

They Work For Volunteer Service

By MARGARET KOCH
Sentinel Staff Writer

There is a mother of eight children who lives in Santa Cruz. She doesn't drive — or own—a car. She doesn't speak English very well. She is eligible to receive surplus foods which she badly needs for her family. But how to get the food and carry it home?

She calls Volunteer Service of Santa Cruz County.

There is a man, old, crippled with age and tired joints. He needs a ride to town once in awhile, and to his doctor's office. Buses don't pass near his home and he is on a very limited income.

What to do? He calls Volunteer Service of Santa Cruz County.

Two young mothers-to-be recently had appointments the same day to visit a county health clinic. They have no car—no money for a taxi and no other means of transportation.

What did they do? They called Volunteer Service of Santa Cruz County.

A woman in her 80's had an appointment for dentures . . . another woman needed to transport soiled clothing to a laundromat. . . a man needed to visit his bank.

In all these instances, the key word is "need."

Volunteer Service of Santa Cruz County specializes in

person-to-person help. Transportation is just one of eight programs operated free, for county residents. But for some, transportation can mean the difference between going hungry or eating, between maintaining health or letting it slide, and between self respect or dull apathy.

There is one little old lady —on limited income—whose one luxury, if you can call it that, is having her hair done every two weeks. She is crippled with arthritis and can't lift her arms to do her own silver locks, and she is almost blind.

A volunteer picks her up, drives her to the hairdresser, then returns her home. While there, she visits with the beauty operators and the other women customers. This is the one highlight in what could be a drab existence. It's also excellent therapy for maintaining one's self-respect as a woman.

The transportation volunteers are people who drive their own cars and who have the time and the wish to do something for others. They call themselves "traveling friends." Most of them are women but there is one man volunteer.

Volunteers must have at least minimum liability auto insurance. Then, when they register as a volunteer driver with the service, they can be covered with excess liability insurance provided by the Volunteer Service.

Drivers can be "on call" or they can be assigned regu-

lar days for service. Approximately 200 transportation requests are provided in a single month, from VS offices in Santa Cruz and Watsonville. The local office is at 1110 Emeline Street and may be called at 423-0554.

Executive director of Volunteer Services is Mrs. Donna Kern, former welfare worker in San Jose.

"We rarely refuse a request for transportation," she said. "We cannot do trips of great distance, nor can we drive people who are too crippled or too ill to ride in a private car."

Volunteer Service was organized in 1967 from a nucleus of individuals who called themselves HELP and had a single meeting room at the Area Service Center. In September, 1969, the growing program incorporated as a Volunteer Service, a non-profit organization, in cooperation with Santa Cruz County Social Welfare Department.

Volunteer transportation chairmen are: Mrs. Dori Bodenheimer, Santa Cruz; Mrs. Kathleen Eaton, Watsonville, and Mrs. Frances Wells, Bonny Doon.

Costs of the program are borne in part by the County of Santa Cruz. The balance comes from membership dues (\$2 or \$5 per year) and from contributions. This year, VS must raise about \$4000.

Aid in the form of office equipment and services, has been received from Santa Cruz Marri-Ed Junior Woman's Club, Welcome Wagon and Garfield Park Christian Church Women.

There is no charge for the transportation service provided to elderly or needy persons. The volunteer driver may deduct his transportation expenses as tax deductions for charity. And if he cannot afford the gasoline, he is reimbursed for that.

"The important thing is to have friendly, available volunteer drivers," Mrs. Kern pointed out.

One of the greatest needs is for volunteer drivers in Watsonville, who can bring

cial hospital services. Drivers to answer emergency calls also are in short supply.

However, the largest number of calls concern elderly people like Rodella Johnson whose closest relatives live in Michigan. She is 87, partially blind, has had nine major surgeries since 1963, and has managed to hang onto her wonderful sense of humor.

Rodella loves to tell jokes. And she is somewhat of a gambling woman too, because she has one favorite tricky story she tells, and she always bets with new listeners on the outcome of her story.

She bets a lollipop — and since she almost always wins, she has a lot of lollipops stashed away. But lollipops aren't for a steady diet.

And Rodella gets her groceries with the aid of "traveling friends" from Volunteer Service of Santa Cruz County.

Planning volunteer drivers' schedules above are Mrs. Donna Kern, executive director of Volunteer Service of Santa Cruz County, and Mrs. Peter Bodenheimer, who serves as a volunteer driver.

Drivers may be "on call" or may have regular days for duty, Mrs. Kern points out.

At right is the "lollipop lady," Mrs. Rodella Johnson. Delivering groceries to her is Edward Reynolds, the one-man volunteer driver, with the group.

Biggest need at present is for emergency call drivers.

Below, Mrs. Joseph Mayhew and daughter Theresa, unload their groceries from the back of Mrs. Carrie Gage's car while she holds her small son. Mrs. Gage is a volunteer driver.

Surplus food pickup and delivery service is one of the main duties of volunteer drivers, as well as trips to banks, medical centers, business firms and others. There is no charge for the service.



On The Club Calendar

Loma Prieta District, California Federation of Women's Clubs, will meet tomorrow at Hollister Woman's Clubhouse in Hollister. Registration will be from 9 to 10 a.m. with the business meeting to follow.

Santa Cruz Parlor, Native Daughters of the Golden West, meets Monday at 8 p.m. at the BPW Clubhouse. President Marion Pollastri.

Club will conduct their annual plant exchange when they meet Tuesday at 1:30 p.m. at the home of Mrs. Harry Beevers, 46 South Circle Drive.

The Auxiliary to United Spanish War Veterans will meet Tuesday at 1:30 p.m. at Veterans Building. Officers will be installed for the coming year.

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programs operated locally by Volunteer Service.



Pasatiempo Productions will meet at Pasatiempo Inn Monday at 7:30 p.m. for election of officers for 1970. Future stage productions also will be planned. Anyone interested in participating or in joining the group is invited to attend.

Santa Cruz Eastern Stars will have a New Year's party Monday at 8 p.m. at Masonic Temple.

Members of the garden group of the UCSC Women's

Santa Cruz County Hammond Organ Society meets at 7:45 p.m. Tuesday at Soquel IOOF Hall.

Three AFS students, Inga Hauksdottir of Iceland, Margaret Thomas of England, and Reuben Ortiz of Paraguay, will speak to members of **Esther Circle** at 1:30 p.m. Tuesday at First Methodist Church. Visitors are welcome.

Golden Triangle will meet Wednesday at 12:30 p.m. for luncheon at Masonic Temple. Installation of officers will follow.

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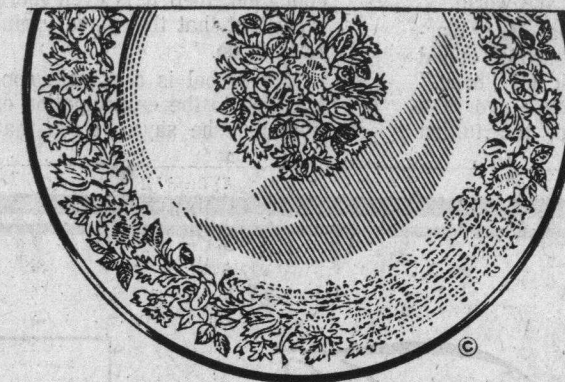
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