

HURRAH Times

HURRAH
Happy Upbeat Retirees
(& OTHER) Residents
Actively Helping

Summer 2010

A publication
about Happy
Upbeat Retirees
(& other) Residents
Actively Helping
in Naperville
Community Unit
School District 203

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

HURRAH Volunteer Fair

Monday,
September 27, 2010

1 PM

District 203
Administrative
Center

For more information,
contact Russ Marineau
at 630-420-1029 or
the District 203 Office of
Community Relations at
630-420-6475

203 West Hillside Road
Naperville, IL
60540-6589
630-420-6475
Fax 630-420-1066
www.naperville203.org



Reading with the Dennlers

Joyce and Bob Dennler are so popular at Kingsley Elementary School that they have their own sign, which says, "Reading with the Dennlers." Students who might need a little extra boost with reading take the sign with them when they have a chance to read a book with either Joyce or Bob. The longtime volunteers at Kingsley originally started because their grandson, who is now a high school freshman, attended school there.

"Our daughter-in-law was volunteering in the Library Media Center (LMC) and she asked me to help," Joyce said.

That was eight years ago and even though their son and his family moved to New Jersey, the couple continues to help out every Tuesday morning. They are completely at home among the stacks of books in the LMC because they have been involved with

the college textbook publishing business for 60 years.

Joyce checks books in and out, shelves books, listens to children read and helps them with math. Bob also listen to students read

aloud and does math problems with them (using both standard math and contemporary math methods and problems) in addition to helping out in the LMC.

Joyce and Bob, who are both 80, will be celebrating their 57th wedding anniversary in August. They both agreed that volunteering is rewarding, especially seeing the children grow and develop.

"Personally, this is the most selfish thing I do," Joyce said with a smile. "I enjoy the children and the staff and teachers. Volunteering is so pleasant and the time spent goes too fast." "It's so much fun to work here," Bob said. "It's really enjoyable and it keeps you young." *



Generations serving generations

HURRAH serves as a model

Over the past 20 years, HURRAH has become a model for mobilizing and retaining volunteers whose work has been changing lives in classrooms across the District. The program is widely regarded as one of the best intergenerational programs in the country.

As Baby Boomers age, the Illinois population of those 50 and older is projected to increase from 3.2 million in 2000 to 5.3 million by 2030. That increase means retirees could be spending many years in retirement. According to a proclamation issued by the State of Illinois, 2010 is "The Year of the Engaged Older Adult" with the theme of "Generations Serving Generations." For an organization such as HURRAH, that's a rallying cry to recruit more volunteers in the present and plant the seeds for volunteerism in the future.

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Booking it at the LRC

When Joyce Trier decided to downsize after her husband died, she moved to Naperville to be closer to her daughters, Todra Oken and Sharna Riemer. Todra was a volunteer at the Kennedy Junior High School Learning Resource Center and she thought her mom might enjoy it, too. That was four years ago and



Joyce Trier

Joyce, who is 74, has volunteered on a regular basis since then.

“I’ve always loved libraries,” she said. “I usually shelve books that the kids have returned and straighten up the books. I do whatever is needed, and help with inventory at the end of the year.”

She knows firsthand how important volunteers can be in schools because she served for seven years as a board member for Butler School District 53 in Oak Brook.

Joyce said there are many rewards of volunteering including seeing the children’s love of books in this day of high-tech equipment; watching them mature from sixth grade to eighth

grade and seeing their excitement about life in general.

“I especially enjoy days that authors are in the library talking to the kids, and listening to Paulette Goodman (recently retired LRC Director) reading or discussing books with the kids,” she said. “I also enjoy working with the other volunteers and getting to know them.”

If retirees are considering volunteering in the schools, she would say, “Do it.”

“We have time, and it keeps you young,” she said. “I’ve talked to many people who volunteer, and they all say they get a lot out of it personally and really enjoy what they are doing to contribute to the education of the children.”

Along with volunteering, she is enjoying her new hometown. “Naperville is wonderful. I love it here,” she said. *

Generations serving generations

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Russ Marineau, who has volunteered with HURRAH since 1991, didn’t have time for retirement. Former District 203 Director of Community Relations Mary Ann Bobosky, who was also his neighbor, knocked on his door the first day he retired and asked him to volunteer. Marineau, who is now the chairman of the HURRAH Executive Council, was tapped by Dr. Jane Angelis of Southern Illinois University to work with her on the State’s Intergenerational Initiative. “If there is anybody in the State of Illinois who is a ‘go to’ for seniors, it’s Jane Angelis,” Marineau said. “We have gone with her to communities throughout the state and talk about HURRAH.”

Dr. Angelis, who is the editor and director of *Continuance Magazine* and the Intergenerational Initiative Project Director, said that she and HURRAH work together because their goals are similar. Both want to promote more cooperation among the generations, particularly in education.

“We use statistics to make people face the idea that we have a tremendous resource in our older people,”

she said. “HURRAH is the model. They have been doing that for many years and they have a beautiful infrastructure developed.”

She said that this fall there will be regional discussions between older people and the education system to explore how the two groups can work more closely together. These regional hearings will be held at community colleges throughout the state, in cooperation with local schools and retirees. By December 31, the results will be reported to the people of Illinois, the Governor and the General Assembly.

“There is lots on the agenda and everything we do, we always turn to HURRAH as the model,” she said. “They established it, maintained and enhanced it, and it’s still going strong.”

Marineau enjoys talking about HURRAH to other organizations who might want to start a similar program. “We started out as a retiree organization, but we changed the name because there are many others who also volunteer,” he said. “Volunteering helps you age better and live better because you are contributing.” *

It's sew easy to volunteer

Although Judy Gordon's son graduated from Naperville Central High School last year, that didn't stop her from volunteering at the school.

"From the time my son, Jeff, was in kindergarten, I've volunteered in many different ways," she said.

Some of her volunteer roles have included running the Market Day program, serving on Home & School boards and writing school newsletters at both Ranch View Elementary School and Kennedy Junior High. At Naperville Central, she decorated the cafeteria for the Homecoming and Winter dances and implemented a new decorating plan for the 2009 Senior Party. This past spring, she created costumes for the school musical, "The Music Man." Set in the early 1900s, the play required extensive period costuming and Judy's sewing room became a hub of activity.

"My son was involved in the musicals when he attended NCHS, so I started helping out on the costumes back then," she said. "When you like to sew, you look forward to making your kids' costumes for Halloween, but when they get to a certain age, it stops. This is a way I found to be able to keep sewing them."



Harlan and Joan Bobb

For the last two shows, she had an opportunity to make outlandish and beautiful hats, which was a new experience for her. Judy said that one of

the benefits of volunteering is learning new skills from other volunteers.

It also provides a unique creative outlet, and students are very appreciative of your work.

"Where else could I have recreated Hogwarts, a 50s drive-in and the Disney Princess' castle? I love to help transform the students' everyday surroundings into a place that makes their jaws



Judy Gordon

"Just because your child leaves, it doesn't mean you have to go too!"

drop open when they enter and see the decorations," she said.

She and the group of friends she met when her son first started at Naperville Central continue to volunteer together. "I enjoy helping them out with their projects," she said. "Just because your child leaves, it doesn't mean you have to go too!" *

Continuing a tradition of service

Harlan and Joan Bobb have lived in Naperville for 43 years and during that time, they've seen both the city and the school district grow. Their three sons attended Elmwood School, Lincoln Junior High School and Naperville Central High School.

When Harlan retired in 1995, he began volunteering at Washington Junior High School. Joan volunteered at Elmwood, where she read to the children. Three years ago, Harlan wanted to join his wife at Elmwood because it's within walking distance of their home. The couple began helping students three days a week in the Study Skills Academy (SSA), an initiative of the Naperville Education Foundation that is designed to cultivate solid study habits among at-risk students who need extra help outside of the classroom.

For Joan, volunteering at the SSA was a perfect fit with her background in education.

She taught at a cooperative nursery school in Joliet for 14 years. She also started the first kindergarten at Wright Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio.

"We can see progress in the children, especially in reading," Joan said. Harlan added, "You see them improve and get better. In that respect, it's rewarding."

Other rewards are more intangible, such as when a student recognizes them in the grocery store and says "hello."

"This year, one of the boys said, 'I don't have any grandparents, it's like having my grandparents help me,' which I thought was really sweet," Joan said.

The couple agreed that they feel very much appreciated not only by the students, but also by the teachers and administrators.

"I hope more retirees join," Joan said. "We get a lot of enjoyment from volunteering and I feel like I really am helping." *



HURRAH benefits include computer training

Training is scheduled in the fall

One of the benefits of belonging to HURRAH is the annual personalized PC training program for HURRAH volunteers and their guests. In the fall, students at Naperville North High School provide one-on-one assistance.

**Fall 2010 HURRAH
PC Tutoring Classes
at Naperville North
High School**

Tuesday, October 5 through
Tuesday, November 9, 2010

Two sessions will be offered:
11:30 AM – 12:30 PM and
12:30 – 1:30 PM

Whether you're a computer novice or you would like some help with a specific software program or application, students are there to help. The training is personalized to meet the needs of each participant, so skill level doesn't matter.

Russ Marineau, chairman of the HURRAH Executive Council, said, "Because of their interaction with these friendly and knowledgeable high school students, volunteers are more likely to want to help at the high schools. The high school students also enjoy helping our HURRAH volunteers."

Although part of the course requirements include mentoring and helping the volunteers, some students have said they wouldn't

take the class if they didn't have an opportunity to tutor the HURRAH members. Through this class, HURRAH provides volunteers with an opportunity to develop new intergenerational relationships.

If you are interested in participating in the classes, please contact the Office of Community Relations at 630-420-6475. *

HURRAH honors volunteers

For more than 20 years, HURRAH (Happy Upbeat Retirees and Other Residents Actively Helping) has been a source for volunteers, who support educational opportunities for students in Naperville School District 203. The organization had its start in 1989 when two retired teachers, Janet Case and Ida Moon, proposed the idea of having retired teachers volunteer in the schools. The program became so successful that it was expanded to include not only retired teachers, but also retirees, empty nesters and those whose children were no longer at school, but still enjoyed volunteering.

Every year, HURRAH recognizes and thanks its volunteers. The volunteers noted here are just a few of the many who graciously give of their time to help students succeed.

"One of HURRAH's objectives is to recognize the people who are volunteering," said Russ Marineau, chairman of the HURRAH Executive Council. "It's so important to thank our volunteers because we rely on them. We want them to know that through their contributions, they make HURRAH one of the best intergenerational programs around." *