

## **Proposal for Service Project: Welcome Baskets and Trolley Rides for VA Patients**

### Summary:

The Cheyenne VA Hospital has a treatment program for veterans with PTSD that draws patients from around the country. Groups of patients rotate every 8 weeks. Our club has sponsored a service project for the past two years that (1) welcomes each new group with a basket of snacks and museum/event coupon and fast food gift certificates, and (2) takes each group on a trolley tour of Cheyenne. The proposal is to continue this project (“Trolley Project”) for the upcoming year.

### Background:

Ed Wright and Judy Weickum started, and have been heading up, the Trolley Project for the past two years. They have done the shopping for items for the welcome baskets, and have purchased tickets and certificates that are included in the baskets. They have given the baskets to the nurse in charge of the PTSD program, who gives the baskets to the patients as they arrive. Ed and Judy have also been coordinating with Cheyenne Street Railway to provide trolley tours of Cheyenne for the veterans. Rotarians sign up to accompany the veterans on the tour, 2 Rotarians per tour. The welcome baskets and tours have been provided every 8 weeks, corresponding with the departure of one group of patients and the arrival of a new group.

### The Need:

The veterans in the PTSD program come from across the country. Few have been to Cheyenne, and fewer are familiar with it. The hospital rooms are fairly bleak, and there are not many opportunities for the veterans to get out. The trolley tours given them an introduction to the city and a chance to interact with Rotarians. The welcome baskets let them know that people care, and that they are welcome in Cheyenne. The snacks give them some comfort while in their rooms, and tickets/certificates for local attractions/restaurants give them something to do when they are able to get out of the hospital.

### The Proposal:

It is proposed that we continue providing similar welcome baskets and trolley tours on the same schedule as in the past two years.

### Logistics:

Ed and Judy started this service project, and have been doing nearly all of the work coordinating the tours and purchasing tickets, and shopping for and delivery of the baskets, for the past two years. They believe strongly in the value of the program, and are willing to continue heading it up. Rotarians would, as in the past, accompany the veterans on the trolley tours. Judy or Ed uses a personal credit card for purchases. He or she then applies for reimbursement from Scott Fox. This procedure would presumably continue. After assembling the baskets (bags), they are delivered to the nurse in charge of the VA treatment program, who gives them to the veterans upon their arrival. Included in each basket should be a welcome letter from our Rotary Club.

### Estimated Cost:

There are typically 10 veterans, 2 VA Staff, and 2 Rotarians on each of 7 trolley rides. Those rides are exclusively for the veterans – no other passengers are allowed. In the past, the Cheyenne Street Railway has given a \$25 discount on the price of each ride, and the budget assumes that this discount will continue.

Typically, the welcome baskets contain the following:

- 1 bottle of fruit juice
- 1 bag of popcorn (microwave)
- 1 tube of Pringles
- 2 cups of mixed fruit
- 2 planters peanuts
- 1 or more fruit snacks
- 1 or more candy bars
- 1 or more protein bars
- 1 or more packets of cookies

2 cans of coffee which the veterans use to prepare coffee in their break room.

The total for the above contents of the 10 “welcome baskets” is usually around \$130.00. An additional \$120 is budgeted to purchase things like McDonald’s gift certificates or tickets (eg., to the Old West Museum) which the veterans use on their time off.

Note: On several occasions, Target, where Judy and Ed have been purchasing the welcome baskets contents, has donated \$100.00 gift certificates. On those occasions they have been able to spend more on tickets and gift certificates for the veterans. Those Target gift certificates are not included as part of the proposed budget since there is no assurance that they will be received in the future.

Proposed Budget for the 2023-2024 Trolley Ride Project:

7 Trolley Rides @ 150.00 each.....	Sub Total: \$1,050
7 Sets of “Welcome Baskets” @ \$250.00 each.....	Sub Total: \$1,750

TOTAL: \$2,800