

SUMMER 2023

# THE TRUMPET

[www.voasela.org/rsvp](http://www.voasela.org/rsvp)



AmeriCorps  
Seniors



Volunteers  
of America  
SOUTHEAST LOUISIANA



Pictured:

RSVP Transportation Drivers showcase their new auto flags! This is a great way to identify their cars for Care Clients while highlighting our program!



**Welcome Summertime!** Things are happening with RSVP. We have added some new volunteer opportunities, and expanded some existing programs! Our **2023 RSVP Recognition Luncheon** is set for **July 29**, at Fleur De Lis Event Center. This is a first come, first served event, and an RSVP is required. Please note that preference will be given to those volunteers who have returned to service this past year. I hope to see you there, and please call me with any questions. Our RSVP programs are thriving. **Transportation** is serving over 40 seniors who are in need of rides to doctors, the bank, the grocery - even to the library. RSVP takes our Care Clients anywhere they need, helping to maintain their independence. Because of our amazing growth, we are actively looking for more drivers - please consider volunteering. (\*Remember, RSVP does offer additional insurance to our volunteers.) **Tutoring** is back at Lyons Elementary - and we helped over 60 students this year at that school alone - and more tutors are always welcome. Our **Food Insecurity** focus is also very healthy! We have volunteers helping a variety of meal delivery and food distribution sites throughout St. Tammany Parish. If you are interested in helping serve our community's food needs, reach out. Thank you for all that you do!

**KRISTEN PUNCH**

**DIRECTOR, RSVP OF ST. TAMMANY**



*Congratulations to our volunteer, Ed Brannan, for receiving the President's Volunteer Service Award for Lifetime Achievement! This is one of the highest honors that the White House awards a volunteer, and we are thrilled that Ed was recognized for his service to our community. Michael Smith, the CEO of AmeriCorps, and Atalaya Sergi, AmeriCorps Seniors National Director, presented the award during their visit to New Orleans.*

*Pictured L-F: Ms. Sergi, Ed, his wife Mary Ann Brannan, and Mr. Smith >*



*Alfie, our RSVP Book Club mascot, would love to meet you!*

*Our Book Club meets on the third Wednesday of every month via Zoom.*

*In July we are reading the iconic **Slaughterhouse Five** by Kurt Vonnegut. Join us!*



# RSVP VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

**Blood Centers** - *Mandeville and Slidell Receptionist*

**CASA** - *Court Appointed Child Advocates for Children Going Through the Court System*

**Christian Community Concern** - *Clerical/Phone, Thrift Store, Foodbank, Custodial*

**COAST** - *Caring Hearts Calling, Staff Assistance*

**Fest Friends** - *Assist with any Upcoming Community Events*

**Habitat for Humanity** - *ReStore: Sorting and Merchandising*

**Hospice House, Slidell** - *Patient Visitor (Reader, Games)*

**Lacombe Nursing Home** - *BINGO Caller, Activity Assistance*

**Lakeview Regional Medical Center** - *Greeter, Gift Store*

**Lyon Elementary School** - *Reading Tutors*

**Mary Bird Perkins Cancer Center** - *Greeters*

**Miracle League Northshore** - *Buddies, MC, Concession Stand*

**New Heights Equestrian Therapy** - *Assist/Walk with Riders, Barn Work, Clerical, Special Events*

**Northshore Foodbank** - *Sort/Box Donations, Food Distribution, Client Assistance, Care Cards, Get Better Bags , Thrift Store Help*

**North Shore Robotics** - *STEAM Tutors, Musical Tutors, Pianist, Legal Assistance, Clerical Help, Grant Writing, Accounting*

**Ochsner Medical Center, Northshore (Slidell)** - *Store, Greeters*

**Senior Medicare Patrol** - *Informational Tables at Senior Events*

**Special Olympics** - *Team Coaches*

**St. Benedict's Lunch Ministry** - *Wednesday Hot Meal Food Prep and Home Delivery*

**US Fish and Wildlife Service** - *Visitor Center Assistance*

White denotes new station

**Questions? Call 985-612-1057 or email [kpunch@voasela.org](mailto:kpunch@voasela.org)**



# Volunteer Spotlight - Toni Hebert

When we reached out to **Toni Hebert** to find out more about volunteering at the **US Fish and Wildlife Center** in Lacombe, she painted quite a picture! Beautiful grounds, a lovely gift shop (that's right - in the A/C), peaceful and so much to do - we had to learn more. Located right on Hwy 434 in Lacombe, this volunteer station is living Louisiana. They offer everything from a visitors' center, fishing and hunting permits, nature walks, a butterfly garden - and all for free.

Toni has been volunteering at USF&W since 2016, and absolutely loves it. She works weekly in the **Nature Store**, the gift store on the grounds. A beautiful facility, which was a seminary in its past life, the Nature Store offers outdoor themed t-shirts, hats, bags, even earrings - all natural, with a lot of merchandise geared towards kids. The volunteers open the store and run the cash register, do light store cleaning, and answer questions for visitors. This facility is handicap accessible. Toni finds the time spent here to be very rewarding, and she loves meeting and talking to visitors. She also likes the fact that the car park is well lit and has reserved parking for volunteers.

Toni's talents shine at the Nature Store and she has a hand in many of the displays and works to make the store look shiny and welcoming. RSVP volunteers can sign up for weekly or monthly shifts in the Nature Store, and for special events. This beautiful state park offers so much to our community like interactive learning exhibits which highlight our native wildlife, botanical gardens, fishing, wildlife photography, and two miles of trails and walkways. There is so much to see and do at the US Fish and Wildlife Center.

The Visitors Center and Nature Store are open on **Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays** from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Want to volunteer at this "best kept secret" on the Northshore? Call **985-612-1057** to get more information.



*"I get to help people enjoy Louisiana!  
I love it. It is so rewarding and  
peaceful here."*

**Toni Hebert, RSVP volunteer**



## New Stations: Hospice House & North Shore Robotics

**The Hospice House** is a home designed to allow terminally ill patients who are in a preferred hospice program with the Hospice Foundation, a place to stay during their final days *at no cost*. The home is located in Slidell, and is owned and operated by the Hospice Foundation of the South, a Non Profit 501-c-3. Professional caregivers are in the home 24 hours a day. The preferred hospice programs recommend people who, because of circumstances in their lives, need a place to live while dying. Hospice House is looking for volunteers to read to the patients, play games/cards, watch movies, or just talk.



**North Shore Robotics** is a 501(c)(3) non-profit STEAM education organization serving the youth of St. Tammany parish and the surrounding areas. They host year-long after school robotics classes, summer robotics camps, and offer competitive team opportunities through VEXIQ tournaments. Within this organization, NSR students explore STEAM education through lessons in programming, mechanical engineering, and design. Through hands on learning and competition, the children build skills like problem solving, teamwork, communication, and patience. If you would like to help tutor and support these students and give them the opportunity to explore STEAM Education in a fun environment that inspires happy, confident achievers, give us a call! We are currently looking for science mentors/tutors, and musical mentors. Together we can Gear Kids Up for Success!



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*Come join us at the*

**2023 RSVP**

**Recognition Luncheon**

**Saturday, July 29, 2023**  
**10:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.**

**Fleur De Lis Event Center, 1645 N Causeway Blvd., Mandeville**

**Space is limited**, so please RSVP by **July 5** to  
[kpunch@voasela.org](mailto:kpunch@voasela.org) or call 985-612-1057