

Volunteer Resource Management

MINUTES

DEC 4TH ,2008

9:00 TO 10:00

CONFERENCE CALL

TYPE OF MEETING	Sharing approaches related to volunteer reward and recognition of volunteers
NOTE TAKER	Lori Bushway bushway@cornell.edu (Horticulture Department)
ATTENDEES	Anne Barlow alb326@cornell.edu (Clinton), Sue Gwise sjg42@cornell.edu (Jefferson), Vicki Jancef vhj3@cornell.edu (Orleans) Julie Marie Nathanson jmn86@cornell.edu (Warren), Sue Pezzolla sep37@cornell.edu (Albany), David Thorp <dlt8@cornell.edu> (Livingston), Laurie Jean VanNorstrand lju8@cornell.edu (Wayne)

Approaches to reward & recognition of CCE volunteers

Years of volunteer service

Most if not all Master Gardener Volunteer programs acknowledge years of service by their volunteers. Some focus on recognizing simply the first year others continue recognition at regular intervals.

Master Gardener Volunteer Recognition pins [click here for details on pins](#)

We now have lots of volunteers who have been with us beyond 20 years. We looked into getting another color pin but the set up was cost prohibitive.

In addition to the pins some offer additional gifts when volunteers' hours of services exceed a certain number (essential passing milestone such as accumulative hours over 250, 500, 750, 1000...). Some counties have had trouble with this approach as hours are harder to keep tabs on than years of service.

Some rewards beyond pins include: tradition MG logo items (aprons, totes, clothing...), pruning saw, gift cards at local garden centers.

Special Awards

- Friends of local county CCE
- Master Gardener of the Year 2009
- 100 hours or more in a year special certificate
- Other plaques or certificates for going above and beyond (possibly a county educators has a certificate template he/she is willing to share?)

Small tokens of appreciation

This might be given to all MGV who went above and beyond in a role or simple finish a project well or meet their minimum hours to stay active for the year:

- Thank you notes (end of a project or event, end of the year ...)
 - Might verbal at monthly meetings, be hand written to individuals, emailed, a part of a week in review email to all volunteers, a section in the MGV or county CCE newsletters...
- Yankee Garden calendar
- Local CCE calendar with programs highlighted each month
- Master Gardener flower pot mug or tote bag*
- Master Gardener stuff (Adminders www.adminders.com)

- Pocket Calendars with local CCE county number (also encouraged to use this calendar to record volunteer hours)

(* available at one point from Lori, all out now but can order more if a can get a larger order together. Or maybe **another item** ... pocket Master Gardener calendars for all your volunteers to record her/his hours in?)

Social Gathering

Most if not all Master Gardener Volunteer programs provide an opportunity for volunteers to get together socially to share a meal at least annually. These meals range from:

- summer picnic potlucks
- fall harvest potlucks
- holiday potluck party
- end of year meeting at local restaurant*
- holiday party/luncheon*
- annual MGV program banquet*
- annual entire county association (awards or volunteer) banquet* (*note that banquets for just the MGV volunteers tend to be attended by greater numbers than these more general banquets*)

*with catered meals some included a fee

Activities at meetings and social gatherings

Complete an educational game or activity with the volunteers such as

- jeopardy ([The Entomology Game](#) or [The Botany Game](#))
- holiday wreaths or swags
- flower arrangements
- small door prizes (for all in attendance)

These also are nearly universally successful:

- food
- continuing education opportunities

Telling our story/Sharing accomplishments

At end of the year meetings, parties or banquets a number of educators shared that a PowerPoint slide show of pictures (even with music) goes over well with volunteers and can serve as a record of program accomplishments.

Professional Development

Stipends to go to state MGV conference or other conference and workshops.

Special Volunteer Status

Albany has these special status roles do others?

Veteran level is achieved when volunteers given 12 years with at least the minimum hours of service (currently 60/yr). Perks comes with this volunteer status such as reductions in volunteer hours required down to just 20 hrs/per year but 10 of those hours must be staffing the phone lines answering questions related to gardening.

Emeritus level is achieved when a volunteers 20 years of service. With this status there are no longer any requirements. Volunteers can simply participate in just the social and continuing education activities though most continue to volunteer.

Dutchess also has Emeritus volunteers but they have the same requirements to maintain an active status.

Additional notes:

Funds to offer these rewards comes sometimes out of the program budget but can often come out of fundraising efforts of the volunteers themselves.

One resource for more information and ideas on volunteer recognition:
<http://www.energizeinc.com/art/subj/recogn.html>

ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Doing something that wasn't mentioned above please share with Lori (Bushway@cornell.edu)	County educators	ASAP
Note the special volunteer status section above. Please share if you have varying level of status within your volunteer program or if that has been done but disbanded? Send to lori (Bushway@cornell.edu)	County educators	ASAP

Next conference call will be about:

Volunteers leading public workshops: how you make it happen with success

Date: January

exact day and time to be determined soon please share preference for regular calls by visiting:

<http://surveys.cit.cornell.edu/Survey.aspx?s=e7200afee6894a60a6a8a99e3ae66cb3>

Other ideas for future conversations?

- Advisory Boards
- Plant sales and fundraisers