

## Mark National Volunteer Month by sharing time, talents

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GORDAN THIBEDEAU • APRIL 20, 2009

April is the month when we finally start to get a taste of spring. We usually put up our skis and break out the bikes, golf clubs and hiking gear.

We also start looking at the clutter in the basement, storage room and garage (or at least my wife does). We might start to consider pruning back the bushes and shrubs in the yard.

April is also National Volunteer Month. While your commitments at home are certainly worthy, this April more than ever, your time is needed in our community as well.

With the economic downturn in full swing, your time and talent can make a huge difference to help our nonprofits meet the increased demand for services.

Literally thousands of choices are available - working with your church or faith community, engaging in environmental or outdoor projects, being involved with the school districts, working with one of the many fine animal-related organizations, or helping one of the health and human service providers throughout our community.

The ability to do the job for many of the nonprofits in our community is based solely on the number of volunteers they have.

The Food Bank for Larimer County is a great example of how your time contributes directly to supporting those in need. It is quite the undertaking to prepare and distribute the vast quantity of food that goes through the food bank warehouse every month. That simply couldn't be done without the hands of many volunteers.

I find it very satisfying to do something that I'm not paid to do or even expected to do. It's rewarding to know that a little of my time does so much for those who really need it. The common theme that I hear from volunteers time and time again is, "I get much more from my volunteering than I give."

A great way to find a volunteer opportunity that best meets your needs is through United Way of Larimer County's Volunteer Center. We have volunteer listings for youths, families, singles, large groups and everyone in between.

We can help you determine your area of interest and then, based on your available time, match you with a potentially life-changing opportunity.

You can reach the Volunteer Center by calling 2-1-1 or 407-7066, or visit the United Way of Larimer County's Web site at [www.uwaylc.org](http://www.uwaylc.org).

Join me in giving back to the community by giving a little time this April and throughout the year.

**Gordan Thibedeau is president and CEO of United Way of Larimer County. Reach him at 407-7000.**