

So You Want to Help...

by Dave Earling

A good friend of mine once said, "Dave, I just don't have time to volunteer". My response to him was, "Bob, there is always time to volunteer if you find something you enjoy." My point of course is while all of us have busy lives, retired or otherwise, we all have our passions. Within that passion, you can find a place to volunteer.

An easy case in point is, even though I wasn't teaching music any longer, I was asked to serve on the Board for the Cascade Symphony which I did for several years. I even played in the trumpet section a couple of those years. Another easy example, I was one of the original Board members for what was then the Edmonds School District Foundation, an "easy" yes with my teaching background. Again, both music and education are examples passions of mine.

But I contend you may not even need to have a real passion to volunteer. Look at the extraordinary volunteer opportunities we have in Edmonds; Swedish Hospital, the Edmonds Arts Festival, the Chamber of Commerce events, the Edmonds Center for the Arts, the Edmonds Food Bank, the Cascadia Art Museum, our public schools, or the many committees and boards city government provides.

The point is if you want to devote some time to the community, there are endless opportunities. Somewhere in the community there is a volunteer opportunity which, with your background or life experiences, is simply waiting for you.

Here in Edmonds one of the largest groups of potential volunteers in our community is our retired population. While this may be the case, I am sure that many others in Edmonds would like to grow, change, find new adventures, and at the same time think creatively! Which leads my focus to a truly new, fun event headed our way on April 15-16 – *The Creative Age Festival of Edmonds* or *CAFÉ*.

CAFÉ is being assembled by five outstanding, local, creative people; Trish Feaster, Jerry Fireman, Dick Van Hollebeke, Julie Colgan, and Sandra Scheider... please take a bow. These fearless five have programmed an opening day on Friday, April 15th that features an afternoon presentation by Dr. Pepper Schwartz, followed by an evening concert with the outstanding Seattle Repertory Jazz Orchestra. Both of these events will take place at the Edmonds Center for the Arts.

On Saturday the 16th, the scene shifts to the Anderson Center where there will be 30 workshops with guest speakers with amazing backgrounds and presenting on fascinating subject matters. Here's just a sampling of some of the presentations: Volunteer Travel for Boomers; Going Digital: Sno-Isle Libraries in the Palm of Your Hand; Life Re-imagined; and several presentations on music, as well as presentations by Harbor Square and Rick Steves' Europe.

Whether you are in retirement, see it in your future, or simply find the programming of interest, you should have a look at the CAFE website at <http://www.creativeagefestival.org/home>. The event is sure to be another exciting two days in Edmonds!

You may have heard me say before, volunteers in Edmonds makes our city "run". Volunteerism is truly at the heart of our community's success. I hope you will find a way to get involved and enrich your life.