

## Cheers for volunteers

By Jake Heckathorn | Posted: Thursday, January 7, 2010 12:00 am

Mark and Nancy Svennungsen are retired stalwarts of our business community — she with 24 years as owner/operator of the Village Shop and he from his optometry practice.

Originally from California, Nancy was on a trip to Canada when she discovered Whitefish. Mark, born and raised in Shelby, knew about Whitefish. He confides that as a newly graduated doctor of optometry, the lure of the Whitefish Lake Golf Course was an influential factor in the location of his practice.

Mark and Nancy met and married in Whitefish and have three children and four grandchildren. Always an active family, they take advantage of the local amenities of golf, skiing, hiking, camping, kayaking, etc. Mark is always "busy with something," and Nancy enjoys attending her two book clubs and her weekly bridge and mahjong sessions.

Retirement to them meant only a redirection of energies. Nancy serves on the board of the Whitefish Lake Institute and has been an active force at the North Valley Hospital gift shop. Together, they give generously of their time to community projects, such as the Winter Carnival and the annual placement of Christmas decorations.

Currently, the thrust of their volunteering is directed to the Downtown Farmers Market and the Whitefish Theatre Company, where Nancy will primarily be found in the box office while Mark will be found constructing and setting up the stage.

The reason they give for volunteering is simple: "We enjoy it." They explain that they meet really nice people, have fun and get more out of it than they give. They love this community, and volunteering lets them feel they are truly a part of it. Co-workers are lavish in their praise, citing their enthusiasm, cheerfulness, dependability and depth of knowledge

Mark and Nancy, your tireless efforts have contributed materially to making our community into a place that we all love, and we thank you.

— Jake Heckathorn

This column is dedicated to those who give freely of their time and energy to worthwhile community projects, but whose efforts often go unnoticed. If you know such a person, please e-mail [jheckathorn@centurytel.net](mailto:jheckathorn@centurytel.net).