

Bret Michaels Hears You America

Written by Arizona Foothills Magazine

Thursday, 15 December 2011 14:37 - Last Updated Thursday, 15 December 2011 14:51



Arizona's own Bret Michaels is a huge philanthropist, and his next project could possibly lead to great improvements in local communities. He is teaming up with Reader's Digest and their renewed campaign, "We Hear You America." In its second year, the initiative acts to empower Americans with funding to help their local communities improve the quality of life. Money is allocated via online voting. This year, the voting extends until March 1, 2012. Community members can cast votes for their towns by logging in to ReadersDigest.com. Last year, Readers Digest donated \$7.5 million in financial and promotional support to communities across the country.

Winning towns like Boley, Okla., received \$10,000 to do a variety of improvements to the community including replacing the fire hydrants, helping the volunteer community fire department and starting a new organization, "Keep Boley Clean," designed to, well, you know. Boley Mayor Joan Matthews says the campaign "boosted morale of citizens and showed what you can do if you work together."

Another winning town, San Jose, Calif., used their \$10,000 to help fund their Safe Summer Initiative, which provides fun and educational activities in the summer for at-risk youths. The program has continually shown a reduction in violence year after year. San Jose Mayor Chuck Reed expressed how much funding from "We Hear You America" has made an impact. "In these tough economic times, cities like San Jose have had to make difficult budget cuts. Contributions and community support enabled us to keep many of our young people active and engaged in positive activities this summer. This generosity truly has made a difference."

These are indeed times of economic struggle and Arizona is no exception. A recent Harris Interactive poll of 52 mayors across the country showed that 90 percent of mayors are anxiously seeking new revenue sources other than taxes. In addition, a large majority of mayors plan to increase municipal fees while decreasing services. It is these tough times that money from "We Hear You America" could really make a difference. Reader's Digest North America president Dan Lagani explains why they have the initiative.

"The 'We Hear You America' campaign is about giving back to the people and towns that have meant so much to Reader's Digest over the years. Cities, towns, and villages across our country continue to face economic challenges. Reader's Digest is bringing back 'We Hear You America' to help these communities get the attention they deserve."

Click [here](#) to visit the website.