Meet RNLI lifesaver David

David is a shop volunteer at the RNLI Troon Shop – part of a special crew in Scotland helping to save lives at sea.

Q. Why did you join the RNLI shop volunteer crew?
A. I originally signed up to do my bronze Duke of Edinburgh. But afterwards, I continued on just to get more experience and skills. I’ve stayed on [for 4 years] because I enjoy the experience and working with other people. I moved up here when I was 6 and ever since have been going to RNLI events. My aunt is a part of the fundraising team and my mum is the manager of this shop so it’s a family thing as well.

Q. What have you learned from your volunteering here at the shop?
A. Many different things: how to deal with the till and with people and enquiries; how to do things in a shop and manage as well. There’s many different skills that can be picked up from volunteering, and can be used later on in life as well.
‘I’ve just been enjoying serving the local community’

Q. What sort of things are in the shop and do you have a favourite item?
A. The Christmas cards because they’ve always got fun designs like Santa moving a Christmas tree on a lifeboat! We have bags and even children’s toys, like boats for kids to play with in the bath. There’s socks that have lifeboats, the RNLI flag or seagulls on them. Even calendars and diaries in June for the next year! Everything’s brand new, not secondhand, though we actually have recycled lifejackets that have been turned into key rings, bags and wallets.

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Q. What’s the best thing about being part of the RNLI shop volunteer crew?
A. Being able to work with other people and learn new skills and qualities that come along with volunteering.

Q. What’s the worst thing?
A. I don’t think there’s a worst part of it!

‘Everyone helps each other’

Q. How much time do you give?
A. I give 3 or more hours a week, at the weekend.

Q. What would you say to someone who says they don’t have time to volunteer?
A. Everyone can make time in their own way, even if it’s only a few minutes by going online and donating, or helping out for about 3 hours in the shop like me. I fit my volunteering in at the weekend after I’ve done school and my paper round all week.

‘There’s many different skills can be picked up from volunteering, and used later on in life as well’
Q. In what way would more volunteers in the shop help you?
A. There are quite a few of us. But we do need more people to help. We would be able to raise more because we could open longer and more often as well. Currently the shop is closed 3 days a week, and half a day on a Saturday because we don’t have enough volunteers. It’s annoying – we need to be open more because Troon is such an active place.

I can help with the physical jobs, like bending over and picking things up. Being taller does help too, especially for the high places for dusting and helping move crates when we get deliveries.

Q. Do you have any funny stories that have happened to you in the shop or interesting requests from customers?
A. It’s hard to remember because I’ve seen so many people! A lot of people come back for products that we no longer have, that were before my time. If anything, it makes them sad over mad, because they like coming back for things! The Kendal Mint Cake is probably one of our top sellers. Although it’s a small little food item, people keep coming back for it.

Q. What do you offer to your fellow volunteers as a younger member of the crew?
A. I offer knowledge about things that some volunteers might not know a lot about, like technology for instance – the till, card payment machine and other things in the shop.

I really enjoy volunteering for the RNLI.

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Will you join our lifesaving shop volunteer crew?
Visit RNLI.org/david to find out more.