**Library Volunteer Manager Peers - Notes**

**12-2-20 1:30 EST**

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

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Hello, Friends!

This week our main conversation revolved around some insights and thoughts from the MAVA Conference on diversity, equity and inclusion. It’s clear as I assembled the notes, that we have a lot of questions about how to break down barriers to volunteerism within our libraries while still keeping checks-and-balances in place. I appreciate everyone’s participation and our ability to continue to have an open honest discussion in a safe space. I know that I personally and professionally have some work to do – I’m glad you’re on this journey with me.

As always, take care!

Wendy

Note correction from 11-18: Fresno, CA - curbside. Nov 13 soft opening 10 branches opened 1 day a week on Fridays. Dec.1 these locations will add Tuesdays. Other branches will open on Tuesdays.

**Holiday Schedule:**

* + Yes, we’ll gather on Dec 23. Eggnog and Reindeer Games.
  + No meeting December 30th. Happy New Year!

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>

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**

Secret Santa for book sales

Since we had to cancel our December sale, IndyPL is trying something new in the book store: Secret Santa gift giving. For $20 which includes shipping, the gift recipient receives 3 items (books or DVD/BluRay). Here’s how it works:

* The foundation sent an invitation to our Friends inviting them to engage the services of Santa’s Elves to do book shopping for them
* The shoppers follow a link to an order form (build in SurveyMonkey, attached). The order form contains the shopper’s contact info, the person they would like to gift, and some details about the gift recipient (reading level, preferred genre and anything special about the request).
* The orders are fulfilled by book store Elf volunteers. (They are loving this!)
* Then an Elf calls the shopper to confirm that we have the materials requested (or offers an alternative) and collects payment over the phone (Credit card or PayPal).
* An adorable gift tag is added to the order and it is shipped.



MAVA Conference Overview: Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

This week’s discussion was very freeform as we each address Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in our respective programs. Tammy and Wendy J. recounted their experiences as conference attendees. Here are some of the highlights.

* We learn, we unlearn, and then we can relearn.
* It doesn’t have to be mission focused vs. diversity focused. They can coexist.
* There has to be true staff buy-in, not just half-hearted agreement.

# “The man who views the world at 50 the same as he did at 20 has wasted 30 years of his life.” Muhammad Ali

* An Ally vs. an Advocate. An Ally walks next to/or behind, lending voice and resources. An Advocate is arguing for a group, person or cause. What does Allyship look like to you?
* Fairness does not equal equity
* We cannot change people, but we can inspire them.
* Micro-aggression occurs both intentionally and accidental, it causes trauma “like dying from a million paper cuts”
* Proximity makes it easier to emphasize, to understand
* No “One Right Way” with Lisa Joyslin of MAVA
  + Who are best practices for? Best practices often do not work well for the very community being supported.
  + Is it best practice or “we’ve always done it this way”
  + Best practice can be a barrier: in volunteer on-boarding, recruitment, goal setting/impact measurement, background checks, volunteer training process…
  + Rediscover creativity – Throw away the box – It’s holding us back from what could be
  + Is there a place for informal volunteering in your organization? Example: BLM protests weren’t organized with a volunteer coordinator, application and handbook. A citizen called for action.
* What is your organization’s culture?
* Aren’t best practices put in place to protect from harm – brand, reputation, staff/volunteer/patron? Or should we say, “fear of harm”.
* There has to be a way to eliminate barriers while balancing “fear of harm”. Should the checks and balances be placed not at the beginning of a volunteer’s involvement, but at different steps along the way? Smaller steps, building trust, entry is easier. What is the minimum threshold to open the door to volunteers?
* Could we have a program for volunteers, 3-6 months long, sample various opportunities, learn about the library, be partnered with a fellow volunteer mentor for volunteer activities, and celebrate the class’ graduation.
* Could we offer a brown bag lunch n learn (monthly, quarterly) to share volunteer news, training, and build community among the volunteers?
* What do volunteers need – what’s in it for them? We agree that we will see a bubble of volunteers coming from the high levels of unemployment – job seekers.
* What are the challenges in our community and how can we assist in addressing them through volunteerism? Example: Summer of Discovery (like a summer reading program) for teens addressed the need for teens being employable. The program retooled and focused on job skills, interview practice, etc.

Resources – just a few referenced during the MAVA conference and our discussion:

* Points of Light webinar on "MOVING FORWARD: TAKING ACTION ON RACE AND EQUITY": <https://www.pointsoflight.org/listen-learn-act-to-end-racism-november-2020/>
* Points of Light Community. Jessica’s not sure if the link will work, but the article is by Lisa Joyslin and is titled "Volunteerism Best Practices: Not Best for Everyone" so you can search for it if you're in that community. <https://community.pointsoflight.org/posts/volunteerism-best-practices-not-best-for-everyone?access_token=c3a278dae189f2bc&utm_source=digest_mailer&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=daily_digest>
* Power, Privilege, and Volunteerism, by Sue Carter Kahl, 6/9/20 <https://www.volunteercommons.com/2020/06/09/power-privilege-and-volunteerism/?fbclid=IwAR2Fz3Oc6U50iqi1-TxOYy4P7tB3owGtviN70jVu3W8I6ysCp_yLI-Nni2w>
* Recognizing Racism in Volunteer Engagement, By Lisa Joyslin, 6/19/20 <https://mava.clubexpress.com/content.aspx?page_id=5&club_id=286912&item_id=55066&fbclid=IwAR0KzTcG6CBoUpMqK9uknPahRE1IBlYCBM3BbCFVC49WWqMZU5ORUPcq-vg>
* McClelland Human Motivation Theory. Information that answers, in part, the question “what’s in it for the volunteer?” Achievement, Affiliation, or Power/Influence.

**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/>
* Join the GetInvolved list serve by emailing Carla, [clehn@califa.org](mailto:clehn@califa.org). Fabulous resource with samples, current news & updates.

**Future Topics**

* Top reasons when we know something isn’t going well. (Chauna)
* Circle Back for updates:
  + University of North Carolina – Charlotte (UNCC) Class Project Update – Chauna
* Encore topics:
  + Reinventing our programs