

The Community Action Pages

Volume 4, Issue 2

Serving our Communities for over 50 years

Upcoming: 2018

October

4th- Financial Capability Class
8th- CLOSED for Columbus Day
18th- Suited for Success, Financial Capability Class
27th- Home Buyer Education Workshop
31st- Halloween at HRDC

November

1st- Financial Capability Class
12th- CLOSED for Veteran's Day
15th- Financial Capability Class
17th- Home Buyer Education Workshop
22nd-23rd CLOSED for Thanksgiving
29th- Financial Capability Class

Like our Facebook Page to learn about more upcoming events!



www.hrdc7.org



**"THANK YOU, MY FAMILY
NEEDED THE FUN!"**

*Article by Ally Carpenter,
11 year old from Fromberg, MT*

Play Date at the Zoo is an event held at Zoo Montana in Billings by HRDC. The past two years my Carbon County 4-H club, the Shane Ridge Rustlers, has volunteered to help at the event. We helped with face painting, went to check if activities in areas needed anything, and handed out food and water. This is a lot of fun. All my friends and I thought it was amazing! The younger kids had plenty of fun on the jungle gym and at all the activity areas. My brother won prizes such as candy and a hacky sack. I enjoyed painting faces the most. I find it is a lot of fun to watch the kids light up when they see that their face is now a bird or snake. I think the Play Date at the

Zoo helps local businesses spread their information. There are also a lot a booths that teach families about dental health, immune systems, reading and safety. I think Play Date at the Zoo is a blast and I hope to see you there next year.

**"WE LOVED THE ACTIVITIES AND
RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES"**

(Nehemiah pictured above helping at the Pathways table with Mom, Amberle)

More about our 5th Annual event inside.

Inside this Issue:

- Jim Thompson
- HRDC in the Community
- Family Forward
- Team Member Spotlight
- Calling VITA Volunteers

More Play Date at the Zoo

The purpose HRDC's 5th Annual Play Date at the Zoo was to provide a venue where families could spend quality time together and receive information about programs and services available through community resources. This year HRDC tallied 5,218 guests to the zoo. Billings Deputy Mayor Larry Brewster, proclaimed June 14, 2018 as "Supporting and Strengthening Families Day" on behalf of Mayor Cole. The HRDC team assisted by many volunteers organized child and family activities, snacks, water, and hosted over 20 vendors. Sponsors included Underriner Motors, Yellowstone Bank, Montana-Dakota Utilities, NorthWestern Energy, Payne West, Rimrock Pediatric Dentistry, Builder's First Source, US Bank, AmeriGas, Western Pawnbrokers, Sam's Club, and Kohl's. Other community businesses also donated to the event.



Above: Janice and Heather paint faces along with volunteers from the community. Below: Crowds gather around Monica and other HRDC team members for a bingo scavenger hunt. Community resource information, and activities were available at tables and tents throughout the zoo.

HRDC in the Community



Above: Left- Jeri and Jayme attend the Fun Run in Red Lodge to benefit Community Resources. Right- Verleen and Maren at the Home Improvement Show. "HRDC to the Rescue!"



Above: Sharon, Penny, Kristine, Kelly, Amy, Tonya, and Carla load over 760 items HRDC staff donated to Operation School Supply. Below: Brittney, Jayme, Shanina, Carly, Megan, Martecia, Sheri, Kristine, and Amberlee were part of a team of 618 volunteers for United Way's Day of Caring.



Did you know?

HRDC's was first know as Community Action Program for Yellowstone County and incorporated in 1966. The office was in the Zimmerman Center at Pioneer Park. In 1975 CAP became District 7 Human Resource Development Council.

Family Forward

Poverty and its social impact present a dire threat to both economic and social stability in our communities and across the state. Addressing issues related to family, system, and community barriers increases the ability of the agency to efficiently plan for and implement a bundled services program. Research has demonstrated that when multiple programs are offered to individuals and families concurrently that they have a significant and measurable impact on the success of participants. The process utilizes an integrated approach to foster economic success.

Since 2016, HRDC has been working to establish a supportive community culture through the development of the Family Forward program. This program began as a pilot project working to implement an integrated, bundled service delivery system utilizing strength based philosophy and principles to promote self-sufficiency of individuals and families. The process requires a long term commitment from the family, extended case management where families are actively involved in goal setting. For example, one low income family required assistance with employment, child care, and energy assistance. Other families focus on other priorities, each individualized to meet the needs of the individual or families based on their goals. In the past, families would come into a community

agency with a single need and would receive services for that need. Today's "best practices" shows higher success rates utilizing this model.

The Family Forward Pilot Project has seen great success over the last two years. As a result, HRDC has officially added Family Forward to their menu of services. Family Forward will facilitate HRDC's goal of providing bundled services to assist clients in reaching their full potential.

It can be difficult, intimidating, and overwhelming for families who need assistance from multiple agencies to go from place to place to find support to address specific needs and barriers and each time having to re-tell their story. For these families the barriers they face and their specific needs are often intertwined and must be addressed simultaneously.

The Family Forward Project addresses (16) meaningful life domains. They include; employment, housing, food/clothing, safety, child health/development, childcare/education, adult education, physical health, mental health, financial health, transportation, substance use/addiction, legal issues, life skills, healthy outlets/leisure activities and natural supports. Family Forward makes referrals to other community partners that provide services which may not be provided at HRDC. Services provided through Family Forward include an individualized assessment/evaluation, long term case management, referral/bundled service delivery, goal planning and collaboration with other service providers through the Family Forward Consortium.

For More Information Please Call Laura (406) 247-4779.

Team Member Spotlight



Wayne Schmidt is pictured below with his partner in crime (maintenance), Jim Clevenger. Wayne celebrated 35 years with HRDC in 2017 at the annual holiday meeting. On the left is Wayne in the shop where he began working in HRDC's Weatherization Program in 1982.



HRDC Computer Lab

Our Computer Lab is open to the public for use in job searching and applications for assistance. We ask that children not be in the lab.

Mondays 1:00 - 3:00 pm

Tuesdays 9:00 am - noon

Fridays 1:00 - 3:00 pm

CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS! WE ARE GEARING UP FOR THE VITA SEASON AND WE NEED YOUR HELP.

Last year we helped secure over \$2,900,000 in refunds for community members at no cost to them because of great volunteers.

Everyone wins...

- The community sees a benefit from the dollars spent locally.
- Volunteers learn to prepare and understand income taxes and serve a vital role in the community by giving back to others.

Contact us today at vita@hrdc7.org or call our Home Center (406) 206-2717

A Tribute to James William Thompson



Jim Thompson
on left and quotes from
newsletter circa 1980s.
Jim on the right in 2012.

“INITIALLY, I VOLUNTEERED TO BE COMMUNITY ACTION’S ATTORNEY. I WAS A CITY ATTORNEY AT THE TIME. AFTER RESIGNING IN 1966, I WAS ELECTED TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES.”

For 52 years, James William Thompson has faithfully served HRDC and his community. Since the inception of District 7 Human Resources Development Council in 1966, he has been instrumental as the longest serving volunteer in the agency’s history. He and his board associates established the Billings Food Bank, Energy Share of Montana, Foster Grand Parents Program, Head Start of Yellowstone County, Montana Conservation Corps, the Retired Senior Volunteer Program, and the South Park Senior Citizens Center. Between 1965 –1974, Jim Thompson and the board implemented Neighborhood Youth Corp, Community Outreach, Family Planning through Job Corps and VISTA, the in-school Employment Program for youth 16-21, Child Services, Neighborhood House Day Care Center, Emergency Food and Medical Services for aid to migrant and seasonal farm workers, the Neighborhood Youth Corps Summer Program, and the

Staff in front of Community Action Program in Billings, MT
Jim wrote the by laws for the program as a young attorney.



“We couldn’t have done this without you!”



HRDC HAS A UNIQUE TRIPARTITE BOARD DEVELOPED FOR COMMUNITY ACTION IN 1968. ONE THIRD OF THE BOARD REPRESENTS LOCAL GOVERNMENTS, ONE THIRD REPRESENTS LOW INCOME PEOPLE, AND ONE THIRD REPRESENTS BUSINESS INTERESTS OF THE COMMUNITY.

ASK Information and Referral Directory. Many of these programs have evolved into more modern versions of their original concepts.

In 1977, Jim and the HRDC Board of Trustees, established the Carbon County Transportation Program for low income residents in Carbon and Stillwater counties to provide easier access to services in Billings. The Green Thumb Project began in the same year, initiating a solar green house in Ballantine which operated for 16 years, providing employment to seniors and garden plants to the community. The LIEAP program was established in 1979 with Energy Share of Montana, again under the watch of Jim Thompson and the HRDC Board of Directors. CETA, Community Gardens, Emergency Food box program, Section 8, Summer Recreation Program, Planned Parenthood – After Family Program, and others developed between 1975 -1982. Crow Food Distribution Program in Big Horn County, AFDC, and the Women’s Educational Equity Act all evolved under the watchful eyes of Jim and the Board.

If serving on the HRDC agency board for half a century were not noteworthy in its own right, he also generously sits on various charitable, religious, professional, educational, environmental, public and civic boards, always first to donate his time and energy. His long standing volunteer efforts in the Billings community began in 1953 serving as board member to St. Luke's Episcopal Memorial Foundation where he continues his active involvement as a Board Member today. He remains committed to providing service to fraternal and professional organizations and is

"WE ALL AGREED THAT POOR PEOPLE SHOULD HAVE A VOICE, AND WITH THEIR ONE-THIRD REPRESENTATION ON THE BOARD THEY HAVE ONE AND ARE ENCOURAGED TO SPEAK OUT."

extremely dedicated to the arts where he has served in a governance capacity for the Billings Symphony Society, Billings Studio Theatre, Yellowstone Print Club, University of Montana, Missoula, school of Fine Arts Advisory Council.

In addition to Jim's impressive civic history, he served 8 years on the Board of Directors for United Way of Yellowstone, 4 years on the Downtown Billings Association board, 9 years on the board of Associated Employers of Montana, 4 years on the board of the Billings Incubator Project, 6 years on MSU-Billings Foundation, 16 years on Our Montana, Inc., 46 years in Billings Kiwanis, 3 years on the City of Billings Zoning Commission, 6 years on the Board of Ethics, and 6 years on the City of Billings Transit Commission. There are many others posts he has filled and honors he has been presented, in fact, there are just too many to mention.

In 2014, Jim Thompson received the coveted "Serve Montana Award" presented by the governor's office to recognize individuals that are dedicated to community service and have greatly enhanced civic life in Montana. Jim is the persona for this ultimate honor. Over the last half century in his service to HRDC, Jim has weathered 4



Jim on the left along with fellow board members and staff during the 1993 Ribbon Cutting of our new and current location.

agency location changes, and a fire.

In the decade between 1990 and 2000, Jim and the HRDC board brought about massive transformation, including, Certification of Childcare Programs, Micro business Development programs for small business loans, one of the first home ownership programs, young parent programs, and even a guaranteed car loan program. Many of the programs that HRDC offers today were an outgrowth of the original programs, projects, and pilots Jim helped to bring to fruition. IDA, Emergency Shelter, General Assistance, County Burial, Family Economic Security Program, VITA, Harmony House, FSET, SNAP, and Family Forward have been the fruits of his labor.

Jim Thompson will always be known as a man of vision. He has helped HRDC define its mission and establish programs that reflect its values. On behalf of the HRDC team; Thank you James William Thompson for your strength, guidance, dedication, and service.

Board of Trustees in 2013, Left to Right:

John Brown, Vera Jane He Does It, Leon Pattyn, Troy Boucher, Fay Marsh, Mark Vinger, Sheri' Lenhardt, Sidney Fitzpatrick, Ryan Van Ballegooyen, John Prinkki, Jim Thompson, Dennis Shupak

