

The Heart of Collier County Newsletter *Collier County Human Services*

THE PULSE

June 2004

President Bush Celebrates Volunteerism



It was an ordinary Monday morning at the RSVP office until RSVP Volunteer Director Sharon Downey picked up the phone and heard, "Mrs. Downey, this is the White House calling." Of course, Downey was astounded and very excited about the phone call. The White House Representative continued speaking, "We'd like to invite you, RSVP volunteers and your staff to be our guest on Friday to hear President Bush salute volunteers during National Volunteer Week."

Without hesitation, Downey organized a group of volunteers to attend the presidential visit Friday morning. Twenty excited volunteers boarded vans supplied by the Parks and Recreation Department to make their way to Rookery Bay. The sun shone brightly overhead as the group waited for the president's arrival.

The crowd cheered and hundreds of people snapped pictures to capture the memory. President Bush spoke for 20 minutes about the importance of being good stewards of the ecology and the distinguished work of volunteers. It was a once in a lifetime experience for all who attended.

Better Teamwork through Communication

On May 13, 2004 the Human Services Department sponsored a staff retreat at Mackle Park, on Marco Island. The discussion topic was "Building Strong Teams." Allison Blankenship, Florida Gulf Coast University Florida Institute of Government, facilitated the workshop. Blankenship assisted individuals in identifying their unique style of communication in order to allow for understanding of others and establish a foundation to work as teams more effectively. This team-building workshop is an important annual event for the department, because it motivates staff to exceed the expectations for delivering human services in Collier County.



Leslie Singer, Social Services Program Case Manager

The Human Services Department would like to introduce the new Case Manager for the Social Services Program; Leslie Singer. As the Case Manager for Immokalee and also providing assistance with clients in the Naples office, Singer provides help for approximately 260 people every month. Sixty-five percent of Singer's clients are Immokalee residents. Singer, herself is a native Neapolitan and received her B.A. in Human Services from Pfeiffer University in North Carolina. Leslie has been working for the department since January 2003.



Inge Rossler provides Care for the Caregivers



Inge Rossler, Case Manager with Services for Seniors recently created, developed, and presented a training on issues related to taking care of elderly family members for County employees. Coordinated through the Collier County Human Resources Department Wellness Coordinator Marilyn Hamachek, Inge provided informative brochures, a venue to share concerns, outreach to those who could not attend, and an empathetic ear. Her caring is obvious and almost tangible. She is an inspiration for the spirit.