

RSVP

Lead. Inspire. Change the World. *Again.*
"We Connect Volunteers to Community Needs"

1971 - 2011

40

YEARS OF
VOLUNTEER
EXCELLENCE

RSVP

News & Information from the Retired Senior Volunteer Program of Tulsa, Inc.

Spring 2011

RETIRED SENIOR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM OF TULSA IS TURNING 40

2011 is RSVP Tulsa's fortieth year. Each issue will highlight RSVP Tulsa's direct service programs beginning with the Court Watch program.



The **RSVP Family Safety Court Watch** program began in Tulsa District Courts in 1999 as the result of the request of a partner agency to collaborate and start-up an 'RSVP volunteer-powered domestic violence court observation program'. The overall goal was to effectively reduce domestic violence in our community. The program volunteers observe and document domestic violence protective order cases, criminal case proceedings, and family division cases in relation to family violence. Observing and documenting cases is an effective way to reflect the process back to system participants —judges, prosecutors, law enforcement, private practice attorneys and other advocates.

Court Watch is a tool for the development of a coordinated community response to domestic violence. Objectives are to provide greater safety for victims and their children through law enforcement and the Courts, to hold abusers accountable, and to open the Courts to the community. Volunteers advocate for victims of domestic abuse by providing information to those in the system who process domestic violence victims and offenders. What happens in the courtroom has the profoundest effect on the safety and well-being of victims of domestic violence and their children.

Court Watch volunteers document case processes, share objective and subjective data with process participants, and offer solutions and service to assist in the development and implementation of improved Court processes and services. Volunteers also design, implement, and maintain special data collection projects, and research Court cases.

The information collected by the RSVP volunteers, whether from observing in Court or doing case research, informs everyone involved of what is working and what needs adjusting. RSVP Court Watch impacts public safety efforts as volunteers assist in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of our community's response to the problem of domestic violence. With the insight of the Court Watch volunteers' service, the most effective use of funds, expertise and available personnel can be determined. Informed decisions can be made that not only benefit the victim, but can promote behavioral change and the cessation of violence from abusers.

Dear RSVP Board and members, Thank you and congratulations on 40 years of excellent volunteer service to our community. Your presence is respected, appreciated and well known at the courthouse.
Warm regards, Judge Sarah Smith

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Lead. Inspire. Change the World. Again

Mission —

RSVP enhances our communities by engaging volunteers age 55 and over; matching their experiences, talents and interests to meaningful service

Staff

Executive Director

Claudia Meiling

Community Relations and

Special Events Manager

Betty Groth

Director of Volunteers

Sherry Clark

Coordinator of Volunteer

Services

Gary Ann Tomkalski

Office & Projects Manager

Diana Askins

Records Clerk

Jerry Casey

Creek County

Coordinator— LaFaune Krampf

Wagoner County

Coordinator—Diana Cooper

Washington County

Coordinator—Ann Dougherty

Patti Denton

Connie Doverspike

Scott Draughon

Mark Fulton

Tracy Harper

Shondel Herald

Alexis Higgins

Deanna Holman

Barbara Mishler

Tracie Moss

Sue Neil

Larry Oats

Shanann Passley

Victoria Perry

Christine Polecaro-Rainey

Edward Rogers

Sarfraz Shaikh

Suanne Wymer

I really should do some volunteering.” How many of us have either heard a family member say that or have said it ourselves? How many of us have done our share of coaching a child’s team, leading the brownie troop or helping with that church dinner...probably a good number of you who are reading this article. Everywhere we look, research is confirming that it’s good for the body and soul, especially for the aging process. A 2007 study by the Corporation for National and Community Service found that for those 65 and over the positive effect of volunteering on physical and mental health is due to the personal sense of accomplishment gained from volunteer activities. Volunteering leads to lower rates of depression and staying engaged with your community may add up to 2 years onto our lives!

At RSVP we hear regularly from our volunteers that on the day they volunteer, they just feel better... and that’s enough reason to get up and get going. Much like our paying jobs, volunteering can offer a variety of opportunities for personal growth or learning a new skill. For many who are grieving the loss of a spouse or loved one, volunteering often eases the loss. A volunteer assignment allows retirees opportunities to continue to lead and share career skills and talents with others.

Saving money and time for agencies is not always the most important reason to volunteer; how about enriching their mission or providing the one on one time with a client that might be unavailable without you? Motivation for volunteering can range from having a reason to get up in the morning to solving a social problem. The best reason is whatever is right for you.

As RSVP begins our celebration of 40 years of operation in Tulsa, we salute all of our members in Northeast Oklahoma. Please promote RSVP and volunteerism. Refer someone to our offices and for each one that joins RSVP and is actively volunteering, we will place your name into a drawing for special 40th year celebration prizes!!



On February 19th, nearly 200 came out to support RSVP’s fast-paced fun evening of thought provoking questions. Tropical Trivia 2011 raised over \$8,000. Congratulations to our 2011 Trivia Champion -- Nancy Herman Team. They took on the Trivia Challenge and became the 2011 Tropical Trivia Masters. Thank you to our Presenting Sponsor - SemGroup Corporation, Sponsors - George Kaiser Family Foundation, Indian Health Care Resource Center, Mazzio’s, Chris & Craig Rainey, Senior Star Living, Williams Companies, and Suanne Wymer. Thank you to our in-kind sponsors - B & B Liquor Warehouse, Cosmo Café, Fox & Hound, Harps Food Stores, Hard Rock Hotel & Casino, Ike’s Chili, Marmet Enterprises, Panera Bread, Reasor’s, Standard Distributing, Stand-By Personnel, Tulsa Fire Department, University Village. A very special thank you to our RSVP volunteers who worked all evening helping us raise funds.

TROPICAL TRIVIA 2011



Nancy Herman Team -
2011 RSVP Trivia Winners

BARTLETT FOUNDATION RECOGNIZED AT RSVP ANNUAL MEETING

On Tuesday evening, December 7, 2010, RSVP held their Annual Meeting at beautiful Tulsa Country Club. Each year RSVP recognizes an exceptional individual or organization that stands as a shining example of leadership in the community. The criteria for award recipients are:

supporting the mission of RSVP, demonstrating interest in promoting the quality of life for older adults, actively volunteering in the community or supporting volunteerism and providing leadership to other organizations that enhance volunteer opportunities for older adults.

“RSVP of Tulsa is proud to recognize The Edward E. Bartlett and Helen Turner Bartlett Foundation our 2010 RSVP Leadership Award recipient for their dedication to RSVP, those people and agencies we serve and the Sapulpa community as a whole” said Claudia Meiling, Executive Director. Accepting the award was Trustee, Bart Bartlett, while his mother, Ann Bartlett looked on. Meiling went on to say, “This Sapulpa based foundation’s mission is to improve the quality of life for the Sapulpa area including scholarships to graduating seniors and grants to non-profit organizations. RSVP in Creek County is fortunate to have support from the foundation for many years. Our medical and seniors transportation program could not function without the foundation.”



From left— RSVP board president, Barbara Mishler; Bartlett Foundation representative, Bart Bartlett; RSVP executive director, Claudia Meiling and RSVP Creek County Coordinator, LaFaune Krampf.

40TH ANNIVERSARY RECEPTION HELD AT TULSA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

RSVP kicked off its fortieth anniversary with a reception at Tulsa Historical Society on April 28th from 4pm to 6pm. Among those attending were past and present executive directors, board presidents and board members, representatives from RSVP partner agencies, and volunteers from all areas of RSVP’s services. Event sponsors included: Montereau in Warren Woods, The Broadmoor Independent Living Community, University Village. Past president sponsors were: Sue Brothers in memory of Dr. Duane Brothers, Daisy Burrus, Jess Evans, Cindy Johnson, Walter Kruse, Nancy McDonald, Debi Masegee in memory of Jerry Masegee, Shiela Mudd, Sue Neil, Deborah Pinkerton, Frank Slane and Sherri Wise.

Below, Past board presidents, from left:

Sue Neil, Walter Kruse, Sherri Wise, Frank Slane, Cindy Johnson and Debbie Pinkerton



Above from left, Chris Traband, director from 1996 to 2000; Earl Tuers, director from 1972 to 1996; Barbara Mishler, 2011 board president; and Claudia Meiling, current Executive Director .

RSVP volunteers spent 275,105 hours helping others through the services they performed in 2010. Take a look below to see just a few of the highlights —



RSVP 12-Month Snapshot 2010 At-A-Glance

- From 70+ nominees statewide, in April 2010 RSVP was named one of three finalists in the senior category for the Oklahoma Center for Nonprofits ONE awards
- RSVP Court Watch volunteers observed 3617 court cases, and volunteers designed a new protective order data reporting program in collaboration with Family Division of Tulsa County Courts
- 111 volunteers assisted 19 arts and cultural education agencies and events with 10,922 hours in Tulsa and Washington counties
- 25 RSVP volunteers in Wagoner were pen pals to 36 3rd graders for the entire school year. 20 other volunteers tutored and mentored 1st graders and kindergartners in Wagoner school. The fall brought 11 volunteers to the preschools, eager to put on an RSVP Grandfriends smock
- Voices of Experience consultants presented 3 workshops on *Risk Management*, *On-line Fundraising* and *Board Development* with an average of 70 participants in each session. 96 % of participants responded that the sessions met their expectations and they would recommend the workshops to their colleagues
- 138 RSVP Airport Ambassadors logged 24,311 hours providing a safe and secure travel environment at Tulsa International Airport
- RSVP partnered with Jenks High School media production students to produce a DVD that focuses on the benefits of volunteering to individuals
- 519 RSVP volunteers logged 56,914 hours with health services agency partners. 104 seniors in Creek and Wagoner counties received transportation for medical appointments and basic needs; plus 994 homebound received 3-5 meals per week.
- Creek County volunteers collected and distributed 300 books to senior housing units and nursing homes
- 122 lap robes and slippers handmade by Creek county volunteers were given to residents of area nursing homes
- 100 Creek county income eligible seniors received special holiday gift bags prepared and distributed by volunteers.
- 313 volunteers served 22,505 hours with Human Needs non-profits
- 78 RSVP knitters handcrafted 6297 items to serve clients in crisis. In addition, they presented handmade scarves and hats to each of 518 children at Addams and Remington Elementary schools -- their 6th year of adopting Title I schools.



TERESA HANSEN RECOGNIZED FOR WORK BY OKLAHOMA BAR ASSOCIATION

RSVP Court Watch volunteer, **Theresa Hansen** (aka Mother Theresa), was the, 2009 Law Day Liberty Bell Award recipient from the Oklahoma Bar Association. Theresa has served with the RSVP Court Watch program since July, 2001. Her work at the courthouse has included observing domestic violence cases in the misdemeanor arraignment and family division court rooms. She also continues to serve as receptionist, offers litigant information support for family division dockets on Monday and Tuesday of each week and provides mentoring support to new Court Watch volunteers. She regularly attends domestic violence advocacy trainings sponsored by the Attorney General and the Oklahoma Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. Theresa has donated an average of 61 hours per month to the courts since July 2001, with a result of increased services and support to people who use the Family Division and Criminal Misdemeanor Courts. On occasion, a litigant has needed special services and information and court personnel weren't able to leave the courtroom to provide assistance. One man was told by a Public Defender, "Go find the little white-haired lady on the 2nd floor; she'll help you." And she did. Thank you , Mother T!



Court Watch Program Volunteers and staff have been recognized for the work they do —

Theresa Hansen, Volunteer

2008 Oklahoma AARP 50 Over 50 Award

2009 Tulsa County Bar Association Liberty Bell Award

2009 Oklahoma Bar Association Liberty Bell Award

Carolyn Parmeter, Volunteer

2005 Corporation for National and Community Service Senior Corp Senior Volunteer of the Year

2008 Tulsa Mayor's Commission on the Status of Women Pinnacle Award for Advocacy

Sherry Clark, Court Watch Director and Victim Safety Advocacy Service

2007 Tulsa Mayor's Commission on the Status of Women Pinnacle Award for Community Service

RSVP's "DAY ON" FOR MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR HOLIDAY

On January 17, 2011, instead of closing in observance of the Martin Luther King, Jr. federal holiday, RSVP made it a "Day On, Not a Day Off". Nine RSVP volunteers, including 5 veterans, accompanied by Executive Director Claudia Meiling and Coordinator of Volunteer Services Gary Ann Tomkalski, visited veterans at the Claremore Veterans' Center to thank them for their service to our country. Blankets and 58 laprobes handmade by RSVP volunteers in Tulsa and Sapulpa were distributed. Volunteers had the opportunity to visit with veterans from several branches of service, and different assignments; from a World War II veteran at the Battle of the Bulge, to Korea and Vietnam. There was even an extemporaneous rendition of the National Anthem sung in the community room!



"What a great way for volunteers to give back to these brave individuals who have served our country," said Director Claudia Meiling. "We hope that more people will come forth to take time to visit with more residents of the center in the future." If interested please contact Gary Ann at the RSVP office, 918.280.8656. The

Claremore Veterans Center is a functioning memorial to Oklahoma's wartime veterans; dedicated to the ideal that caring for Oklahoma's veterans is their primary mission.

Volunteer Georgia Currie
with Battle of the Bulge
veteran Reverend Moss.



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2011
Denim to Diamonds
Honorary Chair - Sharon King Davis,
Chair - Edward Rogers,
Celebrity Emcee - Karen Keith

Live & Silent Auction

RSVP
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"We Connect Volunteers to Community Needs."

D2D
SAVE THE DATE
Saturday, July 30, 2011
Hard Rock Hotel & Casino
denim to diamonds

Presented by
GEORGE KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION
Hosted by
Hard Rock Hotel & Casino

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