

VOLUNTEER VOICE

Pinellas County Volunteer Services Newsletter



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



Current Opportunities

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

Animal Services

Brooker Creek, Tarpon Springs

Clerk of the Circuit Court, Clearwater

Construction Licensing Board

Parks & Conservation Resources

Pinellas County Extension

Weedon Island, St. Petersburg

Water Atlas Volunteer:
Environmental Mgt./Watershed

Utilities Department

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

Volunteer Voice

EDITOR.....Dan Shannon, Volunteer
ASSISTANT EDITORBertha 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

20 YEARS LATER, THE DREAM LIVES ON AND THE BEST IS YET TO COME!

This is the saga of the Pinellas County Trail. What started in 1983 as a vision of a county resident whose son was killed while riding a bike became a reality in 1990 with the opening of the initial section of the Trail connecting Largo's Taylor Park to Seminole Park just south of Park Boulevard. On Saturday, December 4, 2010, bikers, environmental activists and trail enthusiasts will return to Taylor Park to kick off the County's 20 anniversary celebration.

Pinellas Trails, Inc., a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit and all volunteer corporation, continues to support the Trail nurturing its growth from the original five miles section to a 34 mile stretch from Tarpon Springs to South S1, Petersburg. Their mission is clearly defined: "to support, enhance and protect the Pinellas Trail now and for future generations."

Along with our beaches, the Trail is considered by residents and tourist alike to be among the most outstanding recreational attractions in the county. On average, 90,000 people use the trail each month. The Trail offers visitors a unique opportunity to enjoy the outdoors close to home, close to work and close to where people want to go. The Trail serves as an avenue by which many enter the County's beautiful parks. For many, it's a part of a daily exercise routine. Citizens who prefer have avoided rush hour traffic by utilizing the trails for their daily commute. By doing so, commuters help reduce the environmental impact of rush hour as well as reducing stress and promoting a healthy lifestyle. As a part of the expansion of the Trail, the construction of eight overpasses allows trail users to travel above traffic at busy intersections throughout the county.

DOES ALL THIS SOUND LIKE SOMETHING TO CELEBRATE? YOU BET IT DOES!

The vision lives on! In St. Petersburg, the 34th Street Pinellas Trail bridge overpass was officially opened on July 24th of this year. Work has begun on the northern loop section of the trail in conjunction with the widening of Keystone Road. It is anticipated that by the 30th anniversary, ten years from now, a loop, 75 miles long, will be completed including links to interior sections of our county as well as to Hillsborough and Pasco Counties.

Pinellas Trails Inc. efforts include:

- fostering an on-going cooperation with Pinellas County to provide amenities such as benches, shelters, water fountains and rest stops with restrooms. for those who use the trail
- a Fund Raising Committee which regularly solicits support from area businesses and organizations for sponsorship of special events
- a Trail Arts Committee to support and encourage the use of art to enhance and beautify the Trail.
- support for the Auxiliary Ranger Program including providing required uniforms.

In 2008, the Fred Marquis Pinellas Trail was honored by the Rails to Trails Conservancy (RTC) receiving its National Award and induction into the Rail to Trail Hall of Fame.

Thanks to Scott Daniels, President, Pinellas Trails Inc and Fred Bruder for their collaboration on this important story. Hopefully, many residents will turn out at Taylor Park on December 4th to honor all those who have KEPT THE DREAM ALIVE!.

PROFILE OF VIP



Fred Bruder retired in June 2007 after a successful 33 year career in service to Pinellas County. At the age of 21, he started in the Motor Vehicle Inspection Division. Six years later, he moved on to the Fleet Management Division. A former Boy Scout and avid outdoorsman, Fred was thrilled when an opportunity arose for him to transfer to Fort DeSoto Park in the mid 1980's. He started out as their storekeeper before moving into a position in the field. Under the leadership of Jerry Cumings, Fred was named Maintenance Crew Leader of the Fort DeSoto campgrounds. A 1989 promotion brought him to Sand Key Park as Park Supervisor. Years later, he reunited once again with his good friend and mentor, Jerry Cumings, as an assistant for the Pinellas Trail. There he directed the Auxiliary Ranger Program. He expressed tremendous affection and gratitude for the late Ralph Bannister, and for Kathy Barile, currently one of three Chief Park Rangers, for their encouragement and support during his time at Pinellas Trail.

Recently, your editor had an opportunity to sit down with Fred. Fred still works a regular paid job. With his passion for the environment and most especially for the outstanding chain of county parks, that hasn't stopped him from stepping up and becoming a volunteer of the County's Auxiliary Ranger Program.

Faced with dramatic cuts in staff and a genuine threat of park closings, the leadership of the Pinellas County Division of Culture, Education and Leisure now envisions an expanded mission for the Volunteer Auxiliary Rangers. In our conversation, Fred indicated that "the auxiliary ranger program is alive and well and more needed than ever." Rangers will continue to maintain an increased level of visibility assisting bikers all along the 38.2 miles of trail. They will also be on patrol in the parks assisting with supervision and maintenance of the picnic shelters, public restrooms, and park grounds. For Fred and the many volunteer rangers, this is truly a labor of love. He proclaims convincingly, "volunteers will make a big difference in efforts to keep our county parks staffed, clean and accessible to the public." He looks forward to enjoying the camaraderie of so many volunteers as they renew their dedication and commitment to this most important volunteer service.

Fred volunteers when he can and uses his spare time in the evenings and on weekends to promote the Trail and the Auxiliary Ranger Program.

To residents of Pinellas County, he sends this message: "Our parks and trails are beautiful. Come out and enjoy them. If you have time, consider becoming an auxiliary ranger."

LOOKING AHEAD

As we enter the Fall Season, take advantage of the following opportunities, COME JOIN US and support your VIP colleagues at special events around the county.

Saturday, October 23,2010 - -Heritage Village Flea Market and Book Sale

This event, sponsored by the Pinellas County Historical Society as a fundraiser for Heritage Village, will be held as part of the annual Heritage Village Fall Jubilee. VIPs are invited to donate books, tools, dishes, silverware, sports equipment, furniture, decorative items, seasonal decorations and all types of house wares. Please, no clothing or shoe donations. Contact Heritage Village at (727) 582-2233

November 26,2010 to January 2, 2011 - - - FBG Holiday Lights Festival

The Florida Botanical Gardens Foundation welcomes the county's VIPs to this annual event. Volunteers Vivian Haicken and Chuck Scaffidi will once again serve as co-chairs. They know from past experience how important the participation is of many VIPs who contributed countless hours in so many different roles making this incredible event a delightful and greatly appreciated contribution to the holiday spirit throughout our community.

Each evening from 5:30 PM to 9:30 PM, hundreds of visitors will enjoy the sights and sounds of the holiday season. The following special events are planned for this year.

Opening night, Friday, November 26th, will highlight an exciting celebration of the ten year anniversary of the Gardens. Saturday, December 11, a holiday gift extravaganza will features vendors catering to all your holiday shopping needs. The very popular dog show will be back again on Sunday, December 26th. Local community and school groups will participate in special musical events held nightly.

There are many ways VIPs can be part of this year's Holiday Lights Festival. Hosting a particular evening is a wonderful way for you, your friends and family members to celebrate the special joy of the holiday season. To add your name to the roster of volunteers or to learn about specific volunteer opportunities, contact Chuck Scaffidi at 727-582-2177 or at cscaffidi@co.pinellas.fl.us.