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Recognition Events

Enough Formal Banquets! Let's Transform Recognition Events

By [Susan J. Ellis](#)

June

2000

To our friends in the UK, happy Volunteers Week which begins on June 1st. Here in North America, we were finishing up the spring recognition season which broadly goes from April (when our National Volunteer Week occurs) through June. As many others, I've been on the circuit of luncheon and dinner banquets, served up as the after dinner mint to thank the attending volunteers with an energetic speech.

Enough, please! A few years ago I reflected in a Hot Topic that directors of volunteer services spend part of every year planning, in essence, a big wedding. They obsess over the menu, decorations, invitations, and entertainment. In the end, while the event may be lovely, there is a stultifying sameness about it all. And, I believe, this tradition has nothing whatsoever to do with making volunteers feel thanked for their work.

Steve McCurley and I opened the recent Colorado State Conference on Volunteerism with a presentation on the assumptions of our field. One of these was: "Men do not volunteer." We provoked conferees to look at hidden messages. For example, Steve asked, which gender is most likely to appreciate a sit-down banquet??? Ever notice who does not attend?

Many of you have discovered this for yourself, of course. In my travels I have heard all about some wonderfully innovative recognition events: safari-themed zoo picnics, outings to amusement centers, ice cream socials, staff-developed variety shows, special passes to behind-the-scenes tours, discount shopping sprees. Please continue to share your event ideas in our [Recognition area](#)

The point of this essay is not to trash banquets and praise field trips. It's to question the fundamental rationale of what we are trying to do and see if we can come up with ways to make any recognition activity more worthwhile (even a banquet!). I am presuming that we want:

- to make volunteers feel appreciated for their work--collectively and individually;

- to help volunteers feel a part of the bigger picture and get to know one another;
- to educate executives and the board about the impact of volunteers throughout the year;
- to acknowledge that paid staff contributes to the success of volunteers (as well as vice versa); and
- to re-commit everyone to further enthusiastic volunteer service.

So why is it that we:

- Invite an outside speaker who doesn't know anything first-hand about the organization to say "outstanding job"?
- Allow top executives/the board to give a thank you speech that we wrote and they read (complete with mispronounced volunteer names)?
- Seat people at big round tables where they can only hear the conversation of those on either side of them, and then remain fixed in place through speeches and award presentations? (Note: Buffet lines do not offer a "mingling" experience.)
- Print names in a program without any other information?
- Limit attendance because of the cost of the event per person?

Maybe we need to take a new approach and keep our goals in mind. How about:

- Eliminate the speeches and ask various paid staff members to get up and say a few heartfelt--or funny--words.
- If you want the executive to make a presentation, why not share things of interest to volunteers that they don't ordinarily learn about such as any number of plans for future programs, purchases, staff, etc. Make sure the speech references the ways volunteers will play a role in this upcoming happenings.
- When possible, involve clients in saying the thank you (they may actually welcome the chance). If you can't do this on site during the event, go around in advance and audiotape the voices of clients, students, visitors, etc., telling what they like about volunteers. Use the tape as background for a slide show of volunteer activities throughout the past year.
- Give nametags with some useful information on them: volunteer position, years of service, something special this volunteer has done. Then make a point of introducing people to one another in such a way as to encourage real conversations. Yes, icebreaker games do work!
- Organize a moveable feast. During the course of the meal (or after each course), make people move around the room and take new seats to meet new people. Volunteers actually want to meet each other. After all, they share their volunteer interests and are genuinely curious about the other people in the room. There are lots of ways to move people around, from colored dots on nametags to musical chairs.
- Re-focus your energies on everyone's interaction instead of on the meal. Offer great desserts and invite every volunteer, even those who only came in once to repaint the playroom. Allow volunteers to bring a guest. Generate excitement.

- Provide an opportunity for volunteers to speak, too! Have different units prepare a short recap of their year or perform a skit. Ask several key questions from the podium and allow any number of volunteers to give brief answers. Some ideas: What was the most surprising thing you learned as a volunteer this year? What was the funniest incident that occurred? What touched you the most?
- Give volunteers some choice. Instead of one big, dress-up event, why not offer three less formal activities at three different times: a Sunday afternoon picnic, a guided tour of a special museum exhibit on Tuesday morning, and a make-you-own-salad light dinner on Thursday evening. The continuity among these events is something you give each volunteer, such as an annual report, a first aid kit to thank everyone for “coming to the rescue” this year, a set of photographs of themselves at their volunteer assignment, etc.
- Offer something educational. Volunteering is a life-long learning opportunity. Give a seminar on the newest trends in your field. Teach Internet browsing skills. Bring in a corporate trainer who can teach good customer relations techniques.

I also believe that we do not have to plan recognition events “for” volunteers; we can plan them with volunteers. Now there’s some recognition!

Since we have the ongoing [Recognition area](#) on this site, please go there to post specific events, gifts and activities which have been successful for you for recognizing volunteers. For this Hot Topic, please comment on:

- Pet peeves about what's wrong with the way recognition is done generally.
- Ideas for doing things really differently.
- Ways that you have gotten volunteers to interact at an event.

If it's hard for you to distinguish which area to post in. Don't worry, just post your response to the hot topic and we'll separate accordingly!!

Related Topics: [Employee/Volunteer Relations](#) | [Motivation](#) | [Recognition](#) | [Volunteer Resources](#)
[Manager, Role of](#) | [Image of Volunteering](#) | [Philosophy](#)

Posted June 25, 2000

Submitted by Christine Vigil, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Volunteer Coordinator , Commerce City, Colorado

At our annual banquet, we had our volunteers briefly discuss their funniest or most embarrassing moment at Rocky Mountain Arsenal NWR. We also provided Memory cards on the table for volunteers too shy to speak. It was a big hit! Many volunteers commented on the opportunity to be part of the entertainment instead of being just a gracious guest!

Posted June 21, 2000

Submitted by Elizabeth, Cultural Heritage Center, South Dakota

I agree that the sit down dinner and speech thing needs a bit of tweeking. I have about 100

volunteers and 99% of them are seniors. I would like to do a recognition this fall with an apple/harvest theme-any ideas?

Posted June 20, 2000

Submitted by Linda Hamilton, Volunteer Program Supervisor at The Crayola FACTORY and National Canal Museum at Two Rivers Landing, Pennsylvania, USA

Our organization must be doing something right. Our volunteer recognition dinner is a highly looked forward to event, attended by men, women, teens, seniors and in-betweeners alike. Staff attends and never "bunch together" - they mingle during the lively social hour preceeding the dinner and are sure that each table ultimately has a few staff members. Lot's of staff members are part of the recognition dinner committee - it is the largest committee at our facility, a large family discovery center and museum. I really think that is the key - our staff talk this event up, are intimately involved in the planning and make sure it is well attended and great fun. While we begin meeting in spring for the fall event, it is not the focus of the year. We have plenty of ongoing recognition but the dinner is an important night to many people.

Posted 6/7/00

Submitted by Marsha Riddle, Western Carolina Center, North Carolina

Recognition is different for everyone and in my 35 years in volunteer management I have found that it means something different to everyone. Since it is impossible to do everything, our program has long recognized youth at the end of the summer with activities and an event that they have a part in planning. For our senior volunteers, food is a must. For the bands that participate in our annual Christmas parade, recognition is done best in the school and at the time best for each band director, including at their annual evening concert when parents and friends are present. Trying to make recognition what the volunteer would like is a difficult and varying task, but is just as important as the various efforts we all do to find volunteers. Targeted recruitment, I think we call it. How about targeting our recognition as well.

Posted 6/6/00

Submitted by Elizabeth Ellis, Face to Face Health and Counseling Service, Inc., Minnesota

I feel that having a "Volunteer Recognition Week" somewhat sets up volunteer programs/agencies who enlist volunteers, and presents a need for planning events such as banquets, pins and certificates. During my career as a Volunteer Coordinator, I have moved from focusing on Annual Events (food, certificates, music, invitations, cost, time and hoopla) to re-focusing on daily (personalized), weekly (articles, webpage and memos in volunteer mail boxes) and monthly (Birthdays, anniversaries, calls) ways to recognize volunteers. Within the organizations I have worked, volunteer events have not had the kind of turnout I would hope and so I use the National Volunteer Recognition Week dates to highlight and display volunteer involvement throughout the agency by displaying pictures, posting quotes from staff stating the ways they have worked with volunteers over the year, hanging banners with words of appreciation, "Kuddos" to volunteers and sometimes personal and funny statements to what individual volunteers add to our organization, services and offer clients.

When planning events, I know it is important to reach individual volunteers in the way that will most satisfy and fulfill their personality and style. Some people enjoy their name "in lights", or at least in the monthly newsletter. Others, would benefit from a personalized letter to their CEO for acknowledging their support in encouraging their staff involvement in the community. Different ages sometimes are eligible for different forms of recognition, such as scholarships and certificates from the President etc... I feel strongly that it is important not to feel a failure for not hosting a huge gala during Volunteer Recognition. We, as Volunteer Coordinators, shouldn't feel in competition with our events for volunteers and # of turnouts, but rather remain focused on the importance on individual and personalized recognition of how volunteers contribute to our cause, services and mission. Volunteers can even feel recognized for a proper match to a role, being given the opportunity to offer feedback on their position, responsibilities or quality of training or invited to branch into other areas of assistance due to their skills, knowledge and learned talents. There are many ways to recognize volunteers and none of them should be belittled due to "turn-out". Also, it is important for staff to be involved with on-going recognition and appreciation of volunteers. It sets a wonderful environment and welcome to interested and involved volunteers. Keep up the good work!

Posted 6/6/00

Submitted by Tom Rinkoski, Director of Volunteer Services, Diocese of Green Bay, Green Bay, Wisconsin

Right on Sister! I work with religious congregations who ritually put on annual "volunteer appreciation" bashes complaining the whole time of the work they take and the poor attendance they get as a result. And although I must admit to enjoying the opportunity to be "the after dinner mint" as you deliciously express it, I, too am surprised they don't catch the irony in my presence. Loved your suggestions for tweaking these events.

Posted 6/6/00

Submitted by Terri Tallman, RSVP-Richland County, Ohio, USA

What a great article on volunteering. As a new Director (1 1/2 years), I have been thinking of ways that I could change from the past practice of a recognition banquet. I did change from a sit down dinner to an afternoon tea this past year and most of the volunteers liked the change. I especially like your ideas about including the volunteers in providing feedback about their year. As a staff of one overseeing 310 volunteers, my time is limited, so I hope you don't mind that I take some of these ideas and utilize them for my great volunteers. Thanks again, you're doing a great job. Terri Tallman, RSVP-Richland County, Ohio.

Posted 6/6/00

Submitted by Sherry Franklin, Special Services Coordinator, Indiana

Regarding Recognition of Volunteers.....I am the volunteer coordinator for a Parks and Recreation Department. There are approximately seven different areas that I seek volunteers for. Each month the program staff from all areas submit a volunteer nomination for the month. One individual is selected as the BRAVO recipient. This volunteer invited to attend the Board of Parks Meeting and is then acknowledged by the staff member who nominated them. The meetings are televised on our local PBS. The volunteers come from all walks of life, it is my belief that if we offered a banquet of

some sort at the end of the year or even mid year, many of the individuals receiving the BRAVO award would not be present. (The recipients receive a wooden ink pin with our logo on it, value \$3 and a nice certificate signed by our Board President and Executive Director)

Posted 6/6/00

Submitted by Eve Sisson, Volunteer Service Coordinator, Lee County Parks and Recreation, Florida, USA

We have a very diverse population of volunteers in our Parks and Recreation Department. Placements include environmental activities, programs and camps for children, recreation center assistance, Special Olympics, events and more. We have incorporated all ages of volunteers also. Recognition is indeed a challenge. Because we have so many volunteers (700) and many of them are seasonal, we try for an event-type of recognition in the Spring. We have held the event at our Sports Complex to include dinner, a baseball game and fireworks. The last two years we have held it at one of our Regional Parks to include a picnic and a variety of activities to choose from: free ride on the miniature train, canoe rides, fragrance garden tours. Next year I am considering an ice cream social with entertainment. We do nametags for everyone who attends with their volunteer worksite. We do not give certificates or awards. I encourage that in the individual programs and we do support that activity. We also have an incentive program where volunteers can "buy" certain items with their collective hours of contribution over a one year period. I feel this gives those volunteers who really commit a lot of time, something special for their contribution. It has worked very well for us. Each item has our logo and the word "volunteer" imprinted on it, so it becomes a form of promotion for our program also. I consider this on-going recognition.

Posted 6/6/00

Submitted by Beth Aune, Visitor Services Coordinator, North Dakota

Because many of my volunteers are senior citizens and most likely live alone, I have added potlucks prior to public programs. It serves two purposes, fellowship with other volunteers, and gives us a built in audience for programs. Those who participated were not likely to attend because they didn't have someone to go with. Two problems solved with one idea!

Posted 6/6/00

Submitted by Joan Brown, Coord., Civic Center Volunteers, Marin County, CA.

During National Vol. Week we also recognized the PAID Supervisor of Volunteers. It recognizes the importance of the partnership and the value of excellent supervision and training. When a volunteer successfully completes their contract, they receive a Resolution of Commendation from the Board of Supervisors which specifically describes their characteristics and the job they did. It #1 recognizes the vol. #2 educates the top decision makers #3 creates press opportunities.

Posted 6/6/00

Submitted by Cynthia McConniel, Volunteer HELP! Line Manager, South Dakota USA

What a great topic. If you have volunteers that cannot attend the banquet, then technically they do not get recognized. Certificates are nice and cheap, but have you ever gone into someone's house and seen their volunteer certificates actually hang on a wall? When I first started working in disaster, the

governor very thoughtfully took the time to send every volunteer that gave their name and address a form letter and a poor quality hat. The part that was sad that my father-in-law who was part of a volunteer fireman's team that never even went to respond to the call also got the same hat. Not that they shouldn't have gotten recognition for all of the hundreds of things they do all of the rest of the time, but the fact that people who didn't deserve the recognition were also getting it was deflating the purpose of the recognition.

We do several volunteer recognition things for free especially during April. We run a big color ad in our local paper. Each agency pays \$50 to be part of the ad. It is not full page, but pretty close. We also solicit names for our annual Thank-a-thon. Area personalities call volunteers and thank them for all of the work they do at XYZ agency. It is kind of neat for the celebrities and the volunteers. Most of time the volunteers are pretty humble about getting a call because they do not think they do anything that big. Throughout the year, we work with a local am radio station and every Thursday they call a volunteer live on the radio and thank them for all that they do. One of the local flower shops donates a gift certificate for them to redeem at the store at their convenience. I take calls from parents, children, other volunteer leaders, and co-workers most of them are so flattered and for a brief moment they have their 15 seconds of fame. I think we are on the right path though. It looks like we have some volunteer leaders who already come out of the box to see things from a better perspective. Lets keep dragging the rest with us, soon they too will see the light.

Posted 6/6/00

Submitted by Carole Maddox, Public Relations Director, ECHO (Educational Concerns for Hunger Organization), Florida, USA

We are a Christian non-profit organization that works to fight hunger by networking ideas, information and seeds. We have over 150 volunteers on our demonstration farm, offices, and giving tours. We have traditionally held our Volunteer Recognition Dinner in March each year before our "snowbird" volunteers fly north for the summer. For years we had a pot luck dinner with ECHO supplying the meat and beverages. This year we did a catered dinner at a local church that provides this service and had the volunteers just bring their favorite dessert. We have a variety show with "talent" from both the staff and volunteer ranks, as well as a looking forward speech from our executive director. We usually get 60-70% attendance. This year our Volunteer Coordinator (who is herself a volunteer) initiated a series of monthly "Brown Bag Info-Lunches" from October through April when the bulk of our volunteers are with us. We had lunch in the pavilion with ECHO supplying the drinks and dessert. During lunch one of the staff shared his/her story of how they came to ECHO and a bit about their background. We then gathered in our Visitor Reception Center for an in-depth presentation from one of the departments. Volunteers were enthusiastic about these lunches. Those who worked in our seedbank found out what happens in the Public Relations Department, farm volunteers learned how the seeds they helped grow were sent to hungry people overseas, etc. We plan to do another series starting in the fall. In addition, the next dinner will feature the International Year of the Volunteer and we plan to ask volunteers and staff to dress in costumes reflecting their countries of origin or favorite places from their travels--optional, of course.

Posted 6/5/00

Submitted by Martha Diaz, Guardian Ad Litem Program, Florida

Our organization has a very diverse (in age, culture, professional background) volunteer base, so not all events work for all types of volunteers. We only get about 25 - 35% attendance at our formal function. This year, I've decided to hold four events, one each fiscal quarter: one would be the formal shindig (there are those that still think it's necessary), one is a breakfast meeting (underwritten by one of our vols!!) where volunteers are divided into groups and come up with suggestions on improving the program, a "summer social" that is no-frills, no-speeches and all-fun (where they can invite friends who are prospective volunteers), and a potluck holiday event at the home of one of our staff members. Not everyone will attend everything, but I bet most people will attend something.

Posted June 2, 2000

Submitted by Nancy "Clancy" Clatfelter, City of San Bernardino RSVP Director, California, USA

I think you're absolutely right! Too much time spent on the same ol'-same ol'! The food is usually the same (while it may taste great, how many chicken luncheons can one person go to in a year?) and we rack our brains every year trying to come up with something new and innovative for our entertainment (this year we didn't have any...used the extra time to give away more door prizes...volunteers for our group tend to be mercenary when it comes to getting a winning ticket). We also split the events; holding one in May and then a Holiday Social in the first week of December. One of our best was our Holiday Hop...we brought in a Kareoke (sp?) machine and let them get up and lead the group in Christmas Caroling...what a great experience...we had a hard time getting them to stop so the facility could lockup. I'm always looking for alternatives for recognition and you made me think of a few. Thanks.

Posted May 31, 2000

Submitted by J King, Coordinator, Volunteer Program, California

I am the coordinator for a military base volunteer program and this year for the second in a row I was told to put together the "Annual Base Volunteer Recognition Event" which is meant to thank the various base volunteers all at one time. This group includes 850-900 volunteers from 11 various organizations throughout the base so size is a problem.

We send out invites, get perhaps 200-250 RSVP's that attend for a "coffee" type event where they sit at tables and await certificates to be handed to them. Result was fine to the upper management but boring to the attendees who complained of feeling lost in the crowd. Cost is a major factor for the base since the military isn't exactly wallowing in extra funds and we can't ask for donations outside the base.

This year I did try to get the volunteer organizations to participate by setting up information tables with highlights of what their volunteers have done throughout the year. The result was better but still had a "cookie cutter" effect. I would like to start now for next year (they will only authorize one event a year for this program) but could use any fresh ideas to incorporate what might appeal to a military community that is fairly transient and is packed with the usual sit down events and pageantry.

Response to above:

Posted 6/6/00

Submitted by Lillian Gattis, Wichita Festivals, Inc., Kansas

I have some of the same problems as the military volunteers in that we have some 5000 volunteers so size is a problem. We are a 30 years old, ten day festival that takes planning year round. We have a staff of seven to run this organization with a 27 member board of directors. The bulk of our volunteers work for us in April and May. I like the idea of doing something perhaps three times a year to remind them that we are thinking of them all year long, not just in April and May when we need them. This year I am having a Monte Carlo night with free food, games, awards and prizes. This occurs approximately one month after close of the festival. Again like any other organization only about 30% attend. To add to this the organization is thinking about adding another festival in the fall which will mean more recognition for the volunteers. Any idea from other festivals or organizations who have massive numbers of volunteers would be appreciated.

Comments from Readers

Submitted on May 19th, 2016

Ivy Ruark, Director of Volunteer Services, Pines of Sarasota Rehabilitation and Senior Care Community, Sarasota, FL, United States

Our volunteer appreciation "event" is the highlight of the year at Pines of Sarasota. Far from being stuffy, we bring in local entertainment and use in-house food created by our dietary staff. I select my theme almost a year in advance, allowing me to bargain shop for decorations at yard sales and clearance tables. Our large meeting hall has been transformed into a 50's diner, a Country Western town, an elegant tea party salon, and a winter wonderland, all on a very limited budget. Use PINTEREST to get your ideas flowing, and don't be afraid to check out the children's birthday party themes - after all, there's still a "little kid" in most of my volunteers, despite that the average age is over 70. They love getting back to their roots and hearing music that calls back memories of when they were younger. HAVE FUN WITH IT!

Submitted on June 6th, 2016

A. Holloway, Owner/Events Manager, Events Guru, Milwaukee, WI, US

This is an older article, however, I still found it to be quite useful. I'm the Events Manager for a global non-profit organization, as well, Owner of Events Guru. I was researching new ideas for our volunteer recognition program for the non-profit organization as most have chimed in and said, ours is pretty lackluster with very minimal attendance. This was my first year doing the event as I came on board with just a couple of weeks of planning left. The organization doesn't want this particular event to involve too much effort. However, I feel it'll have to be more engaging and interactive to keep the interest of our volunteers. Otherwise, like most have

said, it becomes boring and uninteresting. Currently, it's a simple set up of buffet banquet, very brief slideshow, a quick thank you, a little mingling, and have a nice evening. I noticed the few volunteers that showed up were disengaged and felt "alone", not knowing any other volunteers. A more interactive event will have the volunteers engaging with one another, relaxing, and enjoying the event, rather than feeling like a stuffy event where they are constantly watching the time and waiting for the perfect exit. Definitely going to incorporate all of the tools and advice given.

Submitted on June 6th, 2016

A. Holloway, Owner/Events Manager, Events Guru, Milwaukee, WI, US

As a follow up question, can anyone share their methods of communication to volunteers to advertise the volunteer recognition event?

Submitted on June 8th, 2016

Susan J Ellis, Energize, Inc., Philadelphia, PA, USA

Thanks for posting to this older Hot Topic, which we welcome. I'm glad that you got some good ideas from it and I encourage you to also look at the section on [Recognition](#) in our A-Z Volunteer Management Library.

Have you considered asking a few volunteers -- of different ages and in different volunteer positions -- to form a "think tank" to assist you with this question of what people might want and enjoy as a recognition event? You don't have to do this only FOR volunteers, but WITH them. There are no rules -- really! You can even have a "recognition week" during which you run a few different events and let everyone choose the one that appeals to them the most -- from an ice cream sundae social to a barbecue to passes to a movie. Yes, you will need to be at all of them to say thank you and make sure it's a nice event, but that is a small price to pay if you generate enthusiasm. Also involve paid staff, both to boost attendance and to thank them, too. (A paycheck is not a thank you.)

Submitted on March 5th, 2018

Bobbi Hynes, Volunteer manager, OSF St. Joseph Medical Center, Bloomington, IL, USA

We believe that you cannot overcommunicate information that you want your volunteers to have, so we send the information to the volunteers via email, we post it on our VlcMail they see when they check in, and we put the information in our monthly newsletter. We generally get 100 of our 200 volunteers to attend the breakfast. The volunteers have said that they really enjoy getting together and having the chance to get "dressed up". We get a mix of our college students, our older adults, and some high school youth as well. We hand

out door prizes that everyone loves, we do a slideshow, and of course, a breakfast buffet. The staff attends to pour coffee, get plates filled, and sit with the volunteers. Having the President of the hospital and the Chief Medical Officer pour a cup of coffee goes a long way! Everyone loves to see themselves in the power point slides and it is a fun event.

Submitted on September 8th, 2016

Anamika, Field coordinator, Youth Friendly Centre, Bhutanese refugee camp, Beldangi-2, Nepal

This article was quite useful, I've been planning a volunteers appreciation event for our refugee volunteers & I came up with a blank state of mind. I need a creative do-able event, as we don't have much resources in the camp. Please can you help me with it?

Submitted on September 8th, 2016

Susan J Ellis, Energize, Inc., Philadelphia, PA, USA

Hi, Anamika -- a recognition event is about creating an opportunity for celebrating accomplishments. It's not about the food or entertainment or gifts. It can be a "pot luck" in which everyone (including each volunteer) contributes some of the food for everyone. Let each volunteer get up and say what she or he is proudest of this year -- or some funny incident that happened -- or what s/he learned unexpectedly. Let people share and do a lot of applauding and laughing. You can ask refugees who've been helped by the volunteers to say thank you at the event, too (they will probably be happy to get the chance). Maybe get them to sign their names to a poster with a short sentence about how they were helped. You can then hang it somewhere for everyone to see. Or find refugees who can sing and ask if they'll do a short performance, etc.

You can also ASK volunteers if there is anything they'd like to do to celebrate the last year. It may be something you would not have expected. It might be visiting a scenic spot they've heard about but have not had the chance to see. It might be watching videos for an evening. Give them what they want and they WILL feel thanked!

Hope this gets you started on new ideas.

- Susan

Submitted on August 17th, 2018

Laura Miller, Community Outreach Director, CASA for Kids of East Texas, Tyler, United States

We, too, have grown away from the banquet style recognition event. The last two years we have held a family picnic for our volunteers and their families. This year, rather than giving certificates, we are giving hand written notes by their direct supervisors. I am looking for

some creative, interactive ways to recognize some people and engage the crowd. I want to get away from the typical awards presentation. I would love any ideas. Thanks!

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