

USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT PRESENTS CITY OF ANNISTON WITH \$1,650 MOCK CHECK

Missouri Rural Development State Director Morris Westfall, elected officials and Rural Development staff were present on Thursday, September 18, 2008, to present the City of Anniston and the Anniston Volunteer Fire Department with a mock check for \$1,650 to purchase materials for the City's Fire Station.

U.S. Senator Christopher "Kit" Bond said, "While volunteer firefighters are critical to saving lives in small communities, proper fire fighting equipment and storage is critical to each volunteer. I commend the City of Anniston's leadership and USDA Rural Development for their dedication and hard work to make this project a reality."

The City was recently donated a pumper truck for use by the volunteer fire department. The Fire Station presently has two bays to store fire trucks, but only one bay is completely finished and currently houses the department's other fire truck. The second bay of the station lacks duct work and insulation and, therefore, cannot be used to store a fire truck fully loaded with water during cold weather due to the chance of damage to the truck from freezing. Since the City does not have hydrants, the recently acquired pumper truck is vital to the fire fighting operation, as the extra water is needed to fight even small fires. With the second bay completed, the City will be able to store the truck while loaded with water, cutting down on valuable response time in the event of a fire.

"First responders put their lives on the line everyday to protect Missouri's families," U.S. Senator Claire McCaskill said. "It is vital that we ensure they have the facilities and resources they need to best respond to emergency situations, and I'm pleased that the firefighters in Anniston will be better equipped to do their important job."

"I very much appreciate USDA Rural Development's attention to and the investment in the facilities that house the operations of our first responders. Anniston is a community in Southern Missouri where we work hard to serve and protect one another. This facility only has one finished, heated bay for their fire trucks. In winter this poses a hardship for the fire fighters and a hazard to the community. I am very glad that, with the help of these funds, the structure can be completed," said U.S. Representative Jo Ann Emerson.

The funding for the fire station materials is provided through USDA Rural Development's Community Facilities (CF) Program. In addition to fire station materials, the CF loan and grant program also provides funding to help rural communities finance essential community facilities, health services, and the purchase of equipment which will provide vital services to rural residents. Some examples include financing an ambulance, warning sirens, fire fighting equipment, turn out gear, police cars, jaws-



Pictured left to right: Sam Brown; Lena Brown, Mayor; Robert Jones, Fire Dept. Chief; Jennifer Jones; Randy Crow; Richard Jackson; Morris Westfall, Rural Development State Director; Cathy Walters, Rural Development Specialist

of-life, rescue vehicle, 911 dispatch center, justice center, abuse center, public safety building, medical clinics and hospitals.

Lena Brown, Mayor of Anniston, and Fire Chief Robert Jones stated, “The City of Anniston and the Anniston Volunteer Fire Department greatly appreciate USDA Rural Development and Cathy Walters for all the work they did for us in getting the grant to purchase materials for the fire department building.”

“The intent of the CF program is to assist rural communities with financial packages to enhance the quality of life for rural Missourians,” said Westfall. “Missouri Rural Development was very fortunate last year to have the opportunity to provide over \$11,200,000 in CF loans and grants. We are proud to be able to assist the City of Anniston in helping to provide the funding for materials for their fire station.”

Further information regarding any of the USDA Rural Development programs is available by contacting the Charleston Rural Development Office at cathy.walters@mo.usda.gov or by calling 573-649-9947, ext. 4. Rural Development’s web site is: www.rurdev.usda.gov/mo.

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