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Chadrad Communications, Inc.
226 Bordeaux St - Chadron, NE 69337
308-432-5545 fax 308-432-5601
E-mail: kcsr@chadrad.com

(Neb.)-Lions Club Mobile Screening Unit Offers Free Tests For Schoolkids



By: Roxie Graham-Marski Posted at: 02/27/2014 10:05 AM

Photo: Lions Club members Terry Hinkley, John Lurvey, and Wayne Lembke provide vision tests for Chadron High School students and driver/operator Steve Bennett administers a hearing test (lower photo) in the mobile screening unit (upper photo) that visited the school on Wednesday. (Photos by KCSR News-Roxie Graham-Marski)

(CHADRON)-The Nebraska Lions Club's mobile screening unit was in town on Wednesday providing free vision and hearing tests to students at the Chadron High School and Chadron Middle School. Local Lions Club members Brad Schwarz, Terry Hinkley, John Lurvey, and Wayne Lembke volunteered their time to greet students at the door and provide vision tests for the students as driver/operator Steve Bennett administered the hearing test.

Every year, the Lions Club Foundation sends out a letter to local Lions Clubs to determine which communities and schools are interested in the mobile screening unit coming to their area. The Chadron Lions Club pays a minimal fee to have the mobile screening unit, also known as an MSU, visit the area and provide screening services to students as recommended by the school's nurses. The MSU has been coming to Chadron schools every year for over 15 years now.

Bennett says the MSU, which comes all the way from Elkhorn, a suburb of Omaha, visits approximately 120 schools and provides services to about 17,000-18,000 young people and 2,000-3,000 adults each year. He says after testing that approximately 2-3 percent of young people will determine that they need further attention to their

eyes or ears. The majority of funding for the testing comes from Lions Club International and sponsor Blue Cross-Blue Shield.

School nurses Cleo Koerber and Amanda Chytka help to organize the event every year, and Bennett says that even though state law requires that students get their eyesight and hearing tested each year, that the nurses go above and beyond to ensure students receive the proper testing. Nurse Koerber said that over 200 middle school students and over 190 high school students received testing this year. She says the primary and intermediate school students also get tested, but she and Nurse Chytka administer those tests themselves. She says she thoroughly appreciates the partnership that the schools have had with the Lions Club over the years.

When asked why they volunteer to help run the MSU when it comes to town, Schwarz, Lembke, Lurvey, and Hinkley said “helping people, especially those who are not as lucky as others, is what the Lions Club is all about,” “the organization is deeply community-oriented,” and “the motto itself is ‘We serve.’” Chadron Lions Club member Brad Schwarz says that the local club, which was established in 1950, is active in the community in a variety of ways. The club collects used eyeglasses and helps refurbish them for those who can’t easily afford glasses. They sponsor youth baseball, pick up trash along Highway 20 east of town, sponsor the annual Fur Trade Days parade, and help furnish large print books for the library. To raise funds, they market a community birthday calendar and operate a food booth at the Dawes County Fair and the Pine Ridge Trail Bike Enduro.

The Chadron Lions Club meets on the first and third Tuesday of every month at 6:30 p.m. at the American Legion, 123 Bordeaux Street in Chadron, and new members are welcome.

Lions Clubs International is the world’s largest service club organization with more than 1.3 million members in approximately 45,000 clubs in 200 countries and geographical areas around the world.

(Questions? Comments? E-mail news@chadrad.com.)

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