



# Volunteer Voice

## Adams County Retired and Senior Volunteer Program

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Susan Abbott, Editor

RSVP is a  
program of  
John Wood  
Community  
College



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### Things to Remember



**National Volunteer Week is  
April 17—April 23.**

**Thank You to All RSVP  
Volunteers!**

### Message from Heath Richmond

As we transition from winter to spring, it is a visible reminder that change is a natural part of the world around us. And like the seasons, things at RSVP are changing as well. It is nice to have this newsletter be one of my first opportunities to introduce myself. I am Heath Richmond and I am the new Manager of Volunteer Services at JWCC and the coordinator of the Adams, Brown & Pike County Retired Senior and Volunteer Program. As many of you know, Barb Casady retired at the end of March and I am pleased to be joining JWCC and the great team we have at RSVP.

My wife Kathy and I live in Ursa, IL, and originally hail from Clark County, MO. We have two adult children, an amazing daughter-in-law, and the cutest granddaughter on the planet. I am a veteran of the United States Air Force, an Eagle Scout, and a lifelong member of the Boy Scouts of America (as a youth, a volunteer, and a professional scouter). In addition to my time in the USAF and working for the Boy Scouts, I have experience in retail sales management as well as additional nonprofit experience with our local community foundation. I am looking forward to visiting our stations and meeting our wonderful volunteers in the weeks ahead.

My plan is to continue the great work in which Barb has always been involved, the amazing leadership she has provided over the past seven years, and our on-going positive impact on the citizens and communities that we serve in West Central Illinois. My door is always open and I promise that I am always willing to listen so, please, reach out and introduce yourselves. I am excited to move forward together with everyone involved with RSVP.

*Heath Richmond*



## **RSVP Volunteers Enjoy JWCC Women's Basketball on Saturday, February 12th!**

RSVP volunteers gathered to watch the JWCC Women's Basketball game on Saturday, February 12, 2022. Unfortunately, the Blazers lost against Parkland College, but volunteers still enjoyed the camaraderie and the refreshments!



**NO KID SLEEPS  
ON THE FLOOR  
IN OUR TOWN!**

## **Sleep in Heavenly Peace Says "Thank You!"**

"We are so thankful for a huge bedding donation from Adams, Brown and Pike Counties RSVP. They hosted a 2-week bedding drive and donated over 95 items to our chapter! Wow! Thank you so much!"

Emilie Schulte, Chapter President, Liberty Area



## **Blankets for Babies**



Lois Flesner, 87, of Payson, IL, loves to knit blankets and caps for the newborn babies at Blessing Hospital. Lois became a RSVP volunteer in May of 1995 and has a grand total of 13,853 volunteer hours—so far. When asked about how many blankets and caps she has donated, Lois replied, "Blessing tells me I have made 152 blankets and 378 caps for their babies."

Thank you, Lois, for all your hard work, and we're sure the babies thank you, too.

## **Corsages for Kids**



RSVP volunteer Becky Dawson dropped off 100 beautiful corsages she made for the "Daddy/Daughter Date Night" sponsored by the Quincy Park District. Becky has made corsages for this event for seven years.

Becky has been a RSVP volunteer for 13 1/2 years during which she has given 602 hours. The Quincy Park District was very grateful for her diligence and artistic talent in this endeavor.

## **Volunteer Opportunities—please share with friends and family!**

This is just a sample of opportunities. Call the RSVP office to find the right fit for you!



**Take Back Drug Day** - On Saturday, April 30, 2022, the Adams County Health Department on Vermont St. will be sponsoring Take Back Drug Day. Two volunteers are needed from 9:45a.m. until 12:00 noon, and two volunteers are needed 11:45a.m.—2:00p.m. Volunteers should wear their RSVP t-shirts and come to enjoy a beautiful spring day. Proper disposal of unused drugs saves lives and protects the environment. If interested, please call Nicole at **217-641-4961**.

**Illinois Veterans Home** - “Welcome Corner Assistant”—accepts clothing donations, pushes carts, lifts boxes, and sorts through clothes. Volunteer would also assist residents with shopping for clothes. Hours are Tuesdays and Fridays from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Call Sara Colgrove, Director of Activities & Volunteer Services, at **217-640-2260** or email at [sara.colgrove@illinois.gov](mailto:sara.colgrove@illinois.gov).

**Quincy YMCA** - Volunteers needed to help out with our youth sports and to work at the concessions table.

- Concessions for youth volleyball league—we set up a table in our lobby.
- Need a minimum of 1 person to work the table, but there is no maximum—the more the merrier!
- Games are on Saturday mornings March 26 through May 7. If you are unable to commit to every Saturday, that is no problem—if you are interested, please reach out.
- Games will run from 8:00 a.m. —1:00 p.m. You can work in shifts or stay the entire time.
- The YMCA will do all the set-up and tear-down—we only need volunteers to serve the kids and families while making them feel welcome.

For questions or for more information, please contact Cisco Fuller at [cisconf@quincymca.net](mailto:cisconf@quincymca.net) or **217-222-9622**.

***Great opportunity to serve alongside your spouse or come with a group of friends and spend time together while helping serve the kids snacks & drinks as they come in for their games!***



**Meals on Wheels** - Taking a route for Meals on Wheels not only is a great way to learn more about the community but it is also a tangible way to help those in need. It would only require an hour of your time once a month. You might want to encourage a friend to volunteer as well—one person drives and the other person delivers! If you aren't able to deliver, please mention this need at your church or other organization. Together, we can fill the needed slots. The process for delivering MOW is designed so that volunteers stay safe. Call **217-223-7904** for more information or to volunteer.



### **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. Contact Nicole at **217-641-4961** for more information.

**Be an Important Part of a Research Project** - West Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging is researching how loneliness and social isolation affect the older population. They are looking for volunteers willing to make short phone calls to five or six people a month for the next few months. It will take a couple of hours each month and can be done from your own home. The research will help to improve resources that can benefit people who want to continue to live independently in their own home. Interested? Contact Heath Richmond, Adams, Brown and Pike Counties RSVP Director. He can point you in the right direction. **217-641-4960**.

**Horizons** - Our mission is to feed the poor and hungry in our community, and we accomplish this through our daily soup kitchen and our free choice pantry. We meet the immediate needs of individuals and families who lack access to enough food to sustain an active, healthy life. If you would like to volunteer at the Horizons Soup Kitchen, please call **217-224-5530 ext. 2310**.

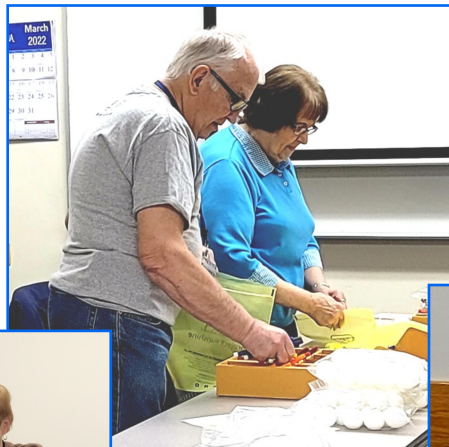
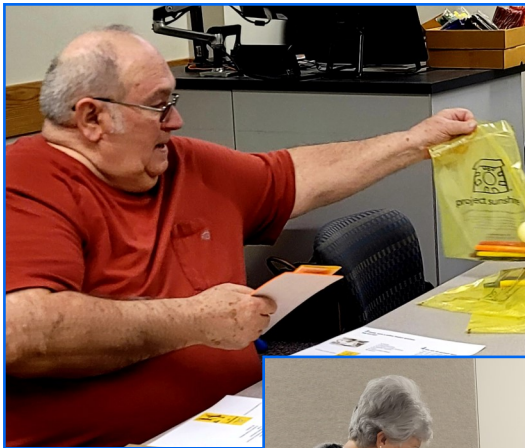
## Project Sunshine



AmeriCorps Seniors has partnered with an international non-profit organization called Project Sunshine—an organization whose mission is simple: Bringing joy and play to pediatric patients. Project Sunshine believes that children undergoing medical care can be helped by harnessing the healing power of play. One way of doing this is to assemble Activity Kits. These kits include developmentally specific activities as well as a blank journal for creative expression and note-taking.

Project Sunshine recently found itself in a situation where they had 75,000 education kits and they needed assistance in putting these kits together. In the past, several national organizations utilized these kinds of volunteer opportunities to help build teamwork among their employees. However, with COVID, many of these employees now worked from home and were no longer available. Project Sunshine just happened to have an employee who knew an AmeriCorps national staff person, and the rest, as they say, is history.

AmeriCorps knew that AmeriCorps Seniors would embrace this opportunity, and they were right. AmeriCorps Seniors then opened it up to RSVP, Foster Grandparent, and Senior Companion programs across the country. In a very short time, all 75,000 kits were claimed and sent to the responding sites. Adams, Brown, and Pike Counties RSVP raised their hands and volunteered to help. On March 18, 2022, RSVP volunteers from all three counties assembled a total of 300 kits for this worthwhile project.



## "Well Done"

*(a poem by Susan Abbott written for National Volunteer Week in honor of the RSVP volunteers of Adams County, IL)*

"Just where are you going?" I ask my young friend.  
"To see the world," he replies.  
"There's got to be more to life than this!"  
So young and—yet—so wise?

"I want to be someone important—  
To have people listen when I speak,  
To see looks of admiration—  
This is what I seek."

He opens the door and takes a step  
Then he turns and smiles at me.  
"I'll come back a rich, rich man—  
Just you wait and see."

He will learn much upon this journey,  
Of this there is no doubt—  
But will he learn the ultimate truth—  
What life is really all about?

Mornings dawn and nights settle  
Like a blanket over the land—  
Each day follows the one before—  
Light and darkness—hand in hand.

Then one morning as I sit on my porch  
Watching a cardinal taking wing,  
I see a figure in the distance—  
What message would he bring?

He is waiting there so patiently  
With recognition in his eyes.  
Hesitantly, I touch his face  
And it's then that I realize—

That here, right now, is that long-lost boy  
Who went off to pursue his dream,  
But I could see that, behind his smile,  
All is not as it would seem.

"I've been gone for days," he said,  
"And life's not always been kind.  
My road was filled with twists and turns--  
I never knew just what I'd find.

I tarried here, I tarried there  
But never too long in one place.  
I always kept on going—  
Slow and steady was my pace.

I was on my way to find riches—"   
And there, once again, was that smile.  
"I wanted to be important—  
To be a man of style.

Now, as I stand before you,  
Those dreams in tatters be...  
But, along the way, I finally saw  
The truths that followed me.

I searched for the right opportunity  
That would bring me recognition and  
praise.

It was then that I spied a poor farmer  
Whose eyes stared empty and glazed.

I couldn't help but look more closely  
At his face, so haggard and worn—  
His feet were shod with broken straps—  
His clothing, tattered and torn."

"Could you help me with my field?"  
His voice was broken with the strain.  
"My son just moved to the city—"   
His eyes were filled with pain.

"So I helped him with the harvest—  
Hard work never took such a toll!  
But there was a sense of accomplishment  
Like salve to a wounded soul...

I found myself feeling hopeful  
As his grain headed for the mill.  
The farmer patted me on my shoulder—  
His hand—I feel it still.

I plodded on and found a town  
Filled with merchants selling wares—  
And I noticed that this old lady  
Needed help collecting fares.

I've always been good with numbers  
So I offered my help with her task—  
At the end of the day, she looked at me—  
"Could you come tomorrow?" she asked.

It seemed her husband had broken his leg  
And she was trying to do all on her own—  
So I made a bed of hay in her barn  
And settled in, no longer alone.

I tossed and turned with questions—  
How do I become what I want to be?  
I knew I was nothing special—  
I had to be more than just 'me'...

When I left them standing arm in arm,  
They would be just fine, I guessed.  
I decided to head to the mountains—  
Maybe there I'd find success.

When I reached the mountain top,  
I lay me down beneath a tree.  
I awoke to a face with a toothless grin  
And a dog wagging his tail with glee.

I petted the matted mongrel pup  
Standing by his owner's side.  
"Are you honest and reliable?"  
The old man looked me in the eye.

"There's a small lake beyond that hill—  
Are you familiar with a fishing pole?"  
I smiled, nodded, and gave him my  
hand—  
I was headed to his fishing hole.

As the days went by, I pondered  
And I watched the sun on the water  
dance—  
At this moment, it came upon me—  
Life is not just a game of chance.

Casting my line——reeling it in——  
My thoughts monotonous & mundane.  
Suddenly, in my heart I knew  
That it's the work that keeps one sane.

I was happiest in that farmer's field  
Or when studying a cipher book.  
And I learned the most important truth  
When putting worms on a fishing hook.

That day I left you so long ago,  
I was filled with a selfish plan  
On how to gain fame and fortune  
And return a rich, rich man.

Now, here I am with the knowledge  
That that dream has been fulfilled.  
I am a man of riches—  
I've seen gold in a pauper's field!

I said that all would know my name  
And they do, I'm here to tell—  
'Ticket Helper,' 'Great Fisherman,'  
And 'Farmer in the Dell!'

When no one listened when I spoke  
And no one cared to understand,  
I learned that words were unimportant—  
It's in the lending of your hand."

He had found purpose and an inner  
peace  
And his face glowed in the rising sun—  
I pulled him close and whispered,  
"Well done, my son, well done..."

## Save the Date

**Friday, April 1—Friday, May 13 - JWCC's 10th Annual Student Show and Sell Art Exhibit** - Public is invited to view and purchase student artwork in the Heath Center Art Gallery located in the lobby area of the Mary Ellen Orr Auditorium at JWCC. Regular college hours are 8:00a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 8:00a.m. to 12:00 noon on Fridays. Contact Jenna Seaborn at [artgallery@jwcc.edu](mailto:artgallery@jwcc.edu) for more information.

**Monday, April 18** - Fowler Development Association will be continuing its speaker series and invites all area residents to attend at 7 pm April 18 at Saint Paul United Church of Christ in Fowler. The Speaker will be Illinois Humanities Council Road Scholar Catherine Lambrecht on Family Heirloom Recipes from the Illinois State Fair. There is no charge to attend and light refreshments will follow.

**Thursday, April 21** - Salvation Army Volunteer Recognition Event Spectacular is for Salvation Army volunteers, whether you rang bells for a few hours or partnered with us. Please join us for fun, fellowship, and light refreshments. Kindly RSVP by Friday, April 15.

**Tuesdays April 26 & May 31** - "News & Views"—volunteers needed to prepare the newsletter mailing.

## Did You Know?

- ♦ JWCC and RSVP will be closed on Thursday, April 14, for professional development and closed on Friday, April 15, for spring recess.
- ♦ Normal working hours for JWCC (and RSVP) are Monday through Thursday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon on Friday.

## The Winner Is . . .

Winner for January is **Bernadine Cook** and the winner for February is **Doria Sanders**. RSVP staff draw a name from all the pink timesheets submitted by the 7th of each month. **Remember—if you turn your pink sheets in by the 7th of the month, you may be a winner!**

We also track the names of our current members who referred a new volunteer who, in turn, submitted their first timesheet. **Patsy Cooley** is the winner for January and February!

**Winners, please stop by the RSVP office on the JWCC Main Campus to pick up your \$15.00 Hy-Vee gift card. We suggest calling before you come—217-641-4961.**

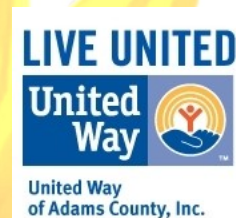
Adams County  
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*Lead With Experience...*

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