



COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS FOR 2007-2008

By Marrietta Catlin, State Community Chairperson

This year all 18 active units sent or e-mailed community service reports to me. Many of our units again participated in the Grandparent Essay Contest. The past two years we have dreamed together, worked together, pulled together to become a "rock" solid organization we can all be proud of. I commend all units for the great job done this past year.

Last year the amount used by charitable organizations to show the value of volunteer time given back to communities was \$18.77 per hour and this year the amount is estimated to be roughly at \$19.52. In that case, our SDRTA volunteers have given 10,212 hours to WITH OUR YOUTH SERVICES and 33,537 hours to OTHER SERVICES for a total of 43,749 hours of time and talents for a grand total value of \$853,980.48 worth of services. So, all units need to be applauded for their services to our communities.

For community services benefiting adults, SDRTA members gave generously in the areas of health care, charitable activities, helping the needy and the elderly, boards and committee work, Red Cross, United Way, and the list goes on and on. One RTA provides many adult services to their community but also realized a need for getting food to the needy that not only affected the elderly but also children. This RTA gave generously to their community by hosting, organizing and staffing a blood drive, did a food drive with the US Postal system, helped with two Food Basket Drives-one at Thanksgiving and one at Christmas time that organized, filled and delivered 325 baskets to needy families at Thanksgiving and over 300 baskets at Christmas time. It is my pleasure to present to the Pierre Area Retired Teachers Association, the Community Service Award for 2008.

This year I would also like to present an honorable mention award to a unit for community service. This unit really became involved this year with providing services to their community with hospital service, providing transportation and home assistance, driver's education, tax-assistance, library work, museum helper, and Meals on Wheels. This year they provided 155 Christmas bags including notebooks, pencils and pens, apples and bananas

to be delivered with the Meals on Wheels. It is my pleasure to present the honorable mention award for community service to the Yankton Area Retired Teachers Association.

WITH OUR YOUTH AWARDS

Volunteering is truly a gift to our communities. One gift that we as SDRTA members share is the many things we do With Our Youth. A favorite quote of mine is: "You never stand so tall as when you bend down to help a child." The one thing that we in South Dakota can be proud of is our concern and welfare of every child whether it is providing scholarships, reading to kids, helping with scouting or youth programs or just sharing our rich heritage background of our area. The Living History School at Keystone is a continuing project that provides students the opportunity to learn history by actually experiencing it complete with wearing the time-period clothing and learning lessons the way they were taught years ago. I am pleased to present the With Our Youth Award to Black Hills Area Retired Teachers Association.

This year I would also like to present an honorable mention With Our Youth Award. As the world continues to change, retired teacher units continue to initiate projects that make learning easier for children. This unit initiated a project for Spanish speaking families and children to provide readiness for preschoolers by reading and communicating with them at the public library. Children were also given storybooks, crayons, coloring books and useful items for families learning the English language. For their efforts, it is my pleasure to present to the Madison Area Retired Teachers Association this honorable mention With Our Youth Award.