

# VOLUNTEER VOICE

*Pinellas County Volunteer Services Newsletter*



July 2010 Volume 2, Issue 3

We're on the web at [www.pinellascounty.org/volserv](http://www.pinellascounty.org/volserv)



## VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION MONDAY, APRIL 19, 2010 PINELLAS COUNTY EXTENSION

Oh what a celebration! From the moment invited guests arrived, it was obvious that this was a very special occasion. The welcome mat was out for the VIP's, **VOLUNTEERS IN PINELLAS**. Over 250 volunteers and their families joined members of the Board of County Commissioners, the County Administrator and members of his staff, the Human Resources Director and her staff, Site Directors and Coordinators. All gathered to meet and greet and to honor those selected to receive the prestigious Lifetime Achievement Awards and Partners in Public Service Awards.

Excitement was everywhere as guests moved from the buffet to the Extension Magnolia Room for the award presentations. Peggy Rowe, County Human Resources Director, joined Commissioner Seel and Administrator LaSala in thanking the volunteers for all they do to make a difference in our County. Administrator LaSala challenged all present to help maintain the same level of county services amidst these difficult economic times. He called on us to do all we can as volunteers to keep our precious parks, gardens, trails, cultural sites and open spaces available for the enjoyment of all county residents. Commission Chair Karen Seel presented the awards on behalf of her fellow commissioners.

## LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

22 volunteers were nominated for their many years of service to Heritage Village. Collectively, they have served by welcoming visitors; creating exhibits, holiday displays and decorations; maintaining the historic house collections, assisting with cleaning and restoring house collections; serving as historic house tour docents and assisting with new docent training; cooking at special events, staffing the Flea Market at Country Jubilee, providing weaving, quilting, doll making and related crafting demonstrations, and so much more.

**We are pleased to honor each of these distinguished volunteers for their many years of service to Heritage Village and Pinellas County.**

Betty Heath of Clearwater	33	Anne Gerken of Clearwater	20
Betty Sarine of Largo	30	Carl Sarine of Largo	22
Hank Hardy of Clearwater	30	Etta Poltrock of Largo (awarded posthumously)	19
Jean Lowe of Largo	30	Carolyn Roderer of St. Petersburg	18
Thelma Powell of Dunedin	30	Lillian Bercowitz of Belleair Bluffs	17
Mona Rohrbough of Seminole (awarded posthumously)	30	Bettie Mease of Clearwater	14
Betty Scrimshaw of Largo	30	Hank Mulchahey of Largo	13
Helen Waechter of Largo	26	Patricia Hensberry of St. Petersburg	12
Mable Wilcox of Largo	26	Howard Anderson of Clearwater	10
Donna Smith of Largo	25	Verna Daniel of Clearwater	10
Jean Carrabotta of Clearwater	22		
Ethel Harju of Largo (awarded posthumously)	22		

## Current Opportunities

Volunteer Services is currently looking for volunteers to fill multiple opportunities, including the following locations:

### Animal Services

Brooker Creek, Tarpon Springs

Heritage Village, Largo

Weedon Island, St. Petersburg

Environmental Mgt., Clearwater

Clerk of the Circuit Court, Records & Information Management/ Court & Operational Services, Clearwater

Ecological Services: Environmental Lands

Water Atlas Volunteer:  
Environmental Mgt./Watershed

For a list of additional opportunities, please go to <http://www.pinellascounty.org/volserv/opportunities.htm>.

### Volunteer Voice

EDITOR.....Dan Shannon, Volunteer  
ASSISTANT EDITOR .....Bertha Battle, HR Mgr  
ASSISTANT EDITOR.....Carol Strickland, HR Tech

#### How to Participate:

You can send noteworthy news of your fellow volunteers, upcoming events, or story ideas. You can even ask about writing a guest column or provide photos for upcoming articles.

PHONE: (727) 464-3945

The Department of Environmental Management, Lands Division nominated two stellar volunteers for their outstanding dedication and years of service to Brooker Creek Preserve (BCP).

**Ken Rowe** of Palm Harbor, an 18 year volunteer, has worked on the bird surveys on BCP, led in organizing the annual migratory and Christmas bird counts at BCP and Weedon Island Preserve through the Audubon Society, served as a board member of the Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve, as a hike guide, assisting with special events and activities at the BCP Environmental Education Center.

**Ty Miramonti** of Tarpon Springs has volunteered for over 12 years. His many contributions have included clean-up and trimming firebreaks, trimming of Preserve roads, repair and clean-up of fence lines, maintenance of Preserve rails and boundary signs, assisting with removal of exotic vegetation, assisting with bird and butterfly counts and serving as the perfect role model for new volunteers to the Environmental Lands Division.

## PARTNERS IN PUBLIC SERVICE AWARDS

PIPS– Partners in Public Service – Awards are presented annually by the Board of County Commissioners for outstanding volunteer contributions to Pinellas County. Candidates are nominated by site coordinators and site directors in four categories: individual, group, youth and retiring. Nominations are screened by the appropriate assistant county administrators and/or the Human Resources Director. This year there were a total of 13 nominations.

**PHILIP SCHIRO** of Seminole was selected as the 2010 recipient in the individual category. As a volunteer at Fort DeSoto, Phil has demonstrated his passion for history conducting 124 guided tours for 3,600 participant visitors to the fort, the museum and the historical trail. He assists with organizing historical data files maintained at the Park Headquarters, trimming vegetation and trail clearing. By posting signs in the youth camp area, he has stimulated even more group tours. He has mentored two additional volunteers providing their Fort tour training. Phil and volunteers like him have stepped forward to respond generously to the recent staff reductions.



This year's recipient in the group category is the **PINELLAS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOARD**, a group comprised of 18 Heritage Village volunteers. The PCHS is Heritage Village's non-profit 501 ( C ) 3 Friends group founded in 1976 to support Heritage Village in its operations and educational mission. Over the past three decades, PCHS has raised funds needed to move buildings, sponsor events and festivals, purchase books for the library and artifacts for the collection and fund the HV volunteer program.



The PCHS has recruited new members and established new committees to meet the current challenges facing Heritage Village. Educational programs, outreach and popular festivals previously administered by county staff, are now managed by the PCHS. This year's "Market in the Park", sponsored by the historical society, brought many thousands of new visitors to the Village. The PCHS Gift Shop raised much needed revenue to cover costs formerly borne by the county such as printing, postage and promotional activities. The PCHS executive board continues to initiate a variety of new fund raising activities to help augment the county budget. For 30 years, the PCHS has provided inspiration and resources to insure the success of current programs and continued growth in the future.



**EMILY BORDIGNON** of St. Petersburg is the recipient in the youth category. Emily's volunteer service is a real strength for Heritage Village. She uses her interest in local history to share historic house tours, and living history activities. She communicates her enthusiasm to tourists, local families, school children, community organizations and summer camp groups. At special events, she demonstrates her skills at rope making, palm shack building, cattle pen building and cattle roping. Her infectious enthusiasm has helped Heritage Village build a strong junior volunteer corps.

Pinellas County and your **VOLUNTEER VOICE** take great pride in presenting to the community this year's **LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD RECIPIENTS AND PARTNERS IN PUBLIC SERVICE**.



## A JOB WELL DONE



Thanks to all those who served on the Planning Committee for the 2010 Volunteer Appreciation Program. From their first meeting in January, it was evident that this talented group of staff members and volunteers were committed to demonstrate to every **VIP, VOLUNTEER IN PINELLAS** just how important and appreciated were their contribution of time, talent and individual expertise to the betterment of Pinellas County and its residents.

As your editor, I was privileged to be a part of this organizing committee. I had the opportunity to observe their creative talents at work as each element of the program took shape. They formulated the program for the evening, designed invitations, organized and set up the banquet room to accommodate a capacity crowd, planned exquisite decorations, selected, purchased and served the evening's refreshments, solicited raffle prizes, served as hosts and hostesses for the evening and completely restored the Magnolia Room for another program the following morning.

Thanks to committee members Carol Strickland and Bertha Battle HR, Lynn Smith ELD, Paige Noel HV, Deloris Hinson CEL; Rhonda Sanborn CVB, Sharon Biemiller and Jim Wilson CEL, **Katie Marvin, Dan Shannon and Jennifer Smith, Volunteers.**

The committee was especially grateful for the additional support received along the way from Administrator LaSala and his staff, Director of HR Peggy Rowe and her staff, Director of Communications Tim Closterman and his staff, Director of Extension Mary Campbell and her staff, and the **Heritage Village Junior Docents** with a special **THANK YOU to HV volunteer Erica Scaglione** for her beautiful musical entertainment.

## FROM OUR MAILBAG

A community resident writes, "Many thanks to **Bob Y, Ben B, and Rich L, Pinellas Trail Ranger Volunteers**, (and you know who you are) who aided me with not only a spare bicycle tube but also insisted in doing all the work! Without their aid, assistance, and generosity I would have had a very long 12+ mile walk home. Again many thanks" Steve Railey.

**Fran Johnson**, Heritage Village volunteer: "It was a wonderful reception. A sincere thanks to you and all your committee. What fun to see so many of our older volunteers. It's not often we come together on the same day. Although this is only my 14th year, I look forward to many more years sharing the history of our county."

**Chuck Scaffidi** writes in the "Green Leaf": After a long stay in the hospital **Bob Abben** is home and doing well. During his 15 years as a volunteer, Bob has brought much strength to the Extension as a Master Gardener. While visiting Bob, I was privileged to present him with a 15 year plaque from the U of F/IFAS for his outstanding service. Bob looks forward to getting back to the Extension help desk."

St. Pete Times Reporter Yolanda Fernandez writes about Memorial Day Weekend at Fort DeSoto Park. "Imagine, 120,000 thousand visitors in three days producing over 40 tons of trash with staff greatly reduced from 68 workers in 2006 to the current staff of 28 workers." Yolanda interviewed **George and Anita Kooyman** just two of the 115 volunteers who have stepped up to fill the void left by staff reductions. Thanks to all the volunteers who have contributed so much to keep Ft. DeSoto at the top of the list of tourist destinations in the county.