Volunteer of the Year 2010: Thelma “Tede” Johnson

Thelma “Tede” Johnson, who has contributed more than 12,000 hours to the Virginia Living Museum in Newport News since 1988, is AAMV’s Volunteer of the Year for 2010. While these hours and years show an impressive commitment, it is the quality of her work and her innovative ideas that set her above the other amazing candidates AAMV considered for this honor.

Tede has volunteered throughout the museum. She conducts a story time on the third Saturday of every month, represents the museum at off-site festivals and fairs, and works with live animals—from owls to tarantulas—for programs and storytelling. Tede was instrumental in creating the popular monarch butterfly exhibit 20 years ago. She also donates artwork to the museum for use in brochures, holiday ornaments, and coloring sheets for children. An active fundraiser, she chairs the Volunteer Fundraising Committee, which generated $100,000 for the museum over four years. The wine-tasting event she helped to create is still an effective annual fundraiser.

“We are so fortunate to have Tede in our museum family,” says executive director Page Hayhurst. “Many visitors know her and look for her and the Great Horned Owl, one of her favorite animals to interpret, when they visit. Her expertise and artistic talent have had an incredible impact on our mission to connect people to nature.”

Martha Dimpel, administrative assistant in Volunteer Services, explains that Tede is “the ultimate volunteer. She is truly a unique and exceptional woman who enriches the lives of everyone who has the pleasure to know her. Her dedication, enthusiasm, love of learning, and respect for nature all come across to people in a dynamic way that draws them into her conversation and plants the seed for a...”

continued on page 11
From the President

2009–2010 in Review

Each year I am asked to prepare a report for the American Association of Museums (AAM) of which AAMV is an affiliate member. I hope it might be useful to include some of the information from this report as an introduction (or re-introduction) to AAMV and what it does.

The aim of AAMV since its founding in 1979 has been to support volunteerism in museums through an exchange of ideas and information that engages both volunteers and paid staff who work with them. While our newsletter has long been the main way AAMV communicates information, in recent years we have taken advantage of new technology to broaden the conversation with members. We organized two sessions for the AAM annual meeting in May 2010: “Talking Shop: A Roundtable Discussion for Volunteer and/or Docent Managers” and “Creating a High-Impact Docent and/or Volunteer Program.” During the past year AAMV members were also engaged in sessions at conferences of the Florida Association of Museums, Western Museums Association, Western New York Association of Historical Agencies, Texas Art Education Association, and California Association of Museums.

During the past year we have continued to promote the book we published in 2007: Transforming Museum Volunteering—A Practical Guide for Engaging 21st Century Volunteers. As an organization AAMV is often called upon to define “standards” for museum volunteer programs, but we have found that the diversity of volunteer programs and of museums themselves makes this an impossible—and probably unwise—goal. However, we feel that our book describes “best practices” that any museum can use to guide the development of their volunteer programs. This past year a board subcommittee worked on a marketing challenges, and training staff to effectively work with volunteers, just to name a few recent examples. The more voices that join in these conversations, the better, so if you need help in getting onto the listserv, do not hesitate to contact Linda Apple: LApple@mfa.org.

AAMV has also engaged its members and nonmembers in stimulating exchanges through participation in local, regional, and national conferences and workshops. While we have hit some potholes, we are working hard on our new website (www.aamv.org) so that it will be a source of news and information.

One area of growth in the exchange of ideas and information has been the AAMV members’ listserv (in operation just since 2006). A wide variety of topics have been addressed, ranging from volunteer recruitment techniques, appropriate use of social networking, and exit interviews, to putting together great tours, meeting holiday scheduling

continued on page 3
initiative, and in January 2010 we sent a mass mailing to a select list of addresses not only to promote our book, but also to build membership. Preliminary results suggest that we attracted some 25 new members each month in 2010. We are very pleased to welcome you.

In the past year we also initiated an AAMV Volunteer of the Year Award. From among the excellent candidates, we selected a winner who was honored at our members luncheon and annual meeting at the AAM annual meeting. You will read about Volunteer of the Year Tede Johnson in this newsletter issue (see page 1). We invite you to nominate exceptional volunteers in your museums for the 2011 award.

Thanks to our board member Maretta Hemsley-Wood from the Smithsonian Institution’s National Air and Space Museum, AAMV was also an active participant in AAM’s Museums Advocacy Day in Washington, D.C., to speak out on behalf of museums.

With this issue, we have a new AAMV Newsletter editor: Ellen Hirzy. This name should sound familiar to you since Ellen is the author of Transforming Museum Volunteering. We are fortunate to have her on board, and we know she will continue the excellent quality established for the newsletter by her predecessor Connie Pirtle.

Looking ahead, we have two challenges: time and visibility. Whether we are museum docents or full-time paid staff at a museum, every AAMV board member has limited free time to contribute to our organization. The AAMV board has also felt frustrated with the low profile volunteerism seems to have within AAM, despite our efforts to get the attention of this national organization for museums. Given the important role volunteers play in museums and the need for professional management for volunteer programs, the relatively small place given to volunteer-related topics at AAM conferences, on its website, and in the pages of its publications disappoints us. (See page 10 for an opportunity to comment on a recent AAM report about changing museum demographics.) As we continue to build our membership and promote communication within AAMV, we invite your involvement, your ideas, and your voice to promoting and supporting the important role of volunteerism in museums.

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AAMV Newsletter

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This newsletter is a quarterly publication of the American Association for Museum Volunteers, the nonprofit membership and service organization dedicated to the millions of volunteers in all categories of museums in the United States and to the professionalism in museum volunteer program management. AAMV welcomes submissions of manuscripts for publication. Queries should be made to the President. Information about AAMV’s other services is available at www.AAMV.org.
Heard on the AAMV Member Listserv

Q: At our museum, all volunteers go through an orientation session along with training for their specific positions—including customer service, if they are working with the public. I would like to add a component of customer service training to the all-volunteer orientation. What type of customer service training, if any, do you provide for your volunteers?

A: • A two-hour class given by the Visitor Services staff, required for all new volunteers
• On-the-job training by staff supervisors, who give volunteers feedback and help them solve problems through experience
• Four- to five-hour customer service seminars for all volunteers that include presentations on effective techniques and small-group role-playing exercises
• Training provided free of charge by the state tourism department (the museum is a tourist attraction)
• Required three-hour training programs for front-line staff and volunteers, custom-designed for the museum and facilitated by in-house staff trainers; training is recommended for other staff and volunteers


Transforming Museum Volunteering—written for volunteer program managers, volunteers, and the staff who work closely with them—stimulates creative thinking about finding, training, supervising, and supporting volunteers in a changing environment. Its nine chapters include practical information on everything from “Staffing the Volunteer Program” and “Measuring Success” to “Recruiting, Selecting, and Placing Museum Volunteers.” It concludes with a discussion of “What’s Ahead for Museum Volunteer Programs,” with action steps for the future. The book’s “Toolkit” section contains sample forms to use in your museum. Purchase your copy for $29.95 at www.authorhouse.com, or visit the AAMV website at www.AAMV.org for more information and a link to purchase the book.

Newsletter Ideas Wanted

Do you have an idea for an AAMV Newsletter article? Have you read a book, article, or blog post that you think your colleagues would enjoy? Or can you think of topics we should cover in upcoming issues? We’re always looking for ideas like these:

• Innovative practices in museum volunteer programs, from big-picture leadership issues to routine everyday tips
• Volunteer trends from throughout the nonprofit sector

• Opinion pieces about volunteer practices in museums
• “Lessons learned” stories about how you have solved particular problems in your museums
• What you have been reading—online and in print—about volunteerism and volunteer program management

Share your ideas with Ellen Hirzy, newsletter editor: ellenhirzy@gmail.com; 202-544-3998.
Museums face strong competition for the time and commitment of busy people. The choices and demands of family, work, and leisure make it difficult for people to carve out hours to volunteer, even when the cause is something they believe in and enjoy. If you can create a program with clear benefits and a variety of challenging and satisfying opportunities, you will attract a range of qualified volunteers. In preparation for this talk, I reached out to different museums to find out how they handle volunteer recruitment. One of the most valuable tips I received was from the Workman and Temple Family Homestead Museum in City of Industry, CA: “Our best recruitment strategy is our product.” Seems like common sense, right? Well, maybe not. You may have an excellent museum with a great collection and inspiring programs, but that doesn’t necessarily mean that your museum is equipped to handle the intake of volunteers.

Getting Started
Before recruiting, have the following plans and materials in place:

- A volunteer program mission that supports the museum’s mission
- Volunteer position descriptions that include specific time and experience requirements, as well as an outline of duties
- Tangible and intangible benefits of volunteering (such as shop and café discounts, museum membership, and social opportunities)
- Volunteer policies and procedures
- Information and training materials, including a volunteer handbook
- Recruitment materials, including a volunteer section of the museum’s website

Museums had these four tips for getting started:

1. Decide which areas of your museum need volunteers (Royal Ontario Museum). Make sure you have institutional support, especially from the top down.
2. Know what you want your volunteers to do, and identify the right people to do it (Maxwell Museum of Anthropology, University of New Mexico). Screening and interviewing candidates is an important process.
3. Present consistent program offerings (Dumbarton House, Washington, DC).
4. Set professional standards that apply to all potential volunteers (Workman and Temple Family Homestead Museum).

continued on page 6
Who Recruits?
A 2008–2009 survey of 50 museums by the Orange County (CA) Museum of Art asked who has responsibility for volunteer recruitment and whether the same person supervises volunteers. In nearly half of the museums (48.8 percent), paid volunteer program staff handle recruitment (volunteer services manager, volunteer coordinator, or docent manager). Paid staff in education, public programs, membership, and building management also recruit volunteers, as do volunteer staff. In most cases, volunteers have supervisors in their specific work areas. At the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, we do it both ways. A volunteer services manager recruits for the entire museum, but individual departments supervise volunteers. I recruit and oversee the docent corps.

Strategies and Sources
The next step is to think about what your recruitment strategy will be and where you will recruit volunteers. My research for this presentation confirmed that for most museums, the best strategy is word of mouth: “Our volunteers really believe in the program and are dedicated to educating our visitor population” (Tribute WTC Visitor Center, New York). “Our current staff and volunteers best know what is required, and they speak with the most enthusiasm about the programs” (National Gallery of Art, Washington). Referrals from current volunteers are an equally popular strategy.

About two-thirds of the museums I consulted rely on their institutions’ website. About one-quarter use other online recruitment methods (such as Idealist.org, VolunteerMatch.org, Craigslist, and college and university websites), the museum newsletter, and local or major newspapers. Other sources include military open houses, flyers posted in public places, and career or volunteer fairs. Only a small fraction use radio.

The least effective recruitment strategy varies, sometimes depending on the community. The National Museum of Wildlife in Jackson Hole, WY, was the only museum for which paper recruitment was more successful than online: “We are a relatively small community, and everyone reads the local newspaper.” Living History Farms in Urbandale, Iowa, says that talking to community groups generates good publicity for the museums but yields few new volunteers. Volunteer fairs at colleges and universities do attract students, according to the Burchfield Penny Art Center at Buffalo (NY) State College, but few have genuine interest in making a commitment.

Online recruitment gets mixed reviews. “Looking through general listings based on tag lines and a listing database does not translate to connection to an organizational mission,” says the Chabot Space & Science Center in Oakland, CA. “Though it’s a good place to see what’s out there, it is too impersonal and too easily satisfies someone’s half-hearted attempt at volunteering.” Other museums—including the Shedd Aquarium in Chicago and the Smithsonian Institution—have found great success with online recruiting. The choice boils down to knowing your community and the resources that potential volunteers use most often.

Use your current volunteers, regardless of age, to champion for you in the community.
—National Museum of Wildlife Art, Jackson Hole, WY

Framing the Message
Before launching a recruitment effort, the volunteer program needs a clear and inviting message that encapsulates the role volunteers play in the museum. The message is a communication tool that is used to market volunteer opportunities. It should answer these questions:

• How do volunteers (front-line and behind the scenes) contribute to the visitor’s experience?

• Why does the museum value volunteers? What do volunteers do that staff can’t do?

• What types of volunteer opportunities are available?

• Who can volunteer?

• What benefits do volunteers receive?

• What do volunteers say about their experience?

The least effective recruitment strategy is giving up on an organization. When you are not getting through to someone, find a different contact and continue to pursue a relationship.
—Tribute WTC Visitor Center, New York
Targeting Recruitment
Museums use creative efforts to recruit specific volunteer audiences. For retirees, they market opportunities through senior centers, libraries, and local chapters of associations for retired teachers. Working adults respond to project-based or one-time opportunities with finite time commitments. Participation in ethnic festivals and ethnicity-specific career events held by organizations, churches, and local governments helps reach diverse populations. Campus-based recruitment—online and through career offices or relevant academic departments or programs—works for college students. Design recruitment methods to suit your museum’s needs and your community’s characteristics, keeping in mind that success depends on multidimensional strategies.

Selection and Placement
“Know specifically what you need volunteers to do and identify the right people to do it,” says the Maxwell Museum of Anthropology. “Ask rather pointed questions during their interview, and check references!”

A typical selection process includes the following steps:
- Information gathering. No matter when you recruit, collect contact information for prospective volunteers year-round.
- Application
- Interview. You can conduct individual interviews, group interviews, or both. Involve other volunteers in the process.
- Background checks. Conduct checks through the HR department. Consult the local police department in smaller communities.
- Placement. Match volunteers’ strengths and interests to available opportunities.

When selecting volunteers, learn when to say “no.” The purpose is not to recruit warm bodies. Remember that numbers aren’t everything. Appointing a volunteer who is not a good fit with the job or the institution can create more trouble than it is worth.

For more information on creating a high-impact program or streamlining your existing volunteer program, check out AAMV’s book Transforming Museum Volunteering, available at www.aamv.org.

Estimating the dollar value of volunteer services is one way to communicate the level and impact of community support a museum receives through its volunteers. But the wisdom of assigning a monetary value to volunteer contributions is debatable. Various systems exist for defining the true dollar value of a volunteer’s services. The risks of doing so, however, include creating the erroneous impression that some volunteer positions have greater worth than others and damaging the case for hiring enough paid staff.

According to Independent Sector’s annual estimate, the value of a volunteer hour reached $20.85 in 2009, up 60 cents from 2008. Many organizations use a method developed by G. Neil Karn, which involves matching a salaried job category with every volunteer assignment. Never use the phrase “volunteers save us money,” cautions Susan Ellis. “A better and more accurate way to make the same point would be that volunteers allow you to spend every cent available and then do more. Or, volunteers extend the budget beyond anything you could otherwise afford.”

Quantifying the value of volunteer contributions to a museum could actually conceal their real, qualitative value—helping visitors feel welcome, facilitating learning, caring for collections, and other mission-related outcomes. Jayne Cravens recommends shifting the conversation to qualitative language by describing how volunteer involvement helps educate the community about what...
Engaging Boomers and New Generations

The new volunteer workforce—including boomers and succeeding generations—has different expectations than the volunteers who preceded them. The Minnesota Association for Volunteer Administration reviewed current research and developed these 12 best practices to engage the wealth of resources that these volunteers offer.

1. Help your organization start with the understanding and expectation that everyone in the organization will need to be open to a new way of doing business.

2. Understand volunteers’ deep-seated need to have impact and use that understanding in all facets of how you involve them as volunteers.

3. Focus the volunteer interview on learning the prospective volunteer’s passions, mutually designing his/her volunteer role and helping the volunteer determine if your organization is the right place to realize the impact he/she wants to have.

4. Offer a wide choice of volunteer opportunities in all aspects of the organization’s operations.

5. Include some short term and seasonal volunteer positions to align with current volunteer availability.

6. Offer skills-based volunteer opportunities to maximize what volunteers can bring to the organization.

7. Develop volunteer position descriptions that are engaging and show impact.

8. Move volunteers into project leadership roles. Be open to project ideas that volunteers propose.


10. Reframe traditional volunteer supervision to leading volunteers and offering collegial support. Identify high potential volunteers and cultivate them to take on additional responsibility.

11. Also reframe volunteer recognition to respond to the value current volunteers place on having impact and being life-long learners.

12. Be an instigator for these organizational changes. Identify your champions for change. Use focused conversations to obtain buy-in. Start small in a part of the organization open to innovation and then market the success with colleagues in other parts of the organization.

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Learn more:
David Eisner, Robert T. Grimm Jr., Shannon Maynard, and Susannah Washburn, “The New Volunteer Workforce,” Stanford Social Innovation Review, Winter 2009; www.ssireview.org/articles/entry/the_new_volunteer_workforce. Nonprofit leaders need to expand their vision of volunteering by creating an experience that is meaningful, develops skills, demonstrates impact, and taps into volunteers’ abilities and interests. The authors recommend six steps nonprofits can take to make sure their volunteers are engaged, rewarded, and satisfied enough to stay.

Alana Conner, “The Volunteer Boom,” Stanford Social Innovation Review, Summer 2009. DePaul University sociologist Christopher J. Einolf says that contrary to popular belief, baby boomers are volunteering more than their elders. Cultivate 50-something volunteers now, he recommends, to ensure their involvement in retirement.

Education volunteers check in before a busy day at the High Museum of Art in Atlanta. (Photo by Jennifer K. Liu)
## Attendance Up, Funding Down

Attendance at most American museums increased in 2009 despite a year of financial stress for museums and economic hardship for many of their visitors. In a January 2010 survey conducted by AAM, 57.4 percent of institutional members reported an increase in total attendance, with similar increases reported by museums of all types, all budget sizes, and in all regions. Half of museums reported a decline in total revenues in 2009, with investment income showing the most significant decline. Twenty-seven percent reported an increase in revenue.

Museums offered a variety of reasons for attendance growth, including:

- More aggressive local marketing, including marketing to school groups
- The “staycation” phenomenon, as people seek less expensive, close-to-home options for spending their time off
- New or special exhibits with high appeal
- The relatively low price of museum admission compared to movies or other forms of entertainment
- The belief that museums are a respite in times of economic uncertainty

The AAM survey report—*Service Despite Stress: Museum Attendance and Funding in a Year of Recession*—revealed an overall financial picture that is better than expected, given the general state of the economy. Three factors help explain why:

- An improvement in market conditions since the fourth quarter of 2008
- The resilience of many museums, especially those that have developed a robust mix of revenue streams
- Increases in personal donations, admission income, membership dues, and other earned income.

## Volunteers in Collection Care

Volunteers in London museums have sewn labels into textile items, helped staff pack objects for storage, updated object databases, and more—all evidence that volunteers can play a vital role in supporting collection care and conservation. Renaissance London, a partnership of London Museums Hub and MLA London, has published *Working with Volunteers in Collection Care*. Aimed at museums that have not involved volunteers in these behind-the-scenes responsibilities, the guide includes benefits, best practices, and museum case studies. Download it here:


A volunteer cleans and rehouses chimp bones at the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology at Harvard University.

## Blogs to Browse

The blogosphere is filled with musings about nonprofits, including volunteer program management. Add these blogs to your feed reader, and let us know about your own favorites so we can share them with AAMV members.

**Alexandra Collie**

Volunteer management and administration blog from New York Nonprofit Press.

**D. J. Cronin**

Volunteer manager D. J. Cronin blogs from Australia about volunteer management issues and concerns.

**From the Field: Conversations on Volunteer Management**
**Volunteer Maine**
[www.volunteermaine.org/blog/](http://www.volunteermaine.org/blog/)

Recent posts consider personal empowerment for volunteer managers, volunteer performance appraisals, and volunteers with disabilities. Featured bloggers include a museum volunteer coordinator: Jamie Andrew of the Children’s Museum and Theatre of Maine.

**Jayne Blog**

Jayne Cravens blogs about volunteering and other nonprofit management topics. Recent posts explain the best way to use “mega-recruitment” sites like Volunteer Match and how to screen volunteers for positive attitude.

**Strengthening Nonprofit Organizations**
**J. F. Fixler & Associates**
[www.jffixler.com/blog](http://www.jffixler.com/blog)

Consultant Jill Friedman Fixler’s blog has a strong focus on volunteer engagement.

**Wendy Biro-Pollard**

Biro-Pollard’s blog has a section on volunteer management.
Changing Demographics and Museums

Museums in the United States could fall short of a “preferred future” of benefiting all segments of society. Based on current audience makeup, which remains less diverse than the U.S. population, museums could serve an increasingly narrow fragment of the public. A new report from AAM’s Center for the Future of Museums (CFM) explores the implication of current trends and the story behind them. Why do some groups have a track record of not using museums? What can museums do to become a vital part of the lives of people they don’t serve now? What more do we need to know in order make strategic use of museums’ existing resources to change course?

Demographic Transformation and the Future of Museums, prepared for AAM by the Cultural Policy Center at the University of Chicago, summarizes current research, presents case studies, recommends improvements, lists online resources, and concludes with a call to action. AAM is seeking comments and guest essays; contact Elizabeth Merritt, emerritt@aam-us.org. Since the report does not explore implications and possibilities for the volunteer workforce, AAMV members should respond with ideas and feedback.


Converging Trends in Nonprofits

Interest in civic engagement and volunteering is on the rise, according to a recent report from the James Irvine Foundation, Convergence: How Five Trends Will Reshape the Social Sector. The five trends are demographic shifts; technological advances; networks enabling work to be organized in new ways; rising interest in civic engagement and volunteerism; and blurring of sector boundaries. To navigate change, nonprofits will need to stay attuned to these trends as they engage in a collective rethinking of what it means to be an organization, how individuals define their work, and how best to compete and partner across permeable boundaries.

Nonprofits can capitalize on the growing interest in volunteering by

• expanding the vision of volunteering and creating opportunities that take advantage of the tools and options available for cost-effective labor and strategic assistance;
• matching volunteer recruitment, management, and recognition efforts to the motivations of an increasingly diverse volunteer pool;
• engaging volunteers in meaningful work that leverages their skills and interests, treating them as partners rather than just another set of hands; and
• seeking and involving a wider range of people—volunteer and paid staff, full time and part time—with varying degrees of commitment.


Volunteering Increases in 2009

Despite difficult economic times, the number of Americans volunteering in their communities jumped by 1.6 million last year, the largest increase in six years, according to the annual Volunteering in America report from the Corporation for National and Community Service. The study found that 63.4 million Americans volunteered through a formal organization in 2009, giving more than 8.1 billion hours of volunteer service worth an estimated $169 billion.

Arts, humanities, and cultural organizations are not a distinct category in the study, so the report is not useful in describing where, how, or how much people volunteer in museums. Relevant categories include sport/arts (3.5 percent of volunteers), educational (26.6 percent), and other (6.9 percent). The Volunteering in America website (www.volunteeringinamerica.gov) does include other helpful research and information.
Volunteer of the Year continued from page 1

At 81 years young, Tede lives her motto: “I want to die young—as late in life as possible!” Interviewed by a local newspaper about the award, she said, “The legacy that I would like to leave behind is the knowledge I instilled in my children to love and respect nature. It’s the most important thing to me.”

AAMV was pleased to receive nominations for a number of exceptional museum volunteers, and the decision to name just one Volunteer of the Year was difficult. Several nominees stood out.

We were impressed by the role John Gonyo plays as a mentor to new docents at the Liberty Science Center in Jersey City, New Jersey. Since the museum’s opening 17 years ago, John has shared his passion for science and learning with museum visitors of all ages and with staff who are inspired by his commitment and knowledge.

We were moved by the work of Marguerite Christman, who serves as a visitor guide and fundraiser for the Oklahoma City National Memorial and Museum. With a sister who survived the 1995 bombing of the Murrah Building and another relative who did not, Marguerite knows firsthand the impact this event had on her city and neighbors. She takes seriously the responsibility to educate people on the meaning behind this terrible event and to teach young people that hatred and violence are not the ways to solve problems.

Among the nominees was a volunteer who demonstrated excellence in critical behind-the-scenes office tasks. Darlys Meyer has volunteered in the Human Resources office of the Minnesota Children’s Museum for eight years, bringing both skills and commitment to a less glamorous but truly critical museum role.

The deadline for 2011 Volunteer of the Year nominations is March 1, 2011. For criteria and forms, visit the AAMV website, http://aamv.org/aamv2010.html. For more information, contact Karen Kennedy Fink, AAMV mid-Atlantic regional director, kfink@constitutioncenter.org.

Volunteer Time continued from page 7

your organization does; creates support for your organization; reflects your mission; helps your organization reach demographic groups that might not be involved otherwise; creates partnerships with other organizations; enhances your organization’s public visibility; and demonstrates community ownership.

Steven Dugan, volunteer coordinator at the Workman and Temple Family Homestead Museum in City of Industry, CA, has come up with a successful compromise that incorporates both quantity and quality: estimating a monetary value for volunteer work and sharing it informally within the museum as a reminder of the importance of volunteer staff. “While we don’t use the numbers for any official reason,” Dugan says, “I usually make a mention of the figure at our yearly Volunteer Appreciation Dinner to let the volunteers know how valuable and valued they are.”

Two viewpoints on valuing volunteer time:


What is AAMV?

There are more than one million volunteers and volunteer program managers in all categories of museums in the United States. Founded in 1979, the American Association for Museum Volunteers (AAMV) is America’s only national association dedicated to the paid and unpaid museum staff who work together. AAMV is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization.

Who are AAMV members?

We are volunteers, docents, and paid museum staff who bring a wealth of experience and ideas in promoting volunteerism in museums and in starting or improving museum volunteer programs. We welcome members from zoos and aquariums, botanical gardens, historic houses, and other cultural organizations with an educational mission.

What does AAMV do?

- Promotes professional standards of volunteerism
- Provides a forum for the exchange of ideas and information
- Offers opportunities for continuing education through panel discussions and workshops at local, regional, and national conferences
- Encourages volunteers and volunteer program managers to become familiar with projects and programs both locally and nationally
- Informs and supports museums and volunteerism in advocacy for legislation at the local and national levels
- Accomplishes these goals in cooperation with museum directors, staff, and boards of trustees

Membership benefits

- Participation in a vibrant members-only listserv
- Quarterly newsletter
- Access to information to create and sustain a museum volunteer program
- Opportunities to take part in workshops and presentations at state, regional, and national meetings
- Access to state and regional representatives as well as a nationwide network of volunteer management professionals and experienced volunteers
- Advance notice of AAMV publications, such as Transforming Museum Volunteering, plus workshops, presentations, and meetings

Become an AAMV Member Today!

Name ___________________________ Institutional Affiliation ___________________________ Date __________

Mailing Address ___________________________

Phone ___________________________ Fax ___________________________ E-mail ___________________________

Volunteer ☐ Staff ☐ Title (if staff) ___________________________ Department ___________________________

Check here if you would like to be added to the listserv ☐

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

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Make checks payable to AAMV. (Membership by PayPal is available online at www.aamv.org.)

If you have any questions about your membership send an email to Kristi Cotner at kcotner@nbm.org.

*Allows 3 individuals from same institution access to AAMV listerv

**Individual membership plus $65 deductible contribution

Send membership applications to: AAMV, P. O. Box 9494, Washington, DC 20016