

the volunteer center of the East Bay

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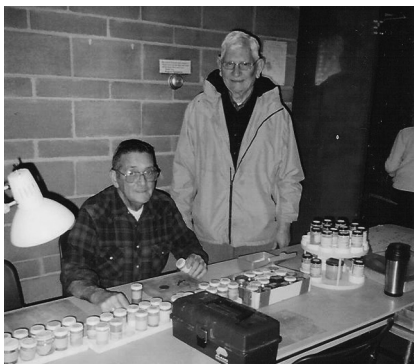
RSVP for A Volunteer Reception

Mark your calendars for October 10, the date of the Volunteer Center's second Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) event.

"Our RSVP group offers active adults ages 55 years and older the opportunity to give back in their communities," says Linda Groobin, RSVP coordinator for the Volunteer Center. "Whether you have one day a month or one hour a week, we have opportunities can match an individual's interests and schedule."

Becoming an RSVP member has no cost and no obligation. Interested individuals meet briefly with Linda to receive an overview of volunteer opportunities.

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Joe Yarbrough (left) and Doug Ellis (right) volunteer at the Concord Senior Adult Activity Center.

Giving Back During The Holidays

Looking to make a difference in the life of a family in need this holiday season? The Volunteer Center can help to identify families and non-profits that need assistance during the holiday season.

"Every year we work to make a difference in the lives of thousands of needy people throughout Alameda and Contra Costa counties during the holiday season," says Tracy Murray, VC Executive Director.

The Volunteer Center in conjunction with the Contra Costa Times and the Dean and Margaret Leshner Foundation sponsors the Share the Spirit Fund where Times' readers can make monetary contributions that benefit local nonprofits. Proceeds from the fund support children, adults and families in need of clothes, food and holiday gifts.

In addition, the Volunteer Center also publishes a community giving guide on their website, www.helpnow.org, that highlights local opportunities for individuals to volunteer, give gifts, or sponsor a family during the holidays. ✦

"Local nonprofit agencies including the Contra Costa Food Bank and Shelter Inc., depend on our community to help people in need during the holidays. We can identify volunteer opportunities that match an individual's needs and availability. If they would rather make a monetary donation to the Share the Spirit fund, their donation will be used to purchase food or gifts for someone who couldn't afford these items otherwise."

—Tracy Murray, Volunteer Center Executive Director

Volunteers Needed To Assist With *Sunset's* Idea House

Sunset magazine is coming to Contra Costa County to build their latest Idea House. Built by *Sunset* from scratch in the Danville-Alamo area, it features the latest in high-tech amenities, gadgets and lifestyle innovations. The Volunteer Center has been chosen as *Sunset's* non-profit partner for this exciting event. The Volunteer Center is recruiting volunteer docents for the house and *Sunset* magazine is giving the Center a corporate grant to thank them.

"We know what a difference volunteers can make in helping a non-profit agency achieve their goals," says Lorraine Meuleners, who is serving as the Volunteer Center's interim Executive Director. "Usually, we ask volunteers to give their time to one of

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Board Profile: Robin Raber-Luna

Robin Raber-Luna could have coined the term multitasking. In addition to working full-time as a Senior Vice President with the Consumer Deposits Group at Wells Fargo, this busy mom is also a passionate volunteer and author of the children's book, "My Name is No No Bad Dog."

Robin began volunteering at the age of 10 and has worked with numerous non-profits as a Special Olympics volunteer, a crisis counselor for San Francisco Suicide Prevention, and an assistant troop leader for the Girl Scouts.

Robin also helped to start an Adopt-A-Family program at Hercules Middle/High School and secured two grants for Ohlone Elementary School in Hercules.



As a Volunteer Center Board member for the past year and a half, Robin says she's proud to work with an organization that shares her commitment to helping others.

"The center is here to help harness the power of volunteerism and to assist volunteers in building a lifelong commitment to community service," she says. "I think we do a great job of matching people to the right volunteer opportunity in their community."

As the center celebrates its 50th anniversary this year, Robin hopes to

"I'm motivated to volunteer because I've seen what people can create and achieve together, when they work for a common cause. My reward is seeing interpersonal relationships grow and the benefits that come from that collaboration."

see the organization continue to expand.

"I'd like to see the center continue to grow its volunteer base and help make volunteering a way of life," she says.

"The agency has the ability to create critical change through volunteerism and education."

Robin also commends the exceptional commitment and dedication of the Volunteer Center's staff.

"I'm continually impressed with the agency's ability to find ways to leverage the creativity, innovation and potential of others," she says.

"Our staff members are very effective at bringing people together and blending their diverse perspectives and approaches for a common goal." ✦

Sunset House, continued from page 1



the 450 non-profit agencies that we support but for this venture we need volunteers who are willing to donate a few hours to help us staff the Idea House."

Volunteers are needed to serve as docents at the Sunset House while it is open for public viewing. The home will be open on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from September 8 through November 12. Volunteers will greet and assist the public as they tour the home. This is a great opportunity for individuals or groups to get involved. Volunteers can work either morning (8:30am-1:30pm) or afternoon (1-5:30pm) shifts. Interested volunteers can register for one or more shifts for the Sunset House at www.helpnow.org or call (925) 472-5760. ✦

VOLUNTEER CENTER BOARD ROSTER 2006-2007

| Position | Name | Position | Organization |
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Chevron employees prepare seedlings for planting at the Walnut Creek Open Space project.

Best wishes to our Executive Director

After five years of service, Volunteer Center Executive Director Tracy Murray is moving on to a new career in local government. Tracy's accomplishments on behalf of the Volunteer Center have been substantial. She brought considerable fundraising experience to her position and increased the Volunteer Center's programming to include RSVP and the delivery of services to nonprofit agencies and volunteers in Alameda County.

"One of her many accomplishments has been to completely upgrade our organization's technology infrastructure, which has allowed us to reach a much broader audience," says Luis Aguilar, the Volunteer Center's Board Chairman. "We appreciate Tracy's leadership of the Volunteer Center and wish her the very best."

The Board of Directors has appointed an interim Executive Director, Lorraine Meuleners, and anticipates hiring a full-time director in the next 30 days.

"One of Tracy's many accomplishments has been to completely upgrade our organization's technology infrastructure, which has allowed us to reach a much broader audience."

—Luis Aguilar, Board Chairman, The Volunteer Center ♦

Help Celebrate The Week of Caring

This year, the United Way of the Bay Area and the Volunteer Center will connect more than 4,000 volunteers from Bay Area businesses to hundreds of non-profit opportunities throughout Alameda and Contra Costa counties during the upcoming "Week of Caring" set for September 11-16.

"The Week of Caring is an opportunity for groups of employees to volunteer together for a week to make a huge difference in their communities," says Rocky Beach of United Way of the Bay Area. "The program provides an opportunity for employees to see how United Way dollars are helping the Bay Area while also fulfilling a growing need for volunteers to assist at local nonprofits."

Chevron Corporation is one of many local companies whose employees participate in the weeklong event that benefits local charities.

"We think the Week of Caring is hugely important to our community and our employees have been volunteering for this event for the past 12 years," says Lucretia Weiner, Chevron's community

involvement coordinator. "By working in partnership with the Volunteer Center and local non-profits our employees can give back to our local communities through a variety of projects."

In past years, Week of Caring have helped with projects including landscaping, renovation and painting of facilities, serving meals to the homeless, working on environmental clean-up projects and more.

To volunteer your office for this year's Week of Caring, call the Volunteer Center at 925/472-5760. ♦

Wells Fargo Makes a Difference

Thank you to our 50th Anniversary Sponsor—Wells Fargo Bank—for its generous support, which includes production of this newsletter.

If you would like to support the work of The Volunteer Center, you may send a contribution in the envelope included or give online at helpnow.org. Your contribution is tax deductible.

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"We have some volunteers who deliver Meals on Wheels once or twice a week and others who make calls to check on homebound seniors," Linda says. "The opportunities are endless and if volunteers have a special talent or skill they would like to share we will match them with a non-profit who needs and appreciates their expertise."

All RSVP volunteers are invited to the Volunteer Center's annual recognition event on October 10 in Hercules.

"Last year we had over 200 volunteers in attendance," Linda says.

"It's a fun event with entertainment, a raffle, and a guest speaker and it gives our RSVP volunteers the opportunity to meet their counterparts throughout the county."

"Our RSVP group offers active adults ages 55 years and older the opportunity to give back in their communities. Whether you have one day a month or one hour a week, we have opportunities can match an individual's interests and schedule."

—Linda Groobin, RSVP coordinator for the Volunteer Center



Youth Hall of Fame winners, Countywide Youth Commission members and Board of Supervisors of Contra Costa County

The Contra Costa Countywide Youth Commission (CYC) invites interested teens to serve on their advisory committee for the coming year.

The CYC acts as an advisory group to the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors on youth-related issues. Teen representatives deliberate issues, hold mock elections, conduct youth forums and recognize youth accomplishments through the Youth Hall of Fame.

"We're actively seeking students ages 12-18 who have an interest in local government and who would like to have a voice in issues affecting Contra Costa's teens," says Joan Tomasini, coordinator of the Volunteer Center's Youth Action Council and CYC.

"Anyone interested in serving on the CYC is encouraged to fill out an application at www.cyc.typepad.com."

While the CYC welcomes volunteers from throughout the county, there is a strong need for representatives from East and West Contra Costa County.

"Many of our Youth Action Council members have participated in the CYC and for those who are interested in political science, it provides a great opportunity to observe the inner workings of local government," Joan says.

The CYC was founded by County Supervisor Mark DeSaulnier to give youth a contributing role in local government. ✦

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