



Public Service Announcement

February 1, 2019

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For Immediate Release

**Helpline Center & Black Hills Urgent Care name
February Volunteer of the Month**



Pictured (left to right): Kathy Minnick of Black Hills Urgent Care and Surgical Hospital, Mary Lee Rude February Volunteer of the Month, and Audrey Nordine of Helpline Center.

RAPID CITY - The Helpline Center and Black Hills Urgent Care are pleased to announce that Mary Lee Rude has been named the February 2019 Volunteer of the Month. Mary Lee was nominated by Suncatchers Therapeutic Riding Academy.

The Volunteer of the Month program is sponsored by the Helpline Center and Black Hills Urgent Care, a division of Black Hills Surgical Hospital. Volunteer of the Month recognizes outstanding individuals who make the community stronger through volunteerism.

For over 10 years, Mary Lee has volunteered at riding sessions for 3 days per week. Mary Lee helps at riding sessions as a horse handler and sidewalker, as well as catching horses before or

between sessions. She also helps at fundraisers and other events in many ways. Jean Johnson of Suncatchers says, "Whenever Mary Lee is at site, she is looking for something that needs to be done. So, if she's not with the riders and horses, then she's tending the flowers, weeding, painting, cleaning, or anything else that she sees to do."

Mary Lee is a perfect example of the kind of person we would all like to have helping our organization. In Suncatcher's case, they offer programs for disabled and special needs individuals and there is no more perfect volunteer than Mary Lee. She is cheerful, encouraging, knowledgeable, and always has a positive attitude. She is willing to do whatever it takes to help a rider, the instructor, or the program to succeed. Mary Lee encourages new riders who are hesitant to get on the horse, explains to riders how to use their reins, and gives cheerful reassurance that they can accomplish their goals. When something doesn't work one way, she will suggest another. For example, some riders have trouble getting their leg over the back of the saddle to mount or might have pain while riding because the stirrup is forcing their ankle to bend in a way that is painful. Mary Lee always has a suggestion on how to do something in way that makes it a bit easier for the rider or will ease the strain on some parts of the body. She knows how individuals can benefit from the program and how much she enjoys seeing the successes of our riders. We couldn't do it without her.

Helpline Center and Black Hills Urgent Care presented Mary Lee with a framed certificate and Helpline Center T-shirt, gifts from Black Hills Urgent Care and a letter of appreciation from Rapid City Mayor Steve Allender. The Helpline Center will also recognize Mary Lee at the Spirit of Volunteerism Awards banquet on Tuesday, May 21, 2019, at the Best Western Ramkota Hotel and Convention Center.

For information on volunteer opportunities, please call the Helpline Center at 211 or visit www.helplinecenter.org