

VOLUNTEER VOICE

A newsletter by and for Pinellas County government volunteers.



April 2015

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"A delightful cruise!" "A wonderful time!"

On April 9th, Volunteer Services hosted a special event to give our volunteers a well-deserved treat. Nearly 250 volunteers enjoyed a 2-1/2 hour dinner cruise in Clearwater Bay.

On hand to thank them for their public service from the Board of County Commissioners were Commissioners Dave Eggers, Charlie Justice, Janet Long, Karen Williams Seel, and Director of Human Resources Peggy Rowe, among others.

Here are a few photos of the evening courtesy of Pinellas County Communications. There are more photos to be found on Pinellas County's Flickr site. Click [HERE](#) to view them.



See more on page 3!

Office Assistant Extraordinaire

Contributed by Sandy Wilson, Volunteer Program Project Manager, Parks & Conservation Resources

Dottie Vitrone was recently honored at a department reception for being awarded the 2014 Partners In Public Services Gold Award in the individual category by Volunteer Services.



L-R: Jonathan Skinner, Dottie Vitrone, Sandy Wilson

When Dottie first came to us she indicated the one thing she didn't want to do was work on a computer. So, what is her main task? Entering data and volunteer hours into the volunteer database (VSP! Dottie comes in every Wednesday morning, rain or shine,

even through a recent bout with knee problems, and catches up all of the hours for volunteers who don't have access to VSP.

Where there is a need, she fills it. Dottie is so quick and efficient on VSP now that she often has time left over to dedicate to other office needs such as filing, making new files, and preparing mailings. She has even been known to help reorganize an office.

Dottie has made a huge difference to the way our office functions. Because of her skill in quickly and accurately entering the volunteer hours into VSP, we are always up to date in our data entry and report functions. Because of Dottie's dedication, we have been able to offer help to some of our other divisions in getting their hours in.

We consider ourselves so fortunate to have Dottie volunteering her time at the Parks Volunteer Office. She greatly contributes to the success of the volunteer program.

Public Service Partnerships

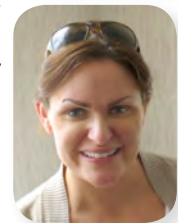
Excerpts from an article by Volunteer Bob Costigan, Communications Department

"I'm working and so this is a valuable position and is really helpful to me." That's what **Rosanna Jerkins** thinks of her volunteer work for Pinellas County's Purchasing Department in downtown Clearwater. She, like **Misti Tate**, volunteered for Pinellas County and both are visually impaired.



Rosanna Jerkins

Mary Kvam (Volunteer Services) was approached by the Florida Division of Blind Services (DBS) Stephen Holland. He talked about a mutually beneficial partnership between DBS and Pinellas County. Kvam agreed it would be a win-win situation for the County and the volunteers.



Misti Tate

Holland notes that employers are looking for persons with recent work experience even if it's volunteering, and working with Pinellas County has been invaluable for both the volunteers and the program.

That work experience paid off as Jerkins recently got a job with a local moving and storage company.

Tate is now working at a gym as a receptionist. She plans on becoming a personal trainer there as soon as she gets her state certification later this spring.

Both Jerkins and Tate feel the program has been very helpful to them. They say Pinellas County and the departments they volunteered in have been very helpful and accommodating to them and their special needs, going above and beyond to make them feel welcome.



The Meyers from Minnetonka

Contributed by Sandy Wilson, Volunteer Program Project Manager, Parks & Conservation Resources

Gordon and Linda Meyer, frequent visitors to Walsingham Park, walked into my office one day, introduced themselves, and asked if they could volunteer to help with litter patrol here at the park. I said sure and the

rest is history. On one of their rounds another patron mentioned a lot of trash gathering at the water's edge, and from then on Linda and Gordon have made it their mission to see how much they can pull out of there. Gordy and Linda are snowbirds, hailing from Minnetonka, MN, and we cannot wait to see them again next year!

the Colors of PINELLAS

Registration is now open! Click [HERE](#) to enter your works of art in the 2015 Colors of Pinellas Art Show. The juried art show is open to Pinellas County employees and active volunteers as well as others. Here are the important dates:

May 29	Registration Deadline
June 12	Artwork Drop-off Day
June 18	Artwork Judging
June 29	Awards Ceremony
June 29-July 28	Artwork Exhibition Dates

THE
**National
ARTS
PROGRAM**
For the management and development of artistic talents

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of those involved with Thursday night's Starlite Dinner Cruise. My wife and I had a wonderful time and wish to thank Pinellas County for holding this event.

As a volunteer it makes me feel great to be appreciated for the time I volunteer. I volunteer because I want to be a part of our county and this is a small way I can help.

Again, Thank you for a wonderful evening.

Thomas Powers
Volunteer, Emergency Management

A number of volunteers have told me that the dinner cruise was an excellent, enjoyable time. Good food, great views, good conversation. Thanks for organizing and providing such a pleasant event for the volunteers. They really appreciated it!!

Sharon Biemiller
Staff, Fort De Soto Park

Sarah, Glenda and I had a delightful cruise. The food and service were very good, and two couples sat with us who were pleasant. Fun evening. Thanks to you and the committee.

Patricia
Long-time Volunteer
P.S. Loved the party favor, too cute.



Many thanks to you and your entire group for a STELLAR event! The feedback here was amazing; kudos all around! I know it took a lot of time and effort and I appreciate all of you.

Stacey P. Zidi
Florida Botanical Gardens



Events

MAY 3 - Diggin' the Arts

Join the **Florida Botanical Gardens Foundation** at the fourth annual Diggin' the Arts. Activities include: quick draw painting competition with over \$2,000 in prize money, open to amateur and professional artists; art sale of items painted at the gardens; presentations and activities by 10 local museums and art institutions; rain barrel raffles; an instrument "petting zoo"; scavenger hunt; and vendors selling orchids, ceramics, glass art, jewelry, tropical plants and food. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. \$2 donation requested for anyone age 13 or older. <http://www.flbgfoundation.org/events.htm>. Florida Botanical Gardens, 12520 Ulmerton Road, Largo.

READ the **Florida Friendly Footprint**, FBG's spring 2015 newsletter.

MAY 16 - 4-H Brooker Creek Explorers

The 4-H Brooker Creek Explorers Club is seeking new members ages 5-18. The club meets once a month to learn about and explore an environmental topic from trees to bees and everything in-between. Most meetings will include the sharing of members' experience with the project books, and other meetings throughout the year will focus on a learning event, fundraising event, or community service event. 2 to 3:30 p.m. Free; advance registration required. Register online at www.brookercreekpreserve.org. Brooker Creek Preserve, 3940 Keystone Road, Tarpon Springs.

Refer Friends and Family

Pinellas County is a great place to work! Check out the new What We Offer page at www.pinellascounty.org/hr/whatweoffer which provides a summary of our benefits that you can share with interested friends or family members.

One way that your contacts can keep up-to-date on the daily job postings is by signing up for **Job Alert** emails or the **RSS Job Feed**.



You give your community hours and days of your lives. Let us help you celebrate your life! Send us stories of events or special achievements, with photos if possible, and we'll include them in every issue.



Volunteer Legal Advocates needed

Human Services in partnership with the Haven of RCS is seeking volunteers to help victims of domestic abuse. Legal background is not necessary. Must complete training. Call Christi Snyder at (727) 584-3528 ext. 407.

Gift Shop Volunteer

Low stress, beautiful surroundings, wonderful people. Proceeds benefit Florida Botanical Gardens. Contact Stacey at (727) 582-2251.

Courthouse Ambassador

This is a great opportunity for people-persons! Contact Vanessa at (727) 464-4600.



Volunteer Voice

Graphics, layout, editor - Mary Sault
msault@pinellascounty.org or call (727) 464-5098.

How to participate: Send questions, article submissions, upcoming events, photos, or story ideas to the editor.