

Volunteers in Plano

Dear VIP Volunteers and Supervisors,

Volunteer Resources Program wins the International Distinguished Services Award

Now operating under the umbrella of the Parks and Recreation Department, the Volunteer Resources Group continues to provide countless benefits for municipal organizations and the citizens of Plano, as well as continuing to earn national acclaim for its effective programming. **As a testament to the effectiveness of Plano's volunteer efforts, the Association of Volunteer Administrators awarded the Volunteer Resources Group its 2003 International Distinguished Services Award.**

The Volunteer Resources Group encompasses the VIP Program, Workplace C.A.R.E.S. (City Advocates Recruiting Employees into Service), and the Emergency Volunteer Resources Program (EVRC). It is committed to encouraging citizen participation, developing money-saving programs, and responding to the needs of the Plano community, while enhancing municipal services.

In 2003 more than 5,000 volunteers donated their services to the City of Plano through the VIP Program, helping in areas such as: libraries, environment, education and public safety. In total, 87,570 hours were donated last year.

Meet the 3,000+ Club

<i>Volunteer</i>	<i>Department</i>	<i>Accumulated Hrs.</i>
Joe Hill	City Manager's Office	13,581
Cecil West	Senior Center	5,632
Violet Brion	Senior Center	5,256
Richard Tobin	Library Tech. Services	5,218
Carol Daugherty	Senior Center	4,950
Phyllis Sloan	Library Tech. Services	4,777
Rosemarie Chronister	Literacy for Life	4,679
Toni Queen	City Secretary	3,846
Anna Friesen	Library Tech. Services	3,740
Kay Canavan	Senior Center	3,242
Tom Grant	Senior Center	3,158
William J. Fell	Police & Fire	3,057
Jane Duggan	Senior Center	3,039

The amount of services these people have donated is truly inspiring. Their contributions add up to a total dollar value of \$1,183,838 for the year 2003.

Thank you for being part of this program,

Respectfully,

Robin Popik
Volunteer Resources Supervisor

Judi Gradt
VIP Administrative Assistant

Did you know:

- An estimated 85% of municipal services are enhanced and facilitated through volunteer efforts.
- Parks & Recreation is our largest user of volunteers, with 39,168 hours donated this year by volunteers, (value of \$521,132). The largest area within Parks and Recreation is the Senior Center, with 150 volunteers.
- Libraries used 550 volunteers to assist with the following: Literacy for Life, Small Talk, Genealogy, Technical Services, Homework Center and book sorting and shelving, which represents a dollar value of \$246,503.
- Ninety-one Master Composters volunteered a total of 1,871 hours this year. One of their activities included the Very Special Arts Festival, where 500 attendees were introduced to composting and seed planting.
- Since the program's inception in 1983, volunteers have contributed nearly 825,000 hours to municipal initiatives, valued at over \$8.6 million.





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Did you ever picture yourself on this aerial ladder?

By Marcia Hurst

Designed for adults to learn more about how the fire department is organized and operates, the Citizens Fire Academy (CFA) allows participants to spend time at fire stations, meeting and riding out with firefighters, driving a fire engine, climbing an aerial ladder, learning CPR and using the jaws-of-life equipment.

After 10 sessions, the CFA graduates have an opportunity to volunteer with the **Plano Fire Rescue Association (PFRA)**. "Our membership is a cross-section of Plano's finest—young/old, men/women, school teachers, engineers, CPA's, retirees," comments Marcia Hurst, PFRA President. As a volunteer, you can:

- ❖ Provide paramedic shuttle service to paramedics who need transportation from area hospitals back to their stations – this saves the expense and down time required for in-service engines to retrieve their firefighters. That means better emergency services for the citizens of Plano. **In 2003, PFRA volunteered over 1600 hours of service related to the Paramedic Shuttle.**



- ❖ Host the annual PFD Awards Banquet, where awards such as Fire Fighter of the Year and Rookie of the Year are presented. These awards are made to individuals nominated by their peers and sponsored by local businesses.
- ❖ Help raise funds to restore a 1982 American LaFrance fire engine for PFD's use in parades, civic events, and for firefighter funeral transportation. **During the time this engine was in service, Plano grew from a population of 83,000 to 194,000; the number of fire stations doubled from four to eight; fire/EMS calls increased from 2,000 to 12,000; and the number of fire personnel grew from 100 to 200.**

- ❖ Staff the "Lost Kids Booth" at the Plano Balloon Festival, and participate in events sponsored/supported by PFD, such as health/safety fairs, Kids Night Out, Very Special Arts Festival, CPR Blowout, and the Christmas Parade.

In 2003 PFRA awarded its first two scholarships to children of PFD personnel. In 2004 it will award four \$500 scholarships. PFRA was founded in 1995 for the purpose of supporting the Plano Fire Department. Since then, 500 Plus individuals have graduated from the academy.

If you would like to help us restore this engine, tax-deductible contributions can be made to "PFRA" at 2701 W. 15th, Suite 192, Plano, Texas 75075-7523.

Citizens Police Academy Alumni Association



The **Plano Citizens Police Academy Alumni Association** is a group of volunteers who have graduated from the City of Plano Citizens Police Academy. Members of the PCPAAA volunteered more than 2,300 hours in 2003, through the following activities:

- ❖ The PCPAAA helped collect over \$220,000 in traffic fines (to date)

working on the "Warrant Project." Working under the direction of a police officer, members called people with outstanding warrants and convinced them to voluntarily take care of their warrants.

- ❖ The Hostage Negotiation Team uses members during training scenarios as hostage takers and hostages, increasing the realism of the training and the effectiveness of the hostage negotiators.
- ❖ Select members serve on the Crisis Support Team. This group can respond in the event of a major disaster or other public safety incident. This team has been in place since 1999, formed as a result of the Rigsbee Day Care hostage situation where 80 children were held hostage.
- ❖ Members serve on numerous boards and committees:

Training Advisory Board, Crime Prevention Advisory Board, and the Police Banquet Committee.

- ❖ Members also take part in the Citizens Handicap Parking Patrol, which issues citations to vehicles illegally parked in handicap parking places. In 2003, 720 citations were issued to violators.
- ❖ Other members participate in the "Kids Night Out" program, a safe alternative to "trick or treating" by providing security to ensure the safety of the children attending. In 2003, approximately 4,000 people attended Kids Night Out.
- ❖ They direct traffic, help park vehicles, and deliver water during the annual "Teddy Bear Run", which benefits the children at the Collin County Children's Advocacy Center, at the Plano Balloon Festival and the Fourth of July celebration. They also man the Crime Prevention Booth at these events.

The PCPAAA awards two scholarships each year to college bound children of Plano police officers. They also support the Christmas Cops Program, which helped 175 families this year.



Volunteers in Plano



Student Job Shadowing Promotes Municipal Career Choices

by Deborah Stone

Punxsutawney Phil may have seen his shadow this month, forecasting six weeks of bad weather, but it was sunny skies that greeted 12 Plano West Senior High students (pictured above) who spent Monday, February 10, participating in the City's 2004 Groundhog Job Shadow Day.

An annual tradition for four years, Groundhog Job Shadow Day, a City of Plano and Junior Achievement partnership, is dedicated to sharing the life experience of running a City, by having students "shadow" a municipal mentor.

"Visiting City Hall allowed me to see how amazing the City of Plano really is. Taking part in the Groundhog Job Shadow Day allowed me to see how much hard work is put into keeping the City running, and it opened up a new world of future opportunities for me," said Ashley Martin, a student participant.

The day's agenda included learning the benefits of working for a City government, education requirements for various positions, two hours of job shadowing, an opportunity to see what the mentor's department does, and exploring the diverse range of careers available within municipal government.

After a morning orientation, 11 mentor teams spent time learning about specific career options in local government through a two-hour job shadow. Plano City Manager Tom Muehlenbeck, Public Safety Communications (9-1-1) Director Ron Timmons and Davis Library Manager Cathy Ziegler, were among the diverse mentors who exposed their "shadow" to municipal operations within their areas.

"I felt that the students came away with a tremendous amount of knowledge and appreciation for the work that our City officials do on a daily basis," said Ms. Lee Ann Begis, Plano West Senior High Teacher/Coordinator. "The Job Shadow Day gave the students the opportunity to see first hand what it takes to run an award-winning City like Plano."



Student Checks Out Career Direction

By Karen Williams

Lisa Pinard is a senior at the University of North Texas, with a major in Communication Studies and a minor in Psychology. Lisa plans to graduate in May, 2004 and intends to enter into the workforce as soon as possible, hopefully, in a field related to Public Relations or Event Planning. To help her along, Lisa took an internship with the Event Coordinator in Plano's Parks and Recreation Department. "I had previous experience working for the City of Plano as a lifeguard, Learn-to-Swim instructor, and swim team coach," explains Lisa, "so this was an easy transition."

Lisa's assignments ranged from marketing and public relations to graphic design. "I was fortunate to work with a number of people who gave me opportunities to show 'what I can do.' I was also incredibly lucky to have a supervisor like Karen Williams, Plano Parks & Recreation's Event Coordinator. She patiently helped me when it seemed my computer hated me, and she gave me invaluable advice on many topics pertaining to her field," said Lisa when asked about her internship.

One of Lisa's projects involved work for the Texas Recreation and Parks Society Regional Conference (TRAPS). "Lisa was given the assignment of designing signs and other publications for the conference. During this project, she gained a valuable familiarity with CorelDraw software," explained Pamela Wharton, TRAPS Regional Conference Committee Member and Learn-to-Swim Coordinator for Plano. She also assisted Karen with the Dickens in Historic Downtown Plano event, which included the annual Tree Lighting Ceremony on December 5, 2003. Duties performed by Lisa included scheduling and coordination of participants for the ceremony, writing speeches, and scripting and queuing the ceremony for key speakers.

Another large project for Lisa was a customer survey. The survey was designed to ascertain the possible reasons patrons of Parks & Recreation's Leisure Programs chose Drop-Off Registration rather than Telephone or Internet Registration. This project required Lisa to develop an easy to read, easy to answer survey postcard, along with a method of recording and analyzing the responses as they were returned.

Lisa said, "This experience was just what I needed. The work environment at the office was friendly and cooperative. I learned computer programs, Event Planning and Public Relations."



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The Different Faces of Literacy—See, Hear, Speak and Read

by Angela Funai

On any given morning, afternoon, evening, or weekend, small groups of tutors and adult students can be found working together at the five Plano public libraries, and off-site locations like local coffee shops and company conference rooms. The team of nearly 200 Literacy for Life and Small Talk volunteers gave 6,788 hours last year helping other adults improve their reading, writing, and speaking skills in English. The volunteers come from all walks of life:

professionals, retired teachers, parents, job-seekers; yet, they come together for a common purpose—to help others build literacy skills and self-esteem.

The Literacy volunteers have a life-changing impact on the Collin County community. Approximately 11 percent of Collin County residents function at the lowest literacy level, according to census research, and the dedication of these volunteers is helping to reduce that statistic - one life...one



adult...one family...at a time. Research studies show the importance of adult literacy and without the Literacy volunteers of the Plano Public Library System, 270 adults in our community would not have the skills they have today.

In order to see progress, our volunteers and participants must overcome obstacles daily. The volunteers have family and work demands, yet they still find two hours a week to contribute.

The participants have similar demands, coupled with that nagging voice that urges them to give up, yet they press on and improve over time. The Literacy volunteers use many innovative approaches such as: a field trip to the local post office to help a participant who has never mailed a package in the U.S., and providing a guest speaker to talk with a small group about a topic of interest or current event.



Master Composter Extraordinaire

By Heather Merchant

Janet Hurley has made huge contributions to the Plano community through her work with the Master Composter Program, and the Master Composter Advisory Board. She has also been very active in the

MADD group locally for a number of years. She has been involved in many aspects of Plano's composting programs over the last several years since taking the Master Composter training in 1999. Hurley has participated in a broad spectrum of the program's outreach into the Plano community. She helped with all the Master Composter training classes since 1999, and has worked on numerous special events, including the Texas Smartscape Lawn & Garden Showcase, The Great American Clean-up and Texas Recycles Day.

Janet has been one of the primary instructors for the adult composting classes, including Compost 101, and the Yardwise Series. She served as volunteer coordinator for over 50 volunteers working on the opening celebration for the Children's

Environmental Discovery Gardens on September 27, 2003. Over 800 children and parents attended this event. Janet often works at the Plano Pure Compost sales days and is very good at answering customer questions about compost uses and benefits. She has been extremely dedicated and works very hard physically at the Backyard Compost Demonstration Site's monthly workdays.

Janet has also put in many hours working as a member of the Master Composter Advisory Board. Her leadership skills have been instrumental in the smooth functioning of the Board and in their follow-through with commitments. Janet is a very key person in this group of leaders. She is an extremely friendly and outgoing person who loves interacting with people.

Janet has contributed over 100 volunteer hours to these City programs over the last year, while also holding down a full time job. Because of her involvement and efforts, hundreds of Plano residents—both adults and children—have been educated about the value of recycling, composting, and taking care of our environment. These children and adults are now working to make our community a more healthful place to reside.

Celebrating Excellence
2004 VIP Supervisor of the Year
Nomination Form

Please choose an "Exceptional Supervisor" who has made your volunteer experience both fulfilling to you and beneficial to the community. Then either mail, Email, or fax using the contact information at the bottom of this page. Completed forms need to be returned to Robin Popik by March 19, 2004. (Use additional paper if required.)

Name of Nominee _____ Dept. _____

Nominated by _____ Phone # _____

Email address _____

Relationship to nominee, e.g., volunteer, employee reporting to, co-worker, supervisor _____

Describe why the nominee merits consideration for recognition in terms of how well he or she supervises volunteers. Where possible, give examples of how well he or she gives direction/instructions, trains volunteers, expresses appreciation for good work, encourages suggestions, provides suitable working conditions, and considers the needs of volunteers.

Describe how the nominee has contributed to the City of Plano's ability to better meet the needs of our citizens through the creative, efficient and effective use of volunteers. Consider the benefit to the volunteer, the impact on City employees' workloads and the effect on service to the taxpayer.

Please send, email or fax completed form to:

City of Plano
Parks & Recreation
1409 Avenue K
Plano, TX 75074

Volunteers in Plano
phone 927-941-7114
Fax (972) 941-7469
Email: robinp@plano.gov





Volunteers in Plano



Volunteers grow and develop in the most opportune places and leave a fragrance that is rarely forgotten.

On Thursday, March 25 we will celebrate the fruits of your labor and love at the annual Volunteers In Plano (VIP) Recognition Awards Ceremony. This year's theme, "Planting the Seeds of Caring" reveals our initiative to find new ways to bring teens and families together through volunteering. Our volunteers inspire the people they help and they in turn are inspired to serve others.

The keynote speaker for the event will be Gloria Campos, anchor for WFAA-TV/Channel 8 News. Mayor Pat Evans will express her gratitude to the volunteers who make Plano a better place to live through their dedication and service. Thomas H. Muehlenbeck, City Manager, will present the Supervisor of the Year Award.

Volunteers being recognized provide a bouquet of services or support individualized efforts.

"This year we are celebrating the outstanding contributions of teenagers, and men and women from all walks of life. What they have in common is a commitment to making their community a better place to live," said Robin Popik, Volunteer Resources Supervisor. Those volunteers with 50 or more hours in 2003 have been invited to join us at the Courtyard Theatre for the celebration. Over 200 people are expected to attend the program, which is a special time to recognize and celebrate the tremendous efforts of volunteers.

Community support of the event includes catering by Albertsons and LaMadeleine's French Bakery & Café; and door prizes from Plano Repertory Theatre, The Container Store, Poor Richard's Café, Big Easy, and Fishmonger's, Starbucks, Whole Foods, Celebrity Bakery & Cafe and the Sample House.

VIP Newsletter by:
Robin Popik
email: robinp@plano.gov
website: www.plano.gov

Please call the Volunteer Resources Office, 972-941-7436, with changes to your name, address and phone number.



Volunteers Resources Group
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972-941-7114