

Happy Holidays! I send you warm thoughts and many blessings for these final days of 2006.

### **Where Can You Give Back**

I received this in the last e-mail newsletter from 2Young 2 Retire ([www.2young2retire.com](http://www.2young2retire.com)), and I thought it had some really great ways to give back. At this time of year, we seem to think more about helping out, making the world a better place, and extending brotherly love. Here are some ways to do that as you move into 2007.

#### Top Ways to Give Back

1. Can you imagine a better world? That is the question posed by Idealist.org (Action Without Borders) a well-established international volunteer organization with a new website design that is even easier to navigate and use. Sign up and connect with people around the world who share your concerns and desire to make a positive change. Sort of a MySpace with a purpose. Founded by Ami Dar out of his experience as an Israeli paratrooper in the Lebanese war of 1982, Idealist is the one-stop resource if you want to volunteer, find an internship, get a job at a nonprofit, join a campaign, or announce one. All this and more. <http://www.idealist.org/>

2. Feel helpless about Darfur and other humanitarian crises? The International Rescue Committee needs volunteers to help settle refugees in the U.S. You need excellent communication and interpersonal skills. Flexibility, patience and the ability to work in a multi-cultural environment, independently or in a team are required. A second language e.g. French, Arabic, Vietnamese, and prior experience with refugees or immigrants, are helpful but not mandatory. <http://www.theirc.org/jobs/volunteering.html>

3. Perhaps you are as shocked as we are that so many people in New Orleans are still waiting to get back home. Habitat for Humanity is one organization that is addressing the housing emergency of Katrina refugees as well as others who need housing, both in New Orleans and around the world. <http://www.habitat-nola.org/> Habitat brings together the resources and volunteer labor to build simple, decent houses in partnership with low-income families. Habitat partner families contribute “sweat equity” by working on their own home and other families' homes and then buy through a no-interest mortgage. There's a local affiliate in your area where you can begin your inquiries. When Jim and Kendra Golden (<http://www.2young2retire.com/jimkendra.html>) were seeking their new home in an RV, they worked on a number of Habitat projects as part of the RV Care-A-Vanner program, [http://www.habitat.org/rv/about\\_cav.aspx](http://www.habitat.org/rv/about_cav.aspx)  
[https://www.habitat.org/cd/ohd/gik\\_involvement.aspx](https://www.habitat.org/cd/ohd/gik_involvement.aspx)

4. When people exclaim, “That must be the most depressing work,” Hospice volunteer, Susan Cooper begs to differ. “It is work that feeds the soul,” she says of her weekly stint at a Hospice center in Tucson, Arizona, in fact, “When we go away on vacation, the only thing I miss is my time working on the inpatient unit doing for people who can no longer

do for themselves, holding the hand of someone who is afraid, singing or humming to or with someone who is agitated, listening to and/or joining in on a prayer, telling the nurse that someone is in pain and helping to alleviate that pain, listening, listening, listening to the dying and to those close to them, hugging, hugging and hugging. It is a blessing!" Hospice training runs a rigorous five consecutive days (or one day a week for five weeks) and covers everything from ethical issues, disease factors, spiritual and cultural diversity, pediatric care, stress management, care of the caregiver, and how to protect one's own bodies. Volunteers also get a comprehensive tour of a mortuary. When they are ready, they shadow other volunteers until they feel comfortable in their understanding of procedures and routines. Says Cooper: "Without us, hospice could not provide the optimal level of service to patients and families. It is nice to know that one is helpful, useful and necessary. I love this work!" More Hospice information: 1-800-854-3402, <http://www.hospicefoundation.org/hospiceInfo/volunteer.asp>

5. Be an advocate for a child in court. Court Appointed Special Advocates or volunteer Guardians ad Litem, represent an abused or neglected child in a court case. Many states have a program that trains and prepares you to become a member of the legal team, and a recent survey of judges indicates there is a growing need and respect for this service. Here's what Judy Johnson, Brunswick County, NC, said: "It is worth every minute of my time to be a part of the system to find safe, permanent homes for the children I serve. My background is in mortgage banking and I have no experience with the court system nor children of my own. I became a Guardian ad Litem Volunteer at the urging of a friend. I have always loved children and I've always known that I have a mother's heart". To find the GAL program in your community, type in guardian ad litem in your Goggle window. CASA: <http://www.nationalcasa.org/volunteer/community.html>

6. There's a quieter crisis brewing in many of our public schools and many children are being left behind. Volunteers can make all the difference here, too. All you need in a few hours a week and the desire to help a child. Experience Corps® taps the experience of caring older adults in schools and youth-serving organizations to improve academic performance and development of young people. It taps volunteers like Virginia Ganzon Sturwold, a retired teacher and editor, who recently received the President's Volunteer Service Award. For the past six years, Philippines-born Sturwold has been coming to Francis Scott Key Elementary School in San Francisco twice each week to work one-on-one with children struggling to learn to read. She's put in more than 500 hours of tutoring, reaching out especially to those children who speak Tagalog to make them feel welcome. "Success to me isn't just helping the children learn to read at grade level," Sturwold says. "Success is also nurturing the students' eagerness to come to school and seeing them excited about learning for the first time." For more stories, visit [www.experiencecorps.org](http://www.experiencecorps.org)

Some forward-thinking companies are sponsoring a variety of programs that encourage their retirees to take up community service. That is how it happened that John Gualtieri, a corporate attorney who retired from Prudential in 1994, and his wife, Maureen McGrath, a former attorney for New York Life, found themselves volunteering as tutors at the Quitman Street Community School in Newark, NJ. On his first day at Lourdes Rodriguez's third grade class, Gualtieri remembers thinking: "What does a gray-haired,

65-year-old white suburban man have in common with third grade inner city kids, and how the devil could I help them?" He soon found out when he met Tyrone Watson, 9, who had entered third grade with no reading skills. Over the remainder of the school year, tutor and student bonded over flash cards and storybooks. Each Wednesday, the West Orange couple arrived at 9 a.m. to begin their small group tutoring sessions. Eight-year-old Onalia Gyamera worked on her reading skills with "Miss Maureen." By the end of the year, test scores for students in the program had improved, according to Ms. Rodriguez, and self-confidence had soared.

7. What do The National Council of Churches, Hard Rock Cafe, Blue Man Group, The Weather Channel and the Philadelphia Eagles have in common? They are all part of a movement to stop global warming. <http://www.stopglobalwarming.org/default.asp> According to Jim Hansen, director of the NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies, "Global warming is not just an environmental or health or economic concern – reversing the trend is a matter of human survival." On Friday, November 17, more than 180 nations at the U.N. climate conference appeared to reach preliminary agreement on next steps toward negotiating deeper future cuts in global-warming emissions, according to a news report. Well, it's a start.

Fortunately, corporations are not waiting for glacial (you should pardon the expression) pace of international policies to take effect. See this report about those who are seeing 'green': Investing in Solutions in Climate Change, [http://www.wri.org/climate/pubs\\_description.cfm?pid=4201](http://www.wri.org/climate/pubs_description.cfm?pid=4201)

8. "There are no cons to joining the Peace Corps as a senior, just pros," says Helen Reffel, 74, who is now serving her third tour. "I hope to spend the rest of my life as a Peace Corps volunteer." As this venerable organization founded by John F. Kennedy celebrates it's 45th anniversary, it is eager to hear from mature people. 1-800-424-8580 gets you connected to a local recruiter, or visit: [http://www.peacecorps.gov/ques/helen\\_land.html](http://www.peacecorps.gov/ques/helen_land.html) to help you decide if this is right for you and whether you are qualified.

### **Books About Giving Back**

Prime Time: How Baby-Boomers Will Revolutionize Retirement and Transform America (Public Affairs, Perseus Books Group, 1999), Marc Freedman.

How to Change the World: Social Entrepreneurs and the Power of New Ideas (Oxford University Press, 2003), David Bornstein.

How to Form a Nonprofit Corporation (Nolo Press, 1998), Anthony Mancuso

### **Inspiration Corner**

*When you were born, you cried and the world rejoiced. Live your life in such a manner that when you die, the world cries and you rejoice .* -- Native American saying

## **Recommended Resources**

Here are two wonderful books to give as holiday gifts or as hostess gifts if you are staying with friends or family this season. These are both beautiful to look at with wonderful, inspiring reminders of how to live a happier life more attuned to our wise, inner voice.

*Choosing Happiness: Keys to a Joyful Life* by Alexandra Stoddard

*Divine Intuition: Your Guide to Creating a Life You Love* by Lynn A. Robinson

## **Upcoming Events**

Teleclass – Find and Follow Your Life Compass – Thursday, January 11, 6-7 p.m. MST (8-9 p.m. East Coast and 5-6 p.m. West Coast)  
register at [www.empoweringmoments.com](http://www.empoweringmoments.com)

Featured Speaker – AAUW Author's Tea – Dixie College, St. George, Utah – Saturday, January 27

Live Workshop – Resign as Master of the Universe – Hurricane, Utah – Saturday, February 24 – 1-4 p.m. (more details to follow in January newsletter)