

April 20, 2016 — VVCC honors volunteers for record number of services

Sedona, AZ—In honor of National Volunteer Appreciation Month, Verde Valley Caregivers held its annual Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon, April 14, at Oakcreek Country Club in Sedona. Nearly 80 guests and volunteers attended.

"The Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon is one of the best days of the year for VVCC," said Executive Director Kent Ellsworth. "It's great to see our volunteers together in one place to celebrate the difference they make for the neighbors we serve.

VVCC Board President George Ault welcomed volunteers and thanked them, on behalf of the board, for their great work in helping older adults stay living independently in their own homes for as long as possible.

Ault also introduced special guest Darla DeVille, Community Affairs manager, Northwest Division of Arizona Public Service, who said APS has committed to supporting VVCC's Guardian Angel medical alert program and transportation.

Guest speaker Terrie Frankel, an early Doublemint Twin, and now a Veterans advocate, shared her story about performing in the jungles of Vietnam with her twin sister Jennie. Frankel later became a producer, screenwriter and New York Times best selling author. Her efforts on behalf of servicemen and women and veterans continue through her work as a filmmaker, public speaker and Lifetime Associate member of the Marine Corps League, Sedona Detachment #1237.

Because of the support of the Sedona Detachment #1237, Frankel was able to accompany her brother-in-law and VVCC neighbor Warren Imus, a Korean and World War II veteran, to visit the WWII Memorial in Washington D.C. via the Honor Flight program.

Frankel thanked volunteers for the assistance they give to her brother-in-law and announced she is naming Verde Valley Caregivers in her will. "I know they will make the most of every dollar to enlighten the lives of hundreds of seniors they touch every day, year after year."

Ellsworth and staff thanked volunteers for providing record services to 2,400 older adults in 2015. About 350 volunteers delivered a combined 72,600 hours of service. They also provided 31,121 individual services, ranging from friendly phone calls, assistance with grocery shopping, and help with minor household repairs. Most notably last year, volunteers provided 21,550 trips for older adults.

Special recognition was given to volunteers who drove the most miles and served the most hours. Hubert Ballesteros received honors for driving over 25,000 miles and for providing 2,000 hours of service. Bill Macuri also received honors for driving 23,000 miles and providing 2,600 hours of service. Fran and Jim Stowell received honors for providing 17,000 miles and 1,700 hours of service. Torrey Barcanic, Elaine Boyer, Irma McNeff, Thomas Brand and Kathleen Zawadzki were recognized for providing over 3,000 miles transporting neighbors. Ed Huber and Frank Cruz were recognized for driving over 2,000 miles.

VVCC recognized volunteers who completed over 500 hours of volunteer service including Elaine Boyer, Lee Weller, Irma McNeff, Kathleen Zawadzki, Thomas Brand and Noreen Zaccaria. Ed Huber, Gail Guntermann, Gary Barto, Holly Horath, and Judy Fisher were also recognized as volunteers who completed over 300 hours of service.

VVCC also honored volunteers for five and ten years of service. The following volunteers were awarded five-year pins: Gary Barto, Ed Huber and Sandy Harotunian. Cindy Walker was presented with a ten-year pin.

VVCC thanks following businesses for donating gift certificates and prizes given to volunteers during the event: Avon Representative Christine Carlyon, C.C. Creations, Charming Charlie, Cowboys & Angels, Curves, Desert Flour Bakery & Bistro, Dominos Pizza, Famous Pizza, Gifts Galore, Isn't She Lovely Boutique, Jay's Bird Barn, Java Love, Jazz Bouquet & Tea Room, Judi's Restaurant, Massage Matters, Namti Massage, Nancy's Hair, Nick's Westside, Olde Sedona Inn, OLLI Membership, Paula Thompson LPGA golf instructor at Randall's Rest. In Cottonwood, Sedona Golf Resort, Sedona Athletic Club at Hilton Sedona, Sedona International Film Festival, Sedona Lavender, Steak & Stuff Restaurant, Szechuan Restaurant, Verde Valley Olive Oil Traders, and Zumba Class sponsored by Christine Trcic.

With 600 older adults expected to become neighbors in the next year, VVCC will need additional volunteers. Operations & Mobility Manager Kim Meller said "volunteering with us is very flexible. You decide when and how often you can help." For more information call (928) 204-1238 or email: kimmeller@vvcaregivers.org.

You may also visit our website at: www.vvcaregivers.org for a full list of volunteer opportunities. VVCC also honored volunteers for five and ten years of service. The following volunteers were awarded five-year pins: Gary Barto, Ed Huber and Sandy Harotunian. Cindy Walker was presented with a ten-year pin.

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