

2008 National Conference on Volunteering and Service

Boomer Power: Harnessing the Energy of a Generation

Presented by: Elaine Hanson, Director

RSVP North Central Iowa

Elizabeth Weinstein, Ph.D.

Elizabeth Weinstein and Associates

Learning Outcomes

- Describe a six step process for identifying how to engage Baby Boomers in volunteer service
- Use a tool exclusively designed for assessing not-for-profit readiness to recruit and retain Baby Boomer volunteers
- Identify six key strategies nonprofit organizations can implement to better

Fact #1 – Big Numbers

- 77 million Baby Boomers
- First turn 60 in 2006
- 365 turn 60 every hour

Fact #2 – Increased Lifespan

- 1900 average American lifespan was 47 years
- Today life expectancy is 77 years.
Those already 65 can expect to live to 83

Fact #3 – Better Health

- Most Americans used to retire at 65 and died a few years later
- Now ninety percent aged 65-74 say they have no disability

Fact #4 – More Money

- 1950s: 30% older Americans in poverty
- 2005: only 10% older Americans in poverty

Fact #5 – More Education

- 1970s Americans older than 65 with high school education: 28%
- 2002 high school education or higher: 70%
- Almost 33% aged 60-64 involved in some type of adult education

Fact #6 – History of Activism

- Marched on Washington D.C. in '60s for civil rights and the women's movement
- Retained the spirit of activism; want to make a difference

Fact #7 – Boomers' Expectations

- 4 out of 5 over 50 say they will work full or part time in retirement – paid or unpaid
- Want to make a difference
 - Have a sense of purpose
 - Help improve quality of life in their communities

Why are
Baby Boomers
important to
not-for-profits?



Baby Boomers:

- are a huge pool of potential volunteers
- inject new energy, skills and talents into world of volunteerism
- save staff time and dollars
- help to make not-for-profits more accountable

Baby Boomers (cont.):

- increase capacity to help in critical community areas – long term care, elderly, tutoring and mentoring youth
- bring new challenges to not-for-profits
- engaged as successful volunteers, results increase in financial and material resources

Few
organizations
ready, willing
or able to enlist
Baby Boomers
as volunteers.



Six Steps to Success

Step I: Secure Funding
Sources

Step II: Set up Advisory Team

Step III: Organize and Hold
Focus Groups

Step IV: Identify Key Issues

Step V: Hold Community
Forums

Step VI: Develop a Plan

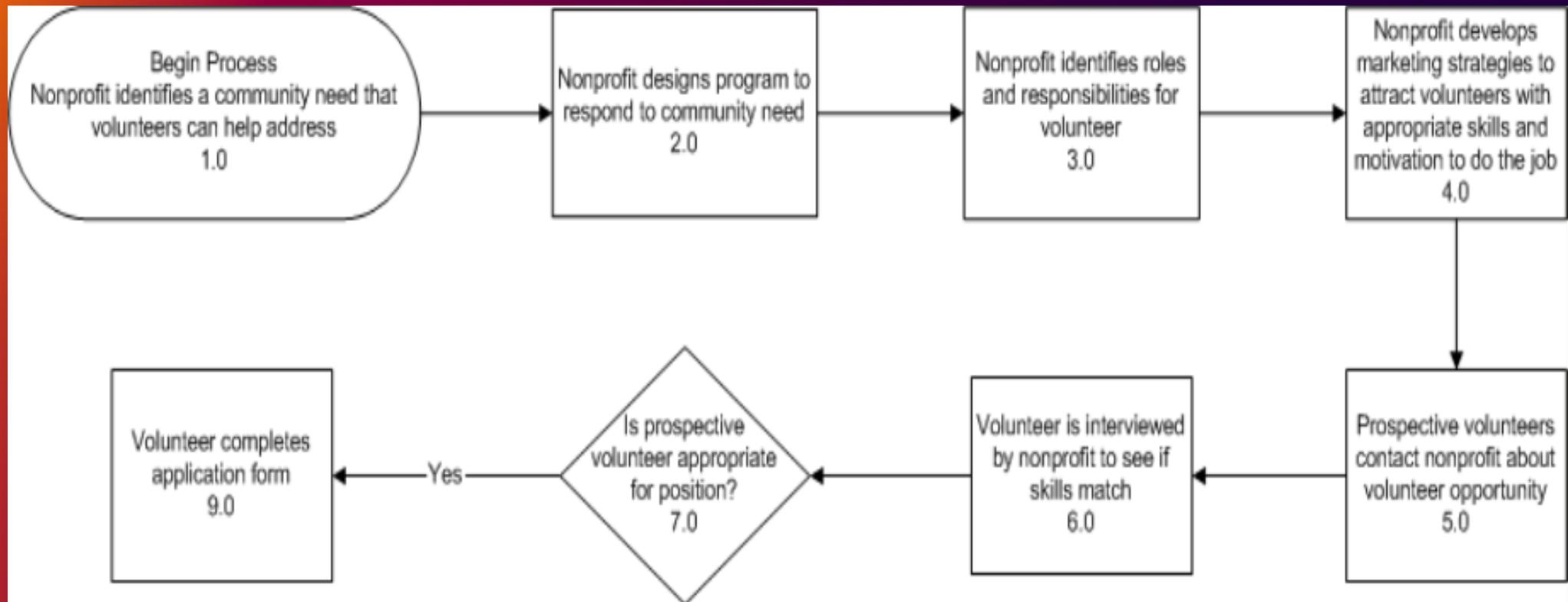
Three Areas of Focus

- Nonprofits
- Marketing
- Partnering with Business

Nonprofits

- Identified ten nonprofits
- Developed an assessment tool

A Traditional Volunteer Journey



WHAT IF? QUESTIONS

- What if a Baby Boomer identifies a community need?
- Can we accommodate an entrepreneurial outlook from Baby Boomers?
- What if a Baby Boomer wants to create his/her own program?
- Does our board of directors fully support our focus on engaging Baby Boomers in volunteer service?

VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT OF READINESS FOR BABY BOOMER VOLUNTEERS

Community Needs	5(strongly agree) -1(strongly disagree)				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We listen to volunteers who have identified a community need that we have no program designed to meet. 	5	4	3	2	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are open to an entrepreneurial volunteer initiating a new program. 	5	4	3	2	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our board of directors supports a focus on Baby Boomer volunteers. 	5	4	3	2	1

Marketing

- Organized sub group
- Focused on website
- Utilized intern
- Designed site with Boomer Appeal



BOOMERS IN ACTION

HARNESSING THE ENERGY OF A GENERATION



PEG WEEG – LAKE MILLS VOLUNTEER

“NOW THAT I’M RETIRED, I HAVE THE TIME TO DO THE THINGS I’VE ALWAYS WANTED TO DO – LIKE VOLUNTEER.”

[HOME](#) [BOOMER STORIES](#) [VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES](#) [BOOMER NEWS](#) [BENEFITS](#) [FAQ](#) [CONTACT](#)

Welcome to Baby Boomers in Action!

The **Baby Boomer Project** is an innovative initiative to connect boomers to service.

Starting in 2005, Elaine Hanson, RSVP of North Central Iowa Executive Director and Elizabeth Weinstein, PhD. of Elizabeth Weinstein and Associates joined their passion for service and interest in Baby Boomers to launch the first **Baby Boomer Project**.

Fact gatherings were conducted through focus groups and Summits in North Iowa and have generated these findings:

- Boomers want to give back to their communities
- Boomers expect good volunteer management
- Boomers want challenging volunteer opportunities to utilize skills/education/experiences in making a difference and leaving a legacy
- Boomers have a limited amount of time and are not an isomorphic group

Boomers changed the face of society in the 60’s and will change the face of volunteerism.

Not find what you were looking for?

Here are some other links that might help...



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Boomer Stories

Pam Angstman

100% of the children Pam Angstman works with in the Reading Buddies program said they have become better readers and 75 stated they now also enjoy reading at home.

With those statistics, Angstman, who is a retired teacher, clearly feels great satisfaction in her volunteer efforts. It gives her "the same sense of making a difference she had when she was teaching, without most of the frustrations!"

[Click here to read the full story](#)



Roberta Kraft-Abrahamson

Hospice work, social work and education are all tricks of the trade for retired baby boomer Roberta Kraft-Abrahamson. These serve her desire to volunteer, now that she has retired, quite well.

"My busy work schedule previously prevented me from trying some of the volunteer activities I really wanted to do." In retirement, Kraft-Abrahamson has been a solid fixture in the RSVP program since June 2002.

[Click here to read the full story](#)





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RSVP of North Central Iowa

Click each volunteer opportunity to find out more about them.

[Breakfast Buddies](#)

[Conversation Partners](#)

[Reading Buddies](#)

[Reading Coaches](#)

[Academic Coaches](#)



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FAQ

- I work full-time and have a family. How could I possibly volunteer?
- Don't you have to be a teacher to volunteer in the schools?
- What kinds of volunteer jobs are available?
- What happens if I am going to be gone for an extended period of time, i.e., snow birds, illness, etc.
- What do I do if the weather is bad or I am sick and can't go at my scheduled time? My time is precious.
- How can I be sure that volunteering is going to be worth my time?"
- I am looking to learn a new skill through volunteering. How can I find the right volunteer opportunity for me?
- What kind of leadership positions does volunteering offer?
- Can I try multiple volunteer jobs to see which one I prefer?
- Can I volunteer around my schedule?
- How can I be sure as a volunteer that I am making a difference?

Partnering with Business

- Organized sub group
- Brainstormed businesses
- Tier I and Tier II businesses

Ten Important Things We Have Learned

- There is a lot to do
- You can't do it alone
- You have to do research before taking action

- One approach does not fit all
- Committed Advisory Team is crucial
- Be much more creative in our thinking

- Be careful with language
- It takes resources—financial and people power
- Organizations are looking for ways to reenergize

Baby Boomers are looking for
answers

**WE CAN HELP THEM FIND
THOSE ANSWERS!**

Baby Boomer Website Address

[www.babyboomersinaction.
net](http://www.babyboomersinaction.net)

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