



RSVP BULLETIN

Fall 2010

Lead With Experience

www.rsvpswct.org

COMMUNITIES SERVED

Darien
Greenwich
New Canaan
Norwalk
Stamford
Weston
Westport
Wilton



Message from the Director, *Teri Klein*

We celebrate the extraordinary commitment and contribution made by our experienced volunteers and recognize their valuable impact on addressing challenges in the communities we serve.

Program Highlights:

ABC World News Tonight featured our D2R2 (Dogs to Read to) Program at the East Norwalk Library led by RSVP volunteer Don Smith and his trained therapy dog Brasil.

Each Saturday morning at the library children are given the opportunity to improve their reading skills by reading to specially trained dogs who listen non-judgmentally. As a testimony to the program's success, an 8 year old participant, Kevontae Hay, was interviewed and several sessions taped over a period of weeks. Initially Kevontae was reading below grade level, but according to ABC News, who visited again six weeks later, "the improvement was remarkable." The show aired in August. To date several hundred children have participated in the program which has been expanded to four other libraries in the area.

Channel 12 News honored two of our Volunteers as "Hometown Heroes" in September. Ron Hitter was recognized for his service with the Wilton Volunteer Ambulance Corps. Ron is now president of the Corps and has logged in over 2,500 volunteer hours since 2004. **Audrey Rabinowitz**, former president of the Westport Women's Club was recognized for her service as a travel counselor for the CT Commission on Culture and Tourism at the Darien Welcome Center. She has contributed over 1000 hours since she began as an RSVP volunteer 6 years ago.

In recognition of **September 11 Day of Service and National Preparedness Month, RSVP** teamed up with **Christian Community Action** and **Norwalk's Department of Emergency Management** to host the **Emergency Preparedness Awareness Project**. Volunteers demonstrated ways to be prepared in the event of a natural or manmade disaster. Thanks to Mary Bennett, Mary Bones-Angeloni, Christine Burke and Mazie Moorer who assisted the public in English and Spanish with information to help individuals and families become ready.

A thank you to our volunteers who tutored and assisted with the **Grass Roots Tennis Program and the CONNCAP Program at Norwalk Community College** this summer. The students who attended these programs will return to school well prepared for a successful academic year.

And the Opportunities for Meaningful Service continue -----!!

NOTES & NEWS

Coming soon: ITN*CoastalCT* (Independent Transportation Network) is a new transportation option for seniors age 60 and above in Easton, Fairfield, Norwalk, Weston, Westport and Wilton. Affiliated with ITN*America*, rides will be available 24/7 with no restriction on ride purpose. Check out www.itncoastalct.org for more information. Volunteer drivers are needed for this program.



The *Live Well* Program Serving Fairfield County – The Southwestern CT Agency on Aging offers workshops to people age 55 or older who are suffering with any chronic health condition. *Live Well* is a nationwide program developed by Stanford University to help participants who suffer with arthritis, diabetes, high blood pressure, anxiety, depression, heart and lung disease, asthma and chronic pain to:

- Find better ways of dealing with pain and fatigue
- Discover easy exercises to help improve or maintain strength and energy
- Learn the appropriate use of medications
- Improve nutrition
- Talk effectively with family, friends and health professionals
- Understand new treatment choices
- Feel better about life

Live Well is a series of six workshops held once a week for 2 ½ hours. Workshops are taught by specially trained volunteers. They cover a new topic each week and provide opportunities for interaction and group problem solving. This program is coming soon to senior centers, senior housing, churches and community based health organizations.

For more information about *Live Well* workshops in your area contact Gretchen James at 203-814-3620, gjames@swcaa.org or visit www.swcaa.org.



Groundwork Bridgeport offers low-cost landscaping services in the Norwalk/Westport area. To take advantage of this program, you must be at least 65 years old and have Social Security income not more than 2 times the poverty guidelines. For information and a free price quote, call 203-335-6126.



Don't forget to send us your volunteer hours! We want to know what you're doing to help others, and how often you're doing it!

Shippan Designer Show House in Stamford will be held September 26 – October 31, with proceeds benefitting the Stamford Museum & Nature Center. Over 25 Interior Designers from CT and NY will be creating rooms to show off their talents. Visit to get some fresh ideas for your own homes. The Show House is located at 422 Ocean Drive West in Stamford. Please show your support!



From Family & Children's Agency's: "Special thanks go out to the wonderful R.S.V.P. volunteers who made lap quilts, hats and bibs for our senior homecare clients. The detail and beauty of these items spurred me to have a special contest for their distribution. I posted categories on the wall of our homecare office. The caregivers wrote the clients' name on a list they thought described the person best. Twenty lists stating great attributes like, "Best Outlook on Life", "Most Organized", "Most Fun to be With", "Nicest Smile" were immediately filled by our home health aides, homemakers and companions as they came into the office. I had expected the winning client's response for the honor of being nominated and the lovely gift they received; however, I hadn't expected the response from our caregivers. For a week, I heard and witnessed the pride, appreciation, genuine caring and joyous stories our caregivers had for their clients as they signed them up. The gifts you donated to us provided a benefit to everyone involved! It was a wonderful experience."

Irene Cronkright, Vice President of Services for Seniors, FCA



Don't forget your flu vaccine! This year, one flu vaccine will protect you from three different types of flu virus, including the 2009 H1N1 virus that caused much illness last season. Medicare clients can get the flu vaccine at no cost and there is no co-insurance or co-payment applied to this Medicare benefit. Nor will people on Medicare have to meet their deductible. Additionally, for non-Medicare patients, beginning Sept. 23, 2010, health plans will be required to cover recommended preventive services, such as the flu vaccination, without charging co-payments, co-insurance or deductibles.



A report by the Corporation for National & Community Service, *The Health Benefits of Volunteering: A Review of Recent Research*, found a significant connection between volunteering and good health. The report shows that volunteers have greater longevity, higher functional ability, lower rates of depression and less incidence of heart disease.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Can you help with any of these?



Enjoy children? Classroom volunteers are needed to read to children in Norwalk pre-school program. Minimum one hour a week. Help make a difference in a child's life! Stamford school is also looking for classroom volunteers for 4 and 5 year olds.



Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program provides low-income area residents with assistance in preparing their income tax forms. Volunteers will receive training to become IRS-certified tax preparers. Must have basic computer skills and be willing to learn tax-preparation software. Volunteers will be needed during the upcoming tax season.



Singers and Musicians! Several senior residences and day programs are looking for talented individuals to provide occasional entertainment.



Medical Transportation Program needs Drivers! Drivers take Westport and/or Weston residents to hospital and medical appointments once or twice a month.



Tutors needed in one of several afterschool programs to help children learn! **Mentors** are needed both in-school and outside of school, to make a difference in the lives of at-risk children. **Male Volunteers** are needed to assist staff with a gender-based life skills and leadership program for middle school boys on Friday afternoons at Norwalk Community College.



Calling all Artists! Teach an art class to seniors or children, on a weekly basis.



Become a Neighborhood Tree Liaison. Help protect trees in local neighborhoods. Suggest locations for new plantings and identify trees that become diseased and need care. No arboreal expertise is necessary. Training is provided.



Norwalk Reads! Book Distribution on October 30th. Help is needed from 9am to 1pm at various libraries in Norwalk as books are given out to area children. This is a fun, one-day event, which makes a huge impact on those who attend.



Lockwood Mathews Mansion needs volunteers to become guides of this national historic site, manage the gift shop, be monitors, assist at special events, and more.



Kingsway Senior Housing (next to Stew Leonard's) is looking for volunteers to staff their small general store, coordinate their entertainment and education programs, run an exercise program or computer lab and assist in their library.



Stamford Museum & Nature Center is looking for museum ambassadors, as well as occasional assistance such as Docents for Shippan Designer Show House, October 17th Harvest Festival, and November 7th Touch a Truck event.



Knitting Instructor needed! Two programs in Norwalk need someone to teach knitting to seniors.



Stamford Senior Center is looking for volunteers to lead classes, pick up supplies from local merchants and help with administration.

For information on these and other opportunities, please contact Nancy Pratt at (203) 663-7332, or npratt@neon-norwalk.org.



RSVP

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Get Involved!

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