



WestArk RSVP Newsletter

WestArk RSVP is a program of the Western Arkansas Counseling & Guidance Center Inc.

Special points of interest:

- Fort Smith Classic June 13th—21st at Hardscrabble Country Club
- RSVP VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) and AARP Tax-Aide sites will provide free tax return preparation and electronic filing through April 15th.

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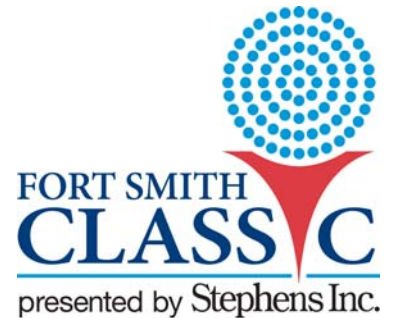
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RSVP Chosen as Ft. Smith Classic Charity

The Fort Smith Classic won't be supporting just children's charities this year. WestArk RSVP was recently notified that it had been chosen as one of the six charities to benefit from the 2009 Fort Smith Classic. The other charities include several RSVP Volunteer Stations— Children's Service League, Girls, Inc., Children's Emergency Shelter and First Tee— along with the Fort Smith Boys and Girls Clubs.

Funds from the Classic will be used to support the RSVP Community Outreach efforts which provide tax assistance to working families and aid Medicare beneficiaries. The Classic has donated in excess of \$1.3 million to local charities since the Tournament began in 1999.

The Fort Smith Classic is one of the premier stops on the Nationwide tour and is the only PGA tournament held in Arkansas. The Classic will be June 13th through June



21st at the Hardscrabble Country Club.

As a Classic charity RSVP will have responsibilities to aid in providing volunteers for the tournament and aiding in fundraising. The Fort Smith Classic provides a economic impact to the to the are of \$35 million.

Classic Volunteer Efforts to Be Led by Trish Walker

Fort Smith Classic named Trish Walker, RSVP Volunteer Manager as the event's director of volunteers.

"Trish Walker brings to the Tournament Council many years of professional, national non-profit education and

training plus local volunteer management experience. The **Fort Smith Classic** is fortunate to have within our community someone who has enthusiastically stepped up to champion the volunteer aspect of the 2009 tournament. Volunteers

will find her to be organized and delightful, as it should be. The ultimate benefactors of Trish's talents will be the volunteers that the **Fort Smith Classic** values so much," said Patricia Brown, **Fort Smith Classic** Executive Director.



**Holiday Open House
December 3rd & 4th
RSVP Center**



“Top 35” RSVP Members for the 3rd Quarter

The names of WestArk RSVP members who ranked in the “Top 35” for the Fourth Quarter follow. These members volunteered over 10,200 hours of service despite the holidays.

Bobby Abbott

First Tee

Jerry Akins

National Historical Site, Ft. Smith Historical Society, Friends of Oak Cemetery

Robert Allen

Arkansas Revenue Department, Project Compassion

John Brown

Baker Senior Center, Trolley Museum

Juan Cardenas

Layton Jackson

Rod Tschetter

Ft. Smith Public School System

David Callahan, Sr.

Pat Moore

Bertine Rozelle

Forrest Slavens

Richard Summers

Preston Swofford

Mary Tausinger

St. Edward Mercy Medical Center (SEMMC)

Robert Cockreham

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance, American Red Cross

Charles Foley

AARP Safe Driving Program, Barling Senior Activity Center

Lorina Garner

Golden Rule Clothes Closet

B.G. Hendrix

AARP

Shirley Hullauder

Van Buren Senior Center

Ellen Karatzou

Mercy Hospice, Reynolds Cancer Support House, SEMMC

David Kerr

Bradley Martin

Trolley Museum

Ruth Ann Lucker

First Tee, Community Service Clearinghouse, Fort Smith Classic

Kathy Luedloff

WAC&GC, WestArk RSVP

Dorothy McCartt

RSVP Advisory Council, RSVP Community Outreach, Bluff Avenue Baptist Church

Jeanne McKim

Ft. Smith Schools, Good Samaritan Clinic, St. Paul United Methodist Church, COTS, Little Theatre, Christ the King School

Mary Jean Moore

Hilda Wallis

Midtown Senior Center

Vyrl Nelms

Sparks Regional Medical Center

Don Palmatary

Bill Johnston

VITA, RSVP Advisory Council, RSVP Community Outreach

Jim Rose

Goddard UMC, Habitat for Humanity

Iyla Stranahan

Heart to Heart, SEMMC

Sister Dolorita

Thompson

Mercy Hospice, Fountain of Youth Adult Day Center

Nancy Zornes

Peachtree Hospice, RSVP Advisory Council, Mercy Hospice, Project Compassion,

February and March Birthdays

February

	15	Mary Hudson	4	Dorothy Barton	18	Eleanor Crosswell
	16	Lilly Freshour	4	Berniece Coates	18	Mary Lou Foley
1		Dot Rappeport	4	Pearl Robertson	18	Sister Pierre Vorster
1	17	Yen Danh Weindel	4	Margaret Schiffner	19	Madaline Baker
2	18	Robert Allen	4	Billie Sharum	19	Kennedy, Virginia
2	18	Jack Baldwin	5	Jo Leach	19	Betty Schaub
2	19	Barbara Williams	6	Wilkie Blades	20	Zoe Ann Batten
2	19	Evelyn Wren	7	Ruth Mullinax	20	Deanna Paschall
4	19	Cleon Daniel	7	Chris Foley	20	Betty Rogers
4	20	Arvilla Garrett	8	Margaret Sanders	21	Raymond Becker
5	21	Patricia Swearingen	8	Richard Summers	21	Sarah Stroub
6	21	Sue Clayton	8	Marsha Brown	22	Betty Coots
6	22	Juanita Chloe Lamon	9	Betty Dyer	22	Betty Huggins
6	22	Pat Moore	9	Marilyn Hawkins	23	Nancy Brewer
7	22	Vernon Lay	9	Tressa McBride	24	Joseph Irwin
7	23	Louise Stewart	9	Madge Patrick	24	Rosamard Osborn
8	23	Barbara Moore	9	Edythe Jakiun	26	Maureen Brown
8	24	Madelyn Proctor	10	OJay Moore	26	Evelyn Jo Graham
8	25	Reba Toon	11	Joyce Hopkins	26	Betty Hoyle
9	25	Patsy Blain	11	Chuck Johnson	26	Nick Mings
9	26	Twyla Brown	11	Wrenetta Ritchie	26	Veryl Smith
9	27	Juan Cardenas	11	Mary Tausinger	27	Dianne Runion
9	26	Linda Elam	11	Edeltraut Theissen	27	Don Sangster
10	28	Barbara Bailey	12	Lois Hobbs	27	Vera Sherland
10	28	Yvonne Keaton - Martin	12	Dorothy Stovall	28	Rita Bowen
11	28	Millie Criser	12	Dr. John Watts	28	Patricia Cooper
11		Lance Haines	13	Paul Garrett	28	Ervin Glenn
11		Lucille Holmes	13	Gloria Groves	28	Glenda Lewis
11		Dell Manus	13	Kay Ollie	28	Louise Lewis
12		Calline Ellis	14	John Griswold	28	Julia Tidwell
12		Robert Epperson	14	Agnes Hale	28	Harold Blaylock
12		Virginia Kutait	14	Maxine Yates	29	Joan Harper
12		Rozanne McCormick	15	Norman Davis	29	Jo Hughes
12		Jim Phelps	15	Marie Gleason	29	Ramona Kouri
12		Carolyn Terry	16	Beverly Barnett	31	Ruby Hile
13		Ellen Franklin	16	Glenda Wallace	31	Jesse Lindsey
13		Richard Grim	17	Diane Clark	31	Jerry Roberson
15		Douglas Cannedy	17	Dennis Vearrier		

March

	1	Dorothy Benham				
	1	Franklin Pulliam				
	1	Mary Reed				
	2	Carl Guhman				
	2	Anita James				
	2	Emma Lay				
	2	Ava Robertson				
	3	Tom Calderera				
	3	Linda LaFontaine				
	3	Larry White				

RSVP Members 2008 Volunteer Service Report

<u>Volunteer Stations</u>	<u>Hours</u>	<u># Volunteers</u>	<u>Volunteer Stations</u>	<u>Hours</u>	<u># Volunteers</u>
Independent Living	34,591	161	Good Samaritan Clinic	1,612	30
St. Edward Mercy Medical Center	24,062	100	Goddard United Methodist Church	1,586	13
Summit Medical Center Auxiliary . .	8,141	37	Wesley United Methodist Church .	1,563	17
Tax Counseling for the Elderly & Volunteer Income Tax Assistance	7,761	50	Scott County Senior Citizen Center	1,510	10
Project Compassion	7,677	109	Community Service Clearinghouse	1,426	20
Sparks Regional Medical Center	6,720	38	Compassionate Ministries of Craw- ford County	1,361	7
Crawford County Volunteers for Literacy	4,558	19	St. Paul United Methodist Church	1,318	6
Mulberry Senior Center	4,152	32	South Sebastian County Historical Society	1,313	11
Barling Senior Activity Center	4,069	35	WestArk RSVP	1,296	9
Fort Smith Senior Activity Center	3,973	22	Ragon Family Center	1,200	2
Trolley Museum	3,881	11	Children's Service League	1,145	8
Midtown Senior Activity Center	3,627	11	Western Arkansas Counseling & Guidance Center, Inc.	1,095	5
Golden Rule Clothes Closet	3,623	5	Fort Smith Historical Society, Inc. .	977	7
Reynolds Cancer Support House	3,308	50	Fort Smith Classic Golf Tourna- ment	963	34
St. Edward's Mercy Hospice	2,990	18	West-Ark Church of Christ - Hope Chest	949	7
Mena Senior Center	2,886	12	We Care Foundation	896	5
Fort Smith Public School System . . .	2,773	36	Greenwood Senior Activity Center	881	12
Cedarville Senior Center	2,762	16	Peachtree Hospice	866	7
Cossatot Seniors of Polk County . . .	2,462	24	Roland Nutrition Site	853	6
Van Buren Senior Inn	2,436	14	St. Boniface Catholic School	828	4
Ray Baker Senior Activity Center . . .	2,430	13	Arkansas Senior Medicare/	799	14
AARP	2,429	19	Medicaid Fraud Patrol		
Lavaca Senior Activity Center	2,297	18	Mt. Magazine Girl Scouts	686	9
Fort Smith Convention Center/ Visitors Center-Miss Laura's	2,226	33	American Cancer Society	673	4
AARP Tax-Aide	2,197	17	Van Buren Visitors Center	578	10
First Tee	1,857	22	River Valley SeniorNet	490	6
Habitat for Humanity	1,648	13	Children's Emergency Shelter	481	3
Heart to Heart Pregnancy Support Center	1,628	10			

RSVP Members 2008 Volunteer Service Report

<u>Volunteer Stations</u>	<u>Hours</u>	<u># Volunteers</u>
Fort Smith Public Library	475	5
Alzheimer's Association	450	14
Next Step Day Room	420	9
First Presbyterian Church	415	6
ARC for the River Valley	404	5
Fort Smith Little Theatre, Inc.	389	4
Fort Smith National Historic Site . . .	379	2
Project Linus	356	3
Fort Smith Art Center	356	6
Evangel Temple	355	3
Christ the King Church/School	329	2
American Red Cross	323	3
VA Clinic	301	2
Salvation Army	298	13
St. Scholastica Retreat Center	297	6
Center for Arts and Education	295	2
Literacy Council of Western Ark. . .	288	5
Methodist Nursing home	285	11
Arkansas Revenue Department	284	1
COTS - Church on the Streets	269	10
City of Fort Smith	263	7
Immaculate Conception Church	236	9
Mountainburg Senior Inn	236	3
Fountain of Youth, Inc.	227	9
Crisis Center for Women	205	3
Commissary Kiwanis Club of FS	200	5
Bluff Avenue Baptist Church	195	2
University of Arkansas Fort Smith	195	10
St. John's Sack Lunch Program	189	5
Alma Performing Arts Center	189	11
Kistler Center for Children	184	31

<u>Stations</u>	<u>Hours</u>	<u>C# Volun- teers</u>
Oak Cemetery Association	180	5
Beckman Senior Activity Center . . .	176	3
Mis-Notes	146	16
Clayton House	138	2
Arkansas River Valley Nature Center	137	4
Mercy Foundation	134	18
Bost Inc.	106	22
United Way of Fort Smith	77	20
Fianna Hills Nursing & Rehabilita- tion Center	63	3
United Hebrew Congregation	30	1
NARFE Chapter 299	27	2
Boys Shelter, Inc.	25	2
West Central Center on Aging	25	1
Girls Inc. of Fort Smith	24	3
United Blood Systems	24	1
Celebrity Classic	19	2
Abilities Unlimited, Inc.	9	2
Fort Smith Museum of History	6	2

Total: 191,127 hours 878 members

WestArk RSVP members did an amazing job for our community during 2008. Despite near \$4 a gallon gasoline their volunteer efforts were equal to 95 full time employees. Their volunteer hours had a value equal to \$3,650,000. Over a hundred community organizations benefited from the effort of RSVP members.

We read and hear on the news the term “quality of place” when politicians are talking about community and economic development. RSVP members are doing more than talking about “quality of place” they are providing it.



*Earned Income Clinic
Jan. 30th & 31st
Elm Grove Community Center*



Free Income Tax Return Preparation and Electronic Filing

Free tax preparation and electronic filing of Federal, Arkansas and Oklahoma income tax returns. Assistance is available at the following VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) sites through April 15th:

RSVP Center

401 North 13th Street
(Corner of Grand Avenue and 13th Street), Fort Smith

Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday
9 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Grand Avenue Baptist Church

3900 Grand Avenue, Ft. Smith

Monday and Thursday
9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Tuesday 9 a.m. – 7 p.m.

Lavaca Library

104 Davis Street, Lavaca

Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday

9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Please bring the following with you:

- Social Security cards for you, your spouse, and any dependents.
- Proof of identification for yourself (driver's license or military ID).
- W-2 and/or 1099's. from each employer.
- A copy of last year's tax return (if available).
- Proof of account for direct deposit of refund (bring a check).
- SSA-1099 form if you were paid Social Security benefits.
- All 1099 forms showing interest and/or dividends.
- Unemployment compensation statements.
- Information for other income (if any).
- Dependent care (day care) provider information.
- If itemizing—

information (receipts, cancelled checks) for all deductions/credits (if any).

For additional information or for assistance for homebound call 782-2525.

Assistance is available at the following AARP Tax-Aide sites:

First Christian Church

3500 Rogers Avenue, Fort Smith

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday

9 a.m.—1 p.m.

Thursday 3-7 p.m.

Fort Smith Senior Center

2700 Cavanaugh Road, Ft. Smith

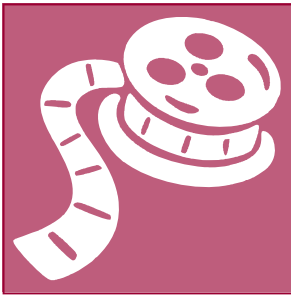
Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 9 a.m.—1 p.m.

Citizens Bank

4 North ridge Drive, Van Buren

Monday & Wednesday

9 a.m.—1 p.m.



News Reehl by Susan Peacock Reehl

First an apology for the lateness of this newsletter. Ice storms, power outages and the start of tax season are to blame. This is a very important edition as it lets the community know the impact our members have on the community.

If you have high blood pressure don't read any farther—you will have steam coming out of your ears!

In January I received a letter from the IRS notifying RSVP that our Tax Counseling for the Elderly grant would not be renewed. What follows is part of the contents of letters I sent Senators Lincoln and Pryor and Congressman Boozman:

“Last year was our first year as a TCE grantee for which we received \$13,600. Our grant called for us to prepare tax returns for 770 seniors age 60 or

older – we served 1,940. We responded to requests by the IRS to aid citizens in obtaining their Economic Stimulus Payments (ESP) and completed tax returns for an additional 1,592 younger citizens (many of whom were disabled). We provided tax assistance from January through October 15th to maximize the ability of tax payers to receive their ESP. In another words, we took extraordinary steps to aid the community. Our RSVP members donated 7,519 hours of volunteer service.”

“... evidently we were not renewed for two reasons – not enough of our returns were filed electronically and not enough of our returns were for 60+ seniors.

I can argue with

their numbers for age 60+ returns (mine are for the entire year – their numbers were probably only through the end of April). The only returns which we did not file electronically were for ESP - BECAUSE THE TAX-WISE SOFTWARE PROVIDED BY THE IRS DID NOT ACCEPT ELECTRONIC ESP RETURNS UNTIL LATE MARCH.

This is not right. This is incredibly poor treatment of a partner that went out of its' way to meet a community need. There are three other RSVP programs which were TCE grant recipients last year and none of them were renewed either – all three responded to the ESP issue as we did.”

I have been in contact with all three members of our Congressional delegation. All are asking questions of the IRS and urging that our funding be returned. Staff members from

Senator Lincoln and Pryor's and Congressman Boozman's office have been responsive and supportive. Unfortunately, I don't believe they will be successful.

None of this had anything to do with our local IRS office or the IRS SPEC (Stakeholder Partnerships, Education and Communication) staff who work with us out of Little Rock. Our SPEC contact Senior Tax Consultant, Deborah Huizenga has gone out of her way to be supportive—agreeing to serve on our Advisory Council and helping with our Earned Income Clinic the last weekend in January in addition to her usual duties which included training our Site Coordinators.

So RSVP will go on with \$13,600 less in funding this year. Because of the IRS VITA grant we will still be able to provide small travel stipends to our VITA volunteers. What we won't be able to do is travel to senior centers outside of the immediate Fort Smith area—what a shame!

WestArk RSVP
401 North 13th Street
Fort Smith, AR 72901

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ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
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**Postmaster: Change
Service is Requested.**

If you are raising your
grandchildren, you may be eligible
for an Earned Income Credit on
your tax return.

WestArk RSVP

401 North 13th Street
Fort Smith, AR 72901
Phone: **783-4155**
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E-mail: rsvp@ipa.net
Web site:
www.WestArkRSVP.org

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

Hours of Operation

Monday—Friday
8:30 am—4:00 pm

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