

Sipping her Chai tea while talking about her love for volunteering, Georgeann Smith gives off the warm and friendly demeanor that makes her company so enjoyable.

Smith's passion for volunteering radiates through her smile, and her stories about volunteering are nothing less than inspiring.

Volunteering five days a week at various agencies and working at the House of Neighborly Service for six years has only expanded Smith's love for making a difference in the lives of others.

HNS, www.honservice.org, provides a safety net for families and individuals who are going through times of economic hardship. HNS Executive Director Glorie Magrum said she sees the warm and giving spirit that Smith possesses.

"Georgeann is a very understanding and compassionate person, and a great asset to House of Neighborly Service," Magrum said.

"House of Neighborly Service is just a great place to volunteer, and the environment is so warm. They never fail to make you feel important for volunteering," Smith said.

Smith lived in Texas for 10 years before moving to Colorado. After volunteering in the clothing room at HNS for two years, she took the position of volunteer case worker.

Smith's background in social work has contributed to her success at HNS. She received her bachelor's of Social Work from Texas Women's University. After having two children, Smith decided to go back to school to further her education and rejoin the work force.

Because Smith has always loved helping others, social work seemed to be a perfect fit for her giving spirit.

"Seeing people get back on their feet is the best part of volunteering at HNS," Smith said.

Smith is one of the many people who volunteer their time for the HNS, an agency that provides food, clothes, shelter, prescriptions, education and more for those in need.

Magrum describes HNS as a place that provides a hand up rather than a hand out.

"The main thing we need to do is make the clients feel comfortable and at ease, rather than feeling judged," Smith said.

When Smith isn't devoting her time to others, she enjoys reading and walking her golden retriever, Jack. Smith is also delighted about becoming a grandmother to her first granddaughter, Zoe.

Smith developed her love for helping others early in life. Having parents who were very active in the community inspired her to seek ways to give back to her community. Volunteering five days a week at various agencies has taught Smith a powerful lesson — the impact one person can make.

"I firmly believe in the power of what one person can accomplish," she said. "One person can have such an influence."

Hannah Goldsmith is a Colorado State University student who wrote this story on behalf of the Northern Colorado Empty Stocking Fund.

NORTHERN COLORADO EMPTY STOCKING FUND

Since its founding in 2007, the Northern Colorado Empty Stocking Fund has raised over \$333,000 to support health and human service agencies in Larimer and Weld County. With matching funds provided by El Pomar Foundation, every dollar grows by 33 percent. United Ways of Larimer and Weld County cover all administrative costs for the campaign, meaning every dollar donated goes directly to the recipient organizations. This year's recipient agencies include: Catholic Charities of Larimer County, Catholic Charities of Weld County, Connections for Independent Living, Crossroads Ministry of Estes Park, Food Bank of Larimer County, Greeley Transitional House, House of Neighborly Service, and Weld Food Bank. For more information, please visit www.nocoemptystocking.org