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South Central Public Health District Honors Local Health Heroes

TWIN FALLS-South Central Public Health District announced today that a couple active in volunteerism, a group of students working on improving quality of life through leadership, a farm safety awareness group, and a group of volunteers providing a mobile screening unit are being honored as 2009 Health Heroes.

The 2009 Health Heroes Awards will be presented today during the South Central Public Health District Board meeting in Twin Falls. Nominations were submitted by the community, and selection of John and Sandra Sexton, Mustard Tree Clinic volunteers; the Valley Chapter of FCCLA (Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America); the Twin Falls County Farm Bureau Women’s Leadership Committee; and the Twin Falls Lions Club was based on the breadth of their service and their on-going commitment to improving the health of south central Idaho residents.

Winners of the award for Adult Health Hero were John and Sandra Sexton of Twin Falls. John and Sandra tirelessly volunteer to offer free health care opportunities to the less fortunate, unemployed, or non-insured. Their selfless running of the Mustard Seed Clinic in Twin Falls offers free medical care to people who otherwise would do without.

“John and Sandra volunteer side by side with local physicians to better the health of this community and the citizens who call this valley home,” said Buck Ward, Chairman of the Board of Health. “Their donation of time, knowledge, and heart make them true Health Heroes.”

The Valley Chapter of FCCLA was selected as the 2009 Youth Health Hero. This dedicated group of Valley High School students works tirelessly to improve the quality of life and health in their communities. The group consists of leaders like Leiloni Keele who has waged a war against smoking and cancer by doing a presentation to her peers and organizing a “Relay for Life” event;

Rozlynn Barnes and Connie Chaires who worked with local elementary students on the importance of proper nutrition and using the USDA Food Pyramid; go getters like Ashley Kraus, Kim Miller, and Jamie Wood who presented a puppet show to third graders on anti-bullying and importance of showing kindness towards others.

“This group of students is exactly what being a Youth Health Hero is all about,” said Ward. “Their dedication and outstanding leadership skills are an excellent example for everyone to follow.”

Winners of the Group Health Hero awards included the Twin Falls County Farm Bureau Women’s Leadership Committee and the Twin Falls Lions Club.

In 2008, The Twin Falls County Farm Bureau Women’s Leadership Committee sponsored a highly successful Farm Safety Day for Twin Falls County residents. This event covered such important things as farm equipment safety, emergency response, animal safety, electrical safety, gun and fire safety, water safety, and large truck safety.

“We applaud the members of the Twin Falls County Farm Bureau Women’s Leadership Committee for their dedication in keeping this community educated on farm safety,” said Ward. “Thank you for taking the time to encourage safety practices that positively influence the health of our youth.”

The Twin Falls Lions Club, a group of extraordinary individuals, takes betterment of the community to a whole new level by providing a mobile screening unit (MSU) for health screenings throughout the Magic Valley. The MSU and the Lions Club volunteers provide diabetic “Head to Toe” screenings and generously donate the use of the MSU to the Twin Falls School District for sight, hearing, and scoliosis screenings. The Lions Club MSU has been used for 150 free diabetes screenings and approximately 3,000 school screenings.

“These volunteers not only give their time to help others in this community but they also provide the fuel to get the MSU to remote areas where it is needed the most,” said Ward. “Their dedication to improving the health of others is an inspiration for all of us.”

This is the eleventh year that South Central Public Health District has recognized the contributions made by area individuals and groups to the health of south central Idaho residents.

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