

# *Older Volunteers*

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# *A Valuable Resource*

A GUIDE FOR THE  
PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS



A PUBLIC SERVICE OF THE  
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED PERSONS

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## INTRODUCTION

**I**t is a tradition older than America, a custom rooted in a commitment to purposeful citizenship, the integrity of the individual, and the worth of sharing talents and time. Volunteering in America is as old as the Mayflower Pact, when the founders of our nation came ashore and pledged to work—not for money, but for “a just and equal life.”

The value of voluntarism has not been diminished by progress. If anything, it has been enhanced. And today, with public resources shrinking and society’s needs growing, voluntary service is essential to maintaining social solvency.

A quarter century ago, a retired educator named Ethel Percy Andrus founded an organization that, like the Mayflower Pact, vowed to work not for profit, but for good. The organization was the American Association of Retired Persons. Its motto is its promise: “To serve, not to be served.”

Through AARP’s voluntary programs, tens of thousands of older citizens have seized new opportunities to serve society. AARP’s experience in creating and nurturing volunteer programs has produced many important lessons for those who would volunteer and those who would turn to older volunteers for help.

AARP’s experiences are spe-

cial because older volunteers are special in the variety of experiences they bring to their volunteer roles. They have retired not to undisturbed leisure, but to service.

At AARP, volunteers are retired accountants who counsel older taxpayers in filling out their returns. They are homemakers and retired educators teaching health maintenance and good driving skills, retired legislators and lawyers representing older consumers’ interests on national boards, and men and women of all backgrounds helping shape laws to fit the needs of older citizens. They are the people who help other older men and women better their lives.

These are the torch-bearers for a new generation—the men and women over fifty. The sixty million of them in America today represent a vast national treasure. The wealth of their accumulated talents and experience is waiting to be discovered.

The AARP commitment to serve and not to be served is articulated every day by those involved in our volunteer programs. These are programs of and by volunteers. Our staffs are spare. Our budgets are lean. Here, the volunteer makes the program, runs the program, *is* the program.

To understand the challenge of older voluntarism is to understand the value of useful work and the sense of mission we all share in wanting to be of service to our society.

## **OLDER VOLUNTEERS**

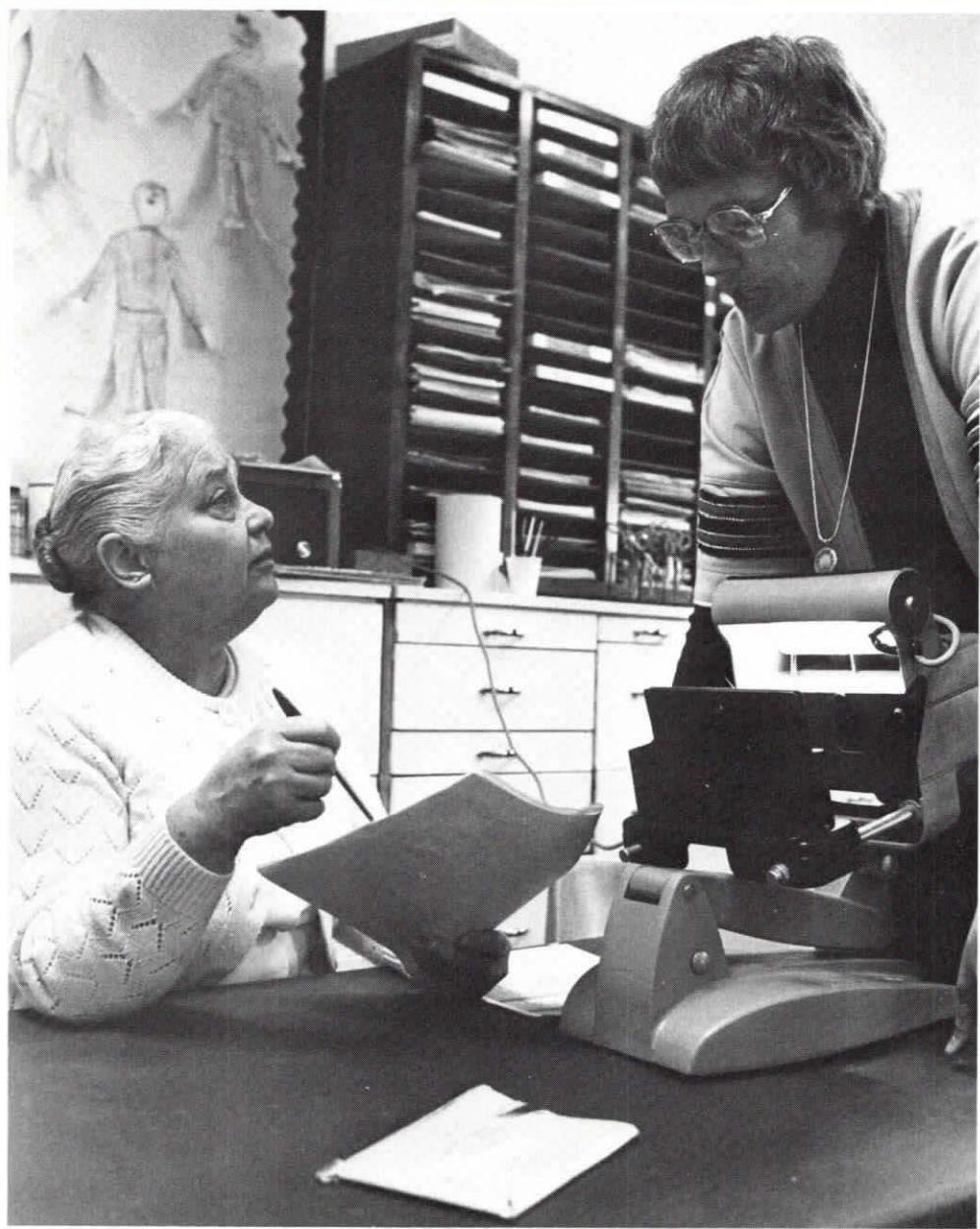
**W**hat you can expect . . .

- **SKILLS**—Older people bring years of experience and a wide range of knowledge and insight into all areas of work.
- **MOTIVATION**—Older people volunteer because they want to, because it serves their own interests and needs, because they believe in helping others, because they don't want their contributions to society to end with their last paycheck.
- **CONSCIENTIOUSNESS**—A healthy work ethic and careful attention to detail characterize the attitudes of older volunteers.
- **DEPENDABILITY**—Impressive attendance records, low turnover rates, and steady performance are consistently achieved by older volunteers.
- **INFLUENCE**—Older volunteers bring with them from their communities new and important contacts that can lead to funds for a program, more volunteers, and good publicity for your organization and its goals.
- **AVAILABILITY**—Freed from full-time work and the responsibility of family-raising, some have flexible schedules and time to share.

What they will expect . . .

- **FULL INTEGRATION** into your organization and program.
- **STAFF** adequate to provide consistent support for volunteers.
- **OPPORTUNITIES** for growth and development of volunteers within the organization.
- **RECOGNITION** of their efforts in and out of the workplace.
- **PAYMENT** of volunteers' out-of-pocket expenses if at all possible.
- **ATTENTION TO PHYSICAL WORK NEEDS** such as parking, transportation, security.
- **LIABILITY INSURANCE COVERAGE**.

*"Let me share my years  
of experience,  
my knowledge, my insight."*



## SETTING THE STAGE...

**R**ecruiting volunteers before you know what they will be doing is like making a cast call without a script. You may fill the stage, but the play will never open.

If you want the curtain to go up on your volunteer program, you need not only a script, but also sound backing from your organization or community, and clearly defined roles for volunteers to fill. Consider:

### *Is there a need?*

If you think there is but aren't sure how great a need, do some research before proposing a volunteer plan to meet it. Meet with those who would know the dimensions of the problem. Con-

duct a poll or survey to find out who in the community is now addressing the problem and what more needs to be done.

### *Are volunteers the answer?*

Can one volunteer, or two, solve the problem? Can a whole corps of volunteers? This is the time to gauge not only the size of the need, but also how big a volunteer program it will take to address it.

### *Do they need special skills or training? Who will provide it?*

Is the problem something that can be solved just by throwing people at it? Or do skilled, trained people need to be directed to the problem? All volunteers, like staff, need some training and orientation.



### *Is there support for the program?*

Someone or some group has to sponsor the program, someone has to be committed to it philosophically—and financially, if necessary.

In the case of AARP's Widowed Persons Service, for example, no program is begun until our volunteer organizers and staff are convinced not only of the need, but of a sound coalition within the community which recognizes the need and is committed to addressing it. We "test" that community commitment by first explaining the complexities of establishing a local program to help newly widowed persons adjust to and grow through their grief.

The staff and cadre of volunteer organizers and volunteer trainers offer consultation, materials, and training assistance to those around the country who want to start Widowed Persons Service programs in their communities. But volunteers are not recruited until organizers have identified the leadership and community resources that will publicly offer services to the newly widowed. Through the experience of our 4,000 volunteers in more than 150 communities we have found that setting program goals

and realistically assessing community support are tasks that must be undertaken before volunteers can or should be mobilized.

### **Working in Public Agencies and Private Institutions**

Just as starting a volunteer program from scratch has its special challenges, so does the integration of volunteers into paid staffs and the expansion of ongoing volunteer programs.

While the same guidelines apply for defining volunteers' roles, program goals, and available support, there are other matters to consider before volunteer recruitment begins in a governmental or institutional setting.

When an agency or government department embarks on a search for volunteers to work beside paid employees, community enthusiasm—even official backing—may not be enough to guarantee success. The acceptance of staff members—particularly those who will work most closely with volunteers—must be assured before the call goes out for volunteers.

Traditionally, public agencies have not been successful in incorporating volunteers into their day-to-day operations. The reason is

not that they *cannot* use volunteer help. More often it is that they *will not*. But shrinking budgets have caused many agencies to turn to the volunteer sector for assistance.

A good example is AARP's Criminal Justice Services program. Although providing for the public safety has become a highly technical enterprise, police departments throughout the country are now utilizing older volunteers in a variety of significant support activities.

- In a West Virginia town where 20 percent of the population is over the age of 60, volunteers and the police department work together to serve and protect isolated elderly and disabled persons through Operation Lifeline. The program offers daily phone contact, and medical, food and fuel services to otherwise isolated citizens.
- In a rural area of western Oregon, older volunteers trained by the police department are helping homeowners identify their property and find new ways to make their homes secure.
- Older volunteers in a California police department's crime analysis unit are translating crime statistics

into codes the department's computers can understand. Because of these volunteer efforts, police can better determine crime patterns and dispatch patrols to fit them.

Readyng an agency like a police department for effective volunteer participation, however, demands immediate attention to such potential problems as:

- Resistance by paid staff members to training volunteers.
- Legal questions about access to confidential information and liability of volunteers, as well as the department.
- Objections from unions about the use of volunteers who may be viewed as threats by some union members.
- Difficulty in finding adequate space, telephones, and supplies for volunteers to use.
- Necessity of providing suitable and secure parking places for volunteers or easy access to transportation from volunteers' homes to the place of work.

All of these issues may represent legitimate concerns of the agency or its paid staff, but none is insurmountable. You should be certain, however, that they are addressed before you recruit any volunteers. Later in this manual, we suggest ways to resolve objections based on legal questions and insurance.

*"It's so important  
to feel wanted, to be a  
part of the team."*



## The Importance of Being Wanted

Volunteers who are not welcomed by staff are unhappy volunteers, no matter what their ages. Staff objection to working with volunteers must be addressed long before volunteers arrive.

The development of job descriptions for volunteers can do away with many objections. But it is important that the staff with whom volunteers will work be actively involved in preparing those job descriptions.

When objections arise to using older workers in police support roles, AARP staff has found that asking staff where and how volunteers can be of greatest service, and then *listening* to their suggestions, usually results not only in more realistic job descriptions, but also in a more receptive environment for volunteers.

## **Volunteers and Unions**

Public agencies should never look to replace paid staff with volunteers. Older volunteers don't want to put others out of work and if they are asked to, will resent it as much as those whose jobs they take. Volunteers want to increase available services.

If this is clearly explained to union leaders and they are involved in drawing up volunteer job descriptions, confrontations with unions can almost always be avoided. Using a pilot program to reassure union leaders that their members' earning power will not be threatened can be a successful way to convince them that volunteers are not a threat.

Identifying personnel limitations, goals that aren't being achieved, and jobs that aren't being done is tantamount to identifying the jobs volunteers can fill.

The message to reluctant staff members and unions is two-fold:

- 1.** *Volunteers will not take away your jobs.*
- 2.** *Volunteers will make your jobs easier to perform.*

Many unions have their own volunteer projects. Volunteer

Services coordinators for organized labor can be your best allies in avoiding volunteer/labor disputes.

If you still find some resistance in your agency to the voluntarism program, avoid those pockets of resistance when placing the first volunteers. At the same time, begin orientation sessions for staff to assess and reverse negative attitudes about volunteers.

## **Volunteer Planning**

You don't need a paid consultant to develop your volunteer program. But you *do* need other volunteers. They can provide the expertise your group or agency needs to shape a successful program. Volunteers should be involved in every step of the design and implementation of the voluntary program on your drawing board.

If the agency or organization where you're planning to set up a volunteer activity already has volunteers working with it, ask them to help you. If it doesn't have volunteers, find some in your



community. A few good places to start the search are:

- AARP chapters
- Retired Teachers Associations
- Churches and synagogues
- Area Agencies on Aging
- American Red Cross
- United Way
- Men's and women's clubs
- Junior League
- ACTION—Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)
- Professional retiree organizations like SCORE (More suggestions are listed on pages 12-13.)

## THE JOB DESCRIPTION

The job description is your key to the treasure chest of older volunteers. It may be your first contact with them, and if not properly done, could be your last.

The job description should anticipate most questions from would-be volunteers.

### *What do you want me to do?*

Be as specific as possible, but don't limit volunteers' options. Sound impossible? It's not if you prepare several different job descriptions and include several types of related tasks in each. Just as all older people are not the same, neither are all volunteers. Reflect those differences in job descriptions.

### *How often do you need me?*

This question can only be answered by carefully measuring your needs. Scheduling can be

arranged later, but it's a good idea to know at the start the approximate number of volunteer hours that need to be logged each week or month for each task.

*How long will this job last?*

Older volunteers need a commitment from their agency or organization as much as the organization needs a commitment from them. If you decide to start with a pilot program, volunteers should be told how long it will last and whether they are expected to stay until the pilot ends. If you are not starting with a pilot project, set a reasonable time—three to six months—that the volunteer will be expected to serve. The assignment can be renewed.

*Who is my boss?*

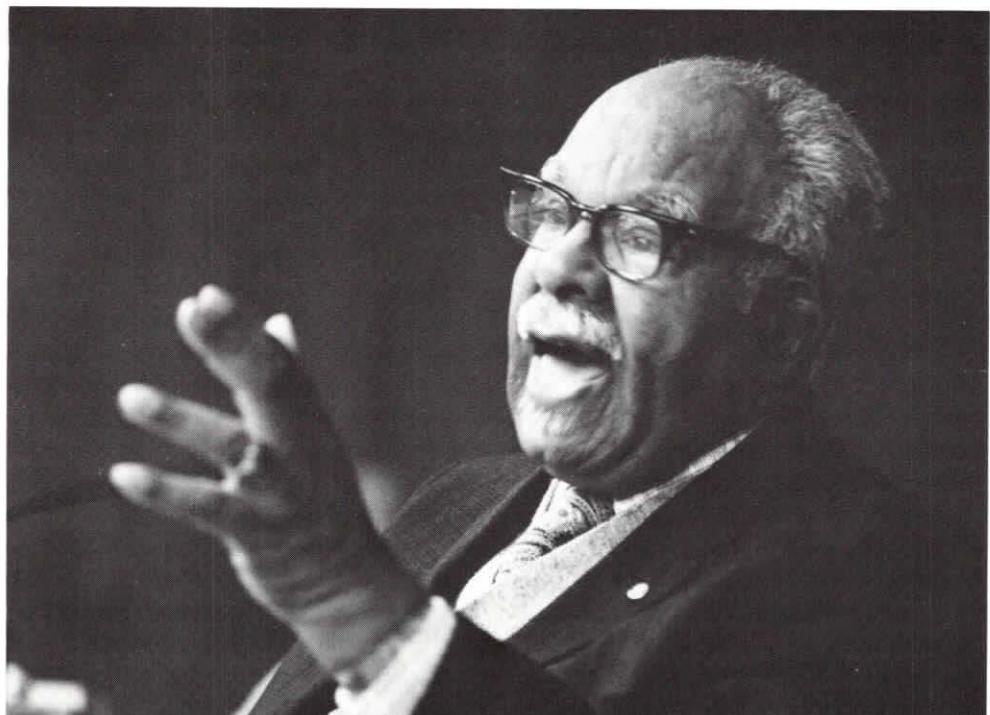
We all feel more secure when we know where we fit into the organization and its work. Volunteers should always report to other volunteers. The volunteer

director or coordinator should report to a high level authority within your organization—the manager, the board, or the paid director of volunteer services if you have one.

*Is this going to cost me anything?*

If at all possible, volunteers should be reimbursed for their expenses. Although they may be more than willing to donate their time, some may not be able to pay for the privilege of giving. The sponsoring organization should try to cover costs of volunteer materials, transportation, meals, and any other expenses volunteers incur by volunteering. If your organization cannot afford these costs, be open with volunteers and

*"When I volunteer, I am committed to the organization I work for. But I need that organization to feel committed to me, too."*



tell them what they will (or will not) have to provide out of their own pockets.

*What are the qualifications for this job?*

If you know what you want your volunteers to do, you should know what skills are required to do it. For jobs that require specific knowledge—like AARP's

medicare information or tax counseling programs, for example—you should be prepared to provide the necessary training. Decide how you are going to train volunteers and who is to conduct the training.

*"I'm proud to be  
of help to my neighbors  
and my community."*



## RECRUITING OLDER VOLUNTEERS

Older volunteers have been called our nation's number one untapped human resource. But, while nearly five million older men and women do volunteer, another two million or more who want to, do not.

Why not? Perhaps because they haven't been asked.

Study after study has shown that the majority of people who volunteer do so because they have been personally contacted by someone. Finding ways of reaching potential volunteers is not as difficult as it may seem. The volunteer community, like any professional field, has its own network. If you know who you are looking for, you often can find the right person through one of these networks.

### *Organizations:*

- AARP
- Retired professional groups
- ACTION—RSVP, Foster Grandparents, Senior Companion Program
- Area Agencies on Aging
- Senior centers
- Religious groups and institutions
- Volunteer Clearinghouses (See page 28.)

### *Industry:*

A less obvious place to look—but one that may be a wellspring of talent—is the business community. More and more companies are helping their retired or soon-to-be retired employees find volunteer programs to become involved in. Identify what sort of skills are needed, then contact the business or industry most likely to know of qualified candidates.

### *In your own back yard:*

Staff members and board members often know of family or friends who may be strong candidates for your volunteer programs. If the staff is sold on your program before recruiting is begun, employees may be anxious to suggest names of potential volunteers.

### **Publicity**

With sufficient publicity, anyone can fill a hall with volunteers. But a successful volunteer program demands more than a good turnout. Public notices, flyers

left on doorsteps, and announcements on radio and television may be good ways to sell a new product or open a new supermarket, but they are not the best ways to recruit volunteers.

Since most men and women who volunteer do so because they have been personally asked, you only need to publicize a little, but in the right places.

Your best “advertisement” is the volunteer job description, accompanied by a brochure or other easy-to-read flyer identifying your organization and its goals. These materials should be distributed to people and organizations most likely to know older volunteer candidates qualified for the job. Post those job descriptions, hand them out, or both. Good places to distribute them include:

- Senior centers
- Area Agencies on Aging
- Public libraries
- Supermarkets
- Doctors' and dentists' offices
- Pharmacies
- Senior housing developments
- Churches and synagogues

Ask organizations that include older volunteers or reach older people to include the job descriptions in their newsletters or post them on their bulletin boards. Begin by posting a few job descriptions around your own offices and in your own newsletters.

Be sure to include on the job description the name, address, and phone number of the person to contact for volunteer applications.

### Volunteer Application

The volunteer advisors and staff involved in designing the program should be responsible for choosing participants. Before the job descriptions are distributed, assign people to take the calls from would-be volunteers and print up applications to send them.

The applications should include everything (within reason) you need to know about the applicant.

Assign someone to read each application and someone to reply *in writing* to all who apply.

### Screening

Selecting good volunteers is no different than selecting competent paid workers. Set standards and stick to them. Don't be afraid to ask for references, test scores, or even try-outs if you think they are needed.

The screening process—including the personal interview—should answer several questions:

*Can the applicant fill the job "advertised" in the job description? Does he or she have the time to commit to the job and the basic interest or skills to do it?*



In AARP's Citizen Representation Program, for example, volunteers on public and private boards and commissions are charged with voicing the concerns of older consumers. The ability to express one's self in public and feel at ease is a prime criterion for CRP volunteers.

In our 55 Alive/Mature Driving program, volunteers must hold a valid drivers' license if they are to help other older drivers improve their driving skills.

AARP's Tax-Aide volunteers last year helped older adults complete over a million tax returns. The free nationwide tax counseling service demands that volunteers know—or more often, be able to learn—a great deal of information about the tax system. Through our cooperation with the Internal Revenue Service, their ability to learn facts about taxes and supply informed advice is carefully tested long before the first client arrives. Tests like the one created by the IRS (which acts as the "certifying agency" for qualified volunteers) can be devised for any number of other technical kinds of volunteer tasks.

*Does the applicant believe in the goals of the program? Will he or she fit in with paid staff, other volunteers, the people we want to help? Are the applicant's expectations of the job realistic?*

A Tax-Aide volunteer candidate whose goal was to turn in as many tax-cheats as he could—and who expected a reward for doing it—clearly would not share the goals, or the expectations, of our program.

To promote good health practices among other adults, volunteers for our Health Advocacy Services must necessarily believe that we are all responsible for our own wellness. A volunteer who believes it takes a physician to keep us healthy would not be a good advocate for self-initiated health promotion and disease prevention—the goals of our program.

Reminiscence, a visitation program which pairs trained volunteer "listeners" with isolated men and women who need to recapture feelings of self-worth, may not require volunteers with a Ph.D. in psychology, but it does demand candidates with gentle and caring personalities.

## How to Say No

If volunteer standards are to be maintained, sometimes you will have to say “No” to certain applicants. This process is never easy but you can minimize the pain for all involved by:

- Describing for the applicant other opportunities for volunteer work. Rejection of volunteers can be destructive to the volunteer as well as to your program if rejected candidates convey their bitterness publicly or to others in the older community. Be prepared with a list of agencies who need help.
- Making sure that another volunteer—preferably your volunteer coordinator or supervisor—is the one to give the unsuccessful candidate the bad news.
- Scheduling the rejection as early as possible in the recruitment process. Often a straightforward discussion with the would-be candidate about the ways in which he or she *may* not be suited to the job prompts the volunteer to withdraw his or her application before anyone has to say “No.”

## TRAINING

**S**et goals for training and deadlines for their achievement. Volunteers should participate in training other volunteers and be involved in evaluating the success of the training program.

While the nature of your training program depends strongly on what service volunteers will be providing, there are several tried and true rules for helping people learn:

- Most people learn best by doing. Give your trainees the opportunity to “do” at every opportunity.
- Knowing where volunteers fit in helps them understand the importance of their tasks. Outline your organization and show how volunteer activity contributes to the success of the whole.

*"We volunteers need tangible goals.  
We need to know  
when we succeed and when we fail."*



- When volunteers have questions, help them find the answers. Older volunteers bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to a volunteer program. Group discussions may provide a good way for them to share their expertise and suggest new approaches to problems.

## EVALUATION

**H**ow do you know if your volunteers are trained? Devise a test, whether written, verbal, or practical, to measure the success of the training program and the abilities of new volunteers to accomplish their tasks.

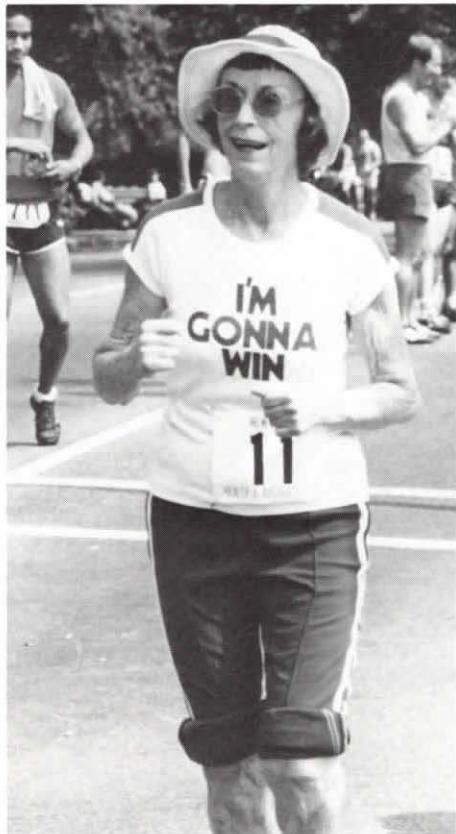
Ask all participants in the training—including volunteer leaders and organizers, as well as trainees—to evaluate the training program and explore any areas in which they feel unprepared.

## PLACEMENT

**M**atching talent with tasks should be easy if you have carefully selected volunteers to fit well-drawn job descriptions. Involve volunteers in their own placement and set a period of time (a week, a month, any period up to six months) during which the volunteer will be expected to fill that job.

If during this "probationary" or "tryout" period, the volunteer decides the job is not what he or she wanted or you discover that the volunteer doesn't fit the job, gently but firmly move the volunteer out of the job. Again, the rejection should be softened by introducing the volunteer to other opportunities in or outside your program.

Arrange for follow-up evaluation of the volunteer by the volunteer leader or coordinator so that when the probationary period does expire, an informed decision about the volunteer's future in your organization can be made without debate or delay.



## ON THE JOB

The only difference between voluntary work and work for pay is that volunteers can—and do—withdraw their services whenever they wish. And unlike paid employees, they can leave without economic penalty.

Older men and women become volunteers because they *want* to, but they stay for many reasons—because they feel comfortable, they are making important contributions, and they see opportunities for increasing influence or leadership.

Respect for volunteers, their talents, their opinions, and their needs is essential to a successful program. It can be expressed in the rules your organization maintains for working with volunteers.

### Consistency

Work hours, tasks, work sites, and access to work materials should be consistent from visit to visit. Volunteers who commit themselves to your organization for a definite time period should be able to expect a similar commitment from you. You may want to use printed schedules or set down written procedures for changing schedules or job tasks.

## Contact

Someone in your organization—either a paid staff person or volunteer leader—must be “on call” for volunteers who want to change schedules, ask questions, or work out problems with their co-workers or clients. Hand out printed lists of names, phone numbers, and other pertinent information volunteers can use to contact leaders and other volunteers.

Someone should take responsibility each week or month for notifying volunteers of schedule changes or new opportunities for service. This should be handled by a volunteer who has 24-hour access to a high-level staff person. The job should be rotated among volunteers.

## Chain of Authority

Volunteer programs should be run by volunteers. Support can be provided by staff, but it is essential to the strength and success of a volunteer program that volunteers manage it themselves.

Encourage creation of a volunteer hierarchy in which positions of leadership can be rotated among volunteers. The first groups

*"Volunteers need authority.  
We need to be involved in decision-making  
about the work we do."*



of volunteer leaders may have to be appointed but after the initial selection, volunteers should choose their leaders.

Endorse the authority of volunteer leaders and include them in decision-making. A volunteer should be included as a representative in all staff or board meetings involving volunteer services and policies.

Volunteer leaders should be encouraged to create new and better ways of serving the organization and to help the organization provide training and self-development opportunities.

### **Consideration**

Volunteers have a right to reimbursement of expenses, a secure and safe work place, access to transportation, on-the-job training, technical assistance when needed, and consideration for any disability.

### **Recognition**

AARP volunteers receive a variety of incentives—certificates, pins, media exposure, and invitations to meetings and formal swearings-in. But the best incentives are always far less tangible—respect from peers and opportunities for advancement within the volunteer hierarchy.

## **THE VALUE OF VOLUNTEERS**

The dollar value of time volunteered by Americans of all ages has been estimated at more than \$65 billion a year. This is about 50 percent more than the amount individuals contribute in actual dollars to their favorite causes. Human service is clearly a valuable entity in the social marketplace and an offering that is often more affordable than a cash gift.

Instituting a volunteer program may demand that the organizers document the dollars volunteers “save” the organization. While such figures can be pulled from minimum wage estimates, union contracts, and the like, putting a dollar value on a particular task can backfire. Union leaders and others could argue that volunteers are being used to replace paid workers. Such opposition could doom your program.

Approaching the cost/benefit analysis of volunteer programs from the *benefit*, instead of cost, side can be one way around this dilemma. We will discuss both approaches.



### Counting the Costs

The dollar value of hours contributed by volunteers is generally determined by the standards used in federal grant programs. Here, volunteer services are considered as "in-kind" contributions for funding. This method is particularly helpful for

organizations or government agencies seeking matching grants since volunteer services deemed integral to the program can be counted as contributions for purposes of matching funds. Volunteers' hourly contributions are estimated at the rate that would be paid an agency

employee for similar work. (This figure should not include fringe benefits and the cost of overhead.) If the required skills being performed by a volunteer are not found within the organization or agency, then the value of the volunteer's contribution is equal to the pay rate for similar work in the local labor market.

### Counting the Benefits

If your organization is concerned about alienating unions, professional organizations, or other paid staff by calculating the dollar value of volunteers' efforts, you can estimate the value of volunteer services by adding the number of hours contributed by the volunteers over a specified period of time. These hours can be viewed as a *gift* from volunteers—a gift that allows the agency or organization to perform more services or do a better job.

Count the additional services in terms of the numbers of clients reached, phone calls taken, speeches made, meals delivered. It is here on the service side that you may best be able to sell the value of volunteers.

However you measure the contribution, though, the cost of

training, housing, transporting, and reimbursing volunteers must also be included in your equation. While a volunteer program is not without cost, it can and should prove extremely cost-effective when you compare the value of services provided with the dollars invested in recruiting volunteers and paying their expenses.

Document all costs associated with volunteers, including their out-of-pocket expense payments, supplies, space, meals, and most importantly, training. As your program grows, you can calculate costs more precisely.

Include these factors in developing a reliable estimate of cost/benefit efficiency of volunteers:

- How long does the average volunteer stay? What is the rate of turnover compared to the amount of time spent training and preparing the volunteer for service?
- How much time was spent by staff working directly with volunteers compared to the time contributed by volunteers?
- What is the cost per volunteer in a given position compared to the cost of a paid worker in the same position? *Or*, how many additional clients, calls, or other services were reached or accomplished *with* volunteers that could not otherwise have been helped?

*"What I do makes a difference in people's lives. And this makes a big difference in my life."*



## INSURANCE

The legal definition of "volunteer," according to *Black's Law Dictionary*, is "one who intrudes himself into a matter which does not concern him . . ." Yet, when we speak of volunteers in a social service setting as we have here, we are really speaking of the "gratuitous employee," meaning that first, he or she is subject to the person or organization being served, and second, the volunteer has an interest in the task being performed.

Under this definition, volunteers are most often "gratuitous employees" and as such, have certain rights and duties under the law to work in a reasonably safe environment and within the limits of a volunteer job description. What this means for the "employer" of volunteers is responsibility, plain and simple. While liability situations rarely occur in programs where volunteers are properly trained and supervised, liability insurance is absolutely essential to protect both the organization and its volunteers.

Comprehensive general liability insurance coverage protects not only the agency and its employees and volunteers against negligence claims, but also covers legal defense costs—even if the lawsuit is groundless. Such a policy also covers the agency should a volunteer sue for personal injuries suffered while volunteering.

There are many insurance firms and attorneys familiar with the insurance needs of volunteer programs. Contact your attorney and/or agent, or contact the Volunteers Insurance Service Association for more information. (See page 28.)

The cost of such insurance is generally quite low and can be extended to cover volunteers' automobile and personal liabilities for as little as \$5 or less per volunteer per year.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

When volunteers work in social agencies or public departments governed by laws of privacy and confidentiality, they are under the same sanctions and prohibitions as every other "employee." Client confidentiality should not be a barrier to the use of volunteers. Volunteers have been successfully recruited throughout the nation by agencies working with confidential files and information.

Volunteers can be trained and supervised by agency staff to ensure that they maintain the same standards of confidentiality as salaried employees. Their access to confidential files should be on a "need-to-know" basis, just as it is for paid staff.

## TAXES

The Internal Revenue Service allows for certain deductions for costs—or donations—directly related to volunteer programs. Because these rules and provisions change from time to time and are not always applicable to every volunteer program, the organizers of a volunteer project should seek expert tax counsel about allowable deductions or should contact one of the IRS' 50 District Offices for advice.

Volunteers can deduct many of their expenses associated with volunteering. Research the rules that apply to your organization and share that information with volunteers.



## CONCLUSION

Working with older volunteers is a special challenge with very special rewards. They have the time, the motivation, the experience, and the skills to accomplish nearly any task put before them. Respect is a small price to pay for their expertise.

They want to give; they are waiting for the chance. Their chance is our opportunity. Too much needs to be done to ignore so many who would help us do it.

"If you look closely, you will see that almost anything that really matters to us, anything that embodies our deepest commitment to the way human life should be lived and cared for depends on some form . . . of voluntarism."

Margaret Mead

## **APPENDIX A: RESOURCES FOR ORGANIZERS OF OLDER VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS**

### **PRINTED MATERIAL**

**Effective Leadership in Voluntary Organizations.** Brian O'Connell. Follett Publishing Co., Division of Follett Corp., 1010 West Washington Boulevard, Chicago, IL 60607. 1976. \$8.95.

**The Effective Management of Volunteer Programs.** Marlene Wilson. Volunteer Management Associates, 279 South Cedar Brook Road, Boulder, CO 80302. 1976. \$6.95.

**Elders and Voluntarism, Technical Assistance Notebook for Older American Volunteer Programs.** Western Gerontological Society, 785 Market Street, Suite 1114, San Francisco, CA 94103. Out-of-print, but available in many libraries.

**Keys to Making a Volunteer Program Work.** Kathleen M. Brown. Volunteer Readership, 1111 North 19th Street, Suite 500, Arlington, VA 22209. \$6.50 plus \$2.00 shipping and handling.

**Older Americans: An Untapped Resource.** National Committee on Careers for Older Americans. Academy for Educational Development, Inc., 680 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10019. 1978. \$8.50.

**The Shape of the Things to Come: A Report from the National Forum on Volunteerism.** Volunteer Readership, 1111 North 19th Street, Suite 500, Arlington, VA 22209. 1980. \$3.10 plus \$1.00 shipping and handling.

**The Successful Volunteer Organization.** Joan Flanagan. Contemporary Books, Inc., 180 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60601. 1981. \$14.95 (\$8.95 paper).

**Recruiting, Training and Motivating Volunteer Workers.** Arthur R. Pell. Pilot Books, 347 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10016. 1977. \$2.50.

**The Volunteer Community: Creative Uses of Human Resources.** 2nd Edition. Eva Schindler-Rainman and Ronald Lippitt. University Associates, 8517 Production Avenue, P.O. Box 26240, San Diego, CA 92126. 1975. \$9.50.

**Volunteers.** Armand Lauffer and Sarah Gorodezky. (Sage Human Service Guides, Volume 5). Sage Publications, Inc., 275 South Beverly Drive, Beverly Hills, CA 90212. 1977. \$6.00.

## **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

### **Association for Volunteer Administrators**

P.O. Box 4584  
Boulder, CO 80306

### **Association of Volunteer Bureaus**

420 Bank Street  
Norfolk, VA 23501

### **Citizen Involvement Information Network**

### **VOLUNTEER: The National Center for Citizen Involvement**

1111 North 19th Street  
Suite 500  
Arlington, VA 22209

### **The Foundation Center**

888 Seventh Avenue  
New York, NY 10016

### **The Grantsmanship Center**

1031 South Grand Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90015

### **Independent Sector**

1828 L Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20036

### **National Council on the Aging**

600 Maryland Avenue, S.W.  
West Wing 100  
Washington, DC 20024

### **National School Volunteer Program**

701 North Fairfax Street  
Suite 320  
Alexandria, VA 22314

### **Volunteer Insurance Service Association**

4200 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20016

### **Volunteer Urban Consulting Group**

300 East 42nd Street  
New York, NY 10017

## **APPENDIX B: LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS? LOOK HERE FIRST!**

### **Volunteer Clearinghouses**

Many of the volunteer positions filled around our nation are done so through some 350 centralized volunteer clearinghouses or voluntary action centers. Many of the centers are connected with senior programs, like ACTION's Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), that operates on local and national levels. These centers maintain a current list of voluntary opportunities—and often, candidates for filling them—and help match volunteers with needs.

For more information about such centers, or for guides to starting one in your community, write VOLUNTEER: The National Center for Citizen Involvement, Suite 500, 1111 North 19th Street, Arlington, VA 22209.

You can determine if there is already a voluntary action center or volunteer clearinghouse in your community by looking in the white pages of your phone book.

### **Area Agencies on Aging**

These regional governmental agencies often have information about voluntary programs involving older men and women. Contact the one nearest you for assistance if you are looking for older volunteers or would like to be one.

### **American Association of Retired Persons**

With more than 15 million members, AARP is a wellspring of volunteers and volunteer opportunities. The AARP Volunteer Talent Bank identifies potential volunteers nationwide for referral to appropriate organizations with specific volunteer needs. For more information, contact the Volunteer Bank at 1909 K Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20049.

For information on AARP chapters contact the area office that serves your location as listed on the next two pages.

### **Governors' Offices for Voluntary Service**

Many states have governors' offices for volunteer groups and organizations. They can provide technical assistance and referral in many instances. Some also keep registers of volunteer trainers, speakers, and other leaders in the voluntary community. These offices are listed under state governmental services—or may be located in your state capital. You can obtain their number from your operator.

## **APPENDIX C: THE AARP AREA OFFICES**

### **Area I—Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont**

930 Park Square Building  
Boston, MA 02116  
(617) 426-1185

### **Area II—Delaware, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania**

919 Third Avenue  
28th Floor  
New York, NY 10022  
(212) 758-1411

### **Area III—District of Columbia, Kentucky, Maryland, North Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia**

1346 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.  
Suite 419  
Washington, DC 20036  
(202) 728-4838

### **Area IV—Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, U.S. Virgin Islands**

Florida inquiries:  
Florida Information Center  
6580 34th Street, North  
Pinellas Park, FL 33565  
(813) 522-9461

All other inquiries:  
2872 Woodcock Boulevard  
Suite 309  
Atlanta, GA 30341  
(404) 458-1491

**Area V—Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin**

2720 Des Plaines Avenue  
Suite 113  
Des Plaines, IL 60018  
(312) 298-2852

**Area VI—Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota**

Suite 1401  
Traders Bank Building  
1125 Grand Avenue  
Kansas City, MO 64106  
(816) 842-3959

**Area VII—Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas**

304 University Tower  
6440 North Central Expressway  
Dallas, TX 75206  
(214) 369-9206

**Area VIII—Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Utah, Wyoming**

709 Kearns Building  
136 South Main Street  
Salt Lake City, UT 84101  
(801) 328-0691

**Area IX—Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, Oregon, Washington**

Andrus Building  
215 Long Beach Boulevard  
Long Beach, CA 90801  
(213) 432-5781

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

Author:

Pamela Warrick

Project Staff:

Anne Harvey

*Head,*

*Program Department*

David N. Gamse

*Senior Coordinator,*

*Program Development*

Grant Harris

*Art Director*

*Creative Services*

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Retired Senior Volunteer Program, a part of  
ACTION—pages 3, 9, 14, 10, and 24

Woodfin Camp, Inc.—page 4

Senior Companion Program, a part of  
ACTION—pages 7 and 22

UNIPHOTO—pages 12, 17, 18, and 24

Foster Grandparent Program, a part of  
ACTION—page 26

Program Department  
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION  
OF RETIRED PERSONS  
1909 K Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20049