

SDRSP COMMUNITY SERVICE REPORT 2016-2017

Submitted by Joanna Jones

National Volunteer Week was April 23-29, 2017. Currently, 63 million Americans volunteer per year about 8 billion hours of their time, talent, and effort to improve people's lives; its worth \$193 billion. Within South Dakota, the SD Retired School Personnel volunteers made incredible contributions to their communities. At this convention, we recognize how our members have volunteered.

VALUE OF VOLUNTEER SERVICES

Each year the Independent Sector website gives a national estimate that charitable organizations can use to show a dollar value for service volunteers provide in their local communities. The hourly wage for 2017 was \$24.14 nationally. With the reported hours from our units, we had 12,406 hours that members worked with our youth. For 52,254 hours, members worked with adults. The total hours were 64,660 for a value of \$1,560,892.40. The South Dakota Retired School Personnel make a difference in the lives of their communities.

Awards for Community Service for 2016-2017

WITH OUR YOUTH AWARDS

Black Hills Retired School Personnel – Bonita Ley is the liaison between the Living History School in the Keystone School Museum and Black Hills Retired School Personal. Students from a 50 mile radius are invited to participate in this rural school program which provides an educational opportunity for an end of the school year field trip.

Teachers and students dress in the 1890 time period costumes for a two hour session. For one hour, students participate by mimicking lessons of the period. Students complete lessons on original blackboards, slates, participate in spelling bees and play recess games of bygone years. Students comment on the size of the desks, the difficulty of the lessons and the value of learning about the past. Students also view items in the museum which takes about an hour, and compare home life of the time period with their home life today.

At the mid-March meeting, Bonita reported 635 students are coming during the last week of April and mid-May. As a coordinator for this program, Bonita notifies the schools of the opportunity, works with retired teachers to do the teaching, (Bonita also teaches), coordinates schedules, plan events at the school and many more jobs. She is part of the Keystone Area Historical Society planning for summer events around the lives of Caroline (Carrie) Ingalls Swanzey and her famous sister Laura Ingalls Wilder.

Milbank Area Retired Teachers Association – MARTA collected over seventy pairs of mittens and gloves to distribute to our local schools this winter. As teachers and others who have worked in schools we know firsthand how often children either do not have mittens or are wearing wet, sloppy ones as they go out to recess or head home for the day. Through our mitten drive, teachers were able to hand out a warm dry pair of mittens to those who needed them to keep their little hands warm. Or even larger hands, as it is not only the youngest ones who are

without gloves. Mittens are easily misplaced or lost. Hopefully, we were able to help some students by releasing some of the discomfort (and danger) of having cold hands.

Southeast Area Retired Teachers Association (Vermillion) – Members of our unit volunteered to assist with reading questions and organizing the Vermillion hosted High School Quiz Bowl. This helped the teachers and community to realize that retired teachers still have much to offer; and the visiting students and their parents appreciated our help.

TO BENEFIT ADULTS

Pierre Area Retired School Personnel – The most unique project some PARSP members were involved in this year was the “pinto bean bagging” project at Feeding South Dakota in Pierre. They had received two one-ton containers of dried pinto beans through a donation, and were in need of volunteers to put them into one pound bags. We accepted the challenge!

Labeling 4,000 food storage bags was the first step. “Dried Pinto Beans, Wash Before Cooking” was printed on each plastic bag with a black Sharpie. We then set out to bag the beans, with some of us scooping, others holding the bags and closing them, and the rest packing the bags carefully into boxes. The enormity of the project seemed overwhelming at first, but once we “got the hang of it,” we moved right along. Pierre Area RSP can carry the load.

Without our help, Feeding SD would have been stuck with two tons of beans, with no means of getting them separated into usable portions. The beans were used by those who are food insecure, not just locally, but throughout the central part of the state. Knowing we were helping feed hungry people made the backaches SO worth it!!

Madison Area Retired School Personnel – This unit continues to maintain the oldest recorded library in South Dakota which is located in the historic Prairie Village. Our June meeting was held at this building. In August we cleaned and prepared the library prior to Prairie Village Days. During the celebration our members volunteered to serve as hostesses in the library.

Children and adults from many other states visit the library. They enjoy reading and learning about SD History through the materials that have been preserved through the years. Adults share their stories and reminisce about days of long ago.

The unit members are proud to be a part of the continuation of this valued project in our community. We are planning for future improvements as needed to keep the building in good condition.

Sioux Falls Area Retired School Personnel – The members of the unit supported a family who makes lunch once a month at the Bishop Dudley Hospitality House in Sioux Falls. The facility in downtown Sioux Falls provides daytime and overnight shelter for the homeless and the vulnerable. 20 members help serve a noon meal. Six members at a time helped to serve 80 guests. Our volunteering helped the family, who makes the meal, continue their service to serve the needy.