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SERVICE IS A WAY OF LIFE FOR HONOREES

The Arizona Republic

Here are profiles of the nine Valley volunteers who will be honored for distinguished service by the Hon Kachina Council, a group of business and professional people affiliated with St. Luke's Health Initiatives.

Doris Jean McColgin

Paz **de** Cristo started as a mobile meal service in 1988, the same year Doris Jean McColgin began looking for a new place to volunteer. And for the past 16 years, she has spent eight hours a day, six days a week soliciting food and other supplies to grow Paz **de** Cristo into an interfaith outreach facility serving 180,000 needy East Valley residents. McColgin also serves on the board of the Arizona Military Museum, plays the Easter bunny at neighborhood grocery stores and participates in the annual Crop Walk, which raises money for the hungry and homeless.

"Her age, compassion, positive outlook and energy level make Jean an impressive role model to other volunteers," the Hon Kachina Council said in a release.

Added McColgin: "Everyone deserves to have food that looks good and tastes good. I cook here as if I am cooking for my own family."

Courtney Klein

During her high school years, as an Arizona State University student and now as a graduate, Courtney Klein donates between 30-40 hours per week to her favorite causes. Klein, the 2002 Woman of the Year for the Phoenix Roman Catholic Diocese, earned the Edson Student Entrepreneur award earlier this year for her work on Youth Re:Action Corps, a non-profit organization that will launch a community service initiative in Mesa high schools this fall.

She also led eight volunteer teams to the Esperanza Orphanage in Mexico to assist in the redevelopment of two dormitory buildings, served Manos **de** Ayuda Medical Clinic as a translator for a young boy needing a life-saving surgery, traveled to the Yucatan to rebuild roofs and construct a new school, has served as a mentor to single mothers at Maggie's Place, cleaned houses for Save the Family and is executive director for Books for a Better World.

"Everyone has time to help someone out," Klein said. "Volunteering is not a scheduled activity for me. It's more of a lifestyle. It's just the way I live."

Terri L. Bowersock

Dyslexia motivates Terri L. Bowersock, owner of Terri's Consign and Design in Tempe. At the time she graduated from high school, she was reading and writing at a third-grade level and says she understands why kids having trouble in school act out and become troublemakers.

For the past 25 years, Bowersock has given thousands of dollars and hours to instill confidence in those who suffer from learning disabilities. "As a child I didn't know I had the right to learn," she said. "Now I know that everyone has the right to learn."

As part of her volunteer work, she decoded phonics and developed The Spelling Map a

book of visual phonetic maps designed to simplify spelling and the Success by Mapping handbook, a goal-setting guide.

"Since we think in pictures, these two workbooks not only support people with visual learning disabilities, they work for anyone who wants to improve their spelling," Bowersock said.

Bowersock visits Valley schools to offer the learning-disabled children a new way to learn to read and write, and travels across the United States to speak at detention centers and women's prisons.

Dr. Max Dine

Dr. Max Dine, a retired physician and co-founder in 1998 of Behavioral Health Consumers in Action, devotes thousands of hours on behalf of the mentally ill. As a young man, Dine overcame severe depression to graduate from medical school cum laude and practice oncology for 17 years. In 1998, he retired to become a full-time advocate for the mentally ill, all the while struggling with a bipolar disorder.

While his depression sometimes keeps him bedridden for weeks at a time, he continues to devote more than 80 hours a month to volunteer activities.

Dine is a volunteer for the Arizona Center for Disability Law. He has served as chair, president, board member and consumer representative for more than 15 organizations including the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill.

"I don't look at myself as a role model," Dine said. "My personal experience provides me with insight to help others."

Neal Jennings

Thanks to Neal Jennings, volunteers introduce their family pets some 39,000 times a year to residents of nursing homes, clients of adult day-care centers in Scottsdale, and patients of cancer treatment centers and rehabilitation hospitals as well as some homebound individuals.

As founder and president of Pets on Wheels of Scottsdale, Jennings has mobilized over 950 volunteer-pet teams during the past 15 years, to enhance the lives of those no longer able to enjoy a normal home life.

Over the past 15 years, Scottsdale nursing home residents and hospital patients have stroked, hugged and talked to the animals as well as been entertained by their tricks. In some instances, folks who were depressed and uncommunicative responded to the animals and began re-learning social skills.

The retired civil engineer's interest in dogs and competitive dog training led him to volunteer with a pet therapy program in Maryland five years before moving to the Valley.

In 1990, he petitioned Scottsdale officials, who provided a small office but no funds. Jennings incorporated as a non-profit organization, enlisted volunteers, and prepared guidelines, an operating manual and by-laws.

He also has had volunteer teams visiting 19 Scottsdale elementary schools, bringing video presentations to teach children respect for animals and how to avoid bites and scratches from dogs and cats.

"There's a wonderful bond between humans and animals," Jennings said. "Animals rely on people and return their affection without pressure, expectations, or agendas. They provide love and loyalty to their owners. And, using animals to help people is a most satisfying volunteer activity."

Mary Gloria

Three mornings a week, Mary Gloria of Queen Creek serves a hot breakfast to 45-65 day laborers. A native Arizonan and mother of 17, she founded the non-profit **Pan de Vida**, a non-profit program that helps needy children and the elderly in the Queen Creek area. Gloria started out volunteering for parent-teacher organizations and her church, then turned her energy to other community needs while she made plans to retire and devote her life to starting her non-profit organization.

First she wrote a business plan, and then she solicited funding, learned how to write grants, approached potential donors, met with community leaders and visited homes of those needing service.

"Mary operates on energy and commitment," Queen Creek Mayor Wendy Feldman-Kerr said. "She is a leader because she is already working on a solution while others are still seeing only the problem."

Gloria developed the Queen Creek senior program, and is helping to start an after-school program. She recruits volunteers to visit and transport homebound seniors and disabled citizens to doctor appointments, provides low-income folks with food items, helped to form a clothing bank, works with Valley of the Sun United Way and contributes to community events.

"I can't imagine sitting in front of a television and living other people's lives when there are so many wonderful people to meet and so much to do," she said.

Philip J Mizzi

Arizona State University Professor Philip J. Mizzi promoted the development of a community service component to learning at ASU's School of Global Management & Learning.

It's not uncommon to find him living his classroom lectures by serving a hot meal to a homeless family, mopping floors, slicing vegetables or unloading a truck at a food bank or homeless shelter.

"Professor Mizzi is responsible for more young people volunteering than any other individual in the 55-year history of the Society in Phoenix," said Stephen Zabilski, executive director of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul Diocese of Phoenix. "We're talking about an estimated 2,000 students plus hundreds of their family and friends." Mizzi said the experience takes being poor out of the abstract and gives it a face while helping students realize that there's more to life than just advancing a career.

In 1997, Mizzi developed Partners for Progress, made up of business, community and government leaders who focus on social responsibility, welfare reform and juvenile justice.

Dr. Paul Steingard

One Saturday every April, Dr. Paul Steingard gathers his volunteer medical force to provide free physicals for almost 2,000 high school athletes who otherwise could not afford to meet a requirement to participate in school sports.

Steingard started the program 30 years ago and it now is the largest free physical program in the state. Concerned about athletes collapsing on the field from undetected heart problems, he also began a campaign to include electrocardiograms as a part of the student physicals.

His group, Team Osteopathic Physicals for Students owns the EKG machines and offers them to groups around the country who want to duplicate the program Steingard started.

"If this program saves just one child from a fatality on the field, my time has been well spent," Steingard said.

Mary Wilderman

When Mary Wilderman learned that as many as eight homeless people were freezing to death every winter in Holbrook, she took it to heart.

The psychiatric nurse helped form the non-profit Bread of Life Mission in 1996 to provide the homeless with spiritual guidance, physical assistance and vocational training. A year later she convinced a former gas station owner to use his facility to provide overnight shelter during harsh or cold weather. Later, an old fire station, two churches and other buildings were used to feed and house homeless men, women and children.

"Mary has devoted her life to making the world a better place for individuals who are conveniently overlooked by our society," said Virginia "Gina" Chavez, executive director of the mission.

In May 2003, Bread of Life Mission opened a 30-bed, around-the-clock shelter. It offers emergency shelter as well as a life-changing program where an individual can stay for up to six months. During winter, a second shelter is operated for intoxicated individuals who run the risk of freezing to death if they stay outdoors.

Diagnosed with multiple sclerosis years ago, Wilderman hasn't let illness stop her. She has recruited volunteers to prepare and serve meals, teach life skills and assist the director in providing supervision for shelter guests.

"Lives are being changed in Navajo County, largely in part by the work, dedication and inspiration of one woman who is committed to helping hurting people and making them whole," Chavez said.

Sidebar to: "9 embody spirit of volunteerism"