

Winter 2010

'Everybody's Fine' at Volunteer Recognition Movie Matinee

A matinee on Saturday morning, Dec. 19, 2009 provided a pleasant break from all the holiday bustle for RSVP volunteers who have logged hours in the past year.

The movie "*Everybody's Fine*" was a glimpse at the life of a recent widower (Robert De Niro) whose family was anything but fine.

Free movie tickets, gift bags, popcorn and soda were enjoyed by participants. Raffle prizes were drawn before the movie began, including gift cards from PF Changs, Ralphs and Universal Studios.

Stay tuned for another movie matinee event to be scheduled in the summer.



A movie matinee gave these volunteers a chance to get out, mingle and munch on popcorn while enjoying a holiday movie. Raffle tickets were drawn for gift cards to PF Changs, Ralphs and other great prizes.



From the Director

Hi everyone,

Happy New Year! I really enjoyed seeing and meeting the volunteers who attended the movie event held at the Laemmle in December. We watched the movie *Everybody's*

Fine, whilst munching on popcorn. The feedback from volunteers was so positive, we plan to have a similar event this summer. I want to take this opportunity, as I forgot to mention her that day. A big “thank you” to Myra Aquino, who put it all together, and in doing so did such a great job. Thank you!

We are in February, so it is the start of tax season! There is a free tax aide service for low and middle-income seniors available at a number of sites in Santa Monica and West LA. We have highlighted the program on page 3 and talk with Renee McDavid, a tax aide counselor of five years. Renee is so good at her what she does, she is requested specifically by those who return each year.

Another program featured in this issue, is the Advocates for Conserved Elders Program, which is featured on page 6. Mark Santa Anna, an attorney who volunteers, obviously loves what he does.

I also want to mention The Beauty Bus, the latest addition to the RSVP team. Beauty Bus provides hair care, manicures and pedicures to chronically and terminally-ill people. They are a new non-profit and are looking for volunteers who were previously in the beauty field or just those who wish to be a “beauty buddy.”

I hope that these articles will inspire those who are currently taking a break or have extra time to consider volunteering in these programs.

Finally, the Census will be happening April 1, 2010. We want you to be aware that there are some people out there who wish to take advantage of this situation. So remember, if you complete and return the Census you will not be visited by anyone from the Census Bureau. Do not reveal any personal information such as your social security number to anyone claiming to be from the Census. This information is not being collected.

On this note, we are working with the Census Bureau to promote this year’s census and have a number of items to give away. Look on page 4 to see how you can win one of these items.

Best wishes,

Helping Earthquake Victims in Haiti –

WISE & Healthy Aging Helped Collect Shoes

Images of the rubble in Haiti motivated people to open their closets and donate new and gently-used shoes to survivors of the devastating earthquake.

Sport Chalet provided a drop for the shoes and collected more than 950,000 pairs of shoes for Haiti Relief in just two weeks! From January 14 through January 31, 2010, shoes were dropped off by the general public at 55 Sport Chalet locations.

Soles4Souls, a Nashville-based charity that collects shoes from footwear companies and the closets of people, distributes shoes free of charge to people in need. Since 2005, Soles4Souls has given away over 5.5 million pairs of new and gently worn shoes. The shoes have been distributed to people in over 125 countries, including Kenya, Thailand, Nepal and Haiti.



Dozens of shoes were donated by WISE & Healthy Aging and Ken Edwards Center staff and volunteers. The nine huge bags of shoes collected took three trips to deliver to Sport Chalet for Sole4Souls.

Providing a Needed Service – Volunteers Give Tax Assistance

Volunteers at WISE & Healthy Aging provide tax assistance to low and moderate income individuals between Feb. 1 and April 15 each year.

Renee McDavid is one of the most popular tax volunteers. Many people ask for her specifically, and some won't work with anyone else. Renee says she's been told, "I have the patience of Job." If the return cannot be finished in the hour allotted, Renee will always make time for another appointment. She works at three sites, several hours a week, sometimes seven hours in a day. She supervises the work of other volunteers at Rogers Park in Inglewood as well. Renee also helps file late returns through November.

**Number of returns filed
last year by Santa Monica
tax volunteers:**

3,496

Renee has helped people with taxes for the past 34 years. "Decades ago," she says, "I spoke with a man who used to be with the IRS. He taught me how to do my own returns and ever since I've done my own and my friends." When she saw an advertisement in the AARP newsletter for volunteers in 2005, she says, "It piqued my interest." She called and got in touch with WISE & Healthy Aging and has been helping ever since.

Many of Renee's clients have returned each year, sometimes bringing a son or a daughter, who will ask, "Can I come in, too?" She is glad to see them all.

Some clients can be challenging. "There was one particular woman," Renee recalls, "very eccentric. She hadn't filed for three years. The woman had many different piles of paper—receipts, income, everything was



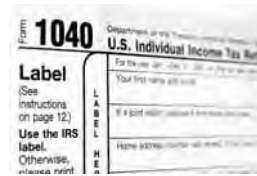
Renee McDavid, a popular tax volunteer, has helped others file tax returns for 34 years.

disorganized." With Renee's patience, the returns were finished after several visits.

"Most people are very kind, she says. "They really appreciate the work we do. They bring cookies, 'can I bring you Starbucks,' they'll ask, and often they bring us lunch." Renee appreciates them as well. Some of the older women, "are beautifully dressed with their hats and gloves." She enjoys complimenting them on how lovely they look. Many more tell her about their lives, "You get couples that come in, the wife or the husband doesn't hear too well. They make little jokes about each other. They're so sweet, you see how long they've been married – 50 or 60 years. I meet very interesting people and hear about their life experiences. I'm taking the journey along with them."



Tax volunteers go through rigorous training before helping seniors with tax returns.



Tax Aide Locations /Phone Numbers

Ken Edwards Ctr
(310) 394-9871

Westchester Sr Ctr
(310) 649-3317

**Felicia Mahood
Senior Ctr**
(310) 479-4119

**Culver City Veterans
Auditorium**
(310) 253-6700

Joslyn Senior Ctr
(310) 524-2705

Rogers Park Ctr
(310) 412-5504

Roxbury Rec Ctr
(310) 550-4761

**Claude Pepper Sr
Citizen Ctr**
(310) 559-9677

Welcome New Volunteers!

Robert Bishop
Oscar Chuang
Judy Dews
David Dows
Evelyn Lauchenauer
Erlinda Maliksi
Betty Melton
Candice Nims
Myron Possman

Melodee Sedell
Louise Steiner
Evelyn Stern
Laura Waisler
Rayma Wells
Thomas Wilder
Martha Yoneyama
Yanlu Miranda Zhang



Go to page 7 and find out how you can win a fabulous Hot/Cold thermal bag, an insulated lunch bag or a nifty security neck wallet!

Witness Project Promotes Screenings for Early Cancer Detection in Women

The Witness Project® through WISE & Healthy Aging is an award-winning model program that trains women to make presentations in churches and community centers about the importance of early detection of breast and cervical cancers. African Americans have the highest mortality rates from breast and cervical cancers. Education is an effective tool to increase participation in screening practices. Presentations in churches and community sites are scheduled on an ongoing basis.

To volunteer as a Witness, please call Volunteer Services at (310) 394-9871 for more information.



▲ *Witness Project Volunteers (L to R) Lay Health Advisors Lucinda McNeal; Denise Lamb; Ann Cochran; Holly Kiger; Vienna Hayes; Witness Roberta Reddick and Lay Health Advisor Gwen Powell.*

Fraud Fighters Find Their Calling and Reach a Lofty Goal



Fraud Fighters recently surpassed their goal of 94,000 calls made to spread awareness about fraud and scams. Above (L–R) Jean Kelly, Daveen Faier, Shirley Kelson, Peggy Mollin, and Nancy Adelman.

Fraud Fighter Volunteers are a special bunch. They spend hours calling others and talking on the phone, in the name of preventing scams and fraud against vulnerable adults. The volunteers follow a script and warn the person on the other end about recent rip-offs that have happened to others.

**Number of phone calls made by
Fraud Fighter volunteers last year
to warn others about scams:**

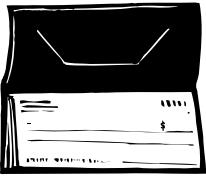
95,117

Sometimes Fraud Fighters talk to people who have been tricked by scammers into providing personal information, such as social security numbers, or sending money for products that are never delivered.

Once in a while volunteers get hung up on – a good thing since that person is not likely to carry on a conversation with a scammer.

If you like to talk on the phone and help others, find out more about becoming a Fraud Fighter by calling Petula at (310) 394-9871, ext. 450.

More Opportunities Available for Volunteering



Personal Money Management

Help someone maintain the highest possible level of independence by assisting those who are having difficulty managing their daily financial activities. Volunteers are trained to provide in-home assistance with budgeting, organizing, bill paying or other financial needs.

Beauty and Grooming Treatments

Give terminally ill men and women the lift they need. Beauty professionals are needed and non-beauty professionals to assist with home visits. Need office and fundraising volunteers to help support the great work of the Beauty Bus.



Los Angeles Airport: Traveler's Aid

Help passengers with directions, locate friends or family and help with the many things that can go wrong for travelers.

Hospice Partners

Support the mission to provide compassionate end-of-life care emphasizing life, choice and dignity in partnership with patients, families and community. Volunteers are needed for patient care, errands, special projects, telephone calls, bereavement and office assistance.

Meals on Wheels

Nourish a life by helping provide home-delivered meals to someone who is disabled and cannot shop or cook for themselves due to illness, accident, age or frailty. Only two hours a day, choose your schedule. The daily visits of volunteers reassure homebound people that someone cares.



Friendly Visitors

Isolation and loss of social interaction due to poor health, lack of transportation or other issues can contribute to depression and self-neglect. Volunteer as a friendly visitor to lonely, isolated seniors and help improve the quality of someones life.



American Red Cross



Interesting volunteer positions including community programs and events. Call and find out how you can contribute.

SM-UCLA Senior Services Office

Answer phones, computer entry, filing and send out membership packets for a Santa-Monica-UCLA Medical Center and Othopaedic Hospital senior services organization. Pleasant office environment.



Join a National Institutes of Health sponsored study.

Drinking and Aging Study

WISE & Healthy Aging is participating in a research study to determine whether providing online education is a viable way to inform people about alcohol use and its influence on older adults.

Participants in the study must be 55 years or older and have had at least one alcoholic drink in the past 12 months. The process takes about an hour and involves reading information, taking a survey and two interviews.

Participants will be paid \$25 for their time.

To participate in the study please call WISE & Healthy Aging at (310) 394-9871 ext. 224.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN THESE, OR OTHER OPPORTUNITIES, PLEASE CONTACT VOLUNTEER SERVICES AT WISE & HEALTHY AGING, (310) 394-9871, EXT. 450

Advocates for Conserved Elders (ACE) Project

Volunteers with the ACE program protect and comfort the most vulnerable among us: older men and women, who have no one else. These volunteers are special advocates who help reduce the isolation of individuals living in long-term facilities and help prevent abuse and neglect.



Attorney Mark Santa-Anna is a volunteer for the ACE Project

Mark Santa-Anna an attorney who heeded the call to volunteer says, “I needed to complement my being. We get caught up in our own lives. We need to take time to help others.”

An elder-law practitioner, Mark was surprised by how much he has gained from helping others, including one 83-year-old woman he visits.

“She has dementia, goes in and out, sometimes lucid, sometimes not so,” he explains. “I just love her. We have nice little talks. She has nobody.” Despite the dementia, he says, “she is very strong.”

Recently he visited her and was concerned because she had a deep congestive cough that lingered for weeks. She was not on her medication. He reported it to the ACE Program manager who contacted her conservator, who was able to follow up. The woman received medication and is now doing better. “If I had not been there, I don’t know what would have happened.” Like all the ACE volunteers, Mark is a champion who keeps the long-term care residential facilities on their toes.

In the past two years, 76 individuals have been trained as ACE volunteers. A commitment of six months to a year is required. Volunteers agree to visit 15 minutes to an hour, twice a month. But many spend far more.

Sam, another volunteer, has been visiting a woman in a secure facility for a year. “The woman has no teeth and was alone. She didn’t want to eat.” Sam started visiting three times a week. “Soon, the woman was eating her whole lunch. She greets Sam by name and the facility is dressing her better.”

A woman in one of the facilities who only spoke French had a stroke. Marie, who is fluent in French, visits her twice a week. When the woman went to the hospital Marie accompanied her, staying for six hours. She went above and beyond what was expected.

“All it takes is one person to make a huge difference in the life of someone abandoned by society.”

The ACE program has sent visitors to more than 30 facilities. “After visits from our volunteers, the staff becomes more involved with the clients. They are now on their toes, because of the visits,” says Laraine Mestman, ACE Program manager.

ACE volunteers were provided with gift cards so they could buy things for the conservatees. Hand lotion, soap, nail polish, socks, blankets, shampoo, scenic calendars to brighten up the room, a scarf, a medical I.D. bracelet,” are just some of the things the volunteers bought for their conservatees. A meal from a restaurant can provide a huge morale booster. Judging from conversations with the ACE volunteers, the little extra gifts are a big hit.

You can become a volunteer with ACE. As Mark says, “All it takes is one person to make a huge difference in the life of someone abandoned by society.”



Volunteer Linda Louie visiting with conservatee Shirley. ACE volunteers provide the “eyes and ears” overseeing conservatees at long term care facilities.

Transportation and Mobility Program

Mobility Classes

(Transportation, Pedestrian Safety & Senior ID)

March 10, 2010 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

April 21, 2010 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Driving Simulation Classes

Improve your skills in a safe setting.

March 24, 2010 10 a.m. to Noon

AARP Driver Safety Classes

March 9, 2010* 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

*Refresher class is only available to those who have completed the 2-session AARP Safety Class within the last three years.

April 13 & 15, 2010 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

(This three-year certificate class may qualify you for auto insurance discount from your insurer - call your insurance company)

For more information about the Transportation and Mobility Program, please call (310) 394-9871, ext. 455.

Free Stuff –

Get This Cool Thermal Bag!



Keep your groceries ice cold until you get home, or use for your take-out so it stays piping hot.

Each volunteer who reports their hours during February, March and April will be entered into a drawing to win a cooler bag, an insulated lunch bag or neck wallet.

Thank you for submitting your time sheets promptly. It makes our life easier and we appreciate all that you do!

BONUS! Refer a friend, who attends Volunteer Orientation and we will give you your choice of the bags or the wallet.



Upcoming Excursions for Dial-a-Ride Members

Downtown Adventure Tour!!

**Saturday February 27, 2010
9 a.m. – 2 p.m.**

- Walt Disney Concert Hall
- Museum of Contemporary Art
- Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels
 - Chinatown
- LA Live – Staples Center – Nokia
- Return via Miracle Mile

Please call (310) 394-9871, ext. 455 for more information.

48-hour advance reservations required.

**Coming soon:
Huntington Gardens in Pasadena**

How Is It Going?

If you are having a difficult time or are not enjoying your volunteer experience, please call us. We want to make sure that you are getting as much out of your volunteerism as you are giving. Thank you for everything that you do! We appreciate the time and the effort that you give. (310) 394-9871

WISE & Healthy Aging

WISE & Healthy Aging, a social services organization, enhances the independence, dignity and quality of life of older adults through leadership, advocacy and innovative services. This nonprofit is the result of a November 2007 merger of WISE Senior Services and Center for Healthy Aging. Each organization served the community for more than three decades prior to the merger, earning national reputation for innovative and effective programs and services.

(310) 394-9871

Plan Your Fall Vacation and Get \$100 Off!

Enjoy the sights, history and cuisine of a Classical Italy Tour – Nov. 1–13

Includes airfare, first class hotels, baggage handling, motorcoach transportation, tour director, 17 meals, international air departure taxes and more ...



**For Italy trip details and reservation form:
www.wiseandhealthyaging.org
or call (310) 394-9871, ext. 440**

WISE
& *Healthy Aging*

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