



VOLUNTEER VOICE

A newsletter by and for Pinellas County government volunteers.



JANUARY 2018

We're on the web at www.pinellascounty.org/volunteer

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THANK YOU

Save the Date: Eco Fun Fest



Volunteer Voice

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

vipsocial@pinellascounty.org
or call (727) 464-8477.

Volunteers Deck the Halls for the Holidays



Heritage Village volunteers got together to spread good cheer and make the Christmas spirit come to life in the historic houses. Special thanks to these creative volunteers: Karen Callahan, Susan Cobb, Judy Dailey, Barbara Finney, Sandy Kelley, Ellen Lewis, Lisa Pettis with Katen and Lauren Doyle, Polina and Elsie Maciejczyk, Donna and Adam Phillips, Gail Signore, Cindy and Dan Stanton, Bette Witt, Tampa Bay Basket Makers, Clearwater Dunedin Junior League, Largo Cracker Quilters, Pinellas Weavers and Spinners Guild, Pin Mar - Pinellas Model a Restorer Club, Maintenance Volunteers, Pinellas County School Board - Russell Neaman Horticulture Class and new volunteer and Lead Elf – Jeff Lantis who helped coordinate each decorating day for the volunteers. *Sent in by Paige Noel, Project Management Specialist, Heritage Village*

The Gulf Beaches Historical Museum invited its volunteers and local friends for its annual holiday decorating party. The interior and exterior of the museum are thoroughly decked out in elaborate holiday decorations.

After much hard work the assembled volunteers enjoyed delicious pizzas from one of the island's better known pizza parlors.

Sent in by Michael Heerschap, Gulf Beaches Historical Museum



Thank You to Emergency Management Interns and Volunteers

Sent in by Mary Burrell, Emergency Management

There were many volunteers who stood side by side with Pinellas County employees as we worked to serve and support our citizens and Emergency Operations Center (EOC) staff before, during and after Hurricane Irma. They continue to do so as recovery continues.

The volunteers in Emergency Management (EM) worked for the week prior to set up the EOC, organize support materials, track activities and help with the countless tasks that are involved as the County prepared for a potential activation.

We had Emergency Management interns and volunteers who worked in the EOC during the activation,

helping in the Citizen Information Center (CIC) and with an emphasis in helping with a yeoman's task of taking thousands of last-minute special needs registrations and entering this important information into the system that would lead to our most vulnerable populations getting the life-saving assistance they needed from our community partners.

Volunteers also supported general operations. Work continues in EM during the recovery stage and interns/volunteers continue to work on special needs applications, assisting with the After Action Report meetings in the EOC and various support functions. Thank you! You are truly a part of our team!



Volunteers in Emergency Management help out with special projects and many of them contribute to outreach efforts in order to better prepare our citizens for disasters. Here, **Teresa Van Alstine** helps prepare an informational packet for a public event.



Volunteers help Sandra Pittman (center) process special needs forms. Far left is **Teresa Van Alstine**, an EM volunteer, and far right is **Katherine Park**, an HR volunteer who offered to help Emergency Management.

Pinellas 4-H Earth Explorers Share Marine Ecology Knowledge

Sent in by Laurie Reed, Pinellas County 4-H Volunteer

Pinellas County 4-H Earth Explorers youth **Brighton and Emerson Reed** recently hosted an outreach to 25 youth in Clearwater.

The boys brought dip nets and examination buckets. They taught a lesson about marine life invertebrates and vertebrates and then demonstrated proper catch and release techniques of marine life. They helped the youth identify the critters they caught using their knowledges gained through the 4-H Marine Ecology program. Earth Explorers love to share and give back as often as they can!



Volunteers Prepare the Gulf of Mexico Sponge Warehouse for Grand Opening

By Paige Noel, Heritage Village



Historic preservation projects at the Village are carefully thought out and guided by the conditions of the existing structure and the Secretary of Interior Preservation Standards. Working with Curator Naomi Mucci, lead volunteers **Richard Samay** and **Greg Kraus**, implemented preparations for the “sneak peek” opening of the Gulf of Mexico Sponge Warehouse and exhibit at the Country Jubilee last October. The volunteers began by addressing the major structure: flooring, ventilation, sliding doors and entrances to secure the building. They then stabilized bins where sponges were stored and built custom barriers for each sponge rack.

Recently other maintenance volunteers joined the team – **Kent Ward, Ron Sacra, Vince Mueller, Fred Belzel, Ron Bilby, Don Hudson, Daryl Stargel, Lon Mackey, Bruce McClintock** and others removed years of dust from surfaces and carefully cleaned the interior walls, floor and attic spaces before washing with a special solution. Volunteers applied a preservation formula of linseed oil and turpentine to all interior wood surfaces. This solution deters pests and nourishes the wood. What a great TEAM!

NOW OPEN, Heritage Village’s Gulf of Mexico Sponge Warehouse from Tarpon Springs welcomes visitors featuring historic photographs, artifact collections and interactive exhibits.



Eagle Scout Builds an Agility Platform for Animal Services Pups

By Season Groves, Animal Services

Meet **Avery Hames**, Eagle Scout and future philanthropist.

He contacted us wanting to help. He wanted to give our pups an agility platform.

Shelter pups need more than just a few daily walks – they need their minds enriched with new sounds and sights and smells. Agility platforms and courses

provide added stimulation. Proper training in agility can provide the dogs with discipline, focus, teamwork and communication, ultimately increasing their adoptability.

Avery created a plan, and with a little help from his Dad and his fellow scouts our platform was on its



way. He designed it from the ground up accounting for heavy use and constant exposure to the Florida elements. We discussed where to put it (so the adventurous dogs couldn’t use it to scale the fence), how high it should be, length, materials and more. Avery

planned down to the last detail, and he even included an assessment of possible safety hazards and how to prevent them.

The volunteers, staff and the pups themselves are so

pleased with our new addition. We have had many pups play king/queen of the hill and you can see the smiles on their faces as they retire to their kennel after a session in the play yard. Huge thanks to Avery and his crew for a job well done!

Volunteer Feature: Sheila Jackson, Courthouse Ambassador

Sent in by Vanessa Quintana, Marketing & Communications



Courthouse Ambassador volunteer **Sheila Jackson** has been serving the County as the longest running Courthouse Ambassador (6 years of service as a VIP!)

My favorite part of the job is that I get to meet and help so many citizens of Pinellas County. Every day is different, interesting and very satisfying. - Sheila Jackson, Volunteer in Pinellas

Volunteers Step in to Honor Late Park Ranger Robert Kilpatrick

Sent in by Carol Gray, Parks and Recreation

On Nov. 21, 2016, the Pinellas Trail staff lost a co-worker and friend, Robert Kilpatrick. Robert was a Park Ranger for the Parks Department and worked closely with the Auxiliary Ranger Volunteer Program. **John and Diane Helvin**, long-term volunteers with the Auxiliary Ranger program, had worked closely with Robert.

The work group and the Auxiliary Rangers felt the loss of Robert as a co-worker and understandably his passing resulted in a position vacancy. John and Diane stepped in and asked how they could help.

From December 2016 to April 2017, John and Diane assisted with trail tasks until the vacant position was filled. John and Diane serviced trash cans weekly, in addition to other tasks on the Pinellas Trail, such as litter removal, maintaining vegetation and replacing bollards.



They assisted as they were able with the after hours closing of Ridgecrest Park, a task Robert was responsible for an evening shift Ranger. This volunteer assistance allowed the other Rangers within the work group to maintain their assigned schedules and keep up with other tasks.

In looking back to this time last year, the staff assigned to the Pinellas Trail and Ridgecrest Park are reminded it has been one year since the passing of our co-worker and friend, Robert.

We are also reminded of this volunteer effort John and Diane provided. Not only did John and Diane's volunteer efforts benefit the citizens of Pinellas County who utilize the Pinellas Trail, their willingness to volunteer during this challenging time was very helpful to the work group. Thank you, John and Diane, from the Pinellas Trail and Ridgecrest Park Staff.

Gulf Beaches Historical Museum Honors Docents with Appreciation Dinner

Sent in by Michael Heerschap, Gulf Beaches Historical Museum

Lance, Connie, and Michael hosted a holiday appreciation event for all the volunteers that have worked so hard at the museum over the past year. Volunteer Services and the museum are both extremely appreciative of our volunteers' wonderful help and support to the Gulf Beaches Historical Museum. GBHM definitely could not accomplish its goals of being the place that connects the present with the past in Pass-a-Grille without volunteer assistance.



Fort De Soto Campground Hosts Holiday Gathering



Note from Pinellas County Volunteer Services:

As we end 2017, we want to say THANK YOU for volunteering your time, talents and efforts to make Pinellas County a great place to live, work and play. A total of 1,601 volunteers worked 218,199 hours in FY2017 in various departments under the Board of County Commissioners and other Appointing Authorities. THANK YOU!

1,601 volunteers
worked **218,199**
hours in FY17



Volunteer positions
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Intern opportunities
www.pinellascounty.org/intern

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www.twitter.com/VolInPinellas

Want to see your story in the Volunteer Voice?
Please send questions, article submissions, upcoming events, photos or story ideas to Pinellas County Volunteer Services at vipsocial@pinellascounty.org.