The Gardens at Pondera Medical Center (PMC), Conrad, MT
Creating a Better World

* Developing the Gardens at PMC is part of a greater movement within our organization to de-institutionalize Long-Term Care. Our vision is to create a community where Elders grow and thrive through close and continuing contact with plants, animals, friends, family and children.

* The RHI mini-grant enabled us to purchase material for raised gardens, hanging plants, watering systems and a water fountain in an effort to create a welcoming and lively backyard patio for the Residents, Families and Visitors of PMC’s Extended Care. The improvements are a major source of pride for many of the Residents who helped grow flowers and vegetables during the summer.
The project continues to gain support from families, staff, volunteers and community organizations such as the Conrad Garden Club, Conrad High School and FFA.

- Students from the Conrad FFA class work with a Resident leveling the raised gardens
Students install the raised gardens while Residents pot the flowers!

This water fountain purchased with RHI Grant funds will be placed in the gardens this spring!
What’s next?

- With help from the RHI grant we were able to kick start our garden project and gain support for its continuation. Volunteers recently removed old rotting landscape timbers from around the in-ground gardens and replaced them with field rock donated by a local farmer.

- Future plans for this empty green space adjacent to our patio include a winding sidewalk path, sensory gardens, more water features and a playground.

- Thanks to the RHI grant we are one step closer to creating a unique place for our community to gather, visit, celebrate, exercise, and grow!
Sanders County Backpack Program
Overview

- Sanders County is 2790 square miles with about 1/3 of our county being on the Flathead Indian Reservation
- We have an unemployment rate of 15.2%
- The 2nd highest in the state
- The 6 schools within our county range from 58-95% eligibility for free & reduced lunch
- Families do not have money to pay bills or purchase enough food for 3 meals a day
- Unfortunalty this leads to chronically hungry children
Objective

• To help improve the health & welfare of our children
• We send them to school to get an education but what good is it if these children are not alert enough to grasp what is being taught
• How do we achieve a good education for these young people who will some day be the leaders in our community, state, & county
How

• In February 2010 Sanders County Health Department joined the Montana Food Bank Network and the Rural Health Initiative Incubator Program to launch a Backpack Food Program
• To provide children weekend meals they can rely on
Program

• The children are determined chronically hungry by their teachers
• This is done by noticing specific sighs from a student
• The teacher then fills out a referral form having many questions identifying being chronically hungry
• This in turn is given to the School Coordinator-the principal- who watches the child to see if there is consistency with the child's performance of being chronically hungry
• From that determination the child receives food each weekend
• A letter is sent home explaining the program to the parent
• A few have declined the meals feeling they can provide enough
• Everyone participating in the program feels relief & gratefulness
• Many children ask on Monday if they will be getting meals again on Friday
Coordinating

- My job is to coordinate between all 6 schools in our county & the Montana Food Bank Network out of Missoula.
- We keep records of how many children from ages 2-18 receive food each week.
- I do all the ordering & must take into account the weekend plus any holidays or teacher training days.
- Each school receives deliveries every 6 weeks.
- Some schools do not have the storage space to keep a 6 week supply so I help find places that can help as well as a volunteer to help move the food to the school weekly.
Cost

• Cost of this years program is about $34,000
• Break that down to feeding plus or minus 134 children every weekend from the 1\textsuperscript{st} of September to the 1\textsuperscript{st} of June
• Each child receives 1 bag of food for every 2 days at $4.00 per bag
• The bags contains 2 each of shelf stable juice, milk, cereal, fruit cups, & protein like chili
• Sanders County does fund this food program
• The county does provide me as the coordinator to run the program
• I help find funds through grants, foundations, local business and private donations
• The Rural Health Initiative Mini Grant has been a great supporter to us of which we hope will continue
Toole County Wellness Program

“TRAILS TO GOOD HEALTH”

TCHF Health Fair
Toole County’s Employee Wellness Program
“Trails to Good Health”

- Over 70 Participants
- 12 Teams
- 14 Week Walking Program, Memorial Day through Labor Day
- Participants tracked miles walked with pedometers
- Funds from RHI Incubator grant used to pay for incentives
Toole County’s Employee Wellness Program
“Trails to Good Health”

Top team- Each member received $20 in Shelby Bucks
“Blood, Sweat and Radiation” logged an average of 615.28 total miles

Second place team – Each member received $15 in Shelby Bucks
“Solely for Fun” logged an average of 486.77 miles

Third place team – Each member received $10 in Shelby Bucks
“Heritage Center” logged an average of 481.54 miles
Toole County Health Foundation Health Fair

- Health Fair held October 14, 2011
- Free admission
- Reduced costs for lab tests and flu shots
- Noon “talks” by local physicians
- 53 Booths
- Free screenings of various kinds
- Free transportation
- Over 150 adults and over 100 students in attendance
RHI Incubator grant used to purchase a Juice Machine for a door prize and manicure sets for each visitor.
“Trails to Good Health”  
2012 Events

- Continuing on the “Trail to Good Health”
- Valentine’s Day through April 1, 2012
  - “Heart Healthy” Calendar Challenge
- Summer Walking/Fitness Program
- 2012 Health Fair, October 12

Thank you! 
Everyone Involved appreciated the events and incentives!!
Kalispell City Parks and Recreation

Gardening with Kids
Gardening with Kids

Partners: School District # 5 International Baccalaureate programme, Montana Conservation Corps, True Value Hardware, and the City of Kalispell.

Twice a week traveled to the community garden: plant, weed, water, and harvest with 12 participants from Parks and Recreation.

Increase awareness of healthy food choices, where our food comes from, and gardening as a life skill.
Once a week provided a healthy snack at summer Day Camp and our After school program from the end of June through September – outcome was introducing gardening skills and eating healthy.
To view the recorded webinar or for a copy of the slides go to:

http://healthinfo.montana.edu/RHI%20Webinars.html

For more information on Incubator Mini-Grants or a copy of the application go to:

http://montanaruralhealthinitiative.info/?page_id=1269