

The Rising Star Award is a prestigious honor. It is presented annually by the Scottsbluff/Gering United chamber of Commerce to a chamber member in business five years or less. This award is intended to recognize a new business person who has not only followed their vision by getting off to a successful start, but also gives of themselves, their time, their talents and their resources to this community in such a way that the entire community benefits.

Our rising Star was born in Scottsbluff and then moved to Cheyenne, WY where her dad was a highway patrolman. In her mid-teens, they moved to Glendale, Arizona. She has an older and a younger sister. This recipient was an avid tennis player in high school. In 1980 during her senior year, the family moved to Scottsbluff.

She had a friend selling chances for a trip for two to Australia and she wanted to support the effort for the Down Under Bowl. She ended up winning! So a good friend of hers joined her on a trip of a lifetime for three weeks. She taught tennis lessons in Scottsbluff the 1985/86 school year.

She met her future husband through a friend – which was his sister. She married in 2001. Their son Tucker is a sophomore at South Dakota School of Mines with plans to be an electrical engineer.

She worked at L. B. Murphy for her grandmother for five years. Then she worked for Crescent Electric for three years. Her next career move was to work for United Way for 32 years and served under nine different directors. She has also worked with Western Nebraska All Stars Football and Volleyball for 33 years. Five years ago, she became the Executive Director of the Scotts Bluff County Volunteer Center. When you take on the leadership role of a non-profit, there are a few that will have the compassion to care about the volunteers and those that the non-profit serves. This is not a forty-hour week and most weekends if you drive by the center you will see her vehicle out front.

When Covid hit, there were concerns how they were going to get meals to clients. Not missing a beat, she met with the hospital and came up with a plan to get 100 meals out each day. Having to bag all the meals and hang them on doors or leave them on steps. Volunteers suited up with her in the lead. She made sure they had masks and gloves and got meals delivered which includes checking on those individuals, as several were isolated at the time. It was a challenge as some clients passed during covid and many times, it was the volunteers who found out something was wrong and assisted.

Shopping for seniors program works with Panhandle Coop. Orders doubled as clients with this program doubled, so instead of 45 orders it was well over 90 per week, again not missing a beat. In the midst of all of this, she would write encouraging notes on the bags delivered to the meal recipients. She refers to them as our little folks, not clients.

Emergency food bags, which are called Snow Angels, were put together and distributed for those in need to have a food source in case things were shut down from delivering.

Thanksgiving in the Valley is also a project where Scotts Bluff County Volunteer Center handles the routing and deliver of meals. 620 meals were delivered in forty minutes. They also deliver commodities for Community Action of Western Nebraska each month.

Another new service was started – Books on Wheels. Over 1500 books were gathered and a small library was put together to have a wonderful selection of books to be delivered to homes for people to enjoy and read. A great group of women took charge of organizing the books and getting books, magazines, or puzzles to homes.

This Rising Star also serves on the board for Larry Massie's 11 13 Ministry. She assists the "By God's Grace Mobile Meals.

Kendra Feather, states, "When you see the logo for the Volunteer Center, it is a heart, and we cannot think of a more perfect way to define Shanna except with a big heart. Congratulations to Shanna Halstead, the 2022 Rising Star.