

Press Release for the RCWA Toy Deliveries – December 2024

For the 17th year in a row, the Rapid City Woodworkers Association (RCWA) will be donating handmade wooden toys to local groups who work with children in South Dakota. The following organizations are on the list this year:

Rapid City, SD

Youth and Family Services - Prenatal to Five Headstart
Black Hills Area Habitat for Humanity
Black Hills Pregnancy Center
Airmen and Family Readiness Center, EAFB
Black Hills Chaplains Association (BHCA)
The Club for Boys
SD National Guard
EAFB Youth Programs, EAFB
Working Against Violence Inc
Monument Pediatrics
Black Hills Chaplains Association (BHCA)
Pennington County Emergency Management Dept

Other Locations:

Beatrice Schools, Beatrice, NE
Cheyenne River Youth Project, Eagle Butte, SD
First Methodist Church - Irwin, PA
Foster Parent Association of the Northern Hills, Spearfish, SD
Kinship Mountain Ministries, Sturgis, SD
St. Joseph's Indian School, Chamberlain, SD
Flood Relief Recovery Efforts – North Carolina

The Toymakers in the Rapid City Woodworking Association (RCWA) have been working all year to finish the toys in time for Christmas giving. This year, this group of 40 active toymakers finished 4,584 handcrafted wooden toys. Many toys were given to children at special events during the year, but 3,854 toys will be delivered to local charitable organizations who work with children in South Dakota and beyond, this week.

The toys for Christmas giving will be packed for delivery on Saturday morning Dec 7, 2024, in the Wood Shop in the basement of the annex to the Our Redeemer Lutheran Church at 910 Wood Ave in Rapid City, SD. They will be delivered (at no cost) to 29 groups in South Dakota and beyond. Most of the toys will be delivered that same day.

In the first year, 2008, the group made and gave over 400 toys to the Club for Boys, WAVI, and Benji's House. The number of toys produced since then has increased each year. The number of individuals involved in the program has increased as well. For those interested in numbers, a summary of the toy making progress is shown to the right:

Year	Toys
2008	400
2009	1,260
2010	1,430
2011	1,620
2012	2,001
2013	2,316
2014	2,519
2015	2,804
2016	3,144
2017	3,397
2018	4,053
2019	4,427
2020	2,942
2021	3,509
2022	3,462
2023	4,263
2024	4,584
	48,131

One organization that receives a portion of the toys is the Youth and Family Services in the Black Hills. In 2009, there were over 700 children involved in the Youth and Family Services in the Black Hills from as far north as Spearfish, and as far south as Edgemont. The woodworkers have received very positive feedback from all groups that receive the toys, and are excited that they have been included in our Toy Program. Another group receiving toys is the Cheyenne River Youth Project in Eagle Butte. They do a Christmas Toy Drive to fill Santa's lists for about 1,500 kids in their area each year. The military groups in our community are also given toys, including EAFB Airmen and Family Readiness Center, and EAFB Youth Programs, and the South Dakota National Guard.

We have completed all of the toys for 2024, but if anyone would like to help build and assemble toys for the 2025 Toy Program, we will start again in January, and we can always use an extra hand. Members donate their time and equipment, but we can also use donations of surplus wood or monetary donations for operating expenses. We moved our Toymaking shop to the WOOD SHOP in the annex to Our Redeemer Lutheran Church in Rapid City, SD in August 2021. Call Bob Buchanan at 605 348-2865 or Rick Weisbeck at 605 431-4708 or check our website: www.rcwasd.org for more information: Monetary donations can be mailed to our RCWA Treasurer Tony Verchio at 143 Rainbow Ridge Ct, Hill City, SD, 57745.

The mission of the RCWA is to promote woodworking safety, skills and knowledge, for the amateur, professional and student craftsperson. The RCWA was formed to meet the needs of the woodworkers in the Rapid City area. We meet on the 2nd Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at Our Redeemer Lutheran Church at 910 Wood Ave in Rapid City, except in the winter months, where we meet at 11 am on the second Saturday of the month. We cordially invite men and women of all ages who have an interest in woodworking to attend our meetings and workshops. No experience is necessary for membership. Membership dues are \$25 a year. Please come and share the experience, ideas, techniques and the mutual enjoyment of creating with wood.

The RCWA exists for two main reasons: (1) To exchange information that will enhance the enjoyment and skills of woodworking; and (2) To promote woodworking as a hobby, as a profession, or anywhere in between. This includes promoting woodworking safety, teaching and helping other members, enhancing the quality of life for underprivileged children of the Black Hills by making and distributing wooden toys to charitable organizations in the local area, and supporting community service organizations thru volunteer woodworking activities.

For more information, contact Bob Buchanan at (605) 348-2865 or Rick Weisbeck at (605) 431-4708. Or go to our website: www.rcwasd.org.