



THE VANNO VOICE

APRIL 2007

We are pleased to bring you the April edition of the VANNO Voice -- your link to news and resources for Virginia's nonprofit sector! We encourage you to forward this valuable information to your colleagues, both inside your organization and throughout your community. You can also read past issues on the VANNO website at www.vanno.org.

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Nonprofit Congress Survey: Strategies for Action in Virginia

VANNO and the individuals who served as Virginia's delegates at the Nonprofit Congress last fall invite your participation in a brief on-line survey to determine the most critical specific actions to undertake in the year ahead.

This survey builds on input gathered during 7 "town hall" meetings held throughout Virginia in September 2006. At these meetings nonprofit leaders discussed challenges they face and the types of resources and strategies that are needed in order to help nonprofit organizations in Virginia operate more effectively and efficiently. The comments from these town hall meetings was then carried to the first national Nonprofit Congress in Washington, DC, where delegates from throughout the country reached consensus on major focus areas for the sector.

To participate in the survey (it will take 5 minutes or less of your time!), go to www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=148471536657.

National Volunteer Week: April 15-21

Sponsored by the Points of Light Foundation, National Volunteer Week is about thanking one of America's most valuable assets - our volunteers - and calling the public's attention to all that they do to improve our communities.



The 2007 theme is "**Inspire By Example**" because it truly reflects the power volunteers have to inspire the people they help, as well as, to inspire others to serve!

Download the free 2007 National Volunteer Week Toolkit at www.pointsoflight.org/programs/seasons/nvw/tools.cfm which will help you plan and publicize your recognition activities on the local, state and national levels.

National Volunteer Week began in 1974 when President Richard Nixon signed an executive order establishing the week as an annual celebration of volunteering. Since then, every U.S. President has signed a proclamation promoting National Volunteer Week. Additionally, governors, mayors and other elected officials make public statements and sign proclamations in support of National Volunteer Week.

Get Ready: Mail Rates & Regs Will Change May 14



mailing
large flats.

The US Postal Service has announced new rates and regulations which will affect nonprofits in a number of ways. While rates with the subcategories will vary depending on sortation and automation levels, a new category of mail could double the cost for nonprofits to send some front-end premiums. Nonprofit periodicals will also get hit with a large increase. Increases in Standard Mail Flats will be 30-40% which will force nonprofits to decide whether to continue

An average nonprofit postal rate hike of 6.7% will take effect May 14, while the new rates for periodicals are delayed until July 15. These changes are largely influenced by a shift to "shape-based mailing", meaning that postage is calculated more by the shape of the item than by its weight. It is based on what it is costing the USPS to handle and process your mail.

For more details, and great tips and tools for nonprofit mailers, visit the Alliance of Nonprofit Mailers website at www.nonprofitmailers.org/tools.html.

Two FREE Fundraising Resources



Nonprofit Genie is a free, excellent series of Frequently Asked Questions and answers about fundraising, written by the legendary fundraiser Kim Klein. Go to www.genie.org, then click on "FAQs" then on "Fundraising."

How to Succeed in Fundraising by Really Trying, a free 18-page guide of practical advice from philanthropist Lewis B. Cullman. Available as a free download from his website at www.lewiscullman.com.

Especially for Small Organizations

Great Boards for Small Groups: A 1-Hour guide to Governing A Growing Nonprofit, by Andy Robinson. Available at www.barnesandnoble.com or www.amazon.com.

FREE: Nonprofit Grant-Writing Seminars

April 24 - Loudoun County
May 1 - Fairfax City/County
May 3 - Loudoun County
May 7 - Prince William County
Dates TBA - Alexandria, Arlington and Stafford Counties

During the past three years, the Institute for Youth Development (IYD) has helped non-profit organizations win over \$133 million in grants! Now, IYD is offering grant-writing seminars in Virginia's Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, Prince William, and Stafford Counties, Alexandria, Falls Church, Fairfax City, Manassas, and Manassas Park.

Using the Federal \$50,000 Compassion Capital Fund Targeted Capacity-Building grant as a teaching model, the seminars teach techniques that will help anyone developing grant applications for government, private or foundation funders.

There is no charge, but a \$25 refundable "no-show" fee is required to complete registration.

Attendance is NOT limited to Northern Virginia faith-based and community organizations. Lunch will be provided. Representatives of any regional non-profit are welcome to attend.

IYD's 2007 Sub-Awards: In addition, IYD will hold a separate competition to award up to \$20,000 to seminar participants who work with at-risk youth in the areas listed, particularly those facing the risk of gang influence and involvement. Attendance at an IYD seminar is required to participate in the \$20,000 sub-award competition.

For more information or registration forms, please e-mail Joanne Jones at jjones@youthdevelopment.org. The \$25 'No-Show' registration fee will be refunded at registration.

2007 VA Conference on Volunteerism and Community Service

April 11-13, Holiday Inn Select Koger South, Richmond

An excellent opportunity to network with peers from across the state and learn how to maximize volunteer involvement in your organization. Complete details and registration now available at www.vaservice.org.

Tidewater Community College Class for Nonprofits

The Academy for Nonprofit Excellence will present the following class in April:

April 12 & 19, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Norfolk

Principles of Grantsmanship: Getting Key Funders on Board

This 101-level course will introduce key fundamentals for successful grant proposal development. For more details, contact Lillian Bailey at 757-822-1170 or visit www.tcc.edu/wd/academy.

April Philanthropy & Fundraising Classes



Below is the April lineup of Classes from the Institute on Philanthropy at the University Richmond. Don't forget that scholarships are available!

4/5 & 4/12 Market Research for Nonprofits

4/17 Successfully Navigating Support From Corporations

4/20 & 4/27 Major Gifts

Call Kathy Powers at 804-287-1290 or check out the website at <http://scs.richmond.edu/philanthropy> for further information and a registration form.

Hampton Roads Classes for Nonprofits



April 10, 9:00 am - Noon
Database Management with Microsoft Access

April 19, 6:00 - 9:00 pm
Board Builders: The Basics

May 1, 9:00 am - Noon
Planned Giving: What You Need to Know

May 8, 9:00 am - Noon
What Your Website Can Do For You

For details and to register, contact Kristen Nelson, Volunteer Hampton Roads, 757-624-2400 or knelson@volunteerhr.org or visit www.volunteerhr.org.

Fairfax Workshops on Volunteer Resources Management

Volunteer Management Boot Camp

April 10, 2007, 8:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

The basics of volunteer management: planning, recruitment, retention, supervision and more.

The Fine Art of Supervising Volunteers

May 16, 2007, 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

The concepts and techniques needed to build a positive, healthy climate for your volunteer team to ensure they have a fulfilling volunteer experience. Add supervisory skills and new, unique recognition ideas to your management tool box!

To register, contact Emily Gibbs at Volunteer Fairfax, 703-246.3460, ext.0

www.volunteerfairfax.org.

Issues & Legislative Developments for Nonprofits

An afternoon of discussion on issues, developments and legislation affecting nonprofit organizations.

May 23, 2007, 2:30 - 5:00 pm

Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, Richmond

No fee.

To register, visit www.mcguirewoods.com/events/nonprofits.asp or RSVP to Doreis Cole at 804-775-7741 or dcole@mcguirewoods.com.

If unable to attend, handouts may be obtained by sending your name, address, phone number and e-mail address to Rick Malek at rimal@erols.com or by calling 804-643-8058.

Sponsored by McGuireWoods LLP, Security Benefit and The Leaders Group, Inc.

Recycling Resource



The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency now offers an online listing of places to recycle or donate used computer and other electronic equipment. This website also provides useful links to other publications and information related to recycling. Visit www.epa.gov/epaoswer/hazwaste/recycle/ecycling/index.htm.

Branding the Volunteer Program

The corporate world loves to update and rename its concepts and, sooner or later, they filter their way into nonprofit and government management philosophy as well. A good example is "branding", the strategy of creating a "look" that instantly communicates an organization's identity and, hopefully, its valued characteristics. Often this starts with a redesigned logo, color scheme, tag line or slogan, and other graphic elements. An easy way to define branding is with this formula:

a specific look + key words + consistency of use = branding

The principles of branding can be put to use to raise the image of a volunteer program internally and externally. You may have a great deal of freedom in designing your own materials any way you want. However, if you are part of an organization that has already developed a visual presentation for itself as a whole, you will need to collaborate with those in charge to carve out a "sub-brand" for the volunteer program. For example, can you select one or more colors from the color palette defined in the brand and apply it exclusively to the volunteer program? Can you take an element in the organization's logo and incorporate it with a graphic twist into a symbol specifically for the volunteer program?

Whether you are starting fresh or working within an existing brand, here are your goals:

- To present an image of volunteer involvement that is modern, positive, and avoids stereotypes such as age or gender (for example, you will probably want to avoid the color pink).
- To immediately identify "this is being done by a proud volunteer in this program" -- both for those looking on and to instill pride in the volunteers themselves.
- To distinguish volunteer program materials from other documents prepared by other departments.
- To capitalize on the goodwill of the volunteer program's reputation.
- To catch the eye of those in a position to support the program, whether top executives, funders, the press, or anyone in the community at large.

The basic tools of a branding campaign are:

- A name (maybe have a contest to name the volunteer program!)
- A logo
- A color scheme
- Other graphic elements such as font or type style and color

Once you have these key tools designed and available, you use them everywhere, all the time (and make sure all volunteers do, too). For example, consider the wide array of printed materials you generate during the course of a year:

- Letterhead, business cards, memo forms
- Recruitment materials
- Volunteer application forms
- Orientation materials and training handouts
- Newsletters
- Blast e-mails
- Any postal mailings
- Sign-in sheets
- Thank-you notes

Make a banner you can use in recruitment presentations and at recognition events. Consider making buttons or t-shirts for volunteers to wear. Incorporate the logo and/or your colors into recognition gifts.

Finally, make sure your branding is recognized and used by the public relations/marketing department and the development/fundraising department whenever they are representing you to the public. For example, the look should be consistent on the volunteer program page of the organization's annual report, on the Web site, or in outreach to financial donors.

Source: Energize Volunteer Management Update, March 2007. Published by Energize, Inc., www.energizeinc.com

New Virginia Law re Inauguration Funds

HB 1977

requires that any leftover inauguration committee funding be returned to contributors or donated to charity. The bill was signed into law by Governor Kaine, effective July 7, 2007.

IRS News

The IRS is seeking public comment for the Form 990-N, a new return required for tax-exempt organizations with less than \$25,000 in gross receipts. For more details, visit <http://thefederalregister.com/d.p/2007-03-15-E7-4699>.

Publication 4589 depicts the telephone excise tax refund process for exempt organizations. See notice at www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p4589.pdf.

A new webpage outlines revised exempt organization tax rules as part of the enactment of the Pension Protection Act of 2006. Visit www.irs.gov/charities/article/0,,id=161145,00.html.

The **2006 Data Book** summarizes the activities conducted by the IRS between October 1, 2005 and September 30, 2006 and includes the number of tax-exempt organizations registered and the number of tax-exempt returns filed and processed. Visit www.irs.gov/taxstats/article/0,,id=102174,00.html.

VSCPA Offers Free Speakers on Financial Topics



Governor Kaine signed a proclamation recognizing the month of April 2007 as the first-ever "Financial Literacy Month in the Commonwealth to remind Virginia citizens about the importance of financial literacy. The proclamation was introduced by the Virginia Society of Certified Public Accountants (VSCPA) as part of a campaign to improve the financial health of all Virginians. It's also designed to encourage other Virginia organizations to make a difference in financial education.

Through its award-winning Financial Fitness program, the VSCPA provides CPA speakers all over the state to educate the public on wise money management and fiscal responsibility. Visit www.FinancialFitness.org for more information on the month and celebration activities, including the VSCPA's free financial literacy workshops. Or contact the VSCPA at 800-733-8272.

Selecting the Right Software



It's tempting to rush a purchase when you're struggling with poor or nonexistent software and doing lots of manual work. But you also want to make sure that what you're running **to** will be better than what you're running **from**.

Your chances for success improve if you gather a list of needs -- the "requirements" -- from the users who will support the software. This will help to ensure that everyone understands what software is best.

NPower of Greater DC region offers a simple checklist to help you consider the most important elements when considering a new software application:

www.npowergdc.org/resources/npower+requirements+checklist.pdf

Source: NPower of Greater DC Region, February 2007 newsletter

Common Press Release Mistakes

PRWeb.com offers this list of some of the most common errors encountered in media releases. Remember: You do not get a second chance to correct the negative impressions left by a poorly written release.

All Upper Case Characters - Never submit a press release in all upper case characters. The headline and body of your press release should be in proper case.

Grammatical Errors - Even the best writers occasionally miss grammatical errors and typos. Please proof read, edit and reproof your press release. Obvious errors are easier to catch when composing your release off-line. Never compose your release during the submission process.

Lack of Content - We reject about 10% of all press release submissions for lack of content. Oddly, authors are particularly guilty of short press releases. (We assume that if authors can muster enough words to fill 300 pages they should be able to come up with a 300-400 word press release.) Please make sure that you answer all of the "W" questions, who, what, where, when, why and how to ensure a complete press release.

Press Releases that Scream BUY ME! - Do not write your press release like an advertisement. Remember that journalists are NOT your marketing partners. Their job is to relay information to their audience, not to sell. A good press release informs the media. If your press release screams, BUY ME, then you might want to consider reworking your release.

Hype Flags - This is a close cousin to the BUY ME problem. If your press release contains too many "hype flags" it will trip spam filters and intercept your press release before it reaches its destination. A "Hype Flag" is anything that challenges the credibility of your press release. Examples of "Hype Flags" include an abundance of exclamation points or wild product and service claims.

Funny Characters - On occasion, strange characters and formatting can creep into your press release during the submission (copy & paste) process. Make sure that your press release is formatted as you intended.

Word Wrapping - Do not break each line at 70 characters. Let your sentences wrap naturally. Please do not place a hard carriage return at the end of each line. Include a carriage return only at the end of each paragraph.

Incorrect Usage of E-mail - This plagues about 30% of all press releases. Use a role account instead of a personal account. A role account is pr@companyname.com. A personal account would be pat@companyname.com. Using a role account allows you to redirect e-mail to someone who can respond while you are on vacation. After all, you do not want to miss valuable media contacts. You never want journalists to receive a message telling them that you are unavailable during the week because of your high school reunion or business convention.

For additional tips on writing press releases as well as a sample template, visit www.prweb.com/pressreleasemistakes.php.

Just For The Fun of It



Looking for some fun cartoons for your newsletter or other publications? Take a look at [Planet 501c3](#), a cartoon that pokes fun at life in the nonprofit sector. It is written and drawn by [Miriam Engelberg](#), along with ideas and suggestions from CompassPoint staff and many others.

The two popular compilations of cartoons, [They Came from Planet501c3](#) and [Planet501c3: The Next Generation](#), are only available through CompassPoint's bookstore at www.compasspoint.org. A great gift for co-workers or Board

members!

Publicize Your Training Events Here

Remember to use VANNO's website calendar and monthly newsletter as a way to publicize training events you are offering. Many nonprofit staff and volunteers are willing to travel 1-2 hours in search of high quality professional development, so you may very well attract attendees from beyond your local community. Send your announcements to info@vanno.org, or call 804-794-8689.

Email: info@vanno.org
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Web: www.vanno.org

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