

WOW PROJECTS

SERVICE AND LEARNING GO HAND-IN-HAND

When Animal Shelter of the Wood River Valley's resident dog, Pal, padded his way into Hannah Young's first grade classroom, he promptly nuzzled everyone and, much to the students' delight, made himself at home. Pal's visit was part of the first grade's Wow Project, the goal of which is to create a media campaign to highlight and publicize one of the Shelter's animals, events, or services.



ABOVE: Animal Shelter of the Wood River Valley resident dog, Pal, visits the first grade. BELOW: Third grade students Henry Page and Easton Turck help groom one of the horses at Swiftsure Ranch.

This is just one of the nine service learning projects in which Elementary and Middle School Cutthroats will participate this year thanks to Wow-students, a local program launched in 2012 and funded by the Wood River Foundation. The program allocates \$25 for each K-12 student in the valley to donate to a nonprofit and encourages participation in service learning experiences as a class.

Morley Golden, who helped create Wow-students, said, "The energy and spirit of generosity that Community School students and teachers bring to the projects and nonprofits is what giving back is all about. Service learning is a key ingredient to the school's mission of nurturing impactful, purposeful lives."

Since the program's inception, Community School students have allocated \$24,500 to valley nonprofits and donated nearly 5,000 service hours to Wow projects.

SUN VALLEY BOARD OF REALTORS FOUNDATION (KINDERGARTEN)

Students decorated gift card envelopes for the Sun Valley Board of Realtors Foundation's Holiday Gift Baskets that were distributed to local families in need throughout the holidays.

ANIMAL SHELTER OF THE WOOD RIVER VALLEY (FIRST GRADE)

PR for Pets

Students helped the shelter by promoting adoptable animals, special events, and shelter services through an original music video.

PHOTOGRAPHY: ANNELESE TURCK



**HAILEY ICE
(SECOND GRADE)**

Free Skating at Hailey Ice

In addition to donating their Wow-students money to Hailey Ice to help provide free ice time, skates, and loaner gear in winter, students also hosted a movie night fundraiser at school to benefit the program.

**SWIFTSURE RANCH THERAPEUTIC
EQUESTRIAN CENTER
(THIRD GRADE)**

Feed a 1,200 Pound Therapist

Third graders visited Swiftsure this winter and learned about equine therapy. Students allocated their Wow-students money to the care of one of Swiftsure's horses for a year.

**BLAINE COUNTRY
RECREATION DISTRICT
(FOURTH GRADE)**

Bike Safety and Support

Students will create a station along the bike path during Bike to School Day this spring to promote bike safety and provide refreshments for bikers on their way to school.

**NURTURE & THE ANIMAL SHELTER
OF THE WOOD RIVER VALLEY
(FIFTH GRADE)**

Helping Hands and Paws

After learning about healthy nutrition for people and pets from the Nurture Foundation, students will make healthy animal treats for pets awaiting adoption. They will also donate proceeds from the sales of popcorn and baked goods to the Shelter.

**SAWTOOTH BOTANICAL GARDEN
(SIXTH GRADE)**

Pollinator Garden

Building on the success of last year's project, current sixth graders will enhance the pollinator gardens by building bee boxes. The goal? Bringing more bees to the valley.

**THE NATURE CONSERVANCY
(SEVENTH GRADE)**

Silver Creek Adaptation Process

Students will complete the project started last year to create a new nature trail at Silver Creek. The project is the culmination of research and planning that began three years ago.

**NURTURE AND LOCAL
FOOD ALLIANCE
(EIGHTH GRADE)**

As part of the eighth grade food unit, students created educational displays and hosted a movie night to educate the public on the importance of reducing food waste. They also researched a lunch program at school.



WOW-STUDENT HIGHLIGHT

In October, in an amazing show of collective effort and imagination, students in grades K-12 carved more than 150 pumpkins (generously donated by Atkinsons' Markets) for the Swiftsure Ranch Blazing Pumpkins Harvest Festival. The event, which attracted more than 5,000 guests, was meant to build greater awareness of Swiftsure's mission of therapeutic equine therapy. Led by Elementary and Middle School art teacher Cara Frost, students collaborated to create a spectacular array of spooky, silly, and artistic creations to line the grounds of Swiftsure during the event. "It was a process of perseverance as slippery seeds were sorted for roasting, orange pumpkin guts were collected for compost, and small hands carved and captured their own personality in each pumpkin," said Cara. "The only rule was no triangle eyes! We wholeheartedly thank Swiftsure for encouraging confidence and creativity throughout our community."



ABOVE (clockwise): Second graders visited the Campion Ice House in Hailey; Students in all grades helped carve pumpkins for Swiftsure Ranch's Blazing Pumpkins Harvest Festival; Admiring the finished creations; Eighth grade students created educational displays to educate on the importance of reducing food waste.