

Good Neighbors



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What are you



Redwood Terrace residents' connection to their hometown continues to grow stronger.

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With more than 100 apartments and single-family homes, fitness and dining facilities, gardens that punctuate the community with bright colors, and round-the-clock medical and security services, it's easy to forget there's an equally vibrant community just outside of Redwood Terrace's Escondido, California, campus.



Escondido, California, once a region of vineyards and citrus groves, is currently home to more than 147,000 residents. Some members of the larger community belong to groups that use Redwood Terrace meeting spaces free of charge. The senior living community often hires local teens for their first jobs, and low staff turnover supports a long-term connection between area families and the community.

Other locals, including two Escondido residents who live in Redwood Terrace-owned homes, support neighborhood enhancement efforts—and, in different ways, are working to make Escondido (and Redwood Terrace) an even more enchanting place to live.

Back to School

Volunteering was a central part of Bob Anderson's post-retirement routine in Yorba Linda, California.

On Wednesday mornings, Anderson often did painting and repair work at the Methodist church he attended. He collected cans and newspapers for recycling. Twice, he traveled to up to central California to package donated fruit for in-need communities.

However, Anderson's volunteer work was put on hold about 18 months ago when he moved closer to his sister, a Redwood Terrace resident, after losing his wife to brain cancer. Soon after settling in, he was on the hunt for local organizations that needed help.

Anderson first started volunteering weekly at a local Habitat for Humanity store that sells home improvement items, offering customers advice and unloading merchandise from trucks.

When his sister heard that a local school needed tutoring help, Anderson, who taught fourth, fifth and sixth grades for 39 years, began providing reading instruction to second- and third-graders twice a week.

"Most of the kids are bilingual," he says. "English is their second language; they're not that proficient in it yet, and they need all the help they can get, since their family doesn't speak it at home, in most cases."

Toward the end of the 2016 school year, he also started meeting weekly with students who were struggling with basic math. For Anderson—who also volunteers weekly at a local church's homework help program—the social aspect of volunteering has been a plus.

"I like to be busy; just being out of the house and talking with people my own age has been nice," he says. "A lot of times, I'm there with children, but I still have contact with adults."

Although he just finished his first year working with local students, the former teacher hopes that reviewing times tables and vocabulary words will prove helpful later on. "If they're better readers and better at math, their lives are going to be a little easier when they get out in the real world," he says.

Designing Woman

After building four homes, Nancy Abernethy knew what she wanted—a yard—and what she didn't—two sinks in every bathroom—when she met with the architect in charge of renovating her Escondido residence.

Abernethy, who was then living on a Pauma Valley, California, horse ranch, had decided to move to the area, which she knew from two decades of judging a nearby regional flower show.

To help make her new neighborhood feel like home, Abernethy contributed design recommendations for her house and two truckloads of uprooted plants. About a year after moving in, she joined a local neighborhood improvement group.

Over coffee and cookies, around 18 people meet each month at Redwood Terrace to discuss trash pickup, traffic patterns and other community initiatives. The group has sponsored an electronics disposal event, hauled unwanted furniture away and installed free lending library boxes on street corners. Abernethy and other volunteers painted them.

"The group is working all the time to improve things," she says. "And it keeps you up-to-date with what's going on in the next block." On Abernethy's street, it's not uncommon to see a Redwood Terrace employee tending to her roses, or children playing in the street.

"It takes you back to the way things were when you had young children," she says. "Most houses have families. They're very nice neighbors."

When she's not at home—which she calls, "adorable, convenient and just darling"—Abernathy spends time at Redwood Terrace, where she often meets friends for lunch or dinner.

Though she has plenty of friends in the community, she wishes more would consider making the move. "I have friends still living by themselves who are so isolated," she says. "Here you can continue to live as you did before, without any risk. If I need help, Redwood Terrace staff will come to my house—that's a very big convenience."