

# WestArk RSVP Newsletter

## Special points of interest:

- Holiday Open House will be December 8th and 9th. Family and friends are welcome.
- January 8, 2010 is the last day to report 2009 volunteer hours to RSVP.

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## Medicare Open Enrollment



**M**aking a choice from 50+ Medicare Advantage or Medicare Part D plans is not easy and many folks just let last year's plan turn into this year's plan. Some people don't want to think about being seriously ill and the financial hardships a chronic illness could cause them.

By the time you receive this newsletter the Medicare plans for

2010 will have been made public. There is a good chance that most of the Arkansas Medicare plans are going to increase in cost and/or decrease coverage. Major changes should be expected.

The unbiased way to compare Medicare plans is to start with the Medicare.gov website. You can contact the RSVP Center for an appointment to review your choices for 2010.

Open enrollment starts Nov. 15th.

Use common sense when choosing what type of Medicare coverage you want. Make all insurance decisions with at least the same diligence that you would use when purchasing a used car. Be aware that the average commission for selling you a Medicare Advantage Plan is significant to the insurance agent who gets you to sign on the dotted line .

Even if you are satisfied with your current coverage you owe it to yourself to at least review what is available for 2010. The Medicare insurance market is extremely competitive—companies are fighting for your business.

## New Members

**P**lease welcome the newest members of RSVP. The need for volunteers in our community continues to grow as requests for assistance from our partners increases. Now more than ever,

volunteer service is making a difference in our community.

**Clara Alvelson**

**Jeff Cates**

**Anne Danko**

**Stephanie Ferrari**

**Bill Fields**

**Lynda Fulmer**

**Martha Hawley**

**Joyce Henderson-**

**Helga Lafalette**

**Mary Mathews**

**Laverne Neihouse**

**Barbara Jo Smith**

**John Sterling**

**Betty Stutts**

**Lou Turner**



*Welcome to our newest members!*

### RSVP Center

#### Holiday

#### Closings:

*Nov. 25th—27th,*

*December 4th,*

*and*

*Dec. 23rd*

*through Jan. 1st.*

## Holiday Open House

**T**he Holiday Open House will be held on Tuesday, December 8th and Wednesday, December 9th, 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, spinach dip and many other treats.

The 2010 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.

Overflow parking will be available courtesy of First Baptist Church in the Grand Avenue and 14th Street lot or behind Channel 5 off of "D" Street.

**NOTE:** The RSVP Center will be closed Friday, December 11th for carpet cleaning.



## Nationwide Tour “Volunteer of the Week”

**T**rish Walker, RSVP Volunteer Manager, was notified in early September that she had been selected by the PGA Nationwide

Tour as the “Volunteer of the Week” for the 2009 Fort Smith Classic. Trish served as Volunteer Director for the event and on the Tournament Council. She

was presented with a plaque in appreciation and recognition of her outstanding contributions to the event.



## Angel Tree Needs Volunteers



**T**he Angel Tree at Central Mall will need volunteers to assist the public in choosing an angel and to be available to receive gifts as they are returned. The Angel Tree is a community project of the Salvation Army which provides

gifts to the needy at Christmas, Angel Tree begins the evening of November 19th.

Volunteers will be needed between the hours of 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. through December 11th. Volunteer are asked to take a four hour shift.

*Thanksgiving is an American holiday and it only seems fitting that at this time of year we should take stock of an American tradition for which we can all be proud—volunteering.*

*Together we make a difference!*

## Helpful Forms

**A**re you going to try to go it alone when choosing a Medicare Advantage Plan this year? You might find the “Medicare Protection Toolkit” helpful. Copies are available at

the RSVP Center or you can download the 8 page pamphlet at <http://www.daas.ar.gov/pdf/medicareprotectiontoolkit08.pdf>.

The toolkit contains a list of questions you should ask yourself be-

fore you select a plan and a form to have your insurance agent complete before you make a purchase. The pamphlet will help you recognize “Red Flags” and provide facts about Medicare Advantage Plans.



## Christmas Stockings

Once again, RSVP has been asked to fill stockings for needy children. If you wish to participate you may pick up empty stockings at the RSVP Center 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 by Thursday, December 3th.

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 with the Salvation Army.

Over a 1,200 local chil-

dren received Christmas stockings



last year. Nearly 400 of those stockings were provided through the generosity of our RSVP members and friends.



## November Birthdays

|    |                    |    |                    |    |                        |
|----|--------------------|----|--------------------|----|------------------------|
| 1  | Genell Graham      | 12 | Don Manuel         | 22 | Lynda Fulmer           |
| 1  | Grace James        | 12 | Sue Yancey         | 22 | Elizabeth Gardenhire   |
| 1  | Steve McEntire     | 13 | Audrey Clemons     | 22 | Fred Stecher           |
| 1  | Leland Pitsch      | 14 | James Worley       | 23 | Susan Chaney           |
| 2  | William Craig      | 14 | Alice Wright       | 24 | Betty McSwain          |
| 2  | JoAnn Jackson      | 15 | Dorothy Calderera  | 24 | Iyla Stranahan         |
| 3  | Paul Anderson      | 15 | Bradley Martin     | 24 | Katherine Tookey       |
| 3  | Margie Evans       | 16 | Carole Hargrave    | 25 | Bette Childers         |
| 3  | Ann Grimes         | 16 | Doris Johnson      | 25 | Smokey McPhail         |
| 4  | Glenda Wofford     | 16 | Cecelia Kramer     | 26 | Patricia Fellner       |
| 5  | Betty Etzkorn      | 18 | Wanda Jeffcoat     | 26 | Veroma Hiatt           |
| 5  | Pamela June Sutton | 18 | Mardell McClurkin  | 26 | Jan O'Leary            |
| 6  | Warren Gardenhire  | 19 | Joy Bailey         | 27 | Laverne Fast           |
| 7  | Carl Grizzle       | 19 | Mildred Deal       | 27 | Helen Jetton           |
| 7  | Charlene Kalmer    | 19 | Patricia Gunselman | 28 | Donald Fast            |
| 9  | Maizie Jones       | 19 | Jim Kitchen        | 28 | Sue Frey               |
| 10 | Ruthie Martin      | 19 | Leta Underwood     | 28 | Tara Kifer             |
| 10 | Kay Pope           | 21 | Wanda Cash         | 28 | Irene Michael          |
| 12 | Ludema Anderson    | 21 | Rose Marie Duffy   | 28 | Evelyn Sallee          |
| 12 | Kenneth Brisco     | 21 | Dimple Johnson     | 30 | Betty Bowlin           |
| 12 | John Brown         | 22 | Larry Brisco       | 30 | Berna Dean Inklebarger |

## RSVP 101: What Should You Report?

**F**requently when RSVP members call to report their volunteer hours the conversations starts with “I’m not sure what I should report . . .” The answer to that questions is to please report volunteer service you provided at RSVP

Volunteer Stations (which is what we call our partners). Hours need to be reported by month for each Volunteer Station. A list of all the current Volunteer Stations for Sebastian and Crawford county may be found on the following page.

resigned every three years) a Memorandum of Understanding with us. Our practice is to be inclusive and organizations interested in partnering with RSVP may contact the Program Director, Susie Reehl.

The only real gray area is Independent Living, which we define as any service to a disabled or frail adult which aids them in remaining in their own home.

Volunteer stations are local organizations that have signed (and

# RSVP

## Lead With Experience

## December Birthdays

|                   |                     |                        |                       |
|-------------------|---------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 Doris Barney    | 5 Mary Talley       | 11 Art Martin          | 19 Betty Mulkey       |
| 1 Linda Donberger | 6 Ellen Edwards     | 12 Bill Beall          | 20 Beverly Davis      |
| 1 Mary Fletcher   | 6 Kay Williams      | 12 Wanda Blaylock      | 20 Jean Kastenbaum    |
| 1 Clara Rubarth   | 7 Barbara Hanna     | 12 Lysbeth Manuel      | 20 Ben Maxey          |
| 2 Ilah Barnhardt  | 7 Don Palmatary     | 12 Dories Shuttleworth | 21 Nadine Harlan      |
| 2 Bill Smith      | 8 Barbara Delong    | 13 David Callahan, Sr. | 22 Carol Bracken      |
| 2 Ralph Smith     | 8 Esther Holland    | 14 Joseph Silva        | 22 Betty Ingels       |
| 3 Lois Elledge    | 9 Chuck Gartner     | 14 Barry Takei         | 22 Bertha Swindell    |
| 3 Nita Geren      | 9 Bob Prough        | 15 Marilyn Bullington  | 23 Bertine Rozelle    |
| 3 James Rogers    | 10 Cathy Bain       | 15 Jo Frances Miller   | 24 Muriel Lovell      |
| 3 Becky Sanburg   | 10 Linda Gabriel    | 16 O M Free            | 24 Jeff Nusbaum       |
| 4 John Furlow     | 10 Lucille Hart     | 16 B.G. Hendrix        | 25 Iva Darling        |
| 4 Dudley Little   | 10 Sandy Linimon    | 17 Gordon Kuykendall   | 25 Betty Tindall      |
| 4 Edward Meyer    | 10 Jim Olienyk      | 17 Margaret Parks      | 26 Mary Goebel        |
| 5 Wilma Brisco    | 10 Gerald Primm     | 17 Jeannie White       | 28 Dorothy Snyder     |
| 5 Lillian France  | 11 Evalyn Burton    | 18 Sharon Szgiel       | 29 Jerry Clemons, DDS |
| 5 Charles Kleck   | 11 Douglas Fletcher | 18 Allie Whitaker      | 29 Dortha Gruver      |
| 5 Joan Stratmann  | 11 Kenneth Glover   | 19 Nancy Heflin        | 29 Ann Staton         |
|                   | 11 Lucille Goforth  |                        | 31 Virginia Roberson  |

## RSVP Volunteer Stations

**W**hat follows is a list of Sebastian and Crawford county organizations that partner with RSVP and are volunteer stations. Volunteer service with an organization in Sebastian and Crawford county **NOT listed here does not need to be reported to RSVP.**

The 25 volunteer stations with the most volunteer activity are in **BOLD type.**

**AARP** \* Abilities Unlimited \* Alma Performing Arts Center \* Alzheimer's Association \* American Cancer Society \* ARC for the River Valley \* Arkansas Revenue Department \* Arkansas River Valley Nature Center \* **Barling Senior Activity Center** \* Beckman Senior Activity Center \* Bluff Avenue Baptist Church \* Bost Inc. \* Boys Shelter \* **Cedarville Senior Center** \* Celebrity Classic \* Children's Emergency Shelter \* Children's Service League \* Christ the King Church &

School \* City of Fort Smith \* Clayton House \*

**Community Service Clearinghouse** \*

Commissary Kiwanis Club \* Compassionate Ministries of Crawford \* COTS - Church on the Streets \* **Crawford**

**County Volunteers for Literacy** \* Fianna Hills Nursing & Rehabilitation Center \* First Presbyterian Church \*

**First Tee** \* Fort Smith Art Center \* **Fort Smith**

**Classic Golf Tournament** \* **Fort Smith Convention Center/Visitors Center** \*

Fort Smith Historical Society \* Fort Smith Little Theatre \* Fort Smith Museum of History \* Fort Smith

National Historic Site \* Fort Smith Public Library \*

**Fort Smith Public School System** \* **Fort Smith Senior Activity Center**

\* Fountain of Youth Adult Day Center \* Girl Scouts Diamonds of AR OK & TX \*

Girls Inc. of Fort Smith \* Goddard United Methodist Church \* **Golden**

**Rule Clothes Closet** \*

Good Samaritan Clinic \* Greenwood Senior Activity Center \* Habitat for Humanity \* Heart to Heart \* Hope Chest:

West-Ark Church of Christ \* **Independent**

**Living** \* Immaculate Conception Church/School \* Kistler Center for Children \* **Lavaca**

**Senior Activity Center** \*

Literacy Council of Western Arkansas \* Methodist Nursing

Home \* **Midtown Senior Activity Center** \*

Mountainburg Senior Inn \* **Mulberry Senior Center** \* American Red

Cross \* NARFE Chapter 299 \* Next Step Day Room \* Oak Cemetery Association \* Peachtree Hospice \* **Project Compassion** \* Project Linus \* **Ray Baker Senior**

**Activity Center** \* **Reynolds Cancer Support House** \* Salvation Army \* South Sebastian County Historical Society \*

**Sparks Regional Medical Center** \* St. Boniface Catholic Church/School \*

**St. Edward Mercy Hospice** \* **St. Edward Mercy Medical Center** \* St. John's Sack Lunch

Program \* **St. Paul United Methodist Church** \* St. Scholastica Retreat Center \* **Summit Medical Center Auxiliary** \* **Trolley Museum** \*

United Way of Fort Smith Area \* University of Arkansas-Ft Smith \* VA Clinic \* **Van Buren Senior Inn** \* Van Buren Visitors Center \* **VITA -Volunteer Income Tax Assistance** \* We Care Foundation \* Wesley United Methodist Church \* West Central Center on Aging \* Western Arkansas Counseling & Guidance Center.



**Volunteers stand out from the crowd!**



## News Reehl by Susan Peacock Reehl

I feel kind of silly writing an editorial on top of a wreath while the air conditioning is blasting away—at least it has finally stopped raining!

I am proud of Trish Walker and the job she did as Volunteer Director for the Fort Smith Classic. I am so glad that her contribution was recognized by the Nationwide Tour. Speaking of Trish have you seen her new haircut? Not only is it cute, but it makes her invisible. Volunteers walk right past her office because they no longer recognize her!

I am seeing some significant changes in how and when our members volunteer. Our members now volunteer with fewer organization. Seven or eight years ago most members

volunteered with more than one organizations - now that is a rarity. Perhaps in these dismal economic times our members are focusing their time and resources on what is most important to them.

Mailings use to be a significant volunteer placement—but we have taken it off our enrolment form because most organizations no longer process mailings by hand. We no longer enroll RSVP members unless they are interested in an on-going volunteer assignment in the community.

RSVP now directs its own service program—RSVP Community Outreach. Volunteer positions with RSVP Community Outreach require orientation and on-going training. Funding for our program now depends on competitive fed-

eral and private foundation grants. Our policy of not fundraising locally is getting more difficult to maintain

Many charities will need extra help as the Holiday Season approaches—please be generous with your time and talent. Fill a stocking for a needy child, provide a gift to Project Compassion for a nursing home resident, make a donation to the local Foodbank, 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)

*Paid for by the Campaign to Re-elect Tracy Pennartz.*

WAC&GC

## WestArk RSVP

P.O. Box 11818

401 North 13th Street

Fort Smith, AR 72901

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ORGANIZATION  
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FORT SMITH, ARK  
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Return Service Requested

RSVP—35 Years of  
VOLUNTEER  
Community Service

### **WestArk RSVP**

401 North 13th Street  
Fort Smith, AR 72901

Phone: **783-4155**

Fax: 782-2269

E-mail: [rsvp@ipa.net](mailto:rsvp@ipa.net)

Web site:

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

**Susan Reehl**

*Program Director*  
[svp@ipa.net](mailto:svp@ipa.net)

**Trish Walker**

*Volunteer Manager*  
[trishrsvp@ipa.net](mailto:trishrsvp@ipa.net)

### **AmeriCorps VISTA**

John Arnold  
[johnrsvp@ipa.net](mailto:johnrsvp@ipa.net)

Chuck Gartner  
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Euba Harris Winton

### **Advisory Council**

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

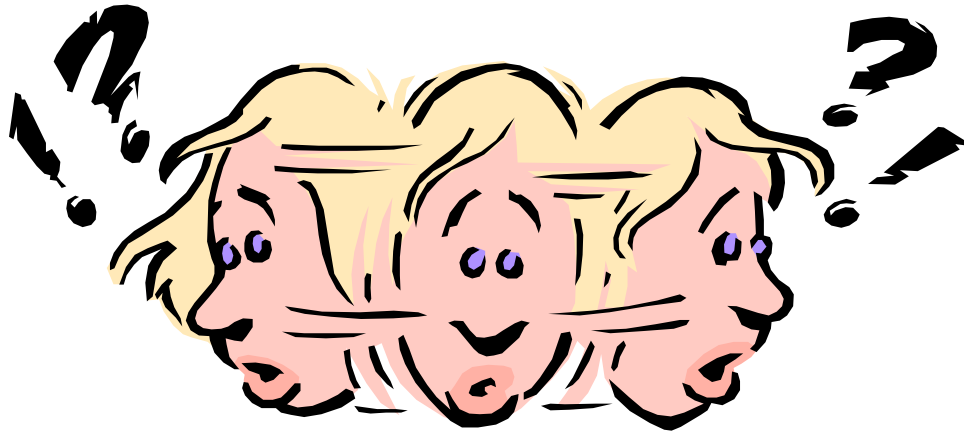
Tim Randolph

Liz Robinson

Nancy Zornes

Mayor Ray Baker

Gary Luedloff



## Questions about Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Plans or Medicare Advantage Plans? We've got answers . . .

*Many changes have  
occurred which may  
effect your pocketbook.  
Look at all your options  
before automatically  
re-enrolling.*

*Make an appointment  
with a trained volunteer  
advocate who will help  
you sort through the many  
plans available to Arkan-  
sas Medicare recipients.*

**Open Enrollment November 15th—December 31st.**

**Call RSVP for an appointment: 783-4155**

*WestArk RSVP, 401 North 13th Street, Fort Smith, AR 72901  
(Corner of Grand Avenue and 13th Street)*