

# RSVP

## Lead With Experience

WestArk RSVP serving volunteers & the community in Benton, Carroll, Crawford, Madison and Sebastian counties.

December 2010/January 2011

Volume 10, Issue 5

### Inside this issue:

New Members 2

Rogers RSVP Open House 3

New Staff 4

Birthdays 5

Grant Award 6

News Reehl 7



- Medicare Open Enrollment assistance available through Dec. 13th.
- VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) training packets are available.

## Rogers RSVP Office Launched

A ribbon cutting was held to officially open the Roger RSVP office on Thursday, November 11th. To celebrate the occasion a reception was held in the main banquet area of the Center for Nonprofits @ St. Mary's and an Open House was hosted in our new office on the second floor of the Center for Non-profits @ St. Mary's (Suite #2301). The event was open to the public.

The reception offered wonderful refreshments, and an opportunity to meet the WestArk RSVP staff and Ad-

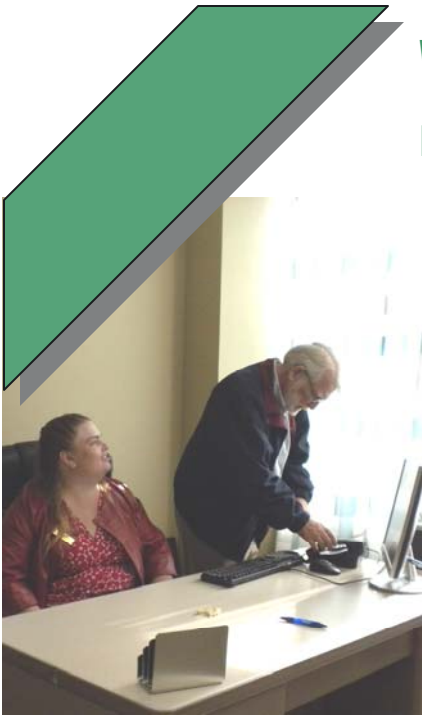
visory Council. Many long-time RSVP members dropped by to complete a new RSVP enrollment form. Numerous non-profit organizations who were interested in partnering with RSVP also stopped by to complete a Memorandum of Understanding.

The Open

House allowed guests to see our new offices. The Center for Non-profits staff made renovations to the hallway and finishing touches to the office by volunteers and staff were completed just in time for our events. A ribbon cutting was hosted by the Chamber of Commerce.



## New WestArk RSVP Members



**P**lease welcome the newest members of WestArk RSVP. Many of these folks are new to WestArk RSVP but old hands when it comes to volunteering.

- Charlene Albright
- Dave Allen
- Doris Allen
- Helen Anderson
- Barbara Ball
- Bill Bean
- Barbara Biarnesen
- Harold Biarnesen
- Bessie Black
- Bob Black
- Norma Bolinger
- Cindy Borchert
- Fred Borchert
- Jemmie Bowen
- Linda Bradley
- Wayne Calhoun
- Wanda Carlton
- Francine Clark
- Robert Clark
- Barbara Coleman
- Owen Conrod
- Carol Conroy
- Barbara Cramer
- Marjorie Davis
- Richard Davis
- Dorothy Day
- Frank Demarest
- Lorraine Demarest
- Eunice Dore
- Norma Dovre
- Ralph Dovre
- Louisa Duncan

- Anita Ebert
- Geri Felstul
- Pat Foster
- Goldie Furgison
- Richard Furgison
- Bonnie Gabriel
- Duane Gehring
- Ethel Gibbs
- John Gibbs
- Clarice Gnuse
- Brenda Goins
- Sharon Griffin
- Mary Groeneman
- Mary Gruber
- Marie Haas
- Agnes Harbick
- Michael Harbick
- Paul Harbick
- Donna Hawbaker
- Nancy Helms
- Charlotte Horuath
- Katherine Hughes
- Marsy Humphrey
- Gareld Johnson
- Lois Johnson
- Robert Johnson
- Beth Kastl
- Joyce Klein
- Charles Learned
- Mike Maher
- Dwight Mantoath
- Ruth McConnell
- Esther Meier
- Mary Teresa Mercer
- Duane Miller
- Martha Miller
- Carol Moell
- Don Moor
- Margie Moor
- Jean Moore

- Brenda Moreland
- Barbara Padas
- Janetta Patterson
- Clifford Peck
- Bob Pennington
- JoAnn Plaisance
- Donna Pletka
- Gardine Powell
- Beverly Puckett
- Freddie Louise Rausch
- Priscilla Rehm
- Paula Resch
- Jane Anne Richison
- Darrel Rise
- Dorothy Rise
- Beverly Rogers
- B.J. Roney
- Richard Rumpe
- Chester Sautter
- Shirley Sautter
- Marjorie Shafer
- Leona Snyder
- Lorna Sperl
- James Sweeney
- Maryann Sweeney
- Gary Thomas
- Lynne Tolzmann
- Margaret Tull
- Billy Vaughn
- Nancy Vaughn
- Marian Venenca
- Peg Wages
- Joe Wasson
- Pam Weiler
- Frank Welnetz
- Jody Wilson
- Wilma Witte
- Charles Zuhlke
- Mary Lou Zuhlke

**Membership in WestArk RSVP is open to active adults who are 55 years of age or older. Membership currently stands at 856.**



# Rogers Open House and Reception



## Volunteer Coordinator Bridget Schmidt



**M**et Bridget Schmidt, the newest member of the WestArk RSVP staff. Bridget will be the Volunteer Coordinator at the RSVP Center in Fort Smith. She will work closely with Volunteer Manager Trish Walker to keep up-to-date the recordkeeping required by the RSVP grant. When you call RSVP, more often than not, Bridget will be the one who answers the phone.

Bridget has lived in Fort Smith for less than a year. She lived in Kansas until last April when she relocated to Fort Smith to be closer to her family.

Bridget is looking forward to learning her new job and meeting the RSVP members.

**Contact Information:** Bridget Schultz, RSVP Volunteer Coordinator, [bridgetrsvp@ipa.net](mailto:bridgetrsvp@ipa.net), 401 North 13th Street, Fort Smith, AR 72901, 479-783-4155.

## December Birthdays

- |                   |                        |                       |                      |
|-------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 1 Doris Barney    | 7 Maren Rueston        | 15 Marilyn Bullington | 21 Marian Venenca    |
| 1 Linda Donberger | 8 Esther Holland       | 15 Jo Frances Miller  | 22 Carol Bracken     |
| 1 Mary Fletcher   | 9 Chuck Gartner        | 15 Dorothy Rise       | 22 Betty Ingels      |
| 1 Clara Rubarth   | 9 Bob Prough           | 16 O.M. Free          | 23 Bertine Rozelle   |
| 2 Ilah Barnhardt  | 9 JoAnn Plaisance      | 16 B.G. Hendrix       | 23 Richard Furgison  |
| 2 Bill Smith      | 10 Cathy Bain          | 17 Gordon Kuykendall  | 24 Muriel Lovell     |
| 2 Ralph Smith     | 10 Linda Gabriel       | 17 Margaret Parks     | 24 Jeff Nusbaum      |
| 2 Marie Haas      | 10 Lucille Hart        | 17 Sharon Rossiter    | 25 Iva Darling       |
| 3 Lois Elledge    | 10 Gerald Primm        | 17 Jeannie White      | 25 Betty Tindall     |
| 3 Nita Geren      | 11 Evalyn Burton       | 18 Sharon Szgiel      | 26 Mary Goebel       |
| 3 James Rogers    | 11 Doug Fletcher       | 18 Allie Whitaker     | 26 Mary Groeneman    |
| 3 Becky Sanburg   | 11 Lucille Goforth     | 19 Nancy Heflin       | 28 Dorothy Snyder    |
| 4 Owen Conrod     | 11 Art Martin          | 19 Betty Mulkey       | 29 Jerry Clemons     |
| 5 Wilma Brisco    | 12 Bill Beall          | 20 Beverly Davis      | 29 Ann Staton        |
| 5 Bill Fields     | 12 Lysbeth Manuel      | 20 Aaron Griffin      | 30 Stephanie Ferrari |
| 5 Charles Kleck   | 12 Dories Shettleworth | 20 Mary Mathews       | 30 Leona Snyder      |
| 6 Ellen Edwards   | 13 David Callahan      | 20 Ben Maxey          | 31 Virginia Roberson |
| 6 Jerry Moore     | 13 Jemmie Bowen        | 20 Bill Williams      |                      |
| 7 Barbara Hanna   | 14 Carole Harris       | 20 Wayne Calhoun      |                      |
| 7 Don Palmatary   | 14 Joseph Silva        | 21 Nadine Harlan      |                      |

## Meet Volunteer Coordinator Cyndi Najar



Cyndi Najar, RSVP Volunteer Coordinator, cyndirsvp@ipa.net  
1200 West Walnut, Suite 2301, Rogers, AR, 479-636-0578

**H**i RSVP, my name is Cyndi Najar. I moved to Northwest Arkansas from Texas a year ago. So far I have really enjoyed living in an area that actually has four seasons.

I have a Bachelors degree in Special Education and a Master's degree in Early Childhood and Elementary Education both from Texas A&M-Commerce. I have taught in a self-contained special

education high school classroom.

I have two sons, Matt age 17 and Jeremiah age 10. They are the absolute joy of my life and both have Down Syndrome. I was so very fortunate to marry my soul-mate, Eddy in May 2010, and I gained 3 new daughters and 4 grandchildren so life has been very exciting this year.

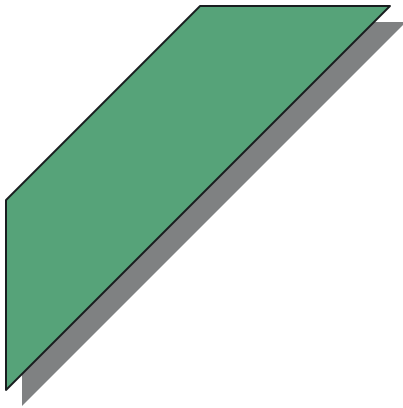
My year ends on a high note since I have been given the

opportunity to pursue this new career path with WestArk RSVP. I have enjoyed getting to meet many of you already and looking forward to meeting many more. If you are in the Benton, Carroll, or Madison counties and need anything please call or come by our wonderful Rogers office



## January Birthdays

1 Dortha Dyer	9 Richard Harris	19 Shirley Septer	25 June Vaughn
1 Sister Agatha Knittig	9 Harold Biarnesen	19 Jim Shepherd	26 Mary Bruce
1 Joyce Lee	10 Blanche Blodgett	19 Garnet M. Watts	26 Geneveiva Heim
1 Joseph Reznik	12 Betty Sterling	19 Jean Woodward	26 Vernon Stewart
1 Jacqueline Rogosch	12 Ava Zachary	20 Bobby Martin	27 Alice King
2 Jean Ann Roddy	13 Florence Cotner	20 Clara Meyer	27 Jim Rose
3 Glenda Conway	14 Dorothy Dewitt	21 Mary Hames-Weaver	27 Carol Moell
4 Ruby Cochran	15 Pearl Gartrell	21 Norma Strang	27 Donna Hawbaker
5 Layton Jackson	15 Mary Lee Kulin	22 Ben Frietsche	28 Phyllis Rollans
6 Shirley Brisco	15 Phyllis Mann	22 Hazel Pierce	29 Gary Thomas
6 Roberta Elliott	15 Sandra Pearson	23 Betty Beck	30 Denise Fagain
7 Janet LaForce	16 Samuel Landrum	23 Nelda Marshall	30 Mable Smith
8 Marie Pate	16 Anna Loring	23 Patsy Rogers	31 Janet Leverette
8 Judith Stewart	18 Ruth Corbin	25 Toka Beall	31 Harold Miller
8 Carol Conroy	19 Lou Knowles	25 Shirley Mikaly	31 Beverly Puckett



## IRS Tax Grants – Win Some, Lose Some

**W**estArk RSVP was recently notified by the IRS that they were selected to participate in the FY2011 Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) grant program. TCE provides free tax return preparation and electronic filing to tax payers 60 years of age and older.

TCE grants. The TCE grant funds will make it possible for volunteer tax preparers to travel to area senior centers and provide tax preparation assistance; TCE assistance while limited to tax payers 60+ does not have an income cap and it does not require a match to receive the TCE grant funds.

kansas groups: Southern Good Faith Fund of Little Rock, Economic Opportunity Agency of Washington County, Inc. from Springdale and Central Arkansas Development Council of Benton.

WestArk RSVP will continue to operate two VITA sites—one at the Municipal Complex in Lavaca and another at the RSVP Center in Fort Smith. Unfortunately, without the VITA grant WestArk RSVP will not be able to expand and add tax sites in Van Buren, Charleston or Greenwood.

WestArk RSVP received a VITA grant in FY 2009.

Contingent upon Congress appropriating funds and approving a budget the grant will be for \$15,000. The majority of the grant funds will be used to reimburse volunteers for their travel expenses.

There are several advantages to the

WestArk RSVP was also notified that it will not be a recipient of an IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) grant. WestArk RSVP was one of 374 applicants for a VITA grant. Grants were awarded to 177 organizations including three Ar-



VITA training on December 14th–16th for new volunteers at the RSVP Center in Fort Smith.

## Christmas Stockings

**R**SVVP is the only local organization that has been asked to fill stockings for needy children by the Fort Smith Salvation Army. If you wish to participate you may pick up empty stockings at the RSVP Center in Fort Smith along with a list of

suggested “stuffers” or just drop off your donation and we will stuff the stockings for you.

Stuffed stockings and/or gifts need to be returned no later than Monday, December 13th.

Feel free to share this project with your friends or Sunday

School class. These stockings will be given to children age 0-12 whose families have qualified for assistance but not in time to be added to the Angel Tree.





# News Reehl

by Susan Peacock Reehl

**T**rish Walker and I are pleased to welcome Cyndi and Bridget, our new Volunteer Coordinators. To say we are happy to have additional staff is an understatement. We've dreamed of this day for years!

It has been a busy year—we have added three counties and two employees to our program, opened a second office, and been awarded an IRS and CBDG grant. Thank everyone for their patience as we made our way through the expansion.

A special thanks to Chuck Gartner, Don Palmatary and

Bob Cockreham who did most of the heavy lifting and many trips up the mountain getting us set up in Rogers. Our Advisory Council members did an amazing job helping prepare for, host and clean up after our Open House and Reception. I greatly appreciated the efforts of the IT staff who made a house-call to Rogers. Stacey Powell and Shanna Davis made it possible for us to talk on the phones and the computers and printers to talk to each other.

The RSVP Center in Fort Smith and the Rogers RSVP office will be closed from December 22nd until

January 3rd for the holidays. All the RSVP volunteer hours for 2010 will need to be turned in no later than Monday, January 10th.

Many charities will need extra help as the Holiday Season approaches—please be generous with your time and talent. Perhaps you could fill a stocking for a needy child, provide a gift for a nursing home resident, make a donation to a local food bank, visit a shut-in, or take someone without transportation to a holiday church service so that everyone can



enjoy this special season.

Thank you to the hundreds of RSVP members who so generously give of their time and talent in volunteer service. It is a privilege to spend my working hours with RSVP members. I hope your Holidays are joyful and blessed.

**This edition of the Newsletter was sponsored by State Representative Tracy Pennartz:**



*"I would like to express my gratitude and praise for each and every RSVP member. Your thousands upon thousands of volunteer activities enrich our lives, the lives of our families and friends, the lives of our neighbors, and the lives of our fellow citizens. You are a blessing for our community. Thank you!"*

**State Representative Tracy Pennartz, District 65**

P.O. Box 10441, Fort Smith AR 72917 Office Phone 479-285-4800  
[pennartzt@arkleg.state.ar.us](mailto:pennartzt@arkleg.state.ar.us)

## Holiday Open House Scheduled

# A

Holiday Open House will be held on Wednesday, December 8th and Thursday, December 9th at the RSVP Center in Fort Smith to honor RSVP members, volunteer stations and community friends. The Holiday Open

House will last from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m. in the hope that all volunteers (and their family and friends) will be able to drop-in at some time during the day.

No one will leave the party hungry. Refreshments will be bountiful and include hot hors d'oeuvre, homemade baked goods, hot spiced cider, spin-

ach dip and many other treats.

The 2011 calendars will be distributed to all RSVP volunteers and mailed the following day to those volunteers unable to attend the Open House. The calendar has been the traditional "thank you" gift given to the RSVP members at the Open House for more than ten years.



### WestArk RSVP

#### *Fort Smith Office:*

401 North 13th Street  
Fort Smith, AR 72901  
Phone: **783-4155**

Fax: 782-2269

#### Hours of Operation

Monday—Friday  
8:30 am—4:00 pm

#### *Rogers Office:*

1200 West Walnut, Suite 2301  
Rogers AR 72756

Phone: **636-0578**

Fax: 636-4218

#### Hours of Operation

Monday—Thursday  
8:30 am—3:00 pm

#### Web site:

[www.WestArkRSVP.org](http://www.WestArkRSVP.org)

### Staff

Susan Reehl  
*Program Director*  
rsvp@ipa.net

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*Volunteer Manager*  
trishrsvp@ipa.net

#### AmeriCorps VISTA

Chuck Gartner  
chuckrsvp@ipa.net

WestArk RSVP is sponsored by  
Western Arkansas Counseling  
& Guidance Center, Inc.

### Advisory Council

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