



**City of
Santa Clara**
The Center of What's Possible

Volunteer!

Community involvement benefits you . . . your family . . . your neighborhood . . . your city

A community is more than the place where you live and work – it is a group of people who have a vested interest in making things better. When individuals come together to help one another, share good times and bad, and pool resources, everyone in the community benefits.

There are many ways to be actively involved in your community. Voting, watching City Council meetings, and keeping abreast of City issues under discussion are actions of involved citizens. Helping an elderly neighbor put garbage and recycling carts at the curb, making a purchase from a Scout troop that has a fundraising project, and picking up litter while visiting a neighborhood park are other ways that residents are involved with their community in their daily lives.

There are many ways to be actively involved in your community

In Santa Clara, thousands of residents go beyond these steps to become more actively involved through volunteering with the City, a school, a faith group, a service club, or a nonprofit organization. They have learned through personal experience that volunteering brings as much joy to the volunteer as it does to those who benefit from it.

This special section describes many of the ways that residents of Santa Clara are involved in the community, enhancing the quality of life of all who live, work, play and visit here. It also describes many opportunities that are available for anyone who wants to become more involved by learning and leading, sharing

their talents and skills, meeting and connecting with other residents, participating in government and community life, and/or volunteering to provide service to others.

Who volunteers? They do – and so do hundreds of others!

Volunteers are essential to providing quality City services to the residents of our community. Community members who are age 14 and older are encouraged to show pride and get involved in civic activities through volunteer work within the City of Santa Clara.

The mission of the volunteer services program is to enhance city programs and services by matching the talents of individuals and groups of all ages, interests, and skills with a wide variety of interesting and challenging municipal projects. The City's Human Resource Department maintains a confidential database of interested residents, and volunteers are placed according to their interests and skills, as well as the needs of the City. Volunteer Services seeks to find the right opportunity for every volunteer to assure a rewarding experience that enhances City services.

Information about volunteer opportunities with the City and links to many City affiliated and community-based nonprofit organizations that also need volunteer help can be found on the City website SantaClaraCA.gov/volunteer



A library superstar

Yifan You, a senior at Santa Clara High School, has volunteered at the Central Park Library since the summer of 2016. In addition to volunteering during the summers, he is a member of the Teen Library Council and is head of BIT Club (see above photo), which holds STEM classes for children. He also volunteers at large scale library events, like STEM and Comic Con. He also helped the Library get a grant for teen programs. He is Central Library's most dedicated and hardworking teen volunteer!



Years of service

JoAnn Silva reached an amazing milestone this year – more than 25,000 hours of service to the Santa Clara Senior Center. JoAnn volunteers in the Snack Bar and is a tour escort with the Adventures to Go program. Thank you, JoAnn, for your dedication and years of service.

Valuable contribution

Barbara deRuyter contributed more than 600 hours of volunteer time to the Santa Clara Police Department over the past four years. A graduate of the Citizens' Policy Academy, she contributed by performing administrative tasks, serving as a role player in officer trainings, greeting the public at community meetings/events, conducting equipment inventories and processing subpoenas.



“Adopt a spot” to keep it beautiful

Community groups, businesses, faith organizations, schools or a network of family and friends are invited to help keep Santa Clara clean and beautiful through the Adopt-a-Spot program. Volunteers pick a location such as their block, a section of sidewalk or trail, a traffic island, a bus stop or a City-owned lot or alley and sign up for a one-year commitment to pick up litter. You set your own schedule of when and how frequently (minimum of four times per year).

The City provides training and equipment such as safety vests, gloves, facemasks, trash buckets and trash grabbers. For information, visit SantaClaraCA.gov.



Neighborhood Watch brings people together

A connected neighborhood deters crime and builds relationships you can count on in an emergency. Bring the residents of your neighborhood or apartment complex together by forming a Neighborhood Watch group with the assistance of the Santa Clara Police Department.

Neighborhood Watch is not a vigilante group. It is not dangerous and you should never risk your safety to prevent crime. Your job will be to use observation skills to keep a lookout for law enforcement, report suspicious activities and be aware of resources in the community in the event of an emergency.

For information, visit SantaClaraCA.gov/neighborhoodwatch or call the Santa Clara Police Department Crime Prevention Unit at 408-615-4876.



Serve on a City Board, Commission or Committee

Since its incorporation as a city in 1852, Santa Clara has been fortunate to have hundreds of citizens step forward to serve on one or more of the City's Commissions, Committees or Boards. Each of these entities has a different focus, but all serve as important sources of community input into policy decisions made by Santa Clara's elected leaders.

Appointment terms vary, so there are frequently opportunities to apply. Residents can be placed on a mailing list to be notified when there is a vacancy by emailing the City Clerk's Office at clerk@santaclaraca.gov or calling 408-615-2220.

Board of Library Trustees

Trustees are primarily responsible for the establishment, acceptance and continued supervision of the public library program. Generally meets on the 1st Monday of each month at 6 p.m. at Central Park Library.

Civil Service Commission

Commissioners advise the City Council on matters pertaining to Civil Service rules and regulations and act as a Board of Review to hear petitions by Civil Service employees and applicants. Generally meets on the 2nd Monday of every other month at 7 p.m. at City Hall – Council Chambers.

Cultural Commission

Commissioners advise the City Council on matters pertaining to the enhancement of multi-cultural experiences and beautification of the City through art. Generally meets on the 1st Monday of each month at 7 p.m. at City Hall – Staff Conference Room.

Historical and Landmarks Commission

Commissioners advise the City Council on matters pertaining to historical landmarks, names and renaming of streets, and the marking and preservation of historical landmarks. Generally meets on the 1st Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. at City Hall – Council Chambers.

Housing Rehabilitation Loan Committee

Committee members review applicant proposals from low to moderate income homeowners for City loans/grants for home improvements. Generally meets quarterly on the 2nd Thursday at 8 a.m. at City Hall – Housing & Community Service Division.

Parks & Recreation

Commissioners advise the City Council in all matters pertaining to parks, recreation, playgrounds and entertainment. Generally meets on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. at City Hall – Staff Conference Room.

Planning Commission

Commissioners advise the City Council in all matters pertaining to the physical development of Santa Clara, and make recommendations with respect to land subdivisions, zoning (as prescribed by ordinances), and more. Generally meets on the 2nd & 4th Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. at City Hall – Council Chambers.

Senior Advisory Commission

Commissioners advise the City Council in matters affecting people age 50 and older in Santa Clara. Generally meets on the 4th Monday of each month at 10 a.m. at the Senior Center.

Youth Commission

Commissioners advise the City Council on community programs for youth and teens, and encourage youth involvement in local government. Generally meets on the 2nd Tuesday of each month during the school year (September – May) at 6 p.m. at the Teen Center.

Volunteers share their time and talents



Local artists share their creativity by converting utility boxes on City streets into eye-catching works of art.



Volunteers drive the success of the annual Santa Clara Art & Wine Festival, especially in Kids Kingdom.



Volunteers start young! These little ones offered their dancing skills at the City's annual July 4th Extravaganza.

Citizens' Police Academy prepares residents to help

The Citizens' Police Academy is a popular 12-week program that provides residents with a behind-the-scenes, in depth look at the Santa Clara Police Department. Participants must be at least 21 years of age.



Graduates of the Citizens' Police Academy help the department in many ways, such as assisting with labeling and distributing body worn cameras to officers in the field.

The curriculum and teaching methods are similar to those of the regular Police Academy, with a mixture of lectures, demonstrations, videos, tours and hands-on activities in a safe, controlled environment. Each session is taught by sworn officers or civilian professionals (records specialists, public safety dispatchers, jail service officers, community service officers, etc.).

For information on upcoming start dates and the application process, visit scpd.org.

Youth benefit from PAL sports activities

Santa Clara Police Activities League (PAL) was founded in 1970 and for almost 50 years has relied on volunteers to teach children about the values and rewards that can be accomplished through athletics – self determination, self belief, goal setting, teamwork and respect for others.

Activities include soccer, boxing, bowling, bicycle motor cross (BMX), girl's softball, judo, wrestling and fishing for youth 5 to 18 years old. It also operates the Police Explorers program for high school students who are interested in police work.

To learn more about how to be involved and support Santa Clara PAL, see the website SantaClaraPAL.org.



Lonely animals need your TLC

Every year, hundreds of dogs, cats, rabbits and other animals find their way to the Animal Care Center operated by the Silicon Valley Animal Control Authority (SVACA). The effort to save all healthy and treatable animals and find them a loving forever home requires the assistance of dedicated volunteers.

Most volunteers work at the Animal Care Center in Santa Clara, exercising, grooming and socializing the animals. Others serve as education docents to give presentations on animal care and welfare to students, service clubs and others in the community. Foster parents are volunteers who are willing to provide temporary, in-home care for dogs, cats and their offspring.

For more information on SVACA volunteer opportunities, visit the website SVACA.com.



Teen volunteers gain leadership skills in LITE

Every summer teens 14-16 years of age have the opportunity to participate in the Leader in Training Experience (LITE) program. After attending a one-week training program they then volunteer for two weeks to help with Parks & Recreation Department summer programs. Responsibilities include assisting staff members to lead games, arts and crafts and help on field trips.

Applications for summer 2018 will be available beginning April 16 and the deadline for submission is May 7. In-service training is set for June 11-15 and two-week volunteer stints can be scheduled between June 18 and Aug. 10.

LITE participants gain valuable leadership skills, build self-esteem and develop essential tools to help them become well-rounded individuals. For more information, contact Rich Casem at 408-615-3742.

Local museums rely on volunteer support

Art and local history museums based in Santa Clara rely heavily on volunteers to keep their doors open and their collections accessible to the community.

They are not disappointed. Residents volunteer as docents and in other capacities, and community donations of funds and in-kind services are crucial to the operations of these treasured community resources.



Both the Triton Museum of Art and the deSaisset Museum on the Santa Clara University campus are able to bring in world-class exhibits because of the support of the community. Special events at the Headen-Inman House and the Harris-Lass Historic Museum, such as the annual Afternoon Tea and Vintage Fashion Show and the Historic Home Holiday Tour, not only showcase the rich and vital history of Santa Clara, they add to the variety of experiences available to residents and visitors throughout the year.

Ask about volunteer opportunities at the museums the next time you visit.

Volunteers care for Ulistac

Ulistac Natural Area is a unique asset in the City of Santa Clara – 40 acres of open space that showcases seven distinctive natural habitats. Volunteers have carefully restored it to include California native vegetation and a wildlife habitat.

Volunteers also help to maintain the open space at regular work sessions on the first Saturday and third Sunday of every month, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Tools and gloves are provided and tasks include pruning, planting native plants, mulching to suppress weeds, and removing non-native invasive plants.

For more information on volunteer opportunities at Ulistac, visit the website Ulistac.org or the Facebook Ulistac page.



People who work in Santa Clara, like this team from Intel, are encouraged to volunteer to help make the community a better place for all.



Lead Santa Clara into the future! Enroll in Leadership Santa Clara

Santa Clara residents, business owners and employees of local businesses are invited to learn more about their community and prepare for taking on leadership roles in government, neighborhood, civic and nonprofit organizations.

Sessions generally meet monthly, January through June, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at a variety of locations within Santa Clara. In addition to learning more about the past, present and future of Santa Clara, participants become more aware of regional issues such as transportation, energy and health care and improve on leadership skills such as public presentations, meeting management, working with the media and ethical decision-making.

Special activities include Public Safety Day that includes a trip to the Emergency Operations Center, Education Day, and mock Planning Commission and City Council meetings.

**For information on tuition costs, schedules and registration deadline contact Leadership Santa Clara Program Coordinator
Scott Summerfield
smmrfld@aol.com • 925-249-9320**

Help to maintain the City cemetery

Residents who like to work in the out-of-doors may be interested in signing up to be a Mission City Memorial Park cemetery volunteer to perform grave clean up duties – removing wilted flowers, grimming grass and removing weeds around headstones, emptying vase cups of standing water, etc.



This is one of dozens of opportunities for individuals to improve the community by working with City departments. See a complete list at SantaClaraCA.gov/volunteer.

Residents take the lead on National Night Out

The first Tuesday of August residents throughout Santa Clara organize events for their neighborhoods designed to bring people together, deter crime, and make their community a better place to live. All types of events are encouraged – potlucks, barbecues, ice cream socials, street dances, sports activities, theme parties and more. City representatives (e.g. police and fire personnel, elected officials, school board members, etc.) attend registered events as time permits.

For more information on how to get involved with National Night Out, visit scpd.org.



Reserves carry on Fire Department volunteer tradition



The Hope Hose Company of volunteers in 1913 used a Seagraves fire engine to keep Santa Clara safe.

The Santa Clara Fire Department started as a volunteer effort in 1854, and even though it is now staffed with full-time professionals it still maintains a volunteer force that work alongside paid firefighters at fires and disasters.

Individuals enrolled in the Volunteer Reserve can receive up to 40 hours of fire service training and numerous hours of actual incident experience per month. The opportunity is open to residents of the City of Santa Clara, age 18 or older, who can meet all of the requirements of the application process.

For more information go to the City website SantaClaraCA.gov and click on the Fire Department page.

They want to preserve Santa Clara's railroad heritage

Volunteer members of the South Bay Historical Railroad Society donate their time and talents to running the Edward Peterman Museum of Railroad History located in the Santa Clara Railroad Depot. Volunteers renovate and maintain



four structures – the Depot, the Tower, a Speeder Shed and a Section Tool House.

The museum includes two operational HO and N

scale model railroad layouts depicting various railroad eras. It takes constant work by volunteers to continually change the panorama so that visitors learn about different aspects of model railroading. Open houses are held in spring and fall to introduce more community members to Santa Clara's railroad history. For information, visit the website sbhrs.org.

Why do people volunteer?

There are many motivators that get people up and out of their chairs and out into the community to help others:

- To solve problems
- To improve lives
- To meet people and make new friends
- To share a talent or skill
- To get work experience or try out a career
- To be of service
- To have fun

Researchers are now measuring the wellness benefits that volunteers receive including positive feeling referred to as “helper’s high,” increased trust in others, and increased social and political participation. The Corporation for National and Community Service reports there is a strong relationship between volunteering and health: lower mortality rates, greater functional ability and lower rates of depression.

Library's Foundation & Friends enhance programs, services

The Santa Clara City Library Foundation & Friends is a nonprofit organization dedicated to support library programs and services. Its primary source of fundraising comes from the sale of donated books, DVDs, CDs and other materials at its bookstore in Central Park Library, at monthly book sale events, and through the Internet. It also provides volunteers to help Library staff at big public events such as Comic Con and STEM.

It takes hundreds of hours to make these efforts successful and the group is always looking for new volunteers to help. To learn about positions available, visit LoveTheLibrary.org.



Monthly book sales, organized by volunteers with the Santa Clara City Library Foundation & Friends, raise thousands of dollars for Library programs.

Residents train to help the community in major emergency situations

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program is a 20-hour course in which volunteers learn how to be more self-sufficient after a major disaster and how they can help family, friends and neighbors.

Topics include safety, preparation, utility control, fire suppression, light search and rescue,

communications and CERT team management. More than 1,500 residents have received CERT training in Santa Clara since 1995.

For information on the dates of upcoming CERT classes, visit the Fire Department pages of the City website SantaClaraCA.gov.

