

Southwest Missouri Association of Volunteer Administrators

Volunteer Appreciation Week: Creative ways to say “thank you!”

Information obtained from Making the Most of Volunteer Resources workshop materials, Community Services Council

With Volunteer Appreciation Week (April 15-21) rapidly approaching, many volunteer coordinators have been trying to find different ways to say “thank you,” to their volunteers.

Here are a few ideas that your organization might wish to use when recognizing the work of your volunteers:

- Have a calligrapher write the volunteer’s name on an appreciation certificate
- Wrap a few cinnamon buns or cupcakes with a note saying, “Thanks for working your buns off!” or “You take the cake!”
- Give a potpourri packet with a note saying “You’ve given our project the sweet smell of success!”
- Take a small box of raisins, attach a strip of magnetic tape to the

back and attach a small note saying, "Thanks for raisin' all those funds." These can be put on refrigerators or filing cabinets at work.

- Give your volunteers a bag of mixed nuts with a note attached stating, "We would go 'nuts' without your support!"
- Wrap candles in cellophane and tie them with a note stating, "You light up the lives of so many!"; or "You lighten our load by volunteering," or “No one holds a candle to you!”
- Fill an heirloom box with artifacts from the organization's past, and include a note that says, "Thank you for being part of our history in the making."
- Use children's drawings or pictures of a past charitable event to make a bookmark. Laminate it

and include a message on the back.

- Personal notes sent out periodically to remind volunteers of how important his/her efforts are to the organization.
- Send a "thought-you'd-like-to-know" letter to the volunteer's employer, acknowledging his/her positive contribution to your organization.
- Bring volunteers together for a recognition brunch/lunch/tea/dinner in their honor.
- Send an anniversary card to volunteers highlighting their year(s) of service. Note how they made a difference in your organization over the past year(s).
- Take photographs of volunteers while they are "on the job" and later give each volunteer a photo of him/herself in a frame with a 'thank you' message.

- Highlight a “Volunteers of the Month” in your newsletter and/or on your office bulletin board.
- Fill a wine glass with candy and attach a note saying, “A toast to a job well done!”

You can visit <http://www.envision.ca/vitems/> and check out the volunteer recognition items available through the Volunteer Centre, Community Services Council.

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United Way and Missouri Foundation for Health Bring 2-1-1 Phone Helpline to Missourians

The new 2-1-1 telephone number is now available to help Missourians find fast, free and confidential help for health and human services. The 2-1-1 call center, available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, is being offered throughout Missouri by the United Way of Greater St. Louis, with partial funding from Missouri Foundation for Health.

This free service provides callers with information about thousands of

non-profit and government-sponsored health and human services in Missouri, such as food pantries, tax preparation assistance, mentoring programs, shelters, and counseling. The service will also help Missourians find out about the organizations' volunteer opportunities and donation needs.

The call center estimates that it will assist 100,000-200,000 callers per year once the service has be-

come fully operational.

Launched in November 2007, Missouri 2-1-1 is covering approximately 90 percent of the state. By Spring 2008, all Missourians will be able to dial 2-1-1 on their landlines to find out about health and human services in their area. Cell phone users can reach the service by dialing the toll-free number 1-800-427-4626.

Sixteen counties in the Kansas City area are served by their own 2-1-1 center

and 20 other states in the U.S. have 2-1-1 service, which makes Missouri the 21st state to have statewide coverage.

More information and resources can be found at www.211missouri.org. Contact Martha Love, 2-1-1 Resource Specialist, at the Springfield-Greene County Library District - marthal@mail.sgcl.org or (417) 883-5366, extension 266, to have your organization added to the 2-1-1 system.

Featured Volunteer Coordinator – Joan Gibson



Joan Gibson—Membership Services Director, Girl Scouts of Dogwood Trails, Inc.

Joan Gibson is the Membership Services Director with the Girl Scouts of Dogwood Trails, Inc. The Girl Scouts of Dogwood Trails is located at 210 S. Ingram Mill Road in Springfield.

Joan organizes, directs and coordinates the seven membership staff and 50+ administrative volunteers. Their duties are to deliver and extend the Girl Scout program to girls in the 25-county jurisdiction covered by the Dogwood Trails of-

fice.

Joan works with her staff to plan and implement membership strategies to ensure that volunteers and girls are recruited in all areas, and that sufficient support is given to the volunteers to be able to provide a quality troop experience for all girls registered. She is also responsible for, among other things, planning and coordinating training of membership staff and volunteers, obtaining and distributing recruitment materials, setting goals and developing a plan of work, and managing a budget.

Joan has a Bachelor of Science in Recreation and Park Administration—Youth Services from University of Missouri-Columbia, and has worked for this Girl Scout council for 13 and a half

years. This is the second Girl Scout council Joan has been employed with—the first was in Quincy, IL (Two Rivers Council) as a Program Director/Field Director. She has also worked as a reenlistment/separation clerk for the Navy at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, and then worked as a Recreation Specialist for Army Youth Services in Hawaii.

Joan has volunteered for the American Red Cross in the past, and now volunteers with the Cub Scouts (Blue and Gold Chair) and Wesley United Methodist Church as a Sunday school teacher. She helps out at Wanda Gray school when she can, and is current President of SMAVA.

Joan also serves on the Gift of Time committee as a representative of SMAVA,

and is a past board member of the Junior League of Springfield.

“I do enjoy working with volunteers, because I find their passion and commitment to our organization very inspirational,” Joan says. “All of our volunteers bring such a diversity of experience and skills, and I really take pleasure in getting to meet and learn about them. It feels good to be able to recruit them, support them and see them grow in their position and in their skills.”

To make their organization stronger and more in touch with girls today, the Girl Scout organization as a whole is going through a period of transition, in which new program materials and delivery systems are being developed by our national organization,

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Pregnancy Care Center

Pregnancy Care Center (PCC), located at 1923 South National Suite C, in Springfield, offers health and wellness education and provides abstinence education in the local schools.

As identified in the [Springfield Community Report Card](#) PCC addresses seven of the "Child and Maternal Red Flags" including: abuse and neglect, fatherless families, single-parent families, low birth weight babies, smoking during pregnancy, teen pregnancies, and school drop out because of pregnancies to an underserved population. The center has been serving clients in the Springfield metro area for almost eight years. During that time, the number of people served has grown from

300 to more than 20,000 in a year.

Melissa Smith believes that PCC is a compassionate resource. Last year Smith was supported by PCC during her crisis pregnancy. Smith's husband had recently left her and her young child, and she did not have a job.

"I came to Pregnancy Care Center as a person who was lost in the woods," Smith said. "Pregnancy Care Center lead me out of those woods and helped me to build a strong home around my two children."

PCC provided Smith with diapers, food, and a mentor who helped her find her current job.

In addition to the services provided to Smith, PCC

has helped more than 150 women and men each week with pregnancy tests, ultrasounds, and healthy relationship classes free-of-charge. Last year it added a new program, Fatherhood 3.6.5., to mentor expectant fathers about preparing for life with a newborn child. The program provides the men with support for education, a job search, and how to budget for the new life changes.

Pregnancy Care Center has 10 full-time and 9 part-time employees, and an additional 142 volunteers who assist as receptionists, instructors, and mentors to clients. More than 200 local businesses, 2,500 individuals, and 150 area congregations provide support, along



Nearly 150 volunteers assist the Pregnancy Care Center with clerical duties and serve as mentors to clients.

with charitable foundations.

PCC is also an official partner with Springfield Public Schools, and educates more than 21,000 students per year about healthy relationship choices through the Choices Abstinence program. Jay Briggs coordinates a team of 5 volunteer presenters who educate local teens about avoiding risky behavior and healthy decision-making.

There are many ways to

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RSVP Reading Buddy 10th Anniversary Celebration

For the past 10 years, the RSVP Reading Buddy Program has provided trained reading tutors for Springfield and area school districts. On February 4, 2008, approximately 50 people gathered to recognize those individuals

that implemented the program in 1997 and those who are currently serving in the program.

Rowena Jones, former RSVP Director, Sally Carter, retired elementary principal, and Ann Dunker, former

RSVP Education Coordinator, reminisced about how the program began and grew in the early years. They shared stories of recognition parties with the students, volunteers, parents, and school personal and different recruitment

events they held to promote volunteer interest.

The event concluded with current Reading Buddies selecting free books to take to their students as part of the celebration.

Spring Volunteer Fair Registration

It's time to register for the Spring Southwest Missouri Administrators of Volunteers (SMAVA) Volunteer Fair, which will take place on Saturday, April 12, 2008 at the Library Center. If you have not already paid for the

2007-2008 membership dues, please include the \$40 annual dues with your registration for the fair.

Membership dues include not only the spring volunteer fair, but also one in the fall. SMAVA members are eligi-

ble to attend quarterly membership meetings that include a learning component dealing with volunteer management.

Please complete a registration form to participate in the Spring Volunteer Fair. For

more information, contact Martha Love at the Springfield-Greene County Library - marthal@mail.sgcl.org, or 883-5366 ex 266.

SMAVA

Southwest Missouri Association
of Volunteer Administrators

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The Southwest Missouri Association of Volunteer Administrators is composed of persons in Southwest Missouri who are involved in and believe in the volunteer movement. SMAVA's main goal is to promote volunteerism throughout our region.

To accomplish this, we:

- *Provide training, education and learning opportunities for our members*
- *Provide members with opportunities to share and exchange knowledge and experience in the creative use of volunteers*
- *Upgrade the role of professionals working in the volunteer field*

The Southwest Association of Volunteer Administrators chartered on April 29, 2003 with 13 member organizations.

Pregnancy Care Center (cont'd)

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be involved at PCC. There is currently an urgent need for office administration volunteers and nurses. PCC also needs volunteers to help with the Vision Fundraising Banquet (held on March 8, 2008 at University Plaza Convention Center). Proceeds will enable PCC to purchase a permanent facility. Syndicated columnist

and author Cal Thomas will be the keynote speaker for the event. Thomas's articles appear in the News-Leader, and he has been involved in broadcast and print journalism for 35 years. Thomas is a frequent face on television and has written 10 books. His most recent book, "Common Ground," was released this fall. Written with Bob Beckel, a liberal,

the two set out to find common ground on current issues.

Please visit www.pccchoices.org or contact Volunteer Coordinator Debra Tucker at 417-877-0800 ext. 24, or email her at volunteer@pccchoices.com to learn more about volunteering, or to have a tour of the center.

Joan Gibson (cont'd)

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Girl Scouts of the USA, and the program age levels will be changing beginning in October. In order to make Girl Scout councils stronger, most councils in the nation are also "realigning"—or merging.

The Administrative Services Center for the new

council will be here in Springfield, but services will continue to be offered through service centers in Jefferson City, Joplin, Cape Girardeau and Dexter to serve the entire jurisdiction of 73 counties in Missouri (including a total of five counties between Kansas and Oklahoma). The Spring-

field Chapter will be called Girl Scouts of the Missouri Heartland beginning October 1, 2008.

Girl Scout cookie are on sale now! Look for girls at booth sales around the community through the first weekend in March if you didn't have anyone visit you to take orders!