

## **Everyone chips in during the holidays**

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Even those in challenging times, away from their families, can't help but find themselves in the mood for giving.

At WATCH East, a felony DUI treatment facility in Glendive, Program Coordinator Deb Dion wanted those incarcerated to give back.

Looking for a mission, Dion looked no further than the Glendive Foster Care Project. The WATCH East family raised \$191 to support the foster children.

WATCH East staff then matched it, donating \$5 each as part of "wear jeans Friday," in which employees have the option to wear jeans if they donate some money to charity.

In all, WATCH East contributed \$400 to the cause.

The sacrifice family members made in order to give back made Dion proud, she said.

"A lot of the people in here don't have any money," Dion said. "They gave up pop, candy, hygiene supplies to be able to donate."

Not only does it help the foster children have a good Christmas, but it helps those serving time in WATCH East, who are away from their families, Dion added.

"You can feel kind of forgotten when you're incarcerated over the holidays," she said. "This is good for them."

Amy Hout of Missoula, a current WATCH East family member, said putting money toward the foster children and wrapping presents for them has enabled her to get into the Christmas spirit.

"It's our way of paying it forward," she said. "It's not what we got, it's what we give."

Hout said her life is a challenge, explaining that she has a 9-year-old daughter in Missoula waiting for her to return home. Hard as life is, by reaching out to the foster children and simply giving back, she feels better about her life and has gained strength to carry on.

"This is about doing the right thing when no one is looking – random acts of kindness that lift you," she said.

Cindy Gabbert, President of the Glendive Foster Care Project, was also pleased with the contribution made by WATCH East.

"We totally appreciate the support," she said. "The Glendive community really takes care of foster kids."

There are 47 foster children in Glendive. Not all are in foster care, Gabbert said, as some are on trial home visits.

For more information about the Glendive Foster Care Program, call Gabbert at 939-4222.