**Library Volunteer Manager Peers - Notes**

**10-28-20 1:30 EST**

**Host: Wendy Johnson, Indianapolis Public Library**

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Hello, Friends!

As I was compiling this week’s notes, I was taken by the number of virtual/off-site opportunities that we listed. I remember in April and May when we were frantically trying to figure out how (or if) we were going to engage virtual volunteers. Now our conversation is normal and calm as if we were discussing volunteers who do the pull/pick list. Of course there are a few bumps in the road with technology, staff acceptance, and volunteer recruitment, but when don’t we face those issues? “Kudos!” to everyone for their flexibility and creativity.

Take care!

Wendy

Meetings will be held every Wednesday at 1:30 EST for an hour until further notice. We’ll use the same meeting link each week. Please share the link with fellow library volunteer leaders…the more smart people the better.

Zoom:  <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85199850785?pwd=WHorb3h2ckgvZjhZT1BOVWxEMzhlZz09>

Not-so-secret Access Code: Volunteer

Please add/check/update your contact information on our shared Google doc. <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/19blg00lShuMShHK2ab1TGeiK6kYqGfpvxz8qO9F8nnM/edit?usp=sharing>

**Topics Discussed**

Good/Bad Opportunity for volunteer

In today’s current climate, there are more one-off requests for opportunities that volunteers haven’t done in the past. Like handing out Chrome books/hotspots/iPads or doing the door count. How do we identify (and help staff identify) opportunities that are suitable for volunteers?

* Pilot what you think will be okay. Give yourself permission to adjust or stop the activity. You’ll have an end date that will help frame the experience for everyone.
* Test the activity out on your own. Or better yet, ask the requesting staff member to test the activity out. This will help them identify what the job description will look like (if they want to move forward), educate them on the role, and work out any kinks.
* Utilize tried and true volunteers who will be flexible and honest about the role.

Bringing Volunteers back

* If you have documents for your “plan” to bring volunteers back, please send them to Liza (and Carla) (Anything that's been presented to your library leadership or managers?)
* Sensitive time – staff re-assignments and furloughs, union
* Phased approach
* Circulation initiated the request for volunteers to return – armed with a photo of the overflowing drop boxes – they made a request to Leadership to invite circulation support volunteers back.
* Only invited back volunteers with a certain # of years, self-starters, and knowledgeable in first wave
* Management restricted the number of days when volunteers could be in-house (days with the lowest staff schedule), volunteer shifts are 2 hrs and only 2 volunteers per shift
* Branch capacity is driving the number of volunteers permitted
* We have moved to virtual only volunteers. Our adult volunteer numbers are down because it’s difficult for us to place them but our teen volunteers are consistently high.
* We are getting ready to open the Friends bookstore and have an outside book sale so contacting Friends volunteers who are very eager to return.
* Continuing to engage group volunteers after hours for packet assembly
* Example 1: What did the library need
  + Drop box sorting
  + Wipe down carts/books in public spaces with books that have been touched and put the books in shelving order
  + Summer reading prize distribution
  + Collate kits and hand them out in the parking lot weather permitting (otherwise indoors), limited the number of volunteers doing this task
  + Children’s section only open on weekends so material would have a week to quarantine
  + Home delivery is adding 30-40 new volunteers – program is rapidly expanding
  + Continuing to engage group volunteers after hours for packet assembly
* Example 2: Small single branch
  + Highest need is processing new material and putting covers on books
    - Moved this team away from staff area into a closed meeting room, created separate workspaces with plenty of distance
  + Shelving volunteers are now returning
  + Reorganized cart locations in public spaces to offer better distancing

Citizen Scientist Update (Kimi)

* Small attendance for 2 on-line introduction sessions, but more are viewing the recordings
* City Nature Challenge, <https://citynaturechallenge.org/>
  + 3-4 days in late April/early May
  + Uses iNaturalist app
  + Started in 2016 with 2 cities; 2020 244 cities participated
  + Kimi has signed up for 2021

Capacity in open systems

Are you hitting your max? Generally the group isn’t seeing max capacity.

* Our max is 150 customers and we've only reached that once. We average about 40 or so at any given time. 80 is a great day!
* We can have a capacity of 500+; our board set our capacity at 250. We are starting to hit 100+ (since July). We use volunteers for capacity counting in our Youth dept. (cap. 35).
* We have 50 per hour and have had up to 40, but usually around 25. Most still doing curbside.
* Our max capacity for patrons is 20 at any given time, but we have never reached that capacity.
* Our hold pickup service is sooooo very popular. We put the books in bags in our vestibule and patrons just pickup. They don't even come inside.

Virtual / Off-site Volunteering

* Co-hosting zoom meetings
* Digital transcription
* Tutoring – adult literacy
* Creating Book lists
* Volunteer are craving take-home projects
* Cabin fever – want to get out of house
* Literacy tutors have been volunteering throughout because it was easy to move them to on-line
* Success converting in-person to virtual: Coffee & Kids – a conversation for parents with volunteers (retired teachers) about resources for helping kids. They now meet every-other week on-line and are asking lots of questions about how to help with curriculum while kids are schooling from home. (Ann)
* Not so much: Resume help. Running into a barrier with IT posting patron’s resumes. Working through the bumps.
* Learning circles – co-lead by college students who need service hours
* Tech coaches – patrons used to visit in-person with volunteers who helped with phones, tablets, etc. Now patrons signup for a 1 hour appointment and meet with the volunteer on-line
* ESL – in-person has gone virtual
* We've had good success with having teens write book/movie/album reviews and having older volunteers be their editor. We 'publish' their review in our weekly volunteer newsletter.
* Our library offered volunteer virtual programs beginning in June with 2 volunteers offering bi-weekly Mind Your Yoga programs. We also have volunteers that are veteran homeschool Moms help the Director and myself with our Community Connection presentations, virtual volunteer oversees the Library Book Club, and Teen Council co-chairs work with a staff person. We hope to offer a Homework Club in January.
* Question: What will happen to these opportunities when we “get back to normal”? Will they be converted back to in-person, stay virtual or become some form of a blended hybrid?

Miscellaneous

* Charlotte, NC is renaming a branch due to the racist nature of the namesake: Morrison. New name will reflect the geographic location: South Park. They are also examining the archives for racially insensitive content.
* We touched on retention – The 5 ways to measure retention document from United Way of Central Indiana was included with email.
* Mask reminder:
  + We have a script, which we haven't had to use a lot (scootch the mask up). We say it once, then contact security.
  + We have volunteers doing door counting. If a customer comes in without a mask, they ask if the customer has one and offers one to those who do not. If a customer walks in anyways, the volunteer contacts Security to deal with it. Volunteers who are not comfortable doing this simply do not do the role. I have several regulars who do this role.

**Resources and Training Opportunities**

* Volgistics National Peer Group – on-line – 2nd Tuesday of the Month – free!

FMI contact Jessica Link, [linkj@crlibrary.org](mailto:linkj@crlibrary.org). Recordings are available.

* CVA Study Group, Marcia ([Marcia.hale@hillsboro-oregon.gov](mailto:Marcia.hale@hillsboro-oregon.gov)) is going to host/lead a CVA study group for anyone who is interested. More about CVA: <https://cvacert.org/>
* MAVA – Minnesota Association of Volunteer Administration Virtual Conference. Redefining Volunteerism: Dismantling Inequities. Nov 16-18, Registration fees up to $350. If you’re attending let Liza know. <https://www.mavanetwork.org/content.aspx?page_id=22&club_id=286912&module_id=405568>
* Join the GetInvolved list serve by emailing Carla, [clehn@califa.org](mailto:clehn@califa.org). Great information and current updates.

**Future Topics**

* Volunteer Managers that run tutoring programs/ homework helper programs that are staffed by volunteers (Becky)
* Top reasons when we know something isn’t going well. (Chauna)
* Skilled based volunteers – CatchAFire (Kate)
* Circle Back for updates:
  + Citizen Scientists – Kimi
  + University of North Carolina – Charlotte (UNCC) Class Project Update – Chauna
* Encore topics:
  + Reinventing our programs
  + Diversity and Inclusion in our volunteer programs