



Local volunteer brings help and sense of humor to CSA

Written by Carol Crites—Wednesday, November 18, 2009

Even the worst rainstorm of the season couldn't keep Los Altos resident **Art Van Horne** from his volunteer job at the Food & Nutrition Center at the Community Services Agency in Mountain View. Van Horne has volunteered at CSA for 12 years, donating nearly 3,500 hours of service. His energetic spirit and great sense of humor make him a valued volunteer, according to those who have worked with him.



For more than 50 years, CSA has provided vital social services for residents of Los Altos, Los Altos Hills and Mountain View. The non-profit agency offers emergency assistance of food, rent and financial support to those in need and sponsors senior assistance services and a holiday sharing program featuring food and toy drives.

Q: How did you become a volunteer at the Community Services Agency?

A: My first connection with CSA was the result of a news item in the Town Crier about the need for volunteers at the Presbyterian Church lunch program, where I could help in hands-on constructive work while serving the less fortunate. A couple of years later, when I moved to the Food & Nutrition Center, I learned more about CSA and its wide range of activities serving so many community needs. I knew my choice was the right one.

Q: What tasks do you perform?

A: Volunteers in the Food & Nutrition Center check clients in and out of the food pantry, verify that they took the correct amounts of food for that day and answer questions. I volunteer twice a week for 2.5-hour shifts.

Q: What is your favorite part of volunteering?

A: While my experience at CSA has been strictly with nutrition and food services, the connection with staff, fellow volunteers and the varied clientele in these activities has made my life highly enjoyable. The opportunity to help make life more comfortable and pleasant for others has been very rewarding.

Q: Who might enjoy this volunteer position?

A: Any suggestions for others contemplating volunteering might include their checking the benefits of having a definite schedule that could work in well with their other activities. Volunteering gets you into circulation again and out into mainstream society – helping by physical activity, rather than conversation, those not so lucky, and “giving back,” as the saying goes, for your own good fortune.

CSA volunteer needs

The Community Services Agency seeks volunteers for the upcoming Holiday Sharing program. Local residents can volunteer as groups or individually to prepare holiday food bags; donate new toys, books and gift cards; help set up the toy store; and escort clients through the store and assist with gift selection.

For more information, visit www.csacares.org/volunteer or e-mail Alison Hopkins at ahopkins@csacares.org.