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NEWS

from



NATIONAL CENTER FOR VOLUNTARY ACTION
1785 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, N. W.
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20036 (202) 797-7800

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Ted Orme

VICE PRESIDENT TO PRESENT NATIONAL VOLUNTEER AWARDS

WASHINGTON, D.C., April 17, 1975 -- Vice President Nelson Rockefeller and George Romney, Chairman of the National Center for Voluntary Action (NCVA) will present the 1974 National Volunteer Awards at a special ceremony at the Atrium of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts on April 24, 5 to 7 P.M.

Sponsored annually by NCVA, the National Volunteer Awards Program is the highlight of National Volunteer Week, April 20-26.

This year's winners were chosen from more than a thousand nominations received from throughout the country. Selection is based on community need, recipient need, scope of the volunteer activity, achievement, method and innovation.

This year's winners are:

Norborne Berkeley, Jr., New York City, for his work as Chairman of the Wildcat Service Corporation -- an organization which provides work opportunities for men with drug and criminal records. As president of Chemical Bank in New York City, Berkeley has put his ideas into practice by hiring ex-addicts and ex-offenders to work in his own company.

(more)



Simon J. Carmel, Washington, D.C., for his efforts in promoting athletic, cultural and entertainment programs for the deaf. Deaf himself, Carmel has been a tireless organizer, promoter, administrator, fund raiser, teacher and coach in a volunteer career which began upon his graduation from Gallaudet College in 1961.

Charles and Beryl Graeff, Harrisburg, Pa., for offering free tax assistance and referral services to Harrisburg's senior citizens. Senior citizens themselves, the Graeffs worked seven days a week, often 12 hours a day, helping over 1,100 persons in 1974. As a result of their efforts, more than \$150,000 in cash refunds went to those eligible.

Family Court Volunteer Program, Columbia, S.C., for its work with children on probation and with preventive programs for school children. The program's 110 volunteers work one-to-one with youthful offenders, offering such services as recreation, hobby and craft work, trips, tutoring and just plain talking.

Wellington-Harrington Citizens Committee and the Wellington-Harrington Development Corporation, Cambridge, Mass., for its success in planning and revitalizing the multi-ethnic Wellington-Harrington neighborhood. Formed in 1963, the Committee developed a \$7 million renewal plan which has resulted in the rehabilitation of more than 1,000 dwellings and construction of a 56-unit building owned cooperatively by its low and moderate income tenants.

West Virginia Youth Conservation Program, Charleston, W.Va., for its efforts in promoting conservation consciousness and responsibility among teenagers. The program has involved over 50,000 young volunteers from more than 500 youth organizations in a variety of statewide conservation and environmental projects.

The National Center for Voluntary Action was founded in 1970 as a private, non-profit, non-partisan organization to stimulate new responses to America's most pressing needs through the greater recognition, utilization and coordination of volunteers. The National Awards, transferred to NCVA from the Lane-Bryant, Inc. Company, is part of the NCVA's national effort to demonstrate what can be accomplished through volunteer effort.

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The press is cordially invited to attend a press breakfast with the volunteers and their Congressmen and Senators, G 219-222 Dirksen Senate Office Building, April 24, 8:30 A.M. Telephone RSVP, (202) 797-7800 ext.78.

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FACT SHEET
Mrs. Ford's Office

Event Reception

Group National Volunteer Awards winners (National Center for Voluntary Action)

DATE/TIME Thursday, April 24, 1975 2:00 p.m.

Contact Saralei Farner, Susan Allen Phone 797-7800

Number of guests: Total 21 Women X Men X Children - -

Place Ground Floor

Principals involved Mrs. Ford

Participation by Principal Greet informally (Receiving line) no

Remarks required no

Background During National Volunteer Week, April 20-26, 1975, the winners of the National Volunteer Awards Program will be in Washington to receive their awards. The recipients, from communities around the nation, have developed, in the opinion of judges, the most outstanding REQUIREMENTS community volunteer programs. (see below)**✓

Social: Guest list yes (National Center for Voluntary Action to Linda Baker)

Invitations yes (issued by the NCVA) Programs no Menus no

Refreshments coffee, tea, and tea cookies

Entertainment no

Decorations/flowers yes

Music yes

Social Aides yes

Dress Business Suit Coat check if inclement

Other - - weather

Press: Reporters yes

Photographers yes

TV Crews yes

White House Photographers yes Color yes Mono. - -

Other - -

Technical Support: Microphones no PA Other Rooms no

Recording no

Lights (if for press needs)

Transportation 2 maxi-buses and 1 or 2 cars - Southwest Gate

Parking South Grounds

Housing no

Other - - (Risers, stage, platforms) no

Project Co-ordinator Linda Baker Phone 2927

Site diagrams should be attached if technical support is heavy.

** Mrs. Ford will honor these winners with a brief reception, and that evening they will be presented with their awards at a reception at the Kennedy Center.

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For immediate release
Thursday, April 23, 1975

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary to Mrs. Ford

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The winners are designated by the National Center for Voluntary Action to honor outstanding community volunteer programs around the country. Both individuals and organizations involved in the programs are being honored.

The recipients are in Washington for National Volunteer Week (April 20-26) and will receive their awards this evening at the Kennedy Center.

Mrs. Susan Allen, volunteer coordinator for the National Volunteer Awards, will introduce the winners to Mrs. Ford.

The people and programs being honored: Simon J. Carmel of Washington, D.C.; Charles and Beryl Graeff of Harrisburg, Pa.; Stephanie Lee, representing the West Virginia Youth Conservation Program of Charleston, W. Va.; Stanley Kohn and Patricia Holtzclaw, representing the Family Court Volunteer Program of Columbia, S.C.; and Mary Ann Nicoloro and James Bentubo, representing the Wellington-Harrington Citizens Committee and Wellington-Harrington Development Corporation of Cambridge, Mass.

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~~WZP~~
#

3 indivs. get checks for 500 each
3 grps get checks
each grp has rep.

silver bowl engraved w indiv. name
NCA 1974 or grp name 1978

J.I.R

Nat.

Exec. Dir. of

Local
Ken Allen = Rep.

Leanne Romney

Ellen Peterson - Rep. party

Rep Romney's campaign

Sarah Lee Farver

Adm. Dir. of NCA



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 23, 1975

MRS. FORD:

Event: Reception for the National Volunteer Awards Winners

Date/Time: Thursday, April 24, 1975 2:00 p.m.

Place: Blue Room

Number of
Attendees: 21 guests

Principals: Mrs. Susan Allen, Volunteer Coordinator, National
Volunteer Awards

Schedule of
Events: 2:00 p.m. Your guests will arrive through the
Diplomatic Reception Room and will be
escorted to the Blue Room.

2:05 p.m. After your guests have arrived, Nancy
Ruwe will escort you to the Blue Room
and will introduce you to Mrs. Susan
Allen, the Volunteer Coordinator of the
National Volunteer Awards. She in turn
will introduce you to the award recipients
and briefly describe their award-winning
projects.

You may then wish to join your guests for
refreshments and mingle informally with
them in the Blue Room or you may wish to
return to the Family Quarters.

2:30 p.m. Following refreshments, your guests will
be escorted on a tour of the White House.

NOTES:

There will be press coverage.

A White House photographer will be present.

A small string ensemble will be positioned in the Grand Hall.

Military Social Aides will be present.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

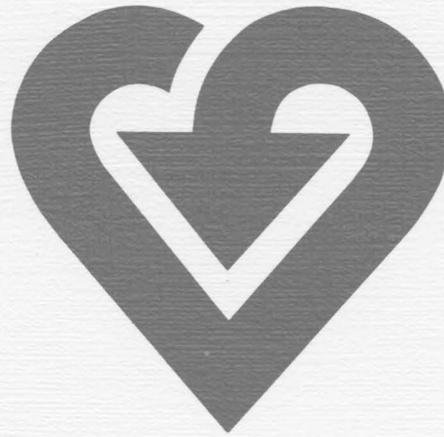
"The National Volunteer Awards Program is a nationwide program of volunteer recognition sponsored annually by the National Center for Voluntary Action (NCVA). The Program seeks to identify and focus national attention on outstanding and innovative volunteer efforts."

During National Volunteer Week, April 20-26, 1975, the winners of the National Volunteer Awards Program will be in Washington to receive their awards. The recipients, from communities around the nation, have developed, in the opinion of judges, the most outstanding community volunteer programs.

You will honor these winners with a brief reception, and that evening they will be presented with their awards at a reception at the Kennedy Center.

(See also the enclosed booklet, "The National Volunteer Awards 1974.")

Nancy Ruwe



The
National
Volunteer
Awards
1974



The National Center For Voluntary Action

THE NATIONAL VOLUNTEER AWARDS PROGRAM

The National Volunteer Awards Program is a nationwide program of volunteer recognition sponsored annually by the National Center for Voluntary Action (NCVA). The Program seeks to identify and focus national attention on outstanding and innovative volunteer efforts.

Each year, hundreds of individuals and groups are nominated by friends, colleagues, supervisors, political and governmental leaders, educators, ministers and others. All nominations are formalized for consistency and reviewed by NCVA to ensure that all eligibility requirements are met.

The nominations are then sent to an independent screening organization for review by a panel representing a broad variety of volunteer backgrounds and experiences. Through this process citation winners are selected. Final selection is made by a distinguished group of judges who determine the three individual and three group winners for the year.

The National Volunteer Awards Program was begun 26 years ago by Lane Bryant, Inc., in an attempt to spotlight the generosity, dedication and achievement of all volunteers. The program was transferred to NCVA in 1970. The nomination and screening process for the National Volunteer Awards is based on Lane Bryant's many years of experience.

The National Volunteer Awards Program is an important part of the National Center for Voluntary Action's major goal: to stimulate new responses to America's most pressing needs through the greater recognition, utilization and coordination of volunteers. Founded in 1970, NCVA is a private, non-profit, non-partisan organization.

Simon J. Carmel

Washington, D.C.

Simon Carmel is a volunteer advocate for one of America's most neglected groups — the deaf. Deaf himself, Carmel has been a tireless organizer, promoter, administrator, fund raiser, teacher and coach in a volunteer career that runs in interest from competitive athletics to dramatics and other entertainment activities.

Carmel, who is employed as a physical chemist at the National Bureau of Standards in Washington, was graduated from Gallaudet College in 1961. The summer after his graduation, he participated in the 9th International Summer Games for the Deaf in Helsinki, Finland, as a member of the USA Deaf Swimming Team. For the 1965 International Summer Games, which were held in Washington, he served as the official interpreter provided by the U.S. government for the Russian athletes.

But it is skiing that is Simon Carmel's abiding interest. After his second stint with the World Summer Games for the Deaf in 1965, he originated the idea of having a United States ski team, to be sponsored by the American Athletic Association for the Deaf, to participate in the World Winter Games for the Deaf. To help his idea become reality, he served as both coach and manager of that first U.S. Deaf Ski Team.

Carmel went on from there to found the National Deaf Skiers Association, to chair the Eastern Deaf Skiers Committee of the (hearing) ski organization, United States Eastern Amateur Ski Association, and to organize such competitions as a New England Deaf Skiers Ski Week in Waterville Valley, New Hampshire, and the Eastern Deaf Skiers Race Championships at Haystack Ski Area in Vermont.

In 1971, Carmel was the man behind a bid by Lake Placid, New York to be the host city for the 8th World Winter Games for the Deaf to be held in 1975. The winter games had never before been held outside Europe, but the Lake Placid bid was accepted, and Carmel served as the General Chairman of the Lake Placid Organizing Committee for the games. Through this competition, an estimated 300 deaf athletes from 16 countries came to the U.S. to participate in alpine and nordic skiing, speed and figure skating, and hockey.

In all of these activities, Simon Carmel has taken on a great promotional, organizational, and administrative responsibility. He has drawn, in a modest way, on the resources of the United States Ski Association — for things like mailings — but he has mostly drawn on his own resources, contributing all his annual leave to these volunteer efforts. He has presided over the selection of competitors for many of the meets, to see that selection was done in accordance with established criteria; he has done the logistical work of getting foreign teams here, and taking American teams abroad; he has served as fund raiser for



the USA Deaf Ski Team and as Publicity Director for a convention of the U.S. Deaf Skiers Association.

But above all else, Simon Carmel has had the vision to see that skiing could indeed be an important vehicle for opening competitive athletics up to the deaf, and the drive to bring his ideas to fruition.

This can-do attitude has characterized all that he has done for the deaf. An interest in magic, for example, led him to organize the first national tournament for deaf magicians. An interest in psycholinguistics led to his current stature as one of the world's experts on sign language. And with respect to skiing, officials of the U.S. Ski Association say that the World Winter Games for the Deaf at Lake Placid would never have happened without him.

Norborne Berkeley, Jr.

New York, New York



For men and women with drug and arrest records, the prospects of finding steady work are grim. While the need for rehabilitative employment is acknowledged, far too few employers seem ready to take either the alleged risks of, or the responsibility for, providing that work.

Norborne Berkeley has been an exception — a leader in defining and demonstrating the responsibility of the business community to hire ex-addicts and ex-offenders. As the Chairman of the Board of the Wildcat Service Corporation — an organization that seeks to provide work opportunities for men with drug and criminal records — he has served the cause with effective and prestigious leadership. As President of Chemical Bank in New York City, he has put his ideas into practice in his own company.

In 1973, Chemical Bank hired twelve ex-offenders and ex-addicts and placed them in its check-clearing section. The bank assigned a supervisor to the group who had experience in drug treatment counseling and who was also able to provide some other social services to participants who required them. After a year and a half, bank officials say that this group has outperformed — in terms of both retention and promotion — any "regular" group of employees.

Much of the program's success is attributed to Berkeley's effort, concern, and personal involvement in the

project — or, to put it another way, to his unwillingness to let the prevailing attitudes about individuals with crime and drug abuse records determine the bank's response.

Berkeley did not stop with the project in his own bank. Soon after the project at Chemical had begun, he also agreed to serve as Chairman of the Board of the Wildcat Service Corporation, the organization through which the group of twelve had come.

Wildcat is a non-profit organization formed to help ex-addicts and ex-offenders develop work records and work skills. It provides supportive work situations for its employees (currently about 1500) by contracting their services out to a variety of agencies, and also places employees, as they are ready, in non-supported jobs in the public and private sectors. The success rate is high for this type of work: about 70% of the individuals who have gone from Wildcat to other jobs are still on those jobs.

Berkeley's support and participation in Wildcat has been critical. "When you are talking about serving people who have an average of eight to ten arrests and three to five convictions," Wildcat's director says, "there are people who don't even want to rent space to you." But Norborne Berkeley's active participation has made it clear that in individual job placements — such as at Chemical — or in the total Wildcat effort, "top management wants the project to succeed."

As Chairman, Berkeley has recruited a blue-ribbon board of New York business and civic leaders to work with him. He has spoken out locally on the need for rehabilitative employment, testifying before hearings of the New York City Department of Human Resources and talking with people throughout the New York business community.

And he has taken his commitment to other parts of the country. In Atlanta, Georgia, he spoke to a public affairs forum sponsored by the American Bankers Association on the need for public and private sector cooperation in breaking the unemployment/crime cycle. In Boston, he keynoted a pilot "Job Fair," which was sponsored by the Massachusetts Department of Corrections in an effort to bring together New England area employers and ex-offenders and ex-addicts who needed jobs.

Perhaps one measure of the success of Norborne Berkeley and the Wildcat Service Corporation is that the Ford Foundation and the Labor Department have recently announced that they are jointly prepared to fund programs similar to Wildcat's in fourteen other cities around the country. These new programs will not all mirror Wildcat — as circumstances in each city will make for slightly different development — but they will come from that model. And they will all aspire to the leadership and support from the business community that Norborne Berkeley has represented in New York City.

Charles and Beryl Graeff Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

In the state of Pennsylvania, qualifying senior citizens can get rebates on their property taxes or rental payments — if they know about the rebate program, if they know that they meet the income eligibility requirements, and if they fill out all the proper forms.

For Charles and Beryl Graeff, the number of senior citizens in the Harrisburg area who did not get deserved rebates, because of one or more of those "ifs," was too high. Senior citizens themselves, the Graeffs knew what the \$200-maximum rebate could mean to those who lived on fixed and limited incomes. So they decided to put their tax and accounting experience to work.

The Graeff's solution was to open, in their own house, a free tax service center for senior citizens. And from this office, in 1974 alone, the Graeffs prepared tax forms which led to cash rebates for more than 1,000 elderly citizens.

The Graeffs kept their office open seven days a week, from nine in the morning until nine at night, and absorbed all the costs of doing so. They installed a second telephone line, and advertised the number, along with their name and address, as widely as possible through RSVP announcements and mention in newspaper columns for senior citizens. They urged their clients to tell friends and neighbors about the service and also to give the Graeffs names of people whom they thought might need help.

It is estimated that the Graeffs probably had direct personal contact with about 2,000 individuals who did need help on their 1973 tax forms. They worked by telephone, through the mail and in person — whatever was most convenient or most possible for their clientele. Some of the people had been sent by friends, and knew nothing of the benefits for which they might be eligible. Others had read about the program, but hadn't acted because they thought there must be a catch, that the government wouldn't really give back money. Some had already gotten the necessary

forms, but were unable to complete them. And still others did not know whether they were eligible for the rebate or how to find out.

About half of those who came did turn out to be eligible, and the Graeffs' work on their behalf accounted for cash returns of more than \$150,000. And even for those who were not eligible for rebates, the Graeffs still frequently performed valuable services. Midway through their 1974 effort, they requested information and forms on the Federal food stamp program, because they had discovered many of their clients who were eligible for that program but not taking advantage of it. They steered many others to appropriate social service agencies — a blind man was helped to take advantage of the Talking Book program, for example, and an elderly woman given emergency health care.

At the end of 1974, the Graeffs were getting ready for a new tax year, preparing a descriptive flier to put in the city hotels where many elderly and hard-to-reach people live; working with the RSVP program on a letter and kit that were mailed, at the suggestion of the Pennsylvania Department of Revenue, to chapters of the Retired Senior Volunteer Program throughout the state, so they could start similar services; and expanding their service to cover state and Federal income tax service, as well as the property tax and rent rebate program.

The Graeffs have given tirelessly of their time, skills and energy. But perhaps most important is the way they have provided a gentle and personal service for those who have often been confused, humiliated, and in some cases over-billed by the public and private officials who otherwise deal with their finances. As one official of the local welfare department put it, "They are a two person agency of good will and activism . . . who make, literally, a state aged-assistance program work in this area."



Stephanie Lee

West Virginia Youth Conservation Program

Charleston, West Virginia

Through the West Virginia Youth Conservation Program, more than 50,000 young volunteers a year are busy conducting year-round clean up programs and anti-litter campaigns, constructing nature trails and even Braille trails, developing outdoor laboratories, removing junk cars, refrigerators, old tires, etc., from rivers and creeks, planting trees (some 87,000 trees last year), recycling, dredging streams, planting food crops for wildlife, and building roadside and community parks, ponds, and playgrounds.

Volunteers in the program represent more than 500 youth conservation clubs statewide. Many of these clubs are the local chapters of such existing youth organizations as the 4-H, the Boy and Girl Scouts, the Future Farmers of America and Future Homemakers of America; others represent church, elementary and secondary school groups. Overall sponsor for the program is the West Virginia Department of Natural Resources, a state agency which provides some printed materials for the clubs, a youth conservation newsletter, a yearly awards competition for clubs and individuals, and occasional access to the resources and technical knowledge needed for projects.

The youth groups enter the program voluntarily, and are then urged to select their own local activities in the light of their own communities' needs and resources. Some of the outstanding work for 1974 included:

The Leon Busy Fours 4-H Club developed a wildlife management area of 133 acres. The club sought and received permission from the owners to develop the area according to conservation plans drawn up by the Soil Conservation Service, and then cut trees to clear ground for food plots (selling the pulpwood and putting the money back into the project); cleared brush and small scrub trees from a frontage area and a picnic area; furnished picnic tables; plowed and planted two half-acre plots for wildlife food; cleared a roadway and nature trail and planted clover for more wildlife food; put out salt blocks for deer and installed a sign for the area set in concrete.

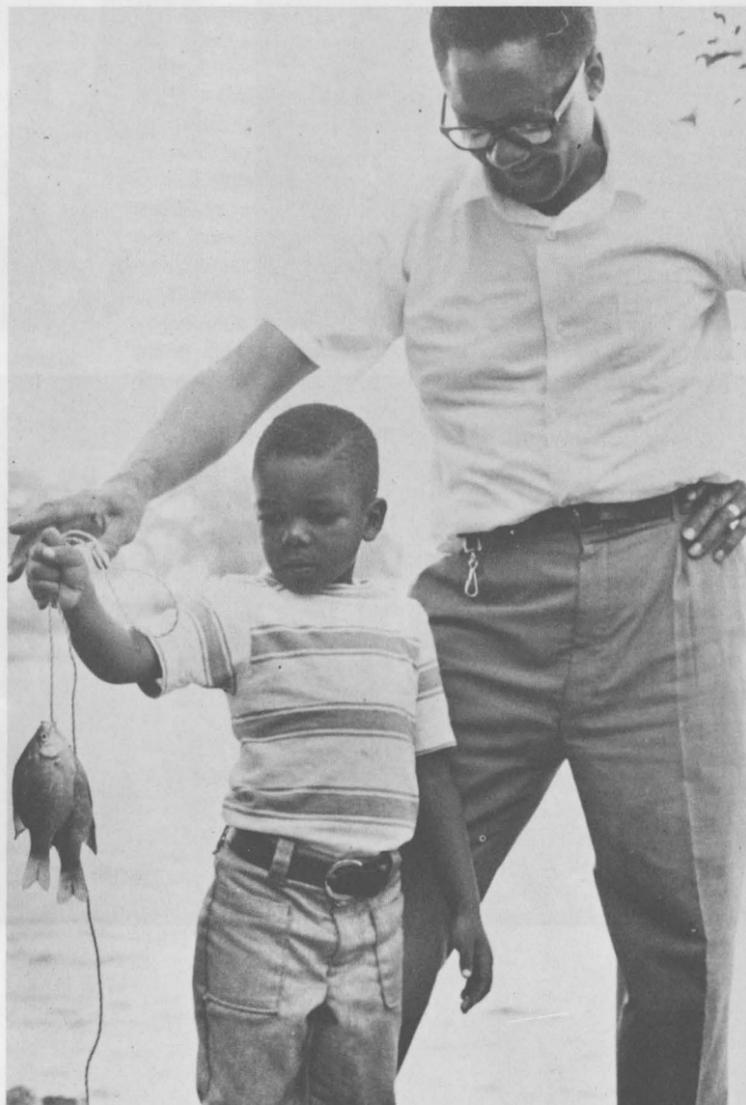
The Hinton High School Ecology Club, among a number of other activities, continued in 1974 its erosion control project on the Greenbrier River and Pipestem Creek, by mulching and fertilizing 3,300 trees and laying 100 pounds of grass seed.

Members of the *Woodrow Wilson High School Conservation Club*, as one of their efforts, worked on their Bike Trail. They circulated petitions requesting the construction of bicycle trails in and around town, presented the petitions to the town council, worked on a committee appointed by the mayor (two city council members, the police chief and three club members) to make a survey and determine routes for the trails, and at last report were working to obtain permission from landowners to use the property. Members also completed a two mile trail around the school campus.

Of great help to the Conservation Program and its young volunteers has been the support of corporations in the state. Sears Roebuck, for example, has been a sponsor since the program started, and continues to provide funds, from its West Virginia stores, for the awards that are given out each year at Youth Day, a conservation-oriented jamboree for program participants that last year drew about 5,000 young people. Westvaco Corp. helped make 267,000 trees available to the clubs for planting, free of charge. Union Carbide co-sponsored with the Department of Human Resources a West Virginia Youth Environmental Conference for 200 high school age participants.

All in all this program represents an impressive and resourceful channeling of the volunteer power of young people. It shows strong staying power: the program predates "Earthday" and the widespread environmental concern of the late sixties, and it has also continued to grow in spite of a general waning of environmental concern from that same peak of the late sixties and early seventies. And the young people who participate in it are both learning and providing an important lesson about the value of being good stewards for the natural resources that are such a major feature of West Virginia's heritage and its future.





Stanley Kohn
+
Patricia
Holtzclaw

Family Court Volunteer Program Columbia, South Carolina

For the young offender, unhappy with school and family and distrustful of the courts and society in general, there often seems nowhere to turn for help and guidance. But in Richland County, South Carolina, a happier story is often played out. Through the Richland County Family Court Volunteer program, dozens of young criminal offenders and potential offenders are involved each year in the kind of stable one-to-one relationship with an adult that they have probably never had before.

The Volunteer Program was started about four years ago, at the combined urging of a group of concerned Columbia citizens and the Family Court Judge, J. McNary Spigner. Currently it fields more than 110 volunteers in direct, one-to-one roles with youthful offenders and potential offenders, and there are many others involved in overall support and administration of the program. Together the volunteers make it possible for the family court to carry out its work with a rehabilitative rather than punitive emphasis.

Volunteers working directly with the young people fall into several categories.

Probationary volunteers are assigned, on a one-to-one basis, to first time offenders. The volunteers most often do, with their charges, the kinds of things parents would do with their own children — sports and recreation activities, trips, hobby and craft work, or just plain talking. But there are also crisis situations — 2 a.m. phone calls when the young person may have been picked up by the police, for example — and probationary volunteers are carefully screened for the program and also go through training sessions before being given an assignment. Court officials feel that this program has about a 75% success rate in deterring first time offenders on probation from actions that would get them back into Family Court.

Volunteers also work on a *preventive project*, with children whose academic and disciplinary records indicate a high potential for lawbreaking. This preventive work is an unusual feature of the Richland County program, and it took careful and diplomatic work with both school officials and parents of the children so identified to get this program

started in the first two schools. A third has now been added and there are plans for further growth. Volunteers work with the target children in the same kinds of activities as do the probationary volunteers. To date, no young person who has gone through the program has been arrested.

There are also two *tutorial projects*, one an in-school effort that puts specially trained volunteers to work with identified potential lawbreakers in reading-related courses, another an off-campus program for poor readers who are on probation and need help if they are ever to get into a pattern of successful school work.

A final and imaginative part of the Family Court program is the *handicapped children's project*. This project brings together a number of young people on probation, their one-to-one volunteers, and 10 - 15 handicapped teenagers for joint Saturday morning programs of recreation and refreshments. The sessions give those on probation an unusual opportunity to be involved in some community service of their own, and to get the kind of satisfaction and sense of responsibility that accrue from it. As one court official put it, "Most juvenile delinquents feel very sorry for themselves; they don't even want to assume responsibility for their own actions — let alone for someone else who is also disadvantaged."

Those familiar with volunteer programs to aid juvenile probationers and potential lawbreakers generally think of these as the critical functions of the adult one-to-one volunteer: providing a child in trouble with a meaningful relationship with an adult he can trust; providing tutoring help and thus helping to avoid the failure/dropout/crime syndrome that catches so many youthful offenders; providing experience of constructive use of leisure time; and providing the child an image of "normalcy" in society, through participation in mainstream organizations and activities.

The Richland County Family Court Program sums up that role in a telling way. As their Volunteer Advisory Board Chairman puts it: "A volunteer is a person who treats a 'nobody' like he's a somebody."

Mary Ann Nicoloso
+
James Bentubo

Wellington-Harrington Citizens Committee and Wellington-Harrington Development Corporation Cambridge, Massachusetts

"Wellington-Harrington" is the name used to describe a Cambridge, Massachusetts working class neighborhood of about 10,000 people. In 1963, Wellington-Harrington's diverse and multi-ethnic population was brought together in opposition to a massive urban renewal plan that had been prepared, without resident involvement, for the area. From this opposition, there emerged a fairly clear consensus about what sort of neighborhood was wanted: one without junk yards, fire-trap wooden houses and heavily used truck routes; one with good rental property at rates that would allow people — especially older citizens — to stay, and with off-street parking and adequate recreation facilities.

In the twelve years since 1963, there have been two groups of volunteers that have played a vital — probably critical — role in making that kind of neighborhood come to pass.

They are the Wellington-Harrington Citizens Committee, formed to develop an alternate to the unsatisfactory renewal plan and to watch over resulting development, and the Wellington-Harrington Development Corporation, formed, as a development arm of the Citizens Committee, to sponsor and construct low cost housing within the guidelines developed by the Committee.

The achievements of these groups have been impressive. The \$7 million renewal plan developed by the Committee — with a heavy emphasis on rehabilitation rather than on razing — was accepted by both the Wellington-Harrington residents and the appropriate city, state and Federal authorities. Under the plan, more than 1,000 dwelling units in the area have been rehabilitated, and large sections of the neighborhood have been rezoned from industrial to residential. Construction has been completed on Harwell Homes, a 56-unit housing structure which is owned cooperatively by its low and moderate income tenants. Linwood Court, a 45-unit structure, will soon be rehabilitated for other low and moderate income families.

In carrying out their work, the groups have displayed an amazing lasting power that has seen them through bi-monthly scheduled meetings and many more unscheduled ones for a period of many years. They have also acted on

two strong convictions. One is that it is their task to find reasonable consensus solutions to issues, rather than to bow to pressure from any of several extremes. The other is that lasting neighborhood redevelopment comes not from the large-scale actions of a few outside developers but rather from the smaller actions of many individual property owners.

In preparing the redevelopment plan, for example, the Citizens' Committee steered its way through an era of great tension in Cambridge. It was a period of housing shortage when some factions were urging massive public housing development for Wellington-Harrington, when others were urging expensive single family housing construction as a way to improve the neighborhood and when every faction was urging immediate action. The Committee went for none of the extremes. It took its time. And its plan was accepted.

To involve Wellington-Harrington citizens in receiving the basic character of their own neighborhood, the groups have taken many steps. The overall redevelopment plan has a significant amount of door-to-door housing renovation in it, and a loan-backing provision to encourage homeowner participation. Harwell Homes is a cooperative — not an outsider-owned rental building. Wellington-Harrington playgrounds are built with the advice of parents' committees and are maintained with the help of parent playground supervisors. And both committees have long records of working with individual landlords and owners, urging absentee landlords to clean up damaged properties, for example, or helping homeowners to get loans and zoning variances in order to upgrade and renovate.

Little of this personal and persistent activity is as sweeping as dramatic urban renewal. But Wellington-Harrington Citizens Committee and Development Corporation members like it this way. Their neighborhood is a stable one, and remains a working class one. In fact, they take it as a great compliment that there are those who look at Wellington-Harrington — and see largely the outsides of the houses that have been rehabilitated inside — and remark that nothing much has happened in spite of all that renewal activity.



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