

Summit County Cares hits \$45K goal

Money goes to emergency assistance funds

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Organizers of the Summit County Cares campaign have met their goal. \$45,000 was raised in two months for the annual fundraiser, coordinated by the Family & Intercultural Resource Center. The campaign ran from Nov. 1 to Dec. 31. All of the money raised goes to emergency assistance for 2011: helping families stay in their home, keeping heat and electricity on and providing any medical care they need. Donations also benefit clients of Advocates for Victims of Assault, the Summit Community Care Clinic and Social Services.

Anita Overmyer, FIRC's development and volunteer director, said the last week of the campaign was the biggest. Nearly \$20,000 was raised in the final week alone, helping FIRC to meet its goal.

"Thank you to the entire community," she said.

Overmyer attributed last-minute donations to the holiday spirit and people looking to get final donations in for 2010. She said a large portion of the money raised in the last week was due to Grand Lodge on Peak 7's challenge to businesses. Grand Lodge had said they would match up to \$5,000 in donations. A total of \$12,902 was raised under the challenge.

In the week before the challenge ended, Overmyer called it "a critical fundraiser."

"Without this money we can't pay bills," she said.

Last year, FIRC raised \$39,000 of its \$40,000 goal. The \$39,000 lasted until this past September and helped 350 parents and children. Overmyer said FIRC hopes to make money raised from the Summit County Cares campaign last throughout the whole year. This year's goal was raised due to a 40-percent increase in rent assistance last year. Overmyer said she expects the money to last until at least the end of November.

"It depends on the need," she said. "The economy plays a role."

Money raised from the campaign has already been put to use. Overmyer said a woman who recently went into the Advocates for Victims of Assault received funds to put a deposit on a new place to live. She had been looking for a way to remove herself and her family from an abusive relationship.

FIRC accepts donations all year round. To donate or learn more, visit www.summitfirc.org. You can also donate directly through a fund set up through the Summit Foundation: www.summitfoundation.org.

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