

Senior program supported by College

RSVP encourages productive 'golden years'

McCaffrey
Print

Senior Volunteer (RSVP) around the are an attempt to pro- meaningful and significant to those senior citizens retired, wish to con- have significant roles in community. The College with a program to help as County seniors seek community related areas. program is federally fund- ACTION and is supple- by the College and some g activities. The vol- must be at least 60 years and willing and able to These people serve in over profit agencies through- kamas County in areas s, libraries, hospitals and centers.

Smith has operated the program since it began in Smith has worked closely er agencies in the tri- area to help meet the of senior citizens in the Her results prove her te successful. After be- with just an idea and an Smith has managed to program that includes 6 volunteers and she con- expects to meet her 600 by Sept. 31, 1978.

agency has two vans to volunteer transportation ed trips. None of the ers are paid, but there is to supplement transport- meal costs. Volunteers ible, at no cost, to be in the insurance policy es set up for members.

ase of her efforts, the is the first, west of the Mountains, to receive an grant for an RSVP . Since then over 600 ave joined the program College.

program is able to help cope with the psychologi- emotional problems of

becoming old, according to Smith. For the person whose forced retirement from a job or whose spouse has recently passed away, RSVP can be a way to bring a person out of their lonely shell and replace their sense of loss of goals with opportunities to pursue new ones, she said.

Smith sees her job as having the responsibility for recruiting and placing volunteers. For the many volunteers who come in to her office with no clear idea of what they can do to help in a position they find rewarding, Smith will help shop around through jobs until the volunteer finds the place that is best for them.

People are placed according to their skills and the needs of the organizations involved. Sometimes it can be quite difficult to match these two requirements, but the office promises to keep trying until the volunteer finds the right position.

In the past, volunteers have included some genuinely outstanding people. Take for instance the 94-year-old man teaching reading in the public schools. The man was born in Scotland and apparently never lost his brogue because he used to teach the children to pronounce words the way as he always had done, Smith said.

Needless to say, the kids were

going home talking pretty funny on occasion. In spite of this, the man was loved and respected by the kids, taking time to eat lunch with them and walk to school with them early in the mornings. Creative and entertaining while teaching, the man was known for comparing periods to stop signs and commas to yellow lights. Many other people with similar energy and talent are serving in other areas around the county including about 20 to 30 at the College.

Because the program is federally funded, RSVP cannot be a public advocate for senior citizen's rights.

The program must, instead, try to meet the needs of its volunteers through its programs. There is a need for professional counseling to work with people on the difficult problems of growing old, Smith said. There is also a need to find the lonely people who have ceased through lack of interest to become active participants in their own lives.



Hired about a year ago by the Green Thumb Project, Ruth Aldredge now works for the Retired Senior Volunteer Program at the College after four years of volunteer work. In March of this year, RSVP had 467 volunteers working for non-profit organizations throughout the county.

In addition to getting volunteers into work programs, the agency also will sponsor activities in conjunction with other agencies, such as Loaves and Fishes, fund raising events and outings for seniors.

It is easy to see how these people, lacking goals and interest, can finish their lives lonely and afraid in their homes completely insulated from the outside world except for their constant contact the television drug, she said.

A western round-up is being sponsored on campus next week. Over 600 people are expected to participate in the colorful all-day event. Prizes are being given for the best costumes and meals will be served. Transportation is being provided throughout the county to make it convenient for those wishing to attend.

RSVP is an attempt to find these people and help find in themselves reasons to live, Smith said.

This provides an opportunity for senior citizens to socialize with their peers in a relaxed and fun-filled atmosphere, Smith said. If it were not for the opportunities that RSVP provides for socializing, many senior citizens would lose contact and interest with much of what is going on in their worlds.

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ms set summer session

eral films, many in a Coll- sit summer course and er a noontime film/dis- will be shown at the

m and War in the Twen- Century" a three credit session course, will be oed of a series of warr aterial beginning with War II and ending with in Vietnam, said Fred college history instruc-

course will be held Tues- ights beginning June 20 ill run for eight weeks.

the first film for examina- ll be "Paths of Glory" an film which will be foll- y a series of WW II he said. "The emphasis lass will be on the sub- World War II."

The course will end with two films concerning the Vietnam war. One, "Hearts and Mind," will focus on the travesty of the war while "The Green Berets" will focus on the glory of it DeWolfe said.

DeWolfe said that the students will be using Leon Uris's "Mila 18" as a reference book. This book may be purchased in the student store.

A single showing, "Hollywood: The Dream Factory" will be a film/discussion being held at noontime as one of the Brown Bag Film series.

Joe Uris, college grants and special projects officer, will lead a discussion following the showing.

The film begins at noon, Thursday, May 25 in the College's Community Center building, room 117.

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