

Guest Column: Volunteerism is a sign of character

July 4, 2022



I'm not a big fan of government grants. The inherent flaw of inserting more government politics and spending into local problem solving and the lack of sustainable or ongoing funding, with no shortage of strings attached, contributes to more and higher inflation, chaotic planning and complications in addressing local challenges. Nonetheless, grants are a political reality in California. In what I can only label as "government charity," the grants process continues its partisan, highly competitive political journey.

I contend community volunteerism is the savior for the City of Crescent City, the County of Del Norte and any rural community in the North State. When one is "breaking a sweat," for the greater good, one helps the community. It's a win-win.

The investment in recruiting community volunteers is virtually cost-free. Not unlike most local governance, Crescent City and Del Norte County have great needs. Filling those needs with compensated employees is expensive and oft-times these items are squeezed in between other priority tasks.

Last week, Pride in Community / Take a Bite Out of Blight volunteers gave of their time, talent and in some cases, tools to assist the City in cutting back overgrowth ice plant brush and removing trash along Howe Drive, the BBQ pits and Battery Point Vista in preparation for July 4.

I'd like to give a big THANK YOU to Crescent Ace Hardware for its continuous support and partnership donation of gas-powered weed trimmers for this Take a Bite out of Blight event.

There are plenty of opportunities to roll up your sleeves and help beautify beautiful Del Norte.

Smith River Alliance will conduct a Fireworks cleanup, July 5. Sponsors for the Tuesday-after event are: Del Norte Solid Waste Management, Crescent Ace Hardware, Home Depot, Rumiano Cheese and the State Whales' Tail Grants Program. Smith River Alliance has been quietly organizing cleanup events for two decades. A lower Smith River cleanup is scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 17 and a Tolowa Dunes event is scheduled for November.

Volunteers are very special people. Those who give of themselves are cost-free. To these special people, a mere "Thank You" for their service is sufficient remuneration for selfless work effort. Volunteering defines who one is. My level of appreciation and respect for volunteers is ionospheric.

There is certainly no shortage of opportunities to help out while helping others. Volunteer opportunities abound: The various volunteer fire departments in the County, the Del Norte Library, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), Del Norte Animal Shelter, Humane Society, Del Norte Unified School District, County roads litter removal (Community Development Department), Sutter Coast Hospital, Hospice Care that is soon to be introduced, and of course, volunteers are always needed and appreciated by the City.

Your participation on these few mentioned programs defines one's character. You are indeed wanted, needed and most of all, appreciated.

When one thinks about how government funds can be saved by properly utilizing dynamic, well- organized volunteer programs, one must be truly impressed.

I urge you to roll up your sleeves, contact Smith River Alliance either on the website or via email gustavo@smithriveralliance.org and make plans to help beautify our beautiful Del Norte.

Roll up your sleeves, break a sweat and help our community. You a will make a big difference in Del Norte County.

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