

2017 Youth Advocate – Volunteer

Bob Penny

Bob served in the US Navy from 1966 to 1969 where he served 2 tours as a forward gunner on a river patrol boat. At the age of 21, he was wounded in the leg while out on patrol during the Tet Offensive, for which he was awarded the Purple Heart.

Upon returning to civilian life, Bob earned a degree in Architecture at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, and then worked in construction in the Bay Area. After moving to Lake County he worked in media sales and landscape architecture.

When his son was old enough to join the Boy Scouts of America, Bob became a volunteer Scouter. As his son progressed through the Scouting program to earn the highest rank of Eagle Scout, Bob raised the level of volunteer participation; rising to the top position in Lake County, that of District Chairman, where he was recognized with the Silver Beaver, the highest award that can be conferred upon a District Scouter. Bob continues to serve as a volunteer Scouter as the long time Skipper of Sea Scout Ship 711, the Konocti Phoenix, a scout unit for boys and girls over the age of 14.

His guidance has taken the Sea Scout unit to various competitions and events in the Bay Area in which the unit has earned several awards. Bob has also led them to Sea Scout Ship to hundreds of hours of service to Lake County for such events as the Sea Plane Splash In, the Wooden Glory and the Pear Festival. The quality of Bob's volunteer work is best seen in his kind, patient and compassionate mentoring of Sea Scouts, encouraging them to develop leadership and citizenship skills through his energetic and tireless implementation of the Sea Scout program.

Last year 4 of his Sea Scouts were chosen for the highly selective Sea Scout Advanced Leadership Training (SEAL). He mentored his Boatswain (the senior youth leadership position) to attend an even more selective program: A summer cruise on the USCG Barque Eagle, a 300 foot sailing ship crewed by 200 Coast Guard cadets and only 6 Sea Scouts. A number of graduates have gone on to maritime careers including the California Maritime Academy and the US Naval Academy.

Bob also served as a volunteer in the Lake County Veteran Service beginning in 1997. He went on to serve as the Lake County Veteran Service Office from 2005 to 2014. Thousands of Lake County veterans have benefited from his unrelenting efforts as their advocate as he educated them about their

benefits, arranged medical treatment wherever the best was available and arranged their transportation. In September, he worked with fellow veteran Frank Parker on the 3rd annual Lake-Mendocino Stand Down Veterans Resource Fair, which helped 200 homeless veterans. For his dedication and toil, Bob was awarded the annual “Veteran of the Year Award” in 2016.

Bob’s volunteer labors continue to produce service minded adults.