

Celebrating Volunteer Achievements

*The Connection between
Recordkeeping, Evaluation, Training, Recognition,
Recruitment, and Volunteer/Employee Relations*



Don't wait for an annual event to shine a light on accomplishments:

- ❖ Take photographs all the time and put them on agency bulletin boards, print them in newsletters, and post them to Web sites. A picture *is* worth a thousand words, especially if it shows diverse volunteers being active.
- ❖ Develop a "Volunteer Victory" alert form (on paper or via e-mail) and share successes as they happen. Include the names of supportive paid staff, too.
- ❖ Submit reports that pass the "So what?" test. Make sure the details are distributed to each department and to all volunteers themselves.
- ❖ Keep a continuous testimonial and comment log. Remember Susan's Maxim:

*Two people talking is a conversation. Several people talking is gossip. But recording the comments of many people talking is **data!***

- ❖ Ask for special notes on excellent volunteer management to be placed into employees' personnel records.
- ❖ Initiate a "sudden praise squad" that descends upon a person who just achieved something with attention-getting fun. Leave a consistent reward behind (special paperweight, framed medal, etc.).

Then, make use of the annual recognition event:

- ❖ Create award categories that celebrate accomplishments, not hours or longevity.
- ❖ Acknowledge and somehow involve volunteers who can't be present.
- ❖ Show the "year in review" in slides.
- ❖ Issue an annual report and include "did you know?" facts such as volunteers' professions, education, etc.
- ❖ Focus on letting volunteers, employees, and clients speak (you don't need outside entertainment!) about *impact*.
- ❖ Be an in-house educator, not a wedding planner!