

Two from Sheridan receive Jefferson Awards

From staff reports

Two Sheridan women are among four individuals recently selected by KCWY-TV News 13, Hilltop National Bank and Serve Wyoming to receive a Jefferson Award for Public Service.

Alta June Pool and Linda Vallejo were each nominated by Nancy McKenzie, director of volunteers at the Sheridan Senior Center.

The awards were created in 1972 by Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis and Robert Taft Jr. to honor and reward community volunteers and to promote an increase in community volunteer efforts, according to a press release from KCWY-TV.

Wyoming winners and all nominees and nominators will be honored at a private luncheon ceremony in Casper on April 12. At the luncheon, the year's Jefferson Award Wyoming State Representative will be announced.

McKenzie said in Pool's nomination letter she has "devoted endless hours in the past 66 years serving on every board of the Sheridan First Congregational Church.

"She has also spent 24 years volunteering for the local senior center and as a driver for Home Delivered Meals.

"Alta has dedicated countless hours over the past 18 years helping at the Sheridan County Health Fairs, blood draws, AARP and Job's Daughters to name just a few."

Vallejo's nomination by McKenzie said she was nominated "for her selfless years of volunteering at the American Cancer

Resource Center and with Relay for Life.

"She has worked as a Certified Nursing Assistant at her local hospital and nursing homes as well as the Senior Center.

"She also volunteers at the Free Clinic and donates to the homeless shelter and animal shelter several times a year.

"After receiving her driver's license at age 50, she now takes elderly and disabled on trips they would not have the opportunity to enjoy without her."

The other two award winners are Russel Hicks of Casper, who works with the Wyoming Fallen Heroes Memorial Scholarship program, and Mary Margaret of Stockton of Riverton, who volunteers with several medical organizations.

In December, KCWY-TV invited nominations from the public for "those who exemplify the finest in community volunteer efforts."

According to the press release, a panel of five judges independently scored each nomination, and four individuals were chosen to receive the coveted Jefferson Award Medallion.

Profiles of the four Wyoming winners were sent to the national headquarters of the Jefferson Awards in Delaware, where one will be chosen to represent the state of Wyoming during a special congressional reception in the nation's capital in June, the release states.

The representative and a guest will receive an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., for the events.



Alta June Pool



Linda Vallejo