



Rappahannock News Photo/Jan Clatterbuck GOLD STAR: If anyone deserves a gold star for volunteering it is Terri Lehman, owner of E-Cow on Route 211 in Amissville. She is always on the go volunteering in the community when she is not working ...

A star in Rappahannock's volunteer network

By Amy G. Kretz Special to the Rappahannock News
THURSDAY, MARCH 26 2009

Spotlight on the Epicurious Cow —

Fresh seafood, meats from small family farms, fresh fruits and vegetables, great wines – the Epicurious Cow, an organic, natural market and grill on Route 211 in Amissville gives us plenty to be grateful for.

On any given day there is a steady mix of locals and tourists stopping in for ingredients from the well-stocked shelves or for a wholesome, delicious made-to-order lunch. There is a love and appreciation of good food in every corner.

What customers won't find on a shelf, and tourists may not realize, is that E-Cow is a stand out Rappahannock County business for its commitment to volunteering.

Terri Lehman, 54, started "E-Cow" in the spring of 2001, the same year she volunteered to co-chair "The Taste of Rappahannock." She has co-chaired "The Taste" as a volunteer ever since. The Headwaters Foundation relies on this annual fundraiser for the bulk of its budget.

Terri works with vendors six weeks before the September event, helps coordinate the menu, organizes extra cooks and donates staff hours and the E-Cow kitchen to support Headwaters, which in turn, supports the public schools of Rappahannock.

Terri's commitment to volunteering extends to her employees. All of them are encouraged to spend time volunteering through flex scheduling and liberal time off. It is a measure of the continuing success of this homegrown business that a commitment to being part of the community, giving time and expertise as volunteers, are as integral to the business as catering work and spring garden plants.

In addition to the Headwaters Foundation, Terri and her staff support the Rappahannock Animal Welfare League (RAWL) and put on its annual fundraising dinner.

E-Cow is a model for putting "what you know" to work for others as a volunteer. In return, employees feel connected to their community and valued. Aging Together encourages every business in the county to find a volunteer activity their employees can do together. The Piedmont Volunteer Center is a great resource for those looking for volunteer projects: 540-825-7615.

Aging Together is a community partnership working to improve quality of life for older adults and their families. It promotes volunteerism as an essential way to support seniors in communities and to make full use of the talents and experience of older adults.

Amy G. Kretz is Rappahannock County's Resource Specialist for Aging Together.