



Supreme Court of Appeals State of West Virginia

News

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Court-referred volunteers keep jail costs low For Immediate Release

MADISON, W.Va. – People on probation in Boone County and participating in drug court provided 8,481 hours of community service in 2014. Based on the current minimum wage, those hours translate to more than \$61,000 in savings to Boone County taxpayers, Twenty-Fifth Judicial Circuit (Boone and Lincoln Counties) Judge William Thompson announced Wednesday, June 10.

Judge Thompson, who presides over the Boone County Circuit Court, said, “Community service allows offenders to repay society for their crimes without the huge expense of jail and prison time. Many of our participants are unemployed or under-employed, meaning they usually have more time than money. Community service allows them to pay for their misdeeds with something other than money.”

While some participants hate community service, others don’t mind. According to Chief Probation Officer Jerry Swanson, several participants have obtained employment as a result of their community service assignment. “We’ve had people do such a good job the agency supervising them actually offered them a job,” he said.

Community service work is performed all over the county with non-profit and government agencies. Community service workers can be found at the county maintenance garage, picking up litter, mowing grass, and many other areas around the county, Judge Thompson said.

Rodney Kuhn of Madison Little League said, “I appreciate the help they provide.” Boone County Assistant Prosecuting Attorney Justin Marlow said, “While not every defendant is a good candidate for community service, the defendants who do qualify are helping to repay a debt to Boone County citizens. It gives these defendants an opportunity to show that they can be productive members of our community.”

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