



Volume Seven

Volunteer Voice

News from the San Rafael Volunteer Program



October 2013

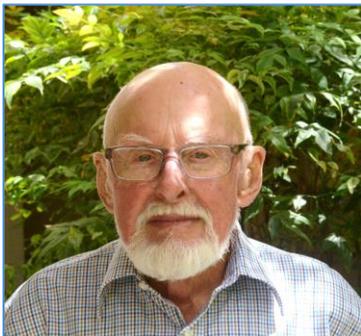
www.sanrafaelvolunteers.org
415-485-3071, 485-3047

Join Us for this Upcoming Event!

Make a Difference Day, Saturday, October 26th. Ever been curious about the gardens next to the Falkirk Cultural Center? You can learn more about the beautiful, diverse plant life in this garden and do some physical work at the same time during our annual Make a Difference Day service project on Saturday, Oct. 26, from 9 am - noon. We'll replenish gravel in the greenhouse and, afterwards, learn about the gardens on an informative tour led by the Marin Master Gardeners. For more information or to sign up go to <http://www.sanrafaelvolunteers.org/make-difference-day.aspx>.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: *Don Olson, Library Outreach Volunteer*

At the grand age of 85, Don Olson is just starting to slow down and has "retired" from volunteering at the San Rafael Library after ten years of dedicated service. In his last three years at the library, Don performed the important role of delivering books to folks who are homebound as an outreach volunteer.



Don spent a half day every week bringing books to people in their homes and senior communities. One client says of Don, "nothing was too much trouble. I am so grateful for the two years he came by every week." Don's supervisor Marilyn Boatright is full of praise for him. "He is just delightful, has a twinkle in his eye and funny things to say."

Don was born in San Francisco and moved to Novato before settling down in San Rafael in 1956. For almost 25 years he worked at the Marin County Civic Center in the Probation Department. Don has two daughters who still live in Novato. In addition to volunteering, Don also enjoys watching movies, reading, and playing bocce. Towards the end of his time at the library, Don delivered books to seven residents at Smith Ranch Homes senior complex

and two clients off site. Don got a lot out of his work, saying it was "a win-win situation...I could fill a need there and hoped I could be valuable." Valuable he was to the library, which is now in need of new volunteers to fill Don's large shoes. Marilyn says she'd "like to clone about 20 of him."

STAFF SPOTLIGHT: *Dave Davenport, Parks Maintenance Superintendent*

If you are bothered by cell phone interruptions, you'd better not hang out with Dave Davenport. As the city's Parks Maintenance Superintendent, he constantly fields calls and tries to resolve one issue or another at the city's many parks or landscaped areas. Driving with Dave on his daily rounds helps you appreciate just how much he does. One of his many tasks is collaborating with the Volunteer Program on monthly service projects that occur from April through October, and miscellaneous projects requested by residents or neighborhood associations. Projects have included planting; weeding; trash pickup; and painting curbs, fences or playground equipment. Maintenance provides needed supplies, and Dave's staff often supervise the work performed by scouts, service groups, and other community volunteers on weekdays and weekends. Dave has been in the city for seven years, having previously worked in Tiburon in a similar capacity for



16 years. He appreciates the Volunteer Program because "it is a good community service effort that supports the maintenance program." Dave lives in Novato with his wife and has two sons. He grew up in Long Beach and graduated from Cal Poly in San Luis Obispo with a degree in ornamental horticulture. Later Dave found his way north to Marin. Some of the things Dave enjoys about his job are "working with co-workers, improving the parks and landscapes around town, and interacting with citizens. It's just a great place to work." In his well-earned free time, Dave enjoys going mountain biking, swimming and fishing at local reservoirs such as Bon Tempe and Phoenix Lake. He hopes people will come and volunteer for the next community service project whether it is at a park, median or elsewhere in San Rafael.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Coastal Cleanup Day

September's Coastal Cleanup Day featured plenty of rain, but also many dedicated volunteers who wouldn't let the cold wet weather get in the way of helping out at five different sites in San Rafael, including the Canal Community Garden and Mahon Creek. Scouts, students, and many other community members picked up a total of 693 pounds of trash and 170 pounds of recycling. Volunteers recorded the types of trash on data cards, which were then sent to the Coastal Commission. The California grand total reached nearly 500,000 pounds of litter. Among the trashy culprits in San Rafael were the usual list topper, cigarette butts (3,875), a toy sailboat, a bike trailer, a shopping cart, shoes, tires, and cans of paint and oil. *Paint should always be taken to a household hazardous waste center while auto oil and old tires are often accepted at service stations.* Thank you to all 72 volunteers who helped make Coastal Cleanup Day in San Rafael such a success!



Stellar Stewardship from Scout Troop 50



It would be hard to rival the accomplishments of Scout Troop 50 in community service to San Rafael over the past six months. Led by volunteer Margaret Farley and Scoutmaster Trevor Greenwood, Troop 50 scouts participated in five service projects from May through October, contributing over 100 hours of hard work and providing much-needed assistance to the Public Works department. In May, scouts spread mulch behind Al Boro Community Center and a week later, weeded, picked up garbage and spread mulch on Anderson Drive. In June, the group picked up trash at Mahon Creek and Path. August's service project involved painting the playground equipment at Peacock Gap so that it looks like new. Earlier this month the group repainted the red curb at Albert Park Lane. Thank you, Troop 50, for demonstrating such enthusiastic stewardship!

Cigarette Eater Meter Inspires Community to Clean Streets

In September, the San Rafael Clean coalition reached its goal of removing 100,000 cigarette butts from San Rafael city streets, the culmination of a nearly four-month campaign. During this time, many community members collected butts from city streets and ash urns, and deposited butts in the Cigarette Eater Meter, an artsy and educational receptacle that's been on display at the downtown city plaza since the end of May. The recently established Downtown Streets Team picked up enormous numbers of butts as part of this effort. All of this litter has been turned into gold for one San Rafael charity that received two cents for every butt collected, for a grand total of \$2,000. On September 26th, the donation was presented to



the St. Vincent de Paul Society. The butts themselves, which are toxic to wildlife and most certainly not gold, will be transformed into useful products such as industrial pallets and ash receptacles by a company called Terracycle. For more about SRC and its campaign: www.sanrafaelclean.org.

RESILIENT NEIGHBORHOODS PROGRAM Update from Tamra Peters

Do you care about the environment and want to learn some simple new ways to reduce your impact on the planet? Come to one of the upcoming Resilient Neighborhood introductory presentations to see if this amazing program is right for you. Hosted by San Rafael volunteer Tamra Peters, you will learn how the Eco-Team program works, what the "menu" of carbon-diet pounds is all about, and why this program really works (hint: one reason is it's fun!). The next meeting times are October 17 from 12 - 1pm (for downtown San Rafael residents and employees that want to do a lunchtime weekday program) and October 22 from 5:30 - 6:30pm (for people more interested in doing an evening program). Learn more on the [Facebook](#) page or email Askus@resilientneighborhoods.org. Marin residents have already reduced their carbon emissions by well over 1 million pounds! Help make it two.



FEATURED VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY



Library Outreach Volunteer. Do you want to bring the joy of reading to others? The library is looking for a volunteer to select and deliver books for readers who live in San Rafael but are unable to visit the library themselves. This is a fairly physical job for someone who enjoys working independently. The library has a 6-month requirement, but most volunteers stay for many years! Find out more here <http://www.sanrafaelvolunteers.org/volunteer-opportunities-listings.aspx>

THANK YOU!

Rem O'Donnelley, for contributions to this newsletter.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW VOLUNTEERS!

Shannon Staley – Volunteer Program
Jennifer Bell – City Hall Concierge
Dennis Papendick – City Hall Concierge

Carol Brandt – Fire Department
Lorena Perez – Finance
Heather LeGrand – Finance

To learn more or sign up online, please visit www.sanrafaelvolunteers.org.

Read more [online](#) and like us on [Facebook](#).

Did you know?

San Rafael hosted four of over 850 sites in California during the 29th annual Coastal Cleanup Day held throughout the state on September 21st. Cleaning city streets and along urban creeks is important because up to 80% of marine debris originates on land, traveling through storm drains, creeks or rivers to the beaches and ocean.