

WINNER, IMMEDIATE NEED: Mr. Handyman of the West Valley

Mr. Handyman of the West Valley

OWNER: Nancy Herrington

FOUNDED: September 2007

HQ: Goodyear

EMPLOYEES: 4

WEB: www.mrhandyman.com/az/westvalley



What is your volunteer philosophy? We have a philanthropic business strategy because we are in the service business. One of our core values is to be socially responsible.

Do you give employees time off from work or other incentives to volunteer in the community? The employees we choose to hire must share our values. They also are compensated with one hour of pay for every two hours they donate of their time.

Why is it important to you to volunteer in the community? For me personally, volunteering is just who I am, as I always reap more than I could ever hope to give.

Is it more important to raise money, or to roll up your sleeves and pitch in? I think a little of both. Nonprofits need the money to help with their operating costs. But then we all have talents and gifts to share, and we take great pride in giving to those who need it most.

What is your specific volunteer mission or goal? To be a catalyst to encourage others to give of their gifts and talents for the benefit of others. We created a West Valley wiki to inform and encourage volunteerism.

How can others help? Join us for the McFeast, a partnership with local McDonald's and the Rotary Club to feed 5,000 disadvantaged people on Thanksgiving. Contact Stacey at st_mcdonalds@earthlink.net to volunteer.

BY LISA POULIN | lpoulin@bizjournals.com

Nancy Herrington has had several careers: police officer, software consultant and now franchise owner. Her business, Mr. Handyman of the West Valley, is a provider of professional repair and maintenance services.

Herrington was diagnosed with cancer while traveling as an Oracle Corp. independent software consultant. She survived the surgery and the chemotherapy and has been cancer-free for eight years.

"I had a do-over," she said.

Some time later, one of her friends started a Mr. Handyman franchise in Dallas and suggested she open one, too.

"It took me three years to make a decision of what to do next," she said. "Once I made the decision, I opened it up in six months."

After months of demographic studies, she bought the franchise in September 2007 and opened the doors in February 2008. One of her core values is giving back.

"When I hire people, I make sure they understand that from the outset," said Herrington.

Her other key principles include providing a great place to work, delighting her customers and being environmentally responsible.

Herrington said she grew up volunteering her time and raising money for various organizations. She currently serves as president of the Rotary Club of Litchfield Park.

Mr. Handyman does construction work either free or at reduced rates for several nonprofits, often helping to fulfill immediate needs in the community.

"We do quite a bit of work for the New Life Center," she said.

She also volunteers with HandsOn Greater Phoenix's twice-annual Make a Difference Day and anything involv-



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Nancy Herrington practices social responsibility through her Mr. Handyman franchise in Goodyear. Shane Leckliter, the company's field operations manager, also volunteers his time.

ing Luke Air Force Base because her parents were both in the military.

"In some part of my life, they helped me or someone that I knew," Herrington said of the entities she chooses to help.

Mr. Handyman of the West Valley also has organized a river cleanup for the Tres Rios Nature Festival, recycled old appliances and cabinets by taking them to the Habitat for Humanity ReStore, and made financial contributions to the Rotary Club's literacy and hunger fundraising projects to thank customers for referrals.

Her employees have the same passion for the volunteer work they do.

"My field operations manager, Shane Leckliter, told me that (even) if he was a rich man he would volunteer," said Herrington. "Being recognized with this type of award validates what we are trying to do, so I'm excited."