

NEWS

VOLUNTEER CENTER OF BERGEN COUNTY, INC.

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Volunteer Opportunities Available for Those 55 and Older

North Jersey--“The life you have led doesn’t need to be the only life you’ll have”

This quote from well known author Anna Quindlen sums up the attitude of many of today’s over-50 crowd.

The first wave of the 76 million baby Boomers have at this point reached retirement age. These people represent the healthiest, most active, best educated and longest living group of older adults in U.S. history.

More than 180,000 people age 55 years or older live in Bergen County. Many will retire from their present jobs to begin brand new careers. For others, the decision to retire opens up opportunities to give back to the community by volunteering.

Today’s recently retired volunteers seek out volunteer activities that challenge them and allow them to think. They appreciate result-oriented projects and appreciate instant feedback for a job well done.

The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) of the Volunteer Center of Bergen County is a good source of meaningful volunteer experiences. RSVP is a nationwide program, established through the Corporation for National Community Service which recruits and involves individuals age 55 and older in a variety of community service opportunities.

A person who recently retired from teaching may enjoy being a tutor helping children to read or helping adults with ESL (English as a Second Language) or literacy. A person who is handy around the house can join a program like the Volunteer Center’s Chore Service which performs simple home repairs that help keep the elderly or disabled

safe in their homes. Someone with construction experience can build homes for the homeless through Habitat for Humanity. Hackensack River Keeper and local nature centers have many interesting projects that help protect the wildlife and the environment in northern New Jersey.

“Even if a person is homebound, we have a volunteer activity for them,” says Barbara Weiderecht, RSVP Director. “The program is called ‘PEAL-- Phoning the Elderly And Lonely’. Volunteers make calls from the comfort of their own homes to homebound seniors to lend a friendly voice and check to see if they are OK”

RSVP can connect interested people to volunteer opportunities like these, and more. Volunteer jobs at over 42 local agencies are carefully screened to assure that the volunteers get the most out of their experiences.

Call (201) 489-9333 for more information about RSVP and making a difference in the community.

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