

A Volunteer Is A Friend

Editor's Note: This is the seventh in a series of articles on the Community Volunteer Service of northern Santa Cruz County.

By JEAN S. BAKER
Sentinel Staff Writer

A volunteer is one who has said, "I am available to help."

What she or he may be called upon to do may vary, of course.

The Community Volunteer Service, a branch of the Community Council, has its offices in the Area Service building of the EOC on Pacific Avenue, but is not an EOC project.

During the six hours that the CVS is manned, each day, the telephone rings constantly with requests for help—some emergency, others just simple needs that one cannot meet for himself.

CVS got its start in January with 14 volunteers—people who said I have some time on my hands, how may I help?

The volunteer is interviewed and given an opportunity to help where he is most interested.

As this series has pointed out, some people make daily telephone calls to be sure people are okay; others provide transportation; still others are teaching reading and writing.

Because we are interested in the volunteers—the kinds of persons they are and how they became interested, we talked to several.

Mary Middleton has become involved with the transportation end of the volunteer program. She says, "I'm glad to do something and this is very worthwhile. At least, I feel I'm doing something useful."

Mrs. Middleton says that most of her calls have been to take someone to the doctor or to do some grocery shopping. One woman, she recalls, needed a ride to obtain some legal service.

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Of course, there is public transportation and taxi services in Santa Cruz. But for some a bus ride is not possible—either they live too far from the bus lines or would not be able to get on were they accessible to them.

The service is not limited to the elderly either—rather it is available for anyone who cannot get where he must go by himself.

Often the volunteers are called only on a one-time

basis. For others, the services (such as to a doctor) are regular.

The one who has a request may call the CVS, 426-0370, who then contacts a person in his neighborhood. Seldom does one make a call directly to the volunteer.

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For Mr. and Mrs. Harold Buggeln of Aptos, service as volunteers is a family project. Both are involved. The Buggelns became interested through Mrs. Mary Kibble, who interviews the volunteers for CVS, and they have been transporting folks for nearly a year, Mrs. Buggeln says.

Most of their trips have been to take a person to the hospital or to keep a medical appointment. Mrs. Buggeln has also driven a blind lady to the beauty parlor to have her hair done, then returned to take her to her home again.

One of Beggeln's errands is to take C. M. Madsen, who is blind, to the doctor or on errands. He fills in where Mrs. Buggeln can't, and the two of them average 8 to 10 hours a week as volunteers.

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Mrs. Hamilton Hoxie's volunteer service is of another nature. She gives at least one half day each week in the office. This means answering the telephone and doing clerical work.

She has been with the CVS since April, but volunteer work is not new to her. Even when her children were young, Mrs. Hoxie says she was a volunteer, spending many, many hours in hospital work.

"Every minute I put in is worthwhile," she says, "and I could easily double my time to meet the many needs." Mrs. Hoxie says there is always some big project women can do in a growing community, and a great many women need to do it for themselves.



A trip to the doctor for Carl Madsen, right, is arranged by Community Volunteer Service. Harold Buggeln of Aptos is the volunteer who provides the transportation for him. Both Mr. and Mrs. Buggeln are volunteers, giving as much as 8 to 10 hours each week. Volunteers are needed to give as little as an hour — as often as they can.

"More people ought to know the tremendous satisfaction and the feeling of being needed," she adds. And Mrs. Hoxie could fill her many hours at home as her husband is an invalid, but she still finds time for others, too.

Sometimes when she receives calls in the office that no one can take care of, she herself often transports people. "I like the contact with these people and wish I could keep in touch with each one."

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What, then, is the CVS?

It is an opportunity to help people who cannot—for

one reason or another—help themselves. Finances are not the sole criteria, nor is old age. Children of one working parent who need to be taken to a doctor, the infirm who can't ride a bus, a lonely woman who has no way to visit her husband in

a hospital or rest home, a semi-invalid youngster who needs therapy — these are the people you could volunteer to help.

It's a way to account for hours you once thought were long!

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