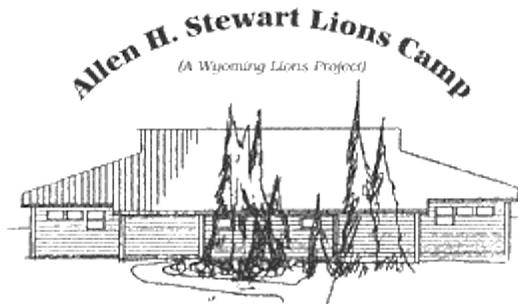




Participants in the Summer Camp for Visually Impaired Kids at the Lions Camp summer 2009

ALLEN H. STEWART CASPER MOUNTAIN LIONS CAMP



The Allen H. Stewart Lion's Camp on Casper Mountain has its roots in the Depression when it was founded to assist impoverished youth.

Thanks to the generosity of a Fremont County Donor in 2011, the Camp will be able to make needed repairs, add to the infrastructure, and contribute to the annual Summer School for the Visually Impaired. Theresa Margaret Neiberger passed away on February 20, 2010. Perhaps inspired by a picture of Theresa and her Sister's donor tiles that hung on her living room wall, the Neiberger's Trust distributed \$100,000 for the local Lion's Camp for the Visually Impaired.

"The Blind Wall at the Camp mentioned in the Trust is a visual reminder of those who have contributed to the Camp," said Lion's Camp Director Al Parmely.

The local Camp for the Visually Impaired was started by the Lion's Club of Casper in 1926. At that time the (lay camp located on the Kimball Ranch on Elk Horn Creek was a "milk camp," summer program for undernourished children. Thirty to forty children attended each day to enjoy a good meal that included milk and outdoor games. Most children who attended gained weight and were in better health after a summer spent at the camp. In 1928, Lion Ed Murane arranged for a lease on a more accessible site, 14 acres of property located 11 miles outside the city limits on Casper Mountain. The new site became the camp's permanent home in 1935 when the Lions Club of Casper renewed their lease with the City of Casper for approximately 16 acres for a period of 99 years.

Local Lions and community volunteers bulldozed a road, and built dormitories, a cook shack, nurses' quarters, a 500-gallon water tank and other buildings. From 1933 to 1935, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and Works Progress Administration (WPA), depression-era federal programs built a few buildings that are still in use and made improvements to the site.

The camp continued to be used for underprivileged children until it closed during WWII. The camp reopened in 1946 as a camp for the blind under an agreement with the Wyoming State Department of Education. The first blind camp was held in 1946. In 1966, the Casper Lions renamed the camp after Allen H. Stewart, a Lion's Club Past President, District Governor, and International Counselor who (died in a snow storm in the Big Horn Mountains. The Camp became a Wyoming Lion's Club project in 1979; the usage of the Camp expanded from a three-week summer camp for the visually impaired to include camp rentals to community groups. The Camp now consists of 14 buildings, including a furnished dining room with fireplace, a commercial kitchen, separate men's and women's dormitories with showers, and a 5,000 square foot multipurpose building. An open air covered picnic area within the commons is complete with tables, benches and a grill. The Allen H. Stewart Lion's Camp, when not in use for the school, is open for group rentals from June 15 until October 1 each year.