



Volunteers in Medicine (VIM) St. Charles, from left, Norma Kuhlmann, VIM clerk; Anita Hockett, VIM clinical director and R.N.; Ted House, CREC board treasurer and secretary; Nola McGillicuddy, VIM R.N.; and Karen Ehlmann, VIM R.N.



TREE House (TH) of Greater St. Louis, from left, Troy Galloway, CREC board member; Katie, TH therapy horse; Sandy Rafferty, TH founder and senior therapist; Nate Harms, TH executive director; and Diane Saale, CREC board president.

'Sharing Success' grants benefit two organizations

*Volunteers In Medicine, TREE House
are this year's recipients*

By Mary Wilson | mwilson@cuivre.com

Two St. Charles County charitable organizations were each awarded a \$5,000 "Sharing Success" grant by Cuivre River Electric Cooperative (CREC) and CoBank. Volunteers in Medicine (VIM) St. Charles and TREE House of Greater St. Louis were the recipients of the grants.

"The 'Sharing Success' grant is such a tremendous opportunity for our cooperative to support one of our guiding principles of 'Concern for Community,'" says Diane Saale, president, CREC Board of Directors. "Every dollar we donate to organizations in the communities we serve that help our members, our neighbors, the positive impact is doubled, and to me that just makes sense."

Volunteers in Medicine St. Charles serves the primary health needs of St. Charles and Lincoln County uninsured low-income adult residents. The clinic, founded in 1996, is completely staffed by volunteers — professionals including physicians, R.N.s, dietitians, pharmaceutical educators and support staff. The clinic does not charge for services, and

depends upon donations and grants like "Sharing Success" to continue providing assistance.

Prescription costs account for about 70 percent of the clinic's patient care expenses. VIM's Clinical Director and R.N., Anita Hockett, said that according to 2018 VIM patient surveys, those who use the clinic have expressed how thankful they are that it exists. Said one patient, "Great place! I appreciate the dedication, patience, and time that all staff give to help people like me."

TREE House of Greater St. Louis, formerly known as Therapeutic Horsemanship (TH), was founded in 1975, and exists to improve the lives of individuals with disabilities and their families through therapy, recreation, education and exploration. The organization, a leader in equine-assisted therapy, is located on 90 acres in St. Charles County, housing a herd of 20 specially trained therapy horses.

TH has 25 part-time therapists/instructors, and five full-time staff members, along with over 260 volunteers to help to serve the needs of more than 3,000 people with disabili-

ties in St. Louis and five surrounding counties.

"This incredible team, together with the financial generosity of individuals, organizations and corporations supports life-changing achievements that just cannot be replicated in other settings," says TH Executive Director Nate Harms.

TH's programs serve individuals from youth through adulthood who have physical, mental, emotional, social, and/or learning disabilities. The organization also offers a special program called "Freedom Reins," specifically tailored for veterans and service members.

"We are seeking interested participants for 'Freedom Reins,'" Harms said.

"Sharing Success" is a matching grant program created by CoBank

in 2012. The cooperative bank partners with its customers, like CREC, to support the causes and organizations they care about. CoBank will match any donation CREC makes to a 501(c)(3), up to \$5,000 per year. This year, CREC awarded \$2,500 to each recipient, and CoBank matched the funds, thus providing a total of \$5,000 to each organization.

Since the inception of the program in 2012 and counting this year's grants, CREC has awarded a total of \$33,000 to Operation Food Search, Greater St. Louis Honor Flight, St. Charles Community College Foundation, Earth Angel Aviators, Sparrow's Nest and Our Lady's Inn. CREC's board of directors jointly makes the decision to which organizations the "Sharing Success" grants will be awarded.