

New group forms to match volunteers with agencies

Organization tries to fill void left by VPS closure

By Mike Russo
Independent Newspapers

Seeking to fill the void created by the demise of the Volunteers Placement Service, a group of residents have formed a new organization to serve as a clearinghouse for volunteer opportunities in the Sun Cities area.

The Sun Cities Area Volunteer Committee began operation last week out of offices in the Sun City Home Owners Association and the Property and Residents

Association in Sun City West. "With Volunteer Placement Services out of the picture, we will take over that function," said Bob Kortright.

"We will be focusing our efforts on providing people to organizations that serve the Sun City area; not the entire west Valley," he continued. "We are talking about 25 organizations."

"It is a volunteer group operated by volunteers," said Gerry Unger, HOA board president.

Although the new organization just began operations last

week, its genesis actually occurred last year.

"This committee started a year ago as an outgrowth of needs that surfaced at the Presidents' Council and the HOA Long Range Planning Committee," Mr. Kortright explained.

He said it was felt that there was a need to solicit more volunteers because not enough people were stepping forward.

Mr. Kortright spearheaded an effort to attract more volunteers

by creating a sign-up sheet on which people could express their preferences for volunteering their services.

Forms were distributed throughout Sun City during the last year, including at four Fun Fairs, the Apple Dumpling Festival and a swap meet, Mr. Kortright noted. Forms have also been distributed to Sun City churches, and will soon be distributed by Sun City West houses of worship.

"We will continue that effort

and expand on it," Mr. Kortright said.

Every new Sun City resident receives a sign-up form in the mail along with a HOA membership application, Mr. Kortright noted.

Mr. Kortright, HOA director, will serve as the organization's interim executive director and Marge Murphy, HOA director, is the committee chairperson.

Other committee members include Nancy Donelson, Sun City Library; J.R. Reese, Interfaith Community Care; Arlene Schindler, PRIDES president; Caryl Schafer, PORA director; Pat Andrews, Westside Food Bank; Jane Freeman, Jane Harper and Vickie Ross. Representatives are also being sought from the Recreation Centers of Sun City West board

of directors and from one of the area's smaller organizations that relies upon volunteers.

Mr. Kortright said he believes the cumulative effect of exposure will yield more volunteers.

He stressed the benefits to the people who volunteer.

"We strongly believe the volunteer benefits at least as much as the organization they help," Mr. Kortright opined.

Mrs. Schindler said a recent study indicates that volunteering enhances the health of the volunteers.

Mr. Kortright said volunteering is great way to meet new people especially for new residents in the community.

SCAVC wants to furnish volunteers to all sizes of organizations, not just the large ones, Mr. Kortright noted.

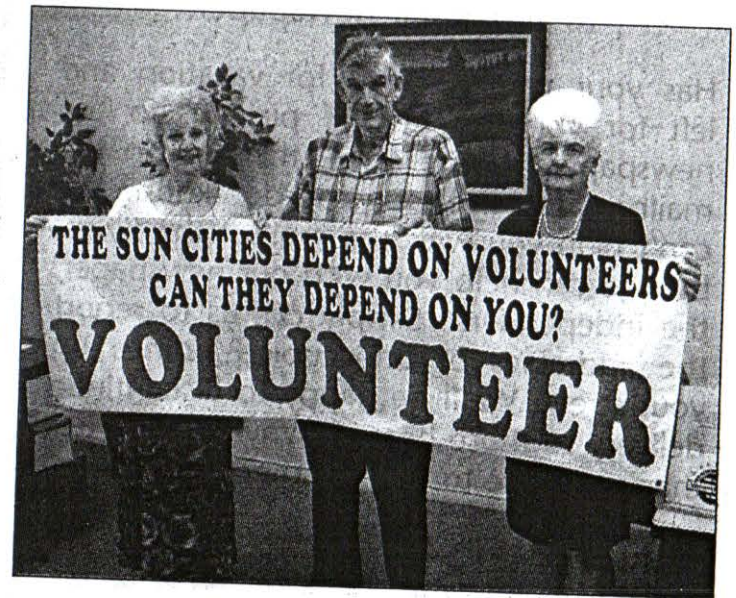


Photo by Mike Russo/Independent Newspapers

Members of the Sun Cities Area Volunteer Committee send out a call for more volunteers. From left, Marge Murphy, committee chairperson; Bob Kortright, interim executive director; and Caryl

"We want to be absolutely sure we cover all the bases, not just the large users of volunteers," Mr. Kortright said. "In our efforts, we have room for all."

Anyone wishing to volunteer can stop by the HOA office, 10401 W. Coggins Drive, Sun City, or call 583-8099. In Sun City West, volunteers may stop by PORA, 13815 W. Camino del Sol, or call 584-4288.

"People can call in and we will ask them their three areas of preference and we will place them," Mrs. Murphy explained.

"We are capable of growing and will with the need," remarked Randy Fuller, PORA board president.

Mr. Fuller helped launch the program by personally donating \$500.

Lack of funding forces VPS to close

HOA EXAMINES OPTIONS: Group might open volunteer office, will ask PORA to do likewise

JOHN SOKOLICH
DAILY NEWS-SUN

People looking to volunteer locally may have to find their own connections once the Sun Cities Volunteer Placement Services closes its doors.

The service has been operating in the communities for the last 20 years and will close April 30 because of limited financial resources, said Patrice Barry, executive director.

The service is funded through private donations, community funds and other area organizations.

"We decided that working half time is not sufficient," she said. "There are too many volunteer needs, and we can't do it on a half-time schedule. It's not because voluntarism is on the decline — it's actually the opposite."

Barry said to make the programs work successfully, it would take a full-time service, but enough funding is available only for a part-time operation.

News of the service's closure disappointed local officials, who have been trying to reverse

From A1

the trend of dwindling volunteers.

"The closure creates a hole," said Gerry Unger, president of the Sun City Home Owners Association. "We established a committee to assist them, and now somebody is going to have to pick up the pieces. We have not decided on any particular action at this point other than trying to fill the hole."

HOA partnered with the placement service for the past six months in an effort to boost voluntarism.

Barry said the trend of dwindling volunteer numbers is only because the needs of the community, and the jobs to fill, are changing. She said newer people moving into the area want to volunteer, but want to do so in positions

that are different than those currently offered.

Her remarks were reiterated by Bob Kortright of HOA's volunteer committee.

"Voluntarism is declining because the demographics are changing," Kortright said. "Now there is so much more competition for people's time. People still want to help, but you have to ask them. And that's what we are working on: a way to ask people the right way to get them to volunteer."

Kortright said VPS's closure could potentially set recruitment programs back a bit, but HOA is trying to pick up the slack.

Two programs HOA is considering are opening a volunteer office in Sun City and talking with the Sun City West Property Owners and Residents Association about doing the same, Kortright said.

"We are talking at this point," Kortright said. "Nothing is final. But we regret to see Volunteer Placement Services go. They will be hard to replace."

The placement service recently revamped its programs to deal with a shortage of volunteers in the Sun Cities, specifically targeting Baby Boomers to encourage them to join the volunteer corps.

Last year marked the first year Boomers could move into the Sun Cities since the first wave started turning 55,

and for many organizations it also marked further decline in their volunteer numbers. The decline had such an impact that HOA formed its committee to find a way to attract more volunteers. The committee was made up of members from HOA, Inter-faith Community Care and local libraries and hospitals.

Some people drew a correlation between Baby Boomers and the year's shortage of volunteers, but Barry said the two weren't related and worked hard to prove her point. She established an extensive program to attract the Boomers into volunteer positions that weren't the common roles the Boomers' predecessors have participated in.

VPS's closure, however, brings an end to a program Barry set in place, which included attracting volunteers to a wider range of opportunities, such as in schools and technology-based jobs.

"They will volunteer, but it's a different type of job they are looking for," she said.

Baby Boomers and others

looking to volunteer after April 30 will have to look elsewhere to find a position.

Prior to closing its doors for good at the end of April, Volunteer Placement Services will provide a volunteer directory listing local agencies requiring volunteers. The directory will be available at the recreation centers and homeowners associations in Sun City and Sun City West.

Potential volunteers and organizations requiring their help are encouraged to contact the Volunteer Center of Maricopa County at 602-263-9736 or visit the Web site www.volunteerphoenix.org, Barry said. The center has agreed to continue assisting volunteers who formerly coordinated their work through Volunteer Placement Services.

Barry said any volunteer organization that has not been contacted by the placement service and wants to be included in the directory should call 546-1774.

John Sokolich can be reached at 876-2526 or jsokolich@aztrib.com.

SUN CITIES VOLUNTEER PLACEMENT SERVICES
FACT SHEET

I. ORIGIN

The Sun Cities Volunteer Placement Services is a non-profit agency incorporated on September 17, 1982 under the auspices of the Sun City Area Community Council, as the result of a survey of community agencies desiring help from volunteers.

II. PURPOSE:

- A. Primarily to assist residents of Sun City, Sun City West, Sun City Grand, El Mirage, Surprise, Youngtown, Peoria and environs to find rewarding outlets for their time and talents through voluntary service tailored to their individual preferences.
- B. Assist non-profit organizations, hospitals, schools, health care centers, retirement centers, adult and child day care centers, and community centers to fill volunteer openings.
- C. Promote volunteerism in the community.

III. FUNDING:

The Sun Cities Volunteer Placement Service is primarily funded through the Sun City and Sun City West Community Funds, churches, service clubs and individual donors.

IV. VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Volunteer opportunities are available in Habitat for Humanity, Community Centers, Hospitals, Retirement centers, Nursing homes, Adult and Child Day Care centers, Libraries, Thrift shops, Food banks, Schools, Sun Cities Poses, Sun Cities Prides, Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic, American Red Cross, Hospice, visiting shut-ins, shopping for shut-ins, Meals on Wheels drivers, Office work, Computer data input, Counseling, working with the handicapped, *public relations and other volunteer opportunities in over 150 area non-profit organizations.*

V. VOLUNTEER TIME PER WEEK

Most volunteers volunteer 4 hours per week. If they want to volunteer more than 4 hours a week, they often choose another non-profit organization for their volunteer work to give them variety.

VI. STAFFING

The Sun Cities Volunteer Placement Services is staffed with two (2) part-time

paid employees and six or ~~more~~ volunteers.

VII. ADMINISTRATION

The Sun Cities Volunteer Placement Services is governed by a Board of Directors selected from community residents for a maximum of two 2-year terms. The Board of Directors meets once a month September through May.

VIII. MOTTO

The Sun Cities Volunteer Placement Services motto is "Caring, Sharing, and Serving". This organization provides an opportunity for area residents to carry its motto into practice by giving them a unique opportunity to share their time and talents with others. By experiencing the joy of helping others and knowing that what they give is meaningful to others and meets genuine needs in the community, residents improve the quality of their life and remain happier and healthier.

Volunteers to the rescue



RANDY FULLER, president of Sun City West Property Owners and Residents Association, gave \$500 to seed a volunteer-recruitment office in Sun City West.



GERRY UNGER, president of Sun City Home Owners Association, which has pledged office space and a telephone in hopes to fill the vacuum with the loss of the volunteer placement bureau.

SPIRIT OF SUN CITIES: Rec centers, home owners groups connect to set up program to fill void created when placement bureau shut down

JOHN SOKOLICH
DAILY NEWS-SUN

In communities virtually run by volunteers, it should be no surprise that they are stepping in to fill the void with the closure of the Sun Cities Volunteer Placement Services.

Sun Cities' officials are pledging their support for an initiative to find volunteers to help the organizations that need them.

With the closure of the agency in Sun City West at the end of April, residents looking to volunteer were forced to contact Maricopa County's placement services, which local officials say wasn't doing enough to help the Sun Cities.

As a result, the Sun City and Sun City West recreation centers combined efforts with the Sun City Home Owners Association and the Sun City West Property Owners and Residents Association to open volunteer offices with a focus on locals. Plans for the new offices, one at HOA and one at PORA, were announced at a Thursday morning meeting.

"We have pledged HOA support to the new Sun Cities Area Volunteer Committee in terms of facilities, staff, effort and energy," said Gerry Unger, HOA president. "We have given the Sun City office space and a telephone in hopes that the effort will fulfill the vacuum and hole that was created when Volunteer Placement Services quit working."

Funding sources to keep the offices operating have not been discussed, but Unger said when financial situations arise, the HOA Foundation is willing to give some money to meet the expenses of keeping a phone line and paying postage rates.

PORA President Randy Fuller — who personally gave \$500 seed money for the program — echoed Unger's remarks with a similar promise from Sun City West.

"The purpose of this is to provide volunteers to the Sun Cities," he said. "We will do everything in our power to get people of Sun City West to support this as well. We are giving the same

degree of service as HOA is giving."

With the new volunteer offices in the two communities, residents will have the opportunity to get information and referrals to various volunteer organizations in Sun City and Sun City West. In addition, the new offices will make a concentrated effort to recruit new volunteers, said Bob Kortright of the HOA volunteer committee.

"We will be absolutely sure that we cover all the organizations in the area, not just the big ones," he said. "The small ones are just as important."

For the past two years, the Sun Cities have reported a drop in the number of volunteers offering their services in the communities — a pattern that the new offices are aimed at reversing, Kortright said.

"There has been a change in the atmosphere surrounding volunteers," he said. "No longer are people coming to us to ask how to volunteer — we are having to go to them."

Although the closure of the Sun Cities Volunteer Placement Services was noted as a setback for local voluntarism, Kortright said with its demise, the new effort to attract volunteers will be more efficient and structured around the needs of the community and changing

TO LEARN ABOUT VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

- Call the Sun City office, 583-8099
- Call the Sun City West office, 584-4288

demographics of those volunteering.

"We are going to continue to get the word out and in time it will have a direct effect on the number of volunteers in the area," he said.

PORA's Fuller said Sun City West officials — like their counterparts in Sun City — continue to pass out fliers asking for volunteer interests in the community.

"There has been some more interest generated since we started handing out the forms to people," said Marge Murphy, chairwoman of the newly formed Sun Cities Area Volunteer Committee. "I think that more people are getting familiar with the need for volunteers in the area

See Groups unite, A5

and are responding."

At the meeting, representatives from the communities' libraries, visitors centers and PRIDES announced that in the past few weeks several people have expressed interest in volunteering for their organizations and a handful already have started to work.

Arlene Schindler, a volunteer consultant living in Sun City West, told meeting-goers about a recent study that showed volunteers generally live longer and healthier lives than those who do not volunteer.

To that, Kortright said the rewards of volunteering are much more than monetary.

"Volunteering helps the volunteer as much as it helps the community," he said. "We want to emphasize that anybody can volunteer whether they are mobile or immobile, male or female, young or old, like working alone or in groups. We need everyone and want everyone."

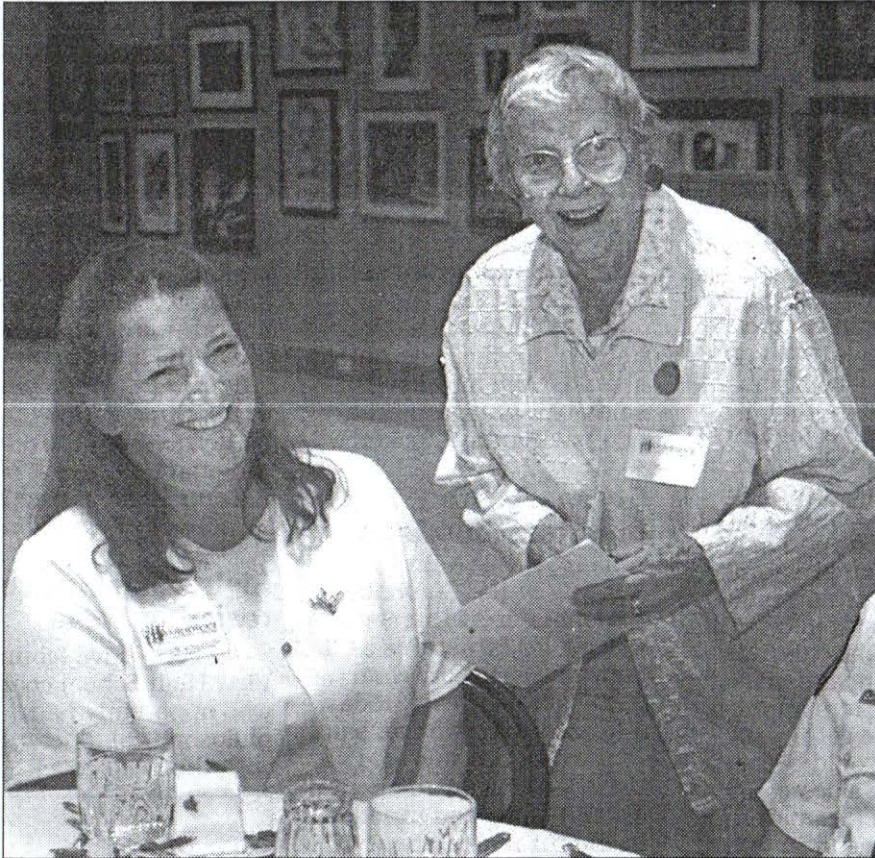
Officials at the meeting also said they wanted to inform the public that volunteering is not something that is a one-time shot.

"There are so many opportunities out there for people that we want to make sure they understand that they are not limited," Kortright said. "They can volunteer for new challenges, something they are familiar with, or change jobs as they want. As an example, Sun Health has 250 categories for volunteers, so there is something for everyone out there."

Longtime fixture closes

Daily News Sun 4/30/02

page A3



PHOTOS BY STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

On Saturday at the West Valley Art Museum, Pitre Chrysler Jeep of Scottsdale sponsored a luncheon to honor more than 70 Volunteer Placement Services volunteers. At left, Patrice Berry, left, VPS executive director, and Jane Freeman, president, pause for a smile during the luncheon. VPS closes for the last time at the end of business today, but those interested in volunteering may call 1-800-VOLUNTEER and enter their zip codes to learn of local opportunities.

Volunteer office to close

By Dennis Godfrey
The Arizona Republic

Phyllis Cohen will have to find something else to do with her time.

She has been a volunteer at the Sun Cities Volunteer Placements Services office since she moved to Sun City West in 1993.

"I'm the longest (serving) employee they've had here. Unpaid employee," she said.

Cohen is considering other options because the Volunteer Placement Services office is closing at the end of April after 20 years in the Sun Cities. Money is the reason: There is not enough to expand the service to meet the growing needs.

The closing creates a vacuum that the Volunteer Center of Maricopa County plans to fill.

"There won't be a gap in services

provided," promised Maggie King, president of the Volunteer Center.

Both non-profit groups have the same goal: match potential volunteers with groups that need them.

King said that with the Sun Cities office closing, her group will make a greater effort to focus on the northwest Valley. Within a few months, the Volunteer Center hopes to have an office there. It already has one in Goodyear that serves the southwest Valley.

The goal, King said, is to help not just Sun Cities people "but Surprise, El Mirage, Glendale, Peoria, the whole northwest area."

The Volunteer Center already serves those people.

"It's just that we don't have a physical location there. That's what we're looking for," King said.

No location has been selected.

Patrice Barry, the part-time executive director of the Sun Cities volunteer program, said the office's closing should not make people think Sun Citians are not volunteering.

"It is exactly the opposite," she said.

In some ways, the success of the program doomed it. The need is for a full-time operation, but there is only enough money to run it part time.

"It has become too much," Barry said.

For Cohen, a change is coming. She's not sure what she will do now.

"I'll figure out something," she said.

Information on volunteering is available at www.volunteerphoenix.org or (602) 263-9736.

Reach the reporter at dennis.godfrey@arizonarepublic.com or (602) 444-6921.

New volunteer association forms in Sun Cities

Organization will try to reverse trend of declining voluntarism

By JULI NESSETT
Independent Newspapers

The subject of the declining number of volunteers in the Sun Cities has surfaced in the last several months, both within the Sun City Home Owners Association Long Range Planning Committee and the Presidents Council.

According to Bob Kortright, HOA director and co-chair of its long-range planning committee, the shortage has become more acute in the last few months, causing organizations such as Interfaith Services to curtail some of its services.

"Even organizations like the Visitors Center have been forced to shorten hours of operation due to a shortage of volunteers," said Mr. Kortright.

Mr. Kortright also said the shortage is not just contained within the Sun Cities, it is occurring in surrounding communities as well.

"Given that there was an obvious need that was not being met, HOA's long-range planning committee, along with the Presidents Council, formed a committee to address the problem," explained Mr. Kortright.

The committee is made up of professionals in the volunteering field and includes members from Interfaith Services, Westside Food Bank, Sun Health, PORA,

Volunteer Placement Services, Recreation Centers of Sun City and Sun City West and HOA.

"Obviously you can't get everybody involved," noted Mr. Kortright. "But we feel that we have a very representative group from the volunteer community."

The committee's first order of business was to come up with a mission statement — to ensure that the non-profit organizations servicing the Sun Cities area was adequately staffed with volunteers.

"How are we going to do it?" he asked. "We are going to marshal the resources of the community."

In particular Mr. Kortright said the committee will look to the two recreation centers, HOA and PORA under the guidance and council of professionals in the volunteering business.

"We're going to certainly make a thrust at new residents coming in, but not ignoring the fact that there are a lot of existing residents in the Sun Cities that would be willing to volunteer if asked," he explained.

Mr. Kortright said the basic tendency was to attribute the lack of volunteering to younger people and/or newer residents.

"But we found from the professionals that the demographics of volunteering have changed and

therefore a different approach was needed," he said.

Mr. Kortright said the committee then decided to take a multi-faceted approach, starting with a universal registration card.

"We want to build a bank of previous experience," he said. "People who are retired trades or professional people. We would hope to be able to call on them."

"There are so many people with so much vast experience and we believe that people will share this experience for a good cause if we ask them the right way and we know who to ask," he added.

The committee has found there is lesser tendency today for volunteers to make extended commitments but they are willing to work on a defined project for a limited period of time.

Another resource the committee hopes to tap into is the service clubs in the Sun Cities.

"Our intent is to ask them to register with us as well," said Mr. Kortright.

He also said the committee intends to stress the social aspect as a part of volunteering in order to get people interested.

"Often times people won't volunteer alone but they will as group," he said.

The new committee does not intend to step on other volunteering organization's toes, but to supplement existing efforts.

Currently the organization is seeking the endorsements of PORA, HOA and the Presidents Council.

The subject of funding has also arisen.

"We have not really addressed that issue yet but we intend to scrounge where we can, drawing on neighborhood resources. We firmly believe that if we can demonstrate a good program, the necessary dollars will become available," stated Mr. Kortright.

The committee has also decided on a name — Sun Cities Area Volunteer Association.

Mr. Kortright said initially SCAVA will address those organizations that directly serve the Sun Cities but ultimately hopes to include the surrounding communities as well.

Right now SCAVA is developing a list of organizations requiring volunteers.

Those organizations that are in need of volunteers are invited to call Mr. Kortright at 972-5954.

SCAVA is not, however, ready for volunteers at this time. An announcement will be forthcoming as soon as that occurs.

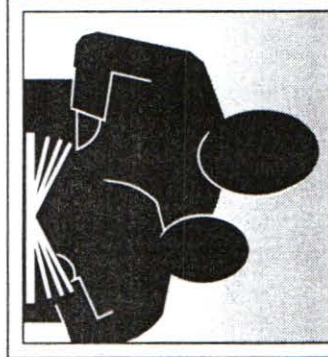
Bureau matches volunteers with tasks

By JUDY JAVA
Daily News-Sun staff

SUN CITY — Volunteers in the Sun Cities are worth their weight in gold — about \$4.5 million worth since 1982, according to Janet Henningsen, executive director of the Volunteer Bureau of the Sun Cities.

Henningsen staffs the bureau with a handful of unpaid helpers to manage a never-ending list of jobs that depend on volunteers who are willing to work

VOLUNTEER WORK



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“Primarily we are a tele-

communications office,” Henningsen said. “We like to find the type of work our volunteers like to do and then match them up with those jobs. It’s amazing the talent and skills that are in these two communities.”

Since its founding in 1982, the Volunteer Bureau of the Sun Cities has provided more than \$4.5 million in volunteer labor to local groups and organizations, Henningsen said.

For information on the

many opportunities listed with the bureau, call 972-6809 in Sun City or 546-1774 in Sun City West.

The bureau’s Sun City West office at 14475 R.H. Johnson Blvd. is now open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The Volunteer Bureau has 1,400 volunteer members “but we also have lots of other places that use volunteers,” Henningsen said. She cited the 2,100 volunteers who assist Sun

Health, Boswell and Del Webb hospitals, bringing millions of dollars for capital improvements to the hospitals through thrift shop sales and other fund-raisers.

“Most of them have retired from full-time jobs in other parts of the country and still donate a major portion of their time each year,” she said.

Henningsen was a nursing home administrator in Brattleboro, Vt. She retired See Sun Cities, Page 8

Sun Cities boast big talent pool

— From Page 1

to Sun City and now has two volunteer jobs in addition to her paid half-time position with the bureau.

She records medical textbooks for the blind, works as a service coordinator with Interfaith Services, and manages the bureau with help from her staff of part-time volunteers.

“It’s fun to find out what everybody does for volunteer work,” she said. “We have tons of skills and we keep in constant contact with all these people.”

The bureau has a long list of jobs waiting for volunteers to fill. Here are a few:

- Speak up for abused and neglected children in court and make recommendations for their future;
- Coach a high school rifle team;
- Lend an ear to the Hotline Emergency Lifeline for Parents;
- Assist Gifted Children programs with special studies and special projects;
- Become a grant-writing consultant;

- Shop for shut-ins;
- Start a Men’s Club at a senior care center;
- Tutor English as a second language, or;
- Translate Swiss, Finnish, German and Italian for the staff of the Social Service agency.

These jobs and dozens of others are going begging in the Sun Cities for lack of qualified volunteers, Henningsen said.

The Daily News-Sun publishes openings for the bureau on the community pages under the heading VOLUNTEERS.

Here are a few that appeared recently:

■ Volunteer needed to clip articles out of newspapers for non-profit agency and maintain scrapbook. Would work at agency on Friday afternoon each week.

■ Volunteer needed to take a female resident to lunch each week. Lunch would be paid for.

■ Volunteer with ability to write articles in a light-hearted manner, do editing and possibly some photography, two days a week.

■ Volunteers needed at community action program office to help 13-to 15-year-olds with school work.

■ Volunteer coordinator for support programs needed at Luke Air Force Base, typing, filing for eight hours per week.

Bureau matches volunteers with tasks

By JUDY JAVA

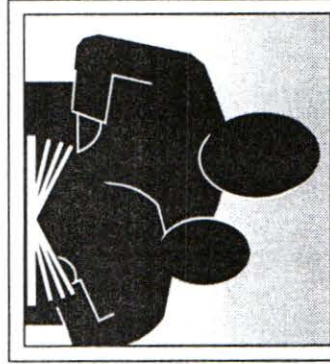
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See Sun Cities, Page 8

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Rick D'Ella/Daily News-Sun

Janet Henningsen, executive director of the Volunteer Bureau of the Sun Cities shows off the service's computerized skills bank.

Tuesday, Nov. 17, 1992
Daily News-Sun, Sun City, Ariz.

Computer tracks SC skills

By MIKE GARRETT
Daily News-Sun staff

The wealth of talent, knowledge and experience among retirees in the Sun Cities is now being filed in a computerized volunteer skills bank.

The skills bank data bases, in the Sun City and Sun City West offices of the Volunteer Bureau of the Sun Cities, are expected to become fully operational in January.

"The purpose of the Volunteer Bureau is to serve the resident in finding volunteer opportunities," said Roger Neumeister, president of the Sun Cities Volunteer Bureau, which maintains offices at 14475 R.H. Johnson Blvd., in Sun City West and 9451 N. 99th Ave. in Sun City. "We keep a record not only of the opportunities but the volunteers."

The project originated with Haakon Bang, chairman of the board of Walter O. Boswell Memorial Hos-

pital.

"The idea came to me that the hospital board of Sun Health Corp. is usually made up of local businessmen," Bang said. "I thought our board could be expanded to include some of the job skills found in the retirement communities."

After some initial setbacks, Bang said several community group leaders began to see the benefits of a computerized job skills bank.

Bang's idea was developed further by representatives from Sun Cities computer clubs, the Volunteer Bureau, Property Owners and Residents Association, Sun Health Corp. and Sun City Ambassadors.

"We want to emphasize this is a project for both Sun Cities," Neumeister said.

The computer system is expected

to ensure that more Sun Cities volunteers will find their niche.

"Too many volunteers get lost in the shuffle without an appropriate place to put them," skills bank organizer Morey Jensen said.

Janet Henningsen, Volunteer Bureau operations manager, said the bureau now has filed about 900 names of local volunteers (up to last names beginning with "O") into the computers. Organizers say they would like to have more than 2,000 names by next spring.

"Now that we've started it, who knows where this will eventually go?" Jensen said. "We've got a lot of volunteers who have never been called upon. We need to stimulate volunteers to apply at the Volunteer Bureaus so we can be in touch with these people."

Skills bank taps talent of retirees

By Lori Baker
Staff writer

SUN CITIES — Residents of the Sun Cities have a wealth of skills.

They have retired from careers as surgeons, attorneys, engineers, secretaries, college professors and military officers.

Some owned their own companies while others worked for Fortune 500 corporations.

Many have backgrounds in art, music and drama — either by profession or hobby.

But banking on their talents has been a challenge.

"Many Sun Citians have specialized knowledge which could be used by Sun Cities community activities if only we could tap into these existing resources," said Haakon Bang, a retired university professor who moved to Sun City 22 years ago.

Bang fathered the idea of a skills bank in the Sun Cities that was launched this month.

The bank holds the names, addresses and phone numbers of people offering to volunteer, along with the skills they have.

It is important, Bang said, to have retirees from the medical field to serve on hospital boards. Bang, who specialized in pharmacy, serves on the Sun Health Corp. board.

"Medicine is such a highly skilled area that we need people who are specially trained to serve on the boards," Bang said.

He has enlisted the support of community agencies, including Sun Health, Computers West, Sun City Computer Club, Home Owners Association, Property Owners and Residents Association, Sun City Ambassadors, Volunteer Bureau and the Del Webb Corp.

Over an 18-month period, representatives from these organizations established the form the skills bank would take.

Richard Horton, Bob Willis and Paul Wilt, members of the Sun
See SKILLS, Page 5

SKILLS

From Page 1

City West's computer recreation club, Computers West, supplied the knowledge needed to start the project. They investigated the type of computer hardware and software needed for the skills bank and handled the purchasing of the equipment.

Morey Jensen, a past PORA board president, served as project coordinator.

"The skills bank has a great deal of potential because there are so many people interested in volunteerism but there has been no central file," Jensen said.

In particular, Jensen said, there is a continuous need by civic groups for speakers on various subjects. Some people may prefer behind-the-scene work like fundraising or stuffing envelopes.

"Many people want to volunteer because this is what keeps them happy and healthy," Jensen said.

The Sun City and Sun City West community funds each provided \$2,000 for the skills bank. Those

contributions were in addition to the donations made to the volunteer bureau for its regular operation.

The Volunteer Bureau already has entered more than 1,000 names of volunteers from its files into the computer database. They will obtain names of other volunteers from PORA, HOA and the hospitals.

Roger Neumeister, president of the Volunteer Bureau's board, stressed the need for volunteers with a wide range of skills and experience.

"The object is to provide opportunities for volunteers as we provide needed services for the communities," Neumeister said.

Anyone wishing to be listed in the Sun Cities Skill Bank can call Janet Henningsen, executive director of the Volunteer Bureau, in the Sun City office at 972-6809 or the Sun City West office at 546-1774.

Volunteers are engaged in others' lives

By P. ATWOOD WILLIAMS

SUN CITY — Assisting with the 1990 census, helping students or retirement home residents plant a garden or teaching people how to read via computer.

That's how volunteers are engaged in the lives of others in the Northwest Valley. And they're doing much more.

In the two years Alma Weatherly has been director of the Volunteer Bureau of Sun Cities Area Inc., the number of volunteers in her job skills bank has remained constant, she said.

On her desk, Weatherly had the names of a person from El Mirage and one from Glendale who had responded to the "Unsung Americans" public service announcement series, a joint campaign of American Broadcasting Co. and Public Broadcasting Service to combat illiteracy in America.

Others say they read about the need for volunteers in local newspapers.

Understandably, most of Weatherly's pool is the "unused talent of the elderly" President Bush referred to in his first speech on vol-

unteerism. Her agency is funded by community funds in the Sun Cities, service clubs and private donations. The office is in the Community Services Building at 9451 N. 99th Ave.

Board members are Charlotte Farmer, president; Ray Brown, first vice president; Josephine Hamblen, second vice president; Cora Jester, treasurer; Luanne Hanks, secretary; Dick Ohmen, Julia Ferguson, Barbara McDonald, Kenneth Plonski and Wayne Parkinson.

A Sun City West office is maintained from 9 a.m. to noon Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday in the Community Services Building at 14465 R.H. Johnson Blvd. by Myrna Bodine, also a paid worker.

When Alma and Myrna "listen" they get requests for tutors in English for graduating Dysart High School seniors, bingo callers and piano players for nursing homes, an organ player for vesper services, shoppers for shut-ins, clerical workers, food box packers and friends for the elderly in nursing homes.

"The winter visitors are



Daily News-Sun photo by Frances Guarino

MATCHMAKER — Alma Weatherly matches volunteers to requests as director of the Volunteer Bureau of Sun Cities Area Inc. She was one of the volunteers during the recent Read-In in El Mirage Elementary School.

leaving but the need for volunteers is year-round," said Weatherly. People are needed to take requests for van rides or assist Red Cross van drivers in picking up and returning riders.

In her job, Weatherly must respond to many emergencies. During her noon hour last week, two volunteers called to

cancel their participation in a read-in for two days later. She flipped through her index file to search for last-minute replacements and found them.

Weatherly herself had already planned to be one of the volunteer readers during the first Dysart District family read-in.

Recently she was a trained

volunteer in the lost children section during Luke Air Force Day and helped five children in two hours. This involved asking detailed questions of both the children and those who claimed them, and taking photographs when children were returned.

The Volunteer Bureau is affiliated with the Directory of Volunteers in Agencies (DOVIA) and Weatherly is asked each year to nominate volunteers who have made significant contributions.

One of them is Joe Flora of Peoria, who last week was awarded the J.C. Penney award and a stipend of \$1,000 for the organization of Caring Citizens which he created and continues in the Murphy School District in Phoenix.

Of all her duties, Weatherly especially enjoys finding people to help with literacy programs.

She has found aides for the Principle of the Alphabet Literacy System (PALS) developed by IBM and which now is in use at El Mirage Community Center.

I'M INTERESTED IN
BECOMING A VOLUNTEER.
WHAT IS MY NEXT STEP?

Call the Executive Director
972-6809 for a personal
interview, or fill out the
application form and mail
it to the address listed.

I would like to contribute to further the work of the
Volunteer Bureau in the Sun Cities Area.

Enclosed is my contribution of \$ _____.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

Zip _____

THE SKILL BANK

Perhaps you don't have time for a regular volunteer assignment but have special skills or knowledge you can share with school children or adults on a spot basis.

The Volunteer Bureau gets many requests for people with a wide variety of talents - entertainers, veterinarians, nutritionists, photographers - whatever you can share, let us know so we can add your name to The Skill Bank.

Small skills are needed too - help with mailing, phoning, writing, typing, knitting, food collecting, etc.

Just give us your name and phone number and we'll contact you as needed.

We also help to find volunteer jobs for clubs and groups. And we can help non-profit organizations and schools to set up volunteer programs to serve their special needs.

Reach out!

Your hands are warm and firm.

Reach out to me for I am faint.

Hold me for a little while.

Guide me!

There are so few who care to show the way.

And I am young and need a friend like you.

Stay with me for a time.

Stand forth!

In fellowship work toward goals

That without you will be but dreams.

Walk with me a mile or two.



**A Volunteer
has much to give
and
much to gain!**

VOLUNTEER BUREAU OF THE SUN CITIES AREA
9451 North 99th Avenue
Peoria, Arizona 85345
Phone: (602) 972-6809

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE VOLUNTEER BUREAU?

The Volunteer Bureau acts as a referral service for volunteers and a placement service for community agencies, hospitals and schools. It will interview you and help to find just the right job for you and then follow through to make certain both you and the agency are satisfied. The Volunteer Bureau has several hundred available jobs with over 70 organizations. One is certainly the placement where you are needed and will enjoy your work.

WHAT VOLUNTEER SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE?

- General office work, typing, telephoning, filing, addressing, stuffing envelopes and bookkeeping.
- Teaching or assisting in day care centers, adult education, nearby elementary and high schools, working with learning disabilities.
- Working with the handicapped or frail elderly, with the blind, deaf or retarded.
- Driving to clinics, doctor's appointments, other appointments for the elderly and children.
- Instructing in arts and crafts, sewing, knitting.
- Acting as library aides, tour guides, manning information desks.
- Serving in hospitals, visiting shut-ins.

AND MANY MANY OTHER VOLUNTEER JOBS

HOW MUCH TIME AM I EXPECTED TO CONTRIBUTE?

Your volunteer job would take as little as four hours a week or as much as you choose to give it.

MUST I HAVE A SKILL?

While many volunteer opportunities do take advantage of special skills, there are a number of areas that require no specific skills.

This could be an opportunity to learn new skills that you have always wanted to develop.

ARE THERE AGE LIMITS?

There are no age limits. Volunteers come in all ages from grandchildren to octogenarians.

The Volunteer Bureau will place you in a spot that is considerate of your age.

ARE EXPENSES PAID?

No. Volunteers are not paid in money for their services.

A volunteer's mileage costs can be deducted for income tax purposes as provided by law.

Payment is the greatest kind: Satisfaction in what you are doing and knowing you are helping someone else.

HOW IS THE VOLUNTEER BUREAU FINANCED?

The Bureau is a non-profit agency supported largely by the Sun City and Sun City West Community Funds.

It must rely as well on contributions from churches, service clubs and individuals who know the value of volunteers to a community.

Date: _____

I'd like a personal interview. Please contact me.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

PHONE: _____

ZIP _____

Please mail this form to: Executive Director, 9451 North 99th Avenue
Volunteer Bureau of the Sun Cities Area
Peoria, Arizona 85345

Volunteer Placement service to cease operation April 30

Agency closing after 20 years of service

By Mike Russo
Independent Newspapers

Another agency providing social service programs to the area is about to call it quits.

Volunteer Placement Service plans to cease operations on April 30. Ironically, the agency will be celebrating its 20th anniversary during the month.

VPS will be following the lead of the Community Council, which closed its doors in December.

Although it was not a social service organization, the Council of Service Clubs, which also relied upon volunteers, was forced to disband in early 1998 after 12 years of operations due to diminishing participation.

Patrice Berry, VPS executive director, quickly pointed out that Volunteer Placement Service was not ceasing operation because of reduced levels of voluntarism — the reasons were financial.

"We just do not have enough

See ■ CLOSING, Page 3

funding," Ms. Berry said. VPS has been operating on a \$25,000 annual budget.

The bulk of the Volunteer Placement Service's funding came from grants from the Sun City United Way and the Sun City West Community Fund, according to Ms. Berry.

"We received very few donations," she said. "We did receive some funding annually from PORA bingo.

"We really need to take the office to a new level and that would serve a greater number of people in a greater capacity," Ms. Berry said. "We just don't have the resources at the moment."

VPS has been operating out of office space donated by the Sun City West Foundation with an almost-entirely volunteer staff. Its only paid employees have been Ms. Berry, a half-time employee, and her assistant, a quarter-time employee.

To help fill the void of coordinating the assignment of volunteers to agencies in need, VPS has asked the Volunteer Center of Maricopa County to expand

its service area to the northwest Valley.

"We are pleased that they have agreed," Ms. Berry said. "It is great organization. We will furnish our database to them.

"They have lots of expertise," she continued. "They have the resources to not only help volunteers find places to volunteer but to recruit volunteers."

Recruitment of volunteers has actually not been a problem for Volunteer Placement Service, according to Ms. Berry.

"Voluntarism is not declining in the Sun Cities," she said. "It is changing but it is growing. There are other volunteers out there waiting to help."

VPS annually placed about 1,200 volunteers, Ms. Berry noted.

To assist both volunteers and the agencies that used their service, Volunteer Placement Service will produce a directory of all the agencies.

"It will serve as a handbook for the community at large," Ms. Berry said. "We will list all of the organizations and what

their volunteer needs are. The directories will be available at common public places, such as the Recreation Centers of Sun City facilities, the Sun City Home Owners Association office and all libraries."

As for its modest assets, Volunteer Placement Service intends to donate its office equipment to a local school. "Any other financial assets we have, would go back to the originating funding sources, our board has determined," Ms. Berry said.

"As a 501(c)3 agency, we have the authority to give the funds to another 501(c)3 group, but the board decided to return funds to the originating agency," Ms. Berry added.

Ms. Berry is not disconsolate about the developments, viewing them as an opportunity for evolution to occur.

"I look at this as a change," she said. "A change is an opportunity to start something new — that is driven by the community and will meet the needs of the community."

HISTORY OF THE SUN CITIES VOLUNTEER PLACEMENT SERVICES 1982-2002

It is for good reason that the Sun Cities area deserves its title as Volunteer Capitol of the World. Here, thousands of active, retired people with a wealth of talent, experience and time actively seek worthwhile activities; at the same time, an aging population in the Sun Cities and neighboring communities welcomes help from volunteers.

In March 1982 the Community Council of the Sun Cities determined that a majority of 68 non-profit social agencies then serving the area favored the establishment of an organization to facilitate recruiting and placing volunteer workers.

Doris Melleney headed a committee selected to develop details for the formation of a Volunteer Bureau. After consultation with the Maricopa County Volunteer Bureau and others, the committee recommended establishing an independent agency not affiliated with the county.

The Volunteer Bureau came into existence in April 1982. the Community Council made an initial donation of \$150. Geri Kenkel was named as the first part-time Executive Director. The Bureau's first completed project was to recruit and place 38 volunteers for what was then the new Day Care Center of Interfaith Services.

Initially, the Bureau occupied a donated office in Youngtown. Later the Del Webb Corporation donated office space in the Sun City Professional Building. In January 1984 the Bureau moved to a new Community Services Building at 9451 North 99th Avenue.

At its inception, the Volunteer Bureau sought objectives that emphasized serving the needs of individuals wishing to volunteer their services to help non-profit organizations in the community. The Bureau concentrates its efforts on recruiting and interviewing volunteer candidates and placing them in positions consistent with their talents and wishes.

In June 1983 the Community Fund made an emergency grant of \$4,000 permitting the Bureau for the first time to compensate Ms. Kenkel. Ms. Koehn resigned her position as President, and Doris Melleney replaced her. Subsequently, Ms. Melleney served as Executive Director during most of 1984 when Ms. Kenkel, as well as her replacement, Jane Daggett, both left the Bureau. Kenneth Peschau then served as President.

During the summer of 1984, the Board of Directors took action to adopt a new service stemming from a Human Services Directory originated by the Dysart school system. Charlotte Farmer, a volunteer who eventually became President of the Volunteer Bureau, worked with the Director to establish and operate a Skill Bank consisting of more than 300 individuals with specific experience.

Ms. Melleney relinquished her responsibilities in January 1985 and was replaced by Mary Glenn, who served as Executive Director until the fall of 1988. In 1988 the Bureau sought new methods to achieve its objectives, including efforts to become better recognized, to promote the benefits of volunteer work, and to develop an improved information system. As a reflection of an expanded role in placing volunteers in neighboring communities, the board of Directors renamed the organization, *VOLUNTEER BUREAU OF THE SUN CITIES AREA*.

Recognizing opportunities in rapidly-growing Sun City West, the Volunteer Bureau experimented there with recruiting tables at high-traffic locations such as banks and shopping centers. By September 1988, thanks to the support of the Sun City West Foundation, a branch office opened in the Community Service Building on R.H. Johnson Boulevard.

With the resignation of Ms. Glenn in 1988, the Board of Directors elected to alter the original organizational structure, eliminating the position of Executive Director and engaging an office manager. This policy was adopted at the September 1988 meeting of the Board. Alma Weatherly was engaged as office manager. Alma Weatherly resigned her position in May 1992, and Janet Henningsen was engaged as Executive Director.

In July 1992, as a result of grants received from the Sun City West Foundation and the Sun City Community Fund, two computers were purchased for the purpose of creating a Skill Bank to be located at the Volunteer Bureau. Paul E. Wilt, III from the Computers West Club in Sun City West volunteered his time to purchase computer equipment and software. In addition he began training staff to use the computer software.

The Board of Directors voted to consolidate the two offices in March 1993 and have one office at the Sun City West office location. Purpose of the move was to have a more efficient and effective operation and provide additional space for computer equipment and volunteers. By July 1993, computerization of all Volunteer Bureau records was completed.

During the summer of 1993, the Skill Bank Committee of the Board of Directors met to explore the possibilities of applying for a grant to fund a Skill Bank project. The Skill Bank Project was planned for a two year period. In the first year the present Skill Bank would be expanded to include information about education, prior work experience, skills and talents of all residents in the Sun Cities area. This was accomplished by securing skill bank information about prior work experience from applicants for volunteer jobs.

In the second year it was agreed to implement a system to measure the impact of the Skill Bank on the Sun Cities area communities and benefit to volunteers in terms of physical and mental health. The Board of Directors voted to approve the application of a grant for these purposes, but despite a major effort, no grant was obtained for this purpose.

Since the beginning of its activities, the Volunteer Bureau has relied for support on donations from both Sun City and Sun City west community organizations, churches and individuals. As of December 1996 the Volunteer Bureau has successfully recruited and placed approximately 10,553 area residents in volunteer jobs since its inception. According to Volunteer Bureau records, it is estimated that the average volunteer serves four (4) hours weekly. Translated into approximate minimum wage dollars, this means that workers recruited and placed by the Volunteer Bureau have so far contributed in excess of 13.2 million dollars to area non-profit agencies benefiting in many ways the residents of the Sun Cities area.

In November 1996 the Board of Directors voted to change the name of the Volunteer Bureau to Sun Cities Volunteer Placement Services, Inc. It was felt this more clearly stated what we do for residents. In February 1997 the Board voted to simplify operations and have one address at 14475 R. H. Johnson Boulevard, Sun City West, and one telephone number (602) 546-1774. A new fax number was added (602) 546-9450.

Due to increased expenses and decreasing funding, on March 7, 2002, the Board of Directors voted to cease operation. Any remaining funds were to be returned to grantors, and office supplies and equipment donated to Nadaburg School, Wittman, Arizona.

VOLUNTEER BUREAU PRESIDENTS OF THE BOARD

Dorothy Koehn	Jan 1982 – Jun 1983
Doris Melleney	Jun 1983 – Mar 1984
Kenneth Peschau	Mar 1984 – Jan 1985
Frank Gerig*	Jan 1985 – Dec 1987
Charlotte Farmer	Jan 1988 – Dec 1990
Ray Brown	Jan 1991 – Dec 1991
Roger Neumeister	Jan 1992 – Dec 1994
Paul E. Wilt, III	Jan 1995 – Dec 1996
Dusty Rhodes	Jan 1997 – Dec 1998
Ruth Bean	Jan 1999 – Nov 2000
Carol Pierick	Dec 2000 – Jun 2001
Jane Freeman	Jul 2001 – Jun 2002

*Dr. Gerig replaced Dr. Davis Illingsworth, who transferred from the area.

VOLUNTEER BUREAU EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

Geri Kenkel	June 1982 – Nov 1983
Jane Daggett	Nov 1983 – Mar 1984
Doris Melleney	Mar 1984 – Dec 1984
Mary Glenn	Jan 1985 – Sept 1988
Alma Weatherly (Office Mgr)	Sep 1988 – May 1992
Janet Henningsen	May 1992 – Dec 1998
Patrice Barry	Dec 1998 – Jun 2002