



MONADNOCK RSVP VOLUNTEER CENTER

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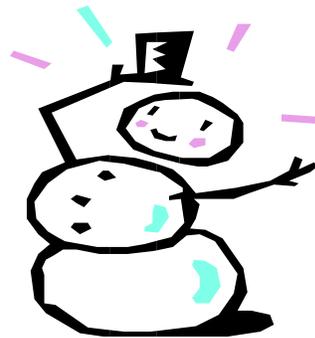
RSVP

Lead With Experience

December 2012

Happy Holidays from the Director

With the exception of the cold winter weather, I love the holidays! While I have many things that I relish about them, one of my favorite things is the luminary event the Felt Road neighborhood holds on Christmas Eve, especially in these tough economic times. It has become well-known in our small city and a tradition for many families. Six years ago when interest and participation began to wane, my husband and I took over the promotion and distribution of sand and candles. The hope was that if it was kept alive, new families moving to the area would feel part of a community and it would continue to be a neighborhood where neighbors talk, interact and help one another.



Maybe some snow!

Perhaps, I was not surprised to learn from a report I recently read, *Volunteering and Civic Life in America 2012*, produced by the Corporation for National and Community Service, that New Hampshire ranks #3 for doing favors for and helping out their neighbors.

At Monadnock RSVP we get many calls from parents who want to expose their children to volunteering or young students who have mandatory community service requirements for school. Most people have in their minds that they have to go to an agency. But the first thing we tell them is to take a look around their own neighborhood. So often, there is an elderly person who could use some help with things they no longer can do or who would welcome a visit, but they would never ask their neighbors because they know they are busy and don't want to burden them. I know from my experience running our independent living program that it is hard for elderly people to ask and accept help. Perhaps in the New Year, we might all resolve to look around our homes and reach out and offer a gift of your time.

As I reflect upon the last year, I think how fortunate I am to work with people who believe in a cause and work to make positive, permanent changes that will improve people's lives, give them the best chance for personal success and make our community healthier and stronger. My heartfelt thanks go to all the volunteers who serve at agencies, in our RSVP programs and who informally give as neighbors helping neighbors.

Have a wonderful holiday season and a Happy New Year!

Kathy Baird, Director

New Hampshire Trends and Highlights in 2011:

- 29.4% of residents volunteer, ranking them 19th among the 50 states and Washington, DC.
- 31.6 volunteer hours per resident.
- 74% do favors for their neighbors.
- 91.8% eat dinner with their family a few times a week or more.
- 57.7% discuss politics a few times a month or more.
- 314,060 volunteers.
- 33.7 million hours of service.
- \$721.1 million of service contributed.

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Thank You to our Recent Funders

This fall, Monadnock RSVP received multiple grant awards and we are thrilled that new and old funders continue to see value in our work!

The Corporation for National and Community Service awarded us a \$7,000 grant to focus on veterans and military family members.

We received a \$2,500 grant from

the ***Bishop's Charitable Assistance Fund*** for operating support for Neighbors-In-Deed. This program helps low-income elderly people, adults with disabilities and veterans and military family members stay in their homes as long as possible by matching volunteers one-to-one to provide companionship and assistance with tasks of daily living.

The **Bean Family Foundation** awarded us a \$2,500 grant to en-

hance our technological infrastructure that is essential for the growth into rural areas and operational effectiveness of our program.

The Jerusalem Lodge #104 Charitable Assistance Fund awarded a \$700 grant to purchase books for students in America Reads to reinforce reading and writing concepts learned over the year, promote the love of reading, and decrease learning loss over the summer.



Christmas Blessing



During this Christmas season,
May you be blessed
With the spirit of the season,
which is peace,
The gladness of the season,
which is hope,
And the heart of the season,
which is love.

Somehow, not only for Christmas
But all the long year through,
The joy that you give to others
Is the joy that comes back to you.



And the more you spend in blessing
The poor and lonely and sad,
The more of your heart's
possessing
Returns to you glad.

John Greenleaf Whittier

We Want Your Opinion!

You may be aware that our major funder—The Corporation for National and Community Service has mandated that all RSVP programs focus on 6 priority areas in the future. This will have an immediate impact on the way we recruit and place volunteers and also the way we work with our current volunteer sites. In order to get feedback from our volunteers and stations, we will be conducting both an online and written survey early in 2013.

When you get the email or hard copy, please complete it and return it. We value your opinion and need your advice based on your volunteer experiences. Some of you may be asked to take on a different volunteer role than the one you are currently performing. This should be an exciting time for all of us as we move forward in our planning.



**We want YOUR
Feedback!**



Veterans Helping Veterans



The RSVP has received a grant focusing on veterans and military families in the Monadnock area. This augmentation grant was one of only 38 awarded nationally by the Corporation for National and Community Service. The program recruits veterans, age 55 and over, as volunteers to work with other veterans and their immediate family members in three specific areas:

- To drive veterans to area medical appointments and trips to the VA hospital in White River Junction, Boston and Manchester. While there are organizations in the area who provide transportation, the demand exceeds capacity and we can make a difference.
- To provide assistance to vets or their immediate family members so they can remain independent in their own homes. Volunteers may help with grocery shopping and errands, schedule a weekly card game or make time for coffee at the diner every couple of weeks, providing practical help and the opportunity for companionship.
- To help with light handyman chores. Veterans and their families can use a volunteer to help install grab bars, change batteries in smoke detectors or a host of other projects that make independence possible.

To volunteer for this program or for more information, please call 357-6893. Check out LocallookPeterborough.com to see a video of the segment Kathy did on the veteran's grant which aired on channel 22 on December 12, 2012.

Pen Pals and Residents Celebrate the Holidays



The Residents of the Woodward Home on Court Street in Keene and the 4th Graders from Trinity Christian School in Keene got together to celebrate the Christmas season as part of the Pen Pal program. They have been writing and visiting for two years and they have become not only pen pals but friends during

that time. They exchange letters every two months and get together two or three times during the school year to visit and have lunch together. The children went to the Woodward on December 13th to visit and sing Christmas carols. After a lively visit and much singing, the children enjoyed a hearty lunch of steak, mac and cheese and berry pie for dessert! It was a real feast! The residents said goodbye and the children promised to return in the spring to help decorate Easter eggs.

The Pen Pal program is part of the America Reads program which promotes literacy in the elementary schools in the Monadnock area. The program is currently in 10 elementary schools and matches adult volunteers with a classroom teacher. The volunteers help engage struggling students in the reading process. The teachers report that 92% of students in the program improve their reading level by the end of the year.

