

Woman is New Director of Volunteer Service

Nine years ago Irene van der Zande was one of the first students at UCSC, living in a trailer while the dormitories were being built.

She returned to Santa Cruz three years ago after graduating in psychology at UCLA, working with VISTA and traveling abroad. "I came back to this area because of its beauty. I knew it was the place I wanted to live," she says.

And now she has been chosen as the executive director of the Volunteer Service, replacing Neil McLaughlin. According to the VS board of directors, he will continue at present with VS as Court Referral project director and on an assignment to organize newly received transportation grants.

Irene is enthusiastic about her new job and brings to it a wide background of community work. She was with VISTA for two and a half years, initiating community programs in small towns and rural areas.

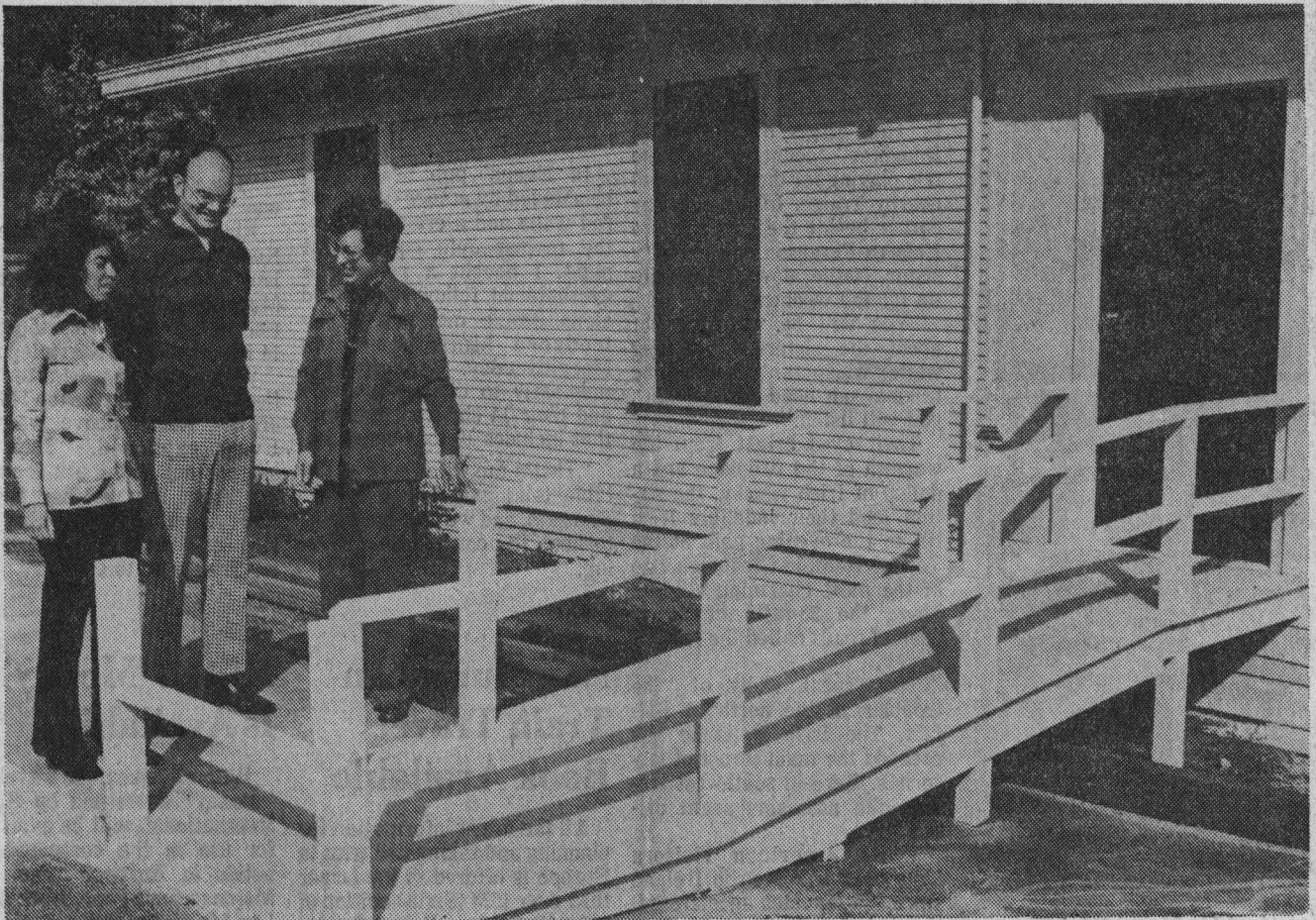
"After a six week training program, I was let off a bus in a small town in Iowa with no prior introduction to the residents. In fact, they didn't know who I was and why I was there. VISTA doesn't operate that way anymore," she notes. "It took awhile to get acquainted to gain the confidence of the people."

"I began by organizing services such as child care and family planning centers as well as a visiting program which allowed boys in the local reform school to come into the community. We always stressed programs which could operate and be staffed by people interested in helping their community after the original organizer left."

Irene also worked as a VISTA leader of other volunteers in rural Nebraska, as a VISTA trainer, and on a Nebraska Indian reservation.

Irene is pleased with the programs carried on by Volunteer Service at its offices in Santa Cruz and Watsonville. The major programs include transportation, with volunteers driving the elderly and indigent to doctors' office; the Buddy program, where a volunteer becomes an adult friend to a child who does not have that influence; English Language, with volunteers teaching English to preschoolers and adults; Friends in Contact, where volunteers visit men and women in the County Jail; Friendly Visiting, with volunteers offering friendship to elderly persons living alone; and Court Referral, a program where volunteers do community work in place of fines or incarceration.

Volunteers also act as receptionists and clerks in the two VS offices. Persons interested in



The Santa Cruz Volunteer Service office, 1110 Emeline Avenue, Santa Cruz, now has a ramp so that those in wheelchairs may volunteer their services to VS as well as attend meeting concerning the new VS grant for the purchase of four vans for their transportation to essential appointments. Pleased with the ramp are from left, Irene van der Zande, new executive director; Bill Fitzgerald, coordinator of the Buddy program, and Leona Dameron, VS assistant director for the Santa Cruz office.

more information on any of the programs may call 423-0554 or drop in at 1110 Emeline Avenue, Santa Cruz.

"This agency is already organized with well developed ongoing services," Irene says, "but we always need more volunteers to fill community needs, particularly in the Buddy and transportation programs. I plan to spend some initial time learning in depth about each of the services."

She also expresses satisfaction with the new VS transportation grant allowing for the purchase of four vans to transport those in wheelchairs to essential appointments. This program is expected to be in operation by July.

"There has been a need for this service for some time," Irene says. "I like that sense of local commitment and dedication that Volunteer Service offers."

A native Californian, Irene grew up in China Lake, a small town on the Mojave desert. Both her parents were scientists working on the Navy base there.

She says she first became interested in community and social service work in high school when she organized a Girl Scout troop for retarded children and found it enormously rewarding.

Irene met her husband, Ed, a Hollander and a consultant with community organizations,

while traveling in Europe. In the last two years she also has worked as a consultant with local community programs such as COPE, La Coalicion, Legal Aid and Project SEW. Last term she and her husband taught a course on program development and funding at Cabrillo College through Community Services.

—ALICE COOLEY

Judges Named for Art Show

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