



volunteervision

gwinnettcounty seniorservices

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collaborative efforts for effective services

Spring Edition, 2010

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We Appreciate Our Volunteers!

National Volunteer Week is celebrated every year in April, but we need to thank all our volunteers every day of the year. Gwinnett Senior Services volunteers are helping seniors, families and children day and night; in spite of cold, wet, or slippery conditions. Every now and then, icy roads or floodwaters will slow down our volunteer service capacity, but these dedicated people of all ages are eager to get back on track. Just imagine if we did not have such dedicated volunteers to deliver meals, make home repairs, or offer a helping hand when challenges arise. Volunteers can repair roofs, help with plumbing, provide transportation, and offer some respite care for caregivers.



National Volunteer Week
April 18 - 24, 2010

The good news is that our volunteers care about people and they always work hard to make things better for others. It may seem hard to believe, but last year our volunteers contributed almost 50,000 hours of valuable services. Every year, Independent Sector, a national non-profit organization, calculates the hourly fair-market value of a volunteer's time. Based on their data, our volunteers contributed more than \$1 million worth of service to others in and throughout

Gwinnett County! This wonderful achievement should be good news to all taxpayers. The local and national economic difficulties directly impacted core services programming, but our quality of services remained intact, thanks to our volunteers.

Manager's Moments



Linda Bailey
Senior Services Manager

If anyone has ever wondered about the true value of volunteer service, please take a moment to digest these examples of volunteers righting wrongs.

1. Last year's storms badly damaged a senior's home.

One unscrupulous roofing contractor selected by the insurance company replaced a damaged roof but also noticed that a French door had been damaged. Taking advantage of the senior, the contractor repaired the door by boarding up the doorway with a piece of plywood and charged the senior \$300 for his services. Volunteers from Mountain Park UMC righted this wrong by purchasing and installing a new replacement door.

2. Volunteers from Dacula UMC handled fourteen yard work and home repair assignments for seniors in one day! A volunteer plumber offered his materials and expertise to fix nagging leaks that had been running up water bills for several seniors. As the crew assessed the differing projects, one victimized senior shared that she had paid a "handyman working in the neighborhood" \$140 to change out several light bulbs.

Thanks to these volunteers and all of our volunteers for the wonderful work you do. We greatly appreciate all the time, hard work, and personal resources you devote to our seniors. Volunteers gave almost **50,000 hours** of volunteer service last year! The fair market value of your dedication to others exceeded more than one million dollars! Your service ultimately meant that more seniors had their needs met and Gwinnett County government received a \$1 million value, thanks to all of you.



Above & Beyond: Extra Special Services

These Volunteers Really Reach Out – Eric & Jenny Guerra

Eric and Jenny Guerra are busy young professionals who not only work hard, but give back plenty. They are both pharmacists working long hours in differing locations. When they are on duty, they have plenty of opportunities to interact with seniors who might be confused or concerned about their prescription medications.

However, Eric and Jenny Guerra extend their service to seniors beyond the workplace. Over a period of time, these two generous individuals have been the greatest individual financial donors to Friends of Gwinnett County Senior Services, the non-profit organization that privately supplements select Gwinnett Senior Services core programming. They have requested that their contributions be split equally between sponsoring senior meals and providing emergency assistance support.



Eric & Jenny Guerra.

Q: Eric and Jenny, please tell us how you came to discover that seniors have so many pressing needs for support?

Our profession has provided us with the opportunity to get to know seniors on a personal level. The trust that they have in us allows a relationship in which they are comfortable sharing their obstacles, such as struggling to pay for necessities like medications. When seniors on a fixed income are unable to pay for necessary medications it becomes apparent that there are many areas of need.

Q: Have either or both of you spent extended time working with seniors in the past?

Yes, we both have spent extended time working with seniors. Although we have both participated in volunteer activities, the majority of our contact in the past and present comes with the daily functions of our profession.

Q: What makes personally supporting seniors with needs so special?

Both of us have just always had a desire to help seniors. As we connect with seniors on a personal level, we have come to see that they are giving to us more than we will ever provide. They have seen and experienced many things in their lifetimes. Their experience and advice is invaluable

and we feel honored to be able to give back to them.

Q: What advice would you be willing to share with people who are looking for a great cause (seniors) to support?

Choose an area to support which has meaning to you. Also, remember that even the smallest amount of time or money given can make a difference in someone's life. We do want to express our deep respect and gratitude for those who freely give of their time to help seniors.

Pat's Pearls of Wisdom



Pat Baker
Director, Health & Human
Services Division

I've worked with senior programs for over 35 years and I know the value of volunteers! Gwinnett County Health and Human Services Volunteers are:

VALUABLE – In 2009 worth \$1 Million+ to Gwinnett Health and Human Services

OPTIMISTIC – You always see the glass half full.

LIVELY – You abound with cheerful enthusiasm.

UNDERPAID – "It's easy to make a buck. It's a lot tougher to make a difference." ~Tom Brokaw

NOTEWORTHY – You are remarkable and significant

TERRIFIC – Your value is immeasurable.

ENERGETIC – You are powerful in action and effect.

EAGER – You keep coming back for more work!

RARE – You are unusually excellent and admirable.

"The breeze, the trees, the honey bees – All volunteers!" ~Juliet Carinreap

Thanks for all you do to make the lives of citizens in Gwinnett County better.

THANK YOU FOR
50K
HOURS OF
VOLUNTEER SERVICE

Opportunities to Support Our Seniors

FRIENDS Beach Party Benefit



There will be beach music, summer fun, and lots of unique Silent Auction bid items at this year's Friends of Gwinnett County Senior Services' Silent Auction. This exciting annual event at Delmar Gardens of Gwinnett is scheduled for **Thursday, July 22, 2010** from 6 – 8pm. There will be plenty of

food and entertainment for this event which has become a community highlight every summer. For more information or to purchase tickets, please contact Jennifer Thilo at **770.923.3100** or Lisa Moffa at **770.822.8774**.

FRIENDS Charity Golf Classic at TPC Sugarloaf



Plan on taking advantage of this unique opportunity to play the TPC Sugarloaf golf course and support FRIENDS! The inaugural **FRIENDS Charity Golf Classic** is scheduled for **Monday, August 30, 2010** at the course that hosted the PGA TOUR's **Bellsouth (later AT&T) Classic** for a number of years.

Sponsorship opportunities and team participation are available for this exciting new event that promises to become an annual favorite. Please contact Gary Galloway at 770.822.8837 or e-mail gary.galloway@gwinnettcountry.com to find out how you can sponsor, play, or volunteer for this golf tournament.

FRIENDS Shrimp & Crawfish Boil

Mark your calendars and start licking your chops because you do not want to miss the **2nd Annual Charity Shrimp & Crawfish Boil** on **Saturday, May 15, 2010** at The Hail Mary Sports Pub in Grayson. \$25 buys a heaping plate of mouth-watering shrimp & crawfish low country boil, salad, bread, and liquid refreshments plus unlimited great fellowship. This opportunity is very special because all proceeds will be presented



to Friends of Gwinnett County Senior Services to support the senior meals

programs. The waiting list continues to grow.

There will be two meal sessions: 4 – 6pm and 6 – 8pm. Tickets for both meals sessions are available at The Hail Mary Sports Pub or from Friends of Gwinnett County Senior Services board members. For more information or to purchase tickets, call **770.822.8837** or e-mail gary.galloway@gwinnettcountry.com.

Meals on Wheels Corner – By Marilyn Sessions, Meals on Wheels Coordinator

Many of our seniors were born in or have lived in differing countries. Since Gwinnett is the state's most multi-cultural county, we must respect diversity and try to understand distinct customs and spiritual practices. We are honored that we have volunteers and seniors from many national origins working to help others. Kindness and service are universal signs of cooperation.



Ismaili Muslim Community Golden Club members delivered Easter baskets with treats and personal care items to Lawrenceville Senior Center attendees. They also helped make Easter treats for home-delivered meals clients.



**Gwinnett County
Board of Commissioners**
75 Langley Drive
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to:

the**volunteervision**

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Norcross
5030 Georgia Belle Court
Norcross, GA 30093
770.638.5683



WANTED

**VOLUNTEERS
GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS**

Description: Home Visitation, Yard Work, Minor Home Repairs, Transportation, and many other exciting volunteer opportunities.

Time Commitment: Approximately 1½ – 2 hours for 1 – 5 scheduled days a month

Min. Qualifications: Must Complete Volunteer Application & Pass Background Check
Must possess a valid Georgia Driver's License

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE PROGRAM OR TO REQUEST AN
APPLICATION TO BECOME A MEALS ON WHEELS VOLUNTEER,
CALL 770.822.8837**

