

United Way of Southwest Wyoming

Serving Lincoln, Sublette, Sweetwater and Uinta Counties

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VOLUNTEERS LEND A HELPING HAND

Sweetwater County--- More than 250 volunteers launched the 13th Annual United Way Helping Hands Day on September 6, 2008. Fifty improvement projects were completed for people with disabilities, the elderly and non-profit organizations.

Project requests include facility repairs and renovations, beautification projects and house and yard work. “Both of our teams had a great time and really enjoyed working with the seniors. They are always very grateful, and it's so rewarding. It only takes part of one day to make a big difference to them,” said Kerry Marshall project coordinator of Memorial Hospital of Sweetwater County’s teams. Marshall’s teams volunteered to do yard work and household cleaning for seven seniors at their homes.

Organized by volunteers, the United Way Helping Hands Day Committee members include Mary Ann Clark, Debra Hokanson and Jeff Homan. The committee works with organizations wishing to submit projects as well as recruiting volunteer teams to pick submitted projects. Local businesses sponsor the event to cover the costs of advertising, giving each volunteer a “thank-you” t-shirt as well as money for supplies. When a project requires supplies that the agency or individual cannot afford the team’s company pays for the supplies or teams submit a request to have needed supplies paid for through sponsorships.

“Projects are submitted because individuals cannot physically do the projects themselves or cannot afford to do them. Many times non-profit groups are able to have projects completed by volunteers so they can use their funds to serve the community. It’s a countywide volunteerism event that raises awareness of challenges in our community and let’s people see when we work together, we can accomplish more than we can on our own,” said Homan.

Agency projects completed were Green River Co-Op Preschool, Sweetwater County Child Developmental Center Rock Springs and Green River locations, YWCA Daycare Rock Springs and Green River locations, YWCA Support and Safe House, YWCA advocate House, School District No. 1 Head Start, Young At Heart Senior Center, United Way of Southwest Wyoming, and Sweetwater Family Resource Center. Fourteen elderly and people with disabilities also received help.

Helping Hands Day marks the kick-off of United Way of Southwest Wyoming's Annual Campaign. This year's goal is to raise \$1.92 million representing a 10 percent increase over last year's total. "Through the generous gifts of the community United Way continues to create long lasting changes by forming collaborative efforts to advance the common good," said Suzanne Zutter Executive Director.

Sponsors for the event included Anadarko Petroleum, Black Butte Coal, Bridger Coal, Chevron USA, ExxonMobil La Barge Operations, FMC, General Chemical, Jim Bridger Power Plant, John Bunning Transfer, Knight Oil Tools, OCI Wyoming, Rock Springs National Bank, Rocky Mountain Power, Simplot Phosphates, Solvay Chemicals, Trona Valley Community Federal Credit Union, Wal-Mart and Williams Companies. Supply sponsors included Ace Hardware, Holiday Inn, Sweetwater Cable Television The Home Depot, and United Way of Southwest Wyoming Board of Directors.

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