

Volunteer Power!

**How to Engage Volunteers
Year-Round to
Build Your Organization**

Presented by:

Helen Tjader, Barrington Land Conservation Trust

Stephany Hessler, Save The Bay

David Prigmore, The Westerly Land Trust

Today's Panel

◆ Helen Tjader

- More than 15 years of experience in leading environmental volunteers in RI.
- Past Chair of the RI Chapter of the Sierra Club and the Town of Barrington Conservation Commission.
- President of the Barrington Land Conservation Trust (BLCT) for the past 5 years. 30 year old land trust is an all volunteer local non-profit organization.

www.blct.org

Today's Panel

◆ Stephany Hessler

- Volunteer & Internship Manager at Save The Bay (STB).
- Experienced professional in marketing, promotion, and volunteer leadership.
- Took over the volunteer program when it was comprised of a core group of approximately 100 volunteers and a multitude of one-time participants. Save The Bay's Volunteer Program is now comprised of over 900 actively participating volunteers and groups year-round ranging from grade school students up to individuals in their late 80s.

Today's Panel

◆ Dave Prigmore

- Retired to Westerly and was recruited to volunteer with Westerly Land Trust's (WLT) land stewardship Clearing and Coffee Club (CCC)
- Three year member of the Westerly Land Trust (WLT) Board of Directors
- Serves as Co-Chair of the Land Stewardship Committee
- Dave has learned to work with a small and dedicated group of volunteers by making the program appealing and direct

Session Schedule

- ◆ Who are volunteers?
 - ◆ Where do we find volunteers?
 - ◆ Keeping volunteer engaged
 - ◆ Presentations by each panelist
 - ◆ Extended discussion
 - ◆ Share your volunteer experiences
 - ◆ Q&A
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- ◆ Today's presentation, handouts, links and more will be available online at the Land and Water Partnership website after today's conference.

Why We Need Volunteers!



- ◆ Volunteers are the core of most non-profit organizations
- ◆ Small non-profits may rely completely on volunteers to achieve their mission
- ◆ Every non-profit must recruit, nurture and engage volunteers – new and seasoned – for the future health of their organization

Goals for Your Volunteer Program

- ◆ Accomplish your organization's mission & program goals
- ◆ Grow & renew your organization
- ◆ Expand your membership & win their financial support
- ◆ Engage & educate your membership and the community
- ◆ Utilize volunteer hours for matching grants

Types of Non-profit Volunteers

Administrative Volunteers

Perform essential supportive and managerial tasks

- ◆ Board Members
- ◆ Officers
- ◆ Committee Chairs
- ◆ Finance
- ◆ Fundraising
- ◆ Recording
- ◆ Planning
- ◆ Governance
- ◆ Newsletter
- ◆ Mailing
- ◆ Website
- ◆ Membership
- ◆ Volunteer Recruitment

Program Volunteers

Perform essential tasks related to the mission

- ◆ Acquisition and Planning
- ◆ Stewardship & Stewardship Monitors
- ◆ Education
- ◆ Project Leaders
- ◆ Writers
- ◆ Outing Leaders
- ◆ Site Chairs
- ◆ Docents
- ◆ Special Event Volunteers
- ◆ Special Project Volunteers
- ◆ Restoration Volunteers

Types of Non-profit Volunteers

Ongoing Volunteers

Volunteers continue with the organization and projects

- ◆ Volunteer helps with mailings periodically
- ◆ Volunteer serves as Webmaster
- ◆ Volunteer serves as a Board or Committee Member

One-time/Sporadic Volunteers

Volunteers assist at one event or project only

- ◆ Volunteer serves twice a year as a Monitoring Steward
- ◆ Volunteer attends a cleanup or restoration project for a service requirement

Why Do I Need to Know Volunteer Types?



- ◆ Helps you outline your volunteer program and communicate your needs
- ◆ Determine volunteer interest and where they will be the most valuable to the organization
- ◆ Recognize commitment by your volunteers and find ways to keep them engaged
- ◆ Learn how to integrate sporadic volunteers into your program
- ◆ Increase volunteer numbers and turn sporadic volunteers into ongoing volunteers
- ◆ You can never have too many volunteers!

Getting Started...

- ◆ Review your current efforts, no matter how informal or inconsistent
- ◆ Consider which volunteers are most needed and focus your program to reach out to them
- ◆ Determine if you can build upon your current program or if you need to develop new volunteer committees and positions
- ◆ Recruit leaders first & then volunteers
- ◆ Develop a budget
- ◆ Plan how you will communicate with your volunteers and how often
- ◆ Research support services that are available to your organization that will help you increase your numbers and visibility in the non-profit volunteering sector

Use Your Local Resources

The Volunteer Center of RI

- ◆ www.vcri.org
- ◆ Non-profits can list ongoing and one-time volunteer opportunities at no charge
- ◆ Trained staff review and post information on your programs and help promote your opportunities in other outlets
- ◆ For an annual membership fee of \$150, members receive listings in the Providence Journal and local papers in addition to the website
- ◆ Members enjoy training programs year round at a discounted rate
- ◆ Volunteers gain access to all of your opportunities and can search by zip code, date, project type, skills needed and other variables you set!
- ◆ Email notification goes straight to you from interested parties

The screenshot displays the homepage of the Volunteer Center of Rhode Island. At the top, there are navigation links: "Subscribe to E-mail List | For Media | Privacy Policy | Site Map | Support/Donate | Contact Us". The main header features the organization's logo, a stylized heart with hands, and the text "Volunteer Center of Rhode Island" with the tagline "Connecting People and Opportunities". To the right is a search box titled "Find a Volunteer Opportunity" with fields for "Keyword(s)", "Zip Code", and a "do only" dropdown, along with "Advanced Search" and "Search" buttons. Below the header is a navigation bar with "VOLUNTEER LOGIN | REGISTER" and "AGENCY LOGIN | REGISTER". The main content area is divided into three columns. The left column contains a vertical menu with links: "ABOUT VCRI", "DONATE FOR VOLUNTEERS", "FOR NONPROFITS", "FOR BUSINESSES", "VOLUNTEERING 101", "FIND A VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY", and "EVENTS/NEWS". Below this is a "search the site:" field with a "GO" button and a "DONATE NOW" button. The middle column features a photograph of two people in winter gear, followed by a "Welcome!" message and a paragraph: "...and thank you for visiting the Volunteer Center of Rhode Island. We have hundreds of unique volunteer opportunities for you to consider. Volunteering is a way to give back and a great way to:" followed by a bulleted list: "Socialize & meet new people" and "Make business connections". The right column is titled "Search Volunteer Opportunities by:" and lists categories: "Member Agencies", "Board Opportunities", "Disaster/Crisis Response", "Internships", "Family Friendly", "Teen Opportunities", and "Court Appr. Opportunities". Below this is a "Featured Volunteer Opportunities" section with a link to "Family Selection & Partnership for So. Co. Habitat for Humanity" and the text "The invaluable volunteer chosen for".

The Volunteer Center of RI

How to Maximize your Reach

- ◆ Write detailed event and job descriptions and update regularly – Only those updated frequently populate at the top of the query search!
- ◆ Respond promptly to all inquiries by email and phone
- ◆ Track communications with potential volunteers
- ◆ Keep accurate lists of attendance for projects
- ◆ Members notify the VCRI of changes and results for your projects

Additional Local Resources

- ◆ Jobs in RI
 - www.jobsinri.com
- ◆ Girl Scouts of Rhode Island and Southern New England Boy Scout Troops
 - www.gsri.org
 - <http://sne.tripod.com/troopsri.htm#ri>
- ◆ Singles in Motion
 - <http://www.simo-ri.org/simportal/>
- ◆ Rhode Island Campus Compact
 - <http://www.compact.org/ricompact/resources/index.php>
- ◆ Local High Schools
- ◆ Local Churches, Temples and other religious organizations
- ◆ Local Businesses
- ◆ Natural News Network
 - www.naturalnews.net
- ◆ Land and Water Partnership
 - www.landandwaterpartnership.org

Additional Local Resources

- ◆ **Take advantage of area fairs and festivals to promote your organization and your programs**
 - Flower & Garden Show
 - Boat Show
 - Saltwater Fishing Show
 - Earth Day Fairs
 - Volunteer fairs at area universities and high schools
- ◆ **Consider participating in organized Days of Service**
 - National Family Volunteer Day (November)
 - Great Day of Service w/Beyond our Walls (October)
 - Roger Williams University's Freshman Orientation Day of Service (August)
 - Earth Day Events (April)
 - MLK Day of Service (January)
 - Make a Difference Day (October)
 - Join Hands Day (May)
 - National Youth Service Day (April)
 - My Good Deed (September 11)
 - Random Acts of Kindness Week (February)
 - Partner with other organizations who have similar missions throughout the year

Use National Resources To Get Noticed Volunteer Match

- ◆ www.volunteermatch.org
- ◆ Register for free as a non-profit and post an unlimited number of projects for free
- ◆ Post pictures to go with your project for a small monthly fee
- ◆ Add multiple zip codes for a small additional fee (Not necessary for RI projects)
- ◆ Receive e-mails from Volunteer Match on trends in volunteering, how to reach volunteers, keeping your programs exciting and more!
- ◆ Volunteers gain access to all of your opportunities and can search by zip code, date, project type, skills needed and other variables you set!
- ◆ Email notification straight to you from interested parties
- ◆ Volunteer Match continues to be one of the top rated national databases for volunteers to search for opportunities

The screenshot shows the VolunteerMatch website. At the top, it says "Made possible in part by The William Randolph Hearst Foundation". The navigation bar includes "Home", "Search", "Volunteers", "Nonprofits", "Corporations", and "My Account". The main content area is divided into two columns: "Volunteers" and "Nonprofits". The "Volunteers" column features a search box for "SEARCH OPPORTUNITIES" with fields for ZIP Code (02905), Distance (20 miles), and Interest Area (Everything). Below the search box is a "VolunteerMatch Corporate Solutions" section and a "Support VolunteerMatch" section with a piggy bank icon. The "Nonprofits" column features a search box for "Looking for a great volunteer?" and a "Need Volunteers?" section. Both columns include photos of people and links to "Read her story" or "Read his story".

Use National Resources To Get Noticed Idealist

- ◆ www.idealists.org
- ◆ Register for free as a non-profit and post your volunteer, internship and job listings (job listings do have a fee)
- ◆ Volunteers gain access to all of your opportunities and can search by zip code, date, project type, skills needed and other variables you set
- ◆ Site is extremely popular with college students and recent graduates
- ◆ Has open forums for members (volunteers and organizations) to post messages, pictures and hold conversations
- ◆ Offers Podcasts from professionals and volunteers on the latest trends in volunteering and various volunteer programs

The screenshot shows the Idealist.org website interface. At the top, there is a search bar with the Idealist.org logo and the tagline "Action Without Borders". To the right of the search bar are links for "Advanced searches", "Email alerts", and "Add your organization / group". Below the search bar is a navigation menu with links for "About Us", "Contact Us", "Languages", "Resources", "Help", "Imagine", "Post", "Find", "Spread Idealist", "Groups", "Forums", and "Donate".

The main content area is divided into several sections:

- The Blog:** Features articles such as "A Particular Profession" (discussing marginalized professionals) and "Graphic Design for a Better World" (discussing successful nonprofits).
- Navigation:** Includes links for "FIND", "POST", and "RECEIVE EMAIL ALERTS".
- Categories:** Lists various categories with counts, such as "Nonprofit Jobs (3,432)", "Volunteer opportunities (11,256)", "Organizations (73,548)", "Idealist Groups (298)", "Consultants (193)", "Internships (1,715)", "Programs (1,733)", "People (127,441)", "Volunteers (14,884)", "Materials (7,176)", "Speakers (3,347)", "Events (664)", "Campaigns (394)", and "Nonprofit FAQ".
- Recently Posted:** Features a post titled "Final Cut Pro Workshop" by Denver Open Media.
- Personal Profile:** Shows a profile for Peyton in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and another for Robert.
- New on Idealist:** Displays a section with "252,233 so far" and "See Latest Comments".
- Resources For:** Lists various user groups including "Community Action", "Job Seekers", "HR Managers", "Kids & Teens", "School Teachers", "Volunteers", "Volunteer Managers", "Nonprofit Managers", "Webmasters", and "College & University Students".
- Participate:** Includes a link for "Nonprofit Career Fairs".

Use National Resources To Get Noticed

- ◆ Charity America
 - www.charityamerica.com
- ◆ City Search
 - www.citysearch.com
- ◆ Craigslist
 - www.craigslist.org
- ◆ Guidestar
 - www.guidestar.org
- ◆ Planet Friendly
 - <http://www.planetfriendly.net/volunteer/>
- ◆ Servenet
 - <http://servenet.org/>
- ◆ Meetup
 - <http://volunteerism.meetup.com/>



Planning your Volunteer Project

- ◆ Choose your project, date & location
- ◆ Set your project leaders
- ◆ Make a plan for number of attendees
- ◆ Set your requirements for volunteers
- ◆ Inform local agencies or officials
- ◆ Decide where and how to promote the project
- ◆ Keep a detailed sign-up list
- ◆ Send reminders to volunteers
- ◆ Get your tools together

Get Your Projects Noticed

- ◆ Give your projects a creative name
 - “British Invasion – Sowams Woods” v. “Pull Up English Ivy – Sowams Woods”
- ◆ Write creative & positive descriptions
 - “Building on our work, we’ll focus on locating and cutting back invasive rugosa roses, rechecking bittersweet vines, and picking up any recent litter.”
- ◆ Be specific about needs & requirements
 - “Wear appropriate outdoor clothing and sturdy close-toed shoes. Bring your own sun & bug protection. Potential for poison ivy exposure. Please bring your own work gloves. Be prepared to get dirty and work hard.”
- ◆ Get them there!
 - Include specific directions to the location and on where to park. Include a map if possible to the meeting location.

Get Your Projects Noticed

- ◆ Timing is Everything!
 - List projects as far in advance as possible
 - 2 months – 6 weeks for stewardship projects, cleanups & habitat restoration projects
 - 3-6 months out for special events
- ◆ Picture It!
 - List project descriptions with photos of past events on your website to draw interest
- ◆ Don't Recreate the Wheel
 - Save all of your volunteer project descriptions and alerts to save time when you repost a project or repeat the project the following year

Host an Organized Event – Keep them Coming Back!

- ◆ Have multiple contacts for the day of your event
- ◆ Be sure to have a contact available in the days before your project; last minute volunteers are now the norm!
- ◆ Provide volunteers with a day of phone number for directions or emergencies
- ◆ Set specific instructions for weather
- ◆ Have all supplies out and ready to go – tools, drinks, snacks, trash bags, first aid kits, hand sanitizer, etc.
- ◆ Have a designated sign in area and/or person
- ◆ Give clear, easy to understand instructions
- ◆ Set a specific schedule for the day and stick to it!
- ◆ Be patient with new volunteers and help them understand the project
- ◆ Encourage volunteers to go at their own pace
- ◆ If volunteers are tiring early, end the project!
- ◆ Be available to sign any service requirement sheets
- ◆ Thank the volunteers!
- ◆ Stay until the last volunteers have left the site

Project Wrap-Up

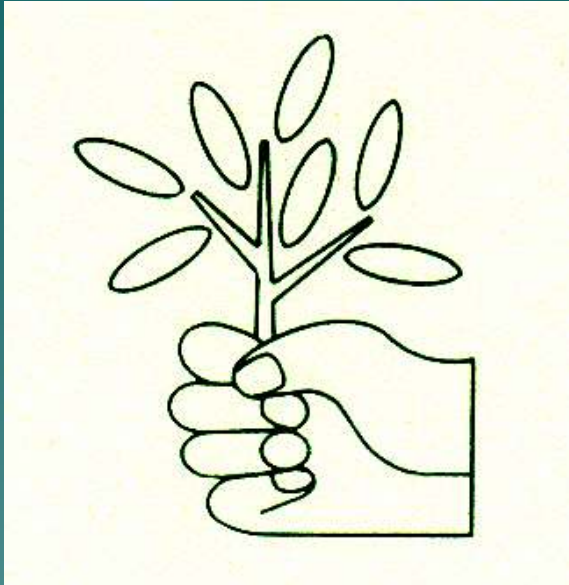
- ◆ Thank your volunteers
- ◆ Evaluate the project
- ◆ Determine next steps
- ◆ Ask volunteers for recommendations
- ◆ Document what your volunteers did
- ◆ Keep your volunteer lists!



Recognize your Volunteers!

- ◆ **Volunteer Appreciation Week (April)**
- ◆ **Annual Appreciation Party**
- ◆ **Volunteer Awards**
- ◆ **Public Recognition**
- ◆ **Thank Volunteers in Newsletters**
- ◆ **Volunteer Rewards Program**
- ◆ **Volunteer of the Month**
- ◆ **Birthday & Holiday Greetings**
- ◆ **Offer Opportunities**
- ◆ **Remember: Recognition is associated with Motivation!**

How We Do It...



- ◆ Active partner with the Land and Water Partnership
- ◆ Changing the face of the program
- ◆ Coordinate with other environmental organizations
- ◆ Use your local resources
- ◆ Flop & Success



How We Do It...

SAVE THE BAY[®]

NARRAGANSETT BAY

- ◆ Communicate with volunteers on a regular basis
- ◆ Post, Post, Post!
- ◆ Keep it flexible
- ◆ Integrate youth
- ◆ Create new opportunities
- ◆ Recognition is key
- ◆ Turn volunteers into members and donors
- ◆ Flop & Success

How We Do It...



- ◆ Rely heavily on volunteers
- ◆ Structured Stewardship Program
- ◆ Offer unique volunteer programs
- ◆ Communicate!
- ◆ Recruit
- ◆ Flop & Success

Volunteer Power!

