

Independent Volunteering

Have a day off or some free time on the horizon? Maybe you've thought about volunteering but haven't had the time to set something up. Perhaps you and your family members have become so busy with family, work, school or other commitments, that you can't imagine how you could help! But there are ways to give back without making a big time commitment or even leaving your home. Little contributions mean a lot! Your opinions and actions matter! On this insert we've assembled some ideas for independent service you and family members can do on your own. Try one today!



Concerned about something? Let your voice be heard! Write a letter to local newspapers or elected officials about issues you feel strongly about. (letters@fredericknewspost.com; jallanach@gazette.net for the Gazette).



Recycle creatively and skip the chocolate! Decorate reusable shopping bags and give them to family and friends for Valentine's Day.



Time to weed out outgrown books from your child's bookshelf? Ask a friend or neighbor to do the same and take your collection where it will be appreciated –your child's school, a neighbor down the street, or the Frederick Reading Center (301-662-1051 or tutoring@starpower.net)



Going to the grocery store? This time buy some extra peanut butter or tuna. Food banks always need key items year-round. Visit www.VolunteerFrederick.org to find the food bank nearest you and contact them about what they need most.

Like to coordinate projects?



The Religious Coalition for Emergency Human Needs is looking for volunteers to organize food or hygiene item drives for their shelter. Coordinate a service project with your co-workers, PTO, book or bridge club! Contact the staff at the Religious Coalition at 301-631-2670 for more information.



The American Cancer Society needs volunteers to coordinate their spring Daffodil Days Fundraiser: Daffodil Days raises money to fund life-saving programs and patient services. Coordinators help collect donations for "pre-ordered" flowers. Step by step guidelines are available in the Daffodil Days Coordinator Kit available from the American Cancer Society. To learn about volunteering for Daffodil Days, call Dawn Snyder at 1-888-535-4555.



Love animals? Collect old towels or pick up some dog or cat treats the next time you are at the store for Frederick's animal shelter at 1832 Rosemont Avenue; 301-694-1319.



Love to bake? Bake treats for the staff and clients of your favorite nonprofit organizations. Make a birthday cake for a resident of a nursing home, San Mar Children's Home, or Community Living. Make homemade play dough or flubber and donate it to your child's

school or daycare center. Organize a bake sale to benefit your favorite charity or your child's school. Visit our web site www.VolunteerFrederick.org to find contact information.



Are your kids into Arts & Crafts? Suggest that they make birthday or holiday cards for residents of nursing homes or Community Living's group homes. Kids can also become pen-pals with Community Living residents. Call Mary Young at 301-663-8811x204 or MartyY@communitylivinginc.org.



Tired of seeing all that unsightly roadside or creekside litter? Take a walk with a garbage bag and pick it up! Better yet, create a BIG Sweep team with your family and neighbors and Volunteer Frederick will provide the supplies and arrange for trash pick-up! Call Volunteer Frederick at (301) 663-5214 or visit www.TheBIGSweep.org for details.



Compost! Start a neighborhood yard waste composting site. Instead of throwing away organic waste (grass clippings, leaves, kitchen scraps), help your neighbors learn how to compost it. Not only will you be saving the landfills, you'll produce free organic fertilizer. Or learn how to build and stock a worm bin at <http://cecalaveras.ucdavis.edu/compost1.htm>



Improve the air and create habitat! Plant trees in your yard and consider engaging the whole family in creating a certifiable Backyard Habitat. Visit <http://www.nwf.org/backyardwildlifehabitat/> to find out more.



Share your talents or hobbies! Volunteer at a nursing home. Plan a party, perform a talent show or plan a craft night. Make a gift to give to the residents, such as a sun-catcher, a calendar, a table centerpiece, a flower pot or a bird feeder. Northampton Manor Healthcare Center is interested in working with individuals or groups that want to do service projects; for example, a club could work on birdhouses or other projects with their male residents. Call or email Tiffany Heberton at 301-662-8700 or thebenton@magnoliamgmt.com.



Are you an Artist? Paint a picture for a shelter, school or nursing home resident.