

Backpacks for Kids

Once again the school district has worked with the Wickenburg Rotary Club and the CAP office to provide backpacks to approximately 300 needy children in our community. Each backpack is filled with the school supplies which the students will need as they start the new school year. The project is completely funded through the generosity of the Wickenburg Rotary Club and the CAP office and we are very appreciative of their efforts. It is important to note, in case you are not aware, that our Wickenburg-based schools tend to have high free and reduced lunch numbers. As an example, this past year, 76% of Hassayampa Elementary School children qualified for free or reduced price lunches. The free and reduced price lunch program is an indicator of the school's poverty level.

How the project operates is that my Administrative Assistant, Lynn Greene, works throughout the summer to develop lists of school supplies which are needed for the project and then contacts various suppliers to purchase the items at deep discount. In total, the Rotary Club spends approximately \$6,000 per year for the school supplies and the CAP office provides the backpacks.

Once the supplies arrive in Wickenburg they are sorted by grade level and Rotary Club members fill the individual backpacks. The sorting and filling processes take a couple of days to complete and then the backpacks are moved to the CAP office for distribution the next day (last Saturday).

I believe this to be a very worthwhile project which supports some of our community's most needy children. I want to personally thank both the Wickenburg Rotary Club and the CAP office for their support of this endeavor as it truly is making a difference in many of our children's lives.