

The Annual 24-hour Nordic Ski Fundraiser 2009 will begin around 8 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 5 and end around 8 a.m. Friday, Feb. 6. The event will be held at the Casper Mountain Trails Center and on the Casper Mountain Nordic Ski Trails.

Proceeds will go to the Lee McCune Braille Trail; Camp Hope, Inc.; Rocky Mountain Eye Bank; Rocky Mountain Eye Institute and other local organizations.

The Braille Trail was "dreamed up," as organizer Bob Matson said, by former Natrona County School District teacher Ed Strube. Strube is a member of the Casper Mountain Lions Club, which helps the elderly with vision needs and children with diabetes. The Lions, along with volunteers, built and maintain the trail, which Matson described as being a "terrific natural outdoor learning experience for both sight-impaired and sighted folks." Matson said Casper Mountain is a national destination for people of all ages with sight limitations. The Allen Stewart Blind Camp is just minutes up the road from the Braille Trail.

Everyone is invited to join the 24-hour event, which is part of the Casper High School Nordic Ski Program's community service project, whether or not they have pledges or donations. "Just get out, get skiing and have some fun," Matson said.

If you are interested in making a donation, call Karen Kennedy at Natrona County High School (577-0330) or Terri Coffman at Kelly Walsh High School (577-4640). You also can bring your donation with you if you join in the skiing or come to Casper Mountain Trails Center to support the skiers.