were treated to some of the best musical talent in Rains County. Many took the opportunity to get a head start on their Christmas shopping from our great vendors or simply enjoyed visiting with one of our many local businesses.

At the end of day, they were able to present the Rains 4-H Club with a check for \$7,300.03! Anyone who knows me well knows that I am never at a loss for words, but this time I truly couldn't find a way to say thank you through my tears.

This whole project has been so humbling, as we tried to convey to our youth that this act of kindness and community service is exactly what 4-H is all about. We challenged them to model their own life after the efforts of Lake Country Neighbors and develop a sense of giving back to the community and those less fortunate than themselves.

So as I get ready to celebrate the Thanksgiving holiday with my own family and friends, I want to say how thankful I am for Lake Country Neighbors, their husbands, and all those who supported this year's Hee-Hawg event. Not only will our 4-H members be able to now expand their project experiences, but they have also learned one of the most valuable lessons of all.....GIVING.