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New website leads to the First Hobo's Healing Heart Legacy Award recipient

Mar 2, 2023



Randy and Connie Peterson, of Blackhills.com, were presented with the first Hobo's Legacy Award for their assistance to Hobo's Healing Heart, Pictured from left are: Penny Thompson, board member; Kelly Harnett, founder of Hobo's Healing Heart, Randy Peterson, Connie Peterson; and Andrea Bakeberg, board member. Not pictured are board members Carrie Carney, Erica Harvey, Nicole McCourt, and Melissa (Mela) Cosme.

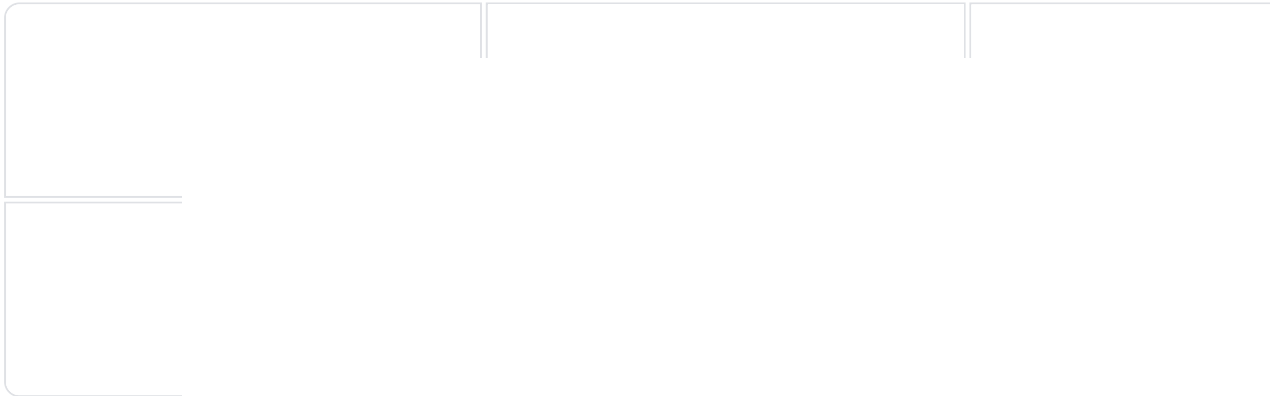
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SPEARFISH — On Sunday, Hobo's Healing Heart (HHH) surprised Randy and Connie Peterson of Blackhills.com with the inaugural Hobo's Legacy Award and an HHH branded jacket for Randy complete with his name.

The award was brought on by the desire to thank them for everything they had done over the past nine years to help Hobo's Healing Heart become successful as they moved to create an updated website to make it more accessible.

In the future, the Hobo's Legacy Award will be awarded during the annual 0.5K Crow Peak Challenge Fundraiser. The Hobo's Legacy Award may be awarded annually by the Board of Directors to an individual or organization who, in the opinion of the board, has made a significant financial contribution

or volunteerism to benefit the mission and objectives of Hobo's Healing Heart. The nominee must have provided at least five years of donated business services, active volunteerism, or a substantial financial contribution to Hobo's Healing Heart. Previous recipients are ineligible and will be found on their website under Supporters. The award may be given posthumously.



In February 2014, when Kelly Harnett had the idea to form a nonprofit to aid families experiencing financial hardship with emergency veterinary care costs, she reached out to the Petersons and asked if they could help with a website. Being animal lovers as well, they agreed to help and Randy taught Harnett how to build the website and solicited the help from others for coding she could not do. He also provided Hobo's Healing Heart free hosting, so the non-profit organization only had to pay its domain fee. He also connected Harnett with Deb Walters who donated her time and talents to design the logos.

“Last March, I attended a free workshop in Spearfish about marketing, branding, and social media hosted by Innovative Nonprofit out of Mitchell, S.D., after meeting their CEO Emma DeVos at the 2022 Women in Leadership Workshop. She was one of the Keynote Speakers,” Harnett said, “I knew we needed a new website, but I also knew they were quite spendy. One of the services INP offers is website and e-newsletter building. After speaking with Emma, I went back to the board, and we decided to make it happen. Out of nowhere, we received a \$2,500 grant from the first annual Black Hills Area Community Foundation's Northern Hills by Choice event in September. A couple other private donors stepped up to help us meet our fundraising goal and we went into contract with INP Jan. 2. Our new website is expected be live by March 15th.”

Harnett reached out to Randy to inform him of the decision to switch to INP and to express her gratitude

“It is bittersweet to be moving on; however, the need is there in part thanks to all they gave to us. They do a lot for area nonprofits and the community,” Harnett said. “We really would not be where we are today without the financial savings they provided us. We were able to focus on our mission and grow our donor base to continue to expand our reach into Pennington County thanks to their generosity.”

Along with a new website, Hobo's Healing Heart is adding an e-newsletter and blog written by the members of the board. You can sign up for the newsletter by visiting their website www.hoboshealingheart.org on or after March 15.

More changes are coming with HHH as they grow and expand. They are currently seeking volunteers from all over the Black Hills to join event planning committees for their 0.5K Challenge Series held throughout the Black Hills and their Hobo's Heartbreakers Pooch Pageant held in Rapid City. The volunteer application can also be found on their new website.

If you would like to learn more about or donate to Hobo's Healing Heart, visit hoboshealingheart.org

Photo Information:

Location: Crow Peak Brewing – Host of the 0.5K Crow Peak Challenge Fundraiser

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