



CENTRAL IOWA
RSVP
 Connecting People To Purpose

Serving Hamilton
 and
 Webster Counties
Fall 2023

Office Hours:
8:30-4:30
Mondays and Fridays
in Fort Dodge,
Tuesday-Thursday
in Webster City

Pen Pals Needed



One of RSVP's most popular volunteer activities is the Pen Pal program, where seniors write one letter a month to a local student, and get the chance to meet that student at the end of the school year.

This year, our program will serve 6 area schools, Webster City Middle School, Southeast Valley Middle School, South Hamilton Elementary, St Edmond Elementary, Stratford Elementary, and St. Thomas Aquinas School.

The Pen Pal program has been very successful because of the great value for the students. They learn the art of letter writing, and of communicating with someone of an older generation whom they have never met. It is a favorite of RSVP volunteers because it is so enjoyable to get a hand-written letter in the mail from a young person, and to get to know the personality of that youngster through their letters.

If you or anyone you know would like to be a pen pal for the coming school year, please contact Becky at 515-832-2525. Must be 55+ to be RSVP eligible.

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If you need an RSVP Individual Timesheet, please contact Becky at 515-832-2525, and it will be mailed to you. Thank you!

First Responders are Honored on 9/11



Linda Hutchinson designed the card front for the cards distributed in Hamilton County

How often do the first responders in our community receive thanks for the job they do? This question prompted the plan of giving notes of appreciation to all the first responders in the police department, fire department, sheriff's department and hospital emergency room department in Hamilton and Webster counties.

Many RSVP volunteers answered the call to help make cards to send to first responders. Some designed the cards, some did the assembly of the cards, some put the first responders' names on the envelopes in decorative script, and many others signed their names to the note written inside the card.

This was our note: "A special thank you for being a member of our community's first responder team. It takes a special kind of person to take on the responsibility of being first on the scene. Please know that your contribution to the welfare of our community is greatly appreciated. "

The cards were distributed by volunteers on September 11 in commemoration of Patriot's Day.



Volunteers Cheri Maehl and Gail Rivera work on First Responders appreciation cards



Volunteers Merrily Dixon and Nancy Siefert work on First Responders appreciation cards

Meet our Advisory Council Members

Central Iowa has a stellar group of people serving as Advisory Council members. These people help the staff come up with great ideas concerning volunteer opportunities, volunteer recruitment, volunteer recognition, and marketing of RSVP in the community.

The Advisory Council members meet quarterly, but also serve in their day-to-day lives to promote RSVP and senior volunteerism in general, fostering good public relations in the community, and identifying unmet needs in the community where volunteers can help.



Rev. Craig Blaufuss is the pastor of First Congregational UCC in Webster City. In addition to his work as a pastor he is active in the Webster City Ministerial Association and Hamilton County Crimestoppers. He has been on the RSVP Advisory Council since 2015.



Bonnie Reck is from Dayton, and has been involved as an RSVP volunteer since 2015. Bonnie is trained as a presenter for both Fraud Fighters and SPAN the Generations. She has served as a BASE Senior Fitness leader, a reading partner and a pen pal. Bonnie represents RSVP at the Dayton Expo.



Paula Brownell, Webster City, has been a volunteer with RSVP since 2012. Paula has served with Hamilton County Public Health in many capacities, and as a hospital greeter and guide. She is a pen pal, and her favorite volunteer activity is as a phone buddy with Elderbridge.



Billie Shelton, Stanhope, has been with RSVP since 2014. She has served as a pen pal in 4 different schools, and as a reading partner at Stratford Elementary. Billie leads the BASE Senior Fitness class in Stanhope, and volunteers at the Lotus Treasures thrift shop.



Lorie Spanjers, Fort Dodge, joined RSVP in 2018. Lorie has been trained as a Fraud Fighter presenter, as well as a Speak UP educator, teaching 5th graders how to give public speeches. Lorie also sends cards to nursing home residents.



Susan Schmitz has been on our Advisory Council since 2015. Sue lives in Ellsworth and is the mother of three children. Sue is the Program Coordinator for ISU Extension and Outreach, Hamilton County.



Jeanine Nemitz, Fort Dodge, is a former director of both RSVP and Foster Grandparents in Webster County. Jeanine served as President of the AmeriCorps Seniors Professional Network. Her expertise is much appreciated on the Advisory Council.



Danielle Moore is a mortgage loan officer with Availa Bank in Webster City. Danielle has been married for 25 years to her husband Rob, and they have 3 children. She is part of the Webster City Rotary Club, and a committee member for the Heart of Iowa Regional Housing Trust Fund.

Current Volunteer Opportunities

Fall 2023



The following opportunities are available to all volunteers in Hamilton and Webster Counties. If you are interested in an assignment in another community, RSVP can provide mileage reimbursement. For more information, contact Becky Koppen at 515-832-2525.

Pen Pals at Area Schools

More pen pals will be needed this fall, and this is a volunteer opportunity that can be done from home. Encourage a young student this year by being their new friend via old fashioned mail.

Santa for Seniors

Volunteers are needed to deliver packages in Webster County and in Hamilton County. Delivery dates in mid-December.

Youth Shelter Care

Volunteers are needed to spend time with youth in care, playing games, doing crafts, baking, or having a movie night. As often as you choose. Background check required.

The Key on Central

The Key on Central is a thrift store which supports the Domestic/Sexual Assault Outreach Center. Volunteers are needed to sort and fold donated items, dust and vacuum, and set up displays.

Nursing Home Note Writers

Nursing homes in Hamilton and Webster counties are looking for volunteers to write cards and notes to residents.

Reading Buddies

Reading Buddies are needed at 5 area schools. You choose your time slot, once a week.

Van Diest Medical Center

VDMC is looking for greeters and guides to lead people to the department they need to reach, and for bedside volunteers to visit with patients.

Elderbridge Area Agency on Aging

Volunteers are sought to be errand buddies, medical transportation drivers, and reassurance callers.

Mentors for Students

Mentors are needed for students at Webster City Middle School and in the Fort Dodge School District. If you are interested, contact Becky at 515-832-2525.

The Inside Story—Lotus Community Project

Lotus Community Project, established in 2019, is a homeless shelter in Webster County that provides shelter for single women, women with children, and families. The project serves a 6 county area, Webster, Calhoun, Humboldt, Wright, Hamilton, and Pochahontas counties.

RSVP volunteers serve in the thrift store called Lotus Treasures, located at 707 2nd Street in Webster City. Lotus Treasures receives donations of clothing, furniture and all kinds of other home goods, and all proceeds from the store support the women's shelter.

The Lotus Community Project believes that every woman, child and family should have access to adequate housing, support and resources.



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RSVP Collaborates with Elderbridge and UDMO in "Santa for Seniors"

For the second year, RSVP will partner with Elderbridge and Upper Des Moines Opportunity in "Santa for Seniors." Eligible older adults will be selected to receive a package of Christmas gifts purchased through donations from area businesses and organizations.



RSVP volunteers will package those gift items for each individual, and will deliver the packages in mid December. Volunteers will be needed for both Hamilton and Webster counties.

RSVP volunteers are also encouraged to create hand-made items such as lap quilts, dish cloths, and hot pads to be included in the gift packages.

If you would like to be involved in "Santa for Seniors," call Becky at 515-832-2525. Get into the Christmas spirit!

We're on the web!
www.rsvpvolunteer.org

Central Iowa RSVP

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