

THE VOLUNTEER

A NEWSLETTER FOR RCRV MEMBERS

May 2009
Volume 9, Issue 2

Rockwell Collins Retiree Volunteers

If you can dream it,
we can do it.

Mission

Rockwell Collins retirees connecting to identify and support volunteer needs in our community and beyond, while enriching the lives of the volunteers.

Officers

Jim Green – Chairman
Rod Thorpe – Vice
Chairman
Barbara Hoffman – Secretary
Arlo Meyer - Treasurer

Committee Chairs

John McDonough –
Community Projects Team
Barbara Hoffman – Recruiting/
Retention/Recognition
Chuck Wehage –
Communications
Angela Berns – Agency Liaison
Jim Klein – Data Base

Web Site

<http://rcrv.org>
e-mail: contact@rcrv.org

RCRV
927 N. Compton Drive
Hiawatha, Iowa 52233
319-393-9637 (voice mail)



RCRV Meetings

Community Projects Team

The Community Projects Team meets every Thursday at 10:00 in our office in the REACT Center where we discuss future and current projects. Service agency representatives submit new project requests on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month. You are always welcome at any of the meetings.

New Retirees Orientation

Informational meetings for new retirees or others interested in becoming active members of RCRV are held at 9 AM on the third Thursday of each month at the REACT Center (927 N. Compton Dr. in Hiawatha). Those of you interested in learning more about RCRV and the many volunteer opportunities we offer are encouraged to attend. ♦

Abbe Center exercise machine

Rockwell Retirees Vern Hunstad and James Wolfe, volunteer Resident Advocates at The Abbe Center for Community Care Marion, Iowa coordinated the donation of three Stair Master exercise machines from Rockwell Collins Recreation Center to be used by the residents at the care facility.

“The exercise machines have been a welcomes addition to the facility”, says Frank DeCamp, Abbe Center staff associate. “Using the Stair Master has increased my energy, improved my breathing and helps lower my blood pressure”, says Chuck, Abbe resident.

Abbe Center management has forwarded a Letter of Appreciation to both Rockwell Collins Rec. Center and RCRV. ♦



RCRV is having another busy year with wheelchair ramp construction. RCRV works through WRAP (Wheelchair Ramp Accessibility Program) and Aging Services to build ramps for needy persons. Already this year RCRV has built 5 ramps and counting. Join us. Its fun!

Bicycle-Controlled Television Switch

By Amanda Christensen

At Anamosa High School I am always looking for new and creative ways to keep my special needs students motivated. Early this school year I called on Ann Griffin, Adaptive Physical Education Consultant from Grant Wood Area Education Agency, to help me develop ways for my students to be more active and like it! One student in particular spends the majority of his day in my classroom. He gets breaks built into his schedule, and his favorite break activity is to watch 10 minutes of television in his comfy lounge chair. Once Ann heard this, she told me about a switch that could be connected to a television that would be powered by a stationary bike. If the student stops pedaling or the speed is too slow, the screen turns to static. This would allow the student to watch television and be motivated to participate in physical activity at the same time.

Ann contacted Jack Murphy and Don Grimm, of Rockwell Collins Retiree Volunteers, who had built an electronic bicycle-controlled television switch for her previously. Don made some improvements to his original design and built a new switch. Jack came back to my classroom to install the switch and it was a hit right away. My students took turns riding the bike to make the television work, and when they stopped to let someone else ride, the screen would turn to static and the kids would laugh and get excited. The television and bike are close to the door so anyone walking by in the hallway saw it and within a few days of having the bicycle, students and staff were asking if they could try it out. Even though the bicycle-controlled television was intended for one student, all of my students enjoying using it as reward for attendance, homework completion, and positive attitudes.

It is awesome to see how excited everyone is by the bicycle powered television. It is such a great feeling to see the proud expressions on my student's faces when people come in to check out the bike. This bike has done more than provide motivation for physical activity for my students. It has provided a confidence amongst them because they have something in their room that others want and think is cool. This is a feeling these students seldom get. Thank you very much Jack Murphy, Don Grimm, and Ann Griffin for making this possible! ♦



Switch installed on the exercise bike



A special needs student riding the exercise bike to keep the TV on



Exercise bicycle switch box disconnects the antenna feed if the bicycle stops

Habitat for Humanity - Genesis Park

On Saturday, May 9, a small group of volunteers – Rockwell Collins retirees, active employees, and others - met to put the finishing touches on the 25th house in Genesis Park, a Habitat for Humanity project in southeast Cedar Rapids. This home occupies the last lot on Americus Drive, thereby completing the neighborhood. The project originally started in 1997 with the donation of land by two cemeteries.

Genesis Park got going when Sr. Eileen Schoenherr, OSF, a Habitat board member from St. Pius Parish, asked RCRV member Vern Hunstad to form a crew to build homes. Since most of Vern’s acquaintances were also employees or retirees from Rockwell Collins, around two thirds of his crew of 37 were “company men”. This effort predated RCRV, so very few of those countless hours ever showed up in the record.

Various groups – unions, churches, etc., sponsored the homes with donated funds and labor, but the Pius/Rockwell group worked on most of them. They worked one day a month for about 12 years before the group “retired”. The first home was dedicated in 1998, a year in which seven of the 3 and 4 bedroom homes were completed.



Genesis Park
25 Habitat for Humanity Homes

Unfortunately, most of Habitat’s records were lost in the flood last year. If you worked in Genesis Park and have any pictures of the construction that you would like to donate, drop them off at the Habitat ReStore on North Center Point Road in Hiawatha. That’s also the place to volunteer your time to Habitat as the organization does its part to help recover from the floods.



Site of the last nail and screw of the entire 25-home project

As for “The Rest Of The Story”, according to Jeff Capps (Executive Director of Cedar Valley Habitat for Humanity): on June 15, 2009, CVHH will kick off the 2009 AmeriCorps Build-A-Thon in Cedar Rapids, during which time the affiliate will build 20 homes in partnership with area families in need of simple, decent and affordable housing. Over the course of the following five days, more than 500 AmeriCorps members will complete the bulk of the construction on the homes. There are two neighborhoods - College Park Estates (near Kirkwood College) and Wilderness Estates (off of F Avenue in the northwest part of the city). The project represents Habitat's initial efforts to help rebuild affordable housing in the Cedar Rapids area following the 2008 floods. It is just phase one of an aggressive building plan which will see Cedar Valley Habitat building dozens of homes in the next few years. Major project sponsors include the City of Cedar Rapids, AEGON and Kurt and Brenda Warner's

First Things First Foundation. Cedar Valley Habitat for Humanity is an ecumenical Christian housing ministry dedicating to eliminating poverty housing and making decent housing available to all people.

RCRV will undoubtedly supply a good deal of the local labor for CVHH projects in June and in the years to follow. ♦

REACT Mission

The primary mission of the REACT center is to provide used computers and computer support for nonprofit and public service organizations. While in the past, REACT has been able to provide limited computer support for Rockwell Collins retirees, it does not have the manpower or space to keep up with the demand. Therefore REACT will no longer be able to provide this service. ♦

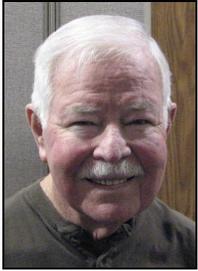


The BumpMobile – A simple adaptation for kids with mobility challenges: a truck inner tube on a platform with casters, and a rope to swing it around a gym. Requested by Ann Griffin, GWAEA Adapted Physical Education Consultant

Member Profile

Cliff Koop

Cliff joined the RCRV after retiring in 2000 from Rockwell Collins (RC), after working 52 years with great people. Cliff's company service started in 1948 at North American Aviation (NAA), which eventually became Rockwell Collins. Cliff and his wife Nancy are natives of California.



Cliff Koop

Cliff served in WWII for 4 years with the USCG in the South Pacific and Gulf Coast, ending up in Greenland for 13 months tracking German submarines

He was hired by NAA as an electronics technician on flight Radar Systems on all NAA aircraft. During these times, Cliff spent 350 hours flying in RB45's as the bombardier, navigator, & radar operator on company and Air Force acceptance test flights.

While working, Cliff continued his education, first at Compton College with an AA, then at the University of Southern California with a BSEE in 1955, and a Masters in Systems Management in 1974. His education doesn't end here, as Cliff has attended the Emmaus Bible College in Cedar Rapids for the past 24 years.

After Cliff's flying days, he became manager of Rockwell/Autonetics Materials Review and then manager of the Autonetics Electrical Metrology Laboratory. Cliff transferred to Rockwell Collins in 1976 as manager of their Metrology Laboratory. Cliff later became manager of the Test Equipment Technical Services to enhance the capabilities of the Government Products

Division concentrating on test equipment productivity. He then returned as manager of the Metrology Laboratory until retirement.

Cliff & his wife, Nancy, have traveled the world, both personally and on mission trips, visiting over 40 Countries. In recent years, Cliff has made 13 trips to Guatemala to support the House of Hope Orphanage and School. There are over 50 children in the Orphanage, but over 120 children in the school, which also serves the local community.

Cliff has served on the Salvation Army Advisory Board, the Linn County Trails Association and church building, finance committees, etc. Wherever there is a need, you might find Cliff, says Nancy! Nancy also calls him her social butterfly... and he accepts that premise!



Request for SHIIP Counselors

by John McDonough, SHIIP Counselor

We have had a request to find several more Senior Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP) counselors. The Cedar Rapids area including Anamosa has 5 sponsors; the Heritage Area Agency on Aging, Mercy Medical Center, St Luke's Hospital, the Witwer Center and the Jones County RSVP office in Anamosa. RCRV currently has 12 SHIIP counselors with two additional retirees going to the April training class in Des Moines.

In case you don't know what SHIIP is, it was created in 1990 to address health insurance questions and problems related to Medicare, Medicare supplement insurance, Medicare managed care (HMO's), Medicare Advantage insurance, long term care insurance, Medicare and insurance

claims, Medicaid, other types of health insurance as well as insurance marketing and consumer protection (fraud). We act as the interface between our clients and the various providers as well as their insurance carriers. As a counselor, when a client has his or her problems resolved, we have great satisfaction that we were able to help with Medicare insurance problems.

A SHIIP counselor must take 6 days of training in Des Moines (taught by a very knowledgeable lady from the State SHIIP office); 3 days one week and another 3 days later in the month with a period of time in between to absorb the information. Upon completion of the training each counselor is required to sign a form stating that they will not divulge any client personal information. Each counselor must make a commitment to volunteer for a minimum of one year.

We are a free confidential service of the State of Iowa Insurance Department that helps Iowans make informed decisions about Medicare and other health coverage.

If you have any questions concerning your Rockwell Collins Insurance programs or you have questions about your parents' Medicare insurance programs, don't hesitate to contact one of us. We are knowledgeable in each of the offered RC programs, as well as with the many Medicare supplements and associated insurances. You may get in touch with us via our RCRV telephone message service at (319) 393-9637. We don't answer the phone, but please leave a message. Someone will return your call.

Again, being a SHIIP counselor is fun. We are helping a lot of people resolve their insurance problems. Please sign up for this very worthwhile project. ♦