



RSVP is a program
of John Wood
Community College



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Things to Remember

- All RSVP offices have a supply of face masks and disposable gloves for our volunteers to use.

Did You Know?

- RSVP has 2021 pocket calendars. They are free to RSVP volunteers. Contact your RSVP Office to have one mailed to you.

Message from Barb Casady

We want to make sure that you receive your January, 2021, Brown/Pike Counties RSVP Newsletter by the first of the year. This gives us a chance to wish you a **Wonderful 2021—a year of getting out, being with family and friends, and volunteering throughout your community!!**

Share Notes of Cheer and Care!

On January 18—Martin Luther King, Jr.'s National Day of Service—let's cover Brown and Pike Counties with cards, notes, and letters that will put a smile on the faces of those who are truly isolated during Covid-19!

- ♦ We encourage all RSVP volunteers to write one, two, three, or even more cards with a note of encouragement, cheer, and care!
- ♦ Mail them to your friends and family who are isolating in their homes while Covid-19 still negatively affects our community.
- ♦ Send or deliver cards to the RSVP Office in your county—and they will share with the residents of local nursing homes and with individuals who they know could use some kind, friendly, and caring words.
- ♦ If you are creative and have artistic talents—make your own cards to share.
- ♦ If you need cards to send—contact the Brown or Pike County RSVP Office and they will get you some.
- ♦ Contact Kathy and Jack at the Brown County RSVP Office and Heather at the Pike County Office for information, suggestions, and cards.

Martin Luther King, Jr. said—Everyone Can Be Great—
Because Everyone Can Serve.

Elder Justice Corner— SCAMS—We Don't Want to Put a Cloud Over Your Good Will— We Just Want You To Be Aware!

Scammers target seniors because they know the older population is more charitable and more vulnerable so it's the perfect time to take advantage of their generosity. While it's encouraged to help those less fortunate and/or legitimate charitable causes, we also want seniors to be cautious, especially when it comes to some of the more frequent scams out there.

- **Fraudulent gift cards** – Many seniors find that gift cards are a great gift for adult grandchildren or those on their own. Be careful where you purchase your cards because fraudsters are known to tamper with gift cards displayed in grocery stores. A better bet is to purchase your gift card directly from the retailer at their register or on their website.
- **Charity Cheaters**—You receive a call from someone who poses as a representative from a charity that may be a made-up cause. Before gifting, check to ensure that the charity is, indeed, legitimate. You can find a list of reputable charities at www.charitywatch.org or by visiting the Better Business Bureau's Wise Giving Alliance at give.org.
- **Gift card scams** - Victims are contacted by the scammer and then prompted to purchase gift cards and send the numbers to the scammer. The scammer promises to pay them back, but never does.
- **Online shopping scams** – We all love a good bargain but scammers use fantastic discount deals to lure you into downloading a fake app that may look like a familiar retailer. Before downloading, check to see if the retailer's name is spelled correctly and/or if there are any reviews posted about the retailer. If there are typos and no reviews, it's probably a fraud.
- **Online Secret Shopper** – You're invited by email to shop online and may even be offered payment. However, to get started you must provide your financial information. Avoid these offers as online secret shoppers are rarely recruited through email or social media.
- **Problem with your purchase** — You receive an email that you believe has come from a business you've shopped at that indicates there is an issue with your order. They ask you to click a link to provide your information again. A legitimate email about your order would provide you with an order reference number and you would be asked to login to your account – not click a link.

Do the following three things to conduct due diligence:

1. When online, investigate offers before clicking any links or providing sensitive information.
2. Confirm the identity of people who reach out for help and verify any organizations that contact you.
3. Just say no if you sense something isn't quite right.

Remember – Stay Vigilant, Stay Aware, and, If It Sounds too Good to Be True, It Probably is!

IMPORTANT SCAM INFORMATION If you receive a call or a text message or are contacted via social media from an apparent AmeriCorps/RSVP official asking for money, you should cease communication and inform the Office of Inspector General through its Complaint Hotline at 1-800-452-8210 or Email at hotline@cncsoig.gov. Further, please be aware that the official email address of AmeriCorps officials ends with cns.gov. AmeriCorps officials do not use public email providers such as Gmail or Yahoo.

AmeriCorps/RSVP DOES NOT call, text, or use social media to demand payment for any of its programs from individuals nor does it require individuals to send money in order to participate in its programs.

Volunteer Spotlight

Pike County will have a new museum opening in the Spring of 2021. The Pike County Military Heritage Museum will be located at 340 N. Illinois St. in Pittsfield and will focus on living history through vehicles, displays, demonstrations, and reenactments. Members have previously gone to local schools to give demonstrations about historical people and events. They are planning to continue that practice, both at the museum and around the area at schools and local organizations. They are actively seeking members and will hold regular meetings the second Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. Anyone interested in joining their group or who may have questions can contact Dennis Dodd at 217-285-4650 or Jeff Snyder at 217-656-3921.

Save the Date

Pike County Senior Services - VITA tax preparations will be held in March at the John Wood Community College location in Pittsfield. No specific time or date has yet been set. Please call Connie at 217-285-6150 for further information.

Volunteer Opportunities—Pike County

All Wars Museum - Volunteers wanted to clean, help set up displays, sort items that are loaned or donated. They have work nights three or four nights a month. They are also seeking someone to take video interviews of veterans. Please contact Lloyd Lawber at 217-242-4253 for more information.

Barry Community Care Center - Seeking colored pencils, puzzle books, and crossword puzzles. Please call Diana Castleberry at **217-335-2326**.

Liberty Village - Seeking crafting supplies, craft paint, and word search books for resident activities. Call Kyler Phillips at **285-5200** with any questions.

Pike County Senior Services - Volunteers are needed to deliver Meals on Wheels. **They also need someone to deliver homebound frozen meals, weekly.** Please contact Connie Lerch at **217-285-6150** for more information.

Volunteer Opportunities—Brown & Pike Counties

Friendly Caller Program - Friendly Caller is a volunteer opportunity that can be done from your home. Volunteers will make phone calls to individuals who have requested either a supportive/listening/social call or a safety and well-being call. Depending on your availability and interest, you may call once or twice a week – or you might call five days a week. Volunteers will receive training. This program is designed to help address social isolation and loneliness. Volunteers will be matched with an individual to call. **Do you know people who would benefit from a weekly call? Contact your county RSVP Office.**

The Winner Is . . .

Winners for September are Kay McDaniel (Brown Co) and Mary Lou Dixon (Pike Co.) and for October Marie Smith (Brown Co.) and Ruth Adams (Pike Co.). RSVP staff draw a name from all the pink timesheets submitted by the 15th of each month. Winners for May were drawn in June and winners for June were drawn in July. **Remember—if you turn your pink sheets in by the 15th of the month, you may be a winner!**

Winners, please stop by the Brown or Pike RSVP office to pick up your \$15.00 gift card during the hours listed above.

Did You Know?

- ♦ Check out the Adams, Brown and Pike Counties RSVP Facebook page. There is information about community events and opportunities. If you have something you would like to post, please send it to Susan Abbott at susan-abbott@jwcc.edu.
- ♦ John Wood Community College including RSVP is closed Thursday, December 24, through Friday, January 1, for winter break. We will re-open on Monday, January 4th.
- ♦ Brown County RSVP hours are Monday through Wednesday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Pike County hours are Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon.

“Not everybody can be famous but everybody can be great, because greatness is determined by service.” Martin Luther King, Jr.

The other day, I was talking with my supervisor here at RSVP and I told her that, in the past, I always felt sorry for her because she had to work on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. She said, “It is not work when you are serving others. We don’t have to work—we choose to serve.” What a profound statement that is. Serving others is not a chore—it is a choice or, maybe, even a calling. When we were working remotely from home last year, we at RSVP were making calls to our volunteers to make sure they were okay. I called a phone number and the lady that answered said yes, she and her husband were doing fine. They were in line at Meals on Wheels waiting to deliver food. My first thought was, “Doesn’t she know that’s dangerous with the virus being so contagious?” Then I realized that there are many people who solely depend on this program to eat—to keep from going hungry—TO KEEP FROM GOING HUNGRY! During these uneasy times in our world, there are those who are continuing to serve just as they always have. In many ways, they are the lifeline—they consciously choose to serve. To our volunteers, we say, “Thank you for making the choice—for answering the call. You are the true heroes—you have achieved greatness.”

By Susan Abbott

Brown & Pike Counties

RSVP

Lead With Experience...

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