



Department of Family Services  
**Volunteer Connections**  
for Children, Youth & Families

January 2008

Issue 1



## 2007 Volunteer Satisfaction Survey

The Volunteer Satisfaction Survey gives us an overview of how the program is viewed by you, our dedicated volunteers. We take the survey seriously. Our goal: a win-win for all involved!

This year, of the 123 surveys we sent to volunteers, 49 were returned. Below are some points of interest from the surveys returned:

- 96% of you indicated satisfaction with your volunteer experience
- 100% of you would recommend our volunteer opportunities to others
- 54% of you have been with us two or more years
- 76% of you find *Volunteer Connections* to be a useful resource

We are happy that your experience working as a volunteer has been a positive one. Please feel free to contact Laurie Eytel at 703-324-7871, TTY 703-222-9452 if you have suggestions on how to improve our volunteer program or this newsletter.

Here are two comments from the Volunteer Satisfaction Survey with our replies.

1. "I get a lot of satisfaction being part of this program (Nurturing Parent Program®) I do wish there were training opportunities for the volunteers. An example would be how to be a more effective facilitator. Also, I really wish there was follow-up training or support groups for the families."

**Response:** We are happy to arrange a mentor for you or a meeting with an experienced facilitator to further discuss effective facilitation techniques and strategies. Please contact Laurie Eytel to make arrangements.

Yes, there has been a need for follow-up support groups, we agree. During the past six months we began offering Parent Support Groups for graduates of the Nurturing Parent Program®. Families meet weekly for six weeks to review concepts learned through the Nurturing Parent curriculum and to further strengthen their relationships with their children.

2. "Perhaps once in a while, quarterly or semiannually the mentors could get together for a social event without the mentees. Notes could be shared."

**Response:** Please let us know how the approaches we are already using to offer "alone time" to mentors could be made more useful or appealing. The Befriend-A-Child Program offers twice yearly mentor in-service training and social time. We are also planning two bowling sessions for mentors only (dates to be determined) this year.

An example of last year's mentor in-service training was: *What Mentors Should Know About Trends In Youth Substance Abuse*. A light dinner was served and there were door prizes. Mentor open-houses (without mentees) are also offered with the Fairfax Mentoring Partnership, Inc. (over 35 mentoring groups including "BeFriend").

Please note, if you have a challenge with any aspect of your volunteer experience, please feel free to contact Laurie Eytel so we can work on finding a solution. You can also leave an anonymous message if you would prefer, but by leaving your name I can address your concern directly.

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## Great Expectations: Boomers and the Future of Volunteering:

Volunteer Match in conjunction with Met Life and other organizations, prepared the above report. Below are some findings of interest:

- Average hours of volunteering per year by age group:  
 55+: 226 hours      40-45: 155 hours      30-39: 132 hours  
 18-29: 145 hours      under 18: 155 hours
- Volunteers 55+ years of age reasons for volunteering:
 

-help others/make a difference:	40%
-contribute to cause I care about	28%
-use my skills in productive way	18%
-meet people, make friends	18%
-be involved in my community	8%
-develop new skills, experience	4%
-community service requirement	3%
- The importance of volunteering increases with age: “Compared to other things you do in your life, how important to you is the volunteer work that you do?”
 

55+: 75%	40-54: 73%	30-39: 69%
18-29: 66%	under 18: 63%	



To see the report in its entirety, visit:

<http://www.volunteermatch.org/nonprofits/resources/greatexpectations/>

Next newsletter: Looking at volunteer trends with the younger generation.

“Volunteer Spotlight” is a new feature where we will highlight a volunteer in each publication. A great way to find out more about others who have the same spirit of volunteerism that you do to assist those in need!

## Volunteer Spotlight: Kay Leget



Why did you decide to volunteer with the Nurturing Parenting Program®?

As a mother, teacher and guidance counselor, children have always been a center point of my life. The Nurturing Program presented their volunteer needs to a Fairfax County Public Schools counseling in-service, and although I could not volunteer at that time, I knew immediately that it was something I wanted to do when I retired. The only thing I missed from my 23 years with Fairfax Public Schools was the children, and of course, it was time to give back.

How long have you been volunteering with us?

Although I only do one group a year, I have been doing it for six years already. My volunteer interview with Laurie Eytel was on

Sept. 12, 2001. Although we were both in semi shock it makes remembering the day quite easy.

What is one of your most memorable experiences with the program?

The interaction with the children has always been my main joy, but graduation nights stand out in my memory. When we look around at the families and see how far they have come and the closeness they have developed, I beam with pride for the program and for my small part in it. I sincerely pray they continue to develop the skills that will insure their success as a family.

Tell us a little bit about your life outside of volunteering with us.

John and I have been married for 47 years, and we have three marvelous adult children, and two wonderful grandchildren.



I served Fairfax County Public Schools first as an elementary PE teacher and then as an elementary school guidance counselor. Both careers brought me great satisfaction and deep pride in the youth of today and I sincerely hope they took responsibility and self pride into their adulthood.

What is something about yourself you would like to share that others might not know about you?

I am privileged to be the People Animals Love group leader for the

Child Life Pet Therapy program at INOVA Fairfax Hospital for women and children. Each week 10 teams of dogs and handlers visit all the pediatrics, adolescents, high risk prenatal, and psych wards. My little Bichon/Poodle, Bailey, and I enjoy our many hours with the patients, and are often told, “That is the first smile we have seen all week.” Nothing can beat the smile of a child--especially a child who is a little scared and might even hurt.

Any closing comments?

I cannot end this without addressing the devotion and dedication of the Nurturing Program staff. Each and every member goes above and beyond when it comes to the children and their parents. This makes the world a better place. Thank you for the program and for giving me the opportunity to participate.

## Facts About Fairfax

Whether you're new to the county, or just curious about its history and current demographics, you might find the following facts and figures interesting:

Fairfax County was created by the Virginia Assembly from the northern part of Prince William County in 1742.

Fairfax County originally included all of what are now Loudoun County, Arlington County, and the cities of Alexandria and Falls Church.

Fairfax County has more residents than seven states: Alaska, Delaware, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Vermont and Wyoming.

The 2002 median monthly rent was \$1,185 in Fairfax County. That same year, the population was 991,000, and the average age was 37.3 years.

In 2004, there were more than 3,300 physicians practicing in Fairfax County.

In 2004, nearly 25,000 students were taking English as a Second Language classes in Fairfax County Public Schools. Students come from 100 nations across the world, and speak about 150 languages.

Visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/aboutfairfax/](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/aboutfairfax/) and scroll down to "Fun Facts" for more tantalizing trivia and tidbits about the county.

## Hats off to Nancy Portee, Recipient of Barbara Varon Volunteer Award



Nancy was honored by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors in October with the 2007 Barbara Varon Volunteer Award. The award, named in honor of the memory of Barbara Varon, was

established to recognize a Fairfax County resident's dedication to improving the community through volunteer service.

The award recipient must show evidence of having a positive effect on the community and be known for encouraging others to do the same.

Nancy demonstrates all of these attributes through her years of service with the BeFriend program.

Congratulations Nancy!

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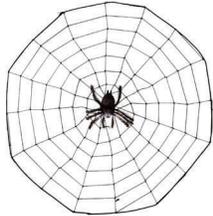
### Points to Ponder...

- To give without any reward, or any notice, has a special quality of its own.  
*Anne Morrow Lindbergh*
  - Only a life lived for others is worth living.  
*Albert Einstein*
  - It is very nice to be important, but it's even more important to be nice.  
*Unknown*
  - We make living by what we get. We make a life by what we give.  
*Winston Churchill*
-

## Interesting Web Sites

[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/government/hotlines.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/government/hotlines.htm)

This page of the county's Web site includes a list of county agencies and telephone numbers for residents in need of assistance with personal and family crises, including child abuse, adult abuse, and domestic abuse.



[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/quickquiz](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/quickquiz)

Go to this page on the county's Web site to test your Fairfax County IQ. The quiz includes 10 questions and takes about 15 minutes to complete. This is part of the kids and teens section of the Web site, but don't let that fool you -- it is not as easy as you might think!

[www.state.va.us](http://www.state.va.us)

This is the Web site for the state of Virginia. It is chock full of information about the state. Some of the topics for which you can find information on the site are state history, tourism, legislation, and forms needed to start a business. The "Fact of the Month" feature on the home page provides site visitors with an interesting and possibly unknown fact about Virginia.

## Training Opportunities

### Social Services Training

As a volunteer, you may be eligible for free training from the Virginia Institute for Social Services Training Activities (VISSTA). Classes are free. Course topics range from emotional disorders to time and stress management. Call VISSTA at 703-324-7836, TTY 703-222-9452 to find out about programs offered, or check out their Web site at [www.vcu.edu/vissta](http://www.vcu.edu/vissta).

Peace Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall, 8304 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield, VA 22152. Lunch is from 11:30 a.m. - noon, and the presentation runs from noon - 1:30 p.m. Call Paulette Whiteside at 703-324-5285, TTY 703-222-9452 for more information. No RSVP required.

### Fairfax County Public Library Learning Opportunities

Visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/libevents/evntform.asp](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/libevents/evntform.asp), or stop by a branch and pick up a copy of *This Month*, the library's calendar of events, to view their opportunities.

Learning is the key to the future.



### Springfield Exchange

This social services lunch lecture series is free and open to the public. Coffee and tea are provided, but you are encouraged to bring a brown bag lunch. The exchange occurs on the second Thursday every other month at the Prince of

January 2008

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**Our Web site:**

[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/about/volops.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/about/volops.htm)

### Projected Nurturing Parenting Program Groups

The following groups meet 5:30-8:00 p.m. in 2008 and will be conducted in English unless otherwise noted:

1/2008 -5/2008	Wednesday	0-4 age range	Annandale	21 weeks
1/17/08 -4/10/08	Thursday	Parents & teens	Springfield	12 weeks
1/31/08 -6/26/08	Tuesday	0-4 age range African American	Alexandria	21 weeks
2/4/08 -5/12/08	Monday	5-11 age range Spanish	Alexandria	13 weeks
2/5/08 -5/6/08	Tuesday	5-11 age range	Centreville	13 weeks
3/3/08 -6/9/08	Monday	5-11 age range African American	Fairfax Stn.	13 weeks
3/4/08 -6/3/08	Tuesday	5-11 age range	Herndon	13 weeks
3/25/08 -6/17/08	Tuesday	5-11 age range Spanish	Falls Church	13 weeks
4/17/08 -7/10/08	Thursday	5-11 age range Spanish	Fairfax	13 weeks
6/23/08 -9/15/08	Monday	Parents & teens	Alexandria	12 weeks

### Nurturing Parenting Support Group Needs Facilitators

2/5/08      Monday      Fairfax or Centreville  
-3/17/08                      (to be determined)

(6-10 families usually attend)



*\*\*Fairfax County is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination in all county programs, services and activities and will provide reasonable accommodations upon request. To request special accommodations call 703-324-7871, TTY 703-222-9452. Please allow seven working days in advance of the event in order to make the necessary arrangements. This information is available in alternate formats by calling 703-324-7871; TTY 703-222-9452.*