Independently Aging....Together!

Creating an interdependent community

January 16, 2013

It Takes a Lot of Volunteers to Make a Village

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People often think that volunteers aren't really needed until you launch the Village and begin delivering services to paying members. This couldn't be further from the truth. The process of developing and promoting the Village is "volunteer heavy," as this list of current Eastside Village volunteer opportunities demonstrates. And the list doesn't even include developing the community needs assessment survey, building the website, delivering Village 101 presentations, or the countless other tasks already being done by Planning Group members!

Still, this list should give you a pretty good idea about the type of tasks that need doing at this stage of the Village development process and how many volunteers we hope to recruit to do them.

Home Hosts: Invite your friends and neighbors to Village 101 informational meetings you host in your home. We'll provide the presenter/you provide the guests & refreshments.

Community Builders: Follow-up with people who attend presentations or who signed-up through the website. Discover their needs & interests, how they might volunteer, skills & talents they have to offer. Make sure they're on the Village email list and invited to social activities and educational programs. Introduce self in person at events.

Volunteer Recruiting & Placement: EastsideVillage, PDX operates primarily with volunteers—not just after we open and need volunteers to deliver services to members, but right now in the development phase. So, volunteer recruitment is a MAJOR priority! This volunteer position works with the Community Builders to find the right volunteer activities for new people; keeps track of the type of volunteers that are needed and gets that information to all the PR/Outreach people to publicize; brainstorms & implements strategies for recruiting additional volunteers; and contacts existing volunteers to ask for their help when/where needed.

Volunteer Tracking: We need to keep track of all our volunteers and their hours for grant writing purposes—in addition to being able to thank them for everything they do! To do this, we need a volunteer tracker who will set up and maintain a tracking system so we know who is doing what and how often they are doing it.

Survey Team Members (Spring 2013): Help our Program & Services Committee with the surveying process by helping to brainstorm group/sites to assist with survey process; reaching out to those groups/sites to request their help; delivering surveys to & collecting them from participating groups/sites; assisting at survey events & focus groups.

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Social Event Team: Do you like to plan and host potlucks, holiday celebrations, and social gatherings? If so, this is the volunteer slot for you! Social events are an essential, ongoing part of the Village, so we need a team of socially-inclined folks to plan fun, community-building social events, find low/no cost sites, and coordinate all the details, including volunteers, set-up, clean-up, activities/programming, and food.

Educational Programming Team: Another ongoing part of the Village is educational programs, speaker/lecture series, and discussion groups, covering a wide range of topics of potential interest to our members. So we need a team of folks to plan this kind of programming, find low/no cost sites to hold them at, and coordinate all the details, including recruiting volunteer presenters, set-up/clean-up help, AV equipment & support.

Food & Snacks Team: Are you a whiz at grocery shopping? Do you love to bake and cook? Are you the person who usually takes care of the refreshments? If so, we need you to be part of the team that plans, buys, prepares and sets up the refreshments for Village 101 presentations and educational programs.

Newsletter Writers/Editors: We need writers/editors to put together the copy & photos for email and print newsletters (going out 4-6x per year), describing the progress of Eastside Village PDX, recruiting volunteers, and inviting people to upcoming Village 101 presentations, social activities, educational programs, and fundraising events.

Poster/Flyer Distribution: We'll be making posters and flyers to get the word out about EastsideVillage and upcoming Village 101 presentations, social activities, educational programs, and fundraising events. So we need your help to identify locations and get them distributed and displayed on bulletin boards and in shop windows throughout the neighborhoods inside our boundaries.

Get us on the Web: Help promote upcoming Village 101 presentations, social activities, and educational programs by getting them into online calendars & listservs, promoting them via social media, and sending the info about them to groups/organizations for their websites & e-newsletters.

Media Liaison/Press Release Specialist: Write and send out monthly press releases highlighting upcoming Village events open to the public, including Village 101 presentations, social activities, and educational programs. Expand on and maintain press list. Follow-up with media after sending releases. Develop story angles and ways to get more media coverage/exposure.

Tabling: (Seasonal/late Spring/Summer 2013) We have received grant funding to do outreach at many of the festivals and street fairs that occur within our boundaries (i.e. Clinton, Belmont, Hawthorne), but we need an outgoing team of volunteers to staff the tables (probably in shifts), and do the set-up and tear down.

PR/Outreach to Faith Communities: Identify and help make connections/partnerships with the faith-based organizations inside the EastsideVillage boundaries. Set up opportunities to meet with their leaders; do presentations to their members; enlist their help to promote the Village; keep them informed about upcoming Village programs open to the public; figure out ways we can be mutually supportive. Also, identify any that have low/no cost space we can use for programs and/or which might be suitable as the site for the Village office.

PR/Outreach to Neighborhood Associations: Help make connections/partnerships with the 13 neighborhood associations inside the EastsideVillage boundaries. Set up opportunities to meet with their leaders; do presentations to their members; enlist their help to promote the Village; keep them informed about upcoming Village programs open to the public; figure out ways we can be mutually supportive.

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PR/Outreach to Senior Organizations/Programs: Identify and help make connections/partnerships with all the senior centers/organizations inside the EastsideVillage boundaries (or serving EV residents). Set up opportunities to meet with their leaders; do presentations to their members; enlist their help to promote the Village; keep them informed about upcoming Village programs open to the public; figure out ways we can be mutually supportive.

PR/Outreach to Community Groups: Identify and help make connections/partnerships with general (not just senior-focused) community groups inside the EastsideVillage boundaries whose members might be interested in our work. Set up opportunities to meet with their leaders; do presentations to their members; enlist their help to promote the Village; keep them informed about upcoming Village programs open to the public; figure out ways we can be mutually supportive.

PR/Outreach to Business Community: PR/Outreach to Community Groups: Identify and help make connections/partnerships with all the neighborhood business associations inside EastsideVillage boundaries. Set up opportunities to meet with their leaders; do presentations to their members; enlist their help to promote the Village; keep them informed about upcoming Village programs open to the public; figure out ways we can be mutually supportive. Also, identify businesses inside our boundaries that would potentially be good "Village Supporters" for the Fundraising Committee & help them connect with the owners.

Business Plan Developers: If you have a strong background in financial or business planning, we need your help to develop and write the Village's business plan.

Fundraising Events Team: If you have interest in or experience planning fundraising events, we need your skills to put together a series of diverse, fun, creative events/activities to raise the funds needed prior to launch. Help research events/activities that have been done successfully by other Villages across the country and figure out how to adapt them for EastsideVillage, PDX. Recruit sponsors/underwriters/event partners. Plan and manage event logistics and volunteers. Solicit in-kind donations. Lots to do here and lots of help needed!

Speakers, Musicians, Comedians, Chefs, Other Talent: Got talents to donate either in an educational program or at a fundraising event? If so, EastsideVillage needs you!

Founding Board Members: Later in 2013 we will be recruiting members for the Founding Board of Directors. Stay tuned for information about the skill set, experience and expertise we are looking for in the first, critically important Board members.

Planning Group Members: The Eastside Village Planning Group meets approximately once per month (plus committee meetings) and is open to anyone who is interested in planning and committee work.

As you can see, there's lots to do, and we hope to find lots and lots of volunteers to help do it. There's an old saying: "Many hands make light work." This seems to be particularly true when developing a Village. I am also hoping that "The more, the merrier" also applies.

If you live on the eastside of Portland and are interested in any of these volunteer opportunities, please email info@EastsideVillage.org. Your hands and help will be most welcome.

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