

Friends of the State Line Serpentine Barrens

Board Meeting – October 4, 2012

Attending: Mike Bertram, Rose Chase, Brittany Howell, Brian and Kristine Parkes, David Ross, Mike Walz, Henry Whitesel

The focus of the Meeting was a workshop conducted by

Brian and Kristine – Krisp Communications
Brittany – PPF Public Relations & Outreach Coordinator

on recruiting and outreach. The deliverable included two notebooks with flash drives with templates and guides covering

- Advocacy
- Community Relations
- Media Relations
- Resources
- Social Media
- Branding & Marketing
- Volunteer Recruitment & Retention

We appreciated Henry's hospitality and the delicious dishes that emerged from the group. We appreciated the detailed information Brian, Brittany and Kristine provided.

Action Items

Next Board meeting will process what we learned today as well as consider the responsibilities of chair and vice-chair and duties of board members Marci circulated after our last meeting as well as other business that arises.

Friday, November 16, 4-6 at Henry's (after habitat restoration day)

Backup: Thursday, November 15, 7:15-9:15 at Henry's

Brian and Kristine will discuss with Marci options for providing the board with support in building governance and organizational capabilities – basic board development.

Brian and Kristine will share a template for surveying volunteers about their experiences with FLSB.

Brian and Kristine will think about ways to facilitate helping Friends groups modify PPF logos and images through publishing software for their own use.

Context

PPFF has retained Krisp Communications and Payton Communications to design an outreach campaign to raise awareness and support for Pennsylvania parks and forest, to increase funding for parks and forests and to strengthen affiliated Friends groups.

www.KrispCommunicatins.com (610) 279-4141
www.paytonpr.com

Volunteer Recruitment

Deadly Sins of Recruiting

- Going after volunteers before getting clear on our needs
- Generic recruiting announcements
- Don't go it alone -- find others who have connections with fertile recruitment grounds
- Don't recruit for a lifetime -- identify small specific tasks
- Never undersell the task -- how much time it will take
- No does not equal never -- it means not now

Why do volunteers drop out? Why don't volunteers return?

- Lack of organizational leadership
- Poor match between skills and jobs asked to do
- Failure to train volunteer
- Failure to follow up with thank yous and follow up expertise

First step: Conduct a Volunteer Needs Analysis

- Brainstorming list:
- Leadership of Organization
- Year End Report
- Articles for newspaper
- College internship recruiting & coordinate with faculty
- Record keeping
- monitoring of sites -- mapping
- Liaison with library
- Publicity -- students looking to build their portfolio
- College Liaison
- Record Keeping
- Poison Control Person -- could be trained
- Recruiting for Workdays
- Grant Writer
- Volunteer coordinator
- Tour Guides
- Partner for Rose to harness her ideas

The “Care and Feeding” of Volunteers

Remember to express appreciation – direct thank you’s and in media releases

Match tasks to gifts

Check in with volunteers – how did it go

Survey for attitudes and ideas and background as well as contact information

*** Brian and Kristine will share sample survey form

Assess – encourage volunteers who aren’t a good match for responsibilities to shift position.

Create regular opportunities for volunteers to shift their contributions to the organization

It’s **easy** to screw up volunteer development. Better to concentrate on a limited number of tasks, a limited number of positions than drive away volunteers by not being ready to fully nurture our connection with them.

Branding

A strong brand make achieving other goals easier and insulates the group (and mission) from negative publicity or word of mouth.

Examine the likely public perception of what we do and how we talk about it. Example: We are living with the idea of changing

Work Days

To something like

Habitat Restoration Days – a Re-Creational Experience

PPFF encourages us to include in our outreach and contact information key PPFF messages about the value of our state parks and forest.

PPFF is disseminating guidelines for a consistency in use of logos and other images

Community relations involves taking advantage of opportunities to be visible in the community, to find organizations open to hearing our message and building on-going connections

Oxford Senior Center

Churches

Schools

Scout troops

Media relations is primarily a combination of the quality of press releases and building relationships with editors and reporters

Invite Chris Barber to walk the Rose Trail or otherwise get a feel for what excites us about the Barrens.

Identify opportunities for outreach

Peak of warm weather flowers and grasses

Peak birding seasons

A year-end review article

Social media (e.g., Facebook) should only be a piece of a broader strategy – a way to build a two-way conversation with a targeted audience.

Advocacy ranges from public pronouncements to sharing our love of the Barrens in one-one conversation.

Be clear about when we are acting as private individuals (in which case advocating for a political parties or other causes is fine) and when we are representing FSLSB and PPF (in which case we need to avoid the appearance of political partisanship or associating PPF with issues and causes it has not endorsed).

PPF tax status allow Friends Groups to lobby for policies that support parks and forests. Check with PPF before acting on specific legislation.

Find ways to build on-going relationships with legislators and local public officials. But, avoid interactions within 6 weeks before an election.