



## **RVers: The Perfect Mobile Volunteers**

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Dunseith, ND (March 9, 2001)-- When travel writer, Hope Sykes, thought about volunteers, RVers immediately came to mind. "Mobile volunteers offer a decided advantage," says Sykes who has explored over 200,000 miles by RV, "their RVs allow them to go where help is needed most without the worry of locating housing in already stressed environments."

To Sykes, the United Nation's International Year of Volunteers 2001 seemed like the perfect time to inform more RV enthusiasts (about 30 million of them according to the Recreational Vehicle Industry Association) about the idea of mobile community service. To the some one million full-time RVers who pull up roots and make America their backyard, she felt a virtual resource center, The RVing Volunteer, was the key to connecting these mobile travelers with volunteering opportunities.

"Since many RVers already travel with a computer, volunteer efforts could be almost unlimited," Sykes says.

In preparing for upcoming national volunteer events, four travel writers will be sharing their experiences and expertise with RVers and nonRVers alike. The writing group's own volunteer project, Volunteers on Wheels, stresses "Making a Difference in Communities Across the Nation."

Getting together to coordinate the events, however, hasn't been easy since 2000 miles often separated the writers. To remedy the situation, Sykes then decided to turn to the Internet to create a virtual volunteer experience in order to mobilize the group.

"Virtual volunteering via the Internet just made sense," Sykes said. "We could work together at any time from just about any place so the opportunity just seemed natural."

Participating in the events will be:

**Stephanie Bernhagen**

Stephanie and her husband, Paul, hit the road in January of 1994 when she was 36 and he was 38. Paul and Stephanie volunteer for Habitat for Humanity across the nation.

**Jaimie Hall**

Jaimie and her husband, Bill, started traveling full-time in 1993 and work on the road. Jaimie is the author of a book covering RVers and working on the road. This event will be her first volunteering experience.

**Hope Sykes**

She is the founder of the RVing Volunteer. She is also writer and columnist on topics of interest to disabled RVers and volunteers. In her spare time she offers publicity assistance to the Handicapped Travel Club, a nonprofit organization that encourages the RVing lifestyle among travelers with special needs.

**Shelley Zoellick**

Shelley is editor and publisher of a newsletter for RVing families who travel full-time and homeschool their



children while on the road. Shelley joins Jaimie in having her first volunteer experience.

Volunteer ideas, activities, and resources can be found at each of the writer's web sites throughout the year.

For information, please visit:

Stephanie Bernhagen and Jaimie Hall

--RV Hometown <http://www.rvhometown.com>

Hope Sykes

--The RVing Volunteer <http://maxpages.com/rvingvolunteer>

--The Enabled RVer <http://maxpages.com/enabledrver>

Shelley Zoellick

--Families On The Road <http://www.familiesontheroad.com>

<http://members.aol.com/rovinusa/page30.html>

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Press Release Attachment:

Volunteer Schedule of Activities and Resources

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National Volunteer Week (April 22-28)

During this time period, the group will cover activities and events relating to National Volunteer Week, National Youth Service Day (April 20-21), and Nickelodeon's The Big Help.

Make a Difference Day (October 27)

This is the nation's largest day of volunteering. USA Weekend and the Points of Light Foundation sponsor the event.

National Family Volunteering Day (November 17)

International Volunteer Day (December 5)

Volunteers on Wheels Resources

The writers will be providing information at the following sites:

The RVing Volunteer (Hope Sykes)



<http://maxpages.com/rvingvolunteer>

Hope's site includes material on all activities. Regular departments at the web site include themes like "Loving What They Do" and "Making A Difference" where outstanding individuals and groups are profiled. The heart of the site features "The Learning Resource Center" where volunteers learn of skills and activities (plus a little inspiration) to maximize their volunteering efforts in maneuverable settings.

The Enabled RVer(Hope Sykes)

<http://maxpages.com/enabledrver>

Hope's second web site will include volunteer resources for the disabled RVer.

RV Hometown (Stephanie Bernhagen and Jaimie Hall)

<http://www.rvhometown.com>

Stephanie and Jaimie will be including stories and information about Habitat for Humanity International's Care-A-Vanner programs, RVing and volunteering, and upcoming Escapees events.

Families on the Road (Shelley Zoellick)

<http://www.familiesontheroad.com>

<http://members.aol.com/rovinusa/page30.html>

Shelley's site will be a hub for families and kids who want to volunteer. She'll be an active participant in all events with a special emphasis on National Youth Service Day and Nickelodeon's The Big Help.

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**Contact Information**

**Hope Sykes**

The RVing Volunteer

**Online Web 2.0 Version**

You can read the online version of this press release [here](#).