



# Find your One Good Reason



**Wendy Osborne (CEO Volunteer Now) and participants from Belfast's Action Day kick off proceedings at the breakfast event which took place on the Belfast Barge.**



**One Good Reason—Bangor—  
Front Row: (L-R) Betsy Trevor, Andrea Peterson, Councillor McKerrow (Mayor of Bangor) Valerie Hutchinson. Back Row: (L-R) Ciara McLean (Volunteer Now), Judith Parr (Volunteer Now), Denise Hayward (Volunteer Now), Bryan Coutts, Jill Hunter**

On the 30th September, as part of Age Awareness Week, Volunteer Now's Annual One Good Reason Action Day took place in towns and cities across Northern Ireland.

The event, now in its second year, saw over 50 organisations across Northern Ireland opening their doors for the morning to give people the opportunity to try out volunteering activities without the pressure of long-term commitment.

South East and North Down volunteers enjoyed a free breakfast event before making their way to their chosen organisation. The Samaritans, Fibromyalgia Support, Cats Protection League, Stepping Stones, Contact a Family and Independent Age all welcomed participants and a

great day was had by all. One volunteer commented that the day was an excellent way to "meet new people and work together" with another highlighting the "feel good factor." We were delighted by this years response and would like to thank everyone who was involved in making it such a success.

If you are interested in finding out more about this action day or similar taster sessions in your area, we'd love to hear from you. Keep an eye on our website

[www.volunteernow.co.uk](http://www.volunteernow.co.uk) to register for regular updates and information on the steps



**One Good Reason in Lisburn from Top Left (Clockwise): Lydia Grierson (Independent Age) Suzanne Liddle (Volunteer Now)**

to take to find your One Good Reason today!

## Your Local Unlocking Potential Contact



Ciara McLean  
Bridging Generations Intern

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European Year of Volunteering 2011

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# Volunteering News

## Christmas Connections

### Volunteer Now Launch the 2011 Christmas Connections Campaign to help you find festive opportunities in your local area.

Christmas is a wonderful time to try your hand at volunteering and many organisations are looking for extra help meaning there are many ways to get

involved. Some examples can be found below and on the back of this newsletter. Alternatively, visit our website [www.volunteernow.co.uk](http://www.volunteernow.co.uk) to find out more.

We are also running a "Pass Your Parcel" Campaign open to all organisations, schools and groups wishing to collect unwanted Christmas Gifts to donate to

their local charity shop. To get involved please contact Volunteer Now on 028-90-232020 and we can put you in touch with your local participating charity shop. There are plenty of opportunities to Volunteer and bring festive cheer this Christmas Season...find your One Good Reason today!

**VOLUNTEER!**

## Give the Gift of Time This Christmas



Every year children's cancer charity CLIC Sargent has a gift wrapping event at Castlecourt Shopping Centre. If you can spare a few hours this December to help and get in the festive spirit visit the Volunteer Now Website <http://bit.ly/sVFno0> or call Brenda on 028-90-725780



**Tuesday 13th December 2011**

**FareShare Island of Ireland is working to promote the FareShare mission that food that can be eaten should go to people first...** A volunteering taster session will be taking place on Tuesday the 13th of December running from 9.30am-1.30pm. Activities will involve sorting food for distribution to local charities. Festive refreshments will be provided. If you are interested, come along to find out how you could be part of a UK wide drive to help feed vulnerable and disadvantaged children and adults in your local community. To find out more contact **Ciara McLean** on **028-90-232020** or email **Ciara.Mclean@volunteernow.co.uk** (Spaces are limited for this event.)

# Volunteering In Focus

## Stepping Stones



## Muriel Patterson

This edition our “Volunteering In Focus” feature showcases the inspiring volunteering story of Muriel Patterson who has been volunteering for over 13 years.

Stepping Stones is a charitable organisation based in Lisburn that supports people with learning disabilities and learning difficulties to reach their full potential in training and employment.

Muriel volunteers weekly in the Stepping Stones Coffee Shop which helps trainees to develop their skills in catering.

In her working life Muriel experienced working with a younger age group with learning disabilities which has developed skills she now brings to this role. Muriel really feels that she gets a lot more back than she gives and that her patience really enables trainees to reinforce and further develop their skills.



Muriel comments, “It is rewarding to see how much enthusiasm trainees bring to their learning and how, as a volunteer, I can help trainees progress. It is a pleasure to see them access employment when they reach that path.”

Emma Moriarty, Operations Manager at Stepping Stones comments, “As an organisation we realise the value of our volunteers. They are a group of kind, committed and dedicated people. I would like to thank our volunteers for the support and diversity they bring.”

For more information on volunteering with Stepping Stones call Emma Moriarty on 028-92-667124 or email [emma.moriarty@stepping-stones.org.uk](mailto:emma.moriarty@stepping-stones.org.uk) or visit the website [www.stepping-stones.org.uk](http://www.stepping-stones.org.uk)

## Volunteering and Your Health

The Unlocking Potential team at Volunteer Now, alongside the University of Ulster, is currently conducting research to assess whether involvement in various formal volunteering activities is related to older people’s reported health and well being status. This is an 18 month longitudinal study and the first of its kind to be conducted. We are excited to announce that the interim period results can now be downloaded from the website. Visit <http://bit.ly/suF6zt>



# “Ho Ho Hot” Opportunities

Could you host an over seas student this Christmas?



All you need is an interest in people, a spare room and the willingness to share your home with someone from a different country and culture.

For more information call 028-25-645633 or visit <http://bit.ly/t51d7e>

**Christmas Collectors. Across Northern Ireland**



This Festive Season Marie Curie Cancer Care is bringing together people from across the country to support the Charity’s first ever official Christmas Collection on Thursday the 8th December 2011. We’re looking for volunteers to offer a few hours of their time to help raise awareness for Marie Curie. For more information visit <http://bit.ly/v4pEUk> or call 0845 305 2192.

**Beach Clean at Loughshore/Marine Highway.**



The Marine Conservation Society invites you to a beach clean and litter survey between Christmas and New Year at either Loughshore in Jordanstown or Marine Highway in Carrickfergus. Litter pickers, bags and gloves will be provided by the Council. For more information call 028 383 62559 or visit <http://bit.ly/uC2Jli>

**Front of House Volunteer Belvoir Players Belfast**



Required to perform a vital role as the public face of the theatre during our performances and events, ensuring that our patrons have a positive and enjoyable experience from the moment they enter the venue.

Volunteers particularly needed to help at the Christmas Panto. Contact 028 90 491210 or visit <http://bit.ly/uSsaiG>

**Animal Sanctuary Volunteer—Bangor/Ards**



Help by providing the animals with a little extra TLC over the Christmas holidays. The animal sanctuary is open every day over the holidays and would be delighted to involve volunteers in caring and cleaning duties to help with the running of the sanctuary. Contact 028 91 812622 or visit <http://bit.ly/rxSAZM>

**Community Support Worker Positive Futures Lisburn**



Our community support workers help adults and children with learning difficulties get involved in the local community. Sharing a hobby or interest, learning a new skill, shopping, going to the cinema, enjoying sports or enjoying a coffee. If you would like to get involved call 028 92 606040 or visit <http://bit.ly/vORrK0>

## “I want to Volunteer! What do I do now?!”

To find out more about these opportunities or to discover what other opportunities are available in your area, visit the website [www.volunteernow.co.uk](http://www.volunteernow.co.uk) or telephone 028-90-232020. You can also call into 34 Shaftesbury Square (Mon-Fri 9-4) where a trained member of staff will be more than happy to provide you with all the information you need to find your One Good Reason to volunteer!

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