Volunteer Ray Lorber
A FOCUS ON NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY

Some people volunteer because they have free time while others feel like they have to. Ray Lorber refers to volunteering as an, “innate desire.” Ray volunteers with the San Rafael Fire Department to make neighborhoods fire safe. He dedicates around 20 hours a month to the Juniper Chipping and Collection Program.

In 2006, as a resident of the Mont Marin neighborhood off of Lucas Valley, Ray was concerned when he learned residents were being hit by vehicles as they traveled on foot and by bike along Lucas Valley Road, towards Highway 101. Ray began out-

reach with residents and city officials, including starting a blog that documented his research and progress. Thanks to Ray’s efforts, in 2012, a sidewalk was built along Lucas Valley Road providing “safe passage” for pedestrians and bikers.

It was a learning experience for Ray because of all the various channels he had to go through over several years to get the situation addressed.

“It was an opportunity for me to learn how to work with the county and the city. It was very rewarding because there was so much resistance in the beginning and we were successful at getting it accomplished. It was a very dangerous situation, people were getting hit by trucks. It had to be corrected and I’m thrilled that I was able to accomplish that.”

As a Vegetation Program Volunteer Ray interacts with residents who want the juniper, a highly flammable plant removed from their properties. He coordinates with both residents and a chipping company to remove plant debris. He keeps SRPD Deputy Fire Chief Bob Sinnot apprised of the various parties he works with. Sinnot says that Ray is always upbeat with a soothing approach whose contribution is invaluable.

“I have found Ray to be someone who is fully committed to this mission of fire prevention and reduction of flammable hillside vegetation. He is very enthusiastic, always very helpful, and positive. He is a very impressive individual to work with. His contribution is much appreciated. If staff had to do this it would place a significant strain on us. We are so fortunate to have him volunteering for the City.”

Since Ray began as the Vegetation Program Volunteer in October 2014 he has coordinated over 300 juniper removal projects. Ray enjoys coordinating with residents and has developed friendships...
San Rafael Police Volunteer Steps Down After 28 Years

As a longtime volunteer at the San Rafael Police Department, Bill Kay lent a hand in the investigations unit nearly every Tuesday for the past 28 years.

That adds up to about 14,000 Tuesdays, discounting the occasional vacation with his wife, or the one time he had the temerity to take a sick day!

Kay, an 87-year-old Terra Linda resident, has stepped down from his volunteer work, citing age and diminished energy. He said he had hoped to reach the 30-year mark, the same number of years he spent in his pre-retirement career as a PG&E engineer. “I wanted to make the decision when it’s time for me to go,” he said. “They treated me well for an old man.”

Kay, whose family fled Poland and then the Soviet Union ahead of Nazi invasions in World War II, spent part of his youth in an orphanage and a refugee camp. He made his way to Oakland in 1949 and has lived in San Rafael since 1963.

After his retirement from PG&E, he got bored with tasks around the home and decided to volunteer his time. He responded to an ad placed by the police department.

As an aide in the investigations unit, he started with tasks such as reviewing pawn shop records and following up on bad checks. Eventually he came to specialize in maintaining records on sex offenders and chasing leads on missing persons cases.

“I enjoyed the work,” he said. “I like the challenge, and I learned from each detective I worked with. I always looked forward to Tuesday to come here.”

On Wednesday afternoon, the police department honored Kay with a farewell ceremony with cake, a plaque, and visits from current and former officers and brass.

Lt. Raffaello Pata described Kay’s contribution as “huge,” saying he spared investigators hundreds of hours of labor. Pata said Kay was also the steady voice people would hear on the phone when they were reporting their missing loved ones, some of whom were potential suicide cases, others seniors or mentally ill residents who had wandered away from home.

“He’s probably raised upwards of seven lieutenants, and at least five police chiefs, over the years,” Pata said. “Bill is the most consistent thing in our bureau over the past 28 years.”

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We were saddened by the loss of a dedicated police volunteer Jason Nachbar who died suddenly in December. Jason began volunteering with the Police Department four years ago and during that time worked more than 1,300 hours. Everyone is in agreement that Jason could light up a room with his smile and good humor. He had a fondness for cats and owned three of them. Jason’s sister said that he would call her at the end of every shift he worked, to tell her what he had done for the police. He loved wearing the police volunteer uniform and driving the department vehicles. He will be greatly missed by the staff and fellow volunteers in the Police Department.
Scout Troops Volunteer Work Honored

Standing: Scouts Sebastian and Jude Key with Scout Leader John Blecka from Troop 101, and Scouts Brandon Navone and Aidan Van Voorhees from Troop 50 with San Rafael Park and Recreation Commissioners Eric Holm and Tom Obletz. Bottom Row: San Rafael Community Services Supervisors Ashley Howe and Debbie Younkin with Holm’s Guide Dog Ford.
Photo courtesy: California Parks and Recreation Society

San Rafael Boy Scout Troops 50 and 101 receive the 2016 Community Service Award from the California Parks and Recreation Society (CPRS) District 1 for their efforts in helping San Rafael reclaim Boyd Park for use by residents and visitors.

On January 26, 2015, the City temporarily closed Boyd Park to the public and the San Rafael’s Parks Department began a major overhaul of the park. This effort was greatly aided by Boy Scout Troops 50 and 101. Troop 50 volunteered 79 hours of service over a two day period painting the iconic wrought iron fence and entrance gate in the front of the park. Jude Key, with Troop 101, proposed to help with the new landscaping as his Eagle Scout Project. The project involved planting 3 Crepe Myrtle trees, 20 shrubs, the installation of drip irrigation and applying a layer of mulch for water retention and weed abatement. The Parks Division supplied the plants, irrigation parts, tools and mulch and instructed the boys on proper planting techniques, drip irrigation installation, and the application of mulch around the plants.

On April 26, 2015 the City reopened Boyd Park with a celebration. Community Services now has a regular schedule of programs and activities at Boyd Park and it has once again become a destination for families.

Thank you Scouts for your service to San Rafael!
through this program. “It’s very rewarding to talk with people who are thankful for what I’m trying to do.”

Looking back Ray is happy with what he has been able to accomplish but also has his eyes on the future. Currently he is a director for the Miller Creek Watershed Stewards which created an outdoor classroom for students at the Dixie school “I enjoy doing something that’s a valuable contribution to the neighborhood.” Over the years he has done so much that he says, “I can be very proud of the things I’ve accomplished so far and I look forward to doing a lot more.”

—Rem O’Donnelley

Volunteers Needed for the Great Race!

The Great Race is a cross country car competition (rally) dating back to 1983. Vintage cars driven by an international field of drivers cross the United States stopping at host Cities along the way. In 2006, San Rafael was the host of the Great Race Finish Line. This year we are the Host City for the Start of the Race! We need volunteers to serve as Ambassadors or Event Helpers.

**Ambassadors** Are you outgoing; enjoy guiding visitors and sharing your knowledge of San Rafael’s delicious restaurants, unique shops and interesting sites (and other Marin locals)? Consider volunteering as an Ambassador! Pairs of Ambassadors will be located at hotels to help race participants from June 14 to 18.

**Event Helpers** work on pre-event preparations June 6 to 17th and on Race Day, June 18th, to set up/clean up and assist throughout the day at booths and activities.

If you are interested to sign up or for more information about volunteering at the Great Race please contact: Ann Bauer at 415-485-3071 or ann.bauer@cityofsanrafael.org. Learn more about the Great Race at [www.greatrace.com](http://www.greatrace.com).

Volunteer Program
City of San Rafael
1313 Fifth Avenue
San Rafael CA 94915-1560
[www.SanRafaelVolunteers.org](http://www.SanRafaelVolunteers.org)
Phone: 415-485-3071

San Rafael Fire Department
Juniper Chipping Available

The Oakland Hills Fire of 1991 was a wakeup call to homeowners in Marin. Residents were reminded of the destruction and devastation a fire in a residential area can do. In response The San Rafael Fire Department gave residents a 10-year period in which they had to remove juniper, one of the most flammable plants, from their properties. At that time, the city had firefighters go to homes to remind people to remove any juniper plants. To make things easier, the Juniper Chipping and Collection Program coordinated by Vegetation Program Volunteer Ray Lorber was created in October 2014.

The program not only helps reduce a major risk to homes in San Rafael but helps residents who want the highly flammable plant removed from their properties. The homeowner pays a gardener to cut down the juniper and the City of San Rafael pays for a company to chip the plant debris and haul it away.

The recent Valley Fire that devastated the towns of Cobb, Middletown and other areas of Lake County again serves to warn us that this can happen in San Rafael as well, we also enjoy an urban-wildland interface. After four years of drought we need to be proactive!

Anyone interested in using the Juniper Chipping and Collection Program can call Ray Lorber at 415-479-9127 or email raylorber@yahoo.com

— Rem O’Donnelley