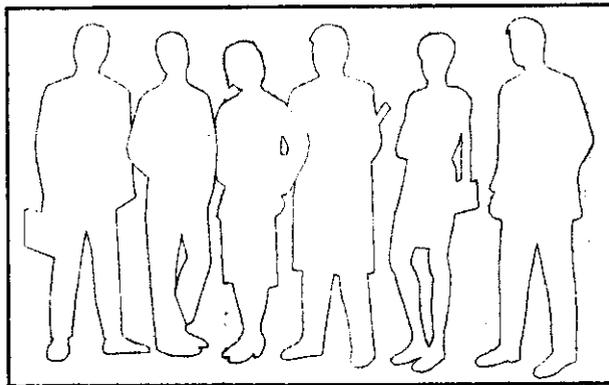


FORTY-SOMETHING,

THIRTY-SOMETHING,

TWENTY-SOMETHING...

**ALL
DOING
SOMETHING**



**A Report on the
Baby-Boom Generation
and
Volunteerism**





"Baby boomers are our biggest group, and they're searching for the meaning of life now, more than other generations. They've tried marriage and liberation and now they're looking for roots. Giving and volunteering have always provided Americans roots in their communities."

*"Please Give Generously, Okay?"
American Demographics (June 1988)*



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We wish to acknowledge the following for their efforts to foster and enhance the involvement of the baby-boom generation in achieving United Way's mission:

United Way of America
Board of Governors Volunteer Involvement Committee
Task Force on United Way and the Baby Boom
1989-1990

Paul M. Ostergard, Esq., CitiCorp
Chair

Ms. Angela Abelow

Ms. Paula Banks
Sears, Roebuck Foundation

Mr. Alan S. Cooper
United Way of America

Mr. Jack C. Costello
United Way Services (Cleveland)

Mr. Joseph Cox

Ms. Patricia M. Kopf
Aetna Life and Casualty

Ms. Midge Gnau Saint
American Express Company

Mr. Lynn Mapes
Partnership for a
Drug-Free America

Mr. Everett G. McDonough, Jr.
Security Pacific Corporation

Ms. Anne Ford Scarborough
National Center for
Learning Disabilities

Ms. Bonnie Tabb
Microsoft Corporation

Thanks also to all of the local communities who so generously shared information about their programs and initiatives. Their names, addresses, and phone numbers are included in Section III.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>SECTION</u>	<u>CONTENTS</u>	<u>PAGES</u>
	ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	ii
I.	INTRODUCTION.....	1
II.	ELEMENTS OF SUCCESSFUL VOLUNTEER INITIATIVES FOR BABY BOOMERS.....	7
III.	BABY BOOMER VOLUNTEER INITIATIVES: A SELECTION OF PROGRAMS.....	11
IV.	THE BABY-BOOM GENERATION: A DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE.....	31

SECTION I

INTRODUCTION

Across the nation, a growing number of volunteer programs and initiatives are successfully engaging baby boomers in addressing a wide array of community needs. The purpose of *Forty Something, Thirty Something, Twenty Something...All Doing Something* is two-fold. First, it will dispel the myth that baby boomers are affluent, self-focused, and uninvolved in community service. The statistics on baby boomers and volunteerism included here are impressive, and show that a *higher* percentage of baby boomers volunteer than the percentage of American adults overall. *Section IV* provides a demographic profile of this intently-studied generation that will challenge many commonly held notions.

Second, this report will offer concrete information and ideas on the development of volunteer programs targeted specifically at baby boomers. *Section II* outlines the elements of some of the more successful baby boomer volunteer initiatives, and *Section III* includes examples of volunteer programs and initiatives from across the United States that have effectively involved members of this generation. Professionals in volunteer management tend to be especially enthusiastic about creating constructive means to share their ideas. Toward that end, readers are encouraged to use the information in *Section III* to network with peers, both locally and across the country, to enhance their volunteer programming for baby boomers by sharing challenges, success stories, and creative ideas.

The Baby-Boom Generation

It is tricky business to attempt to extrapolate universal truths about baby boomers, the 76 million Americans born after World War II, between 1946 and 1964¹. First, baby boomers represent nearly a third of the total population and 43 percent of the adult population in the United States. Second, this generation spans almost two decades, a broad enough spectrum that demographers often split it in two — the older and the younger "waves."

By virtue of its size alone, the baby-boom generation is a unique phenomenon. It is the largest generation in American history. As such, baby boomers have posed continual challenges and opportunities to those seeking to meet their needs. For example, they placed a tremendous strain on the educational system as they entered elementary and high school, but were a boon to college enrollments later on. More recently, baby boomers have faced an exceptionally competitive labor market, both due to economic hard times and to their sheer numbers. As the leading end of the baby-boom generation

nears middle-age and retirement, hosts of new issues will emerge in areas such as health care, consumer marketing, and the leisure industry.

Despite endless scrutiny and analysis, however, misperceptions about the baby-boom generation abound. The term "baby boomer" itself is sometimes taken as synonymous with "yuppie." The entire generation is often perceived to be affluent and self-focused, clouding the truth that baby boomers are actually committed volunteers and generous givers.

Baby Boomers and Volunteerism

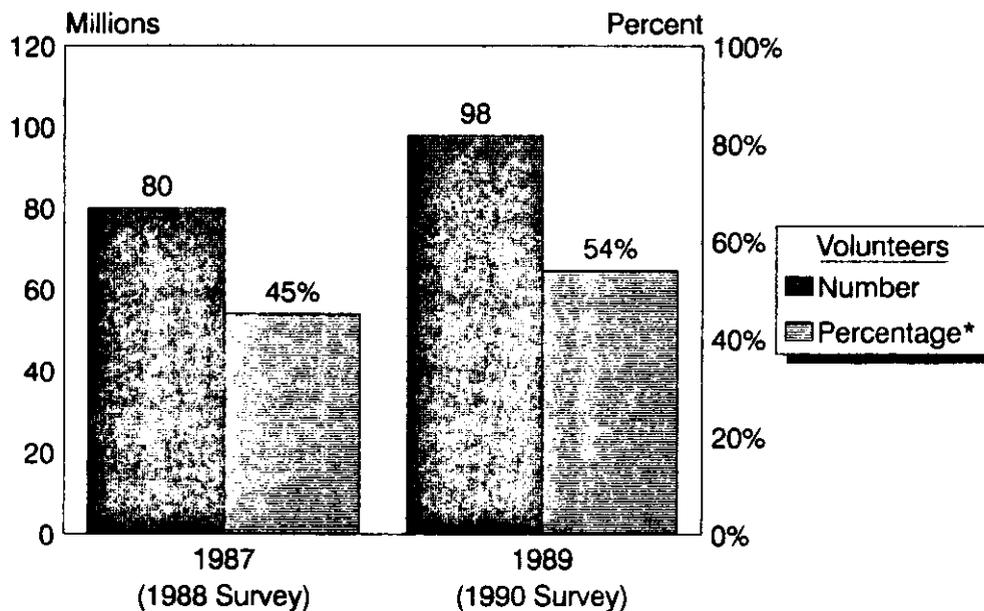
Although commitments to family and jobs predominate the lives of most baby boomers (see *Section IV* for more details), increasing numbers of this generation are becoming involved in volunteering. The second in a series of biennial surveys conducted by the Gallup Organization for the Independent Sector, the 1990 edition of *Giving and Volunteering in the United States — Findings from a National Survey*^{*} found that baby boomers were among the *only* groups in America for which dramatic increases in volunteering and giving have been observed.

On the opposite page are graphs that compare the data from the 1988 and 1990 Independent Sector surveys. Note that between 1987 and 1989, the percentage of adults in the United States who volunteer increased from 45 to 54 percent. In comparison, the percentage of younger baby boomers (the 25-34 age group) who volunteer increased from 45 to 62 percent, and the percentage of older baby boomers (the 35-44 age group) who volunteer increased from 54 to 64 percent during this same time span. Not only does a higher percentage of baby boomers volunteer than the adult population at large, but in the case of younger boomers, there was an even more dramatic increase in this percentage.

Baby boomer volunteers also match or exceed the total adult volunteer population in average *number* of hours volunteered per week. Younger baby boomers volunteer an average of 4.1 hours per week and older baby boomers an average of 4.6 hours per week, compared to an average of 4.0 hours per week for total adult volunteers.²

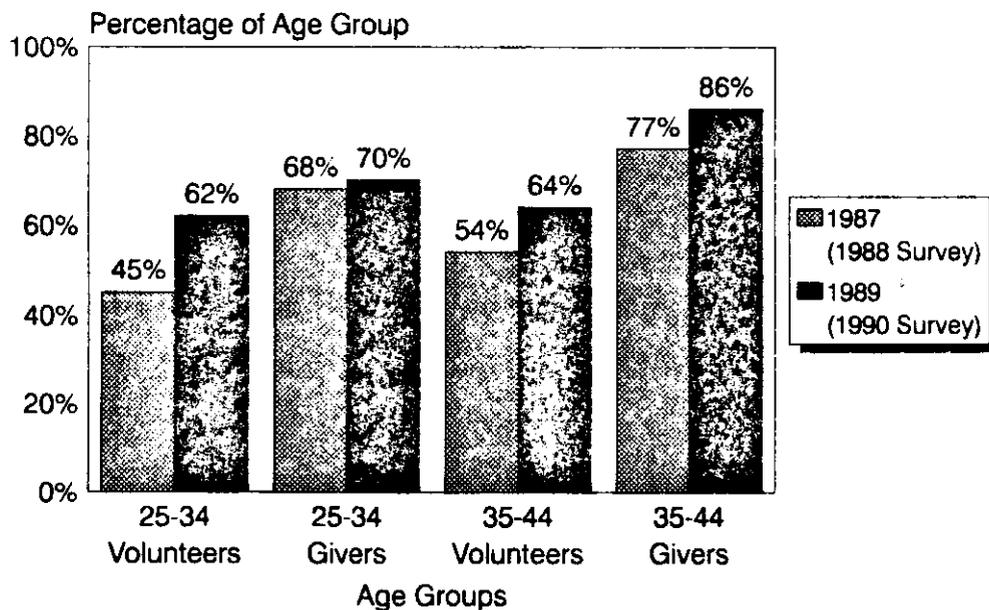
^{*}This survey measures both *formal* and *informal* volunteer activity, defined as follows: formal volunteering involves regular work with an organization; informal volunteering involves helping neighbors or organizations on an ad hoc basis, such as babysitting for free or baking cookies for a school fair.

Number of Adult Volunteers Jumps 23 Percent



*Volunteers as a percent of the adult population

Baby Boomers Increase Their Giving and Volunteering



Data Source: *Giving and Volunteering in the United States* (1988 and 1990 surveys). Conducted by the Gallup Organization for Independent Sector, Washington, D.C., (202) 223-8100.

What are some factors involved in the decision to donate time or money? Both Independent Sector surveys found that:

- People are *much more likely* to volunteer if directly asked.
- Volunteers are much more generous givers than non-volunteers.
- Religion plays a major role both in patterns of volunteering and giving.

For instance, people are *nearly three times more likely* to volunteer if directly asked to do so. Further, volunteers give nearly three times more in charitable contributions than non-volunteers. This represents a significantly higher percentage of household income — 2.6 percent versus 1.1 percent for volunteers and non-volunteers, respectively. The 1990 survey found, once again, that people who regularly give to and volunteer with their religious institutions are the leaders in giving to and volunteering with all causes.³ According to Virginia Hodgkinson, vice president for research at Independent Sector,

*"The sole institution that teaches the habit of giving in our society is the congregation. If religious membership goes up, volunteering goes up."*⁴

The two most common ways that people first become volunteers are by being asked by someone to volunteer and through participation in an organization. The majority of baby boomers and non-baby boomers alike that are asked by someone to volunteer are asked by a friend. Likewise, a large majority of volunteers who learn about their volunteer activities through participation in an organization do so through their religious institutions.⁵

Universally, the top four reasons given for first volunteering and for *continuing* to volunteer, are:

1. "Wanted to do something useful."
2. "Thought I would enjoy the work."
3. "Family member or friend would benefit."
4. "Religious concerns."⁶

What Next?

Since it began in 1946, the baby boom has presented demographers with many surprises. In fact, according to demographer Calvin Beale, "not a single established demographer [predicted] the baby boom" itself.⁷

There is a wealth of information now known, however, about the lifestyles, attitudes, and choices of this generation. There is no doubt that baby boomers will continue to be studied, evaluated, and monitored, as they will continue to impact virtually every aspect of the American experience.

Professionals in the field of volunteer management can certainly benefit by being better-informed about who baby boomers are and how their lifestyles and interests are evolving. As market researchers and advertisers have long realized, the potential of tens of millions of people acting in even just a few respects as a cohesive group is an enormous resource.

For attracting baby boomers to volunteerism, opportunities abound. Although many baby boomers have been bombarded for the past 40 years with messages about toys, colleges, cars, houses, careers, and myriad consumer goods, the message of volunteerism will be fresh and, in many cases, welcome. As baby boomers approach middle-age and their senior years, volunteer opportunities designed to match their needs and interests today could foster a profound commitment to volunteer service among this enormous group well into the future. As evidenced by current trends, this seems a golden opportunity — one well worth planning for. Says Independent Sector president Brian O'Connell,

"The dramatic increase in donating time and money among the baby-boom generation is good news for today and may suggest even better news for the future as this very large population group assumes community responsibility... These increases, plus the group's changing attitudes and values reflected in the study make the picture for giving and volunteering in this country very bright." ⁸

SECTION II

ELEMENTS OF SUCCESSFUL VOLUNTEER INITIATIVES FOR BABY BOOMERS

What are the key factors in attracting and involving baby boomers with volunteering? From the examples of baby boomer-focused volunteer initiatives and the demographic information about this generation included in this report, the following elements seem fundamental to building and sustaining a successful baby boomer volunteer initiative. It should be noted that a number of the elements mentioned below are not unique to baby boomers, but apply to many other groups of volunteers as well. However, these are at the heart of successful programs.

Clearly defined mission statement, goals, and objectives:

- Targeted at baby boomers' unique needs.

Effective promotion:

- Recruitment with direct, personal "asks," including word-of-mouth communication among peers.
- Group projects and individual opportunities for businesses and other organizations with a large number of baby boomers.

Well-designed communication mechanisms:

- Frequent mailings (newsletters, calendars, reminders, invitations, etc.) containing brief, readable information.
- Social-oriented events and meetings, with opportunities for networking.
- Effective means of securing volunteer feedback, including a process to identify and/or create projects with input from volunteers.

Flexibility:

- Varying length of commitment, varying frequency of participation, and availability of one-time opportunities.
- A "come when you can" attitude, with a last-minute cancellation option.

Easy and convenient participation:

- Easy-to-access sources of information on upcoming opportunities, with a simple system for participating.
- Projects are close to home, work, or religious institution. Assignments begin and end on time.
- Weekday morning, evening, and lunchtime opportunities, as well as weekend, holiday, and vacation options.

Meaningful, results-oriented, hard work on critical issues and well-recognized needs:

- Potential to bring about change and to help shape the community.
- Opportunities to share special skills and talents.
- Leadership cultivation, to make volunteer work a vehicle for those seeking greater involvement.
- Work meets both the community's *and* the volunteer's needs.

Enjoyable, rewarding, and varied work:

- FUN projects, opportunities that emphasize the joy of giving, and a combination of social aspect with worthwhile and important work.
- Variety of issues: illiteracy, drugs, AIDS, or homelessness, for example.
- Variety of target groups: infants, youth, seniors, homeless, the disabled, and others.
- Different types of interaction: one-to-one, group activities, technical, or administrative, recognizing that not everyone is comfortable with "direct service."

Family opportunities:

- Husband/wife, or parent/children volunteer "teams."
- Volunteer assignments for children.
- Day care available at project sites.

Learning opportunities:

- A chance to develop new skills, or to apply and further develop existing talents.
- Opportunities to learn more about the community, agency programs, specific issues, or even a new career.

Team spirit and a sense of identity:

- A solid social element — both in the projects and in activities outside the projects:
 - Opportunity to meet others with similar interests and backgrounds.
 - Opportunity for single adults to meet other singles.
 - Special events, parties, picnics, etc.
 - Team-building activities.

Meaningful and frequent recognition:

- Formal (events, awards) and informal (photo, name in newsletter, personal thank-you).
- Steady reinforcement of the importance of volunteers:
 - Information about urgent, critical community needs.
 - Evidence that volunteering has a direct impact.
 - Emphasis that each individual's contribution makes a difference.
- Recognition from the *community* as well as the agency or initiative leadership.

SECTION III

BABY BOOMER VOLUNTEER INITIATIVES: A SELECTION OF PROGRAMS

This section includes over 30 volunteer programs and initiatives that were submitted by United Way communities, Volunteer Centers, agencies, and individuals in response to an announcement about the preparation of this report. To put them in a useful context, the initiatives are grouped as follows: Citizen-Initiated, Volunteer Center-Sponsored, United Way or Agency-Sponsored, and Post-Boomer. On the following pages are tables showing all of the programs, grouped by these four categories. The tables include the organization, city and state for each initiative, as well as the page number on which it appears. Information on each initiative includes the name of the contact person, address of the initiative or program, the year it was founded, and the number of, for example, volunteers involved and projects completed each month or year. Following this is a brief description of the initiative, and, in most cases, a quote on why or how the initiative is effective at involving baby boomers.

Citizen-Initiated programs started, in most cases, through the efforts of one or two people or a small community group. In some cases these have grown to be quite large, have been extensively replicated, and have paid staff overseeing operations. Some are still run by the founding volunteer.

Volunteer Center-Sponsored programs started as programs of the local Volunteer Center, and have remained part of the Volunteer Center's offerings to the community. Likewise, **United Way or Agency-Sponsored** programs began and reside within those respective organizations. There are several programs run by Volunteer Centers that happen to be part of the local United Way. In cases where the Volunteer Center oversees the program, it was distinguished from a program that another United Way division oversees.

Finally, one program submitted is specifically **Post-Boomer** — that generation born after the end of the baby boom — and this warranted inclusion and distinction. The upper age limit included in the activities of this program does overlap with the youngest baby boomers. However, this group focuses primarily on fostering a positive image of post-baby boomers by mobilizing the skills and energies of this younger generation — a generation that is sometimes labeled with its own off-base stereotypes.

These programs and initiatives show a wide range of possibilities in drawing baby boomers to volunteer service. From repairing homes, to packing food, to serving as trustees, to planting trees, to planting new ideas, baby boomers are "doing it all" and enjoying it.

INITIATIVES GROUPED BY CATEGORY

CITIZEN-INITIATED

INITIATIVE	ORGANIZATION	CITY/STATE	Pg#
Christmas in April*USA	Initiative is an organization.	Washington, D.C.	15
Community Impact	"	Burlingame, CA	15
D.C. Cares** (see page 13, bottom)	"	Washington, D.C.	16
doingsomething _{sm}	"	Washington, D.C.	16
Hands On Atlanta**	"	Atlanta, GA	17
Hands On Charlotte**	"	Charlotte, NC	17
"Make a Difference"	"	Phoenix, AZ	18
New York Cares**	"	New York, NY	18

VOLUNTEER CENTER-SPONSORED

A.V.i.A.	V.A.C. of Mid-Fairfield	Norwalk, CT	19
C.V.I.A.	V.C. of Southwestern Fairfield County	Stamford, CT	19
Family Helping Hands	V.C. of Greater Orange County	Santa Ana, CA	20
Friends in Deed	Volunteer Services Center, UW of Central Jersey	Milltown, NJ	20
Hands Across the County, and	V.C. of Sonoma Co.	Santa Rosa, CA	21
Holiday Giving Tree Festival	"	"	"
The Human Race	"	"	"
Plant the Trail	"	"	"
Heart and Hammers, QCA	V.C. of the Greater Quad Cities	Moline, IL	22
Network 2000	V.A.C., UW of Wake County	Raleigh, NC	22
SYNERGY	V.C. of Monmouth County	Red Bank, NJ	23
UW of Central FL Young Professionals	Agency Relations and Vol. Services, UW of Central FL	Highland City, FL	23
UW Singles Volunteer Group	V.A.C., UW of Massachusetts Bay	Boston, MA	24
UPBEAT	Volunteer Jacksonville, Inc.	Jacksonville, FL	24
V.I.A.	V.C. of Dallas County	Dallas, TX	25
Volunteer Ventures	V.C. of Bergen County, Inc.	Hackensack, NJ	25
V.S.O.P.	V.C. of Greater Orange County	Santa Ana, CA	26

INITIATIVES GROUPED BY CATEGORY (continued)

UNITED WAY OR AGENCY-SPONSORED

INITIATIVE	ORGANIZATION	CITY/STATE	Pg#
Arts Commandos	Regional Arts Commission • St. Louis	St. Louis, MO	27
Baby Boomer Volunteer Program	Cleveland Foodbank, Inc.	Cleveland, OH	27
Friendly Visitors, and Project S.H.O.P.	Visiting Nurse Association "	Trenton, NJ "	28 "
Leaders for Tomorrow/All Children's Playground	UW of Wake County	Raleigh, NC	28
Young Professionals Groups	National MS Society	Englewood, CO	29

POST-BOOMER

The Benefit Gang	Initiative is an organization.	Seattle, WA	30
------------------	--------------------------------	-------------	----

****NOTE:**

City Cares of America, Inc., recently established through a partnership of Coca Cola, D.C. Cares, Hands On Atlanta, and the Points of Light Foundation, will facilitate replication of the "Cares/Hands On" initiatives in cities throughout the United States. City Cares' mission is to "meet critical community needs by creating volunteer opportunities specifically designed to accommodate the needs of working people who want to participate in community service activities." For more information, contact:

Alan K. Chambers, Executive Director
 City Cares of America, Inc.
 P.O. Box 27595
 Washington, DC 20038

CITIZEN-INITIATED

CHRISTMAS IN APRIL*USA

Contact: Patricia R. Johnson, President
Christmas in April*USA
1225 Eye Street, NW, Suite 601
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 326-8268

Founded: 1988 **Numbers:** Nationally, 46,000 volunteers — about 75% of whom are baby boomers — rehabilitated 1,800 homes in 1991.

Each April, a growing number of Christmas in April volunteers offer an outpouring of help in scores of communities nationwide by providing their time and money to improve the homes of elderly and low income persons who own their homes but are not able to keep them up. Corporations, religious institutions, and civic and labor organizations tackle sagging roofs, leaky pipes, peeling paint, and rotting steps that are health and safety hazards for residents. The goal is to keep low-income, elderly, and disabled people safe, warm, dry, and living in dignity in their own homes. Individual volunteer commitment ranges from the one-day participant to the more intensive "house captain" role.

"Our memories will last longer than the paint we applied...in short, we received much more than we gave."

"We're not just fixing up houses for one day; we're fixing up people's hearts for a lifetime."

"It's great work! It's also fun...I love meeting new people and making new friends. I've never felt this good about life!"

COMMUNITY IMPACT

Contact: Alice Stern, Administrator
Community Impact
P. O. Box 117186
Burlingame, CA 94011
(415) 344-9194

Founded: 1988 **Numbers:** Over 600 members/about 18 group projects each year.

Community Impact creates satisfying community service opportunities for busy people of all ages. In cooperation with Bay area organizations, one-day, weekend projects are created, organized, and coordinated by project teams. Projects are both people- and labor-intensive, cover a wide range of options, and are financed in part by member dues and corporate donations.

"People of all ages and backgrounds are encouraged to participate although Community Impact has been particularly attractive to many young adults who have been happy to serve the community."

D.C. CARES

Contact: Jeffrey Keitelman, President, Founder
Bryan Kelleher, Executive Director
D.C. Cares
2300 N Street, NW, Fifth Floor
Washington, D.C. 20037
(202) 663-9207

Founded: 1989 **Numbers:** 1,800+ volunteers, 1,200+ vol. hours per month, over 80 community service events per month.

D.C. Cares works in partnership with community service organizations (CSOs) to meet critical community needs by creating volunteer opportunities that make direct community service accessible, educational, convenient, and enjoyable for people with demanding and unpredictable schedules. D.C. Cares can reliably accommodate the volunteer needs of local CSOs while, at the same time, providing the flexibility that many volunteers require. A variety of levels of commitment and participation is possible, in one-time or ongoing projects and activities. Most D.C. Cares projects, however, are done on a regular monthly basis, and volunteers are encouraged to get involved on a regular basis.

"We make volunteering accessible. At D.C. Cares, we believe volunteering is one way to bring about change in our community...an effective and compassionate way. D.C. Cares provides community service organizations with responsible and direct help to meet critical needs, and enables a largely untapped pool of potential volunteers to become involved in a meaningful but less intimidating way."

DOINGSOMETHING_{sm}

Contact: Debra Guenther, Co-Founder
doingsomething_{sm}
P.O. Box 57152
Washington, D.C. 20036
(301) 891-2468

Founded: 1989 (New York, 1990; Los Angeles, 1991; Union and Snyder counties, Pennsylvania, 1991; Baltimore, Philadelphia, and southern California planned for 1992)

Numbers: 200 vols. per month, from corps of 1,500; over 20 projects each month, mostly on Saturdays.

A flexible, "come-when-you-can" volunteer network, doingsomething_{sm} is based on the belief that many busy people want to give more of themselves but lack the time to do it in conventional ways. With a strong commitment to keeping things simple, doingsomething_{sm} responds by serving as matchmaker between community groups and individuals with tight schedules. The group offers a wide range of possibilities and complete flexibility. Projects have included: clinic and shelter renovation, recreation for young and old, environmental projects, and food, clothing, shoe, and tool drives.

"As boomers ourselves, we believe doingsomething_{sm} works because it respects and responds to one of the greatest concerns of our generation: lack of time. Whether it's lack of time to give of oneself often or lack of time to experience new things and new people, doingsomething_{sm} is an answer. We make volunteering a convenient and varied opportunity. And our volunteers get to make a difference — and make new friends in their community. It's really just old-fashioned empowerment."

HANDS ON ATLANTA

Contact: Michelle Nunn, Executive Director
Hands On Atlanta
931 Monroe Drive, Suite 208
Atlanta, GA 30308
(404) 872-2252

Founded: 1989 **Numbers:** 1,500 in volunteer corps. Over 80 monthly projects.

Hands On Atlanta — a grassroots response to the difficulty and frustration some experienced in getting involved in volunteer work — promotes direct community service among young working people. Hands On Atlanta places its members in an array of projects each month including housebuilding, tutoring, soup kitchens, and outings with underprivileged children. Recognizing that today's volunteers have less time, and demand more choice and flexibility than volunteers of the past, Hands On Atlanta constructed a mechanism to accommodate them and to offer a diversity of opportunities.

"It's perfect for people like me who can't necessarily commit to the same day every week and who are often turned down by other more regimented volunteer programs. Hands On Atlanta offers me a wide range of volunteer programs all at my convenience. I think that's wonderful."
— Sue Wasserman, volunteer

HANDS ON CHARLOTTE

Contact: Lisa Quisenberry
Hands On Charlotte
525 North Tryon Street
Suite 201
Charlotte, NC 28202
(704) 358-0558

To explore Hands On Charlotte's working relationship with the Volunteer Center of United Way of Central Carolinas, call Lisa Martinez at (704) 372-7170.

Founded: 1991 **Numbers:** 200 members.

Hands On Charlotte's mission is to lead a diverse group of working Charlotteans in hands-on projects that help people in need. Through exposure to the plights of fellow Charlotteans, volunteers become more informed about the community's many needs and determine how, together, they can make a difference. This organization's goal is to provide a corps of volunteers to make the visions of community agencies and leaders a reality by assisting on projects such as: tutoring and sharing time with underprivileged children, visiting with the elderly, and delivering food and spending time with the homeless and hungry, to name just a few.

"Hands On Charlotte is absolutely the easiest and most flexible way for professionals to volunteer in Charlotte! Each month we mail a calendar with all volunteering opportunities available for HOC members. After reviewing their schedules and identifying projects of interest and convenience, members call the Project Coordinator listed to let them know they plan to participate. Then all they do is show up and volunteer....it's so easy!"

"MAKE A DIFFERENCE"

Contact: Marty Moore, Founder, Coordinator
"Make a Difference"
2342 E. Orangewood Avenue
Phoenix, AZ 85020
(602) 870-0218

Founded: 1990 **Numbers:** About 80 volunteers. One weekend project per month.

"Make A Difference" volunteers participate in a different volunteer project on the first Saturday of every month, ranging from nursing home visits, to delivering food for families in need, to working at a homeless shelter. Projects are put together with input from the Volunteer Center. Volunteers receive a flyer in the mail each month describing that month's activity and they come if they can.

"Make a Difference" is designed to be an extremely easy way for people with busy schedules to volunteer in the community. A flyer comes every month and a 'come when you can' attitude is comfortable for busy people."

NEW YORK CARES

Contact: Kenneth Adams, Executive Director
New York Cares
140 East 58th Street
New York, NY 10022
(212) 753-6670

Founded: 1987 **Numbers:** 7,000 people involved; one-third are active volunteers, the rest are supporters. Over 120 projects per month.

New York Cares leads young, working New Yorkers in innovative, hands-on volunteer projects that help people in need. Projects address New York's most pressing social and environmental problems and include: hunger, homelessness, homebound seniors, people with AIDS, disadvantaged children, sprucing up parks and gardens, and much more. New York Cares improves the lives of New Yorkers by providing skilled, caring volunteers to help them. New York Cares offers both a wide variety of volunteer opportunities and many different levels of commitment.

"Despite some people's perceptions, New Yorkers are really good neighbors, and they want to reach out and help people in need, but someone has to organize them. Someone has to make volunteering accessible — user friendly. That's what New York Cares is all about!"
— Kenneth Adams

VOLUNTEER CENTER-SPONSORED

A.V.I.A. (Adult Volunteers in Action)

Contact: Meg O'Brien, Director
Voluntary Action Center of Mid-Fairfield
83 East Avenue
Norwalk, CT 06850
(203) 852-0850

Founded: 1988 **Numbers:** 1-2 projects per month; 8-10 projects per year; 10-30 volunteers per project.

Their slogan "Helping...for the fun of it!" captures the essence of A.V.i.A. volunteers. Groups from this organization work with human service and environmental agencies on evening and weekend projects. A.V.i.A. provides opportunities for professionals to put their energy directly into the community, while meeting new people and having fun in the process.

"[We] believe the old quote, 'If you rest, you rust.' Helping people is contagious, and when you realize the joy you give and get from volunteering, it becomes a way of life."

C.V.I.A. (Corporate Volunteers In Action)

Contact: Roberta Eichler, Director of Recruitment and Referral
The Volunteer Center of Southwestern Fairfield County
62 Palmer's Hill Road
Stamford, CT 06902
(203) 348-7714

Founded: 1988 **Numbers:** 130 members, 12 group projects year.

CVIA ventures are usually one-time or annual events, scheduled for weekends. Volunteers work in collaboration with nonprofit organizations to select and complete projects. CVIA combines both social and volunteer activities which provide networking opportunities for members, possibilities for recruiting new professional members, and opportunities for larger projects. Member dues offset the cost for group activities.

"CVIA provides a terrific opportunity for busy people to volunteer. When you become a member, there is no obligation to work on a certain number of projects each year. You can choose just those projects that fit into your schedule and that appeal to you."

— Andrew R. Kaplan, Chairman of CVIA

FAMILY HELPING HANDS

Contact: Linda Lyon, Director, Community Involvement
Volunteer Center of Greater Orange County
1000 E. Santa Ana Blvd., Suite 200
Santa Ana, CA 92701
(714) 953-5757

Founded: 1991 **Numbers:** 250 volunteers participated in pilot project.

Family Helping Hands was developed to strengthen today's family and encourage relational growth through volunteering together, and at the same time enable communities to address critical human service needs more effectively. Two hundred and fifty family members, 40 percent of whom had never volunteered before, participated in a pilot project to glean two tons of green beans for Orange County's hungry. Prior to this, a Nonprofit Agency Breakfast and Training was hosted to introduce agencies to the concept of family volunteering and to enlist participation in a Volunteer Fair for the day of the gleaning project. A workbook, "Family Volunteering" was distributed, and a music video has been produced to promote family volunteerism throughout the country. Future initiatives are being explored.

"Family Helping Hands has made it possible for all families, whatever the configuration, to participate together toward a common goal. Busy parents, working, and single parents have the opportunity to be involved with their families. Individuals are welcomed into the 'community of family' to make a difference."

FRIENDS IN DEED

Contact: Joan McKinsey, Director of Volunteer Services
Volunteer Services Center
United Way of Central Jersey
32 Ford Avenue
Milltown, NJ 08850
(908) 247-3727

Founded: 1991 **Numbers:** Close to 60 members. Average of 8-10 projects per month.

Friends in Deed, a group of civic-minded, single adults engaged in short-term volunteer activities to benefit community and human service organizations, was created to accommodate individuals who want to volunteer, but cannot commit to a weekly or on-going position. Activities have included work with youth, the elderly, and the mentally and physically disabled, newsletter assembly, facility and environmental clean-up, and walk-a-thon support. Members attend monthly meetings to discuss upcoming projects, agree to serve as an activity leader or assistant leader at least once a year, and pay dues to cover mailings and snacks.

**HANDS ACROSS THE COUNTY, HOLIDAY GIVING TREE FESTIVAL,
THE HUMAN RACE, and PLANT THE TRAIL**

Contact: Linda Rayner, Director, Services to Agencies
The Volunteer Center of Sonoma County
1041 Fourth Street
Santa Rosa, CA 95404
(707) 573-3399

Founded:

- ◆ Hands Across the County — 1991
- ◆ Holiday Giving Tree Festival — 1983
- ◆ The Human Race — 1981
- ◆ Plant the Trail — 1990

Numbers:

- ◆ Hands Across the County — over 700 people worked on one-day projects at 33 different locations.
- ◆ Holiday Giving Tree Festival — in 1991, over 6,000 gifts delivered to children and adults served by 52 agencies.
- ◆ The Human Race — 5,000 Sonoma County runners and walkers in 1991, raised \$470,000. Statewide, \$1.3 million raised.
- ◆ Plant the Trail — over 500 volunteers planted 600 trees.

- ◆ Over 700 people volunteered in projects at 33 different locations for the one-day Hands Across the County event. Activities included park, creek, and cemetery clean-ups, and painting, planting, etc.
- ◆ Hosted by a shopping community and local companies, the Holiday Giving Tree Festival in 1991 enabled 6,000 gifts — "hearts' desires" — to be delivered to children and adults served by 52 nonprofit organizations. Participants selected a child or family's gift wish (displayed on red hearts on the "giving trees") and purchased, wrapped, and returned the gifts to the Volunteer Center, for distribution to the agencies.
- ◆ The largest fundraiser in Sonoma County, The Human Race runners, walkers, and wheelchair rollers are pledged money for 3K and 10K events to benefit their favorite nonprofit agencies.
- ◆ During one weekend, over 500 Plant the Trail volunteers planted 600 trees along a mile of the Sonoma County Multi-Use Trail recreational area. This was preceded by "Walk the Trail" gatherings to acquaint potential volunteers with the area and each other.

"All of these programs have provided baby boomers a way to 'do something' that connected them with others in the community and they had fun doing it! We're all busy with our jobs, family, and other commitments but we also want to get involved and show we care. These projects provided 'doable,' meaningful, and enjoyable activities that made a difference in our county."

HEARTS AND HAMMERS, QCA

Contact: Evelyn Craig
Volunteer Center of the Greater Quad Cities
1417 6th Ave.
Moline, IL 61265
(319) 322-1751

Founded: 1990 **Numbers:** In 1990, 210 volunteers repaired 5 houses. In 1991, 400 volunteers repaired 12 homes.

Dedicated to repairing and improving residences of Quad Citians who are unable to do the work themselves. Hearts and Hammers, QCA is affiliated with Christmas in April*USA. The project's objectives are to repair, refurbish, and redecorate selected houses in the Quad Cities which are in need of such service. Volunteer commitment ranges from the more intensive preparatory work to the "day-of" participation.

"People are interested in volunteering because it is a short-term, one-day time commitment; it can be done with the entire family involvement; work can be completed and seen on the same day."

NETWORK 2000 — Building Leaders for the Future

Contact: Steve Dudek, Director
Voluntary Action Center
United Way of Wake County
1100 Wake Forest Road
Raleigh, NC 27604
(919) 833-5739

Founded: 1991 **Numbers:** 30 participants in the first "class." Next class scheduled for 1992.

Network 2000 — Building Leaders for the Future, is a program designed to recruit, train, and place minority leaders and potential leaders from corporations at committee, division, and board levels of the United Way of Wake County and its member agencies. Network 2000 seeks to: clarify participants' understanding of United Way's role as a community problem solver, enhance leadership and cooperative action skills, to inspire a personal commitment to leadership involvement, and to equip participants with the tools for skillful leadership in a diverse community.

"Network 2000 offers minorities the opportunity to learn more about becoming involved in a widely diverse family of agencies. The program also provides assistance in crossing cultural barriers to become a more effective volunteer."

SYNERGY

Contact: Maureen Miner, Executive Director
Volunteer Center of Monmouth County
227 East Bergen Place
Red Bank, NJ 07701
(908) 741-3330

Founded: 1987 **Numbers:** 50 members; donated 1,200 hours to over 30 non-profits in 1990.

SYNERGY, which means "cooperative action" or "joint force," is a singles-oriented community-service organization, created to fit busy lifestyles. Members have an opportunity to participate in one or two volunteer activities per month, which are people-oriented and generally short-term. Activities include a wide variety like bike- and phone-a-thons, painting a homeless shelter, and environmental clean-ups. Monthly meetings are held to present volunteer opportunities and to give members a chance to get to know one another. SYNERGY makes getting involved easier, offers an opportunity to step beyond a monetary donation, gives members the satisfaction of sharing their skills and talents, and provides a forum for community-minded adults to meet others with similar interests and increase business and social contacts.

"For busy, full-time working men and women with little spare time, SYNERGY offers a unique opportunity to give time and talent, on an 'as available' basis, and to get the satisfaction that comes from helping others. Even though each individual member may not be able to give regular help, the group's activities are ongoing."

UNITED WAY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

Contact: Morgan Luck Goers, Director, Agency Relations and Volunteer Services
United Way of Central Florida
5605 U.S. Highway 98 South
P.O. Box 1357
Highland City, FL 33846-1357
(813) 648-1500

Founded: 1989 **Numbers:** About 40 participants each year.

The United Way of Central Florida Young Professionals program's goals are: to promote volunteerism among adults 25 to 40 years of age, to have participants learn and understand the different functions of United Way — both campaign processes and daily operations — so that the Young Professionals may become more involved in the future of the community through informed volunteer efforts, and to foster networking among the participants. Among the participants' activities are visiting agencies and meeting with agency staff, receiving training in boardmanship and public speaking, serving as Youth Council advisors, and working with United Way staff.

"Many of the Young Professionals who go through the United Way program have spent their time and energy on their education and on finding their place in Corporate America. They are now at a stage in their career where they want to be involved but aren't sure how to go about it. Most CEO's have been delighted that some of their junior executives are being trained to take their places in community affairs. This factor makes recruitment easy."

UNITED WAY SINGLES VOLUNTEER GROUP

Contact: Matt Orlando, Special Projects Manager
Voluntary Action Center
United Way of Massachusetts Bay
Two Liberty Square
Boston, MA 02109
(617) 422-6774

Founded: 1989 **Numbers:** 38 projects in 1990, equaling 1,300 person hours. Over 175 UWSVG members as of December 1991. More than 45 projects in 1991, an average of 3-4 per month.

United Way Singles Volunteer Group (UWSVG) describes itself as a "family of professionals dedicated to serving the community through volunteer work." Offering an organized way for busy adults to make a difference in their communities, UWSVG's flexible, group-oriented projects have included painting at a school, sorting groceries at a food bank, and taking physically challenged children holiday shopping. Members get a "slice of life" understanding of issues through direct work with agencies, and working alongside friends on projects reinforces commitment to volunteerism, enhances a feeling of community, and is fun. An all-volunteer, self-governing group, UWSVG's members sign a "volunteer pledge," pay dues, and attend monthly meetings and various social events.

"It's a great combination, we have fun and get to meet people while making a positive contribution to community organizations. Also, varying the days of the projects is a good feature for people with busy schedules."

UPBEAT

Contact: Heidi B. Curtis, Program Coordinator
Volunteer Jacksonville, Inc.
1600 Prudential Dr.
Jacksonville, FL 32207
(904) 398-7777

Founded: 1985 **Numbers:** About 300 members. Over 50 projects each year.

"A volunteer service organization exclusively for single adults," UPBEAT was developed by Volunteer Jacksonville as an additional resource to help nonprofit organizations deliver services, and to provide single adults with meaningful volunteer opportunities that are short-term and flexible. UPBEAT members participate in a variety of group projects that benefit all facets of the community, and they attend a monthly meeting where upcoming projects are presented and where they have an opportunity to meet each other. The manual, "How to Develop a Volunteer Program for Single Adults," was created by and is available through Volunteer Jacksonville.

V.I.A. (Volunteers In Action)

Contact: Tracy Schick, SkillBank Coordinator
Volunteer Center of Dallas County
1215 Skiles
Dallas, TX 75204
(214) 826-6767

Founded: 1991 **Numbers:** To date, 135 members.

The mission of VIA is to provide programs centered on education, public service and social interaction for its members, young professionals in the Dallas community. Members are educated on the emerging issues and trends of social service agencies. They fill the volunteer needs of social service agencies on a one-time project basis, and come together in a social atmosphere in which they can make new friends and celebrate the volunteer spirit.

"Volunteers have changed a lot in the past 10-15 years. As most families rely on two incomes, there are fewer daytime volunteers. The majority of volunteers maintain full-time careers and raise families, as well. Thus, they seek evening and weekend volunteer opportunities which require shorter, one-time commitments, provide visible results, and offer the opportunity for participation by friends and family members. VIA's 'menu' approach to volunteerism lets members explore the diversity of needs in the community."

VOLUNTEER VENTURES

Contact: Maryclare Scerbo, Referral Director
Volunteer Center of Bergen County, Inc.
64 Passaic St.
Hackensack, NJ 07601
(201) 489-9454

Founded: 1986 **Numbers:** 175 members. Up to ten group and several "on your own" projects each month.

Volunteer Ventures members' main purpose is to provide service to others, and in the process of working together, camaraderie and friendships develop. A shared desire to make a difference by volunteering sets the membership of Volunteer Ventures apart. Although there are not specific age or marital status requirements, most members are single/divorced/widowed, and between 21-50. Projects have included parties for hospitalized children and a women's shelter, sock hops, pet therapy, holiday food distribution, an annual gift drive, and environmental clean-up.

"Variety is the spice of life, even in volunteering. This, combined with the flexible nature of projects, has made Volunteer Ventures fit well into the busy, often unpredictable lifestyles of 'baby boomers.' In addition, it gives members a productive, worthwhile atmosphere in which to meet other community-minded people."

V.S.O.P. (Volunteer Singles Orange County Professionals)

Contact: Charla McNeff, Volunteer Center Staff Liaison
Volunteer Center of Greater Orange County
1000 East Santa Ana Blvd., Suite 200
Santa Ana, CA 92701
(714) 953-5757

Founded: 1990 **Numbers:** 70 members; \$50 annual dues; meetings every other month.

A "support group of the Volunteer Center of Greater Orange County," VSOP's objective is to meet the needs of professional singles who are seeking a way to become involved in volunteerism. Quarterly projects focus on areas such as homelessness, hunger, illiteracy, the environment, and the disabled. VSOP members make a meaningful difference in the community while enjoying the camaraderie, rewards, and fun of volunteering with high energy, like-minded professionals. Members also gain valuable insights from leading business, political, and community leaders at guest speaker programs. VSOP members pay dues and commit to 25 or more hours of service per year.

"VSOP offers Orange County singles a unique sense of belonging and the ability to make a difference in areas of critical need. The key to success and happiness for many baby boomers is to seek balance in their lives. Serving the community is, for VSOP members, an integral component of that balance."

UNITED WAY or AGENCY-SPONSORED

ARTS COMMANDOS

Contact: Christine Ivcich, Community Arts Director
The Regional Arts Commission • St. Louis
3540 Washington Avenue, Second Floor
St. Louis, MO 63103
(314) 652-5511

Founded: 1990 **Numbers:** 260 volunteers. Close to 30 projects each year.

The Arts Commandos are energetic volunteers who carry out specific projects proposed by nonprofit arts and cultural organizations in the St. Louis area. These volunteers are business professionals who like to be involved in the arts, not simply as audience members but with a hands-on, task-oriented approach. Whether moving props, painting, repairing windows, distributing tickets, or stapling programs, flexibility and personal networking are the key for Arts Commandos. Most projects take less than one day, and volunteers can choose to participate in as few or as many as they wish. Two co-chairs are assisted by project managers in heading up the Arts Commandos each year.

"As a family man with a full time job, I find the flexibility of the Arts Commandos to meet my needs. We work on a project by project basis on weekends. This means that I can volunteer whenever my busy schedule allows." — Jack Brown

BABY BOOMER VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Contact: Maureen DeVito, Marketing Director
Cleveland Foodbank, Inc.
1557 East 27th Street
Cleveland, OH 44114
(216) 696-6007

Founded: 1991 **Numbers:** About 30 corporations involved. Close to 20 "repack nights" per month.

The fourth largest foodbank in the country, the Cleveland Foodbank has distributed 100 million pounds of food since 1980. The Baby Boomer Volunteer Program was implemented in the repack area of the foodbank operations with evening volunteer hours to accommodate young professionals. Food donated from various food companies is sorted and repacked for distribution to 400 agencies. The "repack nights" are popular, and a healthy competition has developed among the various companies that participate. Volunteers feel that the activity is fun, a "good workout," and a chance to give something back to the community.

"I like volunteering at the Foodbank because it makes me feel like I'm doing one small thing to prevent hunger. Why join a health club when you can lift, box, and throw for free at the Foodbank." — Ellen Landers, paralegal, baker, and hosteler

FRIENDLY VISITORS and PROJECT S.H.O.P.

Contact: Lisa Carmalt, Volunteer Coordinator
Community Services of VNA
Visiting Nurse Association
P. O. Box 441
Trenton, NJ 08603
(609) 695-3461

Founded: 1984 **Numbers:** Friendly Visitors — 22 volunteers, Project SHOP — 18;
average total hours per month — 180.

- ◆ *Friendly Visitor* volunteers visit with the isolated, homebound elderly for 1-2 hours a week. They provide companionship and perform a variety of tasks such as: letter-writing, reading, playing games, conversation, or sharing a hobby.
- ◆ In *Project S.H.O.P.* (Services to Homebound Older Persons), homebound disabled and elderly clients are matched with volunteers who purchase and deliver groceries and other items requested by the client once a week or every other week. An ideal assignment for career-oriented volunteers, they can simply do the client's shopping while doing their own.

"Working volunteers can stop by at their convenience — after work, on the weekend, even during a lunch hour. Placement can be made near your home or workplace. Bring a friend or child...A great way for couples to spend 'quality time' together while providing a vital service!"

LEADERS FOR TOMORROW/ALL CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUND

Contact: Joan L. Martin, Vice President, Marketing and Communications
United Way of Wake County
1100 Wake Forest Road
Raleigh, NC 27604
(919) 833-5739

Founded: Leaders for Tomorrow formed in 1988.
All Children's Playground completed in November 1990.

Numbers: \$150,000 project. Involved 2,500 volunteers during week of construction.

The Leaders for Tomorrow program of United Way of Wake County is designed to develop individuals with ability, drive, and energy for volunteer leadership positions within United Way and other area health and human service, voluntary, and nonprofit organizations. Twenty-eight business professionals making up the first Leaders for Tomorrow group chose to build the "All Children's Playground" — uniquely designed to suit the needs and dreams of able-bodied and disabled children to play side-by-side — as their 2-year learning project. Leaders for Tomorrow managed the organization, coordination, fund- and materials-raising, and volunteer recruitment for this project. The playground was designed by architects with input from area children, and the actual construction was carried out by citizens of Wake County.

"Boomers like to see the results of their efforts. All Children's Playground provided a graphic visual reminder of what can be done when people join together to help people."

YOUNG PROFESSIONAL GROUPS

Contact: Peter J. Knockstead, Manager, Community Campaigns
National Multiple Sclerosis Society
116 Inverness Dr. East
Suite 205
Englewood, CO 80112
(303) 790-7929

Founded: 1986 **Numbers:** 20 Young Professional Groups nationally; each host one or two fund-raising events per year. Have raised over \$5 million since inception, and project \$1.2 million in 1991.

A fund-raising auxiliary of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, the Young Professional Groups are comprised of highly motivated, committed young professional volunteers who, along with their local chapter, help support the fight against multiple sclerosis. The goals of these groups are to increase public awareness of MS and to raise funds within the 25-45 age group by creating fun, unique and high-profile special events. A National Advisory Council works with the individual groups on strategies and information exchange, and also edits a national newsletter.

POST-BOOMER

THE BENEFIT GANG

Contact: T. J. McGill, Executive Director
The Benefit Gang
3201 Fremont Avenue, N, Suite 202
Seattle, WA 98103
(206) 632-4987

Founded: 1987 **Numbers:** About 2500 21-30 year-olds involved.

The Benefit Gang ("TBG") is a recruitment, training and placement agency providing 21-30 year olds in northwest Washington state with opportunities for volunteer involvement in the local nonprofit community. The aim of the organization is to establish a lifetime pattern of community service among this age group. TBG has three programs: The VOLUNTEER (a publication listing short- and long-term volunteer opportunities), Team TBG (a 6-month team service commitment that includes volunteer training and education), and Exceed (a board intern and placement program offering "graduates" of The VOLUNTEER and Team TBG opportunities for board involvement). The Benefit Gang facilitates volunteerism, community responsibility, and philanthropy within the local young adult community in an enjoyable, rewarding way.

"As young adults, it is imperative that we take an active role in shaping the fiber of our community. Our greatest challenge lies within our greatest opportunity: to build civic coalitions through volunteerism and help to alleviate serious social ills and support the causes we care about."

SECTION IV

THE BABY-BOOM GENERATION: A DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Baby boomers belong to the largest generation in modern times. Their incomes, their consumption habits, their social preferences, and problems have more influence on America's national profile than those of any other generation. And as baby boomers age, their impact will only increase... To American demographers, baby boomers look like a 300-pound gorilla; wherever they move, they will be the dominating presence.⁹

Despite the challenge presented by its enormous size and wide span of ages, the baby-boom generation's behaviors, lifestyles, attitudes, and choices have been exhaustively studied. In addition to its size, this generation is distinguished from those surrounding it by a number of other factors. Indeed, more than half of all baby boomers agree that there is something special and unique that sets their generation apart from others.¹⁰ Following are several areas in which the baby boomers have already left their mark, and others in which they are just beginning to do so.* Many of these aspects of baby boomers' lives have implications for volunteerism.

Social and Historical Context

As this generation grew up in America, it experienced and helped to catalyze some of this century's most profound historical moments. The "older wave" (born between 1946 and 1955) came of age during the Cold War, the civil rights and women's movements, the Vietnam War, and the Kennedy and King assassinations. The "younger wave" (born between 1956 and 1964) had its political consciousness shaped by Watergate, the Iran hostage crisis, the Reagan era, and a severe recession.¹¹ Whether focused globally or at the community level, baby boomers are generally believed to be more aware than other generations of the problems that plague humankind. In part, this heightened social awareness could be due to the emergence of the Information Age with its staggering and unprecedented array of new information sources. This has enabled boomers to stay

*Demographic characteristics in which the baby-boom generation mirrors the general population are:

- the ratio of females to males;
- racial composition; and
- geographic distribution.

("A Profile of the Baby-Boomer Market," Belden & Russonello)

much more informed about events around the neighborhood, the country, and the globe. It's also possible that the spark of sixties' activism just never quite died out.

Education

The baby-boom generation is the *best-educated generation in U.S. history*, with younger baby boomers even better educated than their older counterparts. Nearly nine out of ten baby boomers are high school graduates, and one in four are college graduates. Only two-thirds of their parents graduated from high school, and one in seven from college.¹² "The baby boom's most powerful financial advantage is education, and this is especially true for women. Baby-boom women are far more likely than their predecessors to have gone to college."¹³

Marriage, Divorce, and Parenthood

"Baby boomers are by no means doing away with the institution of marriage, although they are getting married later and having children later [than previous generations]."¹⁴ Almost two-thirds of the generation is currently married. The median age at first marriage in 1990 was 23.9 for women and 26.1 for men, while in 1960 it was 20.3 for women and 22.8 for men.¹⁵

In comparison to their predecessors, however, baby boomers are more likely to divorce. Although the divorce rate among those in their mid-twenties to mid-forties has now grown to more than 15 percent, it was just two percent among this age group in 1950. While their parents' marriages have lasted an average of 32 years, baby boomers' marriages are expected to last an average of only 23 years. Twenty percent of baby boomers (more than 15 million) have never married, and only one percent are widowed.¹⁶

Baby boomers are also waiting longer to have children than previous generations. In the late 1960's, just four percent of first births were to mothers over age 30. By 1987, that figure had risen to 13 percent. Of the 31 million families headed by baby boomers, 80 percent have children, but they have fewer children than previous generations.¹⁷ Approximately one in eight baby-boom women heads a single-parent household, compared with only one in 50 baby-boom men.¹⁸

Within the next five years, however, this generation's childbearing phase will begin to slip away as the oldest baby boomers pass 45 and the youngest turn 30.

The end of childbearing will make the lives of baby boomers more predictable. After the age of 45, single people are less likely to marry, and married people are less likely to get divorced. Almost half of workers aged 45 to 54 have been

*with their current employer for ten years or more, compared with a median of six years for workers aged 35-44. Once past age 45, adults can expect to make only two or three more moves in their lifetime. And with the cost of starting their households behind them, baby boomers can look forward to their most affluent years.*¹⁹

Economic Reality

Baby boomers, who comprise slightly less than one-third of the total U.S. population and 43 percent of U.S. adults, hold an impressive 44 percent of total U.S. discretionary income. However, only a fraction of them — 31 percent of the households headed by boomers — holds that discretionary income. Fifteen percent of baby boomers have an income less than \$10,000, while only three percent have an income greater than \$75,000.²⁰ All told, 10.4 percent of baby boomers were living below the poverty level in 1990, compared with 13.5 percent of the overall population.²¹

*While baby boomers are slightly less likely to live in poverty than Americans older or younger, there are more baby boomers living in poverty than those who qualify as "yuppies."*²²

A popular perception of this generation is that "baby boomers" are synonymous with "young urban professionals." Using the definition from *American Demographics* magazine, four million baby boomers — only about five percent of the total — qualify as members of this often stereotyped group:

*A "yuppie" is a baby boomer between the ages of 25 and 39, living in a metropolitan area, employed in a professional or managerial job, earning at least \$30,000 as an individual or \$40,000 as a couple.*²³

Although many married baby boomers maintain relatively high levels of family income through dual salaries (in 65 percent of married couples under age 55, both husband and wife work) baby boomers appear to be saving less and borrowing more than previous generations. However, in spite of the economic adversities they have endured — such as skyrocketing housing costs and two recessions — baby boomers' economic resources and consumer power are growing.²⁴ "Boomers are entering the prime of life," says John Naisbitt, "a time of peak earnings and well-being."²⁵ And according to *American Demographics*, "the coming years will be prime time for baby boomers. Today, 25.6 million people are in their peak income years, aged 45 to 54. When all of the baby boomers pass their 45th birthday, in 2010, that number will increase by 47 percent, to 37.7 million. One thing is certain: in the 1990s, the increase in consumer affluence will be staggering."²⁶

¹⁹Currently 25 million, according to the U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of the Census (1990).

Work, Career Satisfaction, and Retirement

"Work is a ubiquitous fact of life for baby boomers: 86 percent of boomer men are employed full-time, with another 6 percent part-time. Fifty-seven percent of boomer women are employed full-time, with another 13 percent working part-time...The job is considered 'very important' to 61 percent of employed baby boomers, and the majority say that work will become more important (66 percent) rather than less important (19 percent) in the next five years." ²⁷

Ironically, what is "important" about baby boomers' work lives is not necessarily money. The desire for personal job satisfaction, rather than financial reward, is the strongest factor among baby boomers. Two out of three boomers would welcome less societal emphasis on money, while three out of four do not particularly want less emphasis on hard work. "Baby boomers want a great deal, but they are also willing to work hard to win a high quality of life for themselves and their families." ²⁸

The baby-boom generation is the first in history in which the dual-career household is the norm and simultaneously caring for aging parents and growing children is becoming more common. Given the constant struggle to maintain a healthy balance, it is not surprising that a significant number of baby boomers intend to reduce their work commitment over the next five years to allow more time for other pursuits. The majority of baby boomers plan to retire at a much earlier age than the traditional 65 of their parents' generation. "Only about 23 percent of today's working boomers say that they plan to retire at age 60 or older." ²⁹

Women in the Labor Force

The growth of women in the work force is probably the single most important change that has ever taken place in the American labor market. ³⁰

Baby-boom women have been at the vanguard of changes in the labor force. ³¹

The flood of women entering the labor force is certainly one of the most striking marks of the baby-boom generation. In 1990, 75 percent of baby-boom women were in the labor force. ³² That number is expected to rise to 80 percent by 1995. A labor force which was less than one-third female 25 years ago is now roughly one-half female. ³³ Additionally, "as baby-boom women age, their higher educational attainment and greater work force experience will translate into higher salaries than older women earn today." ³⁴

A host of issues has been raised by women's increased participation in the labor force. Among these are opportunities for, or obstacles to, professional advancement, the need

for affordable and accessible child care, and the economic phenomenon of the two-income household. Whether or not this has actually been achieved, one national survey of American women revealed that:

Two-thirds of [female] baby boomers want an egalitarian marriage in which husband and wife share the tasks of earning money, housekeeping, and child care.³⁵

"Most Likely" Baby Boomer

This capsule profile of the baby boomer emerges:

The most likely baby boomer is... married, with one child, postponing having another, both parents working and together making \$36,500, and struggling to make mortgage payments on their first home.

36

Leisure Time

Leisure time (estimated to be an average of 16 to 19 hours per week) is a precious commodity for baby boomers as a variety of forces compete for their time and attention. When asked what they would do with an extra ten hours a week, 53 percent of baby boomers in one survey said that they would spend it with family and friends. Thirty-nine percent said with cultural activities, and four percent said they would get more involved with community organizations.³⁷

...boomers say they will be spending more time seeking out deeper friendships, pursuing recreational activities and hobbies, and on volunteer work....Passive pursuits [including television, movies, and reading fiction] seem to excite the least interest.³⁸

From a marketing standpoint, "boomers' frenzied efforts to balance work and family...make them voracious consumers of time-saving services and products."³⁹ With catalog shopping, prepared foods, and shorter — but sometimes more exotic — vacations, baby boomers are working hard to make the most of their leisure time.

Aging

As baby boomers enter their middle years, the middle-age population in the U.S. will become the fastest-growing, largest age group; the same will be true of the senior population as baby boomers move into that age group. While overall U.S. population will grow by only 15 percent between the years 1986 and 2000, *the number of people aged 48 to 53 will increase by 67 percent.*⁴⁰ In 2030, when the youngest baby boomers have turned 65, there will be 65 million people age 65 and older. At that time, one in five Americans will be over the age of 65, compared to one in eight today.⁴¹

Increasing longevity is further compounding this growth in the number of older Americans. Average life expectancy, which was 74.9 years in 1988, will increase to 77.9 years in 2010 (74.4 for men, and 81.3 for women).⁴²

As with other aspects of baby boomers' lifestyles, much has been said about this generation as it crosses the threshold of middle age. Some believe that baby boomers' foray into middle and old age will precipitate a crisis. "Powerful demographic tides are threatening Americans' long-term financial security," writes Mathew Greenwald on the impact of the aging baby boom. "The most troublesome aspect of the baby boom's future is their potentially huge need for long-term care."⁴³

Others speculate on the approach to life that baby boomers will favor as they reach their middle years. "This will not be a traditional or familiar middle-age group," reports Dr. James Hardy, "but rather an adventurous, iconoclastic, self-reliant, prosperous and increasingly diverse group."⁴⁴ Says John Naisbitt, "don't expect baby boomers to age gracefully without a fight: this is the generation that gave birth to the health-food industry."⁴⁵ And finally, "the baby boom will not cross the terrain of middle age on a single superhighway," according to Ralph Whitehead, Jr., a journalism professor at the University of Massachusetts. "They will blaze many trails across that landscape."⁴⁶

Freedom of Choice

*The defining characteristic of this generation may be that they feel they have an abundance of choices — in their careers, family, and other aspects of their lives. And they value these choices highly.*⁴⁷

Baby boomers view themselves as wanting more out of life than their parents did. They also recognize and appreciate that they have more freedom, opportunity, and choices in their lives than their parents' generation did, whether or not they have chosen to exercise these choices. Baby boomers further distinguish themselves from their parents in recognizing that many more issues and causes compete for their charitable attention. The environment, homelessness, drugs, AIDS, and a host of other pressing issues have captured their interest.⁴⁸

Values

With a demographic picture of baby boomers — who they are, how they live, work, spend time and money — before us, what is known about baby boomers' concerns and values? "[Baby boomers'] values may be strikingly similar to those of older generations. Marriage, home, family, and work top their list of values."⁴⁹

Family is very important to baby boomers. Well over nine out of ten baby boomers rate family life as a "very important" part of their life — making the family even more important to them than religion or work. Probably the most significant reason for the importance of family life to boomers is children... Forty-seven percent of boomers say that they will be spending more time with their families over the next five years, while only 8 percent say less.⁵⁰

Religious involvement and the search for spiritual meaning are also looming large in the lives of baby boomers as they continue their quest for self-fulfillment. Boomer women in particular (58 percent) say religion is "very important" to them, compared with only 39 percent of boomer men.⁵¹

Half of all boomers claim they will be spending more time seeking the basic meaning and value of life in the next five years; only four percent say they will be spending less time. Older Americans (over 45) either think they have found the answers, or don't care — they are much less likely than boomers to say they will be spending more time searching for meaning in the years ahead.⁵²

A Final Word

Baby boomers, an enormous group, are volunteering in greater and greater numbers. However, what they bring to volunteering — and their expectations of this experience — differs quite significantly from the more traditional volunteers of earlier generations. Planning for the opportunities inherent in this "paradigm shift" in volunteerism will require volunteer management professionals to move beyond the myths and to be informed and enthusiastic about working with this generation. With creative programs like those highlighted in this report targeting the talents and desires of baby boomers, perhaps the largest middle-age and senior generations in the history of the United States will include the most active and committed volunteers in history as well.

Notes:

1. There are currently 80 million people in this age group in the United States. This number is derived from the original 76 million U.S. births between 1946 and 1964, *minus* deaths, *plus* net immigration.
2. Virginia A. Hodgkinson, Ph.D., and Murray S. Weitzman, Ph.D. (analysis), *Giving and Volunteering in the United States, Findings from a National Survey* (Washington, DC: Independent Sector, 1990),53.
3. Independent Sector News Release, October 16, 1990.
4. Diane Granat, et al, "Doing Good," *Washingtonian Magazine* (October 1991):68.
5. Hodgkinson and Weitzman, *Giving and Volunteering in the United States*, 113, 114, 146-148.
6. *Ibid.*, 149, 150.
7. Judith Waldrop, "The Baby Boom Turns 45," *American Demographics*, (January 1991):27.
8. Independent Sector News Release, October 16, 1990.
9. "A Profile of the Baby-Boomer Market Prepared for United Way of America," (August 1990), Belden & Russonello Research and Communications.
10. *Ibid.*
11. *Ibid.*
12. *Ibid.*
13. Waldrop, "The Baby Boom Turns 45," 27.
14. "A Profile of the Baby-Boomer Market," Belden & Russonello.
15. Leon F. Bouvier and Carol J. DeVita, "The Baby Boom — Entering Midlife," *Population Bulletin*, a publication of the Population Reference Bureau, Inc., Vol. 46, No. 3 (November 1991):17.
16. "A Profile of the Baby-Boomer Market," Belden & Russonello.
17. *Ibid.*
18. Bouvier and DeVita, "The Baby Boom — Entering Midlife," 21.
19. Waldrop, "The Baby Boom Turns 45," 26.
20. "A Profile of the Baby-Boomer Market," Belden & Russonello.
21. *Current Population Reports*, U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Series P-60, No. 175 (1990).
22. "A Profile of the Baby-Boomer Market," Belden & Russonello.
23. *Ibid.* Note: this definition was taken from a book published in 1988. *American Demographics* has not since updated it.
24. *Ibid.*
25. "John Naisbitt's Trend Letter," Vol. 10, No. 2 (January 17, 1991), 1.
26. Waldrop, "The Baby Boom Turns 45," 27.
27. George Gallup, Jr. and Dr. Frank Newport, "Baby Boomers Seek More Family Time," *The Gallup Poll Monthly* (April 1991): 31.
28. "A Profile of the Baby-Boomer Market," Belden & Russonello.
29. Gallup and Newport, "Baby Boomers Seek More Family Time," 32.
30. James M. Hardy, Ph.D., "Blueprint for the Future — 1991 and Beyond." Eleventh paper in an annual environmental scanning series by the author.
31. Bouvier and DeVita, "The Baby Boom — Entering Midlife," 22.
32. *Ibid.*, 23.
33. "A Profile of the Baby-Boomer Market," Belden & Russonello.

34. Waldrop, "The Baby Boom Turns 45," 27.
35. "A Profile of the Baby-Boomer Market," Belden & Russonello.
36. Ibid.
37. Ibid.
38. Gallup and Newport, "Baby Boomers Seek More Family Time," 34.
39. Susan B. Garland, et al, "Those Aging Boomers," *Business Week* (May 20, 1991):106.
40. "A Profile of the Baby-Boomer Market," Belden & Russonello.
41. Bouvier and DeVita, "The Baby Boom — Entering Midlife," 27.
42. "A Profile of the Baby-Boomer Market," Belden & Russonello.
43. Mathew Greenwald, "Bad News for the Baby Boom," *American Demographics* (February 1989):34.
44. Hardy, "Blueprint for the Future."
45. Naisbitt, "Trend Letter," 3.
46. Garland, et al, "Those Aging Boomers," 107.
47. "A Profile of the Baby-Boomer Market," Belden & Russonello.
48. Ibid.
49. Ibid.
50. Gallup and Newport, "Baby Boomers Seek More Family Time," 33.
51. Ibid.
52. Ibid.