

Volunteer Spotlight - October 2009

Jim & Wally Hofssis

Since retiring from the workforce in 2005, Jim and Wally Hoffsis have dedicated much of their time and energy to volunteering in the community. They began their volunteer experience at Sacramento Food Bank and Family Services (SFBFS) one year ago in the Sunday Lunch program.

Soon after, they became regular volunteers at both the Sunday Lunch program and at mobile distributions of the Food Assistance program; a perfect fit for the couple, who are most interested in volunteer projects that are oriented toward food and housing. With the cessation of the Sunday Lunch program in June, Wally and Jim began focusing their efforts at SFBFS on mobile distributions of the Food Assistance program. Each month, hundreds of families and



individuals in the Sacramento area receive emergency groceries through these mobile distributions. The focus is on healthy and nutritious food, often featuring local, organic produce. As self-proclaimed locavores, (individuals who eat food grown locally whenever possible) the Hoffsises are able to use their experience volunteering with mobile distributions as a way to share their food ideology with others in community. They also enjoy the variety of working with this program. "You see a whole lot of different people at mobile distributions... it's satisfying."

Edwin Korankye, Food Assistance Program Manager, is very grateful to have Wally and Jim Hoffsis as volunteers. "They have the ability to come out to distributions on days when most people don't want to... in the sweltering heat. They are dedicated and consistent. They also have a very pleasant demeanor with fellow volunteers as well as the clientele," says Edwin.

Like many other SFBFS volunteers, retirement from paid employment has allowed Wally and Jim Hoffsis to focus their energy on helping others through regular volunteer work. For this couple, retirement has also allowed them to indulge their passion for travel, especially international adventure. Their most recent vacations have been to Colorado and Scotland. Here in Sacramento, Jim worked for the California Energy Commission and Wally was a manager with Sacramento Public Library. Wally and Jim both attended the Ohio State University, where they each earned a B.S. in Mathematics. Wally later went on to earn a Master's degree in information science from Florida State University.

Jim and Wally have a long history of volunteerism as a couple. They were married shortly after graduating college, just before traveling to Fiji to work together as Peace Corps volunteers. In Fiji, Jim taught high school level math, English and music and Wally taught high school level math,

English and science. These two SFBFS volunteers also give their time to other local organizations working to improve the lives of individuals in the Sacramento area. They can be found volunteering with Loaves and Fishes, Friends of the Library, and Senior Gleaners. They say that as retired persons, they want to be useful and productive, and volunteering with SFBFS and these other organizations accomplishes that aim. Wally and Jim Hoffsis sum up their experience working with mobile food distributions of the Food Assistance program by saying, "Edwin and the other staff and volunteers that we've met at SFBFS have been great to work with. Their dedication is really refreshing and uplifting. We personally have been very fortunate in our lives and would like to use some of our time and energy to make others' lives easier if even in a very small way."