

2010-2011 Awards for Community Service

Marrietta Catlin, SDRTA Community Service Chairperson

Our SDRTA units have been busy again this past year with their community service projects as they shared their time and talents with their local communities. Members shared “cups of kindness” with adults and with our youth. Although not all members turned in hours, the number of volunteer service hours reported this year is quite impressive. The number of hours for With Our Youth totaled 7,615. The number of hours reported for Benefiting Adults was 38,627 making a total of 46,242 hours of volunteer service from April 1, 2010 to March 31, 2011. The estimated value amount used by charitable organizations to show the value of service per hour for 2010 was \$21.36 according to the Independent Sector website. Even though South Dakota salaries are lower than many states, the \$21.36 figure does show an estimated value of our volunteer services given back to our communities.

2010-2011 Innovation Awards

This year I am going to present an Innovation Award to a unit that has had a continuing project of providing students the opportunity to be involved in learning about classrooms of long ago each spring with their Living History Classroom at Keystone School. But this unit has also tried some new innovative projects to give back to their community as well as keep their members motivated. One is the Cornerstone Mission where backpacks and school supplies were collected and given to students that live at the Cornerstone Mission. Donations were also given to the Vicki Sweet Fund at Wilson School to buy needy children items they may not have the opportunity to get otherwise such as glasses, new shoes, etc. They also supervise the distribution of three scholarships in memory of past educators who had established funds for education majors. They do the Grandparent Essay Contest where members actually go to 5th grade classrooms and supervise the essay writings and then an event is held later when the three winning students read their essays. This unit also has a high tea where the profits are used to help finance unit members to attend the state convention. Congratulations to the Black Hills Area Retired Teachers Association. (Diana Glover is CS chair with Emilie Zacher unit president)

Another one of our local units has a lot of projects that they have done for a number of years as well. The past couple years our local units have been encouraged to get more younger retirees to become members. One thing that this unit did this year in a very BIG way was to recognize teachers in their district by showing them how much they were appreciated. It hopefully will make a difference when the teachers retire and join the unit as they remember the kindness shown to them. The group gathered at a home and made 425 sack lunches consisting of sandwiches, fruit, chips, water and oh, yes Bill Zubke’s fudge. The lunches were delivered to the schools to celebrate Teacher Appreciation Week. Congratulations to the Watertown Area Retired Teachers Association. (Ruth Olson CS chair with Bill and Cathy Zubke as co-presidents)

2010-2011 Community Service Awards Benefiting Adults

This unit does a lot of community service projects for the youth as well as for adults. The past couple years this unit has helped with the Weekend Backpack Program, the local Food Pantry as well as the Boy Scout/Postal Service annual food drive. However, since June of 2010, this unit has also been involved and proud to be of assistance to the new Senior Food Program called Feeding South Dakota. Up to 1500 boxes of food for qualifying seniors age 60 and over have been filled monthly and then distributed to many counties in central South Dakota. This project provides seniors with a variety of necessary food items for good nutrition. Congratulations to the Pierre Area Retired Teachers Association for sharing many "cups of kindness" with their local community. (Nancy Baker is the community chair with Jean Easland and Nancy Baker serving as co-presidents)

2010-2011 Honorable Mention for Services Benefiting Adults

Another RTA Unit has been meeting a need in their community for providing a variety of personal items and blankets for the St. Frances House which serves individuals and families who need a place to stay for a time until they get back on their feet. This unit also saw a need in the community to help the Sioux Falls Food Bank in providing food for people in need. \$400 was collected and presented to the Feeding South Dakota Program. Congratulations to the Sioux Falls Area Retired Teachers Association. (Harriett Wendt is community service chair with Cathy Anderson as president)