

## **VASP Voice**

### **February 2008**

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### **Upcoming Meeting Dates**

May 15, 2008- VASP Annual Meeting. 11 AM to 2 PM. Location TBA.

May 12, 2008- VASP Board Meeting at Gwen's Girls. All VASP Members welcome and encouraged to attend!

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### **Evie Nominations Due**

Nominations are due April 11. Please fax or mail your form to Pat McCarthy, Linda Soldressen, or Sylvia Lynn asap! If you have worked with/ learned from a wonderful VASP member, let him or her know it by nominating him/her for this honor.

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### **McCarthy Joins AVR M Board** **Submitted by Tracy O'Neill**

VASP Membership Chair and long-time member Pat McCarthy has been invited to be a Board Member for the ever-growing Association of Volunteer Resources Management (AVRM). Her term begins in March. AVR M is working to form a national organization to support Volunteer Managers, and VASP is proud to have Pat as a well-qualified, experienced representative in this important process. She'll have opportunities to provide input on VASP's behalf and return from meetings with new perspectives to share with us. Way to go, Pat!

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## **Best Sources for Volunteer Administration Information Submitted by Cherie Hugh**

It seems there is a lot of information out there about volunteer administration. When you don't have much time, as none of us do, though, you don't want to have to read ten sources to find one piece of helpful info. If you're a new Volunteer Administrator, it's really hard to know where to even start!! Well, I recently took a poll of some of VASP's long-time, well-respected Volunteer Administrators to get their opinions on the best sources for information.

Lynn Guerra: Since she deals mostly in mentoring, she finds The Mentoring Partnership of Southwestern PA to be a good source.

Linda Soldressen:

1. The Resource Center is a training and technical assistance provider funded by The Corporation for National and Community Service to support volunteer and service programs across the nation.
2. VASP membership meetings
3. PA State Senior Corps Directors Association meetings
4. Arlene Grubbs
5. NSSCTalk, which is a listserv for Senior Corps Directors

Sylvia Lynn:

1. VASP
2. Points of Light Foundation [www.pointsoflight.org](http://www.pointsoflight.org)
3. The United Way [www.unitedwaypittsburgh.org](http://www.unitedwaypittsburgh.org)
4. Pittsburgh Cares [www.pittsburghcares.org](http://www.pittsburghcares.org)
5. VolunteerMatch [www.volunteermatch.org](http://www.volunteermatch.org)
6. Volunteers of America [www.voa.org](http://www.voa.org)
7. [www.energizeinc.com](http://www.energizeinc.com)
8. Association of Volunteer Resources Management [www.avrm.org](http://www.avrm.org)

Marian Gentile:

1. By Definition: Policies for Volunteer Programs by Linda Graff
2. 101 Ideas for Volunteer Programs by Steve McCurley and Sue Vineyard
3. 101 Tips for Volunteer Recruitment by Steve McCurley and Sue Vineyard
4. Beyond Banquets, Plaques, and Pins by Sue Vineyard

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## **Update on National Organizations Submitted by Tracy O'Neill**

Key Volunteer Administrators from all over the country continue to work to develop a national umbrella organization for those who work in the field of volunteer management. Two such organizations have sprouted from these efforts—the Association of Volunteer Resources Management (AVRM) and the Congress of Volunteer Administrator Associations (COVAA).

Though there have been rumors about these two organizations combining efforts and becoming one, it seems clear that the boards of each group intend to continue on parallel paths with different approaches. An update on the COVAA website states, “Several Steering Committee members met the leaders of AVRM at their conference in Dallas. We hope this conversation will continue between the future Boards of the two organizations. The Steering Committee is committed to avoiding unnecessary duplication of existing resources. From our perspective, we believe our process for developing our new entity has been approached from a different angle.”

Time will tell what roles these two organizations will play in the professional lives of Volunteer Managers across the country. For now here’s some news from each organization.

### **AVRM**

- The Association recently incorporated as a nonprofit corporation.
- They have a preliminary Board of a few members, but are working to form a full Board. (See “McCarthy Joins AVRM Board”)
- Volunteers are working on bylaws and the federal exemption application.
- They’re also working on plans for the upcoming conference in Binghamton, NY from October 1<sup>st</sup> through the 3<sup>rd</sup>. Pre-conference activities will take place September 29-30. Attendees will be able to register on the AVRM website, [www.avrm.org](http://www.avrm.org).
- Volunteer organizations across the nation like VASP have been or are becoming DOVIAs. DOVIA stands for Directors of Volunteers in Agencies. DOVIAs are then listed in AVRM’s registry which is available on-line.

### **COVAA**

- The Steering Committee, which meets each week, proposes that the name of the new national membership association they’re working to form be called ALIVE. This stands for the “Association of Leaders in Volunteer Engagement.”
- The Committee also proposes this mission statement: “ALIVE serves to enhance and sustain the spirit of volunteerism in America by fostering collaboration and networking, promoting professional development, and providing advocacy for leaders in community engagement.
- They plan to soon publish draft versions of bylaws, Articles of Incorporation, and a business plan.
- They intend to incorporate in Indiana.

Both organizations are looking for more involvement and input from Volunteer Administrators. If you're interested, check out their websites at [www.arrm.org](http://www.arrm.org) or [www.covaa.org](http://www.covaa.org).

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**Help Wanted (Please): Opportunities To Get Involved in VASP**  
**Submitted by Tracy O'Neill**

Take your affiliation with VASP to another level by stepping into a committee or Chairperson role. Leadership involvement in VASP is a great resume builder, and you'll be working toward furthering the possibilities of this great organization.

- *Ethics & Advocacy Chairperson* – This committee is one of those things that can really keep VASP on the professional map. The purpose of the Ethics and Advocacy Committee is to educate members on the ethical standards of VASP; provide leadership for the development of position papers on issues in the field and advocate for professional, ethical volunteer leadership in the community; and provide members with information on government or private sector actions likely to affect the ethical practice of volunteer administration. This committee is important, because if we don't do these things, who will?
  - This Chairperson will assemble a committee and oversee their efforts to achieve the goals outlined above.
  - If interested please contact Alison Boyle at 412-731-7670 x33 or [aboyle@gwensgirls.org](mailto:aboyle@gwensgirls.org).

If you're new to the field of volunteer management, this would be a great way to jump in and get your feet wet. If you've been a VASP member for a while and want to increase the benefits you get from being a member, give a leadership role a try. Help!

Thank you to Rebecca Maletto and Julie Moreschi for volunteering to chair the Professional Development Committee and Mentoring Committee, respectively.

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**Creating Awareness of VASP**  
**Submitted by Cherie Hugh**

When we updated the VASP Strategic Plan for 2006-2008, one goal was to have more visibility as a professional organization in the community. As Public Relations Chair, I encourage all VASP Members to do the following to help us work toward our goal:

1. Display your VASP membership certificate in a frame in your office
2. On all cover letters you write, include "Member, Volunteer Administrators of Southwestern Pennsylvania" under your name
3. Also add the above line to your signature in your e-mail (also consider listing our website [www.vaspdovia.inpgh.org](http://www.vaspdovia.inpgh.org))

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**Pittsburgh Cares Volunteer Event**

Pittsburgh Cares is excited to announce plans for Hands on Pittsburgh 2008 scheduled for Friday and Saturday, May 2-3, 2008. Hands on Pittsburgh is their largest annual event that connects volunteers to opportunities at local nonprofit organizations in order to address community needs and raise awareness of the local nonprofit sector's work.

Last year, they were able to match over 1500 volunteers with projects throughout the region. This year, they are hoping to engage over 2000 volunteers.

For more information, go to [www.pittsburghcares.org](http://www.pittsburghcares.org).

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**How to Keep Boomer Volunteers Coming Back**

By Jennifer Kalita  
 Submitted by Pat McCarthy

"It's no secret that boomers care about the world we live in. They recycle. They educate. They volunteer.

But how much they volunteer, and whether that will increase, has been the subject of great debate and speculation in recent months.

Some say that retiring boomers are too active and busy starting businesses, caring for aging parents, and exercising for better health to take time out to volunteer extensively.

Others say that boomers will respond to volunteer opportunities in increasing numbers, especially as more time opens up in the retirement years.

**What do the experts say?**

In December of 2005, at the White House Conference on Aging, the Corporation for National and Community Service kicked off its *Get Involved* promotional campaign to help convince 77 million boomers to meet community needs through volunteer service.

At that time 33.2% of all boomers (25.8 million people) had volunteered for formal organizations during 2005, representing the highest rate of volunteering of any age (and standing more than four percentage points above the national average of 29%).

The theory then was that as boomers begin to retire and have more free time, this percentage can only increase.

A little over a year later, that theory has been put to the test. The Corporation recently released a report and projections with some interesting findings.

- ◆ Boomers will increase volunteering by older adults some 50 percent by 2020 – and double the number of older adult volunteers by the year 2036.
- ◆ Boomers want higher-skill assignments to keep them engaged.
- ◆ Boomers who volunteer 12 weeks or more annually are most likely to serve year after year.
- ◆ The number of older Americans will continue to rise sharply for decades since the youngest boomers will not reach age 65 until 2029.
- ◆ Three out of every 10 boomers who volunteer today leave their organizations each year.
- ◆ Boomers' relatively high volunteer rate today is tied to their education level and propensity to have children later in life. Previous studies have found education and having children are two key predictors of volunteer levels, which accounts in part for the fact that the volunteer rate for baby boomers is peaking later in life than past generations.
- ◆ Mid-life adults (age 45-64) are three times as likely to have a four-year college degree today as they were 15 years ago (from 11.5 percent to 29.5 percent). Once their children leave home, boomers could maintain relatively high volunteer rates because of their higher education levels, expectations that they will work later in life than previous generations, and good health.

“The boomer wave signals one of the largest opportunities the nonprofit sector has ever had to expand its pool of resources,” said David Eisner, CEO of the Corporation. “Only the nonprofits that retool their ability to engage citizens will reap that reward.”

### **But how do struggling non-profits retain good volunteers?**

- ◆ Baby boomer volunteers who engage in professional activities – such as managing people or projects – continue volunteering the following year.

Approximately 75% of boomer volunteers want more challenging and stimulating roles, usually reflective of the more professional skills set they bring to the table.

Volunteers who are relegated to general labor or who provide transportation services, for example, regularly drop out of volunteering with only 55.6 percent continuing to volunteer the next year.

- ◆Activities with the second and third highest volunteer retention rates were music (or some other type of performance) and tutoring, mentoring and coaching.

- ◆The more often boomers volunteer, the more likely they are to volunteer again. Volunteers who serve 12 or more weeks per year have a volunteer retention rate of 79 percent, versus 53 percent for those who serve two or fewer weeks per year.

- ◆Boomers who work are boomers who volunteer. The report found that remaining in the workforce increases the likelihood that a boomer will continue to volunteer.

- ◆Boomers who increase their work hours are slightly more likely to continue volunteering compared to those who decrease their work hours (71.6 percent vs. 68.4 percent). If many boomers retire later and work longer than past generations (working into their 70s), as some studies indicate, that trend could actually translate into a larger number of older American volunteers.

“The baby boom generation gives our nation an unprecedented opportunity to increase the breadth and the scope of volunteering,” said Robert T. Grimm, Jr., Director of the Corporations’ Office of Research and Policy Development. “If we use the right approach, this population will continue their service and change the face of volunteering in America.”

### **Retention methods that work: cultivation and development**

Grimm says nonprofits should use charitable and human resources retention models. In other words,

- ◆Cultivate volunteers the way you would cultivate a donor.
- ◆Provide professional development just as you do for your staff.

In addition, you can improve your boomer volunteer retention with a thorough analysis of your current volunteers:

- ◆How many are boomers?
- ◆What is your rate of retention?
- ◆Do you perform volunteer exit interviews, so as to identify the reason volunteers are leaving?

◆What can you shift in your volunteer training and management to get greater boomer buy-in?

Boomers are too valuable to pass up. But recruiting and retaining them may be a bit more complicated than we at first thought. Smart analysis and strategic implementation will put your nonprofit ahead in the competition for boomer volunteers.”

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### **Summary of January 24 VASP Meeting Submitted by Cherie Hugh**

On January 24, a large number of VASP members gathered at Northland Library for a diversity training presented by The Anti-Defamation League. Our presenter (and I am so sorry I don't have his name, as I can't find my notes from the meeting. I put them somewhere for safe-keeping and of course can't find them now!) first played a "game" with us to test our cultural competency. He had squares of information on a paper, such as "Someone who speaks 3 languages" and "Someone who knows how the date of Easter is determined," and we had to interact with VASP members to find people who either fit that description or could explain what was listed. We not only got to learn some interesting facts but also got to know some of our fellow VASP members better.

Our presenter then talked about the League and its mission, which led us into what I thought was an interesting discussion about political correctness. The main point I got out of the discussion and what you may not know/ realize is that "political correctness" has become very individualized. For instance, I always thought the current politically correct term was African-American. However, our presenter, who happened to be a youngish Black man, explained to us that each individual "African-American" may not want to be called that and that we should respect their wishes, if vocalized, if they want to be called Black or whatever else.

Not that this comes up in everyday discussions, but... you may have one volunteer who likes to be identified as "Black" and another volunteer who likes the term "African-American." It's an individual preference, and you should respect that individual's preference. The idea is that you don't want to offend anyone.

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### **Editorial Information**

This e-newsletter has been compiled by Cherie Hugh using information provided by VASP members. Newsletters will be e-mailed to members on a quarterly basis around the 1st of February, May, August, and November (theoretically!!).

VASP members are welcome to submit articles or information for inclusion. We also have writers who could research topics of interest to members, so let me know if there is something you want to read about! Articles will be used as space permits and may be edited.

Please note that attachments will not accompany the newsletter, so items must be sent to me as Word documents that can be copied into an e-mail. Deadline for submissions is the 15th of the month prior to publication. For example, if you have something for the May 2008 newsletter, I should have it by April 15.

If you are interested in assisting with future newsletters, please contact me at [cahugh@hearth-bp.org](mailto:cahugh@hearth-bp.org) or (412) 939-2302 ext. 12. Thanks!