

Serve Wins National Award For Senior Citizen Program

By FRANK McKEOWN

A 6-year-old Staten Island pilot project, which has been used as the model for the federal government's Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), was honored Thursday in Washington by the National Center for Voluntary Action.

The Island project, Serve, which presently has more than 600 volunteers, was started in 1966 by the Community Service Society as an effort to use senior citizens to their fullest and to establish a new image of the aging.

The title of the group is an acronym for the organization's aim: Serve and Enrich Retirement by Volunteer Experience.

The Island project, which is coordinated by Mrs. Polly Norman of 228 St. Mark's Place, originally began with 28 volunteers.

Since then it has grown to become the largest single program in the country utilizing older persons as volunteers in community service.

The Island organization, which has given rise to similar groups throughout the state, has grown to more than 600 volunteers who provide weekly service in 30 different programs on the Island.

Average Age Is 71

The volunteers, whose average age is 71, travel twice each week to Willowbrook State School to assist in caring for the residents and to make themselves generally useful in varying ways.

Among their chores are assisting in the repair of machinery, shoe repairing for the residents, stamping new clothes and supplies, sorting donations and wrapping gifts.

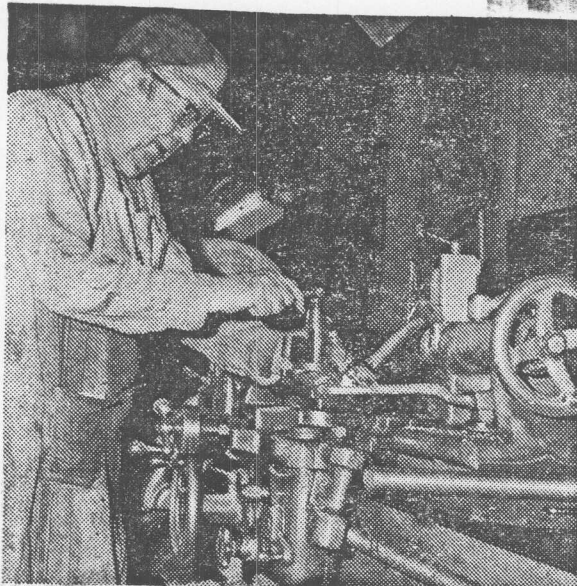
They also repair furniture and the gardeners...



As part of her volunteer duties, Mrs. Lucille Navickas (left) visits one of the young residents at the state school.



Serve volunteers also visit Staten Island Hospital. Mrs. Clara Hausmann assists in meal preparation for patient.



Henry Hansen, who has more than 2,000 hours as a Serve volunteer, operates lathe at Willowbrook State School machine shop.

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