



August 2019

Northeast Iowa RSVP Newsletter

Engaging volunteers age 55+ in Allamakee, Howard & Winneshiek counties

Notes from the Director

Greetings! I hope this newsletter finds you enjoying the cooler weather! I am so excited about all the good work you do that I wanted to share information from the **year-end report**. A printed copy is included with this newsletter. You can also find it on our website.

Fall is a busy time with planning the appreciation events, grant application deadlines, the United Way campaign, and other happenings. We have added, or are in the process of adding, new stations so keep an eye out for new opportunities.

Our **Appreciation Event** will be a little different this year. We will try holding one in each county. As our group continues to grow, it is difficult to find a location that can seat everyone. In addition, I am hopeful the smaller size will allow me to meet each of you. It also allows us to support your local businesses and there is less travel for you. Look for dates and information soon on those events.

RSVP and three other organizations are participating in **Service Enterprise Initiative** through Points of Light and Volunteer Iowa. I am looking forward to this opportunity to look at our program policies and procedures and streamline and improve our program.

United Way Campaign runs August through October and RSVP is one of 15 recipients of United Way funding. Please give to this campaign and if you need assistance in how to

donate, contact me. You could win a Grizzly cooler package, a Family Fun Package or a Taste of Winneshiek package in the United Way raffle. Stop by if you are interested in buying a ticket!

I will be attending a training on **Skills Based Volunteering**, which is matching the skills and experience of employees with the needs of a non-profit. I have had requests from several businesses about volunteer opportunities for their employees while on work time. For example, there is a financial institution who may have their employees help us during the tax season.

Do you know someone who would be a great RSVP volunteer? I will be hosting "**Bring a Friend**" events in the upcoming year, so think about who you can invite! Also, if you belong to organizations or groups who have speakers, I would love to share about the partnerships and volunteerism happening in our area. I still meet people who say they didn't know RSVP existed, so I am looking for opportunities to continue to get the word out.

Thanks again for all you do. If you see anything of interest, have ideas, need speakers, or have questions, reach out by stopping by, calling, or emailing. We would love to hear from you!

Deana Hageman
NE Iowa RSVP Director

Volunteer Spotlight: Walt Horsfall

Walter Horsfall has been a NEI RSVP volunteer since 2012. He doesn't have a lot of hours with us but that's understandable since he's not here very often. Since 2007 Walt and his wife Kathy have spent 7-8 months each year at Gila Box Riparian National Conservation Area near Safford, AZ.

In May 2019 Walt and Kathy were recognized by the Bureau of Land Management with a "Lifetime Achievement Award" for their 20,000 plus hours of service. (Yes, that's the correct number of zeros!)

Walt and Kathy are officially hosts at a popular campground but also are caretakers for several day-use picnic areas, a wildlife viewing area, a river rafting launch, and a large group picnic area. In addition to their daily duties, the Horsfalls help with tasks on the 22,000-acre area including checking trails and roads in the isolated area and helping folks in trouble.

Walt and Kathy really enjoy their time at Gila Box Riparian NCA though he notes "it's kind of in the boonies; there isn't even any electricity." Walt says he's met an awful lot of good people during his work there.



There are plenty of opportunities to do work with the BLM and Walt says, "I would recommend it to anyone."

NEI RSVP congratulates Walt and Kathy on their award and are pleased that some of their limited time in Allamakee County is spent volunteering at RSVP station Thunder Rode.



RSVP volunteer Marsha Nierling with her Summer Reading Buddy at the Decorah Public Library.

Timesheets, Please!

We can't emphasize enough the importance of signing timesheets every time you volunteer. Much of the reporting we do here at RSVP is based on the information collected on those timesheets.

Sometimes people tell us, "I only work for a half hour, that's not going to help." It all adds up - please, please, please write it down!

If you can't find a timesheet or don't understand how to fill it out, ask where you volunteer or give us a call.

Stations: Be sure volunteers have access to timesheets and are signing them. Let us know if you need updated timesheets.

New & Featured Volunteer Opportunities

Alzheimer's Walk

What: Greet & register walkers, help with parking, hand out t-shirts

Where: Decorah

When: September 14, 2019

Backpack Program

Program provides food for students to take home on weekends and holidays.

What: Coordinate Backpack Program - order food, coordinate with the schools & organize volunteers. Looking for 1-3 people to share these tasks.

Where: Decorah

When: Monthly during school year

Days For Girls **NEW!**

The Days For Girls organization provides reusable feminine hygiene protection for girls and women in developing country.

What: Sew and assemble Days for Girls kits.

Where: Cresco

When: Group meets 1st Tuesday year round and also 3rd Tuesday during school year

Driftless Half Marathon **NEW!**

What: Registration greeters and water station attendants

Where: Lansing

When: One day—October 12, 2019

LifeServe Blood Center **NEW!**

What: Call potential blood donors to schedule donation time; serve refreshments to donors; Sign in donors at registration.

Where: Decorah

When: January, May & December

NEI RSVP **NEW JOB!**

What: Help with mailings, enter data into computer, other clerical.

Where: Decorah Public Library

When: Ongoing and some one-time jobs

Pen Pals **NEW!**

What: Write one letter per month to a Crest wood Elementary (Cresco) 3rd grader and receive one letter back; Meet your pen pal at an event in Spring 2020.

Where: Write a letter from anywhere!

When: Once per month during school year

Toys Go Round **NEW!**

Toys Go Round is a toy lending library.

What: Assist patrons, re-shelve toys, inventory, clean, enter data (optional)

Where: Decorah

When: Tuesday & Saturday, 10 am to 1 pm; Wednesday & Thursday, 3 pm to 7 pm

Winneshiek County Historic Preservation Commission **NEW!**

What: Assist with researching stone structure sites through historical society archives (photos, maps, newspapers, etc)

Where: Decorah

When: Archive is open M-F, 10:00-4:00

School Volunteers

School will be starting soon!

There are a variety of ways to volunteer: reading/math buddies in the schools, tutoring after-school children at day care, assisting with nature walks at Kinderhaus preschool, leading a "walking school bus" to help children walk to school safely, and helping with students at Head Start preschool.

Give us a call if you'd like more information.



In Memoriam

Marian Knoke (June 10, 2019)

Mary Lou Rauk-Snitker (June 12, 2019)

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Sponsored by the Decorah Public Library since 2001

“Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they just have the heart.”

~Elizabeth Andrew

NORTHEAST IOWA RSVP

202 WINNEBAGO ST
DECORAH IA 52101

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

NEI RSVP
April-June 2019

58

Stations

390

Volunteers Enrolled

7077

Hours Served