

Folsom Community Service Day

Give Where You Live

by LINDA HOLDERNESS



Folsom's Community Service Day proves the adage "many hands make light work." For the past three years, thousands of local residents of all ages have eagerly rolled up their sleeves to spend a day tackling projects that boost the city's quality of life. For this year's service day on September 16, more than 2,500 pairs of hands—up from 1,000 in 2014—are expected to volunteer at 45 or more scheduled activities. The scope of the projects can be city-wide—adding fitness stations along city trails, for example—or benefit nonprofits, schools or individuals in need.



Whatever the activity, they will all be accomplished in one busy day. "It's amazing," says City of Folsom Communications Manager Christine Brainerd, "how the community comes together for this. We have businesses, churches, community-based organizations [and] residents all working together to benefit the entire city."

Project ideas were generated from community suggestions and city brainstorming sessions, Brainerd says, and no request was turned down. Though some require physical strength, many do not. Choices run the gamut from landscaping Folsom Lake High School and helping the American River Conservancy clean up Folsom Lake, to preparing care packages for deployed troops, writing letters to women diagnosed with breast cancer, sorting Legos to donate to abused children, cleaning and shelving library books, and staining the play structure at Folsom Kids Play Park.

The day's centerpiece, however, is a food drive to benefit Twin Lakes Food Bank (TLFB); and even if you don't volunteer, you can participate. In fact, it's TLFB's largest fund-raiser; last year they brought in 113,000 pounds of food. About a week

beforehand, volunteers will drop off nearly 30,000 grocery bags—donated by Raley's—to every doorstep in Folsom. Residents are asked to fill their bags and place them in front of their homes by 8 a.m. on September 16 where volunteers will collect them. For more hands-on participation, you can help the city "stuff the bus" at the Bel Air parking lot on East Bidwell Street. Once the bus is full, the bags will be delivered to TLFB.

Two other items the city is collecting are bikes—in any condition—and yarn. Both will go to Folsom State Prison, where inmates will repair and build bikes to donate to needy community members



and use the yarn to knit donated items. Materials can be dropped off between 7:30 a.m. and noon at Lakeside Church (745 Oak Avenue Parkway) in Folsom.

The day kicks off with a rally and community breakfast where bright T-shirts are handed out to the volunteers. "You can feel the vibe," says event founder and City of Folsom Council Member Steve Miklos. "It's overwhelming to see 2,500 people so excited about going out for four or five hours to do what they can for their community...that these people take such ownership in their city is incredible." 📍

folsomcommunityservice.org

photos by TOM PANIAGUA

Details
WHEN: September 16
TIME: 7:30 a.m. to noon
WHERE: Various locations throughout Folsom