

**Minutes**  
**Volunteer Program Advisory Board**  
**September 23, 2013**  
**16 Park Road**

*Mission Statement: "To foster goodwill and community spirit in Fairfax through volunteer activities."*

Members in attendance: Holly Bragman, Anya Schandler, Merrell Maschino, Ted Pugh, Mark Solomons. Excused: Helen Fauss, Maryann O'Sullivan. Staff in attendance: Maria Baird, Community Resources Coordinator. Others in attendance: Armando Spartaro, Roots to Branches, Sarah Badorine, Miracle Girls; Mia Andler, Open Space Committee

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. The minutes of the August 26<sup>th</sup> meeting were approved.

**1. Reports**

- **Chair** – Holly announced Council Member Renee Goddard has suggested the Volunteers loan out their china & flatware for special events. The plates & glasses need to be re-stocked. They are located in the cupboards in the Women's Club.
- **Treasurer-** Mark issued a check for \$257.95 for United Site Services to pay for the porta-potty at the picnic.
- **Coordinator** – Maria announced that chipper days have been scheduled for Sunday, October 20<sup>th</sup> & Sunday, October 27<sup>th</sup> from 12 noon – 6 p.m. at the Pavilion parking lot. An insert publicizing the dates has gone out in the garbage bills. Maria has released a Request for Proposals that was sent to 20 tree chipping companies. The deadline for submittal of proposals is October 1, 2013.
- **Discussion** – Lew Tremaine was not at the meeting, therefore the Film Night items will be postponed until next month.

**2. New Business**

- a) **Miracle Girls Unite-** Sarah Badorine made a presentation on her organization, which is for profit. She is a yoga instructor at Yoga Mountain, who began a program for girls aged 8-18. She offers yoga, art, trapeze classes, and summer camps. She has a group of 16-20 girls that attend her program. The focus of her group is building self-esteem in young women. Her group of girls have volunteered at the food bank, and they are looking for more opportunities to provide community service. Holly suggested perhaps they could help with creek clean-up. Anya also added that they could assist with the holiday wreath making

event. Sarah stated the “Miracle Girls” will be making mobiles and then selling them at the holiday crafts fair. The proceeds will go towards a charitable agency. Sarah also invited Armando Spartaro of Roots to Branches to the meeting, to speak about his organization. Armando announced he and his partner Zach Laurie run a for profit organization with the goal of getting kids involved in social issues. He is working with Anne Mannes of FOCAS to bring back and revamp the Youth Commission. The Youth Commission will be meeting on the first & third Fridays in October and November. Armando cited youth programs in West Marin as being highly successful, including the communities of Lagunitas, Pt. Reyes, and San Geronimo Valley. They have teen centers that are funded partially through grants, and also through a fee for service program. Armando volunteered at the Town-wide picnic, and will be working on what interests kids in Fairfax. He recommended service learning, which incorporates issues that are important to kids. He also suggested having kids pick the projects they work on, so they have a vested interest. As an example, he cited an art project that teens in Fairfax will be conducting, and then exhibiting in the park.

- b) **Creek nature walk-** Mia Andler was invited by Mark Solomons to speak on her creek nature walks. She runs an organization called the Gilda Foundation, which offers “Fairfax Treks”. The nature activities she offers are called **Bay Area Voyager**, which include creek walks for kids & adults ages 4-90. One of these is the *Wild Food Walk*, which can accommodate a maximum of 20 people. The participants walk along the creek, and collect edible food, such as mushrooms, greens & berries. Another activity she conducts is *Family Creek Walks*, which entails a 2 hour walk through the creek. Merrell indicated there might be a liability issues with the food purveyor walks. Mia added she has her own disclaimer form that participants could sign, releasing the Volunteers from any liability. Maria suggested the *Family Creek Walks* might be a better fit for partnering with the Volunteers creek clean-up event. The Volunteers decided to wait until next summer to sponsor a combination family creek walk & creek clean-up, when the water levels in the creek will make it accessible.

### **3.Old Business-**

#### **Picnic highlights** – re-cap of event

Mark announced the picnic made \$2,572, before expenses. An additional \$1,700 was raised through sponsorship. A total of \$1808 was made at the beer booth, and the remaining \$764 through the raffle sales. The following suggestions that were made for next year’s event:

- Purchase bullhorn
- Monitor tug-of-war more closely- little kids were participating, and there was the potential for injury
- Game box – have a box that includes all the game supplies, such as the rope for tug of war, sacks for sack races, etc.
- Jumpee house choices were very popular (pirate ship & castle theme)

- Fill sandbags ahead of time – this is the first year they were used to support the umbrellas as shade structures
- Food- ensure there is kid friendly food by caterer
- Raffle – announce prizes at hourly intervals

Overall, the consensus was that the picnic was very successful.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m. The next meeting will be on Monday, October 28<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. at the Youth Center. Topics will include movie night at the ball field by Lew Tremaine, and a newly formed Fairfax Gardener's League that will be presented by Melanie Peratis.