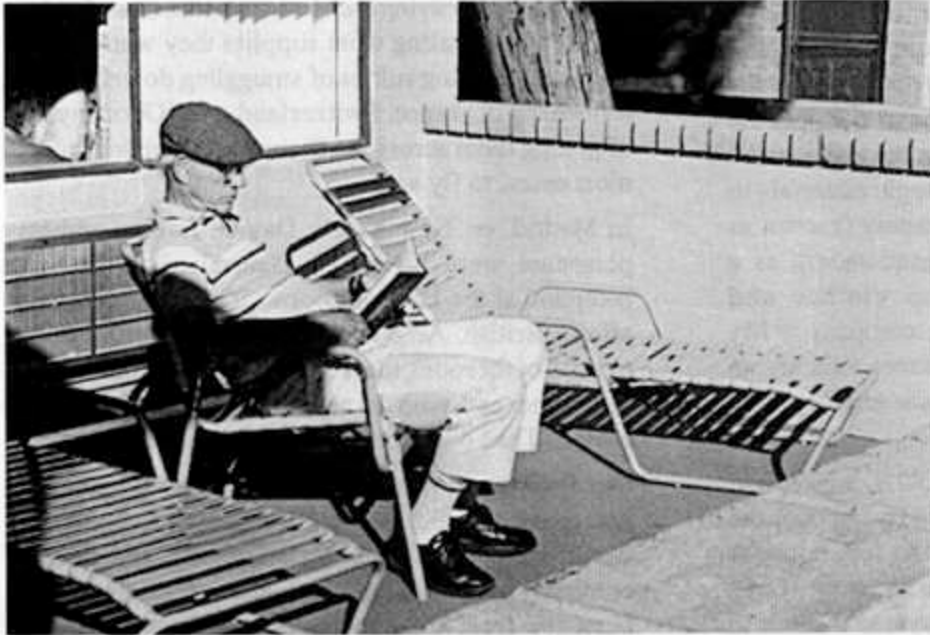


## VOLUNTEERING

or

*"There's still work to be done"*

Curly Marsh

*'33 volunteer—on leave.*

An old friend of mine, Jack, has a pool table in his cellar, and during the winter months calls three of his cronies several times a week for a game of 8-ball. One of the group mentioned that he spent a morning a week as a courier in the local hospital and that it needed volunteers. Thinking about it I realized that, since I always said "yes" to Jack when he called, I must have some spare time.

Before retiring I was a banker and, for some reason, bankers are supposed to be good money raisers, probably because they are so close to other people's money. Actually I wasn't very good at money-raising nor was I very good at dodging money-raising jobs at the behest of important customers. So, where fund-raising was involved, I became what you might call an involuntary volunteer.

When I retired I became an even more reluctant dragon (except in the case of Princeton) on discovering that retired bankers have lost most of their clout. But the hospital does have 20 or 30 different volunteer jobs and, I reasoned, they couldn't all involve fund raising. So I became a hospital volunteer (which I admit didn't interfere with 8-ball).

At Morristown Memorial the new volunteers generally become couriers to learn their way around the hospital. They may then move on to other jobs more to their liking, but since moving paper, medicines, specimens, blood and patients (i.e. "gofers and wouldjas") is one of the most needed volunteer activities, many volunteers who are happy as couriers and well aware of the need do not look for other assignments. As one of these, I've been a courier nearly two years.

The courier service handles over 300 calls a day answered by over 150 volunteers who serve 3-5 hour

shifts once and sometimes twice or more a week. The permanent staff, three employees with responsibility for the activities of over 1200 volunteers, is somewhat undermanned because of budget restrictions. This staff has wisely drawn on the courier volunteers to use their skills, beyond foot power, to assist with managing and delivering the courier service.

Telephone Company retirees with computer skills helped in switching from a phone request to a computer request system; people with sales abilities recruit new volunteers, as do home-makers whose social graces also promote high morale and high standards of conversation in the courier room.

The need to train new couriers, and problems such as solving "The case of the disappearing wheel chairs", receive the couriers close attention. Quick learning junior volunteers, who alone run the courier service on weekends, come in after school on week days and by sheer force of numbers rapidly absorb the backlog of unfilled courier requests which generally accumulate during the afternoon.

The darkness of illness, pain and death, always near in hospital work, is lightened by the comradeship of fellow workers and the smile of a recovering patient.

The monotony of running errands becomes an interesting challenge in trying to do the job quicker and better. The routine of moving inanimate paperwork and medical materials becomes a warm experience in attending to the discharge of a new mother with a two day old baby.

At this point in my life I have some continuing knee problems, during tennis and while playing golf, even with a golf cart. The doctor suggested Advil and , if unsatisfactory, a new knee. I concluded that everyone over 75 has bad knees and had better try living with them. But I cannot explain the fact that I never have a twinge of pain during or after regular rounds of five hours walking at the hospital.

Oren Root, elsewhere in this issue, describes his feeling about volunteer service as "redemptive" in a spiritual sense. I might use the word "remissive" to express my feeling of physical well-being when volunteering; and I would have to use the word "compulsive" in characterizing the lifetime of volunteer leadership so apparent in the story of Henry Beerits (page 12).

In trying better to understand the magic of volunteer work I added to some of my '33 mail a postscript asking about volunteer activities. Below is a sampling of the replies, which simply confirm the universal appeal of volunteering and the strong sense of fulfillment no matter what the level of service may be. For octogenarians, I like Henry Beerits' approach:- that we're not just marking time here, we're still part of the action. Henry says, "There's still work to be done."

**Rosey Rose** (Kensington, CA) has for many years been a driver for the American Cancer Society, is active as a member of the Kensington Municipal Advisory Council, and a member of the History Guild of the Oakland Museum. His wife, Fern, has for years been a docent in its History Department, writes new tours, and teaches how to conduct them, and has been President of the History Guild.

**Bud Earle** (Winnetka, IL), a retired doctor, volunteered, when he was active, in a free medical clinic in the "inner city" of Chicago. Betty, his wife, was active in Planned Parenthood and started the first Little League in Northern New Jersey in order to get the kids out of their backyard. Later in Winnetka she was a reader for "Recording for the Blind".

**Rudy Roell** (Dedham, MA), a retired clergyman now 84, recently helped start the Council on Aging in Dedham. Earlier he was President and an active fundraiser for the General Theological Library in Boston.

"I still try my hand at golf occasionally."

**Dr. Bud Martin** (Springfield, OH) writes, "My volunteerism — BSA. I was a Star Scout as a boy. Later Council President, Vice Chairman-Region 4, Chairman of Finance-Area 6. Recipient of the Silver Beaver and Silver Antelope awards; raised a million dollars plus in a local fund drive; Rotarian; dedicated fly-caster."

**Posy Mulford (Vincent's widow)** "We in Tulsa have very strong support for the arts. I am actively on the boards of the Tulsa Philharmonic, Tulsa Ballet Theatre and Philbrook Art Museum, and loving every minute. My best to all the class. My welcome mat is always out."

**Bill Crow** (Nokomis, FL & Mason's Island, CT) writes, "I'm a firm believer in volunteering . . . we have met many people through hospital board activities . . . I served on hospital boards in Westchester County, New York City, here in Venice, Florida, and hope I can do the same in Vero." (Vero Beach to which they're moving).

**Brad Green** (Hightstown, NJ) drove for the Red Cross in Ridgewood, N.J. "No unusual experiences - through a foul-up had 6 flakey handicapped people in a station wagon at the same time . . . glad I got there. In our Ridgewood church, Marion and I visited shut-ins. Two of mine died . . . not my fault."

**Jack Pyle** (Summit, NJ) is active in a retirement group which has 30 committees working on civic projects. His pet committee is Santaphone - his job is to phone kids who write to Santa at Christmas. "The kids, their parents and grandparents all love it, so it's worthwhile." Jack is also very active in church affairs, the Taxpayers Association, has raised money for the Summit Hospital, and, as a vitally interested pacemaker recipient, for the American Heart Association.

**Harry Garrett** (Brooklandville, MD) With mobility restricted, Dorothy and Harry have had to reduce their activities, but enjoy visits from 6 Garrett children and 15 grandchildren. Harry's active interests include: The Robert Garrett Fund, founded by Harry's great aunt, which supports Pediatric Surgical work at Johns Hopkins Hospital and Medical School; and the Evergreen House Foundation, the former home of John Garrett, Harry's uncle and former ambassador to Italy, where Harry's father and siblings grew up. This now operates as an academic and cultural center for Johns Hopkins University and for local, national and international groups. Young family members serve on

both boards and are deeply involved.

**Henry Thompson** (Grass Valley, CA) Hank writes, "I'm on the board of Nevada County Legal Assistance Inc., which provides legal services to those who can't afford it. Battered wives (not mine) are a significant area of aid. I am also signed up to do carpentry work on a forthcoming Habitat project (minimal cost housing for the needy) in a nearby area."

**Andy Smith** (Greenville, DE) "My volunteer work since retirement has been working with Delaware Nature Society, one of the largest, best financed and sensible conservancies in the east. I am its immediate past president. Yvonne has been a national officer with the Daughters of American Colonists, is active in the state DAR as a past regent, and continues to be busy with the Colonial Dames."

**Dave Moulton**, Charlestown, RI, honored the former tax assessor for his volunteer work over the last 20 years updating the town's land evidence records. A local paper in an extensive article noted that Dave now continues the project from his home due to reduced mobility resulting from his 45 year fight against multiple sclerosis. His wife writes us because Dave says he is too busy "doing what needs to be done for the town." Barbara, since a girl, has been active in Girl Scout work. A past president and life-time board member of the Girl Scouts of R. I., she has also served the Visiting Nurses, Health Care Assistance and for 22 years as a trustee of Roger Williams Hospital. Her greatest regret:- With 13 relatives (including a son '58) as graduates, she couldn't go to Princeton.

**Eddie Gay** (Baton Rouge, LA) teaches Sunday School to the men of the local Salvation Army. Most of them sleep through it. Also works for "Fish", an organization providing transportation for folks who have no means of getting to the doctor. Zola, his wife, is a "Pink Lady" at the Baton Rouge Medical Center.

**Bob van de Velde** (Middlebury, VT) Bob's late wife, Barbara, was for ten years a volunteer at the local library. A garden there is dedicated to her memory. New wife, Deane, is on the Cornwall Town Board of Civil Authority, a justice of the peace, and a founder and crew chief of the Middlebury Volunteer Ambulance Service. Both have served on the Board of the United Way and have raised funds for Public Television.

**Hank Borger** (Naples, FL) On retirement as president of a junior college in Massachusetts, Hank moved to Florida and became a volunteer at the Naples Community Hospital. For four months in Rutland, MA he works as a role player at Old Sturbridge Village, depicting a lawyer, banker, teacher, minister, etc. In the winter he does slide shows about Sturbridge Village in costume for schools and adult groups.

**Ez Eberhardt** (Chatham, NJ) was recognized for 25 years of dedicated service as treasurer and financial advisor of his church in Chatham, N. J.

**Betty Gwinn** (Nashville, TN - Bob's widow) "When you mentioned volunteerism you struck a note! I do it and I love it and it keeps me young! When I return from a visit to Florida, I'll write you about a meals-on-wheels program that I work with."

**Burt Etherington** (Philadelphia, PA) I volunteer one day a week in the health -care center at Waverly Heights, the life-time care community where we have lived for five years. Also, as part of the outreach program of the Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church, I show slides from our trips to nursing homes in the area.

**Ed:** *Thanks for all your contributions to this article. We used all that came in until deadlines got in the way. Great Class!*