



Volunteer

Headline

Your Source for Volunteer News and Events in Florida



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Florida Legislative Spouses Put Their Passion Into Action, Receive Awards for Volunteer Service

"Put your passion into action," said **Aileen Pruitt**, wife of **Senate President Ken Pruitt**. "Whether it is children, or elderly, or whatever your particular passion is, that's what this is all about, putting your passion into action and helping other people."

The Governor's Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service, Volunteer Florida, awarded **49** legislative spouses, all of whom are committed volunteers, the [President's Volunteer Service Award](#), the highest national honor offered in recognition of volunteer service. The Awards were presented at a ceremony in the Capitol Rotunda.

Volunteer Florida also recognized the spouses for their collective volunteer service. Spouses of state Senators and House members throughout Florida volunteered a total of **27,660** hours over the past year. As a result, Volunteer Florida honored legislative spouses with the Florida Faithful Volunteer Group Award.

"I encourage all Floridians to follow the example of Florida's legislative spouses and volunteer in their communities or neighborhoods," said **Governor Charlie Crist**. "If everyone committed just a few hours a week for volunteering, Florida would be an even better place to live." ([more](#))



Legislative spouses accept the Florida Faithful Group Volunteer Service Award. Pictured are (left to right) Volunteer Florida CEO Wendy Spencer, House Speaker Marco Rubio, Jeanette Rubio, Governor Charlie Crist, Aileen Pruitt, Senate President Ken Pruitt, and Volunteer Florida Immediate Past Chairman Dave Ramsay.

 Volunteer Florida is proud to announce new Commission officers

- **Lee Cockerell**, Chairman, of Orange County - recently retired as Executive Vice President of Operations for the WALT DISNEY WORLD ® Resort in Lake Buena Vista, Fla. He was appointed to the Commission in 2005.
- **General Bob Milligan**, Vice Chairman, of Okaloosa County - holds a distinguished record of 39 years of military experience. He also serves as Florida's Insurance Consumer Advocate. He was appointed to the Commission in 2005.
- **Burt Harres**, Treasurer, of Hernando County - is currently the Vice President of Pasco-Hernando Community College's North Campus in Brooksville, Florida. He was appointed to the Commission in 2005.



Lee Cockerell



General Bob Milligan



Burt Harres

"I want to thank our immediate past chairman, **Dave Ramsay**, of Leon County, for his commitment and the outstanding leadership he afforded the Commission," said Volunteer Florida CEO Wendy Spencer. "I look forward to working with the new officers and all commissioners to promote and facilitate volunteerism in Florida during the next year."



Congratulations AmeriCorps HBCU!

AmeriCorps Historically Black College and University members from [Bethune-Cookman University](#) received special recognition from the City of Daytona Beach Leisure Services Department for "Volunteer Services Within the Community." The AmeriCorps HBCU program has worked diligently for the last three years networking and serving as community mentors for events such as the Fall Kids Festival, The Charles Cherry Christmas Festival, Martin Luther King Celebration and Parade, The Annual Easter Beach Run, and Field Days at Turie Small Elementary School and Campbell Middle School. Congratulations on this very special recognition!



AmeriCorps HBCU Members were recognized by the City of Daytona Beach for "Volunteer Services within the Community."



AmeriCorps Florida State Parks: "Getting Things Done"

Since 1997, [AmeriCorps Florida State Parks](#) has been fulfilling its mission “to serve and strengthen Florida State Parks’ natural and cultural resources by addressing critical environmental and human needs.”

The program consists of a team of 10 in Tallahassee, a team of 12 in Apopka, and 30 other individuals placed in 21 parks across the state. Each team participates in activities that range from recruiting volunteers to clearing and maintaining trails. In the past 10 years, Florida State Parks AmeriCorps has maintained more than **100,000** acres of land, presented 600 Environmental Education Programs to more than 1,000 park visitors, and recruited more than 6,000 volunteers who served 100,000 hours.

“Our program focuses on environmental education, volunteer recruitment and management, and resource management. We want to do as much as possible to ensure that future Floridians are able to enjoy the natural beauty that our state has to offer,” said Lorraine Elder, State Program Coordinator.

AmeriCorps Florida State Parks also serves in times of disaster. Because they are among Florida’s trained first responders, they often stay weeks until the aftermath has passed. Members have been instrumental in helping Emergency Support Function 15, Volunteers and Donations, fulfill needs in Florida’s communities during these disasters. For more information contact Joni Ellis, at AmeriCorps@dep.state.fl.us.



AmeriCorps Florida State Parks Members serve and strengthen State Parks natural and cultural resources.

Hurricane Hints

Hurricane Season is in full swing – how prepared *are* you? Do you have a disaster plan? Imagine a hurricane strengthens in the Gulf, and the forecast has your family or business right in the middle of the dreaded “cone.” What is the first thing you should do?

1. Start my disaster plan!
2. Finish my disaster plan!
3. Put my disaster plan into action!
4. Eat another doughnut. I’ve got plenty of time to prepare.

So what is the correct answer? Ideally it would be “3,” put my disaster plan into action! Unfortunately some Floridians still have not prepared for a storm. In a major disaster, emergency workers may not be able to reach everyone right away, and in some cases it may take three or more days for help to arrive. What would you do if you had no electricity, no gas, no water and no telephone service? Having a plan for your family and/or business will help ensure safety and comfort during these difficult times. Visit www.floridadisaster.org and GET A PLAN!





AmeriCorps Members Attend Regional Training Camps

In preparation for the 2007 Hurricane Season and to assist AmeriCorps Members with obtaining critical Disaster Preparedness training, Volunteer Florida offered a series of Regional Disaster Training Camps for AmeriCorps members in Tallahassee, Jacksonville, Daytona and West Palm Beach. Trainings ranged from Shelter Operations and Volunteer Reception Center training to Managing Spontaneous Volunteers in Times of Disasters.

Other training topics included: Life After AmeriCorps, Team Building, Conflict Resolution and Diversity Appreciation, and Disability Awareness and Sensitivity. More than **230** AmeriCorps State and National Direct Members attended from all over Florida! For more information on the Regional Training Camps contact [Dee Wilder](#).



AmeriCorps members attend Volunteer Reception Center Training.



Three Honored in Sarasota With the President's Call to Service Award

Volunteer Florida recently awarded three volunteers with the [President's Call to Service Award](#), the highest national honor offered in recognition of volunteer service. To qualify for the President's Call to Service Award, volunteers must have logged a minimum of **4,000 volunteer hours** over the course of their lifetimes. Recipients were:

- **Brother William Geenan**, of Sarasota, founder of the Senior Friendship Center, which today has an annual budget of \$12 million, and provides the same programs that 16 distinct nonprofits provide in other communities.
- **Mr. Tom Giles**, of Sarasota, has helped provide leadership and programs to support low-income communities over the past 10 years and has been instrumental in the growth of the Friendship Volunteer Center.
- **Ms. Carl Stephens**, of the Newtown Community, has been instrumental in getting her neighborhood prepared for disasters and organizing local African-American churches to be mini points of distribution after disasters occur.



"These recipients of the President's Call to Service Award are role models for all Americans," said Volunteer Florida CEO **Wendy Spencer**. "Each volunteer hour contributed makes a difference in improving the quality of life for others. Through their extraordinary commitment, these volunteers have brought us closer together as families, as communities and as a Nation."



Seasons of Service

Seasons of Service, sponsored and promoted by the [Points of Light Foundation](#), is a portfolio of national opportunities for people to volunteer for service projects and activities throughout the year. More than 20 million people volunteer each year to be part of the Seasons of Service - a year-round action plan to illustrate how a single day of service can grow into an ongoing habit of helping communities.

Upcoming Days of Service

[Community Build Day](#) August 4, 2007

[My Good Deed](#) September 11, 2007

