

July/August 2009

Volume 9, Issue 3



WestArk RSVP Newsletter



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

Special points of interest:

- Breakfast of Champions is scheduled for August 18th.
- Volunteer Service Logs are no longer included in the RSVP Newsletter. Hours not reported by your volunteer station may be reported by phone or email.

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RSVP Shines at the Fort Smith Classic

The Fort Smith Classic Tournament saw RSVP members supporting and volunteering at this community event. The Tournament is the only PGA event in Arkansas and RSVP members were busy with the Fort Smith Classic for months before the June 15-21 golf tournament kicked-off.

Trish Walker, RSVP Volunteer Manager served as the Volunteer Director for the Ft. Smith Classic. She moved out to the volunteer trailer at Hardscrabble Country Club on June 1st and worked seven days a week through June 22nd; nearly got blown away a couple of times by severe thunderstorms and worked for a day and a

half without electricity!

WestArk RSVP is one of the Classic Charities this year and will receive a contribution from the tournament. Other Classic Charities include the Children's Service League, Children's Emergency Shelter, Girls, Inc., Fort Smith Boys and Girls Club and the First Tee.

The Fort Smith Classic has distributed over a million dollars in the last eleven years to area charities. RSVP will use its' portion of the proceeds as match for 2010 grants which support our Community Outreach programs.



Photo Courtesy of Brian McMahan Photography.

Trish Walker, Volunteer Director of the Fort Smith Classic.

The Fort Smith Classic occurred during the first really hot summer weather for our area. All the Fort Smith Classic volunteers deserve a pat on the back for a job well done!



RSVP Members Who Volunteered at the Ft. Smith Classic

A huge thank you to the 46 RSVP members who volunteered at the Fort Smith Classic. Many of these members indicated their volunteer service was to go toward meeting the RSVP Classic Charity requirements for volunteer participation. Thirteen RSVP members supported Classic Charities where they regularly volunteer.

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Berniece Coates | AJ & Ann Lee |
| Bob Cockreham | Ruth Ann Lucker |
| Zelma Cox | Rose Lyons |
| Tricia Davis | Madeline Marquette |
| Lois Elledge | Jeanne McKim |
| Douglas Fletcher | Jeff Nusbaum |
| Kathy & John Furstenberg | Don Palmatary |
| Mary Jo Gage | Leland Pitsch |
| Chuck Gartner | Mary Lou Pointon |
| Elaine Gress | Tim Randolph |
| Fred Hander | Charles Raney |
| Wanda Jeffcoat | Jacqueline Rogosch |
| Euba Harris-Winton | Jim Rose |
| Chuck Johnson | Becky Sanburg |
| Bill Johnston | Forrest Slavens |
| Ellen Karatzou | Sharon Szgiel |
| Gay Loy | Mary Sue & Wesley Warnock |
| Yvonne Keaton-Martin | Barbara Williams |
| Richard Kutschall | Joyce Wolf |



- Bob Abbott**
- Paul Anderson**
- George Beattie**
- Larry Brisco**
- Lola Brown**
- Marsha Brown**
- Karen Carr**

Ft. Smith Classic Volunteers Supported WestArk RSVP

Our thanks go out to the 23 Ft. Smith Classic volunteers who indicated their support of WestArk RSVP by choosing to have their efforts counted toward our volunteer requirements as a Classic Charities:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Bernice Been | Rich Palmatary |
| Charles Dart | Pam Pointon |
| Father Tom Elliott | Beth & Darryl Presley |
| Jimmy Evans | John, Susie & Laura Reehl |
| Debbie and AJ Huizenga | Alice Slavens |
| Heather Kelton | John Speck |
| Gene Kincy | Trish Walker |
| Kevin Lacewell | Lori Williams |
| Reggie Moore | Eric Worley |
| | Catherine Young |



Birthdays! Birthdays! Birthdays!!!

JULY

1	Carl Bruns	14	Daisy Bruns	28	Georgia Brasher	13	Wesley Warnock
1	Oga Grizzle	14	Mary Jo Gage	28	Twyla Reinecker	13	Floyd Zornes
1	Edna LaFontaine	14	Richard Watt	28	Florence Serverson	15	Freida Brewer-Myers
2	Marilyn Bell	14	Phanita Williams	29	Sister Consuella Bauer	15	Leo Geher
2	Maxine Donaldson	15	Dee Beavers	29	Anna Greve	15	Marie Martin
2	Shirley Hullauder	16	Robert Simmons	29	Anna Redden	16	Dorothy Dolan
2	Tim Randolph	16	Ronnie Wagner	29	Peggy Shopfner	17	CeCe Giththens
3	Treva Goodman	17	Cynthia Rains	29	Lynndon Sloan	17	Betty Hanna
3	Vicki Hurst	18	Dolores Bates	30	Sue Preston	17	Kathy Luedloff
3	Robert Leach	18	Janalou Devers	30	Maxine Taylor	17	Wanda Ramey
4	Suzanne Karr	18	Roy Harris	31	Jewell Cox	17	Mary Wagner
4	Lori Oliver	18	Irvin Sternberg	31	Donna Currier	18	Betty Campbell
4	Deon Rollans	19	Charles Klaus	31	Ann Lee	18	Gary Hayes
4	Jessie Zanzeberg	20	David Kerr	31	LoKiel Norgard	18	Earl Martin
5	Bobby Abbott	20	Mary Sue Lowrimore			19	Carole Barger
5	Peggy Lewis	20	Murl Nichols			19	Barbara Hartman
5	Herschel Rye	20	Peter Schutz			19	Gwendolyn Long
5	Louise Turner	20	Maureen Thames			19	Norma Watkins
7	Ann Crow	21	Richard Ayars			20	Karen Carr
7	Alice Lewis	21	Thomas Bartsch			20	Teddy Martin
7	Deanna Martin	21	Anna Campbell			20	Elwyn Parks
7	Edgar C. Newlin	21	Charles Raney			20	Betty Pryor
8	Carolyn Silva	21	Luanne Raynoha			20	Zeta Smith
8	Mary Sue Warnock	22	Jerry Akins			21	Tom Leverette
9	Harry Akers Jr.	22	Jeanette Belin			22	Mary Edwards
9	Harvey David	22	Jimmie Griswold			22	Jack Wright
9	Richard King	22	Drucilla Hughart			23	Eileen Scott
9	Dorothy McCartt	23	Arliss Daniels			26	Alice Orrick
9	Gladys Walz	24	Mary Bryant			26	Jean Parker
10	Kathleen Corbell	24	Betty Golden			28	Janice Hamby
11	Joseph Borden	24	Herschel McClurkin			28	Polly Oliver
11	Edna Olienyk	25	Faye Hicks			28	Sam Williams Sr.
11	Kathy Sherrill	25	A. J. Lee			29	Norma Griffith
12	Velma Farrar	25	Sam Villegas			30	Nan Benn
12	Colleen Stevenson	26	Helen Warren			30	Joan Harris
13	Clyde Chaney	27	Reba Buck			31	Iris Hightower
13	Lidth Cheesman	27	Boyd Clayton			31	Earlene Ivy
13	Sue Row	27	Gene Rapley				
14	Floyd Barger	27	Pauline Smith				
		27	Lou Winchell				



AUGUST

1	Mary Lou Pointon	13	Wesley Warnock
1	Jimmy Rogers	13	Floyd Zornes
2	Dale Kesner	15	Freida Brewer-Myers
2	Jeanne McKim	15	Leo Geher
3	John Weir	15	Marie Martin
4	J. Elaine Gress	16	Dorothy Dolan
4	Betty McCaffrey	17	CeCe Giththens
5	Jerry Benjamin	17	Betty Hanna
6	Kit Hart	17	Kathy Luedloff
6	Sandy Johnson	17	Wanda Ramey
7	Kathy Fritts	17	Mary Wagner
7	Larry Ichniowski	18	Betty Campbell
7	Celestine Sharum	18	Gary Hayes
7	Anne Udouj	18	Earl Martin
7	Louise White	19	Carole Barger
8	Ron Hibbs	19	Barbara Hartman
8	Linda King	19	Gwendolyn Long
8	Joan McCoy	19	Norma Watkins
12	Claire Flynn	20	Karen Carr
12	Richard Kutschall	20	Teddy Martin
12	Rod Tschetter	20	Elwyn Parks
12	Ann Wagnon	20	Betty Pryor
12	Ray Ward	20	Zeta Smith
13	Annella Brewer	21	Tom Leverette
13	Lois Byers	22	Mary Edwards
		22	Jack Wright
		23	Eileen Scott
		26	Alice Orrick
		26	Jean Parker
		28	Janice Hamby
		28	Polly Oliver
		28	Sam Williams Sr.
		29	Norma Griffith
		30	Nan Benn
		30	Joan Harris
		31	Iris Hightower
		31	Earlene Ivy



*VITA volunteer
continue to
provide free tax
preparation at
the RSVP Center
each Tuesday
from 9 a.m.
until 3 p.m.*

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Results

The 2009 tax season had some ups and downs for RSVP—our Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) grant was not renewed, but we were one of only two programs in Arkansas to be a first year recipient of a Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) grant. The lack of a TCE grant kept us from being able to travel to senior centers outside our immediate area when senior centers were unwilling to open their doors to the public.

Some unusual consideration was given to our VITA program—we were allowed by the IRS to prepare returns for individuals with oil and

gas lease income and for the first time we could prepare taxes for the unemployed regardless of income.

Over 2,000 federal tax returns were prepared by RSVP Community Outreach VITA volunteers (we don't keep track of the Arkansas or Oklahoma state returns though we prepare them) resulting in over \$2 million in refunds. Most importantly we prepared returns resulting in families receiving over \$500,000 in Earned Income Credit—a \$200,000 increase over last year. The Fort Smith area has one of the poorest EIC participation rates in the state.

Thanks to the 49 VITA volunteers who donated 4,000+ hours of service with the VITA program. They operated three sites and provided tax services six days a week.

Special thanks goes to our Site Coordinators, Doug Fletcher and Doug Canada who managed the Grand Avenue Baptist Church site, Chuck Gartner and Sarah Stroub who managed the Lavaca City Library site and Don Palmatary and Jo Leach who operated the site at the RSVP Center.

VITA volunteer continue to provide free tax preparation at the RSVP Center each Tuesday from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m.

Ft. Smith Boys and Girls Club Partners with RSVP

The newest RSVP volunteer station is the Fort Smith Boys and Girls Club. Its mission is to help youth of all backgrounds develop qualities needed to become responsible citizens and leaders.

Volunteers are needed to assist with their "Exploring Arkansas" trips this summer. Volunteers will serve as chaperones and a van driver is needed. Scheduled trips include:

- July 14th Northwest Arkansas Baseball in Springdale
- July 22nd Tulsa Air and Space Museum
- July 29th Magic Springs Amusement Park in Hot Springs.



Breakfast of Champions Scheduled

The Breakfast of Champions (BC) will be held on Tuesday, August 18th at the Golden Corral Restaurant in Fort Smith. All RSVP members who have reported at least 48 volunteer hours (prorated for new members) during the last twelve months will receive an invitation no later than August 10th.

The BC is an opportunity for us to say a big thank you to RSVP members for their generous volunteer service. Unfortunately, every year several members are very unhappy because they are unaware of how the event operates. Some things to consider:

- You have to be an invited RSVP member or guest to attend the BC. (If you forget your ticket, Trish will be able to allow you entrance by checking our membership rolls but it will delay your admittance).

- Golden Corral is not open to the public during the BC. The

Breakfast of Champions is a private party and RSVP pays for each person who enters Golden Corral. Grant funds are earmarked for this form of volunteer recognition.

- You can **not** personally pay for a guest—even if they are your spouse, grandchild or chaffer.

- You **can't** show up with a potential RSVP member and expect admission—even if they offer to fill out the application on the spot.

- The doors are never opened early! Those folks you see slipping in are Volunteer Coordinators who have graciously agreed to serve beverages during the BC. The doors open at 7 a.m. to accommodate members who are still employed or who have an early volunteer assignment.

- For the BC an area on the far side of the serving lines (East or back wall) will be set-up for those who have difficulty walking. This area is for not only the obvi-

ous like those with walkers and crutches but also those with temporary problem like new hips or knees. **This is what we did last year also.**

- You are asked to contact the RSVP Center at 783-4155 or (rsvp@ipa.net) to reserve a place at the BC. It would also be appreciated if those who are unable to attend would also notify RSVP.

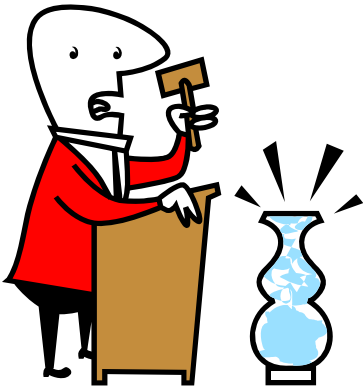
Trish Walker and Susie Reehl look forward to seeing RSVP members at the Breakfast of Champions. Over 400 RSVP members and guests are anticipated at this year's event.



Breakfast of Champions will be Tuesday, August 18th beginning at 7 a.m.



Donors Provide Auction Items for RSVP



As a part of our duties as a Classic Charity we were required to provide \$3,500 in silent and live auction items. RSVP met this goal and we would like to acknowledge the donors who supported us.

- University of Arkansas at Fort Smith
- Wilderness Club at

Big Cedar, Rigdale, Missouri

•**Treasures of the Ozarks by Cynthia Beller**

•**Doug and Jo Carson**

•**Golf USA of Fort Smith**

•**Humana**

and the RSVP Advisory Council members who contributed items :

Lola Brown

Karen Carr

Bill Johnston

Madeline Marquette

Don Palamatary

Beth Presley

Nancy Zornes

The silent and live auctions were held at the Tee Off Ball on Saturday, June 13th and raised over \$10,000 for the Classic Charities..

FSLT volunteer opportunities include an opportunity to see the shows free of charge!

Fort Smith Little Theatre Needs Ushers

Volunteers are needed to greet theatre patrons at the Fort Smith Little Theatre and serve refreshments during intermission. Volunteers may work one or more times during each production, but are asked to commit to helping for a calendar year.

Three productions remain in the year:

•July 30- August 8
Seven Brides for Seven Brothers,

•September 17-26
Rehearsal for Murder,

•November 12-21 **A**



free of charge.

Fort Smith Little Theatre is an all volunteer organization and has been bringing live theatre to our area since 1947.

This is a great volunteer job for a couple or friends as two volunteers are needed at each performance. The Little Theatre is located at 401 North 6th Street in Fort Smith.

Christmas Story.

Volunteer start times for regular performances is 7:15 p.m. and 1:45 p.m. for Sunday matinees. Ushers will need to be able to stand for 45 minutes but will not need to climb stairs.

There will be an opportunity for volunteers to see the performance





News Reehl by Susan Peacock Reehl

(especially those of you out on the course) please know your efforts were appreciated. I write this as my sunburned face peels despite SPF 100 sun block.

Things are re-turning to normal at RSVP after a very hectic six months. Trish and I are back in the RSVP Center on a routine basis now tax season, the Fort Smith Classic and my participation in Leadership Fort Smith are concluded. Next big event will be the Breakfast of Champions in August.

In this edition of the newsletter you will see a lot of “thank you’s” to those who helped with the Fort Smith Classic and I mean every one of them! The event took months of preparation and thousands of hours of staff and volunteer time.

The Classic was held the first really hot week of the summer. To those who put up with the near 100° temperatures and muggy humidity,

The role that Trish Walker played in this year’s Fort Smith Classic as Volunteer Director was crucial to the success of the event. Between June 1st and the end of the tournament on June 21st Trish worked seven days a week—many times more than twelve hours a day. I’m not really sure why she bothered to even go home during the tournament; she arrived no later than 5:30 a.m. and generally didn’t leave until 9 p.m. Trish is to be commended for her outstanding contribution to this community event.

Please note the donors on the opposite page. We are very grateful for the generosity of our supporters. A special thanks to Jo Leach, Fred Hander, Chuck Gartner, Don Palmatary, Bill Johnson, Mary Lou Pointon

and her daughter Pam for selling sweepstake tickets at the Rodeo.

At this time my plans are to mail ‘Breakfast of Champions’ invitations to RSVP members who volunteered at least 48 hours (prorated for new members) in the previous twelve months by August 3rd. I will also mail postcards to those members who will not be getting invitations (because of not reporting hours or having fewer than 48 hours) on the same day. Every RSVP member should be getting correspondence from RSVP the first week in August. If you have not heard from us by Monday August 10th please call or drop by RSVP.

Thank you for volunteering!



Susie Reehl accepts the Employee of Year Award from Vice Chair H.C. Varnadore at the Western Arkansas Counseling & Guidance Center Anniversary meeting in April.

Thanks

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

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**Please report your
volunteer hours!**

WestArk RSVP

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Fort Smith, AR 72901

Phone: **783-4155**

Fax: 782-2269

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

Staff

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Program Director
susiersvp@ipa.net

Trish Walker

Volunteer Manager
trishrsvp@ipa.net

VISTA

Chuck Gartner

Advisory Council

Karen Carr

Marsha Brown

Fred Hander

Ginger Helton

Deborah Huizenga,

Anita James

Bill Johnston

Sandi Klein

Madeline Marquette,

Dorothy McCartt

Kiel Norgard

Don Palmatary

Mary Lou Pointon

Beth Presley

Tim Randolph

Liz Robinson

Nancy Zornes

Mayor Ray Baker

Gary Luedloff