

NONPAREIL *online*

The Daily Nonpareil, Council Bluffs, Iowa

09/18/2007

Funds help center

Dennis Friend , Staff Writer



Submitted photo - Barb Smith of Ameristar, left, talks to Cecelia Creighton of the Council Bluffs Community Health Center. Creighton accepted the \$3,000 Strengthening the Community Award for the health center Monday.

the machine actually sells for \$6,000, but the manufacturer has agreed to accept the award money as full payment.

The Council Bluffs Community Health Center at the Omni Center has a staff of volunteers involved in health care. It served more than 5,800 people last year, most of whom were uninsured and can offer help on a sliding-fee scale.

Jane Bell of Ameristar said 17 organizations applied for the award; and Rita Sealock of the Ameristar Advisory Committee said, "It was difficult to pick the finalists."

Two other nonprofit groups received \$1,000 each. They were the Carson Business Club and Westend Jr. Optimist Club. The Carson group has been around since 1955 and works to promote activities for the small community.

The Council Bluffs Community Health Center will be able to improve the treatment of its diabetic patients, thanks to a monetary gift from the Ameristar Casino. The nonprofit health center won the \$3,000 Strengthening the Community Award Monday.

Health Center Executive Director Cecelia Creighton said the center will now be able to buy a machine known as an HBA1C hemoglobin analyzer. This machine will allow the staff to test blood sugar levels in diabetic patients on site for a nearly-instant analysis. The center currently has to wait several days while blood is sent out, and for some patients such information is time-critical.

Creighton said she feels doubly grateful because

Advertisement

Culligan
better water. pure and simple.

Dave's Water Conditioning
712-322-2046

The advertisement features a light blue background with a pattern of white bubbles. On the right side, there is a partial view of a white Culligan water van. The Culligan logo is prominently displayed at the top in a blue, cursive font. Below the logo, the slogan "better water. pure and simple." is written in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. At the bottom, the text "Dave's Water Conditioning" and the phone number "712-322-2046" are listed in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

The Westend Optimist Club oversees the Junior Optimist group, which was comprised of 38 seventh- and eighth-graders last year. That group of youths carried out a number of projects that included picking up highway trash, sending care packages to Iraq and Christmas gifts to children in Africa.

Local nonprofit groups had been encouraged to apply for one of awards, which have been given out for four years to honor organizations for improving life in the communities. All 501(c)(3) organizations in southwest Iowa were eligible to apply, and the entries were judged by the Ameristar Advisory Committee.

Criteria used in the evaluations included management excellence, leadership, community outreach and the grant purpose.

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