

River Voices



VOLUNTEERS

An estimated 109 million Americans volunteered in 1998 (the last year for which statistics are available). Even though we work more hours and lead busy lives, many still feel called to volunteer at least some of their free time on a regular basis.

Why do people do it?

For some of us, volunteering with a river or watershed organization presents an opportunity to live out our values. To connect with nature. To make a lasting difference in the world. To meet other, like-minded people. To get out of the house.

Perhaps in an age where life is increasingly digitized and people feel surrounded by an electronic moat, the simple opportunity to get together with neighbors and work towards the common good provides a rare feeling of community.

The reasons why people volunteer may be as numerous as volunteers themselves. Almost ninety percent of Americans report that they volunteered simply because they were asked. Forty-two percent of volunteers learned about activities through someone they know, and thirty-five percent through participation in an organization.

River and watershed groups, like other nonprofits, depend heavily on volunteers. And 76% of volunteers feel that nonprofits play a major role in their communities. In a period of declining trust in other public institutions, many Americans feel most

comfortable devoting their trust — and their time — to nonprofits. Not surprisingly, people who volunteer with an organization also tend to become loyal donors.

Who are volunteers?

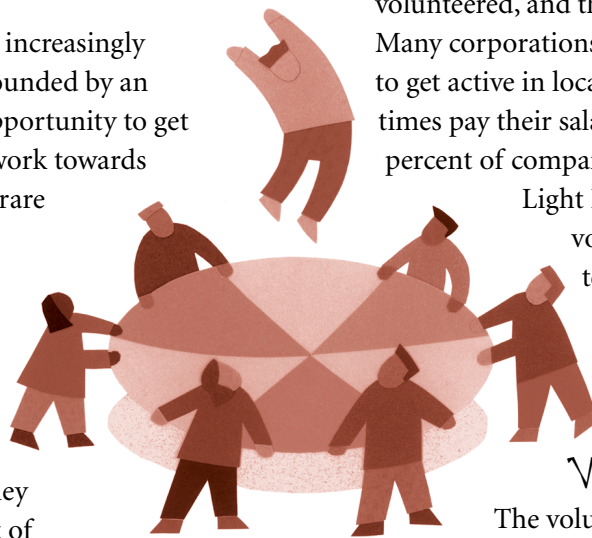
Statistics show that a slightly higher percentage of women (62%) tend to volunteer than men (49%) yet men averaged a slightly higher time commitment at 3.6 hours per week.

Forty-three percent of seniors aged 75 and older volunteered, and this group is increasing quickly. Many corporations now encourage their employees to get active in local community efforts, and sometimes pay their salary while doing so. Eighty-one percent of companies surveyed by the Points of

Light Foundation in 1999 encourage volunteering as part of corporate team-building and to help create healthier communities. Over half of America's teens — thirteen million — volunteered in 1995.

Volunteer contributions

The volunteer workforce represented the equivalent of over 9 million full-time employees, donating approximately \$225 billion in person-hours per year. And while every nonprofit reaps the benefits of donated labor, the value of volunteer action goes far beyond any price that can be ascribed to their work. Every volunteer who takes our cause to heart, our message to the community, and our mission into their lives brings us closer to achieving our goals.



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River Network is a national organization whose mission is to help people understand, protect and restore rivers and their watersheds.

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From the President

THE LIFE OF THE PARTY

“The Americans’...regard for themselves constantly prompts them to assist one another and inclines them willingly to sacrifice a portion of their time and property for the welfare of others.”

— Alexander de Tocqueville, 1835



Photo: Linda Kliever

When de Tocqueville published his famous and still-pertinent description of the American character, the thing that struck him most forcibly was our society’s unique combination of independent spirit and voluntary civic participation. The spirit of volunteerism has not diminished since. In 1998, over 70% of Americans donated money to charities, and over 55% of the population actively volunteered a total of 19.9 billion hours.

In the watershed movement, volunteerism is the force that holds us together. Board members give countless hours of time and expertise. Thousands of others mark off their weekends for watershed protection. In many cases, staff members work as volunteers, and interns work at wage levels which make them virtual volunteers.

Asking people to volunteer can be daunting. Today it seems that everybody is busy — people don’t have enough time for their families or their hobbies. Yet the fact is, when we ask someone to help in some good work, we are not asking a favor, we are offering them an opportunity.

All of us who volunteer do so not only because it is right, but because it feels good — it is fun! Volunteering puts us in direct contact with values that we hold and throws us together with people who are interesting and energized. In a world where more and more of our lives are commodified, volunteerism reminds us that life is not about having things, it is about doing things, and value is measured not by money, but by our beliefs and the ways we live them out.

Even if we could accomplish each day’s organizational tasks without volunteers, our movement won’t grow and our ideas won’t prevail by working in isolation. It is through a network of citizen volunteers that information and ideas trickle back through the local community. When hundreds of volunteers each tell their relatives at family gatherings why we must protect and restore our rivers and watersheds, we are reaching farther than ever before.

You might say that there’s a direct correlation between someone’s love for and desire to protect rivers, and the amount of time they’ve spent contemplating, playing in, learning about, cleaning up, or sampling their waters. In other words, our most important job is to make sure people get their feet wet.



Kenneth Ralczok

If You Build It. . .

Creating Structures to Support Volunteers

by Sharon Behar



At the first meeting you've ever attended for a group, have you raised your hand to ask a question and ended up chairing a committee? This is a sure sign of an organization that has no structure or plan to recruit volunteers. It's also an organization that may not succeed in keeping volunteers active for very long.

Before trying to recruit, it's important to think about the structures you can create to support volunteer development. Defining clearly identified tasks for volunteers is the first step. Those tasks should be diverse in nature and level of involvement to be effective. Without these entry points, potential leaders may get frustrated and move on to another organization.

The Volunteer Pyramid

A volunteer pyramid can help you create and assess a structure for volunteer involvement. The pyramid contains different layers. Outside the pyramid is the general public or your targeted constituency; people who are not yet involved with your organization.

At the base, or bottom level of the pyramid are those you contact for events – your members, and folks on your mailing lists. These are people who will attend a specific event, such as a chicken barbecue, a river clean-up day, a slide show or presentation.

Many groups do not actively or regularly invite the public to get involved in their organization. Each public event you sponsor provides an opportunity to recruit. Think about the type and frequency of events you hold that will attract interested folks. Also, think about how you invite/ask people to become more involved as a result of their participation. Are one or more people from your group assigned the task of recruiting new volunteers at events?

The next level of the pyramid are those who assist in a one-time event or task. They might help with a mailing, sell tickets or provide a dessert for the chicken barbecue, organize 5 canoes for the clean-up day, collect water samples for a monitoring day, or write a article for the newsletter.

One time tasks allow people to help within the constraints of our hectic lives. They also allow you to find out who follows through with work and who needs a little more prompting. In addition to sharing the workload, people who help with an event or job are the best promotional mechanisms for an organization. They talk about it with coworkers, friends, and family. Research has shown that households with a volunteer to an organization contribute more financially as well.

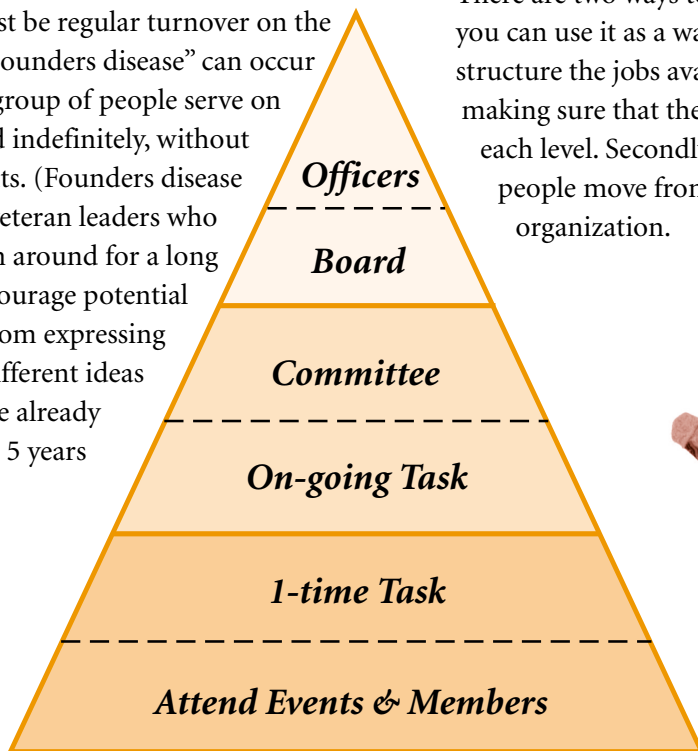
The middle level contains those who take responsibility for ongoing tasks. For example: the person who organizes the chicken barbecue, coordinates the water collection volunteers, coordinates the processing of lab samples for a monitoring program, edits your newsletter, organizes your office files, or enters monitoring data on your database. This level also includes those who serve on a committee.



Sharon Behar is a Watershed Program Manager at River Network's Vermont office.

Committees and ongoing tasks offer a great way to test the interest and capability of volunteers to determine if they would be good leaders. These are people who will coordinate others and ensure that a planned event or ongoing program is carried out successfully. In watershed organizations, the staff often ends up doing many of these tasks. Which of your one-time volunteers can you invite and train to organize or coordinate the work of others?

At the top of the pyramid is the Board of Directors. Remember the example of the person elected to leadership at their first meeting? A lack of leadership development from within the organization means that people move too quickly — even instantaneously — up the pyramid. Yet another problem can be the lack of openings at the highest level of the organization. For new people to move into positions of leadership, there must be regular turnover on the Board. “Founders disease” can occur if a core group of people serve on the Board indefinitely, without term limits. (Founders disease is when veteran leaders who have been around for a long time discourage potential leaders from expressing new or different ideas — i.e. “we already tried that 5 years ago!”)



General Public

It is important to recruit Board members from within your organization. Are there openings available to new Board members? Give yourselves a chance to “try each other out” through a number of different activities and make sure the person understands your organization well. Importing a Board from the outside creates a high potential for them to misunderstand the work of your organization and increases the potential for conflict.

The shape of the pyramid implies that more people will be involved with one-time tasks than with ongoing tasks, and so forth. Not all people either want to, or have the time to offer more. As volunteers rise in the pyramid, the amount of time given and responsibility for decisions increases.

Using the Pyramid

There are two ways to use the pyramid. First, you can use it as a way to organize and structure the jobs available for volunteers, making sure that there are opportunities at each level. Secondly, use it to assess how people move from level to level in your organization.



If You Build It, cont.



Take some time to draw a volunteer pyramid for your group, and then consider the following:

Structure

- What jobs or responsibilities do you provide for volunteers at each level of the pyramid?
- How many volunteers are currently active at each level?
- What are some ways to increase the jobs organized for each level?
- Create written job descriptions to use for recruiting and put them in a notebook.

Many groups find they have clear positions at the top and the bottom of the pyramid, but don't have clearly defined roles or many people active at the middle levels. Lack of volunteer leaders at the middle level of the pyramid can hold your organization back from growing and becoming more effective.

Recruitment

- How do you invite people to first volunteer?
- How can you create a personal invitation for a specific job?
- Create a strategy for inviting people to volunteer.
- Set goals for the number of volunteers to recruit at each level of the pyramid.

Leadership Development

- How do people currently move from one level to another in your organization?
- Would you like to change the way volunteers move through your organization? Create a way to do this.

Creating a strategy that meets the tone and needs of your organization will help make it easier to attract volunteers and cultivate long-term involvement in ways that best honors each person's interests and abilities.



Why Waiver?



Waivers of liability have become a common part of our culture. You'll hardly find a movie ticket or a parking lot without a prominently placed message reading:

NOTICE —THIS CONTRACT LIMITS OUR LIABILITY. PLEASE READ IT!

It has also become a commonplace that people don't pay attention to these waivers of liability; no one really believes that these notices really do limit liability. But...if waivers of liability don't do any good, why have they become so pervasive?

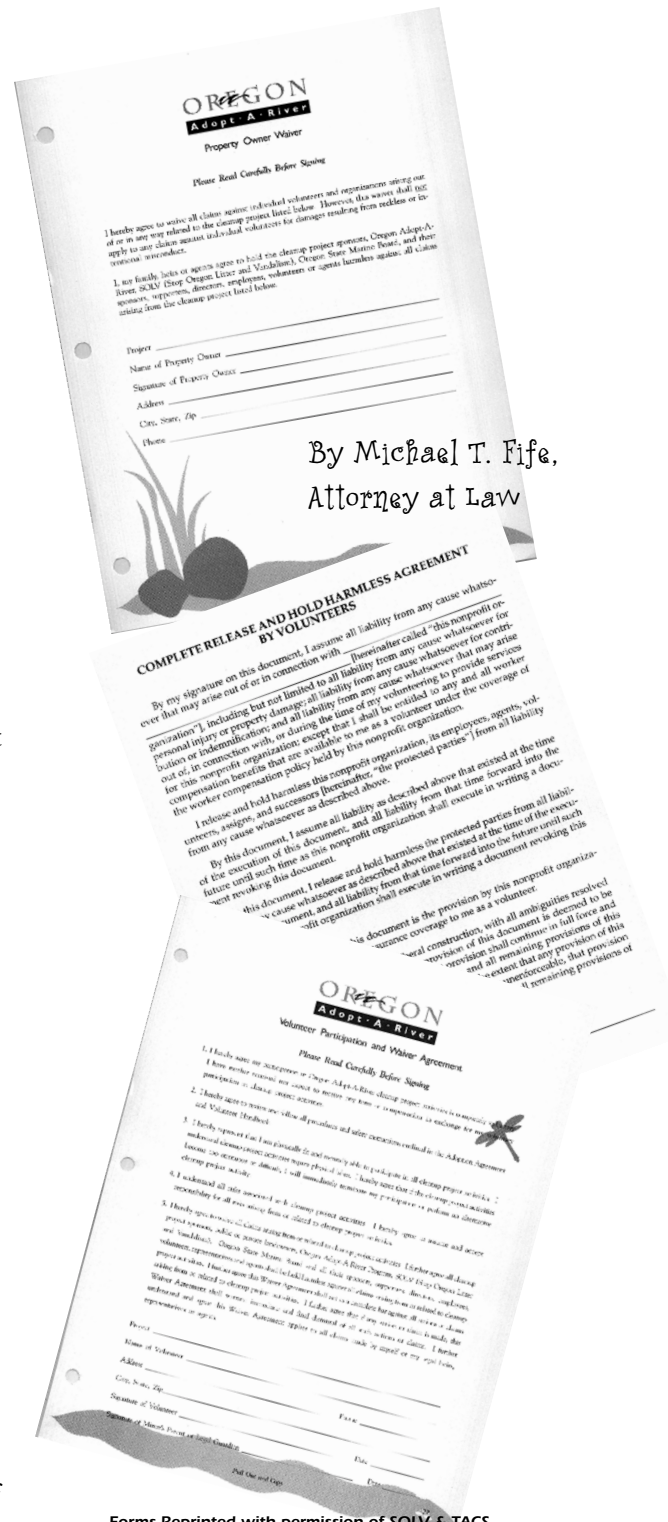
If a volunteer is somehow injured while engaged in one of your organization's activities, a waiver of liability will not simply erase your problems. Rather, your liability will be determined primarily by the degree to which your actions were negligent. Whether or not you have first obtained a waiver of liability, the most important considerations will be whether you took all reasonable safety precautions and sought to minimize risk as much as possible.

If you knowingly send your volunteers out on a river at flood stage in leaky boats without Personal Flotation Devices, you will have liability problems no matter what kind of waivers your volunteers have signed.

A waiver of liability will help you in circumstances where an injured volunteer — or, more likely, the injured volunteer's insurance company — bases a claim of negligence on your failure to warn the volunteer of the dangers inherent to river environments. That is, a waiver of liability will primarily be effective as an acknowledgment that the volunteer knows that rivers can be dangerous and accepts the risk that no matter how careful you are, the volunteer still may get injured.

In this respect, the primary challenge of liability waivers is to draft the waiver language in such a way that the volunteer will have acknowledged in as complete a manner as possible the full range of dangers inherent in rivers, but not in terms so severe that you scare your volunteers away.

Liability waivers are thus primarily an exercise in diplomacy, as you attempt to insure that your volunteers are properly informed in a way that is accurate, yet sensitive. For this reason it is a good idea, when crafting your liability waivers, to attempt to work with a pro-bono attorney whenever possible.



By Michael T. Fife,
Attorney at Law

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Volunteer Protection Act

The purpose of the Volunteer Protection Act is to protect volunteers, nonprofit organizations and governmental entities from lawsuits based on the activities of volunteers. For more information, visit: www.njnonprofits.org/vol_protect_act.html

One Volunteer's Perspective

by Gina Snell



I got the first hint that something might be wrong with my job when I was riding in an elevator with my new boss. I had just started what I thought was my dream job at a pharmaceutical company, which offered phenomenal pay and posh offices in New York City. On the elevator, my boss turned to an associate and said, "I'd like you to meet our new hire. We're going to exploit the hell out of her." It didn't take long for me to figure out why I was being paid so much. I had taken a job that no one would do for free.

The day I quit my job marked the beginning of my life as a volunteer worker. I first heard about the Great Swamp Watershed Association (GSWA), from its executive director. Six years ago, GSWA had 3 part-time employees (the staff has since grown to 6 part-timers) and was overwhelmed by the goal it had set to organize a dinner to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the dedication of the Great Swamp as the first wilderness area east of the Mississippi. The organization was desperate for extra help, and after volunteering to help pull the dinner together, I didn't leave; I just moved on to other projects.

For the last six years, I've been the membership director of the GSWA. I work two days a week on everything from membership renewals and acquisition mailings to special events and member tours. When I took on the responsibility of coordinating the 2,500 members, the organization was so greatly "swamped" that there was never any time for formal training. I just asked questions as I went along.

Volunteering beats paid employment in almost every way I can think of. Working for something you've chosen, because you believe in it, is a bonus most paid jobs can't claim to offer employees. In addition, a volunteer has more freedom to say "no" to that late-night assignment or exhausting trip.

This never works out as perfectly as I imagined, though. Through some mysterious process, I find myself feeling responsible for the success of a mailing or our members' bird-watching hike. At the end of the year, during holiday season, my hours are longest when I wish they were shortest, because that's when most of our member donations must be recorded and acknowledged. And more than once, I've been out on a tour when it rains, or when I'm feeling tired and would prefer to be curled up in bed at home, because I know that I need to be there.

It helps that the staff in our office is invariably pleasant and flexible. They all work part-time, and most of them are juggling families and other commitments, so there's a basic sympathy for the lives we lead outside of work. Gone are the days at my old employer's, when the boss would "check-in" after-hours to see who was still there, or stop by on December 24 to see who was most willing to make sacrifices for the company.

Although I am one of the longer-term volunteers in our organization, I am by no means unusual. We have volunteers in the office almost every day, answering phones, sealing envelopes, updating lists, copying and doing a thousand other necessary tasks. Outside the office, we have even more volunteers. These are the people who prefer to make a more physical commitment to the

watershed. They wade into streams to measure water quality, and pull out invasive species from a plot of land we're using as an outdoor-study area.

Every other year, our organization sponsors a Volunteer Recruitment Evening, where we bring together, over coffee and cookies, all the members who think they might want to get more involved. The outdoor activities are always most popular. At first, we attributed their popularity to our stream team coordinator. He typically appears, fully-outfitted in foul weather gear, and eclipses all the other presenters with his dramatic delivery. This year, another member, who has built bridges across small streams, made an equally effective appeal for volunteers without using any special props. The secret of their credibility and persuasiveness: they are both committed volunteers themselves, who project a genuine enthusiasm for their work.

One of the ironies of being a volunteer membership director is that I also depend on volunteers. I have an assistant, a retired paralegal, who handles matching gift applications, special thank-yous and acknowledgments. She comes to us after Tai Chi class, and cheerfully sets to work with little need for guidance.

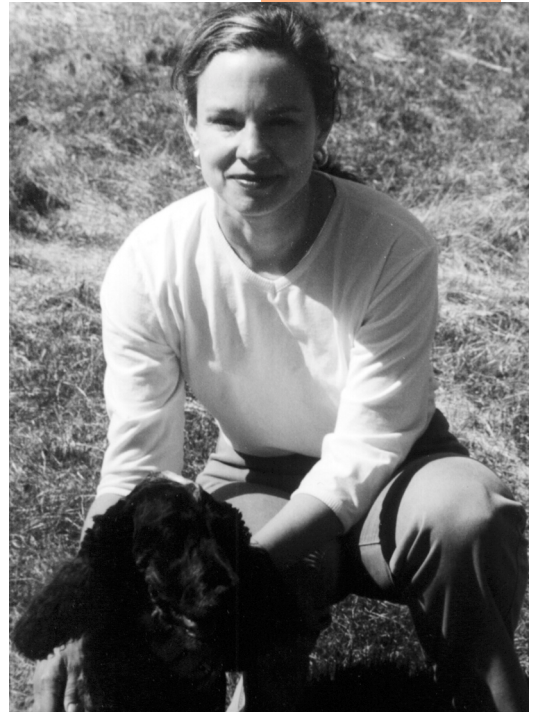
There's a great temptation, with a volunteer like our paralegal, to rely on her services without reaching out to new volunteers. The newcomers need training, which takes time and energy away from completing other projects. But newcomers also offer fresh perspectives and contacts.

Most days, there's at least one unfamiliar face in the office. Many other days, former

volunteers, who have often moved into paying jobs and have less free time for us, stop by. The volunteer population seems to be in a state of perpetual flux. One of the keys to using, and enjoying, volunteers must be an acknowledgment of this uncertainty. Doing the best you can with what you have is my modest goal.

Although I won a "volunteer award" at our organization's Volunteer Recognition Dinner in 1999, I'd have to say that it is the everyday thanks that means the most to me. My award was an attractive framed photo of a scene from the Great Swamp, and it looks terrific in my hall at home. But, more importantly, it is the constant "thanks for helping out" that keeps me coming back to the office.

My son, who is a teenager, asked me not long ago why I would work for no pay. He considers this choice to be some form of insanity. What he doesn't yet know is how deeply satisfying it is to be surrounded by people you like, contributing to a cause you care about. I'm not like the workers who are bound to their desks by their salaries. I'm one of the lucky ones.



Gina Snell is the Membership Director of the Great Swamp Watershed Association.

Her interest in environmental issues dates back to summer internships at EPA and the Bureau of Fish and Wildlife in the late 70s.



Interviewing and Placing Volunteers

by Sharon Behar
& Thalia Zepatos



While you may not know the life story of every person who shows up for your annual one-day River clean-up, some volunteers will stand out as being especially skilled. You may think they have great potential to become a consistent volunteer, or even a leader in your organization.

How do you work to build involvement and leadership among your volunteers? Since volunteers are a major asset to your organization, you need a systematic program that treats them with care and respect.

Do an Informational Interview

For anyone you are hoping to recruit as a regular volunteer, start by chatting with

them to find out their interests. Invite them for a cup of tea or coffee and do an “informational interview” with questions and answers being posed by both participants.

People volunteer for a myriad of different reasons, and it is a mistake to assume that everyone has the same motivations. One potential volunteer might be a new mother who wants to get out of the house and interact with people each week. Another person might be developing new job skills for a career transition.

The best volunteer coordinators match tasks with each volunteers’ interests and needs. In that way, the individual’s and the organization’s goals can both be met simultaneously. For example, for the new person in town, a task that brings them into contact with others might meet their needs better than a solitary assignment to work on a database project.

Ask your potential recruit to complete the Volunteer Needs Ranking form (see next page), which lists many possible volunteer motivations, and take some time to listen to your volunteers’ interests and needs. Even among those that you might see as being similar, you will usually find a great diversity of how people rank their needs.

Some volunteers are happy to share their professional skills—such as accounting or database expertise. Others clearly want to do something different from their everyday work life. Don’t assume that the lawyer wants to join your legal committee; she might prefer to plant seedlings along the river’s edge.



Building Volunteer Leadership and Involvement

Name of Volunteer: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

E-mail: _____

What do you know about this person’s interests and skills? What else do you know about them?

Think about the next 6 months and ways you can invite them to become more involved. Make a list of the opportunities you will invite them to participate in or help with in the next 6 months.

Other Notes:



Track Volunteer Preferences and Activities

Create a way to keep track of who you ask to do what tasks, and keep notes about each volunteer. Your system can be maintained on index cards in a file box, or a computerized database. Note the volunteer's preferences (hates phone calling, prefers outside work, etc.); schedule (willing to work afternoons, Tues-Thursdays); and other personal details that have been shared with you (son plays soccer on Monday afternoons, away on vacation last two weeks of August).

If you can, note each time the volunteer agreed to do something, and whether or not they showed up. If they agreed to make phone calls on three different evenings but never actually did the task, perhaps it's to time check in and offer another activity.

Create a Leadership Development Plan

Leaders are developed, and your organization can make good use of those willing to commit extra time and energy to coordinate the work of others. Think about identifying a few people each season who may want to take on increasing responsibility to and develop a stronger relationship with your group.

This is a good time for another cup of coffee and check-in. For while you see the person as having great abilities, they may not be willing to invest the additional time and energy the leadership position requires. Even if they refuse the opportunity, they will be pleased and flattered with the recognition implied in the offer.

On the other hand, the person may be willing but unsure they have the skills required for the position. Use the *Building Volunteer Leadership and Involvement* chart (pg.10) to plan their activities over the next 6 months – 1 year. Provide opportunities for them to develop and practice the skills of leadership — recruiting and coordinating others, public speaking, technical skills for monitoring projects, fundraising or learning internal systems — that help the organization run. Provide regular training and support as they develop their skills, and your leadership ranks will grow steadily over time.



Volunteer Needs Ranking

In selecting volunteer work, what are you looking for?

There are 11 factors below. Rank them in order from 1-11 where 1 is the most important feature for you and 11 is the least important. Use each number only once.

- ___ good working conditions
- ___ a sense that I am valued
- ___ an opportunity for personal growth
- ___ a challenging task
- ___ a chance to use my special skills
- ___ community and friendship
- ___ recognition for work well done
- ___ caring and compassionate supervision
- ___ a chance to make decisions about factors that affect me
- ___ involvement in an issue important to me
- ___ development of new skills
- ___ a chance to be on the river

Tips for Managing Volunteers

by Sharon Behar



Lack of effective volunteer management is the number one reason people don't return. Think about these tips when working with your volunteers.

ORIENT

Every volunteer should receive an orientation to your organization. The basics of why, what and where should be mentioned often as you work with volunteers. Every volunteer should understand:

- **Why** the organization exists (your purpose or mission),
- **What** is the work that you do (your current programs), and
- **Where** is the progress on these programs?

This knowledge brings a sense of purpose to each volunteer's tasks and allows them to see how their work — whether it is office work or leading a tour — fits in with the overall mission of the group. Remember, these folks help advertise and educate others about your organization. You may want to combine orientation with training.

TRAIN

Think about the kind of help you have needed when you were a volunteer. Don't hesitate to clearly explain how to do the task, and design the training appropriate to the complexity of the task. Make sure to allow each individual the leeway to perform a task with their own style, within the parameters that you set. One effective strategy is to partner a new volunteer with an experienced volunteer.



SUPPORT

Maintain constant communication with your volunteers by providing a defined task with clear deadlines, verbal instructions followed up in writing, structured check-points, and by giving and receiving feedback.

Clear task with deadlines: For multi-day tasks, have the deadline in writing and be sure that the volunteer knows why the deadline is important. For one-day tasks, set a goal for how much will be accomplished by ending time.

A written follow-up: Taking the time to write down specifics allows you to stress the importance of the project, make points that may not have been covered in a previous conversation and provides another opportunity to thank the volunteer for what they are about to undertake.

Check Points: When initiating a task, set up structured check-points ahead of time. These will help you to keep in contact without the person feeling surprised that you are "checking up on them."

Feedback: Establish feedback in both directions. Ask your volunteers for their suggestions about the task and the process as well as letting them know what they did well and areas for improvement. When someone stops volunteering, an exit interview is a great way to gather key information about the way your organization works with volunteers.

RECOGNIZE

The most important form of recognition is a thank-you. Aside from a personal or written thank-you, recognition can take many other



forms such as listing names in the newsletter, special dinners, and small token gifts such as pins or T-shirts. In addition, remember that your Board of Directors are all volunteers as well and need to be thanked in appropriate ways throughout the year. Remember the difference between a **reward** and an **award**. Rewards are something given for some service or attainment. Awards are a kind of special recognition that only a few receive. Pay attention to giving both.

CELEBRATE !!!

Set up regular events where everyone involved in your organization can celebrate your work and socialize informally. Create events that they can share with their families.

KEEP RECORDS

Keep notes on what people like to do, their other interests, and what they have helped with. These records will help to decide who to ask for what tasks and also give you information on who you might start to encourage as a leader.



Tips for Recruiting Volunteers

by Thalia Zepatos
River Network's
Communication Director

- 1. ASK** – in the most specific terms possible. Not just “Can you volunteer with us?” but, “How about helping us next Saturday from 2-5 p.m. for the River clean up?”
- 2. DESCRIBE THE TASK CLEARLY** – jargon can be intimidating. Someone who says they’re not interested in “monitoring macroinvertebrates,” may actually be quite willing to “put on hip-boots and collect critters from the river bottom.”
- 3. EXPLAIN WHY.** People get motivated by knowing how their particular task — even if it’s stuffing envelopes for two hours — fits into the overall goals and strategy for the organization.
- 4. REQUEST A SPECIFIC COMMITMENT.** Whether you are asking for two hours one day, one night a week for a month, or a substantial commitment for a three-month project, clearly explain the specific time obligation you are seeking.
- 5. EXPLAIN THE BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION.** Will the volunteer meet interesting people? learn new skills? get their photo in the newspaper? eat pizza? or help restore habitat for a threatened species...Spell out all the reasons that might motivate them.
- 6. BE ENTHUSIASTIC!** Hopefully your volunteer events are all fun and exciting — be sure to convey that to potential recruits.
- 7. LEARN TO ACCEPT “NO.”** Guilt-tripping or begging may work, just once. But graciously accepting that people lead busy lives and can’t help each and every time you call will create a mutually respectful relationship with a long-term future.

Volunteer Secrets... Revealed

by Kathy Luscher



In keeping with the true spirit of River Network, we asked local groups from across the country to share their tips and strategies as they relate to volunteers.

RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS

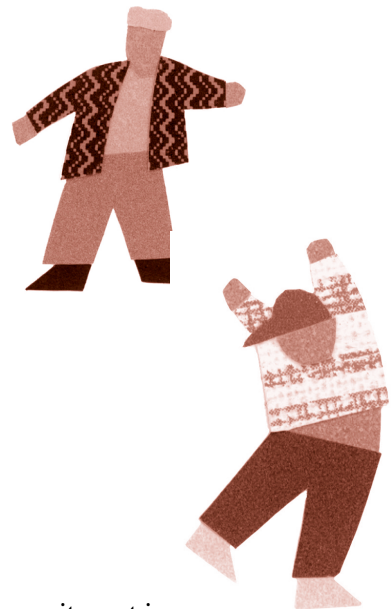
Volunteers play critical roles for many river groups. In fact, numerous groups would not exist if not for their volunteers. Before you reap the benefits of utilizing volunteers, you must first promote the opportunities you have available and then make “the ask.” Here are some examples of successful recruitment strategies.

- Place Newspaper ads
- Distribute flyers at community centers/ churches/civic groups/colleges
- Gather names at conferences, events, workshops
- Use the Web
- Coordinate a volunteer fair with other local nonprofits
- Print flyers/ads on shopping bags
- Host a Singles night/“Bring a friend” night
- College work-study projects

Kathy Luscher coordinates River Network’s River Source Information Center.

“It is important to actually interview prospective volunteers. Have a form developed, meet with a possible volunteer, try to judge their interest, skill level and expertise.”

— *River Alliance of Wisconsin (WI)*



“Our most successful method of recruitment is through existing volunteers. We invite them to bring a relative or friend to our annual training centers.”

— *Licking River Watershed Watch (KY)*



“We use the local media heavily. Our listings may appear in a number of different sections of the local papers: notices of garden work events are sent to the garden editors; trail work events are sent to the sports and/or outdoors editors; general volunteer listings are sent to the community calendar editor.

“On the internet, our work events are listed on Volunteer Match, Idealist, Coastal Volunteers Network, 4 Labors of Love, and other volunteer search or posting sites.

— *Friends of Sausal Creek (CA)*



Photo: Sausal Creek

This Sausal Creek Cleanup volunteer was featured on a Nickelodeon documentary about kids' service projects.

TRAINING VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers may be free labor, but they are not labor-free. To ensure a pleasant experience for both you and your volunteers, take the necessary time to properly train them. Here are just a sampling of possible training strategies:

- Provide job descriptions/background on projects
- Allow volunteers to “shadow” staff
- Coordinate formal trainings
- Prepare a volunteer handbook
- Match a long-term volunteer with the newcomer

“Our volunteers go through a year-long training course, meeting two hours per month. They must attend the training, take tests, be honest and have tremendous personal integrity. Upon successful completion, they earn the respected title of ‘Covekeeper.’”

— *Catawba Riverkeeper (NC)*



“Our volunteers work with the staff person or program director (sometimes a board member) who is most familiar with the work or issue. They are encouraged to attend public hearings and educational events pertaining to the work they are doing.”

— *High Country Citizen's Alliance (CO)*



Volunteer Secrets...Revealed, cont.

PROJECTS FOR VOLUNTEERS

- Filing for tax-exemption and other legal assistance
- Coordinating; recruiting and participating with events, restoration projects and clean-ups
- Providing clerical assistance
- Accounting services
- Serving on the Board
- Researching issues
- Designing and maintaining web-sites and databases
- Working with media
- Editing newsletters
- Fundraising



Photo: Cahaba River Society

Don't limit your thinking when brainstorming a list of volunteer opportunities. Filing, phone answering and helping with mailings are not the only tasks volunteers are appropriate for. Many tasks that might often require substantial time and money can be completed by volunteers. Here are some ways volunteers are helping grow the river conservation movement:

“Our best use of volunteers is for the annual Cahaba Cajun Feast, a fundraiser that clears about \$30,000. We home-cook a Cajun meal for about 400 people. We use about 50 - 70 volunteers for this event, and people have so much fun that last year we actually had the volunteer slate full a month or so in advance and had to turn people away! Volunteer jobs include event organizers, publicity, decorations, cooks, servers, table bussers, and ticket sales.”

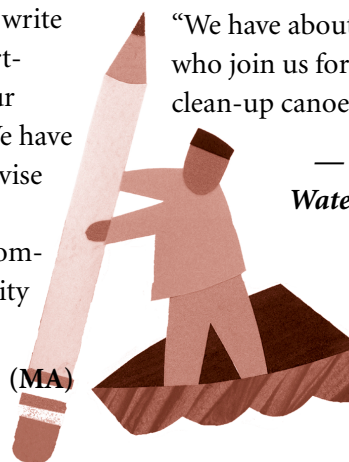
— *Cahaba River Society (AL)*

“Volunteers have organized 13 annual river cleanups, which take place at many sites along the river. The last one attracted 120 volunteers. Volunteers fix our computer systems, do our bookkeeping, put together our newsletter, write press releases, take photographs, donate artwork, design our annual report, and do our graphic design for brochures and flyers. We have both a technical advisory committee to advise us in our responses to proposed projects affecting the river and a public outreach committee to help us with all aspects of publicity and membership development.”

— *Organization for the Assabet River (MA)*

“We have about 30-40 volunteers who join us for our annual clean-up canoe trip every year.”

— *Thornapple River Watershed Group (MI)*



“We had over 45 volunteer taking daily readings from gauges and at weather stations for the past 12 months. NepWA has managed to collect critical data for working with communities on streamflow issues, thanks to these volunteers.”

— *Neponset River Watershed Association (MA)*

“All of our board are volunteers. Activities include long term planning, fund raising, water-quality testing, member recruitment, newsletter production, history research and media-related work. Duties, such as budgets, data base development, records, corporate reporting to IRS, are divided among elected officers. We’re also organizing spring clean-up activities and planning for our annual meeting.”

— *Turtle River Watershed Association (MN)*



“We name river-side trails after volunteers and nominate our outstanding volunteers for local, regional and national awards.”

— *Molalla RiverWatch (OR)*

“Every other year we hold a volunteer appreciation dinner at the home of one of our board members. Board members supply all the food and drink. At the dinner we recognize one or two outstanding volunteers and present them with an award.”

— *Great Swamp Watershed Association (NJ)*

“The key to a successful volunteer program is to encourage the person to volunteer time in an effort that they are skilled at and is dear to their heart. Find out where there “bliss” lies and go for it! And always, always, always say, Thank you.”

— *Clean Up our River Environment (MN)*

ACKNOWLEDGING YOUR VOLUNTEERS

Once you have successfully recruited and trained your volunteers, it is crucial that you acknowledge the work they have done. Here are some ways you can show your gratitude for their contribution:

- Present gifts
- Write thank you notes
- Feature a “Volunteer Corner” column in newsletters
- Host a volunteer appreciation dinner or event
- Plant a tree or construct a bench in a volunteer’s honor
- Throw pizza parties

“We feature pictures of our volunteers in our newsletter. We hold an annual “volunteer appreciation night”, billed as being for “anyone who has ever volunteered or thinks they would like to.” We name a “volunteer of the year” at our Annual Meeting; this usually makes the newspapers. We also have a prestigious “lifetime membership” given for volunteerism above and beyond all expectations.”

— *High Country Citizen’s Alliance (CO)*



Photo: High Country Citizens' Alliance

High Country Citizen’s Alliance presents a volunteer award to a Gunnison County Commissioner.



AmeriCorps Helps 'Get Things Done' in Your Watershed

by Abby Feinstein



Imagine a team of enthusiastic, dedicated volunteers landing for six weeks in your town for the sole purpose of assisting your organization with the outreach and implementation of a week-long, basin-wide educational campaign and river clean-up. In May of 1999, a team of AmeriCorps* National Civilian Conservation Corps (NCCC) members came to the aid of Scenic Hudson, a non-profit organization dedicated to protecting the ecosystem of New York's Hudson Valley. In six weeks, the NCCC members developed outreach programs for more than 85 communities along the Hudson and its tributaries and helped coordinate and facilitate 69 clean-up events during the week-long Great River Sweep, which involved the participation of over 1500 volunteers. Scenic Hudson provided food and lodging for the NCCC members during their time in Poughkeepsie and the Corporation for National Service (CNS) provided the remaining support.

AmeriCorps, commonly referred to as the domestic Peace Corps, is a national volunteer service intended to serve environmental protection efforts like this in communities around the United States, as well as serve in the areas of education, public safety, and health and human needs. This article will describe AmeriCorps — its programs, purposes, and costs and provide some examples of AmeriCorps at work in local river and watershed groups around the country.

What is AmeriCorps?

The Corporation for National Service was formed was created by Congress in 1993. As one of the three main programs of CNS, AmeriCorps serves to engage Americans of all ages and backgrounds to help communities address their toughest challenges. In return, AmeriCorps members receive a modest monthly living stipend educational award to be used for future or previous educational costs.

AmeriCorps is divided into three programs: AmeriCorps*State and National, AmeriCorps*VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America), and AmeriCorps*NCCC (National Civilian Conservation Corps). All three of these programs can serve a need for groups concerned with river and watershed conservation issues in the U.S. and the U.S. Territories, including non-profit organizations, state and local educational institutions, state and local government agencies, and Native American tribes. (See sidebar on pg. 22 for more information.)



How Much Does it Cost?

CNS requires a 15% cash match for AmeriCorps member support and a 33% cash or in-kind match of the overall operating program costs for AmeriCorps*State, National, Native American Tribes, and the US Territories programs. State commissions may add additional requirements for AmeriCorps*State programs. CNS does not require a cash match for member support

Abby Feinstein was an AmeriCorps Member in 1999. She is currently a River Network intern in the national office.

for the AmeriCorps*VISTA program and in-kind matches in the form of supervision, travel, and office needs are negotiated prior to sponsor approval. CNS requires no cash match for the AmeriCorps*NCCC program; however, project sponsors are expected to provide food and lodging for projects involving long-distance travel; NCCC usually covers transportation costs.

AmeriCorps at Work

Here are some examples of how members of the three AmeriCorps programs have worked with river and watershed projects and protection efforts around the country.

The New Jersey Community Water Watch (NJCWW), New Brunswick, NJ
<http://csac.rutgers.edu/~njpirg/old/ww.html>
NJCWW is affiliated with the New Jersey Public Interest Research Group's Student Chapter at Rutgers University. The goal of NJCWW is to give New Jersey communities the resources they need to have a clear and measurable impact on improving water quality and to clean up waterways in urban areas. AmeriCorps members are assigned to state university campuses, where they coordinate river clean-ups, recruit volunteers and monitor water quality of local waterways. The waterways are chemically monitored and surveyed for pollution sources. Audits of these visits and all pollution incidents are reported to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. The AmeriCorps*State contract from the New Jersey Commission on National and Community Service is for three years, after which NJCWW can reapply for continued AmeriCorps support.



St. Louis Partners AmeriCorps, St. Louis, MO
<http://www.americorpsstlpartners.org>

St. Louis Partners AmeriCorps is an AmeriCorps*National program.

AmeriCorps members throughout the City of St. Louis address critical needs in the areas of education and public safety. They are deployed in the St. Louis Public Schools as community mediators and on an Emergency Response Team. The Emergency Response Team (ERT) is intended to be a rapid deployment group capable of assisting with urban and wilderness search and rescue, disaster preparedness, response and recovery, wildland fire suppression, and logistical support for emergency operations. When ERT is not involved in disaster response or preparedness activities (about 50% of their time), the ERT assists the Missouri Departments of Conservation and Natural Resources, the U.S. Forest Service, and National Park Service with trail maintenance, habitat restoration, and other natural resource projects (i.e., GPS mapping). Groups around the country can apply through the national CNS office (202/606-5000) to utilize an Emergency Response Team in their community.

AmeriCorps volunteers helping on The Great River Sweep in the Hudson River Valley of New York.



The Programs

AmeriCorps*State and National:

This branch developed as a response to the many volunteer and service organizations already in place, but unaffiliated with the government, such as Habitat for Humanity. Members usually serve with non-profit organizations, state and local agencies, and Native American Tribes for 9-12 months. Most serve in the capacity of organizational and project development, volunteer outreach and recruitment, and special event coordination. A full listing of state programs is at <http://www.cns.gov/about/family/commissions.html>. For national programs contact the CNS national office: 202/606-5000 x163. For Native American Tribes contact the CNS national office: 541.

AmeriCorps*VISTA:

This branch absorbed the VISTA program created by President Johnson in 1964 that provided opportunities for Americans to serve low income communities as part of the 'War on Poverty.' AmeriCorps*VISTA places individuals in disadvantaged communities for a full time year-long commitment to build the capacity of small community based organizations. For more information contact your Corporation for National Service State office. A full listing is at http://www.cns.gov/about/family/state_offices.html.

AmeriCorps*NCCC:

This branch is modeled after the Civilian Conservation Corps of the 1930s. NCCC teams are composed of 10-15 members and are based at one of five AmeriCorps*NCCC campuses from which they travel to all 50 states and US Territories to perform community service projects. NCCC members conduct service projects for non-profit organizations and state and local government agency projects that help meet needs in education, environmental protection, public safety, and natural disaster relief. Service projects usually last from six to eight weeks. For more information contact your regional NCCC office. To find out what region you fall within, call the National Projects Coordinator at: 202/606-5000 x144.

AmeriCorps, cont.

Friends of the Rappahannock (FOR), Fredericksburg, VA

<http://www.crrl.org/community/for/>

FOR is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting the conservation, protection and enjoyment of the natural, cultural, recreational, scenic and historical values of the Rappahannock River and its tributaries. FOR is collaborating with the Environmental Alliance for Senior Involvement (EASI — <http://www.easi.org>), a national non-profit, whose mission is to increase opportunities for older adults to play an active, visible role in protecting and improving the environment in their communities. To strengthen local conservation efforts, EASI collaborates with local groups and provides VISTA members to serve with them for one year. One of these members will serve with FOR to recruit and train senior citizen volunteers to become active in FOR's river advocacy and restoration projects.

How to Tap into AmeriCorps

To find out how your organization can make use of AmeriCorps volunteers, first decide which program fits your needs. The web is a great tool for getting the information you need; start at these sites.

- Corporation for National Service — <http://www.cns.gov>
- AmeriCorps — <http://www.americorps.org>
- Sponsor application guidelines, manuals, handbooks, etc. — <http://www.americorps.org/resources>
- A breakdown summary of AmeriCorps programs — who can apply, how to apply, what the financial match requirements are, etc. — <http://www.cns.gov/partners/become/ameriCorps.html>

If you are unsure of which program fits your needs or would like further information for any of the above programs, contact Fred Peters at the Corporation for National Service office: 202/606-5000. He will help steer you in the right direction and inform you of what is necessary to qualify and apply as a sponsoring organization.



Volunteers Are Changing: How Volunteer Programs Can Adapt



The lifestyles of Americans have changed dramatically in the last twenty years, and will continue to become more complex in the future. The impact of lifestyle choices is just beginning to be seen in the way people integrate volunteer work in their lives.

Demographics is the change that has already taken place, according to management expert Peter Drucker. Nowhere is this more true than in the volunteer management field. Things have changed, dramatically, in the age composition and lifestyles of people wishing to volunteer, but the change is yet to be felt entirely.

Not so long ago, people worked for a single company until retirement, then volunteered most of their time for an organization whose cause they shared. Spouses of the breadwinners held down the home front and volunteered throughout their homemaker careers.

It's Not Like That Anymore

With the first of the 77 million Americans of the Baby Boom generation reaching retirement age, volunteer managers have been bracing for a wave of volunteers to knock on their doors. The knocks are not coming. People these days do not live like our grandparents.

People today may have not only several different jobs during their career, they may also have several different and totally unrelated careers. Women are in the workforce in force, with women who do not work outside the home at some time now a minority. And retirees are entirely likely to take another job, work as a consultant or even start up a new

business. The refrain I hear continuously from retired people around the country is, "I'm busier now than when I was working." Retired people have second and third careers, grandchildren to visit, distant lands to see, and very, very long to-do lists.

Given these competing interests for the potential volunteer's time, what's a volunteer manager to do?

Take a Project Management Approach

Most potential volunteers have lives so packed with obligations and plans that they cannot commit a large, continuing chunk of dedicated time to volunteering. Many volunteers coming from the corporate sector have learned from their work experience to organize their work as projects. This technique works well for volunteer managers also. Projects have a specific product or outcome, a start date, and an end date.

Many potential volunteers feel most comfortable committing to a project when they know what they must produce, by what date, and how many hours it will entail. They need to know that the project – and their commitment – has an endpoint. Many of these new-style volunteer projects also entail a great deal of flexibility in schedule and technique. In project management, the end result counts, and how many hours on what schedule in which location is of very secondary concern. It's perfect for people with complex lifestyles.

by Will Murray

Will Murray is managing partner of Conservation Impact, LLC, a management consulting company specializing in conservation organizations, and a board member of The Volunteer Connection of Boulder County, CO. This article is reprinted from the Grassroots Fundraising Journal with permission of Chardon Press. www.chardonpress.com



Mike & Ben participated in the Thornapple River Watershed Groups' Cleanup because they learned of it on the internet.

Photo: Patricia Pennell



Reorganize the Work, Not the Volunteer

Think about a piece of work you need done and then think about a specific person. Which is easier to change? Almost any unit of work can be organized as a project. Having a clear sense of the endpoint is foremost. When the work is done, what specifically will be volunteer have produced? Everything from a fundraising event to front-desk management lends itself to project management organization.

The Volunteer Connection of Boulder Country (CO) is launching its first capital campaign, using an all-volunteer staff. We have had trouble recruiting people for the campaign committee — it's a year-long assignment — but have had great success asking people to do part of the work of the committee. The owner of a public relations firm declined to join the campaign committee, but agreed to work with it to develop and implement the public relations campaign. He said he just couldn't commit the time to join the campaign committee, although he is delivering a specific product that will take considerable time.

The requirements for organizing work as projects are simple. The volunteer manager must have specific goals in mind — number of meals served, decline in illiteracy rate, a nature trail to build. Then she or he must identify all the tasks involved in achieving the goal. Each chunk is a potential project that a volunteer could tackle. This approach is available regardless of the size of the



Volunteers Changing, cont.

organization, and takes no more time to manage than other approaches. The volunteer manager just has to know where she or he wants to end up.

Some volunteer positions absolutely require a long-term commitment and belong in the program, not project category. Positions that require extensive training, background checks, or other heavy organizational investments demand that the organization recover those initial investments. Programs that require regular attendance, such as teachers for English as a Second Language or Big Brothers, also demand a long-term, program approach. Careful recruiting will be ever more important as the kinds of volunteers decline in number.

The lives of potential volunteers are complicated. They are packing a lot into life, and their Daytimers prove it. No longer can people who wish to volunteer carve out large, regularly scheduled chunks of time to do so. Like all other aspects of their lives, volunteer activities will have to fit in where they can. Volunteer managers who reconfigure their work needs as projects, with a defined deliverable and definite time boundaries, are in a good position to attract and engage highly competent volunteers. Many of these volunteers, having donated the sweat of their brow and the sweat of their brain to the organization, will want to donate funds as well. If, that is, they were able to make a contribution that resulted in a significant and tangible difference, and if their time was used productively. We can't ask them to show up every Tuesday from now to forever. We can ask them to donate a defined block of time to create a specific positive result. And they will respond.



The Two Magic Words for Motivating Volunteers



Think back to a time when you finished a project for your local group, and no one really seemed to care. No one commented on the time and effort it took. None of the leaders publicly praised your work or seemed to understand what an impact it made.

How did you feel? You probably wanted, at the very least, to hear the “magic words” that you deserved...“thank you.” If you didn’t hear them, you might well have felt angry, isolated or apathetic.

Even though we know how it feels to be unappreciated, we quickly forget to appreciate those around us. In the workshops I lead for the Institute for Conservation Leadership, participants routinely confess to me: “I get too busy on my own projects and I forget,” or “I thought someone else, like the president, would have recognized their work.”

Hearing or not hearing words of appreciation is the bottom line for any leader or volunteer. For motivation and involvement to remain high, everyone needs to feel appreciated, regarded and vital to a group’s cause. A group’s health depends on the people. You can’t afford to have people, especially those who care deeply about your issue, walk out the door.

How to Say “Thanks”

The feeling and frustration of being thanked in a way that does not ring true is much like receiving a gift that just doesn’t seem to fit you. How do you explain those feelings to the giver? He or she is supposed to know you, your tastes, and your needs. Having to explain yourself takes the specialness out of the gift. Using gift-giving as a metaphor, I’d offer the following three guidelines to

cultivate the attitude and habits of saying “thank you,” and saying it well to other leaders and volunteers.

1. Personal Thanks: Sam, a new committee member in Friends of Neah Creek, has just gotten a “letter to the editor” published in the local newspaper. Kate, the group’s president, offers Sam her thanks by saying, “Great job getting in the paper.” What’s wrong with Kate’s response?

Kate could have said, “I’ve heard many of our members praise your letter in the newspaper, Sam. You very succinctly spelled out the arguments for our new project. Thanks for taking the time to think it through so well.”

This response tells Sam that a) Kate read the letter; b) she thought it made the group’s case effectively; c) others thought it was effective; d) Kate thinks he’s a good communicator; and e) his time and effort were appreciated. When possible, tell others specifically what you appreciated and use a personal approach.

2. Appropriate Thanks: Kate knows that Sam likes public recognition. So at the next board meeting she photocopied his letter to the editor, handed it out to everyone and publicly thanked Sam again. In the next Friends of Neah Creek newsletter, the letter was reproduced and his work was acknowledged. Sam was thrilled. He is eager to write more letters.

by Dianne Russell
Associate Director,
Institute for
Conservation
Leadership

THANK YOU



Two Magic Words, cont.

Kate knows that David, chairperson of the membership committee, dislikes being in the limelight. David's real reason for joining the group was to meet people, since he is new in town. To thank him for his work in boosting Friends of Neah Creek's membership by 30 percent, Kate invites David over for lunch with a couple of other new members.

As a leader, you need to know what motivates your fellow leaders and volunteers. Finding out more about the people in your group can be as easy as asking the questions, "Why did you join?" or "What do you hope to get out of working on the committee?" Even if people don't answer directly, you will at least get some clues, and careful observations can fill in the blanks.

There are many different reasons to get involved with your group. Recognize that and say "thank you" with each individual's expectations and needs in mind.

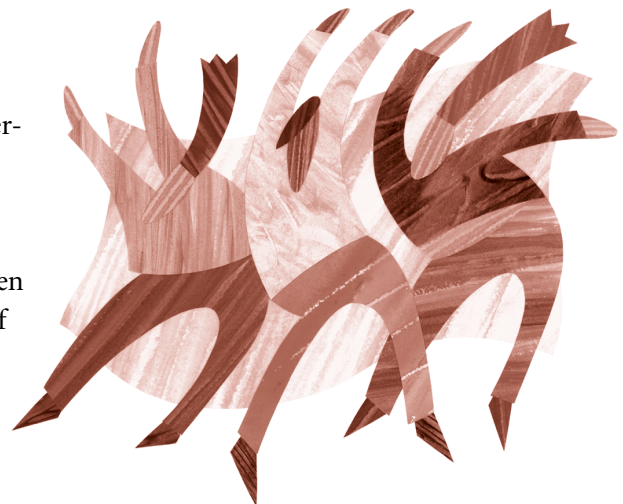
3. Tangible Thanks: Saying "thank you" is a bare minimum for motivating volunteers; sometimes it is better to give a more tangible gift. Let's look at the Friends of Neah Creek example one more time and examine the benefits of tangible gifts.

Kate has an excellent fundraising chairperson, Gail, who helped exceed the group's fundraising goal. At the spring board meeting, Kate presents Gail with an oak sapling (Gail's favorite tree), a handwritten thank you note, and thanks her on behalf of the group.

The benefits are great: a) since the gift meets the above criteria, it's bound to produce good feelings for Gail; b) the tree will last a long time, and will serve as a constant reminder to Gail that Friends of Neah Creek appreciated her work; c) every time Gail looks at the tree, she will think about the good work being done by her organization; and d) Gail can use the tree as a "show and tell" piece, making it easy for her to talk about the important work of Friends of Neah Creek with her family, friends and neighbors.

Tangible gifts don't have to be elaborate or expensive to be thoughtful. Key chains, embroidered patches, T-shirts, buttons and lapel pins, refrigerator magnets, bookmarks and small craft items work wonders for saying "thanks" and building good will.

Just remember, people are the most important resource you have to achieve your organization's goals. By appreciating volunteers with thoughtful words and tangible gifts, you can motivate and involve them over a long period of time. They are worth the biggest possible investment.



References and Resources for Working with Volunteers

ORGANIZATIONS AND WEB SITES

Energize, Inc.

Energize is an international training, consulting and publishing firm specializing in volunteer management and serves as a central resource for volunteer management. It is a place for volunteer managers to exchange views on critical issues in the field, browse pertinent articles and purchase quality books on volunteer management, gather information on how to broaden their professional skills and networks, and link to other useful sites. 5450 Wissahickon Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19144; Book Orders: 800/395-9800, other Information: 215/438-8342. email: info@energizeinc.com; www.energizeinc.com.

Association for Volunteer Administration

The Association for Volunteer Administration (AVA) provides members with a multitude of tools and resources to help volunteer managers maximize volunteer resources in their organizations. P.O. Box 32092, Richmond, VA 23294; 804/346-2266. www.avaintl.org.

CompuMentor's Resources for Technology Volunteers and Mentors

CompuMentor, a non-profit technology assistance group, has great resources to guide technology volunteers through projects like building a database, wiring a network, designing a web site, and more. 487 Third Street San Francisco, CA 94107; 415/512-7784. www.compumentor.org.

CyberVPM.com

CyberVPM.com is a volunteer-run, interactive web site, which provides valuable links and networking and training opportunities for volunteer program managers and volunteers. CyberVPM.com is filled with articles and tools that can help volunteer managers to develop their programs, recruit, train, and supervise volunteers, and evaluate their programs' effectiveness. CyberVPM.com also provides a space for listserv discussion groups, a free on-line newsletter, access to their library of resources and bookstore, and an Internet tutorial.

The Institute for Conservation Leadership

ICL provides training and assistance on leadership development for you and your board of directors. Contact them at: ICL, 6930 Carroll Ave., Suite 420, Takoma Park, MN 20912 • 301/270-2900 www.CyberVPM.com.

GovVPM.com

Sponsored by the Points of Light Foundation Institute, this web site is designed for anyone who works with volunteers in programs, agencies, or departments of federal, state, city, county, or municipal government. In addition to the web site, you can share ideas with your colleagues around the world by subscribing to a companion online discussion group. There is also a comprehensive list of web links for volunteer program managers. www.pointsoflight.org/government/government.html.

Recruit Volunteers on the Web

There are numerous web sites that help individuals nationwide find volunteer opportunities posted by local nonprofit and public sector organizations. Generally, these on-line databases at each site allows volunteers to search thousands of one-time and ongoing opportunities by zip code and category. Volunteers can sign-up automatically by email for those opportunities that fit their interest and schedule. Contributing organizations post their own opportunities, giving volunteers easy access to an accurate and diverse source of activities.

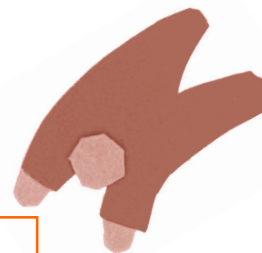
Volunteer Match: www.volunteermatch.org

Get Involved: www.getinvolved.net

Idealist: www.idealists.org

For Labors of Love: 4laborsoflove.org

Volunteering for the Coast (a program of NOAA and site for people with a passion for lakes, rivers, and the ocean, who want to volunteer or coordinate volunteer efforts):
volunteer.nos.noaa.gov/





The Volunteer Recruitment Book

By Susan Ellis

This book is filled with suggestions and recommendations on the subject of recruitment. It first shows how to design the best assignments for volunteers as the initial step to finding the most qualified people. What follows is a wealth of information on topics ranging from how your organization's image affects your success in recruitment to where to look for new volunteers, including your own backyard. Available from Energize, Inc., 5450 Wissahickon Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19144; 800/395-9800. \$18.95. 144 pp. email: info@energizeinc.com; www.energizeinc.com.

Supervising Volunteers: An Action Guide for Making Your Job Easier

By Jarene Frances Lee and Julia Catagnus

Packed with the advice, wisdom, and experience of over 85 real-life, on-the-job supervisors of volunteers, this guide offers a crystal clear analysis of what works and what doesn't in supervision. It also includes comments from volunteers about what they need from those who supervise them, as well as a self-assessment survey covering the attitudes and actions necessary to be an effective supervisor. Available from Energize, Inc., 5450 Wissahickon Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19144; 800/395-9800. \$21.95. 155pp. email: info@energizeinc.com; www.energizeinc.com

Handling Problem Volunteers

By Steve McCurley and Sue Vineyard

Are your volunteer's problems causing you problems? Not sure what to do next? This book takes a lighthearted look at some of the most common volunteer performance problems and delivers some serious solutions and also helps you to assess the extent and root causes of problems. Available from Heritage Arts Publishing, 1807 Prairie Ave., Downers Grove, IL 60515; 800/272 8306 \$18.00. 60pp.

Volunteer Action Training Handbook

By Neil Schulman, SOLV

SOLV focuses their efforts on mobilizing volunteers to enhance the livability of Oregon and offers a one-day Volunteer Action Training for community project organizers. The training handbook is an excellent resource for any volunteer manager. Includes how-to descriptions, forms, and to-do lists focusing on recruiting and coordinating volunteers, coordinating a volunteer project, working with the media, and soliciting sponsors for projects. Available from SOLV, P.O. Box 1235, Hillsboro, Oregon 97123; 503/844-9571. \$10.00.

Pass it On:

Outreach to Minority Communities

By Charyn D. Sutton

Written for the Big Brothers/Sisters of America Minority Mentorship Campaign, this book helps readers in any setting become more aware and accepting of diverse cultural characteristics. Covers cultural awareness and sensitivity training, community networks and establishing credibility. Available from Energize, Inc., 5450 Wissahickon Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19144; 800/395-9800. \$35.00. 181 pp. email: info@energizeinc.com; www.energizeinc.com.

Proof Positive: Developing Significant Volunteer Recordkeeping Systems

By Susan J. Ellis

Proof Positive is a step-by-step guide to the basic elements of a volunteer recordkeeping system. Includes application forms, volunteer fact files, assignment logs, time and activity reports. Lots of sample forms and ideas for documenting hard-to-track activities. Available from Energize, Inc., 5450 Wissahickon Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19144; 800/395-9800. \$12.95. 60 pp. email: info@energizeinc.com; www.energizeinc.com.

Organizing Outdoor Volunteers

By Roger L. Moore, Vicki LaFarge, and Charles L. Tracy

A pocket-sized book to help you recruit, organize and retain your hands-on, outdoor volunteers. Available from Appalachian Mountain Club Books, 5 Joy St., Boston, MA 02108. \$4.95. 111 pp.



Grab onto our life preserver of resources and let River Network help you keep your head above water.



Join the River Network partnership and connect to the information and resources you need to stay afloat!

- **Access our River Source Information Center with the 1-800 hotline:** Let us help you research a particular issue and put you in touch with the necessary contacts and resources through one-on-one consultations.
- **Log onto our Partner-only web site:** Browse the updated postings of funding sources, upcoming events and trainings, and download river clipart.
- **Receive the myriad of Partner benefits,** including subscriptions to *River Voices* and *River Fundraising Alert*, a copy of the *Directory of Funding Sources for River and Watershed Conservation Organizations*, and a copy of either *Starting Up: A Handbook for New River and Watershed Organizations* or *How to Save a River...and more!*
- **Apply for a Partner grant** to help sustain and strengthen your organization.



SIGN ME UP!

Annual Partner Dues are only \$60

Organizational Partner Agency Partner Individual Partner

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Please charge my credit card: VISA MasterCard

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You will receive your initial set of Partner materials, including your choice of: *(check one)*

How to Save a River *Starting Up: A Handbook for New River and Watershed Organizations*

Please make your check payable to River Network and return this form to:
River Network, 520 SW 6th Ave., #1130, Ptd., OR 97204-1535 Phone: 503/241-3506

River Network works to support you and your needs. We provide training and technical assistance to our Partner groups.
 River Network does not promote legislation or represent your organization in legal matters.



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Drowning in To Do's?



River Network exists to help locally-led groups survive and grow. We provide individualized support, publications and trainings created with you — the river conservationist — in mind. When you join the growing number of River Network Partners, you immediately tap into the best thinking the watershed movement has to offer.