

MEDIA RELEASE



United Way Volunteer Connection
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April 20, 2010
For Immediate Release

United Way Volunteer Connection Presents WE Awards

To coincide with National Volunteer Week, Volunteer Connection Director Shelly Kaiser is pleased to announce the 2010 WE Awards winners. WE Awards celebrate volunteers who give their time, share their talents, and put WE before ME to make life better in Marathon County.

Although many outstanding nominations were received in each of six categories, the Volunteer Recognition Review Committee ultimately selected the following honorees:

Youth Volunteer: Aaron Zimmerman

Aaron is a highly motivated young leader who actively volunteers with the Brighton Recneps 4-H, Spencer's Future Farmers of America (FFA) chapter and his church. Recently, Aaron has received 4-H recognition by being selected for the American Spirit Award Program. Aaron's love of agriculture has led to involvement in FFA which includes serving as a chapter officer and developing a website and highlights video. Through his church, Aarons volunteers as an usher, musician and Sunday School assistant.

Adult Volunteer: Brad Gast

Brad's eagerness to take action wherever the need, leading by example and inspiring many, makes him an ideal recipient of the Adult WE Award. Countless hours have been devoted to United Way, the American Heart Association, Junior Achievement, his daughter's softball league and many corporate charity events he oversees to benefit local non-profits. Brad additionally supports local youth through his participation in high school leadership and career programs.

Senior Volunteer: Bob Reid

Bob's quiet impact is felt through his work delivering Mobile Meals, sorting books for the Friends of Marathon County Public Library sales, arranging speakers for AARP, leading BINGO at Kennedy Park, serving on boards for the Performing Arts Foundation, ushering at St. John the Baptist Episcopal Church, assisting at Workplace Volunteer Council's Fill A Backpack event, helping the Wausau Conservatory of Music with their annual rose sale and devoting time to the Mead Wildlife Area.

Family Volunteers: Sandra Silcott and Sami Devore

This mother/daughter duo cares for the resident animals at New Life Pet Adoption Center and works compassionately with adopting and surrendering families. Sandra often devotes 30+ hours a week to New Life and her daughter, Sami, assists after-school. Sandra and Sami's kindly service make life better for both furry New Life residents and the families who adopt them.

Group Volunteers: Aspirus Lifeline Volunteers

For 27 years, the Lifeline installers have driven thousands of miles to reach the homes of hundreds of elderly and disabled residents of Marathon County requiring personal response services. Lifeline volunteers do more than install equipment; they are often asked by subscribers to change light bulbs, move furniture or just offer a compassionate ear. And this isn't done without challenges—muddy driveways, snowstorms, cats jumping on shoulders and constant equipment updates. But installers agree—benefits outweigh the challenges.

Corporate Volunteer: Cloverbelt Credit Union

Since 2001, Cloverbelt Credit Union has adopted 1,350 Mount View residents at Christmastime and has donated thousands of dollars towards resident projects such as musical instruments, new kitchen tables and the creation of a memory garden. In 2005, the staff at Cloverbelt addressed another community need and created Rebecca's Closet, a project which collects and distributes children's clothing (and more) to agencies serving families in need. Whether helping seniors or children, Cloverbelt makes Marathon County a better place to live.

WE Awards are sponsored by River Valley Bank, Target, and M & I Bank. Award winners were recognized at their place of service during the week.

National Volunteer Week is celebrated April 18-24 and honors those who dedicate themselves to taking action and bettering their communities. This week is also about inspiring, recognizing and encouraging people to seek out imaginative ways to become involved in their communities. To begin a search for volunteer opportunities in Marathon County, visit www.unitedwaymc.org.

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