BFEDC COMMUNITY UPDATE

Innovative Programs Help Town to Succeed

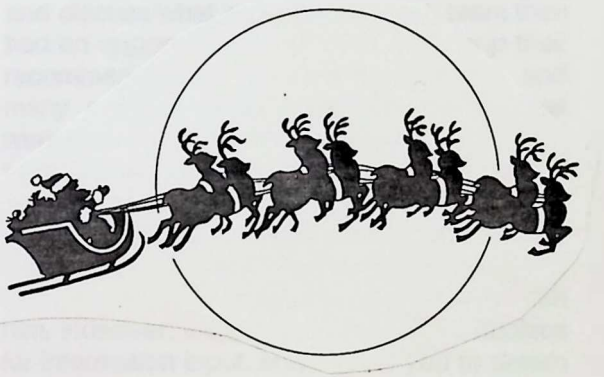
Butte Falls is capitalizing on one of its strengths as a community in support of its childern. Working with the Jackson County Commission on Childern and Families, Joyce Hailicka, creator of an innovative partnership called P.A.S.S.A.G.E.S. and a task force made up of Gloria Karches, Linda Matthews and Patti Mecum wrote a grant to implement Phase I of the program.

In the frist phase of the project, which started in Fall '95, the community sponsored "A Salute To Kids". Over 200 people participated in a community-wide potluck and student appreciation ceremony. Students were honored for their work ethic and the values which they represent by their examples. Recognition ranged from a home-schooled student who is active in her church and community to a young man who helped his parents build a new hotel last summer.

Following the Governor's Proclamation of Children's Week, October 22-28, over 500 Butte Falls residents gathered to form a "Friendship Circle" in the Town Park. Bagpipe music, a reading of the proclamation, a poem, the releasing of balloons and some cake and ice cream treats followed. 270 students attended and the rest were adults from the community. The event was made possible through the partnering of community organizations and the school district. Materials were made available, balloons, bookmarks and coloring books from the Jackson County Commission on Children and Families.

Still another event during the month of October was the First Annual Family Night on Halloween. Dinner, games, parade, dance and movies for the whole family were highlights of the evening of family fun. The event was made possible by a partnership among community groups, parent council and a student group called Close-Up. Funds raised will help students finance a trip to Washington, D.C.

Beginning in November, the community sponsored an Outreach Clinic. Immunizations were administered. Sports physicals were given. Craft activities were made available for the young children. The Clinic was made possible by the Department fo Health and Human Services and the Town of Butte Falls. Over 10% of the population of Butte Falls received the free immunizations.

A competitive mini-grant in the amount of $5,000 was awarded to the town to start the prenatal portion of the P.A.S.S.A.G.E.S. grant. The project is designed to link all ages of the community into meaningful relationships. The prenatal grant will include parenting classes, a preschool community playground, cross-age teaching and establishment of a resource information center in the Community Hall.

To reinforce our efforts to improve the community, the Butte Falls Economic Development Commission (BFEDC) was successful in linking parents, educators, agency partners, student leaders, town council, community members and guests who gathered in the conference room of the Forest Service to learn and discuss water bottling and the Town Master Plan. In partnership, we focused on what is unique about the community and ways to prepare for the future. j.hailicka