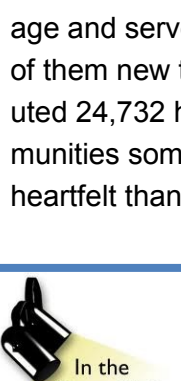


VOLUNTEERS HELP CLARK COUNTY THRIVE!

RSVP and Volunteer Center Volunteers have been busy this year helping make our Clark County communities better places to thrive! The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program members (ages 55 and over) total 255 contributing 28,627 hours in 2016. RSVP volunteers serve critical community needs in 30 nonprofits in five focus areas including Education, Healthy Futures, Capacity Building, Veterans and Other Community Priorities. The Volunteer Center volunteers can be any age and serve over 70 nonprofits. We have 561 volunteers registered, with 214 of them new to the program as Pen Pal volunteers. Center Volunteers contributed 24,732 hours in 2016. 929 Clark County residents have shown our communities some extra love by sharing some of their time and talent! Our most heartfelt thanks to each and every one of you for all you do!

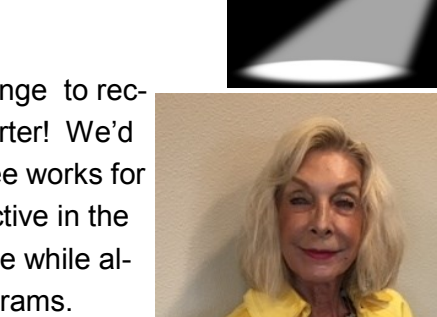
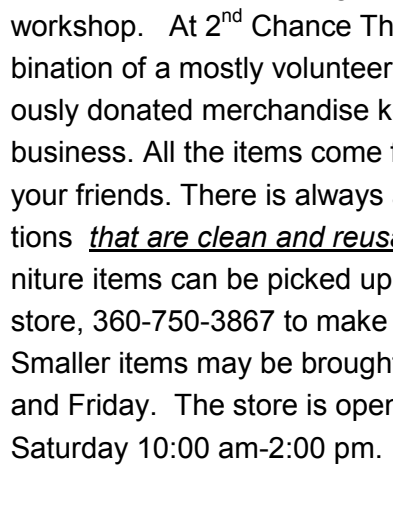


FRIENDS OF THE CARPENTER

The Mission: Friends of the Carpenter is a non-profit, faith-based day facility that provides safety, structure and purpose for vulnerable members of our community.

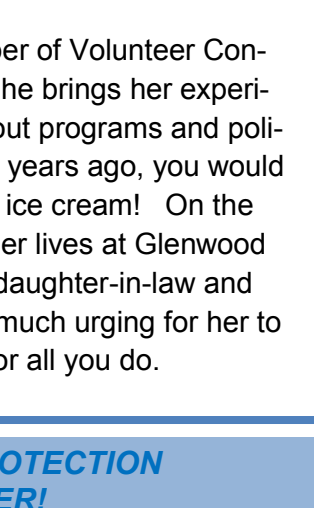
The Vision: People of all circumstances are accepted, honored and appreciated in our community, and are empowered to live life with dignity, hope and love.

Friends of the Carpenter, is open 9:00 am to 4:00 pm Monday through Friday, for any and all who wish to spend time at the Friendship Center. Those who come through the doors are greeted with warm hospitality, offered coffee and perhaps a snack, and then invited to sit around a table with others and help with a woodworking or other projects. The woodworking provides a tangible activity, a way to contribute to the community in a real and meaningful way. The wood products do provide some income for the ministry, but the sense of purpose and the relationships formed around that table are far more important. Lives are transformed every day at the Friendship Center. If you'd like to witness the magic in person, Friends of the Carpenter invites you to stop by for a tour at 1600 W 20th St. In addition to the workshop, Friends of the Carpenter also operates, **2nd Chance Thrift Store**. It's not your every day ordinary thrift store, it's a place where people from all backgrounds love to shop for great selection, deals and treasures. But there's also a higher purpose for what the store does. All proceeds go to support the ministry the faith-based non-profit workshop. At 2nd Chance Thrift Store a combination of a mostly volunteer staff and generously donated merchandise keep then in business. All the items come from you and your friends. There is always a need for donations that are clean and reusable. Large furniture items can be picked up - just call the store, 360-750-3867 to make arrangements. Smaller items may be brought in during store hours on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. The store is open Monday through Friday 10:00 am to 5:00 Pm and Saturday 10:00 am-2:00 pm.



VOLUNTEER HERO SPOTLIGHT: DEE MEMERING

With over 800 fantastic volunteers, it is a challenge to recognize just one as our Volunteer Hero this quarter! We'd like you to meet our Hero – Dee Memering. Dee works for Glenwood Place Senior Living and has been active in the Clark County business community for some time while also supporting nonprofit agencies and their programs. She is a Long Term Care Professional and an advocate for seniors to ensure quality healthcare and life enrichment. In addition to several community Boards, she serves on the Friends of Hospice, CDM Services and End of Life Coalition Boards of Directors. Supporting programs and issues that affect seniors is personal for Dee.



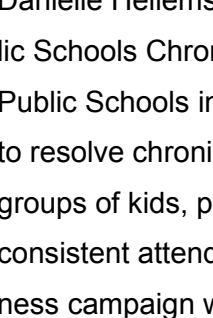
We are especially pleased that she is also an active member of Volunteer Connections 'Advisory and Program Development Councils. She brings her experience and knowledge of the issues into our discussions about programs and policies. If you were at the Ice Cream Social Event held a few years ago, you would recognize her. She was the one dishing up a killer bowl of ice cream! On the personal side; She feels fortunate that Her 95 year old father lives at Glenwood so she can see him daily. Her family also includes a son, daughter-in-law and granddaughter who live in Kailua, Hawaii. It doesn't take much urging for her to decide to visit the family! Thank you very much, Dee, for all you do.

SAVE THE DATE MAY 20, 2017! CONSUMER PROTECTION WASHINGTON SEMINAR COMING TO VANCOUVER!

Mark your calendars for **Saturday May 20** when Volunteer Connections and Southwest Washington Elder Abuse Prevention will host an all-day fraud prevention seminar for the first time in SW Washington! Consumer Protection Washington, is a group of consumer protection outreach specialists from several state and federal agencies and organizations including the Office of the Secretary of State's Charities Program.

The location for the event is still being determined, but it will be a free event featuring presentations and resources on charity scams, identity theft, senior-targeted scams, Medicaid fraud, Utilities fraud and more. Details about the location and time for the event will be posted soon on the Volunteer Connections website.

IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN! TAX TIME FREE TAX ASSISTANCE THROUGH AARP TAX AIDE



The AARP Tax-Aide program has been providing free income tax assistance and preparation geared toward taxpayers 60+ with low and moderate incomes for almost 50 years.

AARP Tax-Aide volunteers, trained in cooperation with the Internal Revenue Service, will offer assistance with personal income tax returns at seven locations around Clark County, and one site in Stevenson.

Volunteers will assist in preparing basic federal and Oregon tax forms for personal tax returns. Volunteers are trained to assist you with ACA, HSA, and EITC issues on your tax return. If you have questions about what can and cannot be done, visit one of our sites for advice. Tax returns are electronically filed as a free service by Tax-Aide.

This year the IRS is holding refunds for Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and Additional Child Tax Credit (ACTC) until after February 15th. Though this sounds like a delay, most refunds take about two weeks so any returns filed early in February with a refund will also arrive after February 15th.

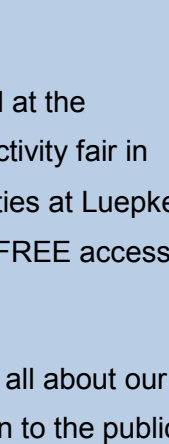
New for 2017, an ID is required for each taxpayer, even if one is not present. You must bring acceptable proof of social security number, ATIN, or ITIN for every person on your tax return. Prior returns and tax documents are no longer acceptable proof of social security.

Bring all income report forms such as W-2s, interest and dividend and miscellaneous income and all other tax related information as well as your prior year's tax return.

Volunteers will staff the following locations from January 28th through April 18th at the Vancouver Community Library, Three Creeks Community Library, Cascade Park Community Library, Battle Ground Community Library, Marshall Community Center, Camas City Library, and the Community Housing Resource Center (CHRC). In addition, volunteers will be at the Stevenson Library every other Saturday through the tax season. Days and hours of operation vary by site.

For more information call the toll-free number, 1-888-687-2277, or visit the Fort Vancouver Library website at <http://www.fvrl.org/tax-help> to check for specific days and hours at an AARP Tax-Aide site near you. If you would like to schedule a specific time, please call 360-690-4496 to request an appointment at one of the many sites.

TWO VISTA MEMBERS COMPLETE SERVICE



In February two of our VISTA members completed their service. Danielle Hellems has spent the last two years with Vancouver Public Schools Chronic Absence Solutions project. Danielle began with Vancouver Public Schools in February 2015. Her duties included the initial research on ways to resolve chronic absenteeism in the schools that included engaging with focus groups of kids, parents, and community health workers to discover the barriers to consistent attendance. She also developed and launched an attendance awareness campaign with information in English and Spanish, developed and trained staff on a data collection tool, and developed some on-going community partnerships with groups including Leadership Clark County. Her site supervisor continually praised Danielle's high level of work and enthusiasm for the project which will soon enter its third year implementing many of the systems Danielle worked on.

Lauren Krug has been with the Clark County Food Bank since February 2016 as the Farming Practices Coordinator developing a sustainable seed to harvest system for low-income Clark County residents. She was able to develop significant partnerships with farmer's market vendors, and other small farms. She created volunteer recruitment strategies and job descriptions, recruited, scheduled, trained, and managed all volunteers for the Farming and Gleaning program at the Clark County Food Bank. Because of Lauren's exceptional efforts she was honored by the Food Bank at their annual meeting in January. The food bank said, "Because of Lauren's year of service, we received a record high in fresh produce. She helped to provide 153,373 pounds of fresh produce for people in need." Lauren will be handing off her project to our newest VISTA member Piper Krabbenhoff who begins service in March.

VISTA PROJECT OPENINGS (JRA and VPS)

We are still recruiting for two VISTA positions. The third year of the Chronic Absence Solutions project with Vancouver Public Schools will focus on implementing wide community outreach and develop/adapt the chronic absenteeism awareness campaign district wide and with community partners.

The Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration is recruiting for a VISTA to develop a Mentor Outreach program. This VISTA will build JRA's organizational capacity with an emphasis on the implementation of initiatives to support stronger mentoring relationships, expand the roster of committed mentors, develop community support and funding strategies and improve the programs effectiveness and sustainability while supporting youth in correction facilities.

The application deadline for both opportunities is March 10, 2017. To learn more about VISTA or to apply for either of these positions visit the website at: <http://www.hsc-wa.org/about-ameriCorps-vista>.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR KIDS TO VOLUNTEER?

About this time of year we get a flurry of phone calls from parents mostly, the occasional teenager, and teachers looking for "community service" projects they can do "right away". While some of the schools no longer require community service to graduate, some still do. The challenge for any volunteer coordinator is plugging kids into those activities "right away". Some of our Volunteer Center opportunities will engage teens, we get group volunteer activities from time to time that will accept family volunteers or teen volunteers. There are not a lot of those opportunities, but we are working on increasing the list with our partners.

One of the best places to start is the City of Vancouver's **VOLUNTEEN** program. This is a weekly opportunity engaging teens ages 14-19 in various park maintenance needs. The group meets every Thursday after school. There are also some Saturday opportunities available as well. To learn more about the **VOLUNTEEN** program visit their website at <http://www.cityofvancouver.us/cmo/page/vancouvervolunteem-program>

EVENTS OF INTEREST

The Master Gardener Foundation of Clark County presents "Petal Heads" with Dave Doolittle, Petal Heads Owner, with a program about Helleborus. **7:00 PM Tuesday March 7** in the CASEE Center Building B Room 202/210 11109 NE 149th St in Brush Prairie. The event is free to the public and members, no registration required.

ST Paddy's For Kids is **Saturday March 11 from 10 AM-2:00 PM** at the Luepke Senior Center 1009 E McLoughlin Blvd. It's a free family activity fair in support of the Parks Foundation of Clark County. Lots of fun activities at Luepke, plus free sports games for kids in the Gym at Marshall Center and FREE access to the Nautilus Fitness Center for adults.

RECYCLING 101 Class Tuesday March 14 6:00-7:00 PM: Learn all about our local garbage and recycling systems at a free after work class, open to the public. Learn how attending the class and sharing your new recycling knowledge can help your neighborhood association earn \$120! Space is limited contact Julie Gilbertson at 360-487-7162 or email julie.gilbertson@cityofvancouver.us for details and to register.

DOGPAW is a nonprofit that manages and creates off leash parks in SW Washington, all the public off leash parks in Clark County were built and/or managed/maintained by DOGPAW volunteers. If you'd like to learn more about becoming a DOGPAW volunteer join them for a fun **Volunteer Fair at Providence Academy Ballroom 400 E Evergreen Blvd Saturday March 18 from 1:00-4:00 PM**. Food, drink, pet vendors and more

The Evergreen School District Foundation "The Great Gatsby Gala" is Saturday March 25 at 5:00 PM at Warehouse 23 in Vancouver. For ticket information or table reservations visit the website at www.esdfgala.com

Evergreen Public Schools Community Education in Action Tours invites you to a general tour of Covington Middle School, Orchards Elementary, Heritage High School and Cascadia Tech Academy on Thursday May 4. Tours begin at 8 AM and end at 1 PM. Registration required by April 27. Contact Mabelle Gurnsey at 360-604-4088 or sign up online at www.evergreenps.org.

WANT TO HELP OUT? VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Spring is around the corner (we're pretty sure, despite the weather)...there are lots of opportunities to help outside. Contact [Jo at Volunteer Connections](mailto:Jo@VolunteerConnections) 360-735-690 if you'd like to help with one of these activities:

Vancouver Farmer's Market will be in full swing soon and they have several ways for volunteers to be involved.

NatureScaping of SW Washington always needs garden volunteers

Mt St. Helens Institute needs visitor service volunteers

Get Bold Events needs help with their running events, the next one is in April!

Furry Friends is an all volunteer cat rescue. They need help with the kitties or bring them items on their wish list : Natural Balance dry or canned food, KMR Milk replacement, Yesterdays Mews Cat litter.

The Volunteer Voice Newsletter is a publication of the Human Services Council Volunteer Connections Program.

Volunteer Connections mission is to connect the wisdom, experience, and talents of volunteers with opportunities to enrich the quality of life for themselves and their communities

Human Services Council, a 501 c 3 organization

Our mission is to improve people's lives by connecting them to opportunities, information, and services that respond to their individual and family needs.

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Questions or comments? E-mail us at rsvp@hsc-wa.org

