Using American Volunteerism as a Model for Domestic Volunteerism Management

in Thailand

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This dissertation titled

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in Thailand

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this study is to examine the management of American domestic volunteerism in order to find ways to improve domestic volunteer tourism in Thailand. Sebastian Inlet State Park in Florida was selected to be the research site of this case study. This study answers questions about how domestic volunteer management works in the United States, who the volunteers are, what the factors that motivated and discourage the volunteers are, ways to enhance volunteer management, and how such findings can be applied to domestic volunteer programs in Thailand.

Ethnographic research methodology of participant observation was performed to answer the research questions. During ten weeks of field research at Sebastian Inlet State Park, 49 volunteers and 7 park employees were interviewed on site.

Results indicate that the domestic volunteerism program at Sebastian Inlet State Park was established in recognition of the deficiency of the park’s human resources as compared with the work needed to maintain the park. The park’s volunteer management was casual. The volunteers had high self-discipline and self-motivation. More rules and regulations tended to reduce the volunteers’ motivation.

The majority of the volunteers at Sebastian Inlet State Park were retirees who lived close to the park. Their major motivation to volunteer was to keep themselves active. The rest were students and working-age volunteers who worked either because of
their personal interests or school requirements. The retirees tended to continue their
service for long periods of time while the younger people tended to quit when they had to
move away or when their interests changed.

The results indicated that various aspects of American volunteer management
could be applicable to the domestic volunteerism program in Thailand. The key factor
was that this domestic volunteer concept should be applied step by step in order to
generate awareness and acceptance among the local population.

Approved: _____________________________________________________________

Raymie E. McKerrow

Professor of Communication Studies
Dedicated to my father and my mother
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I deeply appreciate Ohio University’s Global Leadership Center (GLC) for providing me teaching assistant scholarships for my education and invaluable opportunities to work and learn from the program. Dr. Emery, the GLC director, always assisted me in every way he could to help me accomplish this dissertation. I cannot thank him enough in words.

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CHAPTER 1: RATIONALE

How far that little candle throws his beams
so shines a good deed in a naughty world.
~ William Shakespeare, Merchant of Venice

Introduction

This research was conducted to seek understanding of two issues: one is the domestic volunteer management of an organization in the United States where domestic volunteerism is ubiquitous; the other one is the nature of domestic volunteers in the United States, since I was interested in finding their motivations to become involved in volunteering and to remain in service. In this research, I focus on finding ways in which volunteer programs in Thailand can use local Thais as long-term volunteers. The findings of this research would be beneficial for volunteer organizations in Thailand, my home country, and also for other countries in terms of developing feasible plans for domestic volunteerism.

The trend of volunteerism in the United States has increased significantly since the September 11 attacks in late 2001 and was reinforced with the devastation of Hurricane Katrina four years later. In 2002, 59.8 million Americans volunteered around the nation, and the number rose to 65.4 million in 2005 (Corporation for National and Community Service, 2006). According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the United States Department of Labor, approximately 61.8 million people or 26.4% of the population volunteered through or for an organization at least once within the United States between September 2007 and September 2008. This figure does not include persons who volunteered in a non-formal manner. The levels and rates of volunteering
were similar to the prior year. This information was derived from the Current Population Survey (CPS) of about 60,000 households, which includes both employed and unemployed people age 16 and over (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Division of Labor Force Statistics, 2009). Volunteers in this survey were defined as persons who did unpaid work, except for expenses, through or for an organization (Bureau of Labor Statistics, United States Department of Labor, 2009).

In addition to volunteering in America, there is an upward trend of Americans becoming involved in volunteering abroad, especially in developing countries. Currently, many organizations act as coordinators in charge of placing Americans who want to volunteer abroad. These organizations work in conjunction with the organizations that provide volunteering opportunities at the designated countries, mostly in developing countries, by matching the volunteers with opportunities according to the volunteers’ interests and skills, and the types of volunteer work needed (Institute for Field Research Expedition, 2009).

It is apparent that there are plenty of volunteer opportunities around the world especially in the developing countries, including Thailand, which are attractive in the eyes of the volunteers from the developed world. It is a trend that people from the developed world, especially westerners, want to do philanthropic work and make their travel useful and memorable by volunteering while they travel. There are numerous for profit organizations which utilize these opportunities to do business, and many of them are doing very well. These businesses arrange the trip and activities for the travelers who want to volunteer, and then charge them for their services. In most cases, the volunteers have to pay their own transportation from and to their origin countries, transportation
within the destination country, food, accommodation, and service fees. Most of the organizations advertise that they charge an affordable and reasonable fee while providing quality service and good security. To re-emphasize my observation here, people from the developed countries are coming to developing countries to volunteer and they have to pay to work. Another observation is that the domestic population in destination countries is not the target group of those volunteer organizations in the destination countries, including Thailand. The basic assumptions are that local populations are not interested in volunteerism, the volunteer coordinator organizations or companies could not make a profit on domestic volunteers, or the local organizations or communities that provide volunteer opportunities simply overlook the locals.

It is obvious that Americans are well aware of the practice of volunteerism and the rate of Americans doing volunteerism is on a positive trend. Their contribution is significant in terms of supporting and sustaining organizations around the United States, particularly nonprofit organizations. It helps the United States’ economy and simultaneously, gives opportunities for the population to contribute to their own society. The younger generations are encouraged to help other people, in part, through their schools’ service-learning programs. Volunteerism allows all generations to utilize their time constructively by conducting meaningful activities for communities as well as keeping themselves active physically and psychologically.

This study will shed light on how domestic volunteer management works in the United States, who the volunteers are, what the factors that motivated the volunteers to get involved in volunteerism are, and what the factors that keep them interested in continuing their services are.
Rationale for Selecting This Topic

I am an ethnic Thai person who was born and grew up in Thailand. My parents own a family business selling agricultural machines and I have been around this business since I was young. I was familiar with a business-oriented society and I liked it; therefore, I decided to study economics and business administration in college. My interest was all about doing business for profit and managing human resources to do work in exchange for compensation. Even though I had seen several volunteer activities in my country, I had never considered it as an opportunity to enhance organizational management efficiency or to enhance a volunteer’s life. I viewed it as one way for people to do good things for the community every once in a while, and considered it not much different from making donations. I was shortsighted and could not see how volunteerism could help organizations to sustain their operations over a long period of time. For me, an organization can exist and survive only if it has enough budget and paid staff to run the business. My assumption was that if the organization is not internally self-sustaining, it would not survive.

Being in the United States for over four years and having the chance to travel around the country, I observed that volunteerism in America is abundant. There are volunteer opportunities in almost all areas of work and they involve people from all walks of life. Such practices contribute significantly to the nation’s economy and social welfare. According to the Corporation for National and Community Service, people in the United States volunteer in nine different categories: religious; educational or youth service; social or community service; sports, hobby, cultural, or arts; hospital or other health; civic, political, professional, or international; environmental or animal care;
public safety; and others (Corporation for National and Community Service, 2006). The government is very supportive of the volunteer programs and there are comparisons among all states around the country regarding the number of people involved in volunteerism, indicating that the public highly values the volunteer efforts and wants to see a higher rate of volunteerism in their states.

Research about volunteerism in all areas has been conducted, most of it aimed at finding ways to motivate and increase volunteer efforts. In addition, different statistics of volunteerism in the United States are widely provided by various sources. These include volunteering rates and trends, volunteer service hours, volunteer activities, volunteer performance, and volunteer contributions classified by different factors such as age and occupation. In sum, I perceived that Americans are well aware of the volunteer opportunities, and many of them are involved in volunteerism in one way or another. A significant number of organizations depend heavily on domestic volunteers to the extent that they cannot survive without contributions from them. The current United States president, Barack Obama, also strongly encouraged domestic volunteerism. He has been a volunteer himself before and, while he is in the position of president, he wants to promote a new “era of responsibility” in the United States. For example, in a speech he gave on Martin Luther King Day 2009, he said, "Don't underestimate the power of people who join together… they can accomplish amazing things" (Obama as cited in Tapper, 2009). Such observation spurred my interest in volunteerism and my curiosity about whether the concept could be successfully implemented in Thailand. If it worked, it would be extensively beneficial to my country, its economy, and its people.
I chose to research domestic volunteerism because I believe this domestic volunteer concept should work well in Thailand. Prior coming to Ohio University, I worked for the Chiang Mai University College of Business in Thailand at the College of Business teaching Business Management to both graduate and undergraduate students. I also worked as a consultant for small businesses around the northern region of Thailand. Furthermore, I did research on business-related themes and also in organizational management. I will resume my work with Chiang Mai University as an instructor and a business consultant after I graduate.

I have three main goals toward utilizing this research. First, I plan to transfer the knowledge of volunteering to my students, both in the undergraduate and graduate levels, via the classes that I will teach. I will apply the service learning strategy as one of the tools to accomplish this goal. Second, I aim to share this knowledge with the organizations that I consult for, particularly not-for-profit organizations such as national parks and public schools. As appropriate, I would advise and coach them to develop the volunteer programs in their organizations. Thirdly, in order to find the strategy that best fit Thai culture and Thai people, I will conduct more research and write case studies regarding domestic volunteerism in Thailand in various areas of volunteerism. Such research and case studies will go hand in hand with this current research. I anticipate that this research will be highly valuable for my country and me.

Rationale for Selecting Sebastian Inlet State Park as a Study Site

Florida State Parks’ volunteer program is one of the main pillars that supports the parks’ operations. Without volunteers, as stated by the park staff and the volunteers, the parks could not fully function, or even carry out their fundamental tasks. There are 160
Florida State Parks which cover over 700,000 acres. The number of annual visitors is as high as 18 million, while there are only approximately 1,000 employees working in the parks. Therefore, the demand for volunteers is very high. In 2007, volunteers contributed more than one million working hours, which equals around 500 full time positions. Volunteer tasks include public relations work such as greeting visitors; physical work such as assisting the park rangers to remove exotic plants and collecting trash; and education work such as conducting tours and providing information at the education centers. The tasks in each park are different due to the resources of each park. Florida State Park Headquarters does not manage the volunteer matters; instead, it empowers the individual park to manage its own volunteer programs. This means the people who are interested in volunteering have to contact the specific park that they would like to volunteer for to find out what kinds of volunteer opportunities are available (Florida State Parks Information Center, 2008).

I chose to conduct this study at Sebastian Inlet State Park, one of the Florida State Parks, for various reasons. One reason is that almost 100% of the volunteers at this park were Americans and this characteristic of volunteer fits well with my focus on exploring domestic volunteers. Furthermore, the nature of this park is closely related to many organizations in Chiang Mai and those around northern Thailand, such as a Thai national park in which I am interested. It is notable that the main industry among the Northern provinces in Thailand is tourism. Therefore in this research study, I compare Sebastian Inlet State Park with Doi Suthep-Pui National Parks in Chiang Mai, Thailand. I conducted research regarding tourism at the Doi Suthep-Pui National Park in 2004. From my perception, these two parks are similar in many ways vis-à-vis their state funding
dependency and their management as non-profit organizations. Both are popular tourist
destinations; however, they have insufficient human resources to perform the work well.
Their human resource needs encompass a wide range of skills and knowledge, and the
tasks range from hands-on physical errands such as collecting trash to intellectual tasks
such as providing interpretation about nature and conservation. Conducting research at
Sebastian Inlet State Park enabled me to understand its volunteer management structure
and style and its performance to the extent that I can analyze and apply the proper
approach to organizations in Thailand.

Another reason for choosing Sebastian Inlet State Park is because of its
significance in size and popularity, which results in a large number of annual volunteers
and a wide variety of volunteer activities provided. The park is located on the east coast,
in the central region of Florida, within the Archie Carr National Wildlife Refuge,
recognized as the most important region of nesting beaches for the loggerhead sea turtle
within the Western Hemisphere (Sebastian Inlet State Park Unit Management Plan,
2001). It was ranked as the sixth most visited Florida State Park in 2006, with over
700,000 visitors. Its entire area is 755 acres, which is separated into two parts: the north
side and the south side of the inlet. Visitors come to the park for recreation such as
fishing, swimming, and visiting the museums. The park operates at its maximum
capacity; it is open 365 days a year, 24 hours a day. There are two museums within the
park, both of them open seven days a week from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. (Florida State
Parks Information Center, 2008). This means that there are various volunteer
opportunities around the park for volunteers to choose from. According to the park
manager, the park hosts approximately 100 to 300 volunteers each year (T. Coulliette,
personal communication, June 14, 2008). I decided to conduct my research in this park so that I would have the opportunity to learn from a number of American volunteers with different skills, interests, motivations, and background. The park provides such diverse volunteer tasks as construction and maintenance, collecting trash, collecting toll fees, giving interpretation and assisting the visitors at the museum, patrolling the area, scouting sea turtles, and fundraising. To interview them would enable me to get the big picture of volunteer management at the park and also to understand the diverse volunteers’ motivations, attitudes, and opinions toward the park’s volunteer management.

Statement of the Problem

Research questions

1. How does Sebastian Inlet State Park manage its volunteers?
2. Who are the volunteers?
3. Why do they volunteer?
4. What are suggestions to enhance the volunteer management at Sebastian Inlet State Park?
5. How might the data obtained from this study apply to volunteer programs in Thailand?

Significance of the Study

This study is different from previous studies in terms of its purposes. I conducted this study in order to find answers regarding domestic volunteer management of a volunteer organization in the United States and volunteer identities which shaped their motivations and attitudes. I also sought input from the volunteers and the paid employees as to how to improve the volunteer management in their organization. I interpret and
analyze the results of this study from my perspective as a Thai business consultant and business management instructor. While discussing the results of the study, as indicated in research question five, I offer my opinion and assessment regarding what management techniques might or might not work well in Thailand. In other words, I am seeking ways in which my research could be adopted by or adapted to Thai organizations, especially non-profits. This study could be viewed as a model to develop and manage volunteer programs that aim for local volunteers in Thailand.
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Kindness is the language which the deaf can hear and the blind can see.
~Mark Twain

Introduction

This chapter provides the theoretical background on concepts of volunteerism that explain the idea of volunteering from different perspectives. I will discuss the net-cost concept and the motive concept to demonstrate the differences and the similarities between them. The act and the involvement of the volunteer, the reasons people volunteer, the types of volunteer work, and the ethical issues regarding volunteerism are discussed in detail. Then, I mention the difference between the meaning of volunteerism and the meaning of caring and helping in order to distinguish which actions shall be considered as volunteer and which actions shall not. Next, I present the concept of service learning which is widely implemented in academic institutions around the United States. This concept is significant for this research because it is tied the ways in which Americans are inculcated with the concepts of volunteerism and how volunteerism is managed among those institutions. The service learning concept could be viewed as one of the concepts of volunteerism, but its objective is more specific. The major distinction is that service learning is focused on providing service while learning useful things, while volunteerism has a broader connotation: it is focused on providing services to others regardless of whether or not volunteers learn something. The service learning concept is interesting for me because it is practical and has shown its pervasive success around the United States. In addition, I believe that it has the potential to be implemented
successfully in Thailand if the concept is designed and implemented properly to fit Thai culture.

After that, I review the literature on the motivations of volunteers, the factors that attract people to get involved in volunteerism, and the factors that keep them involved. The motivation concept in this dissertation focuses on motivation to do work without getting returns directly from the work. Numerous sources regarding the motivation of volunteers provide different information, so the data I chose to present in this chapter is based on books and research that I viewed as relevant. Even though volunteerism and volunteer motivation are flexible matters and the results of different research varies, it is important to review them to get the general idea about the nature of volunteers and their motivation. The reviews in this part enabled me to gain understanding about the psychology of volunteers and I used this information as a guideline to develop my interview questions.

To understand the differences between the motivation of the domestic volunteers and the volunteers who come from other countries, I review the definition and concept of volunteer tourism. Next, I review the literature on ways of measuring volunteer work. These measurements allowed me to design the interview questions so that I might draw correlations between the volunteers’ performances and their personal characteristics and backgrounds. Those measurements allow me to interpret the results of my data more soundly.

Then, I review previous research on volunteerism in the United States, including the trend of volunteerism around the nation and the characteristics of American volunteers. This section permits the readers to understand the big picture of volunteerism
status in the United States and to be able to compare it with those of other countries. I also review the American volunteers’ preference of volunteer destinations and their preferences for long-distance volunteering. This is directly related to my research because I aim to understand why Americans volunteer and what makes them interested in volunteering abroad (such as in Thailand) where local people do not pay much attention to volunteering. I also review how American volunteers manage their time compared to those who do not volunteer. This information may be useful for me when planning volunteering programs in Thailand.

Consequently, I review the volunteer opportunities in Thailand by providing three case studies obtained from internet searches. All three case studies are derived from the top three websites that appeared when I used an internet search engine to search for “volunteer in Thailand.” It appears that all of them are websites that belong to the volunteer coordination organizations that target volunteers from other countries, particularly Western countries. This correlates with my assumption in the first chapter that volunteerism in Thailand is more well-known among people from western countries than among the local Thai people. The reviews add to the rationale of why and how such contradictions happen and help me find ways to design suitable volunteer management practices to promote domestic volunteerism in Thailand.

Lastly, I review the concept of organization management, which I use as a structure to analyze the volunteer management of Sebastian Inlet State Park in chapter 4. Chapter 4 provides a theoretical lens for understanding ways to interpret my data to answer the research question number one, “How does Sebastian Inlet State Park manage its volunteers?” Management, as stated in chapter 2, consists of four main functions:
planning, organizing, directing, and controlling. The four functions are related to each other and form a continuous process. The definition of planning covers the process of planning for the volunteer workforce and also the decisions on rules and regulations. The second management function, organizing, refers to the design of the organizational structure and the process of human resource management, which includes attracting, developing, and maintaining the volunteer workforce. The third management function, directing, mentions the motivation of the workforce to work towards the goal of the organization. The last management function is controlling, which focuses on assessing the performance of the workforce in relation to the goal of the organization in order to plan for corrective action or to maintain or enhance good performance.

In sum, this chapter provides understanding about volunteerism, the motivation of volunteers, the trends of volunteerism, and the management concept. The information, concepts, and theory from this chapter enable me to analyze the results of this research in the later chapters.

Concepts of Volunteerism

In this chapter, I choose to mention two concepts of volunteerism in order to provide an understanding of how volunteerism is defined. The first concept is the net-cost concept, which focuses on the assumption that people always compare their investment to their return on that investment. This concept argues that true volunteers should not volunteer for exchange of benefits; on the contrary, they should be selfless and should put the interests of the other person ahead of their own. The higher the degree of selflessness the person possesses, the higher the level of his/her volunteer status. The second concept
is the motive of volunteer concept. Its principle is that besides getting the work done by unpaid labor, volunteers should have intrinsic motives to do the work for others.

*The Net-Cost Concept of Volunteerism*

According to Musick and Wilson (2008), volunteer work consists of four components: the act of a volunteer is voluntary, unrewarded, organized, and of benefit to strangers. Musick and Wilson brought up the utilitarian aspect, stating that people always compare the input and output of their efforts and time, and will be willing to work when they consider that the benefit exceeds the cost. The “benefit” here refers to both materials and perks that the volunteer organizations give the volunteers and the intrinsic self-esteem rewards they gain from their work, whereas the cost refers to the investment in time, effort, and in some cases, money. In turn, volunteering is defined as behavior that violates the utilitarianism rule. Musick and Wilson emphasized that the more the net-cost rule is violated, the higher the level of volunteer status (or prestige) the volunteers possess.

The net-cost concept of volunteering is based on the notion that the individual with lower returns shall be classified as belonging to a higher status of volunteer. In other words, a person who is willing to give and in fact do more than he/she takes fits well with the definition of a “genuine” volunteer. Frey and Geotte (1992) supported the idea that if people volunteer only because they want to gain something they value such as working skill or reputation, then they shall be considered as overly utilitarian and calculating. Regarding the net-cost approach, the key component of the volunteer definition is “selflessness.”
There have been extensive debates about whether or not volunteer organizations should offer benefits to their volunteers in exchange for or in appreciation of their services. In modern practice, many volunteer organizations in the United States offer benefits to their volunteers, mostly in the form of privileges such as waived-entrance fees to enter state parks, task-related training, certificates of recognition, and appreciation parties. Musick and Wilson (2008) reported that most (93%) of the volunteers surveyed in the 1997 United Kingdom National Survey of Volunteering agreed that the volunteer organizations should provide work-related training to their volunteers, such as first-aid skill training for those who volunteer as firefighters, in return for their services. Monetary benefits are rare but some organizations provide it. For example, AmeriCorps grants their volunteers, who are mostly of school or college-age, with education scholarships which are doubled in amount after two years of their service with the organization. The rationale of granting scholarships is that the volunteers of that age are young and the financial issue might be a major obstacle for them to join the service. To participate in the programs, the volunteer has to deal with the financial cost of volunteering and the lost opportunity to work for money during that period of time. Such financial cost of volunteering could be the impediment that obstructs the opportunity for those potential volunteers to join the program, whereas the stipends offered by the organization are the solution to help overcome it. Nonetheless, very few organizations can afford to offer monetary incentives. In fact, there are numerous cases in which the volunteers do not receive anything in return; instead, they have to pay the organization to cover the cost of volunteering. Such expenses can include membership fees, transportation expenses to and from the volunteering sites, and occasionally personal equipment needed to perform the
work. It is notable that by law, such expenses can be counted as contributions to charity and the volunteers are eligible to claim a deductible on their income tax. Musick and Wilson (2008) reported that the majority of the people in the United States agree that it is acceptable and sensible that people pay to do volunteer work; and they also support the law regarding the right of volunteers to claim their volunteer-related expenses as tax deductions.

From my opinion, the net-cost concept seems to be idealistic regarding the idea of “selflessness.” I believe that people do things according to their needs or interests. Instead of being “selfless,” I understand that people volunteer according to their motives. Such motives could be extrinsic such as things or opportunities that are granted from the organization in exchange for their time and efforts to volunteer, such as free passes, discounts, opportunity to socialize, opportunity to spend time productively, or even opportunity to learn. There could also be intrinsic motives such as a sense of belonging and self esteem when doing valuable things for the community. According to the previous paragraph, I agree that it is acceptable and sensible that the organizations granted tax deductions or monetary benefits to their volunteer.

There are ethical and psychological issues surrounding whether volunteer organizations should offer benefits to their volunteers. Regarding ethical concerns, Musick and Wilson (2008) reflect that, in general, society views volunteer work as an opportunity to work and contribute to others, and it would be unethical for organizations to offer benefits as incentives to attract and to build loyalty among their volunteers. They insist that volunteer jobs would become less attractive if material incentives are attached to it. They refer to a number of social psychological experiments showing that people
tend to reduce their effort when offered a monetary reward to perform the work they always do. They conclude that external rewards undermine intrinsic motivation. Vis-à-vis psychological concern, research in the past has shown that volunteers appreciate the psychological benefits they earn from volunteering. Meijs, Handy, Cnaan, Brudney, Ascoli, Ranade, Hustinx, and Weiss (2003) argue that the volunteers who seek psychological benefits should not be seen as a “less than pure volunteer.” According to the Illinois Civic and Engagement Project (2007), a study in Illinois in 2000 shows that when the residents were asked what it would take to get them more involved in volunteer activities, a substantial minority (18%) answered that they would get more involved if they were personally affected by the outcome, if their neighborhood was affected by the development, if their jobs demanded some action, or if they would personally benefit from the work. Such expectations of the volunteers, defined based on motive volunteer concept, would not disqualify them from volunteer status because they were pursuing work for the benefits of the community.

*The Motive Concept of Volunteerism*

Based on “motive of volunteer concept,” volunteering is unpaid work willingly done outside the home in an organizational setting and performed during the allocated time which is free from paid work or daily life commitments. In other words, volunteers are unpaid laborers that are appropriately motivated. It is emphasized that although it is acceptable, common, and not unethical that volunteer organizations offer benefits to their volunteers and the volunteers can enjoy benefit from their volunteer work, they must not volunteer for the purpose of gaining those benefits. The essential factor embedded in volunteers is their spirit to do the work for the benefits of others whether or not the
benefits offered by the organizations are provided or the work is unpleasant (Musick & Wilson, 2008). The volunteers’ motives to work may be based on intangible benefits such as good feelings about their own generosity, selflessness, courage, compassion, and ability to contribute to the communities. The feelings they receive from others, such as a sense of comradeship and appreciation from society, are also a possible motive (Martin, 1994).

According to Campbell and Wood (1999), volunteers should be more concerned for other people’s interest than their own. People who are driven by self-interest should not be considered as authentic volunteers. Many volunteer agencies support this idea and define authentic volunteers as those with the right motives and who respond to the right incentives from inside without gaining any benefit from the organizations.

Musick and Wilson (2008) explain that caring and volunteering are distinct activities but one should not exaggerate the differences between them. First, although volunteer work is one way people choose to spend their leisure time, it can also be seen as a duty or something people believe they owe to their community or to a group or organization to which they belong. This sense of duty moves volunteer work much closer to care work, the difference being that the obligation is owed to a larger social entity rather than to a specific person or organization. Members of an organization such as a religious congregation may well feel under strong pressure to take their turn helping out with organizational events. In sum, volunteer work is not always freely chosen and voluntary is not a synonym for willing.

In conclusion, according to Musick and Wilson (2008) volunteers are not simply unpaid workers; instead, they are unpaid laborers who have intrinsic unselfish motives to
work for the benefits of others. However, there is no absolute conclusion on how to define the appropriate motivation for volunteer work. From my opinion, “intrinsic unselfish motives” may not be the proper way to describe a volunteer’s motivation. I believe volunteers do things because they want something in return, which should not be considered “selfish.” For example, volunteers build new homes for victims of natural disasters. The volunteers’ purpose is to help the victims get a shelter and improve their quality of life at the same time, they expect to enhance their self esteem and also feel good if they are praised and appreciated by the victims and the society.

Conclusion of Concepts of Volunteerism

Even though volunteerism seems to be a commonsense concept, it sometimes can be too general and overlap with many other concepts. People are using the term and interpreting it according to their own understanding and intensions. The meaning of volunteering is often contested; people do not agree on what should count as volunteering. I developed a conceptual framework of volunteerism in this research regarding the definition of volunteerism on two concepts: net-cost concept and motive concept. However, I did not limited definition of volunteers to only people who are “selfless” or people who do not expect anything in return. In this study, volunteers are defined as people who work for the benefit of others, without getting paid, and who are driven by their own intrinsic motives.

The Distinction of Volunteering, Helping, and Caring

When viewing volunteer as unpaid work for the benefit of others, the meaning of volunteering overlaps with the meaning of helping and caring. Volunteer work is conventionally defined as work being performed through organizations or agencies. The
organizations manage volunteers by planning on the amount and qualification of volunteer workforces, identifying the volunteers’ roles, then recruiting and giving training to the volunteers, allocating them to the suitable tasks, and arranging the schedules for the volunteers; some organizations even evaluate their volunteers. Many times people mix the meaning of volunteering with helping and caring in an informal way such as driving friends to places or walking old people across the street. Those actions of helping, in one way, can be viewed as volunteer work because they do it without getting paid and the benefits go to the others. Musick and Wilson (2008) suggest that such service should not be counted as volunteerism; instead, volunteerism should be understood to be in the form of bureaucratized help. Therefore, the action of reciprocity in a casual manner without the management of any organizations should not be categorized as volunteerism.

The meaning of care work is also closely related to volunteerism, according to Farkas and Himes (1997). The meaning of care work is more associated with kin relations, or face-to-face association, and is related to social responsibility. Caring works are, for example, visiting elderly relatives and managing household tasks for them, and providing transportation to neighbors. Ellis and Noyes (1990) suggest that those acts of caring should be identified not as volunteerism, but as basic responsibilities of caring, which implies help that is necessary, unavoidable, required, and generally expected. They suggest that there are three ways of distinguishing volunteering from care work. First, volunteering work is usually the work that is performed for the benefit of other people with whom the volunteer has no relationship or even knows, whereas caring is usually a consequence of the already existing social relationships with families or friends. Second,
volunteer work is non-obligatory work. The volunteer can freely choose to do or not to do the work without feeling guilty. In addition, society does not blame them, regarding morality, if they choose not to do the work (Dekker & Halman, 2003). On the contrary, the caregiver is likely to think of the roles as an inescapable responsibility. Care work is an obligation because it implies strong obligations from the caregiver to the caretaker due to their relationship, which may be kin, friend, or community related (Rozario, Howell, & Hinterlong, 2004). Meijs et al. (2003) suggest that people who volunteer in connection with their jobs, their school curriculum requirements, or some family duty are less likely to be considered true volunteers. According to Adair (1997), volunteer work is more pure precisely when the work is done by choice, not by obligation, and the benefit falls onto the people whom the volunteer does not know. Third, volunteers perform the work in order to benefit others without special relationship between them. On the contrary, there is an emotional tie, sometimes very strong, between the caregiver and the person being cared for because of their personal relationship. For example, children taking care of their old parents are significantly more emotionally involved than volunteers who take care of old people.

Concepts of Service Learning

Service-learning is a branch of volunteerism, the difference being that volunteerism focuses on providing services for the benefit of others without expecting anything in return whereas service-learning focuses on providing service in exchange for learning something useful. This concept is mostly applied in schools around the United States (R. Henry, personal communication, August 15, 2008). According to Colin Powell, the founding chairman of America’s Promise, “Service-learning is a particularly fertile
way of involving young people in community service, because it ties helping others to what they are learning in the classroom” (Volunteer Center Orange County, 2006). As defined by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, “Service-learning is a teaching and learning methodology which fosters civic responsibility and applies classroom learning through meaningful service to the community. The strongest service-learning experiences occur when the service is meaningfully immersed in ongoing learning and is a natural part of the curriculum that extends into the community. “Service-learning is an essential strategy in providing a rigorous and relevant curriculum which will prepare students to succeed in the 21st century” (Department of Public Instruction, 2009, p. 1).

In sum, service-learning is usually defined as the volunteer actions taken by young people contributing their efforts to the community. The essential component is that the volunteers learn by experience, not only gaining knowledge but also developing skills, habits, and attitudes necessary for them to solve a wide variety of problems (Dewey, 1956). Those young volunteers are called the service providers while those who receive the service are called service recipients (Terry & Bohnenberger, 2007). According to Waterman (1997), service-learning is presently in wide use at the primary, secondary, and college levels, and its use is expanding more as states make service-learning and community service a part of their high school graduation requirements. As the use of the term has expanded, there have been debates about what should and should not be considered as service-learning.

The Commission on National and Community Service has defined service-learning structurally as follows:
Service-learning is a method:

(a) Under which students learn and develop through active participation in thoughtfully organized service experiences that meet actual community needs and that are coordinated in collaboration with the school and community;

(b) That is integrated into the students’ academic curriculum or provides structured time for the student to think, talk, or write about what the students did and saw during the actual service activity;

(c) That provides students with opportunities to use newly acquired skills and knowledge in real-life situations in their own communities; and

(d) That enhances what is taught in school by extending student learning beyond the classroom and into the community and helps to foster the development of a sense of caring for others (National and Community Service Act of 1990).

Outcomes of Service-Learning

According to Waterman (1997), the benefits to be derived from involvement in service-learning activities can be grouped into four categories. First, service-learning enhances the learning of material within the traditional school curriculum. As with other forms of hands-on experiential learning, students develop a better understanding and appreciation of academic material if they are able to put that material into practice, especially when their actions are beneficial to the others or to their communities.

Second, service-learning helps promote personal development. It is noted that different people may perceive and learn different things from the same project, depending
on their interests and their roles in such projects. Service-learning experiences at the high school and college levels may also contribute to students’ thinking about their career preparation. Students involved in service-learning projects have advantages over solely school-based students because they have opportunities to experience activities in the work environment. Such experiences allow them to make decisions about whether they want to work in such areas in their future, or if they would prefer to do something else.

For example, if students conduct their service-learning projects at a state park, one person may become more aware about the environmental problems and want to pursue a career in environmental-related areas, while another person may find that he/she does not really have an interest in working closely with nature and therefore wants to do something else for a career. Another personal development outcome is that the service providers receive the feeling of self-efficacy and self-esteem. Self-efficacy refers to the perception that one has the ability to bring about desired outcomes (Bandura, 1977), in other words a sense of accomplishment. Self-esteem is to some extent a broader concept involving the overall value assessment one makes regarding oneself in accomplishing the work. Such feelings include pride, self-confidence, and self-respect. It is important that the volunteers experience themselves as making a useful contribution to the project in order to enhance their self-efficacy and self-esteem.

Third, service-learning helps promote the development of civic responsibility and other values of citizenship among the service providers. It is an effective way to cultivate the sense of selflessness and a will to contribute to the community. Involving students in service at an early age leads the students to become aware of the result of their collective
actions that can make a difference in the quality of the civic life. It is believed that such involvement tends to sustain their participation in community service in the future.

Lastly, service-learning contributes benefits to the community. It could be said that service is a win-win situation, whereas the community gains valuable benefits as a result of the service providers’ actions. The service providers increase useful knowledge and skills, gain understanding about work, have a more developed rationale to help decide their future careers, and also develop their self-efficacy and self-esteem (Waterman, 1997).

**Distinction between Service-Learning and Volunteer Service**

As stated earlier, service-learning is a branch of volunteerism. In both activities, individuals become involved in service projects that are beneficial to others, their community, or their environment without getting paid. One major distinction is that volunteer service focuses mainly on providing services to others without expecting returns, while service-learning projects are designed, enacted, supervised, and evaluated with the educational benefits of the experiences as one of the conscious goals (Nathan & Kielsmeier, 1991). For example, a volunteer picking up trash in the public park is clearly considered as performing volunteer work, but not service-learning, because people do not learn anything academically from doing that task. Planting trees can be classified as service-learning because the service providers may learn about the type and the nature of the trees; this project can be related to biology or environmental-based classes. Another major distinction is that, in general, volunteers are from all walks of life, while service-providers are young people who are presently studying in an academic institution, either in school or college. The rationale of the service-learning concept is that the students can
learn useful things related to their academic curriculum which they can implement in their future study or career; therefore, they should provide service with the expectation to learn and gain skills as a result of involvement in the project (Waterman, 1997).

Introduction to the Volunteer Tourism Concept

Volunteer tourism, also known as voluntourism, has become a well-known concept among world travelers, but the meaning is vague and varies. McGehee and Santos (2005) defined volunteer tourism as “utilizing discretionary time and income to travel out of the sphere of regular activity to assist others in need.” Defined by Wearing (2001), volunteer tourists are “those tourists who, for various reasons, volunteer in an organized way to undertake holidays that might involve aiding or alleviating the material poverty of some groups in society, the restoration of certain environments, or research into aspects of society or environment.” In sum, volunteer tourism is the practice of people who travel and volunteer to work at their travel destinations for the benefit of that society without receiving monetary benefits.

The idea of incorporating volunteer work into a vacation is not new, but the scope of volunteer efforts is expanding rapidly. A survey by msnbc.com and Condé Nast Traveler reported that most people are interested in giving back to the local community in some way when travelling, and one of the ways they can do so is to volunteer to work in the place they visit (Lovitt, 2008).

Concepts of Volunteer Motivations

According to Chacon and Vecina (2000), motivations have long been considered as a crucial factor in distinguishing the volunteers who decide to retain their volunteer services from the ones who quit. To understand volunteerism in depth, it is important to
know why people volunteer their time and effort and why they join an organization.
Numerous studies have shown that people volunteer for a combination of different reasons. Research on volunteerism suggests that the major individual motivations to be involved in volunteer work include self-satisfaction and social and personal well-being. People need to feel useful to gain personal satisfaction, and to sense they are cared about by the organization (Wearing, 2001). According to Stebbins (1992), the motivations that are durable benefits of volunteerism include: self actualization; self-enrichment; recreation or renewal of self; feeling of accomplishment; enhancement of self-image; self-expression; social interaction and belongingness; lasting physical products of activity; and a unique ethos demonstrating a subculture with intrinsic beliefs, values, and norms. Such durable benefits will be embedded in the volunteers; in the other words, they can be called intrinsic values.

A study conducted by Strigas (2006) proposed a motivational model that broadens the existing knowledge about volunteer motives. His results advocate the existence of five major motivational factors that explain volunteerism. One of the most important motivations of volunteers is that they gain pleasure from volunteering. In other words, volunteering is their leisure choice activity. Many people are motivated to volunteer due to their need for social interaction and interpersonal relationship. They also volunteer for what they enjoy doing. Some volunteers are motivated by the rewards that the organizations offer. Such rewards can be tangible or intangible, such as volunteer certificates of appreciation, appreciation events, social status, letters of recommendation, or even words of gratitude from the paid staff. Another motivation is the satisfaction of the volunteer’s egoistic feeling, which means the individual’s needs of self actualization,
self-esteem, and achievement. People volunteer because it makes them feel good about themselves. Next, volunteers may be motivated to help the specific people or the community that they care for. For example, somebody may volunteer at an orphanage because she/he has a passion for helping children. Some volunteers are motivated to aid a particular organization to accomplish its goal. For example, people volunteer with the Red Cross organization because they want to support the organization’s philanthropy goal, “… to provide relief to victims of disaster and help people prevent, prepare for, and respond to emergencies” (American Red Cross, 2008). Lastly, volunteers may have external influences as their motive to volunteer; for example, they volunteer because other people in their family volunteer so they think they should do the same, or they are asked by others to volunteer (Wiener, 2008).

Motivations to Participate in Volunteering

Sherr (2008) classified the reasons that people start to volunteer, based on the functional theory of psychology, into six main categories. The functional theory of psychology aims to explain the intrapersonal and interpersonal needs, goals, plans, and motives that people attempt to satisfy through their beliefs and behaviors. The theory indicates that there are several basic psychological functions involved in all human activity. Beliefs and behaviors that help people understand the world serve a knowledge function, those that allow people to express and act on important values serve a values function, and those that protect the ego from threatening aspects of the self serve an ego defensive function. In addition, beliefs and behaviors that lead to rewards and allow people to minimize risk serve a utilitarian function, and those that help people fit in with others serve a social adjusting function. There are several broad assumptions designating
why people start volunteering, such as people do it to satisfy personal needs. The theory explains that different people may do the same volunteer activity to satisfy different personal needs, that people may satisfy more than one personal need with the same volunteer activity, and that the more opportunities created for people to meet different types of personal needs, the greater is the likelihood that people will begin volunteering (Clary & Snyder, 1991).

The six categories discussed are as follows. First, people begin volunteering because they want to express the values which reside in volunteerism that are important to them, such as altruistic and humanitarian values. These people see the opportunity to help other people through participating in volunteering.

Second, people begin volunteering because they want to gain new experiences and also to get the opportunity to exercise their knowledge and skills by doing volunteer work. This category is the main purpose of service learning. Regarding this knowledge function, people volunteer because they want to establish self-development through their volunteering experiences that they may not be able to do anywhere else.

Third, people begin volunteering because they want to get involved in a social network. They see the opportunity to meet other people, make new friends, and even enhance their social status by showing that they are making a valuable contribution to society. This reason is related to the social adjusting function. A study by Morrow-Howell, Kinnevy, and Mann (1999) shows that older people tend to favor this social opportunity more than younger people. In addition, volunteer organizations that emphasize appreciation for the volunteer efforts and create friendly, close, and
welcoming work environments among the volunteers and the paid staff are likely to attract more volunteers.

Fourth, people begin volunteering because they are attracted by career-related benefits that may result from engaging in volunteer work. Some people begin volunteering in order to improve their career-related working knowledge and skills while some people want to use the volunteer opportunity to explore a new career. This category is also the focus of service learning. However, people who enter volunteerism for this reason have high potential to stop volunteering shortly after they achieve what they want.

Fifth, people begin to volunteer because they want to protect their ego from a negative reflection of self. For example, people volunteer in order to reduce the feeling of being more fortunate than others and they see it as an obligation to pay back the community.

Lastly, people become involve in volunteering in order to improve their self-esteem and sense of belonging. For example, some people volunteer to escape from the feelings of isolation, uselessness, and hopelessness. Many people view volunteerism as a way to maintain their mental health and increase their self-esteem and self-confidence. This motivation is also related to the functioning of ego (Sherr, 2008).

**Motivations to Continue Volunteering**

Sherr (2003) classified the reasons that volunteers maintain their service through time into five factors. First, good communication within the organization is a very important factor to maintain the volunteer’s work in the long run. Good communication is a flow of quality information from the organization to its volunteers. Information flow consists of, for example, general news within the organization, the organization’s
expectations of its volunteers, rules and regulations, recognition, and feedback given to the volunteers. There are a variety of forms of communication, such as face-to-face interactions, newsletters, bulletin boards, and more complicated forms such as public displays of recognition. It is reported that face-to-face conversation is the most effective factor to serve the satisfaction of the volunteers and increase their level of commitment. Providing informal recognition and appreciation early in the volunteer experience can affect the volunteers’ tenure of service at an organization (Stevens, 1991). If the volunteers are satisfied with the quality of the communication, they are likely to stay longer.

Second, scheduling, work assignment, and work allocation are crucial factors to maintain the volunteers’ efforts. Volunteers tend to be satisfied with work if they can schedule their own volunteer hours and days, especially if the schedule is flexible. In addition, they are apt to continue volunteering if they are assigned to work on tasks that allow them to utilize their personal talent or specific skills.

Next, if the volunteers can see that the outcome of their volunteering efforts really benefit somebody, they have a propensity to remain in the service. This factor will be reinforced if there is a connection, particularly direct contact, between the volunteers and the people benefiting from their services. In other words, if the volunteers feel that their efforts are worthwhile and important, they will be motivated to continue volunteering. On the contrary, if they feel useless or incapable, they tend to terminate their volunteer work sooner (Wharton, 1991).

Fourth, volunteers expect good support from the organization they work for, such as training support and emotional support. Volunteers who participate in training report
higher levels of satisfaction than those who do not (Galindo-Kuhn & Guzely, 2001). Organizations offering longer training sessions and a variety of training topics are also likely to have a larger number of volunteers who are satisfied and committed (Cyr & Dowrick, 1991; Paradis & Usui, 1989). Volunteers need emotional support not only from the organization’s paid staff, but also among the volunteers themselves. Volunteers have a propensity to continue their service when they perceive that they are a part of the team and each member is willing to collaborate in problem solving, cooperate on projects, and encourage the volunteer initiative and activity (Cyr & Dowrick, 1991). On the contrary, if they feel like they are being treated without respect, such as being told what to do and what not to do, they will lose their interest and motive for participating in that volunteer effort.

Lastly, a strong sense of group integration is another important factor that keep the volunteer in service. Group integration refers to the bonds that tie volunteers affectively to one another and the organization. Such relationships are independent of the work; instead, they provide a social aspect of the volunteer experience that is associated with satisfaction and commitment. The study by Field and Johnson (1993) indicated that volunteers are more satisfied when they have contact with other volunteers, not only in the work, but also at social events or casual socializing outside of the workplace, such as having an informal dinner with the paid staff and other volunteers, or being invited to join holiday parties (Sherr, 2008).
Measuring Volunteering Work

To study volunteerism, it is important to find ways to measure it so that the data can be interpreted in a reasonable manner. According to Musick and Wilson (2008), there are a number of approaches to the measurement of volunteering, including, but not limited to, time span, the volunteer rate and volunteer hours, concentration, regular and occasional volunteering, the timing of volunteer work, and the range of volunteering and the dispersion of hours. Each measuring approach is explained as follows.

- **Time span** - Time-span means the length of time that the people have been volunteering in the past. For example, Mary has volunteered within the last two months or the last twelve months.

- **Volunteer rate** - Volunteer rate means the number of volunteers, classified by their demographic, during a specific period of time. For example, among all the volunteers at this organization, 80% of them are women and 20% of them are men.

- **Volunteer hours** – Volunteer hours mean the number of volunteer time units per one period of time. For example, Mary volunteers eight hours per day, one day per week. It is notable that the volunteer rate does not necessarily correlate with the number of hours per week or year that the person contributes. In fact, some studies may show contradictions, such as there are 80% women volunteers and 20% men volunteers in one organization; however, on average, men contribute more volunteer hours (e.g., eight hours a day, one day a week) in their service than women (e.g., four hours a day, one day a week.) It is essential to specify carefully whether the discussed figure is the volunteer rate or the volunteer hours.
• Concentration – Concentration refers to the load of volunteer contributions from a specific group of volunteers. For example, 80% of people volunteering in the zoo are students, while 20% of them are adults; conversely, 90% of the accomplished work is done by the adults. In reality, many research results show that a minority of the volunteers contributes the majority of the work load. In fact, it is not uncommon to find that among all volunteers, there are a few people who contribute a significant amount of the work. The concentration figure illustrates how evenly the load of volunteer work is spread across all volunteers and identifies which groups in the population contribute the greatest proportion of work. This is different from measuring the rate of volunteering or the average number of hours contributed.

• Regular or occasional volunteers – It is necessary to learn if the volunteers are volunteering on a regular or occasional basis. Knowing whether people are doing volunteering or not and how many hours they volunteer does not tell much about how their contributions are structured across time. For example, two people contribute the same number of hours but they work on very different volunteer schedules: one person contributes 120 hours over five days by volunteering on special occasions such as volunteering in a development camp and staying in the village; another person may volunteer one day a week, six hours a day, every week continuously for five months, accumulating 120 volunteer hours. In reality, more people volunteer sporadically or on an occasional basis than on a regular basis.
• Timing of volunteer work – One important thing to consider is the timing of volunteer work, or when people volunteer. It is necessary to find out if there are high and low seasons of volunteers’ demand and supply. Knowing the timing of volunteer work enables volunteer organizations to plan to provide work to the volunteers and to recruit for the volunteers structurally. For example, if the number of volunteers peak and there is an oversupply during the winter season, the organization may create new jobs for them during that period of time. Or if the volunteer supply is low during the daytime on weekdays, the organization may consider recruiting more volunteers from the group of people who do not have to work during that time. The organization may aim to attract retirees or people who are in their “gap” years (such as people between graduating from college and entering their career jobs).

• Range of volunteering and the dispersion of hours – Range of volunteering means the number and type of volunteer activities that one person is involved in at the same period of time. For example, volunteer A is doing two volunteer jobs at the same time: collecting trash at the state park for four hours per week and doing interpretation for a summer camp for eight hours per week. Volunteer B is doing one volunteer job at the park greeting visitors at the museum for three days per week. It is suggested that the researcher should look into how many jobs and organizations each volunteer is involved in. The other measurement approach is dispersion of hours, which means the number of hours that the volunteer allocates across those volunteering jobs.
American Volunteers’ Preferences of Volunteer Destinations

People select their volunteer projects and locations based upon their needs and abilities, including personal, physical, emotional, intellectual, and financial factors. A survey conducted by researchers at the University of California at San Diego polled 1,400 American adults regarding global volunteer service and reported that approximately 40% of the informants would like to be involved in volunteer service during their vacation times, while 13% of the informants would like to do volunteer work for the entire year (DeVries, 2008). The same survey reveals that an increasing number of people in all stages of life, from 18 years old to over 65 years old, are interested in volunteer tourism activities. It is notable that the preferred destinations and length of times of volunteering relate to their ages. Out of those 1,400 informants, approximately 26% of people ages 18-24 years old prefer Africa and Europe for their volunteer vacation, while about 36% of people above 45 years old prefer North America. Moreover, the adults ages 25-44 tend to do volunteering on vacation for one week, while young adult ages 18–24 years old and the retirees (age 65 plus) tend to stay several weeks or an entire summer (DeVries, 2008).

Volunteerism in the United States

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the United States Department of Labor, around 61.8 million people or 26.4% of the population volunteered through or for an organization at least once between September 2007 and September 2008. The data on volunteering was collected through a supplement to the September 2008 Current Population Survey (CPS). The CPS is a monthly survey of about 60,000 households that obtains information on employment and unemployment among the nation’s civilian non-institutional population, age 16 and over. Volunteers are defined as persons who did
unpaid work (except for expenses) through or for an organization. Considering volunteering among demographic groups, the same research reports that the volunteer rates of men and women are 23.2 and 29.4%, respectively, of the total population, and women volunteer at a higher rate than did men across all age groups, educational levels, and other major demographic characteristics. In addition, people age 35 to 44 are the most likely to volunteer (31.3%), while persons in their early twenties were the least likely (18.6%). It is notable that the ethnicities of volunteers are diversified: whites at 27.9%, blacks at 19.1%, Asians at 18.7%, Hispanic and Latino at 14.4%. Married people volunteer at a significantly higher rate (27.9%) than those who have never married (20.4%) and those with other marital status (20.9%). In addition, parents with children under age 18 (33.8%) are considerably more likely to volunteer than are people without children (23.5%) (Bureau of Labor Statistics of the United States Department of Labor, 2008).

A report by the Corporation for National and Community Service indicated that in 2007, American volunteers contributed approximately 8.1 billion hours of volunteer services, worth about $158 billion. The study also showed that the volunteer intensity is increasing; in 2007, about one third of the volunteers served more than a hundred hours a year. Volunteerism seems to reflect the opposite direction of the nation’s economics; as the economy slows and nonprofit organizations struggle to provide services on smaller budgets, volunteers become more important to the nation’s communities. However, the economy has a significant impact on volunteers as well, especially in the case of rising gas prices, since their incomes do not change or may even lower. It is notable that the data since 1989 show that the most preferable organizations among the volunteers are
religious organizations, educational organizations, and youth service organizations, respectively (Corporation for National and Community Service, 2008).

Regarding volunteer retention, the report by the Corporation for National and Community Service indicated that the majority (two thirds) of the volunteers choose to continue service past one year while about one third serve for only one year or less. It was suggested by the report that volunteer management is critically important and that creating positive volunteer experiences is the key to the growth and sustainability of volunteer service. The research showed that the more time a person spends on volunteering, the more likely that person is likely to continue serving in the future (Corporation for National and Community Service, 2008).

Americans’ Preference for Long-Distance Volunteering

The Corporation for National and Community Service reported that Americans are willing to travel long distances to help others. More than 3.7 million Americans (about 6 percent of the total volunteer force and many of whom are college age) traveled long distances to volunteer, i.e., more than 120 miles away from their homes. For example, for the disaster recovery volunteer project after Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, Louisiana in 2007, one fifth of the volunteers were out-of-state residents. Moreover, in 2007, about 1.1 million American volunteers served with organizations located overseas. When comparing all adult volunteers, the largest proportion of long-distance volunteers are age 16–24, single, and do not have children. It is notable that the most committed volunteers are also the most likely to engage in long distance volunteering. For example, the individuals who volunteer more than 100 hours per year, serve more than 12 weeks per year with their main organization, or serve with more than
one organization, are much more likely to serve as long-distance volunteers (Corporation for National and Community Service, 2008).

Time Management and Community Involvement of American Volunteers

According to research conducted in 2008 by the Corporation for National and Community Service exploring how Americans use their time, it was found that the largest difference in how time is spent among the volunteers, former volunteers, and non-volunteers is their time expenditure of watching television. On average, current volunteers watch television approximately 15 hours a week while former volunteers and non-volunteers watch television about 21 hours and 23 hours a week. It could be viewed as the volunteers’ trade off of about five or more hours a week of watching television to participate in volunteering service. Besides spending time watching television, the study also showed that the volunteers spent significantly more time socializing and getting involved in community organizational activity more than the former volunteers and the non-volunteers (Corporation for National and Community Service, 2008).

Volunteer Opportunities in Thailand

Thailand is one of the places in the world that attracts many volunteers from other countries. There are numerous websites promoting volunteer opportunities and providing an array of volunteer work, job descriptions, choices of location, and fees. In most cases, interested people can sign up on line and go through the recruiting process conveniently. All of the organizations I found from an online search were non-Thai organizations which have a common mission, to provide volunteer opportunities for people who like to travel and want help out in the developing countries. These organizations are working as a liaison between the organizations in Thailand that need volunteer help and the foreign
volunteers. Most of these organizations have a physical office either in Thailand or in
other countries; they do the administration and marketing work and arrange the program
in the country, find accommodations, provide supplies, train staff, set up the schedule for
the volunteers, and charge the volunteers (customers) for their services. The target groups
of these organizations are mostly similar: young people who have a gap year between
college and work, new retirees, and people who are on long vacations. According to the
advertising websites mentioned, there are costs to participate in volunteerism in Thailand.
The major costs include airplane tickets, food and accommodation, and administration
fees charged by the service organizations. Although volunteers using such services may
seem to be using a tour agency, their main activity is to participate in volunteer work and
classified activity is a minor activity. It is notable that the local Thais are not the target of the
liaison organization websites, even though the costs for people living in Thailand such as
transportation and accommodation costs, would be significantly lower. This observation
suggests that either the Thais are not interested in volunteerism or that the concept of
paying to do volunteer work does not work for the Thais. It could also be possible that
Thais volunteer without the need for a liaison, or maybe they simply help and care for
others on their routine and do not have spare time to be official volunteers.

I would like to provide three examples of organizations that provide volunteer
opportunities in Thailand in order to better explain the circumstances of volunteerism
there. I chose to discuss these organizations as examples because they are the very first
websites that appeared from the search, which implies that they are easy to access and
that potential volunteers may research them first before they look at websites that appear
later in a web search.
Mundo Exchange Organization

Mundo Exchange is a nongovernmental organization based in Oregon, USA, providing volunteer opportunities in Thailand. It advertises through the website www.thai-experience.org. Mundo Exchange partners with a Thai organization, Laekplian Lokgatat, which literally translates into English as “exchange the world vision” – (author’s translation). The Thai organization helps with making connections with local Thai organizations and seeking volunteer opportunities around Thailand, while Mundo Exchange provides funding and training to the staff of the Thai organization. The focus of this organization is on helping Thai people with fewer opportunities, mainly poor children, disabled people and village women. The volunteers can choose their type of work such as teaching in public schools, working in local temples, or doing construction work on natural disaster sites.

The conditions to join the program are that the volunteers must be 18 years of age or older, speak English, and be computer literate, independent, able to work under difficult conditions, and embrace challenges. The program is aimed at people who seek the opportunity to travel abroad and want to make a difference in the lives of the less fortunate. The target groups are those who have a gap year for personal development, are newly retired, or are presently unemployed. The organization advertises that the benefits that the volunteers earn varies: some people may gain personal development, some may enjoy the insight of cross cultural experiences, some may get hands on experience with Thai culture and Buddhist philosophy, and all get a chance to help. The program’s slogan is “Volunteers get more.” The website points out that volunteering with them is fun since the volunteers get to socialize with people with the same interests. They not only work,
but the volunteers of this program are also provided with enjoyable activities such as sightseeing, Thai language classes, and Thai cooking classes. The website does not show the cost to attend its program (Thai-experience.org, 2008). The website states:

Volunteering is partly work, partly vacation and a different travel experience in Thailand. See and experience more than the average tourist or backpacker. Go home with a different perspective, memories that will last and new friends made. Learn about "Third World" issues and gain cross-cultural awareness, a valuable skill to add to your Curriculum Vitae (CV) or resume in this time of globalization.

(Thai-experience.org, 2008)

*International Volunteer HQ (IVHQ)*

International Volunteer HQ (IVHQ) is an organization providing volunteer placement in developing countries around the world. It places over 1,500 people in volunteer programs abroad with a wide range of volunteer types of work. As of 2008, it sent people to ten countries including Kenya, Tanzania, Ghana, India, Nepal, Vietnam, Ecuador, Costa Rica, Peru, and Thailand. It also plans to expand its destinations to Bolivia, Mexico, Philippines, China and South Africa by 2010. The organization provides the volunteers a variety of jobs in Thailand, including teaching, childcare, and community development. The jobs, for example, have volunteers help at a special school for the mentally disabled, teach English to school children as well as adults in remote villages, and carry out construction work such as painting and building infrastructure such as roads and bridges for communities. Placement is in the Chiang Rai area, including villages and surrounding hill tribes in northern Thailand. The program fees range from $305 per week to $1,275 per three-month term. The program provides
accommodation on-site to the volunteers which eases the logistics of transportation and
the overall management. The volunteers are scheduled to work from Monday to Friday
from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and have free time during the weekend. The program
provides weekend tourist activities for its volunteers such as trekking or visiting temples.

Like the Mundo Exchange organization, International Volunteer HQ also targets
people who are traveling abroad, taking a gap year, or wanting to provide assistance in a
developing country. Two conditions to be able to participate in this program are to be
over the age of 18 years and speak English. IVHQ persuades people to join its program
by highlighting that the volunteer will experience and learn about different cultures while
making a difference in local communities in the developing world. Volunteers also get
chances to travel and associate closely with local people. The organization emphasizes
that it offers a high quality program in terms of food and accommodation. It also
underlines that it provides affordable placements in terms of food, accommodation, and
the administration fee. IVHQ also partners with local NGOs to use them as liaisons to get
to the communities and learn their needs. The NGOs are helpful because they are parts of
the communities themselves. Below is a quotation from a volunteer who worked in
northern Thailand, describing her experience and feelings (International Volunteer
Headquarters, 2009).

Everything is going great here in Chiang Rai. It has taken me a little while to
adjust to the dramatic lifestyle change but other than that I have been enjoying the
many experiences on offer. As part of my volunteer work we have stayed in two
different hill tribe villages already and tasted many different foods. The last week
has been very busy and it feels as if I have been in Thailand for months. Thank
Travel to Teach

Travel to Teach is an international volunteer organization based in Thailand. It provides volunteer opportunities not only in Thailand, but also in other places including Indonesia, Cambodia, China, India, Laos, Nepal, Vietnam, El Salvador, Galapagos Island, and Mexico. Its practice is similar to the two previous organizations, to place volunteers in locations that the volunteers want and have proper skills to perform the work well. Unlike the organizations mentioned earlier, Travel to Teach focuses on teaching. The volunteers can choose to teach English to the students in schools or to the monks in temples. In addition, they can choose to do school-related work such as doing restoration projects in school, which could be anything ranging from gardening to maintenance work.

Travel to Teach’s mission is to provide opportunities for people to volunteer abroad in the poorer parts of the world where education is insufficiently provided. The benefits that the volunteers will get are the same things as the other organizations offer, e.g., opportunities to travel abroad, to learn new and different cultures, to meet people of the same interests from different places, and to make a positive difference to others’ lives. The placements are scattered in the northern provinces of Thailand such as Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai and Nongkhai. It is notable that all offered provinces are well known tourist destinations. The program fees range from $580 for two weeks to $1,830 for twenty-four weeks. This fee includes accommodations and training.
Like the previous organizations, this organization targets people who are traveling abroad and wanting to make a worthwhile contribution to another country while simultaneously broadening their life experiences. The incentives that the organization uses to attract the potential volunteers’ interest are its flexible (volunteer) work schedule, the significant experiences that would improve their resumes, the opportunities to immerse themselves into a new culture, and affordable travel adventures. All of the incentives mentioned are similar to what other organizations offer. Below is a quotation from a founder and also a volunteer who worked with the Travel to Teach program in Thailand explaining her belief (Travel to Teach, 2009).

I have the strong belief that the best help one can give a country or a person is education. Nothing is more likely to help “empower” people and create conditions for “sustainable development” than education. I also believe that nothing is more likely to help international understanding than actual contact with the everyday life of another country and personal bonds between people. - Kerstin (Last name not provided on website), Travel to Teach founder (Travel to Teach, 2009)

From the three volunteer opportunities in Thailand I mentioned above, I would like to point out that none of them aims to attract local Thais to become volunteers. Perhaps the reason is that these organizations will not profit from local Thais in terms of business revenue, such as revenue from accommodation and food. While it seems that volunteerism managed by those organizations is beneficial to the communities, I also believe that there are possibilities to attract Thais themselves to do the same or even better work because their involvement can be longer-term and the benefits will fall into their own communities.
Theoretical Concepts of Management

According to Schermerhorn (2005), the management process consists of planning, organizing, leading, and controlling the use of resources to accomplish the organization’s goals. This section provides an explanation of each function. I refer to those theoretical concepts of management when analyzing the volunteer management of Sebastian Inlet State Park in chapter 4. The four main management functions are explained as follows.

Planning

Schermerhorn (2005) defines planning as a process of setting performance objectives and determining what actions should be taken to accomplish them. He suggests five steps for systematic planning. First, define the objectives or the desired outcome in a measurable way. Second, evaluate the organization’s current status in comparison with the desired goal, and also consider the strengths and the weaknesses of the organization regarding its objective. Third, generate alternative scenarios for what may happen and would hold back the progress of the project. Then, analyze and plan to handle each scenario properly and choose the alternative action plan that is most likely to enable the organization to reach the desired goal.

In general, plans can be categorized, based on the range of time, into short-term plans which cover one year or less, intermediate-term plans which cover one to two years, and long-term plans which cover three or more years into the future. Lower management levels work directly with the operational employees who are responsible for the development of the short-term plans while upper management levels focus on the long-term plans and the direction of the organization (Schermerhorn, 2008). The master plan of the Florida State park is an example of the long-term plan in that it describes the
goal of the organization in five years. It is separated into different sections of the park and defines the goals of each section. This master plan is developed by not only the park employees, but also by other stakeholders such as the related-state organizations and representatives from the communities in the area. Several meetings were arranged so that the committees had sufficient time to research and make proper decisions (T. Coulliette, personal communication, June 18, 2008). The key factors for the achievement of the long-term plan are that the short-term plans have to be relevant and support the long-term plan and the main goal of the organization should be well-communicated throughout the organization (Schermerhorn, 2005).

A plan can be categorized based on its scope as a strategic plan or an operational plan. A strategic plan determines objectives of the organization by describing what and where it wants to be in the future, while operational plans define what needs to be done in specific work units. A strategic plan can be presented in the form of the mission statement of the organization and the top management of the organization is the one who announces the mission statement (Schermerhorn, 2008). For example, the Peace Corps mission statement was established by its founder, President John F. Kennedy, in 1961. The organization aims to promote world peace and friendship and its mission has three goals: “helping the people of interested countries in meeting their need for trained men and women; helping promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the people served; and helping promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans” (Peace Corps, 2008).

An operational plan can be viewed as an action plan within the specific work unit of the organization, such as financial plans which deal with budget allocations to support
various operations within the organization, facilities plans which deal with designing facilities and work layouts, or human resource plans which deal with the recruitment, selection, and placement of people into various jobs. The Peace Corps has an action plan for recruiting volunteers. The plan includes, for example, the criteria to select the volunteers, the placement of the volunteers, the application process, the categories of work, and the committee to recruit the volunteers. Most of the process can be viewed on the Peace Corps website (Peace Corps, 2008).

Another type of plan concerns policy and procedure, classified as a standing plan, which is used repeatedly over a long period of time. A policy communicates broad guidelines for making decisions and taking action in specific circumstances. For example, human resource policies address issues about employee hiring, termination, performance appraisals, pay increases, promotions, and discipline. Procedures or rules describe the actions to be taken in order to achieve the goal. Punishment could also be enforced for breaching the organization’s rules. Some organizations provided a handbook or work manual that states the organization’s policy and work procedure. For example, the Florida State Park organization developed a volunteer handbook and distributed it to all of the volunteers around the state. The new volunteers, in principle, would receive this handbook during their orientation. The handbook gives them information about the policies regarding their volunteer work, for example, the dress code of volunteers (E. Perry, personal communication, July 20, 2008). Whereas a policy sets a broad guideline for action, procedures define precise actions to be taken. In contrast to standing plans, single-use plans are used once for a specific purpose. Budget is a single-use plan; it shows the allocation of resources and funds to activities, programs, or projects. The well-
defined budget assists the organization to allocate and prioritize its resources and capital efficiently (Schermerhorn, 2008).

The tools and techniques of managerial planning include forecasting, contingency planning, scenarios, benchmarking, participative planning, and the use of staff planners. Forecasting is the process of predicting what will happen in the future. The general forecasting factors are, for example, economic conditions, interest rates, and unemployment rate. It should be concerned that forecasting is a planning aid but not the solution, which means the final analysis of forecasting should rely on human judgment. Planning involves deciding what to do about the implications of forecasts once they are made (Schermerhorn, 2008).

One important technique of managerial planning is contingency planning, which means to plan based on the current situation. Contingency planning identifies alternative courses of action that can be implemented to meet the needs of changing circumstances. A long-term version of contingency planning, called scenario planning, involves identifying several alternative future scenarios or states of affairs that may occur (Schermerhorn, 2008).

In order to create a good plan, the manager should consider benchmarking, a technique that makes use of external comparisons to better evaluate the organization’s current performance and identify possible actions for the future. Benchmarking is the process of measuring an organization’s performance by comparing its own to those of other organization which are considered to be best-in-class (The Benchmarking Exchange, 2009). In other words, the organization can find its benchmarks by searching for the best practices from other organizations of the same operation and mission, and
then compare its performance with those of the others. Another way to set up the organization’s benchmark is to find the internal best performance among the organization’s different work units and use that performance as the organization’s benchmark. However, one of the mistakes that many organizations make when they set up their benchmarks is that they limit their benchmarking activity only to their own area of business or services. It is suggested that organizations should reach out to other areas of business that perform a similar process (The Benchmarking Exchange, 2009).

**Organizing**

Organizing is the process of assigning tasks, allocating resources, and coordinating the activities of individuals and groups to implement plans to achieve the organization’s goal. The managers’ roles are to define the jobs, assign people to the tasks, and provide resources in order to accomplish the jobs (Schermerhorn, 2005).

An organizational chart is a diagram that indicates functions in the organization and portrays the relationships among the departments and within the department of the organization. The chart also indicates the line of command and the direction of communication within the organization. In reality, people in the same organization not only relate formally as it appears in the organization structure, but they also associate in an informal manner (Schermerhorn, 2005).

One of the most popular types of organizational structure is functional structure, where people with similar skills and performing similar tasks are grouped together into formal work units. Members of the functional departments share technical expertise, interests, and responsibilities. The functional structure typically works well for small or simple organizations that produce only one or a few products or services. They also tend
to work best in stable environments where situations are predictable. One of the major advantages of a functional structure is the economy of scale with efficient use of resources since those with similar expertise are pooled together. Other advantages are the effective development of proficiency within the same work unit and a clear career path within functions (Schermerhorn, 2005).

The Corporation for National & Community Service’s organization chart, for example, was created as a functional structured type. The top management level of the organization is the Board of Directors; the position right below the Board of Directors is the Chief Executive Officer, which is a presidential appointment position. The Chief Executive Offices supervises the Chief Financial Officer and Chief Operating Officer. The Chief Financial Officer takes care of the financial management and grants and field financial management. The Chief Operating Officer takes care of different functions of AmeriCorps such as the Learn & Serve function and the Grants Policy & Operations function. The entire organization is monitored by the Inspector General (Corporation for National & Community Service, 2009). This entire organization chart can be classified as a functional structured type, however, within one unit. There is another organization structure with different functions within itself. Most large organizations have their organizations structured by different functions within the organization. One organization does not need to have only one type of organizational structure.

The current trend of organizational design is toward an organic design, which means decentralizing the power within the organization, enforcing fewer rules and procedures, and supporting more personal coordination. Many organizations tend to be less formal and more flexible, and the employees are empowered to handle more
responsibilities and trained to have multiple skills. A manager should delegate power only when the subordinates have sufficient capability to perform the work. In the modern organizing concept, there are ways to empower people at all levels to make more decisions affecting themselves and their work. In addition, the cross-functional style, where the members of the organization with different expertise come to work together on a project, becomes more common (Nikolenko & Brian, 1996).

Human resource management deals with issues related to people such as compensation, hiring, performance management, organization development, safety, wellness, benefits, employee motivation, communication, administration, and training. In sum, human resource management is the function within an organization that focuses on recruitment of, management of, and providing direction for, the people who work in the organization, and maintains their interest in working for the organization. The basic goal of human resource management is to build organizational performance capacity through people (Heathfield, 2009).

**Leading**

Leading is the process of motivating people’s enthusiasm to work to fulfill plans and accomplish objectives (Schermherhorn, 2005). Motivation is the processes that account for an individual’s intensity, direction, and persistence of effort toward attaining a goal (Robbins, 2005). Motivation theories can be divided into two broad categories: content motivation theories and process motivation theories. According to Fisher and Cole (1993), the content motivation theories include Maslow’s needs hierarchy, Alderfer’s ERG (existence, relatedness, and growth needs) theory, Herzberg’s two-factor
theory, and McClelland’s acquired-needs theory. Process motivation theories include Vroom’s expectancy theory, Adam’s equity theory, and Skinner’s reinforcement theory.

These motivation theories have been used to explain, in earlier research, why people volunteer. To structurally elaborate the concepts of motivation, I follow Fisher and Cole’s approach, which divides motivation theories into three categories: needs, conscious reasons, and benefits (Fisher & Cole, 1993). The explanations are as follows:

Needs

Maslow explains that motivation is the individual’s response to internal needs. According to Maslow’s hierarchy of needs theory, all individuals have various needs and there are five levels of needs. In each level, one will not strive for the higher level unless the lower level ones have been satisfied. Maslow’s five needs include physiological needs such as food, water, and air, without which, people cannot survive; safety needs such as the needs for security; social needs such as the needs for love, affection and belongingness; self-esteem needs such as respect from others; and self-actualization needs which refer to what a person wants to be. This theory is often represented as a pyramid, where the lower needs are larger than the upper ones (Simmons, Irwin, & Drinnien, 1987).

McClelland’s acquired-need theory proposes that an individual’s specific needs are acquired over time and are shaped by one’s life experiences. McClelland classifies human needs into three categories: achievement, affiliation, and power needs. He explains that people with a high need for achievement seek to excel. They strive to achieve realistic but challenging goals and advancement in their jobs. On the contrary, people with a high need for affiliation seek harmonious relationships with other people in
order to gain acceptance by others. They tend to follow the social norms and want to
interact with other people and work with them as a team. Lastly, people with high needs
for power tend to have a desire to direct others or to have control over others. They also
want to gain higher personal status and prestige. McClelland explains that an individual’s
motivation is influenced by those three needs. However, an individual does not have one
need at a time, most people hold a combination of the three needs simultaneously
(NetMBA Business Knowledge Center; Chapman, 2008).

Conscious Reasons

Fisher and Cole (1993) classify conscious reasons into three categories. The first
conscious reason focuses on the task to be performed and the location or setting in which
the individual volunteers. If the task is attractive, fun, or matches the interest of the
individuals, they tend to have to have motivation to perform the work. However, if the
task is too complicated or well above the individuals’ capability, the motivation towards
those tasks will be low. In addition, the location and the setting of the work also influence
people’s motivation. If the location is a long commute or the facilities at the working sites
are insufficient for the people to perform their work well, the motivation to work will
deteriorate.

The second conscious reason focuses on the individuals’ perceptions towards
themselves in performing the work, such as perceiving themselves as altruistic persons
when they volunteer. Altruism is considered to motivate individuals who focus on other
people in the work setting. Altruism and egoism accommodate each other to motivate
people to perform their work. Besides altruism, people can also feel accepted and proud
when they do things for others (Clary & Synder, 2002).
The last conscious reason focuses on the individuals themselves. Even though individuals tend to use altruism as their motivation to work, they also admit that they have other self-satisfying reasons to work. Fisher and Cole (1993) identified the motivation for people to work as deriving enjoyment from working with other people and socializing with them, gaining work-related experiences, and enjoying the tasks they perform. In other words, people are motivated to work when they gain something for themselves.

Benefits

The third category of motivation, classified by Fisher and Cole (1993), is benefits. Vroom’s expectancy theory indicates that a person’s performance is based on individual factors such as personality, skills, knowledge, experience and abilities. In general, people work towards their personal goals. The theory suggests that although individuals may have different sets of goals, they can be motivated if they believe that there is a positive correlation between effort and performance and favorable performance will result in a desirable reward or benefit. Motivation will occur if the desire to satisfy the need is strong enough to make the effort worthwhile. Vroom suggests three factors that influence people’s motivation: valence, expectancy, and instrumentality. First, valence refers to emotional expectations toward the outcomes. The outcomes can be either intrinsic, such as satisfaction, or extrinsic, such as money, promotion, or vacation time. In other words, valence refers to the value that people give to the outcome that they expect to receive from their efforts. Second, expectancy refers to the person’s expectation and their level of confidence of what they can do and how well they can do the work. If they are confident that they can accomplish the work, they will tend to have motivation to do it. Third, as
Vroom named it, “instrumentality” is the perception that they will actually receive what they desire as a result of their work effort. If they are not confident that the reward is promising, they will have low motivation to do that work (Value Based Management, 2008).

**Controlling**

The management function of controlling is the process of monitoring activities to ensure they are being accomplished as planned and correcting any significant deviation (Robbins, 2005). The output standard or performance as planned should be in a measurable format such as quantity of work done or amount of time to accomplish the work. The accurate comparison between the output and the standard is significant for controlling purposes since it enables the manager to plan for corrective action and/or to maintain good performance (Schermerhorn, 2005).

Controlling can be classified into three categories based on when the action is taken: feedforward control, concurrent control, and feedback control. Feedforward control is to be implemented before the activity commences. This type of control focuses on the regulation of inputs such as human, material, and financial resources that flow into the organization’s working process. Sometimes called preliminary control or preventive control, feedforward control allows management to prevent problems rather than having to cure them later. Concurrent control which takes place while an activity is in progress, involves the regulation of ongoing activities to ensure that they conform to organizational standards. It is designed to ensure that employee work activities produce the correct results. Concurrent control helps detect the error during the ongoing working process and allows corrective action to be made before the process ends. Lastly, feedback control
focuses on the outputs of the organization after the working process is over. This type of control can be called output control because it comes at the end of the process. Feedback control has an advantage over the feedforward and concurrent control since it can enhance employees’ motivation because they can see their accomplishments in comparison to the goal. However, the major drawback of this type of control is that by the time the error is detected, the damage has already happened. In practice, all these three types of control are usually combined into a multiple control system (Barnat, 2005).

Conclusion

This chapter provides a fundamental understanding of the volunteerism concept, including its definition and distinctions from other related concepts, such as helping and caring. I reviewed the service learning concept, describing how the American education system cultivates the idea of volunteerism in students and how it could affect the mindset of those students as they grow up. To understand the motivation of the volunteers, I reviewed research regarding the motivation of the volunteers to get involved with the program and their motivation to remain in the service. In addition, I research how to measure volunteer work in order to apply those measurements to my data collection. To understand the American volunteer from different angles, I also reviewed documents about Americans’ preferences of volunteer destinations, the situation and trends of volunteerism in the United States, and American volunteers’ time management. Those findings enabled me to compare the Americans’ involvement in volunteerism to the Thai perspectives. Moreover, I provided some examples of volunteer opportunities in Thailand and pointed out that the organizations that manage those opportunities aim toward the volunteer from overseas, especially the developed countries, while ignoring local Thais.
This finding supports my prior observation that Thai people rarely consider being involved in volunteer service. The last part of the chapter supplies knowledge about certain management concepts. I used these concepts as guidelines to analyze the volunteer management of Sebastian Inlet State Park in the next chapter, which answers research question one: “How does Sebastian Inlet State Park manage its volunteers?”
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODS

Volunteering is an act of heroism on a grand scale. And it matters profoundly. It does more than help people beat the odds; it changes the odds.
~ Bill Clinton

Introduction

This chapter begins with a restatement of the research questions. Then, I explain the significance of the researcher, me, and the role I play in this research. I discuss how and why this research was conducted and interpreted from my perspective. Then, I describe in detail the sampling technique for data collection. Next, I discuss the methods and tools for data collection, which include interview questions, participant observation, and daily-diary. Lastly, I explain how I analyzed the data in order to respond to the research questions.

Research Questions

The five main research questions of this study are as follows.

1. How does Sebastian Inlet State Park manage its volunteers?
2. Who are the volunteers?
3. Why do they volunteer?
4. What are suggestions to enhance the volunteer management at Sebastian Inlet State Park?
5. How might the data obtained from this study apply to volunteer programs in Thailand?
The Researcher

I mentioned briefly in chapter 1 how I played a critical role in interpreting the results of this research. I would like to emphasize this matter again in more detail in this chapter because it is crucial for the reader to be aware that even though I analyzed the results of the research based on the literature review, I interpreted the data from my Thai business instructor and consultant perspective regarding my personal interest in this subject. As stated previously, I conducted this research in order to learn whether an Americans volunteer management concept will work in Thailand. This particular interest originated from my observation that the majority of the people in Thailand, including myself, are either not aware of, or not engaged in, participating in volunteering. Conversely, the extent and variation of volunteerism in the United States is phenomenal; there are volunteer opportunities in numerous areas of work, and many Americans have been associated with volunteerism in one way or another since they were young.

From my own experience growing up in Thailand, I rarely came across the idea of doing volunteer work on a regular basis as a long-term commitment or doing volunteer work for the sake of goodwill without any promised return or acknowledgement. When I came to the United States, I learned that volunteering is very common in American society. For example, people volunteer in hospitals, in nature parks, at fire stations, and at churches, to name just a few opportunities. In the summer of 2006, I conducted my internship at one of the state parks in Florida and noticed that there were numerous volunteers working in the park helping out with various tasks, such as taking care of the campground and giving out information to visitors. Some of the tasks, in my opinion, were not pleasant because the volunteers had to work in the heat or work with inflamed
plants and insects. The rationale of doing volunteer work without getting paid, or in some cases even having to pay, did not fit my mindset. I then came up with numerous questions, such as: “Who are those volunteers?” “What are their backgrounds?” “How can some tiring work such as collecting trash be attractive work for somebody?” “Why do people agree to work under discipline such as committing to work for a certain amount of hours each day, when they could choose to stay home or do something else?” “How does the organization recruit those volunteers?” “How do organizations manage the volunteers properly so that the organization can attract more volunteers while maintaining the current volunteers?” I was inspired to seek the answers to these questions which would lead me to an understanding of volunteer management in the United States. Consequently, I wondered if I could figure out the possibility of whether the American ways of volunteer management is applicable in Thailand. The findings of this research will enable me to apply such knowledge in my consulting, teaching, and researching careers in the future.

I would like to present relevant background here which illustrates my motives and interest in this research topic. I was born and grew up in Lampang, a province in the northern part of Thailand. Lampang is a small province with a rich history and flourishing natural environment. My parents own a shop that sells agricultural machines. They work hard throughout the year, and, to reward themselves, they save money for entertainment such as travelling or dining out. They also donate money occasionally to different places such as Buddhist temples according to their Buddhist beliefs, and Chiang Mai University, where they graduated from, in recognition that this university had granted them wisdom and a good life. My father is now serving as an honorable director
of the Chiang Mai University Supporting Committee and he is responsible for finding ways to support the university financially and academically. He is doing it on a volunteer basis, as he does not get paid. This is an honorable position and highly respected by the people at the university and also in the society. My mother volunteers as an associate judge for the Children and Youth Court in Lampang, my hometown. She now serves as the head of the associate judges. Like my father’s volunteer job, my mother’s volunteer job is a highly honorable job and is well respected in society. My parents said they became involved in these particular volunteer jobs because the people from the organizations invited them, and they felt that now they have a good living such that they do not have to struggle for money, they have enough time to do the work. Moreover, they felt that they would like to use their knowledge and skills to make a valuable contribution to society. They agree that it is the proper time to pay back the community. Therefore, the concept of volunteerism for me has been that people will volunteer when they have enough money for their needs, have spare time, are willing to give to others, and can find work that is honorable and valuable in their eyes and others.

I earned my undergraduate degree at Chiang Mai University. Chiang Mai is the second largest city in Thailand. It is located in the northern part of Thailand. It is a well-known tourist city that attracts people from around the world to visit its cultural attractions, such as temples and ancient ruins; natural attractions, such as waterfalls and natural parks; and also urban attractions such as night markets. I have never seen any volunteer opportunities at those tourist sites. However, during my study, I went with a volunteer group from Chiang Mai University to rural villages to build schools and some infrastructure, such as water tanks. At that time, I viewed such volunteer work as a part of
my activities in college, not as volunteer work. I became involved because I wanted to help people in the rural area, to work and have fun with the students from various departments, and then put such experience on my résumé. This was a short project; each project lasted about five to ten days, so students did not have a long-term commitment to it. This type of opportunity is very common among Thai students in colleges. It is notable that in my generation, Thai students did not work to earn money; rather they gained financial support from their parents or from the educational institutions. Therefore, doing volunteer work was not a lost opportunity for students who could have spent that time working for money.

After graduation from Chiang Mai University, I came to the United States for my master’s degree in Business Administration at Eastern Michigan University. I travelled to many places in the United States and in Canada but still was not aware of volunteer opportunities anywhere. Wherever I visited, there were paid employees working, but not volunteers. Moreover, my area of study was business. I focused my interest solely on how to work for profit and believed in capitalism and the consumer market. I believed that all organizations should be self-sustaining, or they would not exist.

I came back to Thailand and started my career with The Bank of Thailand, then moved to a petroleum company, and then the Bureau of the Budget. I finally ended up teaching at the Faculty of Business Administration at Chiang Mai University where I originally earned my bachelor’s degree. During my teaching career, I also provided consultation to businesses located in the northern part of Thailand on how to begin or improve their businesses. My working framework focused on managing business to generate income.
During the time I was teaching at Chiang Mai University, I also took a Ph.D. program in Management at Adamson University in Manila, The Philippines. During that time, I travelled back and forth between the two countries and had the chance to visit several places in the Philippines; I was not aware of any volunteer programs there.

In September 2005, I came to the United States and attended graduate school at Ohio University. My area of interest generally concerns communication, telecommunication, business management, international affairs, especially in Southeast Asia, and nature-based tourism. I aimed to develop my dissertation with integration of those areas. In summer of 2006, I did my internship at the Jonathan Dickinson State Park in Florida. I began to realize that there are numerous opportunities to do volunteer work in the Florida state parks, and that the parks rely heavily on the help of those volunteers. This fact was new to me and it sparked my interest in conducting research on this issue. It was very interesting and surprising to me to see how Americans of all ages spend their time and effort to do volunteer work in the state parks in a wide variety of jobs, on a regular basis, and mostly long term without getting compensation.

I worked with the Global Leadership Center (GLC) at Ohio University as a teaching assistant from September 2005, when I started my degree, until I graduated in November 2009. The GLC offers a two-year certificate program for undergraduate students. All of the classes are hands-on and project-based. The first class that the GLC students took in 2005 was a business-focused project in which the students were assigned to work as consultants to Thai enterprises located in Thailand. Their tasks were to conduct research in order to give their clients suggestions on how to improve their businesses. During winter break of every year, the GLC takes its students to an
international destination to work with a counterpart university, and also with their
business enterprise contacts. One of the GLC’s contacts in 2005 was the Elephant Nature
Park in Chiang Mai, Thailand. I did not have a chance to visit the park that year, but I
was able to get to know the staff of the park after the project was completed.

In December 2006, I went back to Thailand with the GLC and visited the
Elephant Nature Park in Chiang Mai. I discovered that this park is unique from other
tourist attractions because of the way it manages the business. This park works against
animal abuse. The visitors who visit the park have to pay, not for watching elephant
performances, but for providing services to the elephants, such as feeding and bathing
them. The park offers volunteer programs for the visitors who not only want to visit, but
want to work closely with the elephants for a longer period of time. The volunteers have
to pay for their accommodation and food and agree to work according to the job
description and the assigned work schedule. The park’s volunteer program is very well
subscribed to by foreign tourists, and the volunteer calendar is always booked far ahead
of time. I learned that there were no Thai volunteers. While the fact of no Thai volunteers
did not surprise me, what struck my interest is the fact that these foreigners knew about
this volunteer opportunity and agreed to commit money to plane tickets and volunteer
(accommodation) fees plus use their vacation time to engage in this volunteer work. This
is another reason that I wanted to study the mindset of the Americans regarding their
commitment to volunteerism.

From my background, I would never think of paying the price of an international
trip and spending my vacation time in another country to do volunteer work instead of
sightseeing or doing tourist activities. Neither would I consider volunteering locally, like
at this Elephant Park, because I was too busy with work, and if I were free from work, I would prefer to spend my free time doing something else but not volunteering. In addition, working outdoors in the heat and dirt is not appealing to me. Even though I admire the mission of the park, I would support them by other means, such as donations or buying their souvenirs, but not by volunteering. Due to such contradiction in the way of thinking, I am inspired to try to find out if there is any way that I can make domestic volunteer projects work in Thailand.

The Participants and Sampling Technique

The participants of this study were park employees and the volunteers who worked at Sebastian Inlet State Park in Florida during the months of July and August 2008. I started my research project by interviewing the park manager because he was the top manager at the park who made final decisions on the park’s master plan. The limitation of interviewing him was that he had just moved from another park and had become the park manager at Sebastian Inlet State Park about three months prior to my interviews. However, due to his experience being a manager at several other Florida State Parks, he understood the overall system and was able to provide useful information and opinions. I also interviewed the other park staff who worked closely with the volunteers. I randomly chose the employees from different parts of the park who were available to be interviewed at the time I was at the field site. The information from interviewing the park employees was used to answer the first research question. The interview questions were oriented around the volunteer management of the park and its consequences in terms of volunteer performance and feedback.
To find the answers for research questions two, three, and four, I interviewed the park volunteers. According to the park manager, there are approximately 100-300 volunteers working in the park each year and the summer season is the low time of the year for tourists and volunteers (T. Coulliette, personal communication, June 18, 2008). The overall number of the volunteers at the time I collected data was not available because many of the volunteers took a summer break, and some of them were sick and could not come to work.

I found that most of the volunteers in this park were senior citizens who moved to Florida after retirement. Since they came from different backgrounds, there was diversity in their interests and skills. There were 14 groups of volunteers in the park categorized according to their workplaces, types of work, and supporting organizations to which they belonged. Those volunteer groups included: McLarty Treasure Museum, Fishing Museum, Toll Booth, Park Watch, Jetty Watch, Volunteer Other Personal Services (OPS), Maintenance and Construction Team or so called Sebastian Park Area Reconstruction Crews (SPARCies), Tidal Pool, Beach Cleanup, River Walk, Show Team/Social Planning Team, Campground Host, Citizen Support Organization (CSO), and Turtle Walk.

I will discuss the function and characteristics of each group in detail in chapter 4. In this chapter, I would like to explain how I chose the participants. According to Patton (2002), there is no rule for the sample size of qualitative research. The sample depends on what the researcher wants to know, the purpose of the research, the credibility of the sources, and the available time and resources. I planned to interview the volunteers from all groups in order to reduce the bias of the data. I applied a convenience sampling
technique from each working site in order to get information from the volunteers with
different tasks. It is notable that the subjects from the convenience sampling technique
were selected non-randomly simply because they were available at that particular place
and time (Frey, Botan, Friedman & Kreps, 1991). I ended up interviewing volunteers
from 9 out of 14 groups. I could not get an interview with the volunteers from: Other
Personal Services (OPS), Tidal Pool, Beach Cleanup, River Walk and Turtle Walk teams
due to the limitation of time and work schedules. The questions to the volunteers were
about their backgrounds, their motivation to volunteer, the factors that would discourage
them from volunteering, and their suggestions for the improvement of the park’s
volunteer management system. Since the interview questions were designed to contain no
sensitive issues and not to cause any risk to the participants by any means, I verbally
asked for permission to interview the participants without requesting them to sign a
consent form, as agreed to in the permission letter from the Institutional Review Board
(IRB) that I was granted. The IRB letter of permission is in Appendix A.

Before I started my data collection, I contacted the park manager prior to my
arrival at the research site and asked for permission to be a volunteer at the park so that I
would learn about the volunteer opportunities provided and get to know the volunteers in
those places before I started to interview them. The park manager permitted me to do so.
The consent e-mail from the park manager is in Appendix B. I also wrote an agreement to
the park manager stating that I agreed to work at least four hours a day, five days a week,
as a volunteer at the park. In addition, I wanted to rotate around the park in order to meet
various volunteers engaged in different kinds of work. The letter of agreement appears in
Appendix C. It is notable that the dissertation title in the IRB letter and in the letter of
agreement from the park manager is different from the current one; I changed it in order to make the title better represent the content of this dissertation. I explain this issue in Appendix D.

Consequently, I went into my research field as a volunteer and a researcher. The park manager assigned me to the McLarty Treasure Museum and I started volunteering there. He suggested that I volunteer at this museum and interview the volunteers there at the beginning of my data collection period, then go to other locations of the park to interview volunteers of other groups. According to his appointment, I spent my first week volunteering and interviewing the volunteers at the McLarty Treasure Museum, and then I started to interview the volunteers of other groups on my second week. However, my routine was to go to the McLarty Treasure Museum every day and help out there. If the museum was not busy and there were other volunteers to take care of the museum, I would go out to conduct my interviews around the park.

Each group had its own schedule for the volunteers; for example, there would be one or two volunteers working at the McLarty Treasure Museum each day. Most of them worked during the museum’s open hours (10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.), while some volunteers chose to work half days per week. For the Fishing Museum, most of the volunteers also worked during the museum open hours, one day a week as well. However, the number of the volunteer at the museum ranged from zero to five people each day. The number of volunteers was low and fluctuated in summer because many of the volunteers who came from the northern states went up north for the cooler weather. Then they would come back to Florida in fall or winter. This group of people called themselves “snowbirds.”
Some volunteer groups did not work every day; for example, the Maintenance and Construction Team (SPARCies) worked two days a week, Tuesday and Thursday, during the morning hours (about 8:00 a.m. to noon) and the Citizen Support Organization (CSO) met every three months. The convenient sampling technique was a proper method for me to select the respondents and I went to the other different research sites when I did not have to stay at the McLarty Treasure Museum. I started the conversation by introducing myself to the volunteer who was working there, and then I asked if he/she was available and willing to be interviewed. Sometimes I made an appointment to interview at a later date because he/she was not available at that time.

Methods and Tools for Data Collection

*Participant Observation*

I performed participant observation in the field sites by involving myself as a volunteer at Sebastian Inlet State Park for a ten-week period of time, June to August 2008. I was wearing two hats simultaneously, one as a volunteer and another one as a researcher. I stationed myself at the McLarty Treasure Museum and did the regular volunteer tasks, such as greeting the visitors, collecting the museum fee, answering questions that the visitors asked, and cleaning the museum. I also wore the volunteer uniform to work. Even though I appeared to the other volunteers and park staff as one of the volunteers, I also introduced myself to them as a researcher and explained to them why I was there.

There are three main reasons that I chose to conduct participant observation. First, I wanted to receive the same experience as the other volunteers by doing the hands-on work. This way, I could reflect from the viewpoint of the volunteers. In addition, I was
better to understand the relationship between the volunteers and the other volunteers, the park staff, and also the tourists. Being in the field as an actual volunteer, I was better able to observe the attitudes and motivations of the volunteers in many aspects, such as attitudes towards their jobs, their self perceptions, and the feedback they received from the others. I was able to do a self assessment on my own attitude towards the volunteer work. Second, to appear as one of the volunteers, I expected to develop a sense of belonging to this volunteer group and gain the trust of other volunteers. I anticipated that this close relationship would facilitate my interviews with the informants. I believed that the informants would feel comfortable with me and answer my questions more openly. Participant observations are best suited for the study of cohesive memberships (Lindoff, 1995). Last, being a participant observer enabled me to put myself in the shoes of the other volunteers and see things from their perspectives. As a result, I could compare my perspective with the American volunteers’ perspectives.

As a result of the participant observation technique, I learned to perform the volunteer tasks by doing them for ten weeks; therefore, I understood how the volunteers might feel. In addition, from being in the field as “one of them,” I was well-accepted by the park employees, the other volunteers, and the visitors of the park. After I started to interview a few people, they spread the word that a researcher (me) had come to the park to study volunteerism and wanted to interview them. As a result, they expected to see me around the park and they were willing to be interviewed. I developed close relationships with some of the volunteers and they invited me to their houses to show me their lifestyles. I also got to know in informal ways some of the park employees, such as the park service specialist, who was my supervisor at the McLarty Treasure Museum, and
also the park manager. They helped me bond with people by introducing me to other people around the park, inviting me to have lunch with them, and even inviting me to their family activities and to meet their friends. The establishment of friendship and networks made my field research run smoothly, and I felt like I was really a part of the organization. Occasionally the park staff discussed my research among themselves and exchanged their opinions about the volunteer management system of the park. I thought that information was useful for my research, and I wrote the conversations down in my daily diary so that I would not forget.

Interviews

I chose to gather necessary data by interviewing the participants because interviewing is one of the most common and powerful ways in which researchers attempt to understand human beings (Fontana & Frey, 2000). Intensive interviews are used to gather qualitative data (answering “why” and “how come” types of questions) (Rubin, Rubin & Piele, 1996). This technique provides a means of contemporary storytelling, where people divulge life accounts by responding to interview inquiries (Gubrium & Holstein, 1997). Moreover, it allows one-to-one contact between the researcher and the informant; therefore, the communication between them tends to be prompt and effective (Rubin et al., 1996).

I designed my interview questions to be used in semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews are conducted with a fairly open framework which allows for focused, conversational, two-way communication. Semi-structured interviewing starts with more general questions. However, not all questions are designed and phrased ahead of time. The majority of questions are created during the interview, allowing both the
interviewees and me the flexibility to probe for details or discuss issues (Food and
Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2009). Most of the questions were open-
ended so that the participants would not be influenced or distracted from their actual
thoughts or attitudes. According to Strauss and Corbin (1990), research questions should
allow flexibility and freedom to explore the fact or phenomenon in depth. Even though
open-ended questions are time consuming, they provide more in-depth and complex
understanding of the issues (Rubin et al., 1996). Those prepared questions contain the
main points of the research objectives. While interviewing, I encouraged the informants
to express their thoughts openly and welcomed participants to insert their experiences,
opinions, or suggestions as they would like to. I especially encouraged the informants to
give examples or cases to elaborate their explanations. Their cases then became very
valuable to the research in terms of enriching the understanding of the topic.

The first part of the interview consisted of questions about the participant’s
demographic background, such as education and career. The findings from this part
answered the second research question, “Who are the volunteers?” The second part
focused on their experience in volunteering. In the third part, the interview questions
were designed to explore the motivation of the volunteer. The questions in this part were
broad because I intentionally wanted to encourage the participants to express their own
ideas and attitudes as much as possible. The last part of the questionnaire added the
critical thinking aspect into the research by asking for suggestions to improve the
volunteer management of the park. There were some indirect questions, such as the
questions about the factors that drive people away from volunteer work. According to
Lincoln and Guba (2000), to retrieve more truthful answers from respondents, there
should be both “why” as well as “why not” in interview questions (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). The interview questions are provided in Appendix E.

The interviews took place during the volunteers’ free time, but still at or close to their work sites. There are two main reasons for this intention. Firstly, I did not want to overly interfere with the volunteers’ work time. Secondly, I wanted to interview the volunteers at their work sites so that they would have pictures of the volunteer work in their mind while answering the questions. Consequently, the answers came from their current and fresh attitude, not from past memories.

In most cases, I interviewed one informant at a time. Each interview lasted about 40 to 60 minutes. However, in a few cases, I interviewed two or more volunteers at once because they worked together and wanted to join the conversation so that they could hear others’ opinions and share their own. I tried to provide enough time for the informants to answer the questions thoughtfully. In order to conduct the interview effectively and not waste my time writing the answers down, I used a digital voice recorder to record the interviews. From my previous experience, some informants would feel uncomfortable with recording equipment; therefore, before every interview, I asked for their permission to use the equipment. My original plan was that if the informant preferred to give interviews without recording equipment, I would just write down the answers during the interview. However, when I conducted the interviews, all of the informants were willing to be interviewed and be recorded, so I recorded all the interviews. However, I lost three interview voice record files because the surrounding noise was too loud and I could not hear the conversations. Those files were the interviews with the Jetty Watch volunteers that I interviewed on the jetty on a windy day. There were some cases in which I could
not complete the interview at one time, so I rescheduled these for the second (and/or third) interview in order to get all the data I needed.

One difficulty I faced during the interviews was that some of the volunteers wanted to tell me everything they thought I should know such as their work experiences, the products they had invented, the countries they had been to, the movies they like, etc. Although I found that the stories were interesting, I thought they were irrelevant to the goal of my research. In such a situation, I let them talk, and when they finished, I tried to ask the questions on my interview question list to bring their interest back to the focus of my research. In fact, from those stories, I could understand them more as a person in terms of their interests, inspirations, lifestyle, and even their social and financial status.

_Daily Diary_

I wrote a daily diary after work for the entire period that I collected data at Sebastian Inlet State Park. I described my feeling and attitudes toward the work and also the relationship with the people at the park. In addition, I wrote the interesting things that happened that day, such as the volunteer appreciation picnic that the park provided to its volunteers, the interesting conversations that came up during the day, the park situation during the tropical storm where some volunteers still came to the park, and so on. I did not use all the information from my daily diary in the research; the main usage of it was to help me recall the past events and my perception at that time. The daily diary was a useful tool to keep track of my understanding of volunteerism and the transformation of my attitudes through the 10 weeks that I volunteered at the park.

In addition to the written diary, I took photographs and video clips of what I thought was related and would be useful to my research, such as the volunteers, the work
environments, and the park activities. I took pictures of all the volunteers and the park employees I interviewed. Those pictures and video clips helped me recall my memories when I analyzed the data. In addition, they were a useful means to present to others to aid their understanding of this research. I counted the photos and video clips as my “visual” daily diary.

Data Analysis

This study is qualitative and ethnographic containing descriptive data that are considered rich and thick. The raw data of this research are the answers from the interviews and my daily diary, including pictures and video clips taken during my research period. I transcribed the raw data from the interviews from the voice recorder and kept them as Microsoft Word digital files. I sorted the transcription files by date and arranged them into ten folders, from week one to week ten. I named the files with the names of the informants and the date they were interviewed. I did the same with the photos and video clip files. The written daily diary was in a hand-written form in a notebook that I brought with me to the field site every day.

During the ten weeks of field research, I interviewed a total of seven park employees and forty-nine park volunteers from nine (out of fourteen) groups of volunteers. I transcribed all the interviews from the voice-digital files, typed them and saved them in Microsoft Word Documentary form, and then printed all of them out. According to Seidman (1991), some questions that researchers should keep in mind at the data analysis stage are: “What is understood now that was not understood prior to conducting the interviews?” “What knowledge was confirmed?” and “What new
information was confirmed?” To answer those questions, I read the transcriptions carefully several times.

After gaining the big picture of the research findings, I decided to divide the results of the research into two parts as mentioned above. The first part was described based on the management concepts explained in chapter 2. Since the park does not have its volunteer management system planned out exactly like the theory, I tried to explain it as it is. For example, the park does not have its organization structure on a chart, so I made one according to the information received from the informants. In addition, the park does not have its budget for volunteers planned out on any document so I did not report on that, but I touch on it briefly.

I present the data in a qualitative form by describing what the interviewees said, and I also quote some of their answers or opinions within the essay so that the reader can interpret and gain a deeper understanding of the context.

I have categorized my data analysis into three parts. The first part answers research question number one “How does Sebastian Inlet State Park manage its volunteers?” This part is presented in chapter 4. The data to answer this research question was generated from interviews with Sebastian Inlet Park’s employees and its volunteers together with my observation of the volunteer practices around the park. I discuss the volunteer management of the park by its actual practices instead of categorizing them by the theoretical management functions. The reason is that by relying on the theoretical foundation, each step of the park’s volunteer management practice overlapped others. In contrast, analyzing the park’s volunteer management by its actual practices avoids overlapping and makes it easier to understand the management role. According to
Schermerhorn (2005), the theoretical management process consists of four main functions: planning, organizing, leading, and controlling the use of resources to accomplish the organization’s goals. The description of the management theory is provided in chapter 4. The park’s volunteer management consists of six stages which are relevant to Schermerhorn’s management functions: job development and design (planning); budget (planning); recruitment (organizing); screening and interviewing (organizing); orientation and training (leading); motivating (leading); recognition (leading), and supervision (controlling).

The second part answers research questions number two, three, and four. This part is presented in chapter 5. For research question two, “Who are the volunteers?,” I interviewed each volunteer individually to learn about their background such as their hometown, their career (or past career) and their daily activities. The answers regarding this question give ideas of who the majority of the volunteers are and the diversity among them. In addition, it established a conceptual framework of the relationship between the types of the volunteer work and the preferences of people from different backgrounds. I derived the answers for research question three, “Why do they volunteer?” and four, “What are the suggestions to enhance the volunteer management at Sebastian Inlet State Park?” through these same interviews. The questions included, but were not limited to, those about their criteria in choosing to volunteer at the park and their current positions; what their motivations to volunteer were; how long they wanted to volunteer for; and what they would suggest the park do to maintain or to improve volunteer activity. Most of the interview questions were open ended questions. The answers to the research question two to four are presented in chapter 5.
The third part answers research question five. This part is presented in chapter 6. Regarding research question five “How might the data obtained from this study apply to volunteer programs in Thailand?” I summarize the answers of the research question one to four, and then follow with my analysis and suggestions. I answer research question five based on my Thai business consultant and business management instructor’s perspective.

Obstacles in Data Collection

On week seven of my data collection, tropical storm Fay forced closure of the park. The park employees had to come to the park to help prepare for the storm; it was uncertain whether or not it was going to become a hurricane. They stopped their normal tasks to put up shutters, evacuate the campers, and lock up the outdoor tables and chairs that might get blown away by the wind. Some of the volunteers came to work, such as the volunteer at the McLarty Treasure Museum and the volunteer in the Maintenance and Construction Team (SPARCies), during the days that the storm was not too strong. However, they could not do much and no one was in a mood to be interviewed. After the storm was over, most of task forces had to clean up the park, such as removing fallen trees and shutters. During that period of time, I had to suspend my interviews. However, I had a unique opportunity to observe the efforts of the volunteers and the park staff during the crisis.

Conclusion

This chapter explains the research methods and tools that I employed in this study. This study uses ethnographic research methodology in order to seek understanding of the volunteers’ behaviors, their thoughts, and their lifestyles. To gain deeper
understanding, I conducted participant observation by putting myself into the research field site, Sebastian Inlet State Park, as one of the park volunteers. I spent ten weeks collecting data in the field, from June to August 2008. I not only went around and interviewed different people, but I also took pictures and video clips of them in action and of the environment so that I could recall my memories and use those visual media to convey the data to other people. At the end of my data collection period, I interviewed seven park employees who worked closely with the volunteers or had authority in developing the volunteer management of the park. I also interviewed 49 volunteers who worked around the park. In order to find possibilities to apply the volunteer concept in Thailand, this research aimed to study the volunteer management of the park, the volunteers’ characteristics, their motivation and their feedback towards the system. Therefore, I documented my own reflections concerning volunteerism from my Thai perspective throughout the period of time I was in the research field. The answer to research question one: “How does Sebastian Inlet State Park manage its volunteers?” is presented in chapter 4; the answers to research question two: “Who are the volunteers?”, three: “Why do they volunteer?”, and four: “What are the suggestions to enhance the volunteer management at Sebastian Inlet State Park?” are presented in chapter five; and the answer to research question 5: “How might the data obtained from this study apply to volunteer programs in Thailand?” is presented in chapter 6.
CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH RESULTS ON VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

Learn to lead in a nourishing manner. Learn to lead without being possessive. Learn to be helpful without taking the credit. Learn to lead without coercion.

~ Lao Tzu

Introduction

This chapter answers the first research question “How does Sebastian Inlet State Park manage its volunteers?” I describe the volunteer management of the park based on the theoretical concept of management as presented in the last section of chapter 2. According to the theory, management consists of four functions: planning, organizing, directing, and controlling. I gathered the data for this part mainly by interviewing the park staff. I also collected related information from interviewing the park volunteers, reviewing documents, and observing the park’s volunteer management process on site.

To understand the volunteer management of Sebastian Inlet State Park, it is necessary for the reader to gain a fundamental understanding of the park. I will start this chapter with the general information of the park and then proceed with details of each management function.

General Information on Sebastian Inlet State Park

Sebastian Inlet State Park is one of the 160 Florida state parks. The park address is 9700 South A1A, Melbourne Beach, Florida. It is located on the east coast, Central Region of Florida, within the Archie Carr National Wildlife Refuge. Its area is approximately 755 acres. Maps of the park are shown below.

*Figure 1.* Map of Florida State Parks and the location of Sebastian Inlet State Park, 2009.
It is recognized as the most important region of nesting beaches for the loggerhead sea turtle within the Western Hemisphere (Sebastian Inlet State Park Unit Management Plan, 2001). In addition, it was ranked as the sixth most visited Florida State Park in 2006 with over 700,000 visitors. It is also the most popular spot for surfing in Florida. The park operates to its fullest capacity; it is open 365 days a year and 24 hours a day. There are two museums within the park; both of them are open 7 days a week from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. (Florida State Parks Information Center, 2008).
The park does not have its organization chart written out, so I developed one according to the information given by the park staff. The organization chart provides the structure and chain of command among the park employees. It also explains the working capacity of the current human resources of the park in comparison to the amount of the work needed. Based on the interview with the Sebastian State Park manager, Terry Coulliette, on August 11, 2008, there were 19 park employees as of August, 2008: 1 park manager; 1 assistant manager; 2 park service specialists; 1 administration officer; 1 toll collector supervisor; 8 park rangers; 1 maintenance mechanic; and 4 toll collectors. The top management of the park is the park manager and the second to that is the park assistant manager. Their jobs are to take care of the management of the park and convey the policy of the Florida Park Service into action. The administration officer is responsible for paper work such as keeping records for the park and correspondence with other organizations. There are two park service specialist positions: one of them is in charge of the McLarty Treasure Museum, one of the two museums that belongs to Sebastian Inlet State Park, and also takes care of developing interpretive programs and public relations for the park. The other park service specialist is in charge of the other museum, Fishing Museum, and also takes care of developing interpretive programs and coordinating the special events held within the park.

Sebastian Inlet State Park is separated into two parts by the inlet, one part on the north side and another on the south side. Both parts have areas that the visitors have to pay entrance fees to get into; therefore there is a toll booth at the entrance to each part. The toll collectors take care of these booths and the toll collector supervisor oversees their routine. The biggest pool of employees is the park rangers who keep the park up and
running; their jobs include interacting with the visitors, setting up exhibits, patrolling the park, cutting trees and mowing the lawn, collecting trash and cleaning the bathrooms.

There is a mechanic who takes care of all the vehicles and equipment that belongs to the park, such as the park trucks, electronic cars, grass mowers and so on. There is a maintenance shop in the park and the park rangers also help out with maintenance tasks.

The organization chart of the Sebastian Inlet State Park is shown below.

![Organization Chart]

Figure 3. Sebastian Inlet State Park organization chart.

According the Sebastian Inlet Park manager, there are approximately 100 – 300 volunteers per year working in the park. Approximately 100 volunteers work during the summer (June to September) and the figure doubles in winter (October to April). Most of the volunteers in this park are retirees. Many of the volunteers in the winter come from the northern part of America; they called themselves “snowbirds” as they migrate to the south to escape the cold weather of the north. According to the park manager, the snow
birds stay between 3 and 6 months. Those who are still working, such as school teachers who have 3 months summer break, may stay for 3 months; while the retirees prefer to stay longer (6 months or more) in order to avoid the cold weather up north (T. Coulliette, personal communication, August 11, 2008). The park offers a wide range of work to the volunteers, such as providing information to the visitors at the museums, collecting entrance fees at the toll booth, doing construction and maintenance work, patrolling the park, taking care of the campground, patrolling sea turtles, collecting trash, and so on, depending on the volunteers’ skills and knowledge.

The volunteer hours of each individual varies, but are usually four to six hours per day, one day a week. Most of the year-round volunteers have homes in the area, while some drive up to one hour to get to the park. Increasing gas prices have become a significant problem for volunteers who live far away. Most of the winter volunteers from outside of the area either have winter homes close to the park or they come to the park with their recreational vehicles (RVs) and camp around the area. There are usually three to five households that camp within the park during the winter, volunteering approximately 20 – 40 hours per week in exchange for the camping fees (T. Coulliette, personal communication, June 18, 2008).

I divided the park into four areas in order to illustrate the layout of the park so that readers can see how the volunteers are scattered within the park. The four areas include: the north side of the inlet, the south side of the inlet, McLarty Treasure Museum, and the other areas.

Below is a map of Sebastian Inlet State Park.
The north side of the inlet has a vast beach area where visitors can enjoy activities such as swimming, surfing, or fishing. During the park open-hour time, there is a beach-watch team, who are part-time paid employees, stationed at the beach to take care of safety for the visitors. The facilities in this area include a restaurant and a bait shop which
are operated by a non-park entrepreneur; public restrooms; bike trails; a jetty where people can walk and/or fish on; picnic areas with picnic shelter and tables; parking lot; and a toll booth where park staff collect entrance fees and interact with the visitors. The park occasionally arranges special activities in this area, such as a surfing contest. The visitor has to pay to get into this area.

The south side of the inlet is somewhat similar to the north side, however, it does not have beach access where people can walk to and enjoy beach activities as on the north side. The facilities in this area include: the Fishing Museum; jetty; camp site; picnic area; parking lot; public restrooms; boat concession; and also another toll booth. The visitor has to pay to get into this area as well. The admission fees to get into the north and south side of the inlet are $5.00 per vehicle for up to 8 people or $3.00 for a single occupancy vehicle or motorcycle. The visitor does not have to pay to get into the Fishing Museum, and the receipt received from the toll booth is applied to both the north and the south sides of the park, but not to the McLarty Treasure Museum.

McLarty Treasure Museum is located about 1.8 miles south of the south side of the inlet. It is a separate part from the main area of the park. It is open 7 days a week from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The visitor has to pay a $1 fee to get in and this fee is not related to the entrance fee at the north or south side of the park. Behind the museum, there is a boardwalk from the museum to the observation deck. However, there is no beach access at the museum. Therefore, the only activity there is to visit the museum, browse around the showroom and watch the movie provided. Sometimes groups of school students or children from the summer camps would come to visit the museum as a group.
The other areas of the park are the park administrative office building which is shared with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission; the boat concession area; the park employees’ positioned houses; and the land and beaches that are properties of the park and are open to the public. The park police officers take care of these areas with the assistance of the Park Watch volunteers who ride the electric cars patrolling for safety. These areas are scattered from the north side of the north inlet down to the McLarty Treasure Museum.

In addition, in order to logically estimate the work load of this park, it is important to learn about the park’s activities and its facilities. The park provides different kinds of natural resources and facilities for the visitors as follows (Florida State Parks Information Center, 2008; Sebastian Inlet State Park Unit Management Plan, 2001):

1. Beaches

   The park has 3 miles of beaches; one mile in the north of the inlet and another two miles in the south of the inlet. Tourists can conduct beach activities such as surfing, swimming, scuba diving, snorkeling, and sunbathing. They can also observe marine wildlife such as sea turtles, manatees, and right whales during the seasons. The Beach Cleanup and Park Watch volunteers and the park police work in these areas.

2. Museums

   Sebastian Inlet State Park has two museums: the McLarty Treasure Museum and the Sebastian Fishing Museum. The McLarty Treasure Museum is located in a survivor camp of the 1715 Spanish Plate Fleet. This museum displays artifacts from the mentioned fleet and a movie. Since the artifacts from the ship fleet are
still being found, the museum has a folder that contains the stories and pictures of what people have found recently. This folder receives a lot of attention from the visitors. The Fishing Museum focuses on the history of Sebastian’s fishing industry on the Indian River Lagoon and also showcases the types of fish that can be caught around this area. During the sea turtle season, this museum is used as a meeting point for the park’s Turtle Walk program where the park ranger gives interpretations about the turtles before visitors go to see the turtles lay eggs on the beach. Both of the museums are open 7 days a week from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. There are volunteers working in both museums.

3. Bicycle paths

The park provides a 40-mile paved path which runs through the park. In addition, it provides three mountain bicycle trails; these bike paths are a combination of off road and paved paths. The park staff is responsible to take care of this path and the Park Watch volunteers sometimes drive electronic cars patrolling around the area.

4. Boat ramps

The park provides boat ramps on both sides of Sebastian Inlet. The main four boat ramps are open 24 hours every day, while another one opens only during the Inlet Marina business hours. All the boat ramps are operated by the park, except the one at the Inlet Marina which is operated by a private company. There is no volunteer working in this area.

5. Canoe and kayak rentals
Canoes and kayaks are available for rent at the Inlet Marina. The canoe and kayak rental is also operated by the same private company that manages the boat ramp. There is no volunteer working here.

6. Concession/snack bar/gift shop

There is a concession located on the north side of the inlet. Within the concession, there is a snack bar and a gift shop. They are open daily from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The gift shop has a variety of selections such as t-shirts, books, and souvenirs. It also rents out surfboards, snorkel gear, beach chairs, and beach umbrellas. This concession is operated by a private company.

7. Bathhouses, showers and restrooms

The park provides bathhouses and several restrooms around the park and at the museums. In addition, cold outdoor showers are available near the beach accesses. The Maintenance and Construction volunteers (SPARCies) help build and maintain those facilities. The park paid-employees are responsible to clean them on a regular basis.

8. Full facility camping

There are 51 campsites in the park with water and electric hook-ups, a fire ring with grill, and a picnic table. Furthermore, all of the 51 campsites are able to accommodate RVs up to 32 feet in length. A dump station, laundry facilities, and pay phones are also provided. The Campground Host volunteers take care of the cleanliness of the camp sites and the discipline of campers.
9. Nature trails

There are two nature trails in the park: a mile-long Hammock Trail, and a 10-kilometer long Volksport Trail. Plant identification signs are provided along the trails. Over 180 species of birds can be observed during the course of a year. Sebastian Inlet State Park is part of the Great Florida Birding Trail. Moreover, wildlife such as bobcats, alligators, river otters, raccoons, and opossums can be seen along the nature trails. Occasionally the park arranges education programs for the public and the volunteers assist with the programs.

10. Pavilions

Four waterfront pavilions are located south of Sebastian Inlet. Each pavilion can accommodate up to sixty people. The visitors who want to reserve the pavilion have to contact the park staff and pay the $60 fee. The Park Watch volunteers sometime drive electric cars patrolling these areas and the Maintenance and Construction volunteers (SPARCies) occasionally do some maintenance work there.

11. Picnic areas

Picnic areas are located on both sides of the Sebastian Inlet. The visitors can use those areas free of charge (except for the entrance fee). The Park Watch volunteers sometimes drive electric cars patrolling those areas and the Maintenance and Construction volunteers (SPARCies) occasionally do some maintenance work there.
12. Playground

A playground is located near the pavilion. It features swings and slides. The Park Watch volunteers sometime drive electric cars patrolling those areas and the Maintenance and Construction volunteers (SPARCies) occasionally do some maintenance work there.

13. Cultural sites

The areas of Sebastian Inlet State Park are rich in cultural prehistory and history. There are 12 recorded cultural historical sites within the park. The park posts some restriction signs to alert people not to get into those sites. The Park Watch volunteers sometimes drive electric cars patrolling those areas. Some of the sites are located around the McLarty Treasure Museum.

14. Special events and programs

Besides the resources and facilities provided, Sebastian Inlet State Park also holds seasonal special events such as surfing events and sea turtle walk programs. The park staff is usually in charge of arranging the event or coordinating with the outside event organizers. Volunteers may be asked to help out at the event such as help with managing the traffic and parking in the park.

Volunteer Management at Sebastian Inlet State Park

The extent to which an organization develops and implements a volunteer management system depends on the nature of the activities to be conducted by the volunteers. For example, an organization that uses volunteers to directly deal with sensitive or risky issues such as health care or racial issues may use a very comprehensive system. In contrast, an organization that occasionally uses volunteers to
do general things such as greeting visitors or cleaning might do a brief solicitation to recruit any volunteers that the organization can get and then do a very brief training, afterwards leaving the volunteers alone to perform their task (McNamara, 1997). As with other organizations, Sebastian Inlet State Park designed its volunteer management program to gain delivery of services at a reduced cost, get access to additional expertise, and develop better contacts with the community. However, the challenges that the park faces are that the park is vulnerable to the lack of control and reliability of its volunteers, it has to properly manage their paid staff’s time for volunteer supervision, and it may have to deal with difficulties in recruiting qualified volunteers.

According to Schermerhorn (2005), the management process consists of planning, organizing, leading, and controlling the use of resources to accomplish the organization’s goals. According to the practice of Sebastian Inlet State Park, the four functions are closely related. In this chapter, I report the volunteer management of the park by its actual practices instead of categorizing them by the theoretical management functions; this approach avoids overlapping and makes it easier to understand the management role. The park’s volunteer management consists of six stages which are relevant to Schermerhorn’s management functions: job development and design (planning); budget (planning); recruitment (organizing); screening and interviewing (organizing); orientation and training (leading); motivating (leading); recognition (leading), and supervision (controlling). I will explain each stage as follows.

1. Job Development and Design

Sebastian Inlet State Park developed its volunteer jobs from existing needs. This means that the jobs that used to be and/or are currently performed by the paid employees,
such as collecting entrance fees from the visitors at the toll booths, or collecting trash on
the beach and around the park areas, have also became volunteer tasks. The park also
developed volunteer jobs from the needs that were observed but were not directly
assigned to the paid staff, such as patrolling the park for security purposes. I gathered this
information by interviewing people around the park and observing the volunteers and the
workplace and discovered that there are 14 areas of volunteer jobs that the park provides.
These jobs are developed and named based on the workplaces, the type of work, and/or
the supporting organization. The park’s volunteer opportunities include: McLarty
Treasure Museum, Fishing Museum, Toll Booth, Park Watch, Jetty Watch, Volunteer
Other Personal Services (OPS), Maintenance and Construction Team or so-called
Sebastian Park Area Reconstruction Crews (SPARCies), Tidal Pool, Beach Cleanup,
River Walk, Show Team/Social Planning Team, Campground Host, Citizen Support
Organization (CSO), and Turtle Walk. Each volunteer group is supervised directly by
either the park staff or the volunteers who are assigned by the park staff. The job
descriptions for each volunteer category are as follows:
Figure 5. In front of McLarty Treasure Museum, 2008.

Figure 6. Inside McLarty Treasure Museum, 2008.

a) McLarty Treasure Museum

Supervised by: The park service specialist who is stationed at the museum.

Job description:
The museum is open from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Most of the volunteers come one day a week during the open hours. There are one or two volunteers per day. The tasks include (but not required) cleaning the display cases in the museum, collecting the entrance fee, selling items at the Citizen Support Organization (CSO)’s gift shop and recording the sales, and answering questions that the visitors may have. The volunteers are expected to have some knowledge about the history of the Spanish Treasure Ship Fleet that sank in 1715, which is the theme of the museum, so that they can answer the visitors’ questions accurately. Some of the volunteers give their interpretation about the history to the visitors and some do not; such extra service is not required by the park. In addition, the volunteers here have been trained to use the cash register. There are two cash registers: one is for the museum entrance fee which is easy to use because the fee is $1.00 per person; hence the only thing to do is punch a few buttons; and the other one is for the gift shop which is more complicated because of the variety of prices and codes for the sale items. Most, but not all, volunteers know how to use the gift shop cash register machine. In case the volunteer needs help, the park service specialist who is stationed at the museum will be the one who assists them. The museum is an air conditioned building so there is not much difference in working conditions between the warm and cold season.
Figure 7. Fishing Museum, 2008.

Figure 8. Inside Fishing Museum, 2008.

\textit{b) Fishing Museum}

Supervised by: The park service specialist who is stationed at the Fishing Museum.
Job description:

The museum is open from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Most of the volunteers come one day a week during the open hours, while a few of them choose to work half a day. The volunteer-schedule chart indicates that the number of volunteers ranges from zero to six volunteers per day. However, during the time I collected data, the actual number of volunteers was less than usual because some of them took a break for travel or health purposes. There were some days that there was no volunteer working at the museum at all. However, even though there was no volunteer working at the museum on that day, the museum can still be open because the visitors can get in and do a self-guided tour. The Fishing Museum is different from the McLarty Treasure Museum in that it does not have to deal with money transactions. The visitors can get in for free (since they must already have paid for the park entrance at the toll booth).

The volunteer tasks in the Fishing Museum include greeting the visitors, turning on the video for the visitors if requested, preparing materials for the campers such as brochures and forms, and keeping the museum clean. All of the mentioned tasks are optional; the volunteers have flexibility to do what they like to do. It is notable that even though knowledge or interest in fishing is beneficial to work in the Fishing Museum, the volunteers are not required to know about fishing. Their appearance in the museum helps with the security of the museum; for example, the visitors will likely not do anything that they are not supposed to do knowing that there is a park representative watching them. Similar to the McLarty Treasure Museum, the Fishing Museum is an air-conditioned building so there is not much difference in working conditions between the warm and cold seasons.
c) Toll Booth

Supervised by: The toll collector supervisor and the toll collector who is stationed at the toll booth.

Job description:

There are two toll booths in the park; one is located on the north side of the inlet and another one is located on the south side of the inlet. The toll booths are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. However, the Toll Booth volunteers’ working hours go from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Most of the volunteers come one day a week during the open hours; they can choose to work a half day or a full day. There will be one Toll Booth volunteer working at a time with the park toll collector, who is a paid employee. The Toll Booth volunteers’ main task is to greet the incoming visitors, collect the entrance fee and answer the visitors’ questions. The park toll collector assists the volunteer and also
handles another task, managing the campers. Toll Booth volunteering is indoor work where the volunteers do not have to deal much with the heat during the summer time.

![Figure 10. Park Watch volunteer and Mule car, 2008.](image)

d) **Park Watch**

Supervised by: The park assistant manager and the Park Watch group leader who is also a Park Watch volunteer.

Job description:

The Park Watch volunteers’ working hours range from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The volunteers can design their own working schedule. Most of the Park Watch volunteers work half days, either in the morning or in the afternoon. Most of them come once a week but one volunteer comes three times a week. Their routine is to go to the park’s vehicle garage and take the electric car out. This electric car is somewhat similar to a golf cart but slightly bigger such that two people can ride together. Some Park Watch
volunteers choose to work by themselves but many choose to work with their partners. Before and after the volunteers take the car out, they are to check the gas tank and make sure it is full. The back of the car is a big trunk for collecting trash or carrying necessary tools around. The Park Watch volunteers will ride around patrolling the park. Their responsibility is to make sure that the visitors obey the park’s rules and regulations; for example, they will ride to the jetty to make sure that the fish caught and kept are legal (by law, fish smaller or larger than the allowance range have to be put back into the water). The Park Watch volunteers’ work is to advise and warn the visitors, and they can report to the park police but they have no authority to take legal action such as arresting people who break the laws. Similar to the appearance of the volunteers at the Fishing Museum, the appearance of the Park Watch helps reduce illegal actions that may occur around the park. The Park Watch position is attractive to retired policemen because the nature of both jobs is similar.

Park Watch is outdoor work; the volunteers have to ride the electric car around the park. Working during the summer time under direct sunlight can be too much for some volunteers to handle. On the contrary, during the cold season, working outdoors can be pleasurable.
Figure 11. Jetties on the north and south sides of Sebastian Inlet State Park, 2008.

Figure 12. Sebastian Inlet State Park’s jetty, 2008.

e) **Jetty Watch**

Supervised by: The park assistant manager.

Job description:
The Jetty Watch volunteer’s working hours range from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The volunteers can design their own working schedule. Most of the Jetty Watch volunteers work a half day, either in the morning or in the afternoon, once a week. Their routine is to walk on the jetties with a bucket and trash picker to collect trash. The park provides the equipment for them but some volunteers prefer to bring their own. In addition, similar to the Park Watch volunteers, they act as eyes and ears for the park to make sure that the visitors obey the park’s rules and regulations or law. Their appearance helps reduce the illegal actions that may occur on the jetties.

Jetty Watch is outdoor work; therefore the volunteers should be able to work under direct sun for a certain amount of time. The capability of walking does not seem to be a big obstacle because the volunteers can work at their own pace. One of the volunteers walked with his walker while collecting trash on the jetty.

Figure 13. Fishing Museum where the volunteer OPS works, 2008.
f) Volunteer Other Personnel Services (OPS)

Supervised by: The park service specialist who is stationed at the Fishing Museum.

Job description:

Volunteer OPS help with the document work at the park, such as keeping records of individual volunteers’ working hours by inputting those numbers into the computer database. The Volunteer OPS works on Monday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. At the time I collected data, there was only one Volunteer OPS. The office is located within the Fishing Museum; one computer was provided by the park. The volunteers in this position need to have computer skills and be familiar with working with numbers. In addition, they have to be very organized because of the nature of the work. Since the office of the Volunteer OPS is located in the Fishing Museum, the Volunteer OPS is usually closely associated with the volunteers at the Fishing Museum and sometimes even helps out at the museum.

Figure 14. Sebastian Inlet State Park’s employee position house where the SPARCies team did construction work in 2008.
g) Maintenance and Construction Team (SPARCies)

Supervised by: The park maintenance mechanic.

Job description:

The Maintenance and Construction Team, or so called SPARCies, was established in 2000 by a small group of people who came in the park and saw many things that needed to be repaired such as the boardwalk and the gazebo. This group of people had a meeting with the park manager to discuss what they wanted to do for the park, and how they wanted to work, as well as the budget and possible sources of funds. They came up with the name SPARCies which stands for Sebastian Park Area Reconstruction Crews.

The SPARCies work closely with the park maintenance team to either build or maintain facilities around the park. In case the SPARCies team wants to initiate a project, they will propose their plan to the park manager, and if the project is approved, they will...
ask for funding either from the park or from the CSO. Then, the members of the SPARCies will allocate the work based on the volunteers’ skills and willingness. The members of the SPARCies sometimes work alone and sometimes work in teams. The park provides tools, equipment, materials, and sometimes vehicles for the team to use in their work, but some volunteers prefer to bring their own tools. The SPARCies work during the morning hours (about 8:00 a.m. to noon) on Tuesday and Thursday. The time is flexible depending on the project they are working on.

The work is both indoors and outdoors. For example, they do the maintenance work in the park office and the park employees’ position houses; they also do outdoor work such as fixing the boardwalk and rebuilding the gazebo in the park.

The SPARCies volunteers are required to have construction skills and be able to use maintenance tools and other equipment. Most of the volunteers who work in the SPARCies team are male; however, there are some females as well. During the time I was collecting data, there were only three SPARCies volunteers working due to the low season, as many of them went up north.
h) Tidal Pool

Supervised by: The park assistant manager and the Tidal Pool supervisor who is also a volunteer.

Job description:

The Tidal Pool volunteers’ tasks are very similar to those of the Jetty Watch volunteers, namely to pick up trash around the areas and put it in the trash bins for the park staff to collect later. The Tidal Pool volunteers occasionally come to work together. This is also outdoor work. The location is at the Tidal Pool on the north side of the inlet.
**Figure 17.** Sebastian Inlet State Park beach, 2008.

**i) Beach Cleanup**

Supervised by: The park assistant manager and the Beach Cleanup supervisor who is also a volunteer.

Job description:

The Beach Cleanup volunteers’ job description is similar to that of the Jetty Watch volunteers. The location is along the beach on the north side of the inlet where visitors have their beach activities such as swimming and picnicking.
Figure 18. Indian River Lagoon and the bike path where the River Walk volunteers work, 2008.

\textit{j) River Walk}

Supervised by: The park assistant manager and the River Walk supervisor who is also a volunteer.

Job description:

The River Walk volunteers’ job description is also similar to that of the Jetty Watch volunteers’. The location is along the Indian Lagoon River that runs along the park. (The east side of the park is Atlantic Ocean and the west side of the park is the Indian Lagoon River).
Figure 19. Display board that the Show Team/ Social Planning Team used when doing outreach, 2008.

k) Show Team/Social Planning Team

Supervised by: The park service specialist who is stationed at the Fishing Museum

Job description:

The Show Team/Social Planning Team is a group of volunteers who get together occasionally to do outreach promotion for the park. Their goal is to promote the park and its volunteer opportunities to the public. They participate in the local festivals that are not too far from the park. At the festival, they set up a park information booth with pictures of facilities and activities in the park. They also display the pictures of the volunteers in action to showcase volunteer opportunities to the people. The volunteers and the park employees work together at the booth. Besides giving information about the park, they try to attract new volunteers by asking people if they would like to volunteer for the park; they also explain the types of volunteer opportunities that the park offers. If people are interested, the Show Team will hand out the volunteer application form and set up an
appointment for them to come to the park for a tour so that the potential volunteer can make a decision on whether they will apply to volunteer at the park or not. In the past, the Show Team has been effective in attracting new volunteers to the park; a significant number of the current volunteers learned about the volunteer opportunities at the park and became involved through these festivals.

Figure 20. Sebastian Inlet State Park Campground, 2008.

l) **Campground Host**

Supervised by: The park assistant manager

Job description:

The Campground Hosts work in exchange for a free campsite in the park. Their responsibility is keeping the park’s campground in order by giving advice to the campers about how to use the facilities properly and also about the etiquette of staying at the
campsites with other campers. The Campground Hosts are also responsible for keeping the campsite, including the common facilities such as bathrooms, clean. They are working as the park’s representatives who can give clear advice to other campers. Besides working at the campground, they may also choose to volunteer at other positions around the park. For example, one of the Campground Hosts joined the SPARCies Team and helped out with construction work. They have to work a certain number of hours to meet the park’s requirement to stay for free at the campsite. During the tourist season (winter), the park sets maximum weeks that the Campground Host can stay in order to open the opportunity to other visitors to be the Campground Hosts. However, during the low season (summer) when the numbers of tourists is low and the camp site is not full, the park will let them stay for as long as they want to. In order to become a Campground Host, the interested visitor must fill out the application form and submit it to the park in advance so that the park can check for the availability of the position and can do a background check. In this case, a background check is necessary because the responsibility is high.
m) Citizen Support Organization (CSO)

Managed by: The CSO’s Board of Directors (elected by the CSO members).

Job description:

The Citizen Support Organization (CSO) is an organization formed by a group of people to help raise funds to support Sebastian Inlet State Park. Most of them are local people who live in the area and want to support the park. It was the first volunteer program at the park. At the time I collected my data, there were approximately 50-60 CSO members. According to personal communication with Perry (2008), “The park cannot grow without the support of the CSO. The CSO do things to help the park that the state cannot do. They help the park raise funds without getting any compensation back.” The income of the CSO comes mainly from the revenue of its gift shop located at the McLarty Treasure Museum, while some comes from other income, such as membership.
fees and donations. The CSO treasurer team will come to the gift shop to check stock and manage the account every week. They also do the entire stock checking once a month.

The gift shop is operated on a daily basis by the volunteers and the park service specialist at the museum. The funding generated by the CSO is granted to the park to spend on things that the board agrees are worth purchasing, such as construction materials that were not funded by the state. Another part of the fund provides two scholarships for local students, $1,000 per scholarship (E. Perry, personal communication, July 15, 2008).

The CSO’s organization structure consists of a president, treasurer, and members. They have meetings quarterly to review their performance and discuss their future plans. The number of meeting attendees varies throughout the year. The busy time of the year is during spring season, when there are usually about 25 to 35 people attending the meeting. The CSO president has a meeting agenda such as the gift shop financial report, and announcements about accomplishments and also the goals of the park manager and of the park assistant manager. To become a member, the applicant has to pay a membership fee of $10 (single), $25 (family), or $5 (student). The regular meetings are held at the McLarty Treasure Museum. The CSO members can choose to only be involved in the CSO, but not any other kind of volunteering in the park (E. Perry, personal communication, July 15, 2008).
n) **Turtle Walk**

Supervised by: The park service specialist who is stationed at the Fishing Museum or the park ranger who is an expert on sea-turtles.
Job description:

The Turtle Walk program is held during June and July, which is the season that sea-turtles come to the beach to lay eggs. The volunteers are called “turtle scouts.” The Fishing Museum is a meeting point for the Turtle Walk program, and the park rangers take turns (a different ranger for each night) giving interpretations about sea-turtles to the visitors at 9:00 p.m. They use a PowerPoint Program to do their presentation. After the presentation, the park ranger and all the visitors stay at the Fishing Museum to wait for a call from the turtle scouts to report if they have found turtles on the beach. If the turtle scouts cannot find any turtles that night, which happens sometimes, the park ranger will release the visitors around 11:00 p.m. or midnight. If they get a report that a turtle is found, the park ranger will bring all the visitors to the spot and give interpretations on how to observe the turtle and about the nature of the turtle.

The volunteers come to meet at the Fishing Museum at about 9:00 p.m. and then separate into 3 or 4 teams and walk up and down the beach looking for a turtle that may come up to lay eggs. Each team has at least one person who is well-trained to observe the turtle. Each team is equipped with a handheld transceiver (walkie-talkie); whenever any team finds the turtle, the team will call the other teams to get together and call the park ranger at the museum to bring the visitors to the beach. If none of the teams can find any turtles, they may decide to go home at 11:00 p.m. or midnight. In addition to searching for turtle, the turtle scouts are assigned to give advice to the people on the beach regarding night-time beach etiquette, such as not using a flashlight, or cell phone, and not making noise on the beach because those actions will disturb the sea-turtles.
The volunteers should have knowledge about the nature of the sea-turtles so that they can answer questions of the visitors; in-depth knowledge is preferable but not required. Their main task is to try to find turtles. Not finding any turtle for the night is not the turtle scout’s fault; it is an uncontrollable factor. The necessary condition is that the Turtle Walk volunteers should have good health and strong legs, and be capable of walking on the soft sand for at least two hours. This work is not suitable for people who have leg problems or for people who are allergic to insects.

It is notable that turtle season is in summer when the average high temperature in Florida is 90 degrees and can go above 100 degrees. It is also a season of insects such as no-see-ums and mosquitoes. Therefore, walking on the beach at night can be unpleasant because of the high humidity, heat, and bugs.

The information about job development and design described above gives the readers a fundamental understanding of what the volunteers at Sebastian Inlet State Park do and how much effort and time they contribute. The characteristics and requirements of volunteer work at this park are various: some is indoor work under controlled temperature while some is outdoor work where the volunteers have to deal with the weather conditions and other factors such as insect problems; some work requires special skills such as construction work while some does not require specific skills, such as Jetty Watch; some work requires exceptional good health and strong legs such as the Turtle Walk program, while some is suitable for anybody, including people with health or age issues, such as the work at the Fishing Museum. In sum, it can be seen from the job descriptions that the volunteers can choose to be involved in different kinds of work that require different levels or amounts of effort, time, and skill.
2. **Budget**

The Florida State Park Management System used to have a volunteer budget aimed at promoting the morale of the volunteers. The funds were used, for example, for volunteer appreciation events and for volunteer uniforms. The Florida State Park Management, in the past, used to provide an annual volunteer appreciation event where all of its volunteers were invited to gather together at one of the Florida State Parks to socialize and have fun together. The Florida Park Management System provided them accommodations and entertainment, such as food and transportation for touring around the area. The venues of the event were rotated every year (Florida Park Service, 2006). This event was well responded to by the volunteers. In addition, the park employees who work with the volunteers were invited as well. However, due to the economic downturn, the state eliminated this budget. This budget cut did not seem to discourage the volunteers from continuing their services; many volunteers expressed that they understood that the economy was tight and they were willing to continue volunteering (E. Perry, personal communication, July 15, 2008).

Currently, the Florida State Park Management System does not provide a volunteer budget for each park. Each individual Florida state park has to manage the volunteer budget by itself. Regarding Sebastian Inlet State Park, its volunteer budget comes from the revenue of the Citizen Support Organization (CSO)’s gift shop revenue. This budget is allocated for the volunteer appreciation picnics (approximately 3 times a year). Since the budget is limited, the park provides some food, such as beverages and hot dogs, while the volunteers bring some dishes to share (E. Perry, personal communication, July 15, 2008).
In addition, Sebastian Inlet State Park’s volunteer budget used to cover volunteer uniforms for those who have been working over 100 hours and volunteer working-hour pins to those who work over 500 hours. However, during the time I was collecting my data, the park was short in the volunteer budget and did not provide uniforms and pins anymore. To manage this situation, the park asked the volunteers who quit their jobs to return their uniforms so that they could be passed on to the new volunteers. In addition, the volunteers also pass on their old working-hour pins to the newer volunteers and just keep their latest pin. In case the new volunteer would like to have a brand new uniform, she/he has to buy it with their own money. The uniform shirt costs about $25.00. If the volunteer cannot afford or does not want to pay from their own money, the park staff coordinates with the CSO to request supporting funds for that special case. Even though the cost of the uniform could be an obstacle for some volunteers, the park manager believes that it is very important that the volunteers wear uniforms because it shows the discipline of the people working in the park and it gives a good impression to outsiders (T. Coulliette, personal communication, August 11, 2008).

CSO is considered as one group of the Sebastian Inlet State Park volunteers. Its goal is to raise money to support the park. The CSO’s gift shop makes approximately $60,000 a year. The money from the CSO is allocated into three major areas. First, as stated earlier, it is used to support the volunteers. Second, it is used to support the general needs of the park; if the park needs to have new equipment to perform work, for example, a lawn mower, but does not get funded by the state, the park manager requests funding from the CSO and the CSO board of committee decides on granting that item. Third, it is used to grant scholarships for local students who study the environment or related areas.
The condition is that the students have to apply for this scholarship after their freshman year in college. In recent years, the CSO has granted two to three $1,000 scholarships a year for the students to pay for textbooks and tuition (E. Perry, personal communication, July 5, 2008).

3. Recruitment

There are so many things here that have no system in place, especially the volunteer recruitment process. For example, we don’t have a flow chart to tell the process what to do next when volunteers come in, such as providing applications, doing background checks, handing out uniforms, and training. See, there’s no one to take care of that (P. Rand, personal communication, July 3, 2008).

The park has no systematic volunteer recruitment procedure. In addition, the park management does not set an optimal number of volunteers (P. Rand, personal communication, July 3, 2008). According to the park employees and volunteers, the more volunteers the park has, the better because more jobs around the park will get done. There is a lot of work around the park needing to be taken care of; such as maintenance work, and there is also support work that would make the park a better place, such as beach cleanup and security patrolling work. In addition, in case somebody cannot come to work, the others can cover the task for them; such cases occur frequently because a large portion of the volunteers are retirees who need to see doctors regularly. Moreover, in many cases, the volunteers have to spend their time with their family or friends (such as having family visit or going to visit family at other places) and cannot come to work (T. O’Toole, personal communication, July 12, 2008).
The park has two main volunteer recruitment strategies: through the outreach at local festivals and through direct personal contact. The park occasionally sends its Show Team, which consists of the park staff and the volunteers, to set up a display booth at the local festivals in order to promote the park and also to inform the public about the volunteer opportunities at the park. This strategy has been successful and many volunteers who are currently working at the park got involved through this channel.

Another way is that the potential volunteers just come into the park to ask for volunteer opportunities; these people are either those who have visited the park before or have heard about the park from their families or friends (T. O’Toole, personal communication, July 12, 2008).

The first step to get involved is that the park staff or the current park volunteer will ask for a contact address from the potential volunteers and schedule them to come to the park. Then, when the potential volunteers come, the park staff who is in charge will explain the volunteer opportunities in the park and show them around the area. After that, the potential volunteers will make their decision whether or not they really want to commit to do the volunteer work at the park on a regular basis. If yes, the park staff will give them the volunteer application form to fill in. The applicants will be asked to check out from the list the skills they possess and identify what kind of work they prefer. The volunteers can choose how many hours they want to work and the day(s) to volunteer. The park staff will do a background check only on criminal records. Then, the park will schedule the new volunteers to start their work and assign either the current volunteers or the park staff who is in charge of or supervises that volunteer group to give them an
orientation. Since the park always gets one or a few volunteers at a time, the orientation is in a casual style (T. O’Toole, personal communication, July 12, 2008).

As stated earlier, there are 14 categories of volunteer work. The number of volunteers is low during the summer time. The following table is the daily schedule of the volunteers at the park during the time I gathered data; it provides a basic understanding about the workforce and the needs for volunteers. The table shows that some days there were several volunteers working together and some days there was no volunteer at all. Since summer was a low season, the park expected that there would be more volunteers in the fall because the snowbirds would come back. The park does not have an emergency plan to recruit more volunteers to fill in the days that there is no volunteer working.
Table 4.1

*Daily Schedule of the Volunteers at the Park (Number of Volunteers per Day)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>Tue</th>
<th>Wed</th>
<th>Th</th>
<th>Fri</th>
<th>Sat</th>
<th>Sun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>McLarty Treasure Museum</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing Museum</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toll booth (gate)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park Watch (north side of the inlet)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park Watch (south side of the inlet)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jetty Watch</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer OPS</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance and Construction Team (SPARCies)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tidal Pool</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beach Cleanup</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River Walk</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show Team/Social Planning Team</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campground Host</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizen Service Organization (CSO)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total member of 45, meet every 3 month.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turtle Walk Team</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 days a week, approximately 8 volunteers per night</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is notable that there are some days that the park is short on volunteers. In addition, even though it seems like the schedule is already planned and settled, the
number of volunteers is not always as planned when it comes to practice. For example, at the Fishing Museum, which is open seven days a week, on the volunteer schedule, there was no volunteer on Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday, whereas on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, there were about four to six volunteers per day. However, when I observed on site, on those days that there should be volunteers, the number of the volunteers present was not as it was on the schedule; there was always some missing because some of them were sick, some were on vacation, and some had families visiting and they had to take care of them or they went to visit their families somewhere else. The park service specialist at the Fishing Museum gave an example, “On Thursday, we were supposed to have six volunteers but two of them have cancer, two are going on vacation, and I haven’t heard from another one who is missing. So we ended up with one volunteer for that day. So, it’s always better to have more” (T. O’Toole, personal communication, July 12, 2008).

Several volunteers at the Fishing Museum told me that there was no problem having less or more volunteers because they can cover other people’s tasks and during the summer, the museum is not very busy. In addition, if there are a lot of visitors, the visitors can do self-guided tours in the museum and the volunteers can still perform their work efficiently. They said that they felt good that the park has been flexible for them regarding working hours; they had no problem with other volunteer absentees. Instead, they felt comfortable with this style of volunteer management. There will be more volunteers when winter comes and every day will be filled.

There are other types of work which are not on a routine daily basis such as the construction and the beach cleanup work. For these types of work, the volunteers will
come together once or twice a week. For example, the SPARCies volunteers will get
together twice a week, Tuesday and Thursday (Note: This is also different from the
planned schedule). They will work around the park, and their projects depend on the
needs and the priority of the work. Sometimes they work together as a group and
sometimes they work individually. The park mechanic is the one who allocates and
assigns the work for them.

It is interesting to learn how the park came up with different types of work for
volunteers. The origin of the work can be divided into two groups: the work that already
exists as routine work that the park employees have to do, such as taking care of the
museums, collecting money at the toll booths, or patrolling the park; and the work that
the volunteers initiated such as the maintenance work. This fact indicates that the
relationship between the volunteers and the park is reciprocal; not only does the park
approaches the volunteers and asks them to work for the park, the volunteers also suggest
and offer help in various areas.

4. Screening and Interviewing

At Sebastian Inlet State Park, the volunteer screening process includes filling in
the application form, getting a background check, and having an interview with the park
staff (T. O’Toole, personal communication, July 12, 2008). In the application, the
applicants are required to indicate their skills and preferences for the volunteer jobs
provided (Florida Division of Recreation and Parks, 2008). The park service specialist
clarified that the applicants do not give wrong information on the applications in order to
get to volunteer; they in fact give accurate answers so that they are assigned to work that
matches their capabilities and skills. In the past, the volunteer applicants would declare
their limitations, such as health problems, so that they would not be placed in the wrong job. Many volunteers indicated that they could not work under direct sun during certain hours due to their health issues. In such cases, the volunteers are placed to work indoors. As volunteers at Sebastian Inlet State Park, the volunteers have to be responsible for themselves in terms of health and safety. For example, if the volunteer has a stroke while working in the park, she/he is responsible for the medical and hospital cost. As a result, the volunteers do not try to be placed in work that is beyond their capacities (T. O’Toole, personal communication, July 12, 2008). To elucidate the idea of what the park wants to know from the applicants, I provide the volunteer application form from the Florida Division of Recreation and Parks website, 2008 in Figure 4.3.
Florida Division of Recreation and Parks’ Volunteer Application Form

To apply as a volunteer in a specific region, please view the various regions and parks by clicking on the region names below:

Northwest | Northeast | Central | Southwest | Southeast

Do you need a campsite for your RV, motor home or tent? [ ] Yes [ ] No

Do you require a park which accepts fur-bearing pets (i.e., cats and dogs)? [ ] Yes [ ] No

Use the following drop-down lists to provide up to three specific areas/parks of interest:

Primary Area of Interest: [Select Region/Park of Interest]

Secondary Area of Interest: [Select Region/Park of Interest]

Tertiary Area of Interest: [Select Region/Park of Interest]

Applicant Name: ________________________________ *
Address: ____________________________________________ *
City: ________________________________________________ *
State: ________________________________________________ *
Zip: (must be a number) ________________________________ *
Email: ______________________________________________ *
Phone: ______________________________________________ *
Age: (must be a number) ________________________________ *
Emergency Contact: __________________________________*

References
Name & Phone: ________________________________________
Name & Phone: ________________________________________
Name & Phone: ________________________________________

What months are you available for volunteer service?

Check:

FROM: Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Year

TO: Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Year
What days of the week do you prefer? AM or PM shifts?
Check:

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thr Fri Sat AM PM
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

How many hours per week will you contribute?

Experiences & Interests
Tell us about yourself. Please describe your background (educational and professional, including any special hobbies, interests, or skills) that may apply to your volunteer service with the Florida Park System:

Education:

Experience:

Certifications, qualifications, skills:

Hobbies and interests:

Your goals of volunteer service:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Check any or all that apply</th>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>Interests</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounting &amp; Finance:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Management:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computers &amp; Office Operations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical / Data Entry:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programming:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Speaking:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign Language:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Gardening / Landscaping:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphic &amp; Visual Arts:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desktop Publishing:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design / Illustration:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photography:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchandise / Retailing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cashier / Clerk:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inventory Control:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Store Management:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park Operations &amp; Resources</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archaeology:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boating / Canoes:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Botany / Horticulture:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campground Host:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Education:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fish / Wildlife:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grounds Maintenance:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Historical Preservation:  
Interpretive Guide:  
Hiking & Trails:  
Museum / Tour Guide:  
Research / Library:  
Resource Management:  
Special Events / Projects:  
Toll Collection:  
Wildlife Rescue:  
Visitor Information:  
Public Health & Safety  
Fire:  
First Aid / Rescue:  
Police:  
Trades  
Carpentry:  
Construction:  
Electrical:  
Maintenance:  
Painting:  
Plumbing:  
Writing / Editing:  
Other (specify):  


Figure 24. Florida Division of Recreation and Parks’ Volunteer Application Form, 2008.
The park manager stated that the only background check for volunteer screening is the criminal record check. If the applicant has no criminal record, she is eligible to be a park volunteer (T. Coulliette, personal communication, August 11, 2008). The park manager and other park staff agreed that the criminal record check should be sufficient for volunteer screening because the park’s volunteer jobs are not risky or likely to cause harm to people. In addition, they believe that the people who apply to be volunteers at the park are willing to contribute their time and effort to the community; they tend to be good-hearted people. There has been no problem of getting bad volunteers such as those who steal or destroy the facilities in the park. However, the park staff explained that other types of organizations may have stricter rules or procedures for conducting background checks due to the nature of volunteer work. For example, volunteers at schools would have a stricter background check because the volunteers have direct contact with children. They may have to take training courses in order to be qualified to volunteer there.

As with other organizations, the recruitment process is a two-sided decision: one by the organization and another one by the applicants. In order to come to this decision, the park staff makes an appointment for the potential volunteers to come into the park and may give them a tour around the park in order to show what kinds of volunteer work the park provides. The potential volunteer can see the working condition and can make a decision whether or not they would like to pursue volunteering. The park lets volunteers choose their own volunteer work and also the working hours. The volunteers’ decision on accepting or denying the volunteer work mostly depends on their will, time, interests, and
health. Some of the people decide not to volunteer after they see what the work is like and reconsider their time management. More than half of them decide to commit to volunteer. The interview is two ways: the park staff tells the potential volunteers about the work, and the potential volunteers ask the park staff about the work they are interested in. According to the park service specialist at the Fishing Museum, who also takes care of several other volunteer groups:

In general, they (the new volunteers) have no idea what kinds of work they can do. We will ask them if they want to work indoor or outdoor, with people or without people. Then we place them in the proper place. One of the things that I emphasize is that I encourage them to try something, and if they don’t like it, they can rotate around. There are various volunteer opportunities that they can try (T. O’Toole, personal communication, July 12, 2008).

In most cases, the park staff do not deny any volunteer applicants except for those who apply to be campground hosts, due to the limitation of the campground space. The park manager pointed out that the campground host volunteer position is very competitive because of the benefits of the free campground space (T. Coulliette, personal communication, August 11, 2008).

5. Orientation and Training

Since the characteristics of the Florida State Parks are different, each park trains its volunteers differently. Sebastian Inlet State Park does not provide formal orientation to the new volunteers. In most cases, the park staff or the current volunteers who have been working at the park for a certain period of time are responsible to inform the new volunteers what to do, show them the place, teach them how to use the equipment, and
also introduce them to other park staff and volunteers. The park staff is responsible for
telling the new volunteers about the general rules and regulations such as uniforms and
absentee issues (T. Coulliette, personal communication, August 11, 2008).

There is also a volunteer handbook that the park staff gives to the new volunteers.
The volunteer handbook was written by a committee of volunteers, park managers, park
staff, and agency administrators. The goal of this handbook is “to provide volunteers a
guide to the Florida Park Service Volunteer Program. Individual parks have varied
volunteer programs and procedures; refer to that park manager for specific information
on the park volunteer program” (Florida Park Service, 2006). The book provides
information about the mission of Florida Park Service; Florida Park Service philosophy;
volunteer benefits and recognition; responsibilities and general expectations of Florida
Park Service volunteers; related laws; uniforms; and Florida Park Service Commitment to
Volunteers such as orientation and training provided to the volunteers, and
communication channels between the park and its volunteers (Florida Park Service,
2006). This volunteer handbook contains fundamental information that the volunteers
should read so that they can learn their roles, responsibilities, and benefits. However, not
all of the volunteers received this handbook and not every volunteer who received the
handbook read t. Therefore, not all of the volunteers have accurate knowledge and
understanding of their assigned responsibilities. In addition, a significant number of the
volunteers do not know about the benefits that the park provides for them. Some have
heard about the information in this book from other volunteers or park staff. In such
cases, the volunteers know something but not everything, and sometimes the information
from word of mouth might be distorted.
6. *Motivating*

The park provides some complimentary incentives to its volunteers such as a discounts at the restaurant in the park and a free annual pass to get into the park if they volunteer more than 500 hours (T. Coulliette, personal communication, August 11, 2008). The information is in the volunteer handbook and in principle should be communicated to all of the volunteers. However, some of the volunteers do not know about those benefits. It is notable that even though some volunteers do not know about these benefits, granted as an appreciation for volunteering, they are self motivated to work. Some of the park staff and the volunteers use those benefits as a recruitment tool to get people to be interested in volunteering at the park. However, some of them disagree because they think that the volunteers should have their own internal motivation to volunteer instead of wanting something in return. One of the park service specialists said:

I don’t even tell them about the benefit until they work here. My style is that they are here to help us and the benefit is the extra things they will get. But it should not be a recruitment tool. People should want to volunteer from their heart, not because they want those benefits. Some people just come to volunteer here without knowing that there are benefits attached to it and they are the people I am looking for. (T. O’Toole, personal communication, July 12, 2008)

The park manager pointed out that the nature of the volunteer work at the park could be viewed as motivation. For example, to have opportunities to work with other people who have the same interests and to be able to make a valuable contribution to the community could be counted as motivations of the volunteers (T. Coulliette, personal communication, August 11, 2008).
7. Recognition

Sebastian Inlet State Park sets up a volunteer recognition event once a year; normally the park makes it a part of the volunteer appreciation picnic. In the past, the park manager gave volunteer “hours” pins for those who have reached a certain number of volunteer hours. Many of the volunteers wear these pins on their uniforms. However, many volunteers told me that they have been working for more than the hours indicated on the pin, but they did not receive the new one due to the park’s budget cut (T. O’Toole, personal communication, July 12, 2008).

Sebastian Inlet State Park used to have award recognition programs for its volunteers; those awards were, for example, Volunteer of the Year. The award recipients would receive a plaque from the park management staff. The park management would ask the park staff and volunteers to nominate the award recipients. However, due to the budget cut, such programs were put on hold (T. Coulliette, personal communication, August 11, 2008). Currently, the park uses the volunteer appreciation picnic as an opportunity to recognize the volunteers. Instead of giving the volunteer-hour pin or recognition plaque to the volunteers as it used to, the park now provides a certificate of appreciation to them. Most of the volunteers who receive the certificate told me that they did not place much value on the certificates they were given; many of them just put them in the cabinet file at home and none of them framed the certificates.

Most of the volunteers felt appreciated that the park recognized their importance. They thought that the picnic was a good way that the park could express its appreciation to them. They also viewed it as a good opportunity for them to meet other volunteers
whom they had never known before (T. O’Toole, personal communication, July 12, 2008).

8. Supervision

According to Schermerhorn (2005), one of the management functions is controlling. The main goal of controlling is to monitor the work performance and compare the performance to the standard in order to see if any action should be taken. Those actions are to maintain the work at a satisfactory level or to take corrective action if the performance is lower than standard.

Sebastian Inlet State Park does not have a strict supervision system for volunteers. The park manager explained that the park management had a discussion about whether or not to set up a formal supervision system for its volunteers and the consensus was that the supervision system might cause a negative feedback from the volunteers, such as the volunteers losing their willingness to perform their work because they did not feel trusted. In addition, it would add extra work for the park employees. The employees, it was agreed, should spend that time working on something else. The park employees also agreed that since the volunteers work from their own free will and do not get compensations, they should have flexibility in their work. They agreed that most of the volunteers come with their will to help and they are mature people who have high self discipline. The park staff is appreciative of the volunteers and is willing to be flexible with them. They also understand that the volunteers come with different skills and capacities. For example, the 90-year-old volunteer cannot work all day and remember everything; some volunteers cannot work under direct sun due to their health conditions;
and some of them have to be absent often because of their health issues (T. Coulliette, personal communication, August 11, 2008).

Even though there is no formal supervision system to be used with the volunteers, the park employees informally supervise the volunteers who work with them. The park staff teaches the volunteers to work and to use the tools and equipment related to their work. It is important to know that the park employees are the ones who are responsible for the outcome of the work, not the volunteers. For example, if the volunteers made a mistake with the cash register, the park staff would be the one who took responsibility for that. The park staff is also responsible to make sure that the work is done properly. In case the park staff received a complaint from the park visitors that they were not treated properly by the volunteers, the park staff would have to act and might have to talk to that volunteer to solve the issue.

Conclusion

This chapter answers the first research question “How does Sebastian Inlet State Park manage its volunteers?” It is noted that a significant amount of the information came from interviews with the park staff who deal with the volunteers and also are involved in setting policy regarding volunteer management. Their opinions and information came from their experiences working with the volunteers at this park. The park manager who contributed a lot of information to this chapter did not have long experience working at this park; he had just moved from another Florida State Park to locate at Sebastian Inlet State Park about four months previously. However, he had been with the Florida State Park system for over thirty years and had been in the park manager position for over ten
years. His answers came both from experience working at Sebastian Inlet State Park and also from the other Florida state parks that he had worked at before.

Sebastian Inlet State Park performs all four management functions classified by Schermerhorn (2005). Instead of reporting by those particular functions, I decided to break down those functions and report them by the activities the park performs. Those activities are related to the theoretical functions. This chapter shows what the park emphasis is in terms of volunteer management. It also indicates the extent of the formality of each activity. In conclusion, the park’s volunteer management is informal and highly flexible, which fits well with the characteristics of its volunteers.
CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH RESULTS ON VOLUNTEERS AND THEIR SUGGESTIONS

Love cannot remain by itself -- it has no meaning.  
Love has to be put into action, and that action is service.  
~ Mother Teresa

Introduction

This chapter provides information responding to the second, third, and fourth research questions: “Who are the volunteers?” “Why do they volunteer?” and “What are suggestions to enhance the volunteer management at Sebastian Inlet State Park?” I gathered information to answer these questions by interviewing the volunteers who worked at the Sebastian Inlet State Park during July and August 2008. In addition, I conducted participant observation by volunteering at the McLarty Treasure Museum during my data collection time so that I could gain a deep understanding of how the volunteers feel and what their attitudes are toward volunteering at the park. In addition, I wrote a daily diary to keep track of my thought processes. The content of my daily diary was about, but not limited to, what I did each day, my feelings and self-reflection, interesting quotes from people I met, and interesting observations. In addition, to gain more information from another angle, I discussed with eight park employees their attitude towards the volunteers and the suggestions for improving the volunteer management.

I separated my findings in this chapter into two parts. In the first part, I summarize the number of volunteers that I interviewed from each category. In the second part, I describe the background of the volunteers, their motivations, and their suggestions to enhance volunteer management at the Sebastian Inlet State Park. I describe the
volunteers’ background and the reasons they volunteer in an essay form. In addition, I also bring up other relevant issues that allow the readers to get to know the volunteers better, such as the volunteers’ personal lifestyle, their hobbies, and their life goals. Lastly, I present not only their suggestions on how Sebastian Inlet State Park should improve its volunteer management, but also their opinions on the things that the park is doing well and should maintain.

Category of Volunteer Work and Number of Volunteers Being Interviewed

I interviewed volunteers from 9 out of 14 groups of volunteer opportunities that the park offers. I did not interview volunteers from the other five groups: Other Personal Services (OPS), Tidal Pool, Beach Cleanup, River Walk and Turtle Walk teams; therefore I will not mention them here. The numbers of interviewed volunteers are described as follows.

1. McLarty Treasure Museum

   Volunteers interviewed: 13

   Note:
   - All 13 of them solely work for the McLarty Treasure Museum

2. Turtle Walk

   Volunteers interviewed: 13

   Note:
   - 11 volunteers solely work for the Turtle Walk
   - 1 volunteer works in both Turtle Walk and Fishing Museum
   - 1 volunteer works in Turtle Walk, Jetty Watch, and Toll Booth
3. Fishing Museum

Volunteers interviewed: 12

Note:

- 10 volunteers solely work for the Fishing Museum
- 1 volunteer works in both Fishing Museum and Turtle Walk
- 1 volunteer works in both Fishing Museum and Show Team / Social Planning Team

4. Park Watch

Volunteers interviewed: 6

Note:

- 5 volunteers solely work for the Park Watch
- 1 volunteer works in both Park Watch and Show Team / Social Planning Team

5. Toll Booth

Volunteers interviewed: 3

Note:

- 2 volunteers solely work for the Toll Booth
- 1 volunteer works in Toll Booth, Turtle Walk, and Jetty Watch

6. Jetty Watch

Volunteers interviewed: 3

Note:

- 2 volunteers solely work for the Jetty Watch
- 1 volunteer works in Jetty Watch, Toll Booth, and Turtle Walk
7. Citizen Support Organization (CSO)
   Volunteers interviewed: 2
   Note:
   - 1 volunteer solely works for the Citizen Support Organization
   - 1 volunteer works for the Citizen Support Organization and the Maintenance and Construction Team (SPARCies)

8. Maintenance and Construction Team (SPARCies)
   Volunteers interviewed: 2
   Note:
   - 1 volunteer solely works for the Maintenance and Construction Team (SPARCies)
   - 1 volunteer works for the Maintenance and Construction Team (SPARCies) and the Citizen Support Organization (CSO)

9. Show Team / Social Planning Team
   Volunteers interviewed: 2
   Note:
   - 1 volunteer works for the Show Team/Social Planning Team and the Fishing Museum
   - 1 volunteer works for the Show Team/Social Planning Team and the Park Watch

Volunteers’ Backgrounds, Motivations, and Suggestions

The number of the volunteers at Sebastian Inlet State Park positively correlates with the weather. The volunteers’ peak season is during the winter time when the temperature in Florida is more pleasant than that in the northern part of the country. A significant number of the volunteers are snowbirds who come down to volunteer during
the winter season and go back to their home in the northern states during the summer time; many of the Florida resident volunteers also may travel to other places to avoid the heat. The low season for traveling in Florida is in summer due to the heat and the widespread number of insects such as no-see-ums and mosquitoes. The accurate figure of volunteers at the park during my data collection time was not available because some volunteers were off due to the previous mentioned reasons, some had health issues and could not come to work, and some could not come because of various other reasons.

I interviewed 49 volunteers from 9 groups around the park. Most of them (88%) are retirees, and a small percentage of them are school students and people with careers. Based on the data from my interviews and observations, I observed positive correlations between the age and working status versus their motivations and lifestyles. Therefore, in this study, I categorized the volunteers into three groups based on their age and working status: the teen volunteers under the age of 20 who are studying in school; the working-age volunteers who are working for money as their career; and the elderly volunteers who are retirees. To protect the identities of the interviewees, I use an alphabet letter and numbers to identify the volunteers instead of their actual names. For example, I refer to them as V1, V2, and so on.
Group I: Teen Volunteers

The teen volunteers, in this study, are identified as the volunteers under the age of 20 who are studying in school. I interviewed two of them. Since there are only two of them in this category, I will describe both profiles as follows.

Profile: V1

Volunteer category: McLarty Treasure Museum
Volunteer time: Every Saturday (10:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.)
Occupation: High school student
Interview date: July 5, 2008

Background

V1, 14 years old, is a native Floridian. He volunteers at McLarty Treasure Museum. He loves to bike, dive, and kayak. His house is less than a mile from the McLarty Treasure Museum. He lives with his mother, stepfather, 17-year-old brother, and pets: two snakes, six turtles, and three dogs. His mother is a housewife and his father is a pilot. V1 is in the ninth grade. He is doing dual enrollment and has not decided what major he wants to pursue yet. He started volunteering at the McLarty Treasure Museum in the eighth grade. It is his first and only volunteer job.

V1 was the youngest volunteer at the Sebastian Inlet State Park during the period that I did my data collection. He told me that he was a quiet person and he was nervous on his very first days of work. He explained how he used to feel uneasy speaking to people he had not known before; however, after working at this museum for a while, he gained more self confidence and felt more comfortable interacting with people, and sometimes he even took the initiative to talk to the visitors and give them information.
Volunteering at the McLarty Treasure Museum, to V1, was a separate life from school. Like the other students, he did not talk about his volunteer life at school because he thought it was his personal interest which might not be interesting to his friends. When at school, students talked about something else, such as television shows or sports. V1 believed that it would not be interesting for the others to listen to what they were not aware of or care for, such as this museum or the shipwreck stories.

V1’s duties at the museum were to put the flags up in the morning in front of the museum and take them down when the museum closed, turn on the video for the visitors, help the Park Service Specialist clean the museum, greet the visitors and collect the entrance fee, answer the visitors’ questions and sell items at the gift shop. The volunteers at this museum sit behind the gift shop counter and the Park Service Specialist who takes care of the museum sits in his small office behind the gift shop. Whenever the volunteers had questions or need help, he would come out for them. For example, when there were a lot of visitors in the museum at the same time, the park service specialist would come out to help with the cash register; and when people came in with artifacts they found on the beach and suspect that they might be treasure or something from the shipwrecks, he would come out and give them advice. V1, as well as other volunteers, park staff, and repeat visitors, loved to talk to the park service specialist since he is knowledgeable and willing to share his knowledge with others. V1 and the park service specialist were good companions; when the park service specialist was free from work, he would come out of his office and socialize with the volunteers. V1’s mother and elder brother were very supportive of his volunteering work. Sometimes they would bring lunch for everyone working at the museum. V1 viewed the working environment at this museum as casual
and friendly. In addition, he felt that he was well accepted as a valuable worker in the museum. He liked to bring his close family members and friends to visit the museum and introduce them to the staff.

V1 understood what he was expected to do for the museum and knew some rules that were related to him, such as that he was supposed to wear the volunteer shirt, black pants and covered shoes when he came to work; and he should inform the park staff at the museum in advance if he could not come to work so that the park staff would find another volunteer to substitute for him on that particular day. However, V1 was not aware about other things such as the volunteer benefits provided by the park. For example, he did not know that the park volunteers do not have to pay to enter the park’s main areas where visitors have to pay an entry fee.

Motivation

V1 started volunteering because it was a requirement from his school for students to participate in service learning, which means every student has to do volunteer work for their community for a certain number of hours each academic quarter. V1 chose the McLarty Treasure Museum because of its location; it takes him less than five minutes from his house by bike. In addition, he had been to this museum a couple of times and became interested in the history related to the museum. He started this volunteer work simply by coming in the museum with his mother and filling in the application form, then started work right away. He chose to work on Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. because it was his weekend and he had no school.

He liked to work at this museum because there was air conditioning in the museum. He also thought that it was interesting to meet people who came in with stories
related to the museum. This museum showcases the history and the artifacts of the shipwrecks in 1750s where there was a big hurricane that sank a treasure ship fleet. A significant amount of the treasure, such as jewelry and Spanish gold and silver coins from those ships, still remains in the ocean. The museum is located on the old salvage camp and in the ocean behind the museum is the spot where the ships sank. Treasures from those shipwrecks are constantly being found and many times when people find them, they come into the museum to share their stories and show what they have found. V1 grew up hearing about this history and he felt particularly connected to it because his house is located on this historical site. One of V1’s favorite hobbies was to go metal detecting on the beach, hoping that one day he would find gold or silver coins. This summer he found a couple of ballast stones on the beach. (Note: Ballast stone is the type of stone that was put in the bottom of the ship to keep the center of gravity of the ship low so that it would not turn over in rough seas.) V1 brought those ballast stones into the museum to show to the park service specialist who is in charge of the museum and knows a lot about the treasures and the history. V1 found himself much connected to the museum; he was excited to meet with the salvage divers who dove for treasure and wrote books about their stories.

V1’s original objective to volunteer was to earn school credit for service learning. However, after he had completed the required hours, he decided to continue volunteering. His later expectation was that from working at the museum, he would earn useful skills, such as communication skills, which would be an advantage for him when he tries to get a paid job in the future. In 2008, he did not work for money, but he planned to look for a
paid job soon. He stated that if he started to work at a paid job, he would still keep this volunteer job.

Suggestion

V1 did not have suggestions for improving Sebastian Inlet State Park’s volunteer management. He thought that it is good that the park provides volunteer opportunities for people, especially students. He expressed that it was a good way for him and other students to start building social and work skills to prepare for the future. He appreciated that the park staff treated him nicely and he felt welcome. V1 particularly enjoyed working with the park service specialist at the McLarty Treasure Museum, not only because he is well-rounded and gets along with other people very well, but also is very knowledgeable. He knows a lot about the park, the museum, the history, and environment and he is willing to share his knowledge with other people. V1 never hesitates to ask him for suggestions or help in work-related issues and also about life in general. He was not concerned much about the volunteer management of the park as a whole; he was concerned for the part he was involved in, and he was satisfied with it.

Profile: V2

Volunteer category: Turtle Walk

Volunteer time: 3 nights a week (9:00 p.m. – midnight) during sea-turtle breeding season (June and July)

Occupation: High school student

Interview date: July 5, 2008
Background

V2 was a volunteer with the Turtle Walk program. She was 17 years old and has been volunteering at this park for four and a half years. She was familiar with this park because her grandmother was working as a toll collector; therefore she had a chance to visit the park and got to know the park employees prior to her involvement as a volunteer. V2 was interested in volunteering in different areas, besides volunteering at Sebastian Inlet State Park, she also volunteered in a program called Explorer Program at the sheriff’s office. V2 stated, “I do a bunch of police work. I get to ride with the police and help them out.” She became involved in this volunteer work because she knew a person who worked there and she was informed about the program. In addition, she volunteered to teach and train boy scouts during the school year at a primary school. She expressed that she never has had a bad experience in her volunteer life.

Motivation

At first, V2 became involved in volunteering because she needed to gain service learning credit hours from her school. V2 mentioned, “I only need 75 hours and when I reach my 400 hours, the school told me to stop turning in the volunteer-hour record (laugh). I believe I have about 800 hours now.” She started volunteering at Sebastian Inlet State Park at the toll booth. She said that she was placed there because she was very young at the time she started (13 years old) and working at the toll booth was the only volunteer job the park would allow her to do at that age. Her house was about half an hour away from the park; she used to come to work with her grandmother and now she drives to work on her own.
V2 quit volunteering at the toll booth and was now volunteering with the Turtle Walk program at the park, which she volunteered for three nights a week from 9:00 p.m. to around midnight. Besides volunteering, she also worked for money at the community theater. She expressed that she worked for the theater not because of the money but because she wanted to be involved in the activities she likes. Similar to V1, V2 did not have to worry about making money. She said, “I just want to have fun. I do what I love doing. I don’t care for getting paid. My parents support me.”

V2’s motivation to volunteer was to get the opportunity to be involved in the activities that she had interest in. She expected to take such opportunities to learn and improve her knowledge and skills which would be beneficial in her future education and career. She planned to keep volunteering at this park as long as she did not have to move away when she entered college. V2 revealed that she was passionate about sea-turtles and she had a strong desire to study marine biology in college. V2 described herself, “I love to read and learn about sea-turtles. I think about turtles all the time, 24/7 in my head. I am in high school right now and I want to be a marine biologist. Now I study that by myself.” She became very enthusiastic when she talked about her interest in sea-turtles. She was very proud of herself about how much she had learned compared to other people of her age or even people in general. Among the volunteers in the Turtle Walk program, V2 was one of the sea-turtle experts who could read turtle tracks and explain the nature of different breeds of turtles.

Even though V2 knew a lot about sea-turtles through her four years experience participating in the Turtle Walk program, she was still very young compared to other volunteers. Consequently, she always faced the problem that the park visitors did not
want to talk to her because they thought she was not credible in her knowledge about sea turtles. However, when they started talking to her, they learned how much V2 knew and came to admire her. Such feedback from people around her reinforced her to continue volunteering and keep on learning about the sea-turtles.

Suggestion

V2 thought that the volunteer management system at the park was good because it is open to anyone who wants to volunteer. The park provides various kinds of volunteer work for people with different skills, preferences, ages, occupations, and interests. She liked that she could learn what she was interested in from doing the volunteer work. In her case, she learned about sea-turtles and also earned hands-on experience from participating in the Turtle Walk program. Such experience influenced her to pursue higher education in this field. She viewed her experience from volunteering as an advantage to her future education and career.

V2 also liked the flexibility of the volunteer management at the park. For example, she could choose to participate in the volunteer groups that she has interest in. She saw some issues that she thinks other volunteers might concerned about, such as getting working-hour pins or free volunteer uniforms; however, she expressed that she did not care for those material things. For example, she was given a volunteer cap but she never used it; and she never received the volunteer pin. V2’s main suggestion was that the park should keep providing and promoting volunteer opportunities to young people like her so that they would gain knowledge and understanding and could apply it in the future.
Group II: Working-Age Volunteers

I interviewed four volunteers who still work for money. The interesting finding is that all of these four volunteers are working in areas related to nature or park management. I describe all four profiles as follows.

Profile: V3

Volunteer category: Turtle Walk

Volunteer time: One night a week (9:00 p.m. – midnight) during sea-turtle breeding season (June and July)

Occupation: Volunteer Coordinator at the Environmental Learning Center (ELC)

Interview date: July 20, 2008

Background

V3, 32 years old, had been volunteering with the Turtle Walk program at the Sebastian Inlet State Park for six years. V3 worked at the Environmental Learning Center (ELC) which is located about 15 minutes drive from Sebastian Inlet State Park. She has been volunteering since she was in high school. V3 became a Peace Corps volunteer after she graduated from college. She volunteered in Africa for three years. She started her contract for two years and liked it, so she extended it to three years. Through the Peace Corps, she provided environmental education to the villagers. For example, she taught village women to do organic gardening.

Motivation

V3 loved volunteering and wanted to do volunteering abroad in exotic countries such as Nepal and Thailand. In her opinion, Americans want to volunteer because they want to do something meaningful. In addition, there are needs for volunteers in all kinds
of work. V3 mentioned, “There are many programs that won’t be possible without the help of volunteers.” V3 was involved in four volunteer programs. She did two Turtle Walk programs; one with this park and another one with the Caribbean Conservation Corporation (close to Sebastian Inlet State Park). V3 was already trained to lead the Turtle Walk program. She also volunteered in the Turtle Walk program with other organizations around the same area. She became involved because she originally had an interest in sea turtles and she was asked by the organizations to help out. The Turtle Walk program was seasonal; it was during June and July when sea turtles lay eggs. She also volunteered in a Life Coaching Program, helping young, low income minorities with their studies. She was also on the board of directors of the Pelican Island Preservation Society, which is a local environmental education organization that promotes the conservation of habitat and wildlife on Pelican Island in Sebastian, Florida. Besides volunteering in Florida, she went to Costa Rica for two weeks to do the same kind of Turtle Walk program. For the Costa Rica program, she had to pay for her own transportation and accommodation. That trip to Costa Rica was special to her because she was selected to be the one who put a satellite receiver on the back of the turtle, which not everybody was allowed to do. The purpose of that satellite reception is to keep track of that turtle after it was released to the ocean.

Furthermore, she occasionally volunteered to do beach cleanup at Sebastian Inlet State Park. Even though she thought that was an unpleasant job to work in the heat, she was proud of her contribution to nature. V3 shared her thought:

I used to do beach cleanup at noon before. I thought to myself why am I doing this? But I had seen dead sea-turtle that died because it ate a plastic bag thinking
that it’s a jelly fish. I heard stories that turtles ingest trash and die; it’s crazy. I keep doing it. It gives me a high sense of satisfaction.

V3’s original motivation to volunteer was that she would like to be involved in the honor society, and then it became her habit to continue volunteering. She explained:

In America, if you want to be involved in honor society, you have to do community service. It’s a program that depends on your grades and other activities. Students have to do something besides the school work. I think in general they are requiring more and more volunteer hours from the kids and that leads to the habit of lifelong volunteer.

Currently, V3’s motivation to volunteer was that she wanted to contribute to the community and to utilize her time wisely in the things that she likes to do. She said she did not like to spend time watching television; instead, she preferred to do things outside. Volunteering made her feel good about herself. She commented, “It made me feel like I’m doing something more than making money.” In addition, being involved in volunteering helped enhance her career. She learned hands-on knowledge about the environment.

V3 accepted that she did not have friends her age doing volunteer work with her. She explained, “School kids do it for their school credit. Older people do it because they retired and wanted to do something. There’s not much in between. I am 32; most people my age may start to have a family and little kids.” She told me about an organization that targeted single volunteers, “There’s an organization such as in DC; it’s for singles only. That’s interesting. They try to take the same amount of males and females on the same project.” She said that even though there was nobody of her age volunteering at the
places she worked for, she still liked to do the job. She could make friends with people from all walks of life. She mentioned that she had a boyfriend who was very involved in volunteering. He was volunteering with the construction team at the place she worked for money. However, they do not volunteer together because they preferred different kinds of work. She pointed out that she could volunteer many hours a week because she had more time to give, she did not have children, and she was not yet married.

She observed that she thought people who volunteer encourage people around them to do volunteer work as well. She said her three best friends were volunteering in different areas regarding their skills and interests; one volunteered in a marine biology project, one in a cancer support and medical project, and another one volunteered at a community theater helping out with making costumes. She said that the girl that she mentors through the Life Coaching Program also volunteered at a community museum. She believed that she was a good influence on people around her.

Suggestion

V3 thought that the volunteer management at this park was flexible and fit its volunteers’ characteristics. She liked the fact that the park offers different types of volunteer work which people of different interests and capabilities can join. She did not mind not having a chance to make new friends of the same age; instead, she felt that the opportunity to participate in activities she had an interest in, and to utilize her time wisely were her main goals. She also appreciated that the park staff treated the volunteers nicely and were willing to share and exchange knowledge with the volunteers.

Profile: V4

Volunteer category: Turtle Walk
Volunteer time: 4 nights (9:00 pm – midnight) during 2008 sea-turtle breeding season (June and July)

Occupation: Park Service Specialist (at another Florida State Park)

Interview date: July 26, 2008

Background

V4, 24 years old, was a volunteer with the Turtle Walk program. She worked as a park service specialist at another park. Her education background was English. She used to work as a volunteer for AmeriCorps and had just started work with the Florida State Park about eight months earlier.

Motivation

V4’s motivation to volunteer with the Turtle Walk program was her interest in working close to nature. She wanted to learn about wildlife because of her personal interest and her career purpose. Besides volunteering with the Turtle Walk program at Sebastian Inlet State Park, she also volunteered for the Turtle Walk program at Juno Beach Park, another organization close to her workplace. V4 learned about the Turtle Walk program at Sebastian Inlet State Park from the park ranger at this park and she became interested. She could only participate four times this summer (every other week within the season) because she lived far away from the park, about a one-hour drive, and she had to work the next morning at 9:00 a.m. To get to the park, she took turns driving to volunteer with two of her AmeriCorps friends and a park ranger friend. It was her first year participating and she would like to do it again next year. She accepted that it was a time consuming activity; however, it was also an interesting activity. She expressed, “I do have real passion for sea turtles. It’s extremely exciting. I am happy that I can help out a
little bit.” In addition, she also would like to do something to reciprocate, as the park service specialist at the Sebastian State Park always helps her at her park. She mentioned, “The Park Service Specialist at Sebastian Inlet State Park always helps us at our park such as being a guest speaker, so I want to return him some favor.”

Besides volunteering with the Turtle Walk programs, V4 also volunteered as a Spanish tutor for school children and as a political campaign 2008 volunteer. She stated firmly, “I like to volunteer.” Her criteria for choosing volunteer jobs were that she must have a passion for them and could learn useful knowledge from participating. She explained:

If I earn from it and feel like I made an impact, I tend to stay longer. If I don’t feel like I have an impact on it, I won’t stay long. For example, I used to volunteer for a press and I just did filing stuff, I didn’t feel like I made any impact or learned so I quit.

Most of the time, she volunteered individually because she believed people had different interests and she would make new friends at the workplace. However, she thought that it was also good to volunteer with a group of friends so that they could keep each other motivated. From her experience at the park she worked for, she observed that most people came to volunteer as individuals, and sometimes she saw couples that came together and also groups of teenagers. She felt that the motive that kept her coming back to do volunteer work was the sense of comradeship among the volunteers and staff. She admitted that she rarely met people of her age in the voluntary work.

V4 liked to travel and she had been looking for volunteer opportunities that fit her interests. She explained:
I want to do something interesting which provides me opportunities to grow and learn from the program. The benefit is not that you are selfless but everyone wants something different. I don’t have much interest in saving money. I think I still want to find a program that I can explore other parts of the world. After that, I might think about settling down. By my nature, I play things by ear. I follow my instinct. I don’t really have a concrete plan for myself. And things seem to work out well for me that way.

V4 said that if she could take a month off from work and travel, she would definitely do volunteering at the destination of wherever she traveled to. She explicated her thought:

If the country is where I already have in my mind that I want to visit, I will be willing to pay my own way to volunteer there. I think it will be more valuable than just being a tourist. This would be a good contribution to the country and a good way to experience. I guess I will be concerned about lodging in the country, but the airfare doesn’t seem to be a problem to me.

Her perspective about volunteerism in the United States was that people do volunteer for different purposes: some volunteer to kill time while some volunteer because of the incentives such as scholarship or recognition. She thought that people who became involved in volunteerism and remained in service perceived volunteerism as a part of their life. She believed that Americans were open-minded; the choices to volunteer or not were individuals’ decisions and people who do not volunteer will not be looked down on by society. In her opinion, American society did not classify volunteer work into levels; people had freedom to choose to volunteer what they want without
getting insulted by others; for example, somebody may be happy to volunteer to clean the bathroom and others will appreciate them. V4 commented, “Level of prestige depends on the amount of time and effort, but not what they do. A lot of awards granted by the Florida State Park were given out depending on the amount of work hours, not what they accomplished.”

Suggestion

V4 appreciated that the Sebastian Inlet State Park provided volunteer opportunities for people from all walks of life. She gave an example of the Turtle Walk program and explained how it gave a good opportunity for people to be really involved and learn about nature. She thought that the park was doing well in networking with other related organizations and in sharing human resources among those organizations. For example, the service specialists from Sebastian Inlet State Park went to other nature-based organizations to give lectures or did interpretation programs; and those organizations sent staff to the Sebastian Inlet State Park to help out when needed. She said that not only would the organizations benefit from such reciprocal manners but the staff would also learn useful knowledge and skills for their work as well.

Profile: V5

Volunteer category: Turtle Walk

Volunteer time: Four nights a week (9:00 p.m. – midnight) during sea-turtle breeding season (June and July)

Occupation: Biology teacher at Brevard Community College

Interview date: 20 July, 2008
Background

V5 was a volunteer with the Turtle Walk program. She was born and raised in Florida and moved to live in California for five years, then moved back to Florida. V5 was a biology teacher at Brevard Community College. She used her biology class as an opportunity for her students to do service learning for school credit. The students could volunteer to help preserve nature in many ways such as planting trees or conducting some biology research to find ways to enhance the quality of the environment. V5 explained that many of the students who take her class are not science majors but take it as a required course, therefore, they might not be as motivated. She said a hands-on volunteering project is an effective means to inspire the students to the subject taught. V5 explained:

I was looking for ways to motivate my students because they don’t really want to study science and they have to take it as a required course. So I decided to take them on a field trip and to the neighboring park, and do something useful; we remove exotic plants and clean up, which is a significant service to the community. We have lecture in the beginning of the week and second half of the week they come out. That works out very well. They feel satisfied in what they have done. They can talk to their friends; they can bring people and show them what they have done. After the hurricane, we came out and helped people and people see what we had done. That’s one motivation.

Motivation

V5 joined the Turtle Walk program as a volunteer because she had an interest in sea turtles and she wanted to do something outdoors. She might be the Turtle Walk
volunteer who had been volunteering the longest at the Sebastian Inlet State Park. She started volunteering at the park in 1989 (19 years ago). The Turtle walk was the only volunteer program she was involved in. She put a lot of time and effort into it, four nights a week. Since she had a long experience and was considered an expert at the program, she also volunteered to train the new turtle scouts. In addition, V5 was occasionally invited to train turtle scouts at other turtle walk programs, such as at the Caribbean Conservation. She did the Turtle Walk program two months a year, and for another ten months, she worked with her students on their biology service learning projects. She was planning to retire in about three years, but she would continue to volunteer in this program.

V5’s motivation to volunteer was to be a real part of the community who contributes something to it. She clarified, “I don’t have family. So community is my large extended family.” V5 said that she had quit many things that she did not enjoy. For example, she used to volunteer to do paper work for an organization and she did not like it, so she resigned. She also stopped teaching the courses at school that she did not think were worthwhile for the students. She then changed her teaching style to more hands-on learning. She explicated:

I changed what I teach and how I teach it. I was teaching science majors and the content; after a year, I was over it. It didn’t make sense, I love teaching. So I started to teach about nature. It’s the content that they should know but I change the aspect of teaching. I make clear at the first class that if they don’t want to do field work they can choose to take the same course that is taught by other people. It’s only me who does field work.
Suggestion

V5 thought that the park’s volunteer management was good and she did not have suggestions for its improvement. She appreciated that the park provides opportunity for students to do service learning in various fields. To volunteer in the park, the students gain hands-on experience and understand more than sitting in the classroom or reading textbooks. She pointed out that service learning is a significant concept that is growing around the United States and the park should continue to provide this opportunity to the students in the area.

Profile: V6

Volunteer category: Park Watch and an assistant manager of the Park Watch Team

Volunteer time: Every Saturday (8:00 a.m. – noon)

Occupation: Landscaper at local school

Interview date: 19 July, 2008

Background

V6, 47 years old, was a Park Watch volunteer and also an assistant manager of the Park Watch team. He moved down from Indiana in 1968. He had two sons; one was in high school and another one would start college in the upcoming academic year. He was a landscaper and was working at his sons’ school. His house was about seven miles from the park. He used to volunteer as a football coach at his sons’ school. He explained, “I like sports, football. I coached football, basketball, baseball, and all kinds of stuff and other kinds of sports when my kids were in school. I stopped when the children grew up.”

Currently, he only volunteered at Sebastian Inlet State Park.
V6 was promoted to be an assistant manager of the Park Watch team. (The manager is V8.) His duty was to help manage the Park Watch volunteers’ schedule. In addition, for special events, such as when there was a surfing contest in the park, he would coordinate the Park Watch team members to help out in various tasks such as directing traffic and parking. He also joined the Show Team/Social Planning Team on some occasions.

V6’s elder son used to volunteer with him for his school’s community service learning credit. However, he quit because he did not have time to do it anymore. He had to do school work and also worked at a paid part-time job. V6’s elder son just received a scholarship from the park’s CSO and V6 is very proud of it. He shared the story about his son:

He is 18 years old. He is an honor student. His GPA is 3.975. He has a lot of scholarships for school because of his high grades. We knew about this Park scholarship when he was in Grade 11 and we held onto it. For this scholarship, he had to write an essay; it was very good. He filled all the curricular requirements that they needed. This year we have a lot of people applying and he was lucky. He was a good candidate to get it. He volunteered here about 4 years.

He explained that the scholarship did not require being a volunteer at the park, but the applicant should have a competitive GPA and aim to use their knowledge to help the community in the future.

Motivation

V6 joined this volunteer program because he went to a festival, talked to the park’s recruitment team, and became interested. He used to come to this park and learned
about the volunteer opportunities. He chose to join the Park Watch because he wanted to ride the electric car, and help visitors and also be the eyes and ears for the park. He mentioned, “When I was young, I used to come here and I saw people break into cars and somebody had to take care of it. So, we (the Park Watch) ride on the electric car together around the park and make sure cars are not broken into.” He worked every Saturday morning for four hours. He usually started around 8:00 a.m. and left around noon. Then another Park Watch would come for the next shift. He stated, “I am here on Saturday because many people don’t want to do volunteer on weekends.” He liked to do Park Watch and never thought about changing to other tasks because he liked to work outdoors and he realized that it was an important job that needed more people. He commented, “They need people to do park watch, too. Even though they have law enforcement people, they still need more people to help out. It’s important to have people out there.”

He also preferred to volunteer at Sebastian Inlet State Park because of the beautiful ocean and opportunities to talk to people. He expressed, “I’m not leaving this place. It is beautiful.” He felt comfortable with people in the park. He planned to work twelve more years in his career before he retired; but he would keep on volunteering at this park after his retirement.

V6 said that he wanted to help the park because the park did not have enough people to handle everything. He gave an example:

I do help with parking during the surfing contest. Last time it was raining. I went under the palm shade and after that I got dried out and I came back to work again. Park staff has to help out sometimes if we don’t have enough volunteers. It’s something that has to get done and somebody has to do it.
V6 believed that people would volunteer in what they had interests in. In this case, he volunteered because he had always come to this park since he was a child and he loved the scenery here. In addition, he felt appreciated for his time and effort that he put into the work. He also liked the people he associated with when he came to work.

He mentioned about the one million hours patch, a patch that the Florida Park Service made and gave to every volunteer of Florida State Park when the accumulation of all volunteer working hours in every Florida state park reached one million hours. He appreciated that the Florida Park Service awarded the contributions of the volunteers. He expressed, “It makes me feel good.” He also wore a thousand-hour volunteer pin. He explained that even though he wore the one-thousand hour pin, it did not mean that he volunteered one thousand hours. He clarified, “I have a thousand. I know I did way more than that. It doesn’t mean anything but I’m happy to get it.” He said that the park stopped making more pins because of the limited budget.

In conclusion, V6’s motivations to volunteer were that he had the opportunity to work on the activities he likes, to be in the beautiful surroundings, to have a chance to be outdoors with fresh air, to have the opportunity to socialize with other people, to give back to the community, and to be appreciated by others.

Suggestion

V6 suggested that the park should be concerned more with how to show appreciation to its volunteers. He thought that symbolic acknowledgement, such as the volunteer working hour pin and volunteer appreciation picnics, should be provided to the volunteers. In addition, some perks, such as a discount at the restaurants in the park and free park-pass could attract and maintain the volunteers. He suggested that the volunteers
should not have to pay for their own uniforms; instead, the park should provide enough uniforms to its volunteers. In addition, he believed that empowering some volunteers with management titles (such as group manager) and responsibilities was one of the ways to emphasize the importance of the volunteers, to show the trust that the park has towards its volunteers, and to encourage the volunteers to continue their services at the park.

**Group III: Retiree Volunteers**

Among the 49 volunteers I interviewed, 43 of them were retirees. They had diverse career backgrounds. The majority of them (14 volunteers or 31% of them) used to work in engineering, computer, or technical areas. I chose to present 8 interviews with the volunteers with different backgrounds so that the presented outcome would be properly diverse.

**Profile: V7**

Volunteer category: McLarty Treasure Museum

Volunteer time: Every Wednesday (10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.)

Occupation: Retired. Used to work as an engineer for IBM

Interview date: 9 and 30 July, 2008

Background

V7, 65 years old, moved from upstate New York to Florida about ten years ago after he retired. He had one son and two grandchildren in Pennsylvania, and one daughter in Palm Bay, Florida. He moved down to be closer to his daughter. He sold his house in New York and bought a new one in Florida, about 15 miles from the park. He always goes up north to stay with his son for a month during summer.
V7 used to work for IBM as an engineer in a manager position for 30 years. He was in charge of testing the products that IBM produced. He started working there when he was 19 years old, holding an associate degree. He retired from IBM when he was 49 years old. His dream since he was six years old was to drive a bulldozer. At that time, he had a friend who owned a heavy construction equipment factory; therefore after he retired from IBM, he learned to drive bulldozers, backhoes, and dump trucks from this friend. Then he applied and acquired a commercial driver’s license. He worked for a construction company and drove a dump truck for about two years and then ended up driving a school bus on a part-time basis. He expressed that he quit working for IBM because at that time, IBM encouraged people to retire by offering employees a year’s salary to quit; so he accepted the opportunity. “Money was not a problem, so I can do anything I want,” he said.

V7 told me that he was supposed to get lifetime insurance from IBM, however, the company started to charge him more and more. The medical insurance used to be free for him. But about two years after he retired, the insurance company started to charge him $50 a month for medical. Then three or four years later; it started to charge him $100 a month. Then, for 5 years, it charged $600 a month. Currently he pays over $700 a month. Even though he had a higher cost of living than he expected, he still volunteered.

V7 had been involved in volunteerism since age 32. His first job volunteering was as a fireman in upstate New York. He worked every Monday night for four hours. The age of the firemen volunteers ranged from 18 to 60 years old. There were certain categories of work which were assigned according to the volunteers’ skills and physical
capabilities, for example, the older ones would drive the truck, while the younger ones would handle the hose. V7’s job was to check the equipment and go out with the fire truck when needed. In case of emergency, the fire station might call him at other times requesting him to come; he would let his supervisor know and he would be allowed to leave for his volunteer duty. He said that IBM was very supportive of volunteer programs in the community; however, he said not every company in America supports community work. V7 joined the volunteers at the fire station because of the sense of comradeship. “I enjoyed being with a bunch of other guys, doing service for the community, having a party, having fun being around with other people who are doing the same thing,” he said. In addition, he also wanted to help the community. While he was with the fire station, there were approximately fifty to a hundred volunteers working each day. The fire station provided a game room, pool table, ping pong, and beer. It was convenient to gather the volunteers together in one place so that in case of fire, they could go out right away from the fire station, and not have to come from their houses.

It is noticeable that most of the American volunteers I interviewed joined the volunteer work on their own; rarely did they come with friends. V7 was one of them; he applied for the volunteer jobs by himself and hoped to make new friends at the workplace. The fire station gave him a good impression about volunteering, however, he had to quit after two years because he had to move to another town. However, he was still very interested in volunteering. When he was 34 years old, his policeman friend invited him to join the Explorer Scout volunteers with the policemen, so he joined and volunteered there for about 5 years.
Regarding my question whether he had encountered the issue of a “ninety days wonder,” he replied that he did not have anybody call him that. He commented that “ninety days wonder” was not a good thing to say to people. He explained:

It’s not a good word; it means you are a brand new person that doesn’t know anything. They could be brand new, and come in saying I can do this and that, and people will say that ‘Ah! They are another day wonder.’ They think they know everything, but in fact they don’t. They think they can learn everything in 90 days. Sometime I used it as a defense system. For example, when visitors came in and complained or asked too many questions, I would say that I was a volunteer and I did not know much, therefore those visitors would stop bothering me and look for the park employees instead.

Motivation

V7 was interested in volunteerism; he told me that there are about 5,000 volunteers in one county in Florida. He gave me examples of well known volunteer programs in the United States such as Meals on Wheel, in which volunteers drive their own cars to deliver hot meals to old people who stay at home because they cannot go out by themselves. He believed that the good feeling that people received from volunteering was the main motivation for people to remain in the service.

V7 volunteers at Sebastian Inlet State Park without expecting anything in return. However, he felt appreciated and happy when the park did something for the volunteers. For example, in 2005, the Florida State Park service provided a big volunteer appreciation event for the volunteers of all the state parks in Florida. Every volunteer was
invited to stay and camp for free at one of the Florida State Parks and they had a chance to meet and socialize with volunteers from different parks. He shared his experience:

In 2005, one year they had a weekend for volunteers from the whole state. It was a very nice weekend and they put us on a bus that took us around. I stayed in the cabin at Jonathan Dickinson State Park. I went to Lake Okeechobee and they gave airboat rides around the area. We went all over and some busses took people to Ft. Lauderdale. That was a beautiful weekend and all the food was provided to the volunteers. There must be 2,000 people who stayed in the same park, cabins and tents, or outside and they could come in any time. I paid for the cabin but camping was free. It was a nice thing that the state gave back to the volunteers. The park staff, particularly those who work with the volunteers, were also invited to join them. I went with them for 4 years but they do not do it anymore due to the budget cut. I think they stopped in 2007.

Suggestion

V7 suggested that the Florida Park Service (headquarters) should provide a budget for volunteers, such as uniforms, working hour pins, and especially state-wide volunteer appreciation events as it used to have in the past. He thought that the volunteers’ appreciation events increase the morale of the volunteers to continue their services and also it was a good opportunity to bond the volunteers and the park staff together. Moreover, the volunteers would get to know volunteers and staff from other Florida State Parks. For him, such events were memorable and have much more value than materials such as pins or certificates.
Profile: V8

Volunteer category: Park Watch and Park Watch Manager

Volunteer time: Every Saturday afternoon

Occupation: Retired, Used to be a policeman in Philadelphia

Interview date: 19 July, 2008

Background

V8, 80 years old, was a Park Watch volunteer and also the manager of the Park Watch team. He used to be a policeman in Philadelphia and retired when he was 50 years old. He moved down from Philadelphia to Florida and bought a house in 1991. His house was about 25 miles from the park. He had been volunteering for Sebastian Inlet State Park for about five years. V8 had four children and they all lived up north. Two of his sons used to be in a police department and were now retired, another one does elevator repair, and his daughter is a housewife.

Motivation

V8 knew about the volunteer opportunity at the park because he went to a local shopping mall and had a chance to talk to one of the volunteer recruiters at the park’s volunteer promotion booth. V8’s wife volunteered at a tap dancing school on Saturday; therefore he wanted to have something to do on Saturday so that he would not be alone at home. He was invited to come for a tour at the park and he decided to start volunteering right away.

V8 began by volunteering at the Fishing Museum. Then in the summer time, when the snowbirds went up north and the park became short of Park Watch volunteers, he transferred to join the Park Watch Team. He became the Park Watch manager because
the volunteer coordinator (at that time), asked him to take responsibility and be in charge of managing the Park Watch group. V8 believed that he was chosen to be the manager because of his work experiences as a policeman. He had two Park Watch manager’s assistants; one taking care of the group working on the north side of the inlet and another one taking care of the south side of the inlet. Most of the time, he contacted his assistants by phone without having in-person meetings due to the far distance between his house and the park. V8 revealed that he rarely had volunteers who caused problems. However, there were some. For example, one time he had a volunteer who was always rude to people; as a result, the park received a lot of complaints about him. Therefore, V8 had to fire him and he had been given the authority by the park manager to do so.

V8 had not thought about stopping volunteering any time soon. He mentioned, “I always visualize that I’ll stop when I get tired.” V8 used to volunteer for Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), and sometimes he donated blood for the Red Cross and a blood bank up north. His wife liked to volunteer, too. She just received a 15-year volunteer pin from the hospital she volunteered for. V8 believed that volunteering was a good opportunity for couples to do something useful and not have to spend time together too much, which would, in turn, reduce the divorce rate. V8 liked many things about volunteering at Sebastian Inlet State Park, so he decided to stay in service as long as his health was good. He received a Florida state park’s free pass card and utilized it a lot. He also appreciated the friendship that the park staff and other volunteers gave to each other. He concluded, “I also like the employees. They make me feel like I am wanted.”
Suggestion

V8 suggested that the park should have a volunteer coordinator who takes care of volunteer recruitment and manages the benefits for volunteers. He mentioned that the park used to have a volunteer coordinator whose job description was to coordinate the volunteers, to recruit, and to manage the volunteers’ benefits in order to maintain their service with the park. However, the position was discontinued and now the responsibilities were distributed to many people around the park. He indicated that, even though it works fine, he thought that if the park brought back that position, the volunteer program would be more effective and the park would have an increasing rate of incoming volunteers and lower rate of volunteer-turnover. He also suggested that informing potential people about the benefits that the volunteer would receive from the park, such as a free pass to the park, is an efficient way to draw new volunteers into the park. He believed that even though many people disagree with the idea of using the volunteer benefits as a recruiting tool, as the park may get people who just want to get the benefit but not have the sincere will to volunteer, he thought people would change their attitude when they became involved.

Profile: V9

Volunteer category: Maintenance and Construction Team (SPARCies) founder/volunteer and the president of Citizen Support Organization (CSO)

Volunteer time: Every Tuesday and Thursday morning (8:00 a.m. – noon)

Occupation: Retired. Used to work for IBM as a product manager

Interview date: 24 July, 2008
Background

V9 was a president of the Sebastian Inlet State Park’s Citizen Support Organization (CSO) and also the founder of the Maintenance and Construction Team (SPARCies.) He was the one who gave the name SPARCies to the Maintenance and Construction Team. V9 was from Wisconsin and moved down to Florida in 1982 and stayed until 1995, then moved to Texas, and came back to Florida again in 2000 after he retired. He used to work for IBM as a product manager and used to manage software development. V9 liked fishing and that was the reason he moved to Florida and bought a house. He also liked boats; he had his own kayak and a row boat. V9 likes to keep himself busy, after he moved to Florida in 2000, he started to volunteer right away.

V9 founded the Construction and Maintenance Team because he observed that Sebastian Inlet State Park had many things that needed to be fixed and he wanted to help out. The SPARCies works on different projects around the park, such as re-building the gazebo, fixing the park employees’ houses, fixing the bulletin boards, and even trimming bushes. They usually work on Tuesday and Thursday for four hours from 8:00 a.m. to noon; they might extend their working hours if needed. The group received funding from the park and some part from the Citizen Support Organization (CSO) in case the park did not get funded from the state. To request funding, the SPARCies manager would propose the projects that they wanted to accomplish to the park manager for approval. Then if the budget was lower than $500, V9 as the president of the CSO could decide and approve by himself, but if the request was over $500, the proposal would be sent to the CSO board for approval. The SPARCies could also request materials and tools from the park.
The CSO was an organization that was established by a group of people who wanted to support Sebastian Inlet State Park. The CSO members did not come to volunteer at the park on a regular basis like other volunteers; instead, they had a meeting every three months among the members. The main goal of the CSO was to support the park financially in the areas that the park did not get funded from the state but they thought it was necessary for the park, such as construction and maintenance costs. In addition, they provide two scholarships a year to local college students who have a high GPA and aim to work for the community when they graduate. V9 said last year the CSO spent about $4-5,000 on the park. The CSO’s money came from the revenue of the gift shop and membership fees. The major problem of CSO was that the organization is small, only 20–30 members including the board, and the members are old, therefore it was a possibility that the organization could shrink, unless they could attract more members. In addition, there is a lot of document work within the CSO, which discourages people from joining.

Motivation

V9 knew about the volunteer opportunity at the park from his neighbor who was currently volunteering there. He started by volunteering to do exotic plant control (pulling weeds) and picking up trash. He and another volunteer worked together and noticed that there were several things in the park that needed to be fixed, such as a billboard and the gazebo that were torn down by hurricane. Therefore, they went to talk to the manager and offered to do construction and maintenance work. He came up with the name SPARCies which stands for Sebastian Park Area Reconstruction Crews. He expressed, “We need something that’s kind of catchy.” At that time, it was just two
people. When he got approved by the park manager and started the project, there were a lot of retirees that joined the team. Now, there were about twenty to thirty SPARCies members from all walks of life. V9 acted as a coordinator of the team. He said that many people just came to the park and asked if they could help with construction and maintenance work without knowing about SPARCies before. It was notable that people seemed to have the idea of volunteering to do maintenance and construction work in their minds already. V9 said that he had a diverse group of people to do different things such as plumbing, carpentry, and steel work. There was one volunteer who used to be an NBA basketball player. He explained, “We have guys who come in and offer to help and tell us the scope of what they can do. They are specializing in something and we let them do what they can.” He said that they work with trust; for example, one of the SPARCies came up with a budget to do a maintenance project and proposed the budget to the park manager. Then the park allocated him necessary supplies and money to buy the materials that he requested.

Suggestion

V9 liked that the park worked hand-in-hand with the volunteers and the two parties trust each other. He suggested that the park should continue the flexibility and simplicity of its coordination with the volunteers. For example, since the volunteers at the park were mature and responsible people, the procedure of requesting a budget or allowance to conduct projects should have minimal paper work. He said that paper work discouraged a lot of people. Moreover, some people did not have paper work skills, and many people who are qualified to handle paper work (maybe because they used to do it as a career) did not want to do it anymore. He added that it was easy for the SPARCies and
the CSO to reach the park manager and informally consult about the new projects they wanted to do, and he thought the park should keep this kind of flat and dynamic organization.

Profile: V10

Volunteer category: Fishing Museum

Volunteer time: Every Friday (10:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.)

Occupation: Retired. Used to be in the Air Force and worked overseas

Interview date: 1 August, 2008

Background

V10 is a volunteer at the Fishing Museum. He used to work for the US Air Force in many countries overseas, such as Japan and Korea. He switched to work for AT&T and had spent 35 years in other countries such as Thailand, Vietnam, the Philippines, Hong Kong, Japan, Italy, and Germany. He retired in Germany in 2000 and came back to the United States. V10 likes to keep himself busy. He lived about 44 miles, or about forty minutes drive, away from the park. He volunteered only at the Sebastian Inlet State Park. On his other days of the week, he spent time reading, gardening, socializing, and sometimes he traveled to visit his children and grandchildren. He liked his life to be planned. He mentioned, “I always plan to do things each day.” V10 said that it was his goal to do volunteer work after he retired. He mentioned that while he was working overseas, he did not observe much volunteering. He commented, “I don’t get the impression that people there volunteer. The only thing I saw was the Red Cross. I didn’t see local people volunteer. I think a lot of countries can use a few hours of people to volunteer, but I didn’t see much.”
Motivation

V10 started volunteering at Sebastian Inlet State Park in 2000. He became involved because he went to a local festival and met the park volunteer recruiter at the park’s public relations booth. He was impressed by the pictures of the park and the volunteers. He expressed, “It’s beautiful and peaceful.” He decided to volunteer right away because he was looking for something useful to do after retirement. He stated:

When you retire, your life is kind of quiet and unstructured. So to volunteer once a week, it gets your life more structured and to get up to come to volunteer and socialize with people. It puts you in another frame.

He started with the Maintenance and Construction Team (SPARCies), but he quit shortly after because he did not like to work in the heat and do too much physical work. However, he appreciated that it gave him a sense of belonging. He explained:

It’s kind of comradely, but it takes a lot of physical effort. It’s interesting and rewarding but you have to be outside and deal with humidity, heat, and bugs. At that time there were about eight people and sometimes the rangers joined us; we had got them to know each other pretty well.

After quitting the SPARCies team, he then moved into the Fishing Museum and stayed there. He enjoyed the work as well as the others who began volunteering at the same time; many of them were still working around the park. “It’s pleasant to work here,” he said. He started by working two days a week; but now he cut it down to one day a week so that he could have more flexible time for himself. He does not commit to volunteer at other jobs such as picking up trash, but he will do it whenever he feels like it. He commented, “It’s almost like meditation when you are out there.”
Volunteering at Sebastian Inlet State Park is V10’s first volunteer work in life. He considered other volunteer opportunities such as hospice but had not made any decision on what he wanted to do yet. He was aware that there were volunteer opportunities in other countries but he never considered getting involved with them. He commented:

It sounds interesting but I never consider that. I read that people like to go to developing countries to volunteer. I want to make a difference but I don’t think I can do it in Africa. I still want to do something that I enjoy. I always enjoy Asia. But living in the third world countries you have to sacrifice something. It’s difficult. I may get emotionally involved in such a disadvantaged position.

His criteria for choosing a volunteer job are that the job has to be useful and help people and he must enjoy doing it. In addition, he did not want responsibilities; and at the same time, did not want to be told to do work. He said:

I don’t particularly want responsibilities and it’s a hassle. In here, nobody really tells me to do anything. I don’t want people to tell me what to do either. I just want to do my job and I don’t care if it’s not challenging. I think most of the retired people say that anything is fine.

Even though he accepted that it was far to drive to volunteer at this park and the cost of transportation was significantly higher, he still was willing to continue working at Sebastian Inlet State Park. He clarified:

I know two people that switched to work somewhere else because they are a lot closer to home. But I still enjoy being here. Just like when you get into habit and surrounding, you don’t want to change. I have been here seven years and I don’t want to change. I like the isolation and that’s one reason why I like to come here.
I like to get away from people and I find it’s refreshing. I enjoy people and I also enjoy being away sometime.

Suggestion

V10 suggested that the park keep its friendly and easy atmosphere for the volunteer program. He liked that the staff treated the volunteers with respect and they showed appreciation to the volunteers in various way, such as thanking them with words or setting the volunteer appreciation events for them. He said that he wanted to do something meaningful and the feedback from the park staff and park visitors reinforced that he had fulfilled this goal. He also liked the fact that the park staff showed their trust in the volunteers and let them do the work without interfering or being unnecessarily strict on the work procedure. He suggested that the park should keep such a management style to maintain the volunteers’ morale and to retain the volunteers to stay with the park. He pointed out that the retired people, which were the majority of the volunteers at the park, were looking for something meaningful to do and wanted to keep themselves active. Therefore, if there were no issues that would cause them to be uncomfortable, they would stay in service as long as they could.

Profile: V11

Volunteer category: Park Watch

Volunteer time: Every Friday (1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.)

Occupation: Retired. Used to do construction work

Interview date: 1 August, 2008
Background

V11 is a Park Watch volunteer. He used to do hands-on construction work as a career and is now retired. He built his own house in Florida about 17 miles from the park. He took turns with his neighbor, who volunteered with him, to drive. They chose to avoid the rush hour to come to work. V11’s wife used to volunteer at this park to take care of the butterfly garden but she stopped because of her health problems. Sometimes, he had to take her to a doctor’s appointment and be absent from volunteering on that day. He said that he did not have problems with money because he received benefits from the government, such as Medicare. However, he admitted that after people retired, they worry about their health insurance and the cost of it. He pointed out that most of the volunteers at the park are retirees who do not have financial burdens and do not have to work for money. He said that in his case, he just had to take care of himself and his wife, but not his children. He also pointed out that his children do not have an obligation to support him either. V11 mentioned that he heard about volunteer opportunities in developing countries at the volunteers’ own costs; he said that it was beyond his financial capability so he was not interested in going. He explained, “I never thought about volunteering overseas. I read about it but I never picture myself doing that. I don’t have to go out to work for money now but I have to watch and control my spending. I have to live within a budget. I am not at the bottom; I have enough. I have a nice house with three bedrooms."

Motivation

V11 learned about the volunteer opportunity at this park from his friends at the Sebastian Fishing Club who were volunteering there at that time. His friends invited him
to join so he did because he saw it as an opportunity to socialize and do something useful outside of the house. At first V11 wanted to work as a Park Watch so that he could work with his friends who introduced him to the park. However, because of his skills in construction work, he was placed to work with the SPARCies team. He stayed with the team about six months and then quit. He admitted, “They started too early for me; I’m not a morning person. I had been waking up early to work all my life and I don’t want to do it anymore.”

After that V11 decided to join the Park Watch team; he introduced this opportunity to his neighbor and they agreed to volunteer together. He joked, “We like to do it together; we are not old and cranky. It’s always fun to have somebody to talk to.” They worked from noon to 4:00 p.m. and they have been doing Park Watch for 3 years now. When volunteering, they ride the electric car to patrol and pick up trash around the park. They said there were two reasons for them to do volunteer work at this park. First, they like the place and they like to work outside. Second, they wanted to contribute to the community. Besides the two reasons, they like the opportunity to get out of the house to do something useful; they made their volunteer day a day out and they always go to a Chinese buffet restaurant after work.

V11 enjoyed volunteer work; he commented that it gave a different feeling from a paid job and he appreciates the difference. He explained:

The paid employees have got a lot more responsibility. When I was in the crew with the head of the SPARCies team, I asked him what I should do if I cannot come. He said call somebody and let them know so that other people can allocate the work properly, and just don’t show up. That made me realize that we don’t
have that much responsibility. All my life I had to get a pay check and be responsible; by the time you get older (I am almost 70) I don’t want responsibility anymore.

Even though he said that he did not want responsibility, he was always seeing something in the park that he wanted to do such as fixing the broken bridge. He thought that one of his motivations to continue volunteering was to accomplish a meaningful construction project, in which this park has infinite opportunity for that work.

He expressed that he did not expect anything in return from his volunteer effort, but he appreciated what the park gave them. He commented:

Picnic once in a while is good. If they cannot afford it that’s fine, we understand. I do not care much about recognition. They give us a certificate once in a while; I smile at it and put in the file cabinet. Not something we put on the wall.

Suggestion

V11 thought that the volunteer management at this park was average, “I guess it’s just normal. Not good and not bad.” He mentioned that the outstanding volunteer groups of the park were the SPARCies and the Park Watch team and the park should find a way to sustain them. He viewed that those two volunteer groups were necessary and productive. V11 believed that the factor that would discourage people in general, including him, from volunteering work is health deterioration. He concluded, “My wife depends on me. If it gets to the point where I have to take care of my own health, I may have to quit.”

Profile: V12

Volunteer category: Toll Booth
Volunteer time: Every Wednesday (10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.)

Occupation: Retired. Used to be a nurse

Interview date: 23 July, 2008

Background

V12 is a volunteer at the toll booth and has been working there for eight years. She used to be a nurse. After she retired, about ten years ago, she volunteered as a nurse for the Red Cross at its baby clinic. Then, she quit because she wanted to do something that was different from her previous career; therefore she changed to work at the park. She likes to volunteer one job at a time. Her husband also volunteered at the park with the Jetty Watch team. They volunteered on the same day and they came to the park together. Their house was about sixteen miles from the park. In her free time, she took art classes and went to church on Sunday.

Motivation

Her motivation to volunteer at the Sebastian Inlet State Park was that she had an opportunity to meet and talk to people and to give back to her community. She said, “The people here are very nice. I got to meet different people all the time. I also think this is my state park; I am a resident here.” She chose to work at the toll booth because she saw that it needed volunteers and was busy all the time. In addition, she enjoyed meeting people. She mentioned, “I enjoy the people I work with. I don’t get a chance to work with a lot of different people. We socialize sometimes by working together.” She learned how to use the cash register and she sometimes trained the new volunteers how to use it. She wanted to be busy and useful. She articulated, “I am here to help.” She admitted that sometimes she would run into the visitors who were not nice, such as complaining and
not being respectful, however, she said such manner did not discourage her to continue volunteering there. She said that the “90-day wonder” issue did not occur in this park because the visitors did not distinguish between volunteers and staff. She interpreted, “They don’t know because we wear almost the same uniform.”

V12 explained that in the United States, people were independent. They would do what they want to do and they would not do it if they did not enjoy or feel comfortable doing it. In addition, people would not criticize other people’s decisions; for example, the people who volunteer would not blame the people who do not volunteer for not contributing to the community. They would respect other people’s life style.

Suggestion

V12 thought that many people volunteer because they wanted to do something outside of their homes and socialize with people. She thought that Sebastian Inlet State Park gave such opportunity to people from all walks of life and she suggested that the park should keep the diversity of volunteer opportunities as it was now. She also pointed out that the park staff were friendly and had good attitudes and she would like to see that remain.

Profile: V13

Volunteer category: McLarty Treasure Museum

Volunteer time: Every Sunday (10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.)

Occupation: Retired. Used to work as a nutrition programmer for the elderly

Interview date: 20 July, 2008
Background

V13 has volunteered at the McLarty Treasure Museum for eight years. She has five children. She moved down to Florida from New Jersey in 1989 to take care of her mother who lived in Florida and was very sick. V13 used to work as a nutrition programmer for the elderly. While she was working in New Jersey, she used to volunteer at a hospital and with the Meals on Wheels program. After her mother passed away, V13 started volunteering again. She volunteered two days a week, Sunday at the McLarty Treasure Museum and Monday at the thrift store. On the other days, she kept herself busy by playing bridge, socializing with friends, cooking, going to theaters, fishing, and reading. V13 volunteered with her neighbor. They were close friends and always did activities together, so they always car pooled to save gas and keep each other company.

As she was volunteering at two places she did not look for more volunteer opportunities. However, she was aware that there was advertising in the newspaper for people who looked for volunteer opportunities. She said that she was interested in volunteering to read for the blind and record audio books for them. In addition, she was interested in reading one-on-one with school children. However, she never got to do it because she was busy with her current volunteer work. She recognized that there were volunteer opportunities in all kinds of work such as hospital, school, church, and library. V13 commented, “Nobody should have an excuse if they want to do volunteering. If we really wanted to, we can do it every day.”

V13 explained that volunteerism is the American way of life. There were many ways that people could volunteer, and it did not have to be in a formal or systematic way. She explained her thoughts on volunteerism:
You know, most of the people like my neighbor and I, we had done a lot of volunteerism, and it becomes a way of life. We don’t get pay for it. All of these things could be viewed as volunteerism; when you think about it, people do volunteer in some ways. Even in the neighborhood, when people get ill, the other neighbors will cook and bring food over. We didn’t think of it as volunteerism, but in fact it is. One time my neighbor asked me to drive him to the airport and also pick him up. That’s a volunteer.

Motivation

V13 knew about the volunteer opportunity at the park from her friend who was working there and was told that the museum needed a volunteer on Sunday. Therefore, she applied with her neighbor and started the service. Every Sunday morning, she would go to church with her neighbor and then come to the museum together. Both of them did not wear the uniform; instead, they wore more formal attire that they wore to church and put a name tag on so that people could recognize that they were volunteers. V13 stated that if the park required her to wear a uniform, she would quit. She said, “We don’t wear uniform because we come from the church in the morning. If they don’t like us, we will quit.”

V13 recalled another volunteer who used to work on Sunday before she and her neighbor joined the program. She said that at first they did not get along very well because that volunteer felt that he was there before and did not want new volunteers to do his task. He especially told them that he did not want them to work on the cash register that he was responsible for. Later, they started to know each other better and built trust among them. Finally, they developed into good friends. However, he became sick and
went up north for surgery and passed away. V13 said that sometimes people did not work well together because of personality issues, but she believed that such problems could be overcome. The sense of comradeship was one of the most important motivations for volunteers to continue their services.

V13 expressed that she did not expect anything in return for volunteering. She was happy to do it and she felt good about what she did. She pointed out that many people in this world were takers but she would not be discouraged by them. In most cases, friendship was what she received in return. She concluded:

What we get back from here is that we had fun meeting people. We talk with them and learn interesting things from them. I don’t get to know other volunteers but I get to know people that keep coming back on Sunday. I like to teach. We have a lot of people that come back on Sunday because they know we (her neighbor and her) will be here to give them a tour and explain the history of the treasure ship fleet to them. I like my volunteer jobs and would like to continue doing them.

Suggestion

V13 pointed out that the park was flexible and she would like to see that continue. For example, she appreciated that the park staff allowed them to wear the clothes that they wore to church. She mentioned that the volunteer uniform was too thick and too hot for Florida. She enjoyed the freedom to decide what she wanted to do in the museum. For example, she liked that she could freely teach and talk to the visitors about the history related to the McLarty Treasure Museum and she was praised for doing that. She felt that the psychological support from the park staff was very important for the volunteers’
morale. She appreciated that the park staff treated her with respect and she wanted them to keep up such a good attitude.

Profile: V14
Volunteer category: McLarty Treasure Museum
Volunteer time: Every Friday (10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.)
Occupation: Retired. Used to work for U.S. Navy
Interview date: 11 July, 2008

Background

V14, 83 years old, was born and grew up in New Jersey. He joined the US Navy during World War II when he was 17 years old. He was stationed in Guam and worked there for about four years. After that, he went back to school and studied engineering. He worked in the engineering field for most of his life. In the beginning of his engineering career, he moved from one company to another; and every time he moved, he received significant raises as well as higher positions. He was very successful in his career. His last position in the corporation he worked for was a vice president. However, when his salary was too high, the company fired him and replaced his position with younger people who were trained by him. After that, he started his own international consulting business; his clients included, for example, UNDP. He worked in many countries such as Japan, Korea, and New Guinea. He made a lot of money and had enough savings to live comfortably for the rest of his life. He retired at age 62 and stayed in Kentucky with his wife. After he retired and still lived in Kentucky, he volunteered at a school that belonged to the church he went to. He decided to get involved in volunteering there because the school was in need of teachers but did not have a sufficient budget. He taught advanced
mathematics, chemistry, physics, and algebra to the students. He said that even though he received a small salary for that, it was considered volunteer work. He worked four hours a day in the morning, teaching four subjects. His hobby at that time was fishing. He taught there for three years. Besides this volunteering job, he used to volunteer for his church and volunteer as a football coach for children.

V14 moved down to Florida nine years ago to live with his son after his wife died. He sold his house in Kentucky and bought a new one in Florida, which is about five miles from the museum. One of his sons, 58 years old, moved in to stay with him. His son took care of V14, doing all the cooking and gardening work. He did not work and V14 said, “I got enough income that he doesn’t need to work.”

Motivation

V14 became involved in volunteering at this park because he attended a special lecture about fishing at the Fishing Museum in 2001 and learned about volunteer opportunities at the park. He started by volunteering at the Fishing Museum for two years, and then he moved to the McLarty Treasure Museum. He decided to move because his friend who used to work at the Fishing Museum quit. In addition, he got bored working there since there was not much to do, in his opinion. “At the Fishing Museum, most of the times I sit in the rocking chair watching boats come in and out,” he said. V14 explained that he likes working at the McLarty Treasure Museum because he likes the history of the ship fleets and he also is a treasure hunter (doing metal detecting on the beach searching for treasure) himself. A more important factor is that he likes the park employee who works at the McLarty Treasure Museum. He said, “He (the Park Service
Specialist who works at the McLarty Treasure Museum) is doing a very good job. He is very dedicated and very intelligent. I will work as long as he is here.”

Suggestion

V14 suggested that the good thing the park should keep was the positive attitude the park staff had towards the volunteers. He said that he remained in this volunteering service because he was treated very well by the park staff that he worked with and other park staff that came by and talked to him occasionally. He gave an example that the park staff he worked with learned that he liked coffee so the park staff made coffee available for him all day. He also liked that the park supported him to work in his own way; he loved to talk to the visitors and give them a small tour around the museum. He viewed that the park was doing a good job on assigning work to its volunteers of different skills and capabilities.

Conclusion

This chapter answers the second, third, and fourth research questions: “Who are the volunteers?” “Why do they volunteer?” and “What the suggestions to enhance the volunteer management at Sebastian Inlet State Park?” The results showed that the majority of the volunteers at the Sebastian Inlet State Park were retirees. The other two groups were the teens who were studying in high schools and were financially dependent on their parents and people of working-age and were working for their livings.

For the retiree group of volunteers, they lived on their savings. None of them had financial problems. Some of them were in a better financial status than the others. Their backgrounds were varied, for example, health care, engineering, construction, and police. Many of them used to be in the executive level. Their main motivation to volunteer was
to do something outside of their houses to keep themselves active. For this group, the
tasks did not have to be challenging; they enjoyed routine duties and it did not matter if
they would learn new things from working or not.

The teen volunteers were school students who started volunteering because they
had to fulfill their schools service-learning requirement. However, after they had met the
requirement, they decided to continue their service because they felt that they were doing
something interesting and useful for their future. Their motivation was to be involved in
the activities that they had interests in and to have the opportunity to develop their
knowledge and skills. In addition, the encouragement and acceptance from surrounding
people such as their families, the park staff, and the visitors, were also significant parts of
their motivation that kept them in the service.

The working-age volunteers were people in their thirties and forties who worked
for their living. Most of them worked or had backgrounds in the areas related to
environment. Their common motivation to work was to be involved in nature-based
activities and gain opportunities to learn and improve their skills from the work. Most of
them expected to utilize their knowledge and skills to do meaningful activities, especially
in preserving the environment. Some of them had networked with other organizations and
they swap volunteers at each other’s organizations in a reciprocal manner. It was notable
that most of the volunteers in this category were not married and did not have children, so
they had more free time, compared to other people of their age.

Most of the volunteers agreed that the volunteer management of the Sebastian
Inlet State Park was good and practical. They liked the flexibility of the management and
suggested that the park should keep such flexibility. For example, they liked that the park
was flexible on their work schedule; if they could not come to work, it was not a big deal. The park staff could either contact other volunteers to cover the work, or there would be other volunteers or park staff who would work there on that day to take care of the work (such as at the museums), or it was fine not having volunteers working there on that day (such as Park Watch or SPARCies). In addition, the volunteers suggested that they appreciated the friendliness and respect with which the park staff treated them. They thought that it was very important that the volunteers felt appreciated by the park staff since it would make them feel that they were needed. As the volunteers have high morale, the volunteer turnover rate is low.

The most mentioned appreciation effort that the park did for the volunteers was the volunteer appreciation picnics. They pointed out that having the volunteer appreciation picnic every 3 months was an effective tool in terms of establishing a bond among the volunteers and the park staff. It was also a good opportunity for the volunteers to get to know other volunteers. Most of the volunteers said that they did not care much for material things such as volunteer hour pins or certificates, but they felt good that the park made such efforts to show its appreciation to them. Most of the volunteers who received a volunteer working hour pin wore it on their uniform. In addition, most of the volunteers suggested that the park should provide uniforms to the volunteers without asking the volunteers to pay for them.
CHAPTER 6: RESEARCH RESULT ON APPLICATION TO VOLUNTEERISM IN
THAILAND

Tenderness and kindness are not signs of weakness and despair,
but manifestations of strength and resolution.
~ Khalid Gibran

Introduction

This chapter answers research question 5: “How might the data obtained from this study apply to volunteer programs in Thailand?” To answer this research question, firstly, I review the research outcomes regarding the volunteer management of the Sebastian Inlet State Park as presented in chapter 4 and summarize the main ideas; then I provide suggestions on applications in Thailand. Secondly, I review the background of the volunteers and their motivations as presented in chapter 5 and provide comments regarding applications in Thailand.

Volunteer Management of Sebastian Inlet State Park and the Application in Thailand

This section provides reviews of the volunteer management functions of Sebastian Inlet State Park from chapter 4, followed by my suggestion for applying some of the practices to the volunteer programs in Thailand. My suggestions are based on my own perspective as a Thai business consultant and business management instructor. I insert my opinion and assessment regarding what management techniques would work or would not work well in Thailand among the Thai localities. In other words, I am seeking ways in which I could adopt or adapt and apply the research outcomes from Sebastian Inlet State Park to Thai organizations that are running or developing volunteer programs, targeting the local Thais as their prospective volunteers.
Job Development and Design

Sebastian Inlet State Park

The volunteer jobs at Sebastian Inlet State Park were developed from three situations. First, jobs were developed from the existing needs and from where there were paid employees working, such as at the museum where the park needs volunteers to assist the park employee to work on a day-to-day basis in the museum. Second, jobs were developed from the suggestions of people who volunteered or visited the park. For example, the Maintenance and Construction Team (SPARcies) was originated by the volunteers who observed that there were facilities in the park that needed to be fixed, so they offered to volunteer to fix them. Third, jobs were developed by people who wanted to help the park but did not want to work as volunteers. These people formed an organization to raise funds for the park and help out in different ways. This group is the Citizen Support Organization (CSO) whose members pay to be involved and their mission is to raise funds to financially support the park.

After the volunteer groups were formed, the park employees were assigned to work in coordination with each volunteer group, and the assignments were made on a convenience basis. For example, the park service specialist at the McLarty Treasure Museum coordinated the volunteers at that museum because he worked there, and another park service specialist coordinated the Show Team/Social Planning Team because he had contact with the volunteers on a regular basis. In most cases, the park employees coordinated the volunteer work schedules and provided some necessary training related to the work, while the volunteers performed the work on their own. Some of the volunteer teams were coordinated by the appointed volunteers to be the group
leaders; however, those group leaders were supervised by the park staff. If the volunteers
had problems or questions, the park employees would assist them. It is notable that the
park management highly trusts their volunteers as they empowered their volunteers to
work with minimal supervision. Even though it looks like the park practiced a
decentralized organization structure, all the major decisions and the responsibilities
related to the park belonged to the park employees, not the volunteers.

Application in Thailand

In Thailand, many of the organizations, especially the government organizations,
have bureaucratic, hierarchical, centralized, and rigid organizational structures. In other
words, the organizations consist of several departments classified by their function, and
in each department, there are supervisors and subordinates. The chain of command flows
from the top of the organization to the lower level positions. Cross functional work is
starting to be more common but is not yet compatible to that in the United States.
Flexibility in organizations is still somewhat limited. The employees of the organizations
are familiar with the clear job descriptions in the departments they belong to; however,
they are not expected to know much about the work in other departments.

Due to the nature of organizational structures and the mindset of current
employees; I suggest that the development of volunteer jobs within the Thai organization
should be generated from existing work. In general, Thais are not familiar with having
volunteers performing work within the organization on their own; in the beginning stage,
the volunteers should be assigned to assist the current paid employees or to work together
with them. The rationale is that since volunteering in Thai organizations, unlike in the
United States, is not yet a common practice, the organization should provide close
supervision and assistance to the volunteers until they feel comfortable working on their own. In addition, the organizations should clarify the responsibilities of the work to the volunteers. For example, if damage occurs while the volunteer performs the work, who will be the one to take responsibility, the volunteer or the park staff? Such clarification would encourage the volunteers to perceive that they are a part of the organization because they are sharing the responsibilities with the organization. In addition, it would help them to make decisions on whether they want to commit to this volunteer work or not. Moreover, it would help the park employees to be aware of how much supervision and the type of guidelines they should provide to the volunteers.

The supervisor of the volunteers should be the supervisor of that particular department because they are experts in their particular areas of work. The chain of command would be such that the volunteers report to the functional employees of that department, and the functional employees report to the supervisor of that department. This structure would be very clear to the employees and the volunteers regarding who reports to whom and with whom the volunteers should consult when they have problems. The cross functional organization structure would not work well in the early stage of volunteerism in the Thai organizations, due to its bureaucratic system.

**Budget**

*Sebastian Inlet State Park*

The Sebastian Inlet State Park used to receive a volunteer budget from the Florida Park Services, the agency that controls the budget for all of Florida’s state parks. This budget was used mainly for promoting morale among the volunteers, for example, purchasing volunteer uniforms and sponsoring the volunteer appreciation events.
However, this budget was eliminated due to the downturn of the nation’s economy. Currently, all the individual Florida state parks have to come up with a volunteer budget on their own. In the case of Sebastian Inlet State Park, the current volunteer budget comes from the Citizen Support Organization (CSO). This budget was spent on volunteer appreciation picnics and on volunteer uniforms. The CSO was able to provide some funds but not for everything that the park requested. It is noted that the park did not have a sufficient budget, as it had in the past, to provide uniforms to the incoming volunteers; therefore, the park managed this situation by suggesting the new volunteers either buy their own uniforms, or use the used ones that were passed on from the previous volunteers who had terminated their services. The park also used to give volunteer working hour pins to those volunteers who reached a certain amount of volunteer hours; however, due to the budget shortage, the park stopped giving away these pins and did not request funding from the CSO.

Application in Thailand

The organizations in Thailand, in general, do not set volunteer budgets because they do not currently have volunteer programs. For example, the university that I work for, Chiang Mai University, does not provide a budget to run a volunteer program (Chiang Mai University, 2009). I also browsed other Thai organization websites, such as Bank of Thailand and Bangchak Petroleum Public Company, where I used to work, and none of them have a budget to run a volunteer program (Bangchak Petroleum Plc., 2009; & Bank of Thailand, 2009). In fact, they have budget for their employees to run several programs to contribute to communities. For example, Bangchak Petroleum Public Company provides several programs to serve communities such as free-lunch for school
children program (Bangchak Petroleum Plc., 2009). However, this is a different concept. Those organizations I mentioned had a budget to send their employees to volunteer for the community, however they did not have a program to have people from outside to volunteer in their organizations.

I researched National Parks in Thailand and found that all of them belong to the government and are fully funded by the state. As I mentioned in chapter 2, there are other organizations that act as a coordinator to connect those parks and people who want to volunteer and manage volunteer programs to help those parks. However, none of the Thai national parks directly provide a volunteer program (Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation: DNP, 2009).

I recommend that, since most Thai organizations do not have a volunteer program, therefore, in the beginning stage, the organization must find a way to develop and support its (newly developed) volunteer program. As the volunteer program is new to the organizations, to start it, the organizations have to come up with a starting budget. In general, the Thai organizations have a “miscellaneous category” which is for unplanned-emerging expenses throughout the fiscal year. At the beginning stage of a volunteer program in a Thai organization, the organization could use this budget to support the practice of volunteerism.

After the beginning stage (first year) of volunteerism practice, the volunteer program management would be able to calculate the optimal amount of the volunteer budget needed and may propose to the decision maker of the organization. If the budget is granted, the volunteer program would use the budget from this source. However, if the
budget is not granted or not sufficiently funded, the volunteer program would have to find other sources of funds for its volunteer program.

Besides depending on only top management for financial support, the organization should find support from other sources. The organization’s volunteer program could establish a Citizen Support Organization (CSO) and try to raise funds, as is the practice of the CSO of the Sebastian Inlet State Park. As stated earlier, the park’s volunteer program used to be supported by the Florida State Park Service but later the state terminated this budget due to the economic downturn, so the park volunteer program currently is solely funded by its CSO.

Alternatively, the organization’s volunteer program could raise funds by asking for donations from outsiders. People in Thailand are familiar with this donation practice. When thinking about giving back to the community, the first thing that comes to Thais’ minds seems to be making donations. In general, Thais donate money to contribute to tangible outcomes such as building temples, helping victims of a natural disaster, or giving to scholarships for students. Thus, making donations to support volunteer groups so that those volunteers would be motivated and have sufficient means to provide service to the community may not seem appealing to Thais. I suggest that in the beginning stage, the organizations should educate the public on how such donations that support the volunteer program would help the community; time and successful cases would be the ways to overcome the mindset of Thais on this issue.

Similar to that of Sebastian Inlet State Park, the volunteer budget generated should be focused on supporting the morale of the volunteers, such as sponsoring volunteer appreciation events, purchasing uniforms for the volunteers (if applicable),
purchasing necessary equipment to perform the volunteer work, acknowledging
volunteers in organizations’ newsletter, or engraving names of distinguish volunteers on a
plaque in a prominent location. It should be emphasized that the organization should
invest in building and reinforcing the volunteers’ morale in order to keep the volunteers
with the organization in the long run. The beginning stage is crucial for long-term
success.

Recruitment

Sebastian Inlet State Park

As stated in chapter 4, the park had two main volunteer recruitment strategies:
through the outreach at local festivals, and through direct personal contact. For the
outreach at local festivals, the park’s Show Team/Social Planning Team, which consisted
of the park employees and the volunteers, attended local festivals located within a 30-
mile radius from the park. The rationale was that they would reach the residents who
lived not too far from the park and be able to promote the park’s volunteer opportunities
to them. Pictures of volunteers in action were an effective means to attract people’s
attention. For direct personal contact, it was either by the current volunteers telling
outsiders about the volunteer opportunities in the park and those people became
interested and applied, or by outsiders hearing about the volunteer opportunities at the
park from somewhere else, such as a website, and deciding to walk in and apply.

Both strategies were effective in getting people interested and committed to
become park volunteers. Many of them continued to volunteer for a long time. An
optimal number of volunteers in the park was not determined. The more volunteers the
park has, the more work will get done. It is notable that the park could still perform its
fundamental functions with a low number of volunteers. The number of volunteers at Sebastian Inlet State Park fluctuated throughout the year due to the seasons; the number of volunteers was low during summer and high during winter. The ratio of the volunteers to the paid staff at the Sebastian Inlet State Park was high, approximately 100 to 300 volunteers versus 19 paid employees. The park made an effort at recruiting new volunteers throughout the year because it lost some of them during the year due to different reasons. Volunteers were crucial for the park since there was work that needed to be done and the park staff alone could not handle all the tasks.

Application in Thailand

Volunteering in organizations on a routine basis for a long run is not a common practice in Thailand, therefore, I suggest that in the recruiting process, the organization should provide knowledge about volunteering in terms of why people should get involved; what kind of work they can do for the organization; how much time they shall contribute; how much commitment they need to give to the organization; and what they would get in return (both intrinsic and extrinsic benefits). It is very important to give such primary understanding about volunteerism to the potential volunteers so that they know what they are getting into. In addition, volunteer recruitment could be viewed as a self-selection process; the ones who understand the concepts and agree to work would tend to stay for a longer term than those who do not really understand how much effort and time they should put into the work. In many cases, according to my interviews with Sebastian Inlet State Park’s employees and volunteers, some people signed up to volunteer but dropped out within a short period of time after they realized that they did not have enough time or interest to commit to their volunteer work.
In Thailand, promoting volunteer opportunities through participation at the local fairs and through direct personal contacts should work well since there are several local fairs all year round, and the relationships within Thai communities are considered as very close. Local fairs in Chiang Mai are, for example, the Chiang Mai Winter Fair in January, which is somewhat similar to local festivals in the United States, where local entrepreneurs get together to sell their products and local organizations set up promotion booths; various entertainment such as music on stage are also part of the festival (GoThailand.com, 2008). The targeted group would depend on the type and location of the organization. For Sebastian Inlet State Park, the target group was retirees who live not too far from the park. The park targets the retirees because the majority of residents in Florida are retirees. In addition, those retirees have a lot of free time and have sufficient money to live on without working for money. They also are looking for something to do outside of their homes to keep themselves active. In Thailand, the organization may target college students if the organization is located in a province with a university or working-age people if the organization is in Bangkok or in another city. For example, Chiang Mai province has a population of 1.5 million and the median age is 32.1 years old. The majority of Chiang Mai population, 67.2%, is between ages 15 and 59 years old. Approximately 76.5% of people ages 15-59 years old are employed (United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, 2009). According to these statistics, there is an opportunity to target this group of working people for local volunteer programs on the weekend. In addition, Chiang Mai is a university province; there are three big universities including Chiang Mai University (approximately 33,000 students) (Chiang Mai University, 2009), Payap University (approximately 7,000 students)
students) (Payap University, 2009), and Chiang Mai Rajabhat University (approximately 4,000 students) (Chiang Mai Rajabhat University, 2009), totaling 44,000 university-level students. This group of university students could be another target group for volunteer programs as well.

In the beginning stage of volunteerism in the organization, the organization should start from a small number of volunteers in selected departments where the work is not complicated or risky. For example, if the organization is a state park, one of the types of volunteer work offered should be simple work such as being a visitor greeter. Then, when people become familiar with the volunteer concept and practice, the organization may provide more volunteer opportunities that are more complex, such as interpreter or positions that deal with money. People would feel more comfortable to take more responsibilities when they are familiar with the organization and its system.

It should be noted that many Thais have a concept of hierarchal status which is related to the work they want to do. For example, while it is very ordinary in the United States for people to volunteer to collect trash or do construction work, many Thais may consider such work dirty and tiring. According to my interviews with the volunteers at Sebastian Inlet State Park, the majority of them agreed that Americans did not care about the “class” of work. For example, they did not consider that volunteering as an interpreter held a higher status than those volunteers who work as construction laborers. From the interviews at Sebastian Inlet State Park, I was told that Americans choose to volunteer in the job that they are interested in, and other people respect their choices. Collecting trash and giving interpretation in an educational program have equal value of contribution to the community.
On the contrary, from my experience, Thais in general tend to have a concept of hierarchy of working classes. Many of them view intellectual work as having higher status than physical and outdoor work. However, an emergency situation is an exceptional case where the concept of class seems to be omitted. For example, if there is a natural disaster which causes a big flood, people will not think much about the class of work; instead, they will be willing to contribute their labor and not mind if they have to do dirty or physical work. In such cases, the society admires their selfless effort. However, in a long-term volunteer program, I do not observe many volunteers that do physical or outdoor work. Social status is highly considered among Thai society. The society has great influence on people’s thoughts. For example, if an old member of the family volunteers to collect trash in the park, Thai society may blame them, saying that the family members do not take good care of this old member, letting him out of the house to do hard work. Even though the old member wants to do it and made his/her own decision, others might not see it that way. My suggestion is that the organizations should start their volunteer program by offering the kind of volunteer work that society would honor such as intellectual work. Then, after the society and the volunteers become familiar and feel comfortable with the volunteer concept and practice, the organization could gradually begin to offer more varied types of work.

According to the research outcome at Sebastian Inlet State Park, the ratio of the park staff per volunteer was 1:5 in the low season and 1:15 during the high season. I suggest that this seems to be practical in Thailand as well. Since the volunteers work approximately one day per week, there should be at least one volunteer working in each area of the volunteer program each day and the number should increase during the high
season when there is more work. At Sebastian Inlet State Park, the volunteers and the park employees agreed that the more volunteers they have, the better, because more work will get done. This idea of volunteer working one day a week should apply in Thailand as well. However, at the beginning stage, the organization should start with a small number of volunteers in order for the employees and the volunteers to work together closely and understand the expectations of each other. Then, after the volunteer management of the organization becomes stable, the volunteers understand their roles and perform their work well, the organization should recruit more volunteers. The current volunteers can teach jobs to the new ones; it does not have to be the paid employees that do it every time. The high season in Thailand may be during school break. People can also volunteer during weekends and after work. Volunteering can be viewed as family’s weekend activity.

Screening and Interviewing

Sebastian Inlet State Park

At Sebastian Inlet State Park, the volunteer screening process includes: filling in the application form, getting a background check, and having an interview with the park staff. On the application form, the applicants are required to indicate their skills and preferences in the volunteer jobs available. The park provides various kinds of work ranging from indoor work to outdoor work. The park staff also interviews the applicants; the purpose is to provide information about volunteering to the applicants to help them make a decision on getting involved in volunteer program. The park would reject the applicant only if he/she does not pass the background check (such as having been convicted of a crime) or if the volunteer position is limited, such as the Campground Host position. The applicants make their decision to commit to be volunteers based on their
available time and their interest in the work. A significant number of volunteers resigned a short period of time after they started their service because they realized that they did not like the work or the working environment or could not manage their time to volunteer.

*Application in Thailand*

The same process of application and interviewing as implemented at Sebastian Inlet State Park would be suitable for a volunteer program in Thailand. The application should be provided in hard copy by the organization and on the organization’s website so that people could get access without coming to the organization’s worksite. The application would give the applicants fundamental understanding of the expectations of the organization so they could assess whether their skill and interest match the organization’s needs.

It is very important that the applicants come to the organization to interview with the organization representative in person. This interview would be a good opportunity for both sides to ask and answer questions about the tasks, the work environment, and the culture of the organization. The face-to-face interview would give the applicants a clearer understanding of the volunteer jobs. In addition, to be at the organization, see the physical work place, and meet with the current volunteers and paid staff would enable the applicants to decide whether they really wanted to be involved. I would like to point out that a volunteer job is different from a paid job since the applicants do not have pressure to get accepted into the work. The goal of the interview is to get information to decide whether they really want to get involved in the volunteer program. The organization
representative should not over sell its volunteer program; instead, it should leave it up to the applicants to make their own decisions.

The background check in Thailand would be different from that in the United States, since personal information, regarding crime, of the Thai citizen is not accessible via internet. I suggest that the organization should add the background section into the application form; for example, it should ask the applicants to check in the yes or no boxes if they have ever been convicted of committing a crime or been jailed. Such questions are commonly seen in the job applications of organizations in Thailand.

Orientation and Training

Sebastian Inlet State Park

Sebastian Inlet State Park gives orientation and training to its volunteers informally. In most cases, the park staff who will work directly with the volunteers will train them when they start their service. The park staff informs the new volunteers about the park’s rules and regulations related to volunteering, such as policies on volunteer uniforms and absenteeism. The volunteers receive a volunteer handbook which contains information about the rules and regulations and also benefits of being a volunteer at the park. The park staff train the new volunteers how to perform the work and introduce them to the current park employees and volunteers with whom they have to work or deal. Most of the orientation and training is on a one-on-one basis since the volunteers join the program at different times. However, if there is a significant number of volunteers who start volunteering during the same period of time, the park sets up a group orientation and training for them all at the same time.
Application in Thailand

Firstly, I suggest that the organization should provide an orientation to the volunteers all together when the program begins so that the first batch of volunteers gets to know each other and receive the same message. In the orientation, for example in a park setting, the park representative should provide information about volunteer-related rules and regulations and benefits they will receive. In addition, the park should use this opportunity to introduce the organization’s staff who will work directly with them. Since the Thai system is hierarchical, as stated earlier, I recommend the organization executive gives a welcome speech and talk to the new volunteers at the orientation event. Consequently, the volunteers would feel honored and appreciate the chance to meet and talk to the executive of the organization, and, in turn, it would increase morale of the volunteers working for the organization.

Secondly, the organization should develop a volunteer handbook so that all necessary information regarding the organization’s volunteer program would be compiled in one place, and it would be a good source for both the park employees and the volunteers to refer to. According to my research at Sebastian Inlet State Park, some of the volunteers or even the park staff were not sure about the rules and regulations, and benefits of the volunteers. When they were not sure, they would look up information in the handbook. However, since the volunteer handbook provided at the Sebastian Inlet State Park was developed by the Florida Park Service, the information was somewhat general so that it would be applicable to all Florida state parks. Some small details specific to Sebastian Inlet State Park were not provided in this handbook. Therefore, if the Thai organization is a large organization like Sebastian Inlet State Park, I suggest that
the headquarters do the same: develop one handbook that applies to all units. A small unit
many also develop another handbook, as necessary, that covers only its unit and not
overlap with the master one. The handbook should be updated at least every five years or
if there is a major change. When the updated version is distributed, the older versions
should be recalled to avoid confusion. The problem of the handbook at the Sebastian Inlet
State Park was that the information was not updated and a significant number of the
volunteers did not know about this handbook.

Thirdly, I suggest that the organization should provide training in the same
manner as Sebastian Inlet State Park. One-on-one basis should be an efficient technique
to train the new volunteers since the volunteers would have an opportunity to ask
questions and to get full attention from the park staff. On-the-job-training is a suitable
way to train the volunteers. Once the first batch of the volunteers is well trained, this
group of volunteer should be qualified to train the next generation.

Motivating

Sebastian Inlet State Park

The motivation of volunteers at the Sebastian Inlet State park can be classified as
extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation. The extrinsic motivations are the benefits
that the park provides to its volunteers, such as volunteer uniforms, working hour pins,
free park passes, restaurant discounts, volunteer recognition, and/or appreciation events.
The intrinsic motivations include the sense of comradeship; self esteem; opportunity to
work on the tasks they are interested in; getting to work outside of the house; getting to
exercise, socialize, and make new friends; good feelings that they get to help and pay
back the community, and the like. From interviewing the volunteers at the park, it was
found that the volunteers mentioned more of the intrinsic motivations than the extrinsic motivations. Some of them did not even know about the extrinsic motivations such as the free pass or the restaurant discount.

The volunteers’ opinions of the extrinsic motivations fell into two groups. Part of the volunteers thought that the park should use extrinsic motivations as recruitment tools. The rationale was that those motivations were tangible and attractive, and in turn, they would be an effective recruitment tool. However, the majority of the group and all of the park staff believed that the extrinsic motivations should not be used as a recruitment tool. Their rationale was that if the volunteers joined the program because of those incentives, they would not care to work as much as they wanted to get those benefits. They might come to work just to fill in the working hours in order to be qualified to receive the benefits but not put full effort into the work. In addition, if the park stopped providing those benefits for any reasons, such as budget cuts, those volunteers might be more likely to terminate their service. The loyalty to the organization of this group of volunteers, who volunteer in order to get the benefit, was believed to be low.

Application in Thailand

I suggest that the Thai organizations promote both extrinsic and intrinsic motivations among its volunteers. According to the literature review in chapter 2, most organizations that provide volunteer opportunities used intrinsic motivations as a key incentive to attract the interest of the potential volunteers. Those motivations are, for example, opportunities to learn, to make new friends, and to help the community first hand. Some extrinsic motivations were used, such as complimentary trips or cooking classes for the volunteers. Such motivations may be applicable to Thai volunteers.
Regarding the interviews at Sebastian Inlet State Park, the extrinsic motivations such as the working hour pin and the volunteer appreciation events gained positive feedback from the volunteers. Even though many volunteers stated that they did not expect any return from the park, they were happy that the park made an effort to recognize their contribution in different ways.

For extrinsic motivations, I suggest the organizations in Thailand provide volunteer appreciation events and symbolic items to recognize their working hours, such as volunteer working hour pins. If the organization has a big enough budget, it should also provide some perks that would fit the interests or lifestyle of the volunteers, such as tickets to special events, restaurant discounts, volunteer appreciation trips, etc. The organization should make it certain that the value of extrinsic motivations should not be high in monetary value; instead, they should be high in symbolic value. If the monetary value is high, it may cause the volunteer to enter the service just to gain those benefits. In addition, it may negatively affect the morale of the paid employees.

Regarding intrinsic motivations, they are generated by the opportunity that the organization gives to the volunteers and they have a positive effect in the volunteers’ perceptions. For example, the organization gives them the opportunity to preserve the environment. As a result, the volunteers feel proud of themselves that they are positively impacting the environment as well as the community. The key concern here is that the organization should provide the volunteers jobs that are meaningful to the volunteers and to the others. The measurable outcome may be of more value to some people. For example, the volunteers may feel that they have made a valuable contribution to the environment when they see that they have collected two full bins of trash from the beach.
in one day. Other intrinsic motivations could be the opportunity to learn. The organization could facilitate this by giving training to the volunteers.

Recognition

**Sebastian Inlet State Park**

Sebastian Inlet State Park set up a volunteer recognition event once a year and volunteer appreciation picnics approximately three to four times a year. The park used to give awards to the outstanding volunteers and working hour pins to those who had reached certain hours of volunteering. Now, instead of a plaque or pin, the park gives certificates to them due to the limited budget. Most of the volunteers expressed the feeling that they did not care much for the certificate itself, but they felt appreciated that the park made the effort to recognize their service.

**Application in Thailand**

I suggest that a volunteer program in Thailand provide a recognition event for its volunteers. The event neither has to be a big nor a high-cost event. The main idea is to communicate the organization’s appreciation to its volunteers. Sincerity is the key factor to accomplish the goal of the recognition event. Since the volunteer tasks are diverse and each task is valuable to the organization, one way or the other, I suggest that the organizations do not grant special awards to specific volunteers. Such practice could be a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it would encourage a certain group of volunteers to keep their effort up; on the other hand, it could discourage other volunteers. For example, assume the organization grants an award “Volunteer of the Year” to a volunteer who volunteers five days a week (while the majority of the volunteers work one day a week. The volunteers who work more hours would feel appreciated and would keep their
high working hours up. However, those who did not receive awards might think that they are being ignored or undervalued by the organization. In addition, regarding their volunteer hours and other obligations in their personal life, they may think that they will never get such recognition award. Recognition is a very important factor for the volunteers’ morale. The organization should be aware not to praise any specific group or individual volunteers so much that it fails to acknowledge the others.

Supervision

Sebastian Inlet State Park

Sebastian Inlet State Park has a somewhat informal supervision system for its volunteer program. The park staff who works directly with the volunteers supervises the volunteers who work with them. They teach the volunteers how to perform the work and help them when they have trouble regarding their work. In principle, the park staff is responsible for the consequences of the volunteers’ performances; therefore, they keep an eye on the volunteers. However, the park employees believe that the volunteers are self-selected and have high self-discipline; they committed to volunteering because of their personal motivation. Therefore they do not need close supervision.

Application in Thailand

Volunteerism in the United States is such a common practice that people of all ages may have been involved in it in one way or another. On the contrary, this practice in Thailand is behind that of the United States. As a result, I suggest a volunteer program in Thailand, at its early stage, provide close supervision of its volunteers. The organization staff should give clear descriptions about tasks, rules and regulations, and the organization’s expectations of the volunteers. The volunteers should be assigned to work
with the organization staff instead of on their own. The intention is to provide enough information and help to the volunteers, not to be commanding or picking on them. Then after the new volunteers are familiar with the organization system and the organization sees that they are competent to work on their own without close supervision, the organization should start to decrease the level of supervision. The goal of close supervision is to provide appropriate guidance and assistance to the volunteers.

Background of the Volunteers at Sebastian Inlet State Park and Implications for the Volunteer Programs in Thailand

This section provides reviews of Sebastian Inlet State Park’s volunteers’ background followed by my suggestions on implications for the volunteer programs in Thailand. The volunteers at Sebastian Inlet State Park can be categorized into three groups: teen volunteers, working-age volunteers, and retiree volunteers. Each group of volunteers has different characteristics and is driven by different motives to volunteer. It is crucial to understand the different motivations of each volunteer group in order to design the volunteer program in Thailand. The volunteers’ background and their motivations are presented in chapter 5 and the following are the summaries and analysis.

Group I: Teen Volunteers

Sebastian Inlet State Park

This group consists of volunteers under the age of 20 who are studying in school. This was the smallest volunteer group at Sebastian Inlet State Park during the period I collected my data. The reason was because at that time, schools were closed for summer break. Most volunteers in this category were students who started volunteering at the park because of their school’s service-learning requirement; therefore, there would be more
the teen volunteers during the academic semester. Service-learning is a branch of volunteerism; it focuses on providing service in exchange for learning something useful.

This concept is broadly applied in the schools around the United States. The school requires students to participate in service-learning, in other words, volunteer in the community for a certain number of hours for each academic semester. The teen volunteers at the park first decided to volunteer there because of either the close location from home or a relative who currently worked there. It is notable that the initial involvement of the volunteers in this category highly depends on their parents, since they are young and might not have much access to or knowledge about volunteer opportunities at other places. Personal connection and location of the workplace seem to be the most important factors that influenced the teen volunteers to work at that specific organization.

The motivations of the teen volunteers to work and maintain their service at organizations include the opportunity to learn and acquire working and social skills, and to be a part of the organization and be accepted as valuable members. At Sebastian Inlet State Park, the park staff showed their trust in the volunteers by encouraging them to work on their own with the assistance of the park staff as needed. As a result, those teen volunteers gained self confidence and developed their interest from what they were doing. For example, V2, who volunteered with the Turtle Walk program, had the opportunity to learn about sea-turtles from the park staff and also from her own first-hand experience working in the field. She could explain about sea-turtles to the visitors and to other volunteers and became accepted as a sea-turtle expert of the program. Consequently, she aimed to pursue her higher education in marine biology. Another example, V1, who volunteered at the McLarty Treasure Museum, revealed that he gained
significant social skills from working at the museum since he had to talk to the museum visitors. He admitted that before volunteering, he used to feel uncomfortable talking to strangers, but now he felt comfortable enough to take initiative in starting conversations with the visitors. He also got along well enough with the people who work at the museum to the extent that he shared personal thoughts with them.

Both of the teen volunteers agreed that they were treated with trust, respect, and appreciation by the park employees and that was the most important factor that kept them volunteering at the park.

Application in Thailand

I suggest the education system in Thailand integrate service-learning programs into their curriculum. Currently, most of the education institutes in Thailand do not yet carry service-learning programs. However, many academic institutions support students who wish to volunteer with communities. For example, some educational institutes arrange a volunteer program to plant trees on special day such as Father’s or Mother’s Day. Students in the universities have established volunteer clubs to help communities in remote villages, for example, to build a school or some infrastructure for the villages. I was involved in those types of volunteer activities when I was in school and college. I viewed those programs as reciprocally beneficial. On one side was the community who directly benefited from the project; on the other side were the volunteers who had done the work and felt good about themselves since they could see the result of their efforts. They could put such volunteer experiences on their resumes when they applied for scholarships or jobs. In addition, they gained social and working skills through working with other people with the same interests.
Current Thai volunteer programs, as I mentioned in the previous paragraph, are practical and beneficial for students and communities; however, most of them are short-term projects that might last only a day or a week. If service-learning is required by schools, as in the United States, the students would volunteer on a regular basis through a longer period of time, such as one academic semester or throughout the entire year. The volunteer projects that students have to participate in on a regular basis might, as it is in the United States, cultivate the concepts of volunteering to the students, which means the students would see the value of volunteering and continue it on their own as they grew up, even though they are not required (by school) to do it anymore. The two teen volunteers at the Sebastian Inlet State Park are good examples of this case.

Since service-learning is new for Thai academic institutions and Thai society, I suggest educational institutes begin with inserting service-learning as a part of the existing classes where the teachers have agreed to become involved. For example, the school may insert a service-learning component into a biology class. The students may be required to do a biology project that benefits the communities, such as learn about exotic plants, and then go out to a public natural park to help remove weeds. From doing hands-on projects, the students would get to help and also understand their subjects better than just studying from books. After the concepts become well-known and accepted by the educational institutes, the students, and the parents, the education institutes might decide to launch a stand-alone service-learning project. Many educational institutes in the United States provide service learning programs that students can take as a class or extra-curricular activities, and students get school credits or acknowledgement from the school. I suggest the Thai academic institutions do the same thing. The education institutes
should start from developing a service-learning center that manages service-learning programs for students. The center should provide instruction about the service-learning program, including rules and regulations. For example, it may require students to work 40 hours per academic semester in order to receive 4 credit hours from an educational institute. It should also network with outside organizations that provide service-learning opportunities, so that it can arrange a program for those students who do not have connections with any organizations. The center should also be authorized to approve or reject the service-learning programs that students propose. The key component of a service-learning program is that students not only volunteer for the community, but they must learn useful knowledge and gain skills from their work. Therefore, the condition to accept or reject the students’ proposed projects should be that students could learn from the work. In addition, the center should require the organization to evaluate the students’ performance and send the results back to the center; likewise, the center should request the students to keep a record of their work (such as in a time-log form) and evaluate their own work and the organization they work for as well. The center should keep a list of the organizations so that it can send students to them when needed.

This group of volunteers is the group of people that will grow up to be volunteers in the future. It is very important that they have a good impression volunteering at this age. Proper volunteer programs for them should be programs that have staff that are willing to teach and support them. Teen volunteers need more attention from the organization staff since they do not have much prior experience and would be willing to accept guidance.


Group II: Working-Age Volunteers

Sebastian Inlet State Park

This group consists of the working-age volunteers who are working for money to support themselves in their respective careers. The ages of volunteers in this group range from approximately 20 to 60 years old. Most of the volunteers in this group currently work in parks or nature-related areas. Most of them had volunteered at other places before and some were currently volunteering at more than one place. For example, V3, who worked at the Environmental Learning Center (ELC) and volunteered with the Turtle Walk program, also volunteered at other volunteer programs such environmental and non-environmental work. It could be said that this group of volunteers was interested in volunteerism because they wanted to contribute their skills, knowledge, and time to pay back the community. In addition, they chose to volunteer in the area that was related to their current or future career. They viewed volunteer opportunities as a chance for them to learn and grow. Furthermore, many of them volunteered in order to be in the network of their work areas. For example, some people volunteered for Sebastian Inlet State Park because the park sent representatives to be guest speakers at their organizations, therefore, they would like to volunteer for the park in return. Moreover, some may even integrate their volunteer work with their career such as teachers who integrate volunteerism in their classes as a service-learning component.

It was interesting to see that the working-age volunteers at Sebastian Inlet State Park were interested in the opportunity to learn rather than to work with people of their age. This may just be the case of Sebastian Inlet State Park but may not apply to other volunteer programs around the United States. Most of the working-age volunteers at the
park were single or had no children or had grown-up children, which meant they had more free time. They had their social life outside of the parks and were not much concerned about making new friends of their age at Sebastian Inlet State Park. The volunteers in this group chose to work in the more active kinds of tasks such as Turtle Walk programs and Park Watch. Their motivation was to learn, sharpen their skills, and to spend their time productively. It is notable that the volunteers in this group were seeking work that matched their interests. They had the potential to quit the job if they felt that the work did not fit their interest or they did not learn from the work; however, if they felt that the volunteer work fit well with their needs, they might continue volunteering for an extended period of time. They wanted their effort to have a real impact on the society or on themselves.

This group of volunteers seemed to be opinion leaders among people around them. Since they are very involved in volunteer activities, they tended to talk about it with other people they associate with outside of Sebastian Inlet State Park. Some of them asked their friends to specifically join as volunteers at the park so that they could work together, and some of them encouraged their friends (or people they associated with) to participate in any kind of volunteering.

In conclusion, the chief motivation of the working-age volunteers was the opportunity to learn and share knowledge. Other motivations were the meaningful contribution to the communities, the appreciation by others, the flexibility of work, the respectful way that the park staff treated them, the surroundings of the work (many people wanted to work in a beautiful environment such as at the natural park), and the diversity of the volunteer opportunities that the park provides.
Application in Thailand

As noted above, with strong intrinsic motivation, volunteers will be full of energy and the capability to work. They would be an effective workforce for the organization. To attract this kind of volunteer, I suggest the volunteer programs in Thailand offer volunteer opportunities where they can utilize their knowledge and skills to make a difference in the communities. In addition, those tasks should allow self development to the volunteers. The key factor is that the work must provide opportunities to learn and the work should be somewhat challenging.

From the research outcome at Sebastian Inlet State Park, the working-age volunteers had a high turnover rate because they would quit the job if they felt that they did not learn or did not make a valuable contribution to the community. In turn, it is very important for the volunteer programs to communicate to this group of volunteers in order to assess their needs and try to fulfill their needs.

It should be noted that this group of people have careers and they might have less free time than volunteers from other groups. Therefore, volunteer programs should design the work that can be done in a limited time and the volunteers can see the impact of their work promptly. For example, the Turtle Walk program at Sebastian Inlet State Park is a successful program regarding getting the working-age volunteers involved.

In Thailand, people in general work five days a week, from Monday to Friday and by law, a weekly holiday of at least one day a week at intervals of a six-day period must be arranged by the employer (Thailand Board of Investment, 2004). Therefore, the Thai organization may provide opportunity for the volunteers to work on the weekend or in the evenings of work days. According to Edmunson (2007), a significant number of
Americans have an individualistic character and tend to work alone. On the contrary, the majority of Thai people have a group characteristic which is a consequence of their living in extended families and implies that Thais like to work with friends or people they are familiar with. As a result, the organization should encourage the volunteers to bring friends to work with them. As stated earlier, the volunteers in this group seemed to be opinion leaders, so the organizations should get them involved in volunteer recruitment teams.

*Group III: Retiree Volunteers*

*Sebastian Inlet State Park*

Retiree volunteers were the majority of the volunteers at Sebastian Inlet State Park. They were from diverse backgrounds, such as engineering, education, and health care. A significant number of them used to be in the executive level of the organization they worked for. The retiree volunteers worked with all types of volunteer groups around the park. Most of the retiree volunteers moved to Florida after they retired, sold their homes, and bought new ones in Florida. None of them had had financial problems; they lived on their savings and Social Security. Some of them did part time jobs to earn extra income. All of them had cars and had their own houses. Their children were all grown up and financially independent. Most of them had children and grandchildren, some of whom lived in Florida, but the majority of them lived in other states. Therefore, they might have children visiting or they went to visit them sometimes.

The oldest volunteers in this group were 90 years old. Some of them had very good health and some had health issues and had to be under their doctors’ supervision. For example, some of them could not work in the direct sun and some could not walk in
soft sand. Many of them had to see their doctor on a regular basis and could not come to work on the day that they had a doctor appointment, and some had to take their spouses to the doctor and could not come to work. The working schedule for this group of volunteers was very flexible.

It is interesting to observe that many of the volunteers in this category could perform all types of work. For example, many of them were in the Park Watch team, the Beach Cleanup Team, and even the Turtle Walk program. This work required volunteers to work outside for long hours. For the Park Watch and the Beach Cleanup teams, they had to work in the heat, which could be above 100 degrees during the summer time, and for the Turtle Walk program, they had to walk several miles on the soft sand in the dark and they also had to deal with insects such as no-see-ums and mosquitoes. This implies that many of the volunteers in this group were in good shape, even though they were above the age of 60.

The motivations of this group of volunteers were the opportunities to be active, to work outside of the house in meaningful work, and to socialize with people. Even though many of them expressed that they enjoyed learning new things from volunteering at the park, some of them stated that they were not concerned with learning so much as they just wanted to do activities outside of the house that kept them active. They did not care as much about challenging work as the working-age volunteers did. Comradeship is a very important motive for the retiree volunteers to work and continue their service for a long time. The volunteers in this group have a low rate of turnover, and a significant number of them had been volunteering for more than five years. Most of them expressed that they would continue their service as long as their health would allow.
The volunteers in this group chose to volunteer on the tasks that either were different or similar to their previous career. For example, a volunteer who used to be an engineer chose to work at McLarty Treasure Museum where his duties involved talking to visitors and taking care of transactions at the gift shop; another volunteer who used to do hands-on construction work chose to be a Park Watch volunteer, which has nothing to do with construction work. On the other hand, some volunteers chose to work in areas they could use their specific skills; one volunteer who used to be a police officer decided to work with Park Watch, which requires police-type communication skills.

The retiree volunteers were significantly different from the other groups in that they had long work experience and did not seek to develop new skills. They were willing to take the initiative in developing a new volunteer activity; for example, they initiated the Maintenance and Construction Team (SPARCies) and the Citizen Support Organization (CSO). Since they had long work experience and many of them used to be executives in their organizations, they did not like to be told what to do. They preferred to work on their own and ask for assistance from the park staff as necessary. They had a high level of self-discipline.

Application in Thailand

Florida is a state on the east coast of the United States where people can spend their retirement years in a warm climate. Therefore, the majority of the volunteers at Sebastian Inlet State Park were retirees. However, in Thailand, people of all ages reside all over the country. Traditionally, Thai people live with extended family, which means the children live with their parents until they grow up and get married. Elderly Thais remain part of the extended family and are generally well taken care of by their children.
and grandchildren (Leekpai, 1995). The grandparents, in many cases, help take care of the young children in the family. This implies that Thai retirees do not live by themselves and they help out with the family household in such ways as taking care of young children; therefore, they may not have as much free time as the American retirees. In addition, traditional Thai people respect their elder family members and want to treat them as well as possible. For example, they do not want the grandparents to have to work hard, and they prefer their grandparents to stay at home and enjoy their retirement by not working. Thai society would blame the family if they let the old members work outside, or sometimes, even worry if the grandparents drove on their own. To let the grandparents volunteer to walk in the sun collecting trash around the park or to drive 40 minutes to work in a museum for 6 hours a week seems to be an unacceptable concept for Thais.

According to the research results from Sebastian Inlet State Park, the retiree volunteers were the biggest group of volunteers and had the lowest turnover rate. They had high self discipline and skills, and did not require much training. They had more free time than the other two groups. Therefore, the Thai volunteer program should not neglect this group of volunteers. Due to the Thai tradition that young people do not want their old relatives to work hard, the volunteer programs should offer volunteer work that is somewhat light and give these people a chance to socialize and be active. For example, the parks in Thailand may offer the older volunteers to be greeters in a museum, the libraries may ask them to read to children at the library, and so on.

I suggest that Thai volunteer programs promote their volunteer opportunities targeting newly retired people because those people would be in transition from working full time to having no work to do. Many of them age quickly after they retire because
they become inactive and lose their social and work life. In this case, the younger members of the family should appreciate that their older family members have activities to do to keep them active. Then after that, the family members may feel comfortable about letting their parents or grandparents continue volunteering as long as their health is good. It is expected that retiree volunteers would have a low turnover rate as is the case in the United States. Similar to the United States, the Thai retiree volunteers could come from diverse career backgrounds.

It is important to note that the US retiree volunteers highly appreciated the sense of comradeship among their peers and with the organization employees. They wanted to feel that they were an important part of the organization. Therefore, I suggest that the Thai organizations invest in creating social gathering events for the volunteers and the employees so that they have a chance to associate with others and build good relationship among them.

Conclusion

This chapter answers the last research question “How might the data obtained from this study apply to volunteer programs in Thailand?” I summarized the research outcomes regarding the volunteer management at Sebastian Inlet State Park and the background of the volunteers and their motivations to volunteer and remain in their services. I then provided analysis and suggested applications for volunteer programs in Thailand. My analysis and suggestions were based on my Thai business consultant and business management instructor’s perspective. It is important to understand that the analysis and suggestions in this chapter are biased in light of my background and interests. In sum, this chapter provides ideas of how Thai organizations might design and
promote their volunteer programs to the public, using the case study of Sebastian Inlet State Park’s volunteer program as a point of comparison.
CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSION

Never doubt that a small group of committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.
~ Margaret Mead

Introduction

This chapter concludes my discussion on how the domestic volunteer management at Sebastian Inlet State Park, which was used as a case study, would be adaptable for volunteer programs in Thailand. The information drew upon the literature reviews in chapter 2 and the research outcomes in chapters 4, 5, and 6. I start this chapter with a discussion of the significance of local volunteers. Then, I report on my observations on American mindsets versus Thai mindsets. After that I discuss how volunteer programs in Thailand can apply the American domestic volunteer management system as a model. The limitations of this research and the suggestions for future research are provided at the end of the chapter.

Significance of Local Volunteers

I aim to provide suggestions to organizations in Thailand that are currently running volunteer programs or planning to develop volunteer programs. My targeted population of potential volunteers is local Thais. As stated before, there are a number of volunteer programs in Thailand that focus on attracting volunteers from other countries, especially from western countries, instead of local Thais (Thai-experience.org, 2008; International Volunteer Headquarters, 2009; Travel to Teach, 2009). This constitutes a lost opportunity for getting Thais involved in the programs.
I noted that volunteer tourism or voluntourism, which applies people who travel away from their homes to volunteer or people who do volunteer work while they are traveling, has become a significant type of tourism in Thailand. As demand for this practice has expanded, voluntourism has become commercialized. There are many emerging organizations and companies that provide packages of traveling plus volunteering, as shown in chapter 2. Those companies use, as their selling point, the benefits of volunteering to help communities while traveling as tourists. They work as a liaison between the travelers and the communities; they place the travelers in volunteer work that match the travelers’ demands. They also provide activity packages, especially ones related to Thai culture or nature, such as cooking classes, language classes, village tours, hiking, etc. The companies charge fees for their services, and some share the profits with the communities.

I view voluntourism as one way to get people to volunteer for the communities; however, it should not be the only thing that the community depends on. Voluntourism has several benefits, providing opportunities for people to give back to the community while traveling and to experience personal growth, as well as access to outside help for communities. However, there are some potential negative effects, such as the middle-person or the companies that arrange the volunteer programs focusing solely on profit and not caring about the real impact on the communities. In other words, the companies may invade the villagers’ traditional lives by bringing tourists into the village, exploit the natural resources, and offer volunteer work which does not meet the real needs of the communities. Another possible negative impact is that as a consequence of the revenues and aid from voluntourism, the community may become dependent and not survive
without the help of the outsiders. Due to the fact that volunteer tourists have to pay their way to come to the desired destination and, in most cases, have to also pay for their accommodation and in-country transportation, the number of volunteer tourists would surely drop during an economic downturn. As a result, the communities that depend heavily on volunteer tourism would be negatively affected.

It is undeniable that volunteer tourism has powerful motivations that attract people from other countries to invest their time and money to go overseas as volunteers. However, those travel-related motivations are not the only factors that inspire people to volunteer. Without the traveling part, there certainly are other ways to motivate people to be involved in volunteerism. The volunteer programs in Thailand should not overlook the local people. It is proven at Sebastian Inlet State Park that local volunteers are a significant human resource for the organization. These domestic volunteers are willing to contribute their time and effort to help the community without getting paid on a continuous and long-term basis. In turn, the organizations save a lot of money and can accomplish more work due to the help of the local volunteers. The volunteers also satisfy their needs by working for the park.

Observation on American and Thai Ways of Thinking

Volunteer Workplace Issue

It has been my observation that Americans are familiar with the concept of volunteerism from an early age. Volunteerism can be viewed as a part of American culture. In the United States, volunteer opportunities are offered in almost every area of work. For example, there are volunteer opportunities in natural parks, hospitals, zoos, schools, churches, and police stations, to name just a few.
From my Thai perspective, Thais know about short-term volunteerism, such as doing volunteer work on special days like Father’s Day. However, the concept of continuous and long-term volunteerism, such as volunteering one day a week for over a year, may be foreign to them.

In fact, from my secondary research, I found that there are several programs that have involved local Thais around the country. For example, during the bird flu outbreak in Thailand in 2005, the government called for volunteers to help monitor the situation. There were about 900,000 local Thais who volunteered to perform house-to-house checks for signs of avian influenza virus all over the country. The volunteers received training from local health offices in their area of residence. At that time, there were 19 confirmed cases of avian flu in Thailand and people were aware that if they let only the government officials trying to control the situation without any outside help, the outbreaks might get out of control (AEP, 2005). I view this type of volunteer as a short-term volunteer. I would like to point out that this type of volunteer is different from the type of volunteer program I am focusing on. My interest is in the long-term volunteer who volunteers on a regular basis such as at the volunteer program at Sebastian Inlet State Park. I do not focus on the type of volunteering when people come together because of an emergency situation such as the 9/11 attacks in the United States. This bird flu case would be compatible with the 9/11 situation in the United States, but not the state park type.

I would like to give another example of volunteering in Thailand, namely community radio. The purpose of community radio is to provide news and entertainment to local Thais residing in the countryside. These stations often provide important news that is left out by the nationally oriented broadcast media, such as local coverage of
natural disasters, public health, and agriculture. This type of radio station is very popular, especially in remote areas where local newspapers are not circulated and Thai language literacy rates are low among ethnic minority groups. It was said by a Thai community member, “They (community radio stations) were bringing rural communities together in a new and powerful way” (Crispin, 2007, p. 1). The volunteers who work at the stations are residents of that area who are interested in being representatives of the community. They broadcast local news and announcement and provide some entertainments. Since the concept has been highly praised by the locals and the start up cost was affordable for the locals (starting at $1,250), the radio stations have expanded rapidly. Since 2000, thousands of new community radio stations have developed across Thailand's countryside and in its provincial towns (Crispin, 2007). In this case, I also think that it is different from the type of volunteers I aim for in the sense that volunteers of community radios came together because they have the same interest and they have initiative to start up the organization by themselves. I believe that the motives and goals of community radio volunteers are different from those of the volunteer at the state park. As a result, the proper volunteer management strategy of these two groups should be different.

I did not find the type of volunteer program in Thailand that I have interest in, the type that is managed by an existing organization and where the volunteers commit to work long-term on a routine basis. Nevertheless, I discovered that the volunteer type that I am looking for mostly consisted of volunteers from other countries, especially western countries.

I have not seen Thai organizations such as hospitals, zoos, schools, or police stations offer volunteer opportunities. There are only paid employees working in those
places. My explanation would be that those organizations either receive funding from the
government or receive donations from other sources, so they use those funds to pay for
operational costs, including human resources, so they can operate without volunteers.
Another reason is that those organizations never have had volunteers working for them so
they do not have a concept of developing volunteer programs in their minds. Moreover,
the wages in Thailand are low, so organizations can afford to hire people; in turn, this
creates jobs for the community. In the contrary, if there were volunteers, they might
replace the paid employees and that would give a negative effect for the community as a
whole. In addition, Thai people tend to think that high-responsibility work, such as work
at the hospital and at the police station, should belong to well-trained people. Therefore,
outsiders should not be involved in this work.

Age Issue

From the previous chapters, the study reported that Americans volunteer for
different reasons depending on who they are. For example, many students volunteer to
earn service-learning credit in school; many working-age people volunteer in order to get
an opportunity to learn what they are interested in and to have experience in positions
useful to their career; and many retirees volunteer simply just to keep themselves
physically and mentally active and to socialize with people. Some of them choose to
work in tasks that they are familiar with and some of them chose to volunteer for tasks
that are absolutely different from their skills. Their rationales are simple; they do what
they feel like doing.

Regarding the different age-groups of Thais, I believe there are limitations within
each group. Teenagers may have limitations in transportation or obligations to other
activities. A significant number of Thai students are involved in outside-of-school activities, such as tutoring class, music class, etc. For example, when I was a high school student, I barely had free time because I spent the weekdays in school and the weekends on extracurricular tutoring and music classes. For the working-age group, I believe that it is the same as in the U. S., where most of them are busy with their careers. The volunteers in this age-group would be the smallest group of volunteers among the three groups. The volunteers in this group would be motivated by the opportunity to learn things that are useful for their careers or future education.

For the retiree group, I believe the conditions of Thai retirees are significantly different from American retirees. Firstly, the Thais pay great respect to the elder members of the family by taking good care of them. This means the young members have the old members live in or close to their place and do not let them do outside work. Traditionally, the old members may do miscellaneous house work or take care of the young children at home. The children would not be happy if their grandparents volunteered to collect trash in the heat or work without getting paid at the museum on a regular basis and have to pay for their own transportation. The neighbors might criticize the family, saying that they do not take good care of the older family member. To volunteer occasionally would be acceptable but to do it over a long period of time would be a different issue. I also note that the Thai bond within the family is tight and the community relationships are strong. Unlike Americans, who may depart from family and move to other states or even other countries when they enter college or a career or retirement, Thais tend to stay close to home. As a result, Americans need to develop their new social life in the new place, while Thais already have their community that they
belong to. In addition, Americans are more individualistic, which means individuals can make decisions for themselves without significant interference from family members or friends unlike the Thais. This could be one of the reasons why Thai people do not volunteer like Americans.

Class Issue

From my research findings, Americans in general do not divide volunteer work into high or low classes. In other words, they would not think that volunteering to collect trash or clean the bathroom is low-class work. Most of the volunteer interviews agreed that any kind of volunteer tasks is considered as valuable work in which all of them should be honored. It was unlikely that people would give negative comments or look down on them. Americans seem to have relative freedom in their choice of life. For example, at Sebastian Inlet State Park, there was a retired FBI agent volunteering as a toll collector where his main tasks were to collect fees and greet visitors. He did not care if the task was simple; he expressed that he was very happy with this position and had no desire to deal with challenging work anymore. Another example was a volunteer who used to hold a high engineering position in an organization and now he volunteered to do hands-on physical construction work. Sometimes he had to work in the heat and get dirty. He offered to do this work and he had committed to this job for years. He was satisfied that he had the opportunity to help the park and was content to see the accomplishment of the work. Everybody around him praised him for his dedication. From interviewing Sebastian Inlet State Park volunteers and also the park employees, I found that many Americans thought that working outdoor was a great opportunity to be close to nature and
in some cases, could be counted as recreation. Many of them preferred to work outdoor than indoor.

From my opinion, Americans and Thais have different ways of distinguish works. On the one hand, Americans seem to distinguish between paid work and volunteer work. They tend to value volunteer work since it shows their good will to contribute to the community. On the other hand, Thai people have a way of thinking of dividing people and work into classes. Thai parents always tell their children to study hard so that they have a good career; otherwise they have to do physical work or an outdoor job as their career. Physical work or outdoor jobs are classified as lower class jobs, while intellectual jobs such as teacher or banker are classified as higher class jobs. In addition, the more complex and more responsible the job is, the more Thais will look highly on them. As a result, Thais would likely be more selective in regards to volunteer jobs than Americans. The jobs that are considered as lower class may not be appealing to Thais. In addition, Thailand is a hot country where working outdoors could mean working at above 100 degrees Fahrenheit, which would be an extreme condition for many people. It is an important to point out that Thai people embrace having fair skin since it implies higher class, therefore working outdoors would not be appealing to them, especially for women.

Dependency Issue

I also observed that most American volunteers were relatively individualistic. Most of them joined the program alone, except in some cases when they came in to volunteer with friends or spouses. The majority of the informants expressed that they hoped to meet new people and make friends in the work place. Therefore, the chance of
getting the Americans involved in a volunteer program might be more likely than getting Thais because the decision is made by one person.

On the contrary, Thai people tend to be dependent on others such as friends or family members. From my experience, Thai people prefer to do things with companions they are familiar with; for example, if they were to apply to be a volunteer, they would prefer to come with a friend and if their friend does not want to do it, both of them would end up not doing it. In the same manner, if one decides to quit, the other one would do the same. This could be an obstacle for the volunteer program to attract new volunteers. However, if the program gets both of them in, they may stay longer than those that join alone because they do not have to adjust to the new place and new people much.

**Motivation Issue**

From my observation, American volunteers have different motivations depending on their age, career, and background. The young volunteers seem to be motivated by the challenging work, opportunity to learn and practice or develop their skills, and school credits. It is interesting for me to find out that socializing or making new friends is not the young volunteers’ main motive. On the contrary, old people, especially the retired, are looking for opportunity to get themselves active and to meet and work with people. They do not care much for challenging jobs or for learning opportunities. All generations of Americans enjoy the perks given by the organization, such as restaurant discounts and free passes to recreation places. They also appreciate symbolic things that acknowledge their volunteer efforts, such as volunteer working hour pins or certificates. They think it is not necessary but it makes them feel good to know that their contributions are being recognized.
Thai people are similar in this respect. Young people would volunteer in exchange for the opportunity to learn and build up skills in the areas that they are interested in. However, the motivation of the older Thai volunteers may be different from that of Americans. Even though Thai households have become more nuclear, not living as an extended family like in the past, the family members usually live not far from each other and the younger generations take care of the older generations. It is rarely seen in Thailand that 80-year-old individuals or couples stay by themselves. In general, they usually stay with or stay close to their children or grandchildren. This implies that the old Thai people are not lacking a social life, and they have things to do to keep themselves busy, such as taking care of the grandchildren. Their motivation would be to make themselves useful for the family members by taking care of the grandchildren or taking care of some house work. To be involved in volunteerism may have undesired effects such as they might feel guilty taking their time to volunteer for others instead of spending that time to take care of their own grandchildren.

Organizational Issue

As I researched the organization structure of Sebastian Inlet State Park’s volunteer program, I found that it was informal and flexible. The volunteer program organization structure was not written out but the volunteers and the park employees seem to understand it well, at least in the part that they were involved with. The park manages it on a convenience basis; the supervisors were assigned mostly according to the location they worked. The work was decentralized and the organization structure was flat, which means there was relatively little hierarchy in the organization. Some volunteers were assigned to supervise their group instead of the park employees. However, the final
decision-making power belongs to the park manager. From what I saw, I perceived that in general, American volunteers seem to have high self discipline and sense of responsibility. Those I observed were willing to take the lead and also willing to be good followers. It was obvious that they neither wanted to be told what to do nor to be monitored closely. Independence and trust were the most important things that they look for when volunteering.

In Thailand, I experienced working in a hierarchical organizational system where the chain of command was clear and the status of the people in the higher positions was significantly different from that of the people in the lower positions. Many Thai organizations, including the government organizations which are known as highly bureaucratic, now tend to transform their management system to be more decentralized and dynamic. However, since this is still in the transition period, I believe that volunteer programs should be designed according to the current managerial structure of the organizations.

American Domestic Volunteer Management as a Model for Thai Volunteer Program

According to the comparison between Americans’ mindset and Thais’ mindset in the previous section, I would like to conclude that the American domestic volunteer management could be used as a model for Thai volunteer programs that aim to attract local Thai volunteers. Even though their mindsets are different in some aspects, there are similarities in many ways. Since domestic volunteerism in the United States shows its success in attracting local people to be involved in programs and is able to keep a high
retention rate, I believe this concept of domestic volunteerism should work well in Thailand also.

As stated in chapter 4, Sebastian Inlet State Park’s volunteer management consists of six stages: job development and design; budget; recruitment; screening and interviewing; orientation and training; motivating; recognition, and supervision. These six stages of management could be used by a Thai volunteer program as fundamental factors to design its own program.

Sebastian Inlet State Park volunteer groups were developed from three sources: from the existing tasks; from outsiders’ suggestions; and outsiders’ contributions of support organizations. I suggested in chapter 6 that the volunteer program in Thailand should start with the existing tasks at the beginning stage so that the volunteers will have the employees to guide them. Then, after the employees and the volunteers feel familiar and comfortable with the program, they could expand the work to other newly created tasks.

Regarding the budget issue, it is shown at Sebastian Inlet State Park that the organization’s investment in promoting the volunteers’ morale paid off. The park budgeted money to provide volunteer appreciation picnics and volunteer acknowledgement symbols such as working hour pins. Some of the money was used on purchasing working equipment. I suggest that the volunteer program in Thailand do the same. It is very important to show appreciation to the volunteers since they do not receive monetary compensation in exchange for their time and effort. Volunteer appreciation events, uniforms, and pins give the volunteer a sense of belonging and such feeling is one of the significant factors that keep the volunteer retention rate high. Sebastian Inlet State
Park used to receive a volunteer budget from the Florida Park Services, which is the center of the Florida State Parks’ budget. This budget was used mainly for promoting the morale of the volunteers. Currently, all of the individual Florida state parks have to come up with a volunteer budget on their own. In the case of Sebastian Inlet State Park, the current volunteer budget comes from the Citizen Support Organization (CSO). For the volunteer program in Thailand, at its beginning stage, the volunteer program may request funding from the sponsoring organization. In addition, it should try to find other sources of funds. The concept of the Citizen Support Organization (CSO) is a good example of a funding resource. As of now, I do not see any supporting organization like this in Thailand.

On the subject of recruitment, the park has two main volunteer recruitment strategies: through the outreach at local festivals and through direct personal contact. The park makes an effort in recruiting new volunteers throughout the year. The local festival and direct personal contact should also be effective strategies to attract local Thais to join the volunteer programs. There are several local festivals in Thailand throughout the year. This channel will reach a vast number of the local Thais. However, since the continuous and long-term volunteer concept may still be foreign to Thais in general, in the recruiting process, the organization must provide knowledge about volunteering in terms of why people should get involved, what kind of work they can do for the organization, how much time they should contribute, how much commitment they need to give to the organization, and what they would get in return, both intrinsically and extrinsically. I also think that the organizations should start a volunteer program by offering the kind of volunteer work that the society would honor, such as intellectual work. Then, after the
society and the volunteers become familiar and feel comfortable with the volunteer
concept and practice, the organization could gradually begin to offer more varied types of
work.

At Sebastian Inlet State Park, the volunteer screening process includes filling in
the application form, getting a background check, and having an interview with the park
staff. The same process would be suitable for a volunteer program in Thailand. The
application should be provided in hard copy from the organization and in downloadable
form on the organization’s website so that people can get access without coming to the
organization in person. It is very important, however, that the applicants come to the
organization to interview with the organization representative in person.

Concerning human resource development, Sebastian Inlet State Park gives
orientation and training to its volunteers informally. In most cases, the park staff who
work directly with the volunteers train them when they start their service. Those practices
should also work well in Thailand. However, since the concept may be new, the
organization should orient the volunteers together as a group when the program begins so
that the first batch of volunteers get to know each other and receive the same message.
Thai volunteer programs should develop a volunteer handbook like the American
organizations do so that they have the standard rules and regulations to refer to. Besides
the big group orientation, Thai volunteer programs should provide training in the same
manner as Sebastian Inlet State Park does. The one-on-one coaching would be an
efficient technique to train the new volunteers since the volunteers would have
opportunity to ask questions and to get the full attention of the park staff. As seen at
Sebastian Inlet State Park, the coaching system results in good relationships among the volunteers and the paid employees.

The motivations for volunteering at Sebastian Inlet State Park can be classified as extrinsic and intrinsic. The extrinsic motivations are the benefits that the park provides to its volunteers such as volunteer uniforms, working hour pins, free park-passes, restaurant discounts, and volunteer recognition-appreciation events, to name just a few. The intrinsic motivations include the sense of comradeship; self esteem; opportunity to work on the tasks they are interested in; getting to work outside of the house; getting to exercise, and to socialize and make new friends; good feelings that they get to help and pay back to the community, and the like. Thai organizations should promote both extrinsic and intrinsic motivations to its volunteers as well. According to the literature review in chapter 2, most organizations that provide volunteer opportunities used intrinsic motivations as a key incentive to attract the interest of the potential volunteers.

With regard to volunteer recognition, Sebastian Inlet State Park set up a volunteer recognition event once a year and volunteer appreciation picnics approximately three to four times a year. Most of the volunteers said that they did not care much for the certificate itself, but they felt appreciated that the park made an effort to recognize their service. I believe Thais would respond similarly. I also would like to point out that such events would have to be neither big nor expensive. The main idea is to communicate the organization’s appreciation to its volunteers. Sincerity is the key factor to accomplish the goal of the recognition event.

Concerning supervision, Sebastian Inlet State Park has a somewhat informal supervision system for its volunteer program. The park staff members who work directly
with the volunteers supervised the volunteers who worked with them. This may be too early to be implemented in Thailand right away. At its early stage, I think the volunteer program should provide close supervision of its volunteers. Clear description about tasks, rules and regulations, and the organization’s expectations should be provided to the volunteers. The intention is to provide enough information and help to the volunteers, not to be commanding or pick on them. The goal of close supervision is to provide appropriate guidance and assistance to the volunteers.

Conclusion

I have noted that the present lack of local volunteers in Thailand is an opportunity to start a new era of local Thai volunteerism by using the successful example of volunteer management in the United States. There are several volunteer management practices that have proved to work well in the United States that should be effective in Thailand. As the American and Thai mindsets are dissimilar in some ways, a volunteer program in Thailand should be designed in accordance with a Thai mindset. Since this would be the beginning stage of promoting domestic volunteerism in Thailand, the organizations should start with a small department and gradually expand to other departments to form the solid foundation. There are also numerous types of organizations in Thailand that have never offered volunteer opportunities while the same type of organization in the United States already has long established volunteer programs at police stations, fire stations, hospitals, etc. Thai organizations should consider applying volunteer programs into their management system.
Limitations of the Study

Generalization

It should be noted that this research focuses only on volunteerism management at Sebastian Inlet State Park in Florida. Even though this park is large with a considerably high numbers of visitors and volunteers, one park only cannot represent all volunteer destinations. The organization’s mission, resources, location, types of volunteer work, and volunteer management system is different from that of others; therefore this research should not be used to generalize the findings beyond the factors relevant to volunteer programs in Thailand. This study could serve as a fundamental understanding, but more research in Thailand should be conducted to test the hypothesis of whether the findings derived from this case study would be practical and effective in Thailand.

In addition, when I interpreted data in this research and I mentioned the Thai mindset, I sometimes over generalized it. It should be noted that not all Thais have the same mindset.

Bias

As was mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, there is bias in this study due to my identity and purpose of study. I observed, interpreted, and analyzed the data from the perspective of my Thai and business background. It is notable that I aim to use the results of this study as a knowledge base to teach my business management students in Thailand and to consult for organizations in Thailand; therefore, I focused the content towards my goal and may have omitted unrelated information which I gained from my study. Another factor that might cause bias in this study is that when I conducted my field research and corresponded with the informants, the relationship and the feeling between
the informants and me might be different from that when Americans communicate with Americans. Since I am an Asian woman who speaks with a Thai accent, the informants might feel a difference and talk to me less, or more, openly than with people of the same nationality. It is likely that the informants may view me as “the other” and try to answer the questions as they want the outsider to hear, especially the questions about their opinions and personal motivations.

Suggestion for Future Studies

Since this research focuses on only one state park, the results should not be generalized. In turn, the replication of the same study with the same list of interview questions at other organizations that provide volunteer opportunities would enhance the validity and reliability of the results of this current research. In addition, I suggest that a comparative study between the motivations of the volunteers who work in developing countries versus developed countries would be useful for volunteer management purposes. Furthermore, comparative studies on motivations of different types of volunteerism such as conservation volunteering, wildlife volunteering, development volunteering, working with children, and working at a police station, should be performed in order to see the similarities and the differences of the volunteers’ motivations. Case studies in different volunteer programs in Thailand would also enhance the knowledge in this filed. The results of the aforementioned studies would enable me to design my teaching materials and consultations for the Thai organizations more rationally. Lastly, I suggest that a study of the attitude of people in Thailand towards volunteerism and volunteer management styles would be beneficial to my goals. Such study would in turn validate the result of this current research from the Thai perspective.
REFERENCES


A determination has been made that the following research study is exempt from IRB review because it involves:

Category 2: research involving the use of educational tests, survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior

Project Title: A Qualitative Analysis of Volunteer Tourism Participants' Motivation

Project Director: Pichayalak Pichayakul

Department: Individual Interdisciplinary Program (IIP)

Advisor: Raymie McKeerow

Rebecca Cale, Associate Director, Research Compliance Institutional Review Board

The approval remains in effect provided the study is conducted exactly as described in your application for review. Any additions or modifications to the project must be approved by the IRB (as an amendment) prior to implementation.

Date: 6/18/08
Dear Ms. Pichayakul,

Thank you for your inquiry about doing research at the Sebastian Inlet State Park. We welcome the opportunity to work with you to better understand and perhaps improve our volunteer program here. The most expeditious way to arrange this from the park's point of view would be to have you sign up as a volunteer. As a volunteer, you will be committing to work with the park for a minimal number of hours to be determined. Please let me know if there any resources that you might need to pursue this objective.

We would also need to create a letter of agreement that would outline your research goals and objectives, along with a statement of understanding that you will provide a copy of the resulting research to the park, upon its completion.

If there is any information we can provide to assist you in your endeavor, please let me know. I look forward to hearing from you on this subject.

Sincerely,

Terry Coulliette
Park Manager
Sebastian Inlet State Park
9700 Highway A1A
Melbourne Beach, FL 32951
321-984-4853
APPENDIX C: LETTER OF AGREEMENT TO SEBASTIAN INLET STATE PARK

July 7, 2008

To Sebastian Inlet State Park Manager,

My name is Pichayalak Pichayalak. I am a PhD. student in Individual Interdisciplinary Program (IIP) majoring in Communications, Telecommunication, and Southeast Asian Studies. I am in a process of conducting research for my dissertation. The topic of my dissertation is “A Qualitative Analysis of Volunteer Participants’ Motivation” The research site is Sebastian Inlet State Park in Florida. The data collection time ranges for two months, July and August of 2008.

My research is an ethnography type of research which seeks to understand volunteers’ behaviors and thoughts. It aims to seek understanding of the motivation of the people who dedicate time, effort, and expertise to work as volunteer tourists. The motivation of the volunteers is the main focus of this study; however, other angles of volunteer tourism such as the characteristics and personal profile of the volunteers, and the criteria they use to choose volunteer sites, will also be researched, analyzed, and discussed to enhance this knowledge base. The research technique is participant observation, which means I will participate in the activities as one of the volunteers so that I will gain understandings from their perspectives. I will also interview the volunteers, park staff, and other related people within the park to gain deeper understanding of their motivations.

During the data collection period, I agree to work at least four hours a day, five days a week, as a volunteer at the park. I would like to rotate around the park in order to meet various volunteers from different kinds of works. As a result, my working schedule varies depending on where I will volunteer for.

I would like to thank you the Sebastian Inlet State Park for allowing me to work with the park volunteers and collect data within the park. I plan to finish this dissertation within one year. I will provide a copy of my dissertation to the park when finish.

Sincerely,

Pichayalak Pichayakul
Individual Interdisciplinary Program
Ohio University
APPENDIX D: NOTE ABOUT THE CHANGE OF DISSERTATION TITLE

I changed the dissertation title from “A Qualitative Analysis of Volunteer Tourism Participants’ Motivation” to “Using American Volunteerism as a Model for Domestic Volunteerism Management in Thailand” during the time I conducted my research in order to make the title better represent the dissertation content. Therefore, the dissertation titles in the IRB letter and in my agreement letter to the Sebastian Inlet State Park manager are different. However, the major theme and direction of the dissertation as well as the research procedure remained unchanged.
APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Part I: General information of the informant

1. Where are you from?
2. What year were you born?
3. What is your occupation? If you retired, what was your previous career?
4. What is your education background?
5. What is your income range? If you retired, what are your sources of income?
6. What do you usually do in your free time?
7. What is your marital status?
8. Do you have children? If yes, how many and how old are they?
9. How many volunteer jobs have you participated in?
10. Who do you volunteer with?
11. Are you a member of any associations? If yes, please specify, and what are your roles?

Part II: Experiences in volunteering works

1. What group of volunteers in this park do you belong to?
2. What are your daily tasks? Please describe, including how many hours per day, job descriptions, management system, etc.
3. How long have you been volunteering here?
4. Have you ever changed or thought about changing to work with other volunteer groups within this park? Why?
5. Are you interested in volunteering with other organizations? If yes, please explain.

6. Have you ever worked as a volunteer somewhere else besides at Sebastian Inlet State Park? If yes, please describe and also compare and contrast the experiences with working at this park.

7. How did you know about volunteer opportunities in this park?

8. Please explain the process of getting involved in this volunteer program. (Public relation process, recruitment process, training/educating process, and work supervision process)

9. Did you apply to volunteer here by yourself or with other people? Please explain.

10. How long do you plan to volunteer here?

11. Where do you stay during the volunteer period?

12. What is your daily life schedule? (How many hours of work each day? And what do you do for the rest of the day?)

13. What does the park expect from you?

14. What do you expect from the park?

15. What do you think about working as a volunteer in this park in terms of self satisfaction?

16. What feedback do you receive from volunteering at the park (from your family, friends, park staff, and park visitors)?

17. Would you please give some examples of your experiences working as a volunteer here? (Both good and negative experiences are welcome.)
Part III: Volunteer motivation

1. What are the factors that you considered before you made a decision to do volunteer work?

2. What is your motivation to work as a park volunteer? Please explain with examples.

3. What do you expected to gain from volunteering? What are your satisfactions and dissatisfactions? Please explain with examples.

4. Does the park do anything as an appreciation to the volunteers? If yes, please explain. What do you think about that?

5. If there are costs to volunteer, such as you have to buy a uniform or work equipment, would that discourage you from volunteering?

6. Do rules, such as volunteers have to wear a uniform or that they have to contact their supervisor in case they cannot come to work, discourage you from volunteering? Please share your opinion.

7. What factors will make you stop volunteering at Sebastian Inlet State Park?

8. What do you think about your assigned task and load of work?

9. How is the relationship between you and the park staff?

10. How is the relationship between you and your volunteer peers? Do you see them outside of work?

11. If any, what are the topics of conversations among the volunteer peers that are different from the non-volunteer people?

12. How would you evaluate your work outcome?
13. How much effort do you put into this volunteer work (compared to your actual career)?

14. In the future, do you plan to do more volunteer work? If yes, where do you plan to go? And what do you plan to do?

15. Do you have a chance to give suggestions or feedback to the park? If yes, how and have you ever done so and what was/were your suggestions?

16. Will you suggest other people such as your friends or families to do the same volunteer work? Why/why not?

17. In your opinion, what kind of people want to do volunteer work and why?

Part IV: Suggestions for improvement

1. What would you like to suggest to the park to improve its volunteering system?

2. If you were the management team of the park, what would you do to motivate the volunteers to work efficiently and to keep their loyalties?

3. Is there anything else that you would like to share?

4. Is there anything you would like to ask?