

# Charles City Foster Grandparents Program treats foster grandmas to day of appreciation

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Foster Grandparents and Charles City Foster Grandparents staff stop for a photo during a day of activities Thursday for the group's annual appreciation day. The event includes lunch, entertainment (this year by rock 'n' roll entertainer Richie Lee of Richie Lee and the Fabulous '50s of Des Moines, as well as door prizes, goodie bags, awards and recognitions. The event was held at St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church in Charles City. Press photo by Bob Steenson  
By Bob Steenson, [bsteenson@charlescitypress.com](mailto:bsteenson@charlescitypress.com)

The Americorps Senior Foster Grandparents Program based in Charles City took time Thursday to hold its annual appreciation day, a way to thank the dozens of foster grandmothers (and occasionally but not currently foster granddads) for the hours of work they put in helping out in area schools and child care centers.

Director Jennifer Lantz said the program is currently up to 39 foster grandparents – slowly but steadily climbing back from pandemic years when participation plummeted.

“We can always use more grandparents,” Lantz said. “Some folks are still wary of going back in the schools, or going out in general.”

The program provides foster grandparents for more than 20 sites in Floyd, Mitchell, Chickasaw and Cerro Gordo counties. Charles City has been the official local sponsor of the program for 33 years.

In addition to a lunch and treats throughout the day, the foster grandparents were entertained by the 1950s rock 'n' roll music of Richie Lee, of Richie Lee and the Fabulous 50s group from Des Moines, which is known in this area from the group's performances at the Surf Ballroom.

Lee's repertoire included hits by Buddy Holly, Jerry Lee Lewis, Ritchie Valens and Chuck Berry that even had some of the grandmas out of their seats and dancing along.

- Site awards – Charles City Washington Elementary School, Charles City Lincoln Elementary School, Charles City Middle School, Immaculate Conception School, TLC The Learning Center, St. John Christian Preschool, Central Preschool, RRMR Elementary School, West Town Charlie Brown, Washington Charlie Brown, Lake Town Charlie Brown, Mason City Harding Elementary School, Mason City Hoover Elementary School, North Iowa Christian School, Sugar Plum Preschool, Clear Creek Elementary School, Osage Lincoln Elementary School, Osage Community Daycare, St. Joseph Community School, New Hampton Elementary School, Fun in the Son Preschool and Daycare.



Rock 'n' roll entertainer Richie Lee, of Richie Lee and the Fabulous '50s, of Des Moines, entertains foster grandparents at the Foster Grandparent program appreciation day held Thursday at St. John Lutheran Church. Press photo by Bob Steenson