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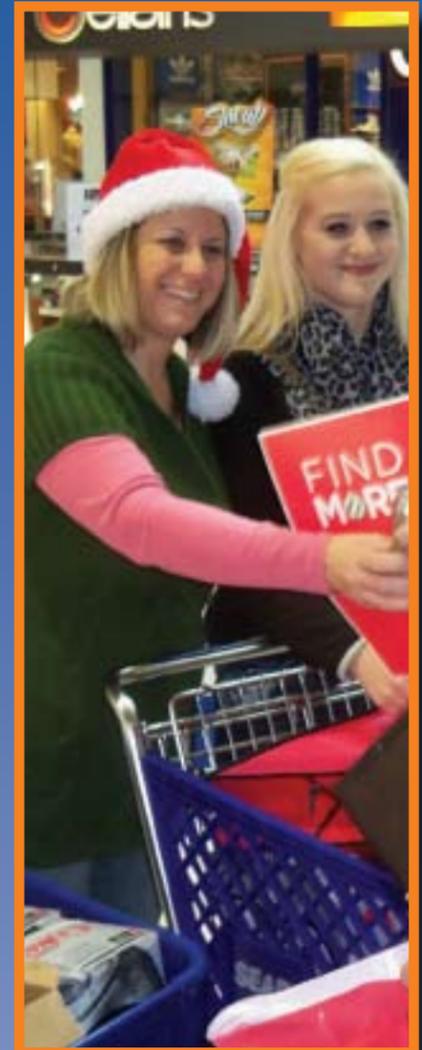
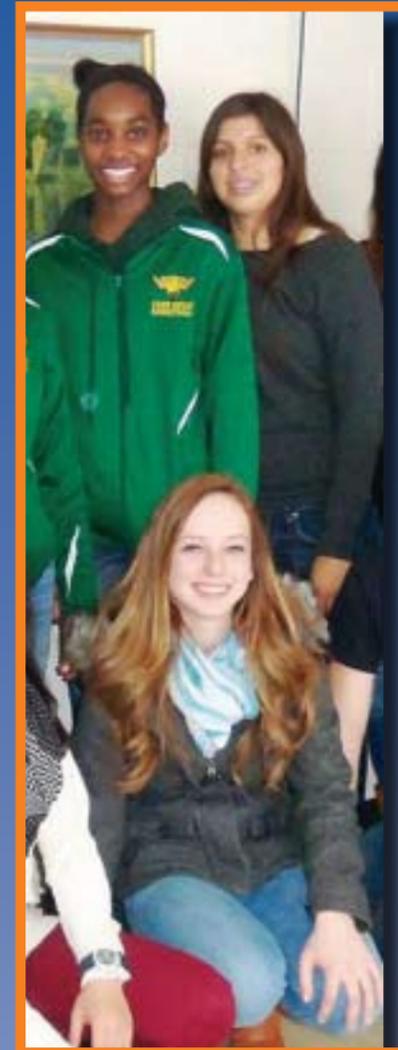
www.volunteerracine.org

Volunteers are the Heart of the Community



Volunteer Center
of Racine County, Inc.
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Annual Report



Check out our page on 
<http://www.facebook.com/volunteercenterofracine>



2014

Design and Layout by P. Amadio, Volunteer

2014 in Review - Sandy Wahl, President Al Volmut, Executive Director

How many good people are in your world? At the Volunteer Center, we interact with thousands of individuals who look at volunteerism as a duty and the answer to "A Call to Service".

These folks identify the needs in the community, rally the resources to address the issues, and participate in the solutions. These are those "good people", who typically give of their time, talents and resources in support of environmental, senior, youth, and social issues affecting Racine County.

Nationally, the state of Wisconsin ranks 5th in the country in volunteerism with 35.1% of its residents contributing to our communities. In Racine, the number of registered volunteers continues to rise along with the number of non-profit agencies in need of support. The increase in youth volunteerism is attributed to an emphasis on community service as a requirement for graduation, scholarships, and consideration for employment. As the population of retirees increase, more and more individuals are finding the need to utilize their time in a productive way in retirement. Thus, our senior volunteer population is growing.

The Volunteer Center continues to support activities related to Racine area veterans. In June this past year, the Veterans Cemetery Tour featured re-enactments of deceased honored vets and a tribute to living war veterans displayed with demonstrations and memorabilia in the "Hero's" tent. The Volunteer Center donated \$1000.00 to the Racine County Veterans Fund. This year we will open the Racine-Area Council-Retired Activities Office. Over 20 volunteers will be trained to answer questions on current benefits, employment considerations and travel opportunities available to military retirees.

We continue to assist law enforcement in the search of missing persons with our SafeAssured™ID Program designed primarily for young children and seniors. Search and Rescue volunteers have been recruited to support on-the-ground operations.

The RSVP Program has supported the efforts to reopen St. Vincent DePaul's food distribution center following a fire that put the service out of commission for months. RSVP volunteers have contributed to the staffing of this vital facility on the city's near northside.

The primary new service provided in 2015 will be the Volunteer Senior Driving program of Racine County. Door to door transportation will be provided to seniors(55+) at no charge to Racine County residents. My ride will support the effort to keep seniors independent.

**How many good people are in your world?
Be one and Volunteer.**

Retired & Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) Continues to Serve Racine County in 2015 Bruce Davis - RSVP Director

As the 2014 holiday season rapidly recedes, so do the daily stories in electronic, print and social media recounting many acts of kindness at year end.

Concurrently, the on-going projects of Retired & Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) members regularly, systematically and without fanfare continue to serve Racine County residents.

In 2014, 230 RSVP – Racine County members recorded an average of 1200 volunteer hours a month through 20 agencies. RSVP – Racine County concentrates on five Focus Areas: Healthy Futures, Education, Disaster Services, Veterans and Military Families and Community Priorities.

Healthy Futures projects are divided into two areas: "Aging in Place" and "Obesity and Food". Senior Companion and Meals on Wheels are in the former category, St. Vincent DePaul Food Pantry and HUB of Senior Racine are in the latter. Healthy Futures has the largest percentage of RSVP – Racine County volunteers.

Some RSVP members are steady, trusted companions of elementary and middle school students in Racine Unified School District's Mentoring Program.

RSVP volunteers also participate in disaster preparation through amateur radio clubs, the Wisconsin Blood Center, the Racine County Sheriff's Patrol substation and the Medical Reserve Corps.

RSVP – Racine County members provide military-to-civilian transition services through the Navy Retiree Activities Office and the soon to be opened Racine Area Council - Retired Activities Office (RAC-RAO).

Agencies and projects associated with Community Priorities activities include: the Caledonia Historical Society, Friends of the Wind Point Light House, Racine Literacy Council, Sexual Assault Services, Wheaton Franciscan, Wisconsin Veterans Home, SafeAssured™ID and the RSVP Advisory Council.

RSVP – Racine County operates under a federal grant awarded to the Volunteer Center of Racine County, Inc. by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). RSVP matches 55+ volunteers with service opportunities in Racine County. RSVP members are eligible for mileage reimbursement and complimentary, supplemental accident and liability insurance while volunteering.

As 2015 dawns, RSVP welcomes 55+ volunteers interested in joining Focus or Community Priority Projects serving neighbors in Racine County year round.

SafeAssured™ID Update

Dave Voss - RSVP Outreach Coordinator

This year we have expanded SafeAssured™ID to include some venues in Kenosha County. Our grantees have made this possible along with SafeAssured™IDs for residents of Racine County.

A continued effort is being made in the Burlington-Waterford areas of Western Racine County. A major change is that we now have organizations and law enforcement agencies calling us to schedule more SafeAssured™ID events. Spearheaded by the Racine Police Department we partnered to develop a Search and Rescue team for missing persons.

CERT trained volunteers will be offered our first round of training early next year. This came about as a result of a person leaving a home, reported missing and later found not too far away, deceased. Chief Art Howell wants to mitigate the end result of this happening again. Volunteer, Al Obermeyer, took over the reins as VOAD (Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters) Coordinator. More training and disaster exercises are planned in the future.

Take a look at the latest list of where we will be with SafeAssured™ID. <http://www.volunteerracine.org/programs/safe-assured/>

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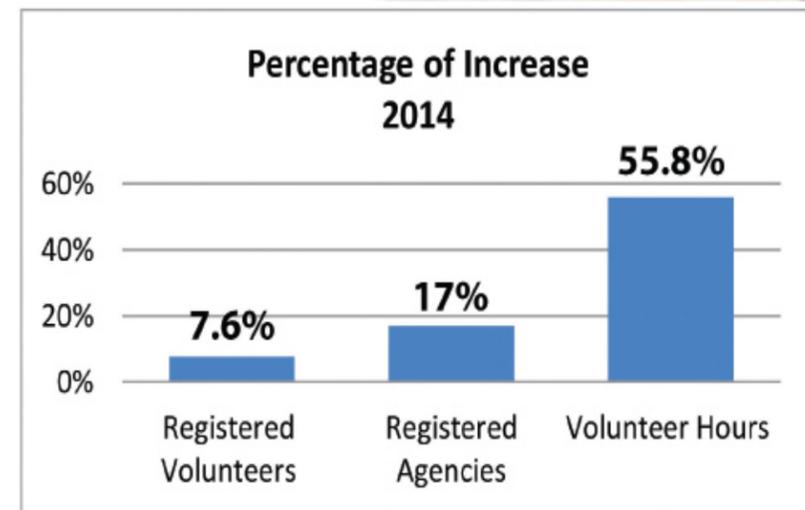
Judie Nielsen - Volunteer Coordinator

The Step Forward and Volunteer program ended this year with 3460 registered volunteers, and the migration of all those volunteers and agencies from "Volunteer Solutions" to "Get Connected". "Get Connected" is an easy-to-use web-based platform that matches the right donors, advocates, and volunteers with the right opportunities (needs) in our areas. Our new "A Call to Service" program began January 2015 and is the theme for our annual recognition luncheon.

Our 2015 goal is to expand our agency base and their ability to manage the new site. The new site has many new features:

Use Get Connected to find ways to give your unused materials and household items to agencies in need of donations.

Advocate for causes and events by linking them to Facebook and Twitter. Post events and get direct response from those attending. Track volunteer hours at over 265 agencies. Any time you need help or support with any volunteer project or the web site please contact Judie at 262 886 9612 x 104.



Youth Volunteer Corps of America - Racine County

Michelle Ortwein- Youth Coordinator

Volunteer Center of Racine County, Inc. nearly tripled the Youth Volunteer Corps summer service- learning camps program this year, from six camps to sixteen. New project locations included: Eagle Lake in Kansasville, Halo, Bethesda Thrift Shop and the Seno Woodland Center. Eighty youth participated in our one week long summer camps, and another 200 participated on various episodic days of service such as Make a Difference Day, Dr. Martin Luther King Day, and Earth day. Many of these students also attended our monthly projects including St. Monica's Senior Living Center, Ridgewood Assisted Living Center, and Love, Inc. These programs are free to the participants thanks to a generous grant we receive from S.C. Johnson.

Next summer we envision an expansion of our popular Summer Camps, adding more Team Leaders to the program, which in turn means at least maintaining if not increasing the number of camps per week that we can offer. This will introduce even more students to the value of volunteerism both as a vocational stepping stone and as a personal value system. Our affiliate, the Youth Volunteer Corps has continued to receive funding that allows for us to recruit AmeriCorps Volunteers as Team Leaders. We currently have three Team Leaders on board and expect to have several more adult volunteers join the summer program.

We have plans to create more monthly or weekly opportunities, including partnerships with programs run through the YMCA and non-profits as well as other one-time events run through schools or church groups. We have expanded into middle schools, getting students participating in projects from St. Monica's to Christmas Gift Wrapping. We continue to coordinate and participate in episodic days of service like Dr. Martin Luther King Day, either as an YVC service-learning group or as the Volunteer Center informing these students of opportunities.

I look forward to continuing to recruit and train Team Leaders which will in turn increase the credibility and value of our service program. Students are participating across all groups –we are attracting students from both public and private schools, from middle school to high school students, and from a variety of backgrounds. I expect our program to be recognized as the viable option for students seeking volunteer hours.