

## **Minutes of the RCRV Board of Directors Meeting 04/18/2007**

Board Vice Chairman Keith Sutherland determined that a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 1:35 PM.

Board members and guests introduced themselves by name and organizational affiliation. Seventeen members and guests signed the attendance list.

Minutes of the March Board of Directors meeting were approved as published on the web site.

### **Program**

Bruce Vander Sanden from the Department of Correctional Services presented an overview of the Weed and Seed Program. This is a series of related activities that are part of a strategy for dealing with neighborhoods where crime has become troublesome. Five neighborhoods in Cedar Rapids are being addressed. These are Mound View, Wellington Heights, Oakhill Jackson, Taylor, and the Northwest area.

*Weed and Seed* is not a grant program. It is a defined strategy that uses existing resources to address specific targeted elements: Law Enforcement; Community Policing; Prevention, Intervention, and Treatment; and Neighborhood Restoration. Neighborhood Associations in each targeted area partner with government and social service agencies and schools to accomplish their objectives.

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Centers serve as a focal point for Weed and Seed activities. A paid site coordinator, who trains volunteers to work with neighborhood residents, manages these sites. A primary object is to file tax returns to claim earned income tax credit for eligible residents. One objective is to displace commercial firms that charge for large fees for services.

Coordinators at Neighborhood Resource Centers (comparable to federal Safe Haven centers) direct clients to available services, including police officers and probation officers as needed.

As part of *Weed and Seed*, the *Beautify, Restore, Improve, Upgrade Houses to Empower Neighborhoods* (BRIGHTEN) project is in its second year of operation. Its focus is neighbors helping neighbors. Volunteers assess houses for code violations, send letters to homeowners offering appreciation for good work, and offering help where needed. Participants include *VISTA* volunteers, Junior League, United Way Day of Caring, and many others. Scheduled volunteer days are June 16, July 21, and August 18. These designated work days bring people out to do fix-up and to meet neighbors. The *Weed and Seed* project is now soliciting grants and business contributions for the BRIGHTEN project.

In a question and answer period, Tom Brennom asked: Are there any measurements from last year? Nine properties were addressed, and these will be re-assessed this spring. The emphasis was on a cluster of projects, hoping that the improvements would spread better than scattered projects might. The BRIGHTEN project emphasizes neighborhood participation—for example, painting, to address lead-based paint issues.

Chuck Wehage asked: Can you use corrections people as part of their community service obligations? This has not been done yet. Adequate supervision must be provided. In one case, the neighborhood association bought an old drug house, and arranged to rework the furnishings using Corrections facilities at Anamosa. BRIGHTEN is open to more Corrections participation.

Keith Sutherland asked: Are opportunities available for RCRV volunteers? There is a continuing need for tax preparation volunteers and other volunteers in established programs, especially those with specific skills. Sutherland encouraged *Weed and Seed* to present specific projects to the RCRV Community Projects meetings on Thursdays. The Newsletter and the web site might also be used.

### **Committee Reports**

#### **Community Projects, John McDonough:**

Two high school dress rehearsals have given us an invitation to see the plays free of charge. You need only to contact their volunteer office if you would like to go. Kennedy High School is doing 'Disney High School Musical' at 1:30 and Linn-Mar High School is doing 'Beauty and the Beast' at 4 PM on April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

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Aging Services has several volunteer opportunities for us. They are going to expand their home safety program and will need folks to address special needs of some of their clients. They also are in need of drivers to transport patients to and from their doctor offices.

Bob Ocken is helping Aging Services with software which will identify the location of each of the clients so they can readily be contacted in case of an emergency like the recent freezing rain which caused loss of power to so many of Linn County Residents. This resulted in a real need for a lot of people in the area.

Our volunteers have been judges at the Eastern Iowa Science Fair, volunteered at local schools in the classroom and with tutoring as well as mentoring. We have volunteered at the REACT Center, the 4 Oaks Bridge, Eastern Iowa Observatory, SHIP, Indian Creek Nature Center, the Free Clinic, and the Abbe Center to name a few.

Several have signed up to be Board members in local nonprofit organizations. Some are the Salvation Army, the Witwer Center, RSVP in Jones County as well as in Linn County.

Arlo Meyer built another bocce ball ramp for documentation purposes as well as fulfilling a need for Ann Griffin at the GWAEA.

John Wauer redesigned the trail counter so it uses less power. He will test it on the trail system. I believe that he has a couple on the trails at this time.

The WRAP ramp requests are growing. As of April 4, we had eight requests to build and one request to remove. A breakfast was held this morning at St Lukes, introducing the WRAP program to area nonprofits.

The ramp removal was completed last weekend with ten volunteers removing and loading on Joe Wells' trailer where it is currently stored. It will be moved to the St Lukes Storage Building on A Avenue in the near future.

Linda Dearing nominated us for the *Shining Star* award from the Governors Conference on Aging and we won. It will be presented to Jim Green and Jack Hotchkiss on 5/22/07 in Des Moines.

Currently we are building the Space Shuttle mockup in the Pierce Gymnasium again this year.

The Volunteer is ready for print thanks to Rod Thorpe and John Wauer.

Casey Prince, Director of Theatre Cedar Rapids is in need of volunteers to act as ushers, set builders and set painters as well as auditioning for parts in the performances.

If you can dream it, we can do it.

### **Communications, Rod Thorpe:**

The April Newsletter is on the web site, now being prepared for mailing.

*The Cedar Rapids Gazette* had an RCRV/RSVP segment in the *Milestones* section. Angela paid for it.

Another *Gazette* feature is planned. Jim Green was interviewed for this feature.

### **Data Base, Jim Klein:**

No report. Jim submitted a membership update for the newsletter mailing.

### **Recruiting and Retention, Pete Jurgens:**

Waiting for new data on current membership.

### **Rockwell Collins, Cindy Dietz:**

Congratulations on RCRV's winning the state *Shining Star* award.

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### **Report on action items from the Rockwell Collins Management Briefing:**

Preliminary data from Melbourne and Richardson is being refined. So far, it appears that both locations have possibilities for establishing an RCRV-like organization. We are seeking candidates for leadership in both locations and looking for input from RCRV.

The Kennedy High 9/13 "think tank" project talked about processes potentially useful for expansion of RCRV.

Rockwell Collins is considering establishing a volunteer data base to track opportunities for both employees and retirees.

Cindy is doing research with other companies to find out whether matching contributions of retirees is a common practice. She is also attempting to estimate potential participation if retiree matching is offered. Wehage suggested a poll of RCRV active members to help make that estimate.

### **Agency Reports**

#### **Aging Services, Carol Luth:**

No report.

#### **Correctional Services, Heidi Soethout:**

Reorganizations in process. See RSVP and St Lukes reports for reports on WRAP and RSVP activities.

#### **Four Oaks Bridge, Carol Kalous:**

No report.

#### **Grant Wood AEA, Ann Griffin:**

No report.

#### **Heart of Iowa, Myrna Loehrlein:**

No report.

#### **Heritage Agency on Aging, Linda Dearing:**

Senior Leadership Institute planning is under way.

Both Heritage nominees for *Shining Star* awards won those awards.

#### **Hospice of Mercy, Sara Case:**

No report.

#### **Jane Boyd Community House, Karl Cassell:**

No report.

#### **New Horizons, Mark Beason:**

No report.

#### **Options of Linn County (Wayne Clayton):**

This past month, we've taken advantage of a couple of opportunities to share RCRV's story with others.

We hosted a tour of our facility for 30+ Kirkwood students. One of their principal points of focus was our use of assistive technology. We showed many of the RCRV devices and shared your brochures so they could see your other projects as well.

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One of our program managers showed two assistive devices to her son's Boy Scout troop. They were studying disabilities. She shared how these devices help keep people as independent and productive as possible. She also handed out your brochures.

Fox News did a feature on Autism, which featured RCRV device technology as part of the report.

Thanks for all you do.

### **REACT, Barb Klawiter:**

No report.

### **Red Cross, Joan Schaffer:**

Red Cross recognized Keith Sutherland for disaster assistance participation.

Red Cross volunteers were recognized in early June for nine who care awards.

May 4 is the *Big B\*A\*S\*H* at the PS Air hangar. This is a fundraiser, featuring a silent auction, a band, and is to be a fun event.

Three *AIDS Project (RAP)* events are scheduled for April 25, May 20, and May 31.

Red Cross Volunteers are doing ice storm cleanup next weekend.

Red Cross Awareness day will be May 12.

### **RSVP, Angela Berns:**

The Cedar Rapids Gazette published a Retirement Living Supplement April 15, on pages 14 & 15 in the *Milestones* section, entitled "How Can I Help." The feature highlighted RCRV and RSVP activities in the community. It was published as a thank you to volunteers.

RSVP of Jones County is growing and is currently up to 30 members.

WRAP Update: good progress being made. Detailed report deferred until the next Board Meeting.

### **St. Luke's Hospital, Denise Walker:**

Referral agency kickoff of WRAP at breakfast 4/18 was well attended, already getting good feedback from participants. Good contacts made that will help RCRV with other assistive technology opportunities. Good inputs to the assessment process already received.

### **United Way, Mary Klinger:**

No report.

### **Old Business**

No items.

### **New Business**

No items.

### **Adjournment**

2:48PM

The next Board meeting is May 16 at the Red Cross building.

Submitted by Don Grimm, Secretary.