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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **AREA NONPROFIT AGENCIES PARTNER IN “GIVE A DAY. GET A DISNEY DAY” PROGRAM**

Bend, OR (December 18, 2009) – “It’s like a bunch of Mickey Mouse shaped Disney balloons going up in unison -- it’s a partnership that is uplifting and exciting to see,” states Pamela Norr, executive director of Central Oregon Council On Aging.

In a collaborative effort, several local not-for-profits have partnered to celebrate and inspire volunteerism in Central Oregon as part of the national “Give a Day. Get a Disney Day” Program. The three official certifying organizations, **Bend Area Habitat for Humanity, Central Oregon Council On Aging and Volunteer Connect** will work together to help area residents get connected with approved opportunities that will allow them to volunteer for a day locally, and then potentially receive a 1-day, 1-park ticket to Disneyland or Disneyworld.

Disney announced their event as an opportunity to increase volunteerism in 2010 – The Year of the Volunteer. “This event celebrates volunteers and encourages volunteerism locally. It’s meant to inspire volunteerism and our agencies are very proud to participate and offer this wonderful opportunity for our community,” states Robin Cooper, Development Officer for Bend Area Habitat for Humanity. “Central Oregon is a very giving community. The opportunity for volunteers to possibly receive a Disney ticket is a wonderful additional benefit to the positives of volunteering – satisfaction for helping others, purposeful work, and an opportunity to give back.”

Disney plans to give away 1,000,000 tickets during 2010 for volunteers who register and are verified for volunteering opportunities listed through a link on their website beginning January 1, 2010. Volunteers must register on [www.disneyparks.com](http://www.disneyparks.com) and must be a minimum of 6 years old. Each person must register separately and must be verified through a participating agency as listed on [www.disneyparks.com](http://www.disneyparks.com). All details and frequently asked questions can be answered through the website on the “Give a Day. Get a Disney Day” link on [www.disneyparks.com](http://www.disneyparks.com). Projects in Central Oregon will begin in the first few weeks of and held at various organizations throughout the region. Interested volunteers should pick opportunities which are of interest and fit within their schedule and timeframe.

“Volunteerism is strong in our community and there is no limit to its growth. We have worked hard to post multiple opportunities that can connect people with this encouraging Disney outreach event, starting with Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service on January 18<sup>th</sup>. Our goal is not only to celebrate the volunteer, but also to interest community members in advocating and participating through volunteering. Volunteer Connect will link people with volunteer opportunities that make their hearts sing and maybe even open the way to a Disney Day,” states Betsy Warriner, executive director of Volunteer Connect.

“We anticipate a huge response to this program, not only locally but nationally, so we are partnering with local agencies for multiple volunteer events over the first few months of the year. We’re very hopeful several Central Oregon families will be awarded Disney tickets and enjoy volunteering at the same time,” continues Norr.

Interested volunteers should go to [www.disneyparks.com](http://www.disneyparks.com) after January 1, 2010 to register for a volunteering day. On that site there is also a very clear “frequently asked questions” page which will answer any questions a potential volunteer might have.

All three agencies and the partner organizations offering project work for this event concur about the importance and timeliness. “Of course, local not-for-profits are grateful for volunteers each and every day of the year. We would not be able to do what we do for our community without dedicated volunteers,” states Cooper. “The opportunity for our agencies to collaborate to make this as easy as possible for Central Oregon volunteers is unique. Partnering and combining resources is effective, and makes it as easy as possible for the organizations and the volunteer,” Norr agrees. “It’s an opportunity to give back to the volunteer and celebrate their spirit. We all hope it inspires people who may never have volunteered before to consider the joy of giving again,” states Warriner.

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