



South Dakota Retired Teachers Association

SDRTA Community Service Report for 2009-2010

By Marrietta Catlin

“Volunteers don’t necessarily have the time, but they have the heart.”

A special thanks to all the units for sending me their community service hours for the year. The following information is from those reports.

GRANDPARENT ESSAY CONTEST

Marilyn Kratz and her committee from the Yankton RTA and the AARP/SD office in Sioux Falls provided the management of the Grandparent Essay Contest this year. The reading of the essay is always a highlight at our SDRTA Convention. Many of our units participated in this contest again this year.

WITH OUR YOUTH

Some of the WOY community services provided by members this past year include: Grandparent Essay Contest, tours of a pioneer school house, helping with music and sporting events, tutoring and mentoring students, Big Brother Program, judging 4-H, essay, poetry and spelling contests, collecting school supplies for needy students, after school activities, Storybook Land, escort children to hospital visits, Weekend Backpack Program, reading to students, helping students in math and science, assisting with Easter Egg Hunt, providing education scholarships, Reading at the Mall, Boy Scouts, Space Day at SDSM, Living History School at Keystone, Pioneer Lane tours, Children’s Theater, Kid’s Hope, Orphan Grain Train, Reading Buddies Program, Discovery Center, student health screenings, school crossing guard, coordinating classes for picture day, working concession stand for sporting events, Mops (Mother’s of Preschoolers), Boy’s and Girl’s Club, benefits for student music camps and scholarships, directing children’s choir, helping youth groups at church, Kid’s Fair Booth, totaling receipts for cash programs at school, PTA and Jr. Achievement Program.

ADULT BENEFITS

Unit members provided a vast variety of services that benefited adults in their communities this past year. Members have served on various boards, clubs and committees, entertained at senior centers, nursing homes and assisted living centers, assisted with blood drives, annual food drives, jail ministries, driver safety programs, Meals on Wheels, Salvation Army bell ringing, Tax-Aide, Red Cross, Capitol Christmas Tree Project, giving tours at museums, Humane Society, helping at libraries, gift and thrift shops, Habitat for Humanity, AAUW Book Sale, Community Theatre, monthly birthday parties at a nursing home, American Cancer Society, Arts Council, Corn Palace, volunteer photo work, magazine recycling to nursing homes, hospital and healthcare assistance, Hospitality House, Safe House, highway and park clean-up, visiting and driving elderly to appointments, quilting and blanket projects, church activities, planning and organizing SDRTA bus trips, AARP activities, Washington Pavilion, teacher appreciation activities as well as beautification and gardening projects. Our members truly have big hearts in making a difference in the lives of others.



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VALUE OF SERVICES

Each year the Independent Sector website gives an estimate that charitable organizations can use to quantify the enormous value volunteers provide to their communities. This estimate helps acknowledge the millions of individuals who donate their time, talents and energy to make a difference in the lives of others. Many of these individuals are retired teachers. According to the Corporation for National and Community Service, about 61.8 billion Americans or 26.4% of our adult population gave 8 billion hours of volunteer service in 2009. In 1980, the dollar amount organizations used to estimate volunteer services per hour was \$7.46. In 2008, that amount was \$20.25 and for 2009 the average estimated amount per hour is \$20.85. Although the value of hourly earnings in each state is different and South Dakota earnings are lower than most states, we do get an idea of the valuable services we as retired teachers provide in our communities. The total hours reported by SDRTA members this year for WITH OUR YOUTH is 10,646 hours. (233 of those hours involved working with the Grandparent Essay Contest.) The total hours recorded for OTHER SERVICES this year is 35,318 for a combined total of 45,964 volunteer service hours. Several trends have been noticed in the volunteer services this past year. Several more units are doing weekend backpacks for needy students under WOY Services and in Other Services, several groups are providing more services in the areas of healthcare. We can be proud of being a part of the nonprofit community that is an enormous contributor to our American economy. Think of the difference our units are making in our communities across South Dakota. I, for one, am proud to be a retired teacher and volunteer.

MONITOR BILLS

Once again, we are thankful for Wyland Borth as state legislative chair who monitored the legislative bills and kept us informed of items of interest to our retired teacher membership. We are also thankful for the services Wyland, Jim Hansen and Rob Wylie provide in the area of retirement concerns.

THANK YOU

Thank you to all the unit community service chairs for collecting unit volunteer hours and sending in the reports to me. You are truly appreciated. Thank you also to the SDRTA Board Members and to all the unit leaders for their dedicated services. A quote from Mother Teresa definitely describes our membership. **“It’s not the great things we do that matter but the small things we do with great heart.”**