

May/June/July/  
August  
2010-2011



# Newsletter

A publication of the Oregon Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, a not-for-profit membership organization

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## President's letter

Fall is upon us bringing with it the opening of school, the disbursement of aid funds and the happy faces of our students. Hoping your students are happy and grateful for all you do.

The Summer Drive-In workshop was held August 5 at Portland State University. Matt Sagayaga, Shelly Sass and Julia Reid did a great job of putting together an informative program. I am thankful to Matt and Shelly for taking on a committee chair role as first-time OASFAA volunteers. The day was very successful, with 41 participants attending.

The Annual Conference committee has been working hard at planning a great event to be held at Salishan Lodge in February. Ryan West and Michelle Holdway are serving as the chairs and have made an early start on program planning so folks can have event information early on.

Our Fund Development chairs, Raymond Yee and Mike Johnson, have been researching various options for vendor support. They have identified about 100 prospects to target through an email campaign. The first round of emails was sent out August 18. I appreciate the hard work Raymond and Mike have put into this effort as it is not an easy task these days due to the loss of support on the student loan side. They created a great letter to communicate the mission and purpose of OASFAA and to detail how organizations can support us with our efforts.

The OASFAA Newsletter committee chair is Sue Shogren. I am thankful to Sue for all her hard working at putting together such a great newsletter for our benefit. Sue also has helped create an OASFAA brochure. A final version has been approved that will be a great tool to share with vendors, education communities and new financial aid folks so they know what OASFAA is about. A copy will be available on our website soon.

OASFAA is a volunteer organization that depends on the support of our members. Encourage your fellow colleagues to join today and begin networking with their colleagues in Oregon. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions about OASFAA or how to get involved.

Patti Brady-Glassman



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## Editorial Policy

Opinions expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily of OASFAA, its members, or the institutions represented by the authors.

OASFAA welcomes all views and invites submissions of articles, essays, photographs, or information of general interest to all members. Submissions should be brief and may be edited. It may not be possible to publish all articles submitted. Email items for publication to: [smshogren@gmail.com](mailto:smshogren@gmail.com)

## Editorial Board

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## Letter from the Editor

by Sue Shogren, formerly with NELA Services

You may have noticed from my by-line that my role changed recently. My time with NELA Services drew to a close on September 3, 2010. This was a reluctant parting, for both parties, but necessary. I can say that I have never worked with a more conscientious and forward-thinking team than the staff at NELA – and my training team, in particular. I'll be watching closely as they chart a new course for the future.

Be sure to check out the "Member News" section to find out what your OASFAA colleagues are up to. In particular, note that Nancy Hanscom was honored for her volunteer work managing the Dirloan2 listserv, which she describes more thoroughly in her article. Congratulations, Nancy!

In this summer issue, you'll find news about the next Annual Conference, as well as some upcoming volunteer opportunities to consider. You'll also find profiles of two fellow members that I know you'll find interesting. In the expression of their commitment and enthusiasm, we find good reason to be optimistic about the future of our profession and our association!

Keep sending in your news! Publication of the fall issue is scheduled for October 2010, so we're looking for your contributions by **September 30, 2010**.

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## Welcome, New Members!

**Michele Burton**, Tillamook Bay Community College

**Lori Ellis**, Oregon Student Assistance Commission

**Wayne Fanno**, Oregon Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development

**Cheryl Foster-Hunt**, USA Group Guarantee Services

**Shanna Hancock**, Central Oregon Community College

**Lindsay Heneage**, Everest College

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**Delores Pruett**, Portland Community College

**Douglas Severs**, Oregon State University

**Jessica Shriver**, Rogue Community College

**Jessica Skinner**, Rogue Community College

**Sally Tracy**, ELM Resources

**Sheryl Vanselow**, Tillamook Bay Community College

**Sara Viemeister**, Columbia Gorge Community College

**Molly Walsh**, University of Portland

**Linda Yang**, Art Institute of Portland

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## Member News

**Shamra Clark** left the University of Oregon to join the Ford Family Foundation as their new Scholarship Advisor.

**Nancy Hanscom**, University of Oregon, was honored in June by the National Direct Student Loan Coalition with an "Appreciation Award for Outstanding Service to the Colleagues in the Direct Loan Program."

**Jennifer Knight** became Director of Student Financial Services and Financial Aid at Warner Pacific College, as of August 2010. Previously, Jennifer worked for EdFund, and in the financial aid offices at Western Oregon University and Oregon State University.

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# OASFAA Annual Conference 2011

by Ryan West, Western Oregon University

Planning for the 2011 OASFAA conference is under way and the conference committee is happy to report that much progress has already been made in planning a powerhouse conference that is a must-attend event. We are excited to provide a brief update and hope that you'll make plans to attend.

As a result of OASFAA members' preferences on a survey several years ago, this will be the first conference to be held on a Wednesday through Friday (instead of Sunday through Tuesday). The dates are **Wednesday, February 2, 2011 through Friday, February 4, 2011**. The conference is returning to **Salishan Lodge and Golf Resort in Gleneden Beach** this year. While the agenda is still being determined, the conference likely will start around 11:30 a.m. on Wednesday with earlier meetings and sessions for newcomers and the OASFAA Executive Council. The conference will wrap up prior to lunch on Friday.

To help plan for your office training budget, please note that the early-bird conference rate will be \$210. This represents a \$30 increase in the rate from the past few years and reflects the reality that our association has seen a decline in donations from vendors who subsidized our conference activities heavily for years.

As an association, we continue to explore avenues to grow gift revenue and keep our costs low. The conference fee includes access to all the great sessions and federal updates and includes 2 breakfasts, 2 lunches and 1 dinner and a great setting— still a good value.

We will provide more information soon about room reservations, but our contracted rate with Salishan gives us a rate of \$99 (plus approximately 10% tax) for a traditional room with single or double occupancy. Special rates are also available for deluxe and premier rooms and suites. Additionally, Salishan will honor our group rates through the weekend following the conference should you want to stay and relax for a couple extra nights at a great rate!

If you have ideas about what you would like to see at the 2011 conference or have questions or concerns about the conference, please feel free to contact the conference co-chairs, Michelle Holdway ([mholdway@uoregon.edu](mailto:mholdway@uoregon.edu)) or Ryan West ([westr@wou.edu](mailto:westr@wou.edu)).

Save the date now and we'll look forward to seeing you in February 2011!

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## Member Article: Volunteer Goes to Washington

by Nancy Hanscom, University of Oregon and list owner of Dirloan2



The National Direct Student Loan Coalition (NDSLCL) is comprised of schools dedicated to assisting colleagues transitioning to Direct Lending and to the continuous improvement and strengthening of the Direct Loan program. Its members are financial aid professionals working at participating institutions. One of the many tools available to members of the coalition is an e-mail listserv which has been hosted by the University of Oregon since the mid-1990's. I have managed the NDSLCL Listserv as a volunteer since 1999.

Due to my volunteer management of the NDSLCL Listserv, I was recently invited to Washington D.C., as a guest of the National Direct Student Loan Coalition (NDSL) to attend the Executive Council Meeting. Here is a link to their website: <http://directstudentloancoalition.org/> The three-day trip in June consisted of a meeting of the executive council, meetings with the Federal Student Aid staff, and a meeting with U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, which included Robert Shireman, Martha Kantor and James Kvaal. I was able to participate and to express an appreciation of the increases in the Pell Grant program.

Personal highlights of my trip included getting to meet one of the early supporters of the Direct Loan Program, Coalition Advisor Tom Butts. As the listserv manager, I have often seen his contributions to the list over the years. He frequently has provided excellent Direct Loan information and has been a valuable contributor and helpful resource for questions posed by other members. In addition, I was able to participate in meetings with the Federal Student Aid Staff. I was very impressed with the respectful relationship that the Executive Council has with the Federal Student Aid Staff. The staff listened carefully to the issues that the Coalition Executive Council brought to their attention.

On my last day, just before leaving to fly home, I was surprised and humbled to receive an "Appreciation Award for Outstanding Service to the Colleagues in the Direct Loan Program." I was honored by the recognition of my service and very appreciative because these were people that I had only met online and they wished to recognize me for the work I do at the UO, managing the "Dirloan2" listserv.

*Editor's Note: Nancy wrote a similar article for the WASFAA 2010 Summer Newsletter.*

## VP Report: Public 4-Year Schools

by Josh Puhn, University of Oregon



Summertime and the living is easy. Wait a tic, that's not it at all.

This summer has been fast and furious and shows no sign of slowing. There are a million things to do for fall term and that doesn't include all of changes to the Pell that impacts summer term.

We also have an OASFAA member on the move: Shamra "Bohemian FAFSA-dy" Clark is leaving the University of Oregon for a wonderful opportunity as the new Scholarship Advisor with the Ford Family Foundation. Luckily for us, Shamra hopes to remain involved in OASFAA in her new position.

As we continue to ready ourselves for fall term, always feel free to contact me with any questions, concerns, suggestions, etc., regarding our segment or OASFAA.

I am here for you and can be reached at [jpuhn@uoregon.edu](mailto:jpuhn@uoregon.edu).

## Volunteer Opportunity: Portland National College Fair

by Julia Reisinger, Portland Community College

As a kick-off to the college admissions and financial aid process, the Portland National College Fair returns to the Oregon Convention Center on **Friday and Saturday, November 12 and 13, 2010**.

The fair hosts over 250 colleges and universities from across the country and includes college admissions personnel and high school counselors giving advice on where to look and how to apply.

The fair includes presentations on how to apply for financial aid and how to search for and apply for scholarships. There is also a table set up in the middle of the fair for students to stop and ask specific questions on how to apply for financial aid, when to apply and what types of aid are available.

The fair has been a traditional way for juniors and seniors to begin the process of learning how to apply for financial aid at the same time they look for colleges. In the past, many OASFAA members volunteered to both staff the financial aid table and also give group presentations to students and their parents on the financial aid process.

If you are interested in volunteering for the college fair, please contact Julia Reisinger at [jreising@pcc.edu](mailto:jreising@pcc.edu).

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## Volunteer Opportunity: College Goal Oregon 2011

by Lori Ellis, Oregon Student Assistance Commission

The Oregon Student Assistance Commission (OSAC) is gearing up for College Goal Oregon (CGO) in January 2011. The CGO site event helps prospective college students and their parents complete the FAFSA.

Sites have indicated they prefer to choose a Saturday in January that works best for their sites and their communities, so College Goal Oregon 2011 events will take place on **January 15, January 22, and January 29, 2011**. Visit [www.CollegeGoalOregon.org](http://www.CollegeGoalOregon.org) to see the locations for each of the three dates. The event takes place at more than 25 sites in Oregon, and OSAC is mailing agreements to sites to indicate which one of three dates they will host the event and to start the planning process. To view last year's sites and for more information visit [www.CollegeGoalOregon.org](http://www.CollegeGoalOregon.org). If you would like information about becoming a site or volunteering at an event, contact Lori Ellis at 541.687.7471 or [lorianne.m.ellis@state.or.us](mailto:lorianne.m.ellis@state.or.us).

For 2010, OSAC initiated FAFSA Friday Webinars with great success. A special thanks to Leslie Limper from Reed College and Mike Johnson from Pacific University for being our financial aid experts during our FAFSA Friday webinars. OSAC hosted five FAFSA Friday webinars during the 2009-10 school year. These free online training webinars helped college-bound students and parents complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. Due to increased participation and demand, OSAC will continue holding FAFSA Friday webinars throughout the summer. Dates are posted online at [www.CollegeGoalOregon.org](http://www.CollegeGoalOregon.org).

College Goal Oregon is part of the national College Goal Sunday program to help students access millions of available financial aid dollars. In 2009, over 2,000 Oregon families participated in College Goal Oregon at 25 sites. The event partners with the Oregon Student Assistance Commission, NELA Center for Student Learning, OASFAA, YMCA, and receives support from The Lumina Foundation for Education.



## Member Profile: Molly Walsh

**Molly Walsh** worked as a Work-Study student in the University of Portland Financial Aid Office for three years before joining the staff as Financial Aid Coordinator. Molly helps manage the front office, coordinates student workers and assists with parents and students as needed. She also helps with loan preparation and origination and assists counselors with various projects.

*How long have you been in Financial Aid?*

I started in the Office of Financial Aid at the University of Portland in the spring of 2007 as a student worker. After graduating in May 2010, I was hired on as a permanent staff member.

*How did you get started in Financial Aid?*

I started in Financial Aid as a student worker about three years ago. Working with students and parents, as well as learning new things all the time, kept me coming back every semester.

*What has your involvement been with OASFAA so far?*

I have not had involvement with OASFAA yet. Being a full time student, graduating, and now starting a new job, has really taken over the little time that I had in the past. I hope to get more involved once I am settled in at the University of Portland.

*What is the most rewarding part of your job?*

I love helping a parent or student on the phone and walking them through the process of applying or filling out documents. The feeling is great when you hang up and know that they are now starting to understand the financial aid world.

*What case/student will you be most likely to remember for the rest of your life?*

Last year, I had a mom come in to our counter asking for help and

explanations of her two sons' accounts. I walked her through the award letters, verification process and her sons' tuition bills, which took an extended period of time as English was not her first language. Whenever she needed something after that she would come in and wait, sometimes quite a while, until I was available to help her and answer her questions. The two of us formed a bond as we struggled to communicate and clarify everything that she needed to know to put her



sons through school. When she walked away for the final time, I felt wonderful to know that I had answered all of her questions and that she had actually understood.

*What is the most difficult aspect of your job?*

The most difficult aspect of my job is working with parents or students who come in on the defensive. Getting them to realize that we are really working for their benefit is sometimes a challenge.

*How do you cope with stress on the job?*

Stepping back and taking a moment to catch my breath has always been a good way to de-stress from a situation. We also have a lot of food days in the office, which is a good way to keep everyone's stress levels down.

*Who has been the biggest influence/mentor on your career?*

All the members of my office have had a significant impact on my career choice. Seeing the counselors, directors and coordinators interact with students on a daily basis has made me realize how much I want to be a part of the financial aid world.

*What is/was your favorite volunteer experience?*

I worked at the Oregon Historical Society for a time in the Museum Gift Store. Not really aid-related, but I loved interacting with customers on a daily basis.

*What do you do when you are not working?*

When not working, I love to explore the Portland area, ski, paint, read or knit.

*What do you like about living in Oregon?*

The Pacific Northwest is a beautiful place to live and explore. I love that there are so many things to do outside at all different times of the year. Portland has a great selection of parks, hiking, markets, funky shops, restaurants and amenities that make it a wonderful place to live and explore.

*What is the most unusual place that you have traveled?*

When I was younger, I spent most summers on a boat in the middle of Desolation Sound in Canada. It is a gorgeous place that truly looks untouched by humans. All food and resources are flown or boated in.

*What is your favorite restaurant?*

I don't have a favorite restaurant, but I love trying anything new or different.

*What was the last book you read?*

"Animal, Vegetable, Miracle" by Barbara Kingsolver.

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## Member Profile: Shamra Clark

**Shamra Clark**, formerly with the office of Financial Aid and Scholarships at the University of Oregon, recently joined the Ford Family Foundation as their new Scholarship Advisor. Shamra began volunteering with OASFAA soon after arriving in Oregon.

*How long have you been in Financial Aid?*

I have worked in Financial Aid for 2 years this past July. I transitioned from being a Financial Aid Counselor at the University of Oregon to Scholarship Advisor at The Ford Family Foundation in early July.

*How did you get started in Financial Aid?*

I worked in Admissions for 3 years in Michigan and applied for a financial aid counselor position at the University of Oregon. I was hired in the position and moved across country almost immediately.

*What has your involvement been with OASFAA so far?*

This upcoming OASFAA Conference will be my second year of being on the Conference Planning Committee. Last year I assisted in finding entertainment and drew the comic strip and created the crossword puzzle in the Conference agenda. I also assisted in the Newcomers Session. This year, I am heading up the Entertainment Committee and participating and providing some of the activities in the Conference agenda again.

*What is the most rewarding part of your job?*

I love helping students. I provide guidance and support to students who need a little bit more of a helping hand. From monitoring their grades each term, to providing support in times of crisis, I am here to help them find the resources to help them succeed.

*What case/student will you be most likely to remember for the rest of your life?*

I recently spoke with a young student who is taking care of his father who has brain cancer. He works 20 hours a week taking care of his father who has seizures up to three times a day making sure he is safe when a seizure strikes. He has an older brother and sister who are too busy to help out. He expressed to me that it was so hard to watch his father decline so much and that every time he seized, part of his will to live went with it. Even through the discomfort of seeing this every day, he enjoyed just



sitting spending time with his father. He wished his brother and sister could do the same and fears that they will regret not spending time with him. Even more impressive, is that this student gets high marks every term. I realized that in taking care of his father, he was missing out on the crazy life of a college student. He realizes that his father may have limited time left and spending time with his dad and doing well in school mattered more to him than a few years of social exploration. He was so wise beyond his years. I said to him, "M., you are a good kid. Do you know that?" He responded slowly and thoughtfully, "Thanks. It's good to hear that."

*What is the most difficult aspect of your job?*

The most difficult aspect of my job is explaining the financial aid process to students. Each college is different and has different packaging rules and policies. It's so vast and the answer usually is, "IT DEPENDS". Financial aid to students can be like rocket science.

*How do you cope with stress on the job?*

When there is stress, I usually sing with Pandora and make a hot cup of tea to soothe me. Scones, cake and chocolate are also temporary fixes, although not the healthiest.

*Who has been the biggest influence/mentor on your career?*

I have had three mentors in the financial aid. The first is Jim Gilmour. He was my supervisor at the UO for most of my time there. His sense of logic is almost infallible. He articulates his points in cases so eloquently and I strive to organize my ideas and communicate them in a manner that can be easily understood like he does. Nancy Hanscom has been my mentor and teammate in everyday financial aid life. Her memory and explanation of why we do things a certain way would help me to understand the process and logic behind things—not just doing without knowing why. My third mentor is Josh Puhn. Josh has a forward way to thinking about financial aid. He is constantly moving things from paper to online to make it easier for the office and for students. He has a vision that is exciting and prompts me to think about possibilities.

*What is/was your favorite volunteer experience?*

The OASFAA Conference.

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*What do you do when you are not working?*

I sing in the Eugene Opera and the Eugene Concert Choir and dabble in a bit of acting. Most of all, I like to ride my bicycle around Eugene singing at the top of my lungs just to make people laugh or smile.

*What do you like about living in Oregon?*

Being outdoors is new to me! Even more exciting is that I can live without heat and air conditioning! Another great thing is learning alternative natural approaches to food and medicine. Before coming to Oregon, I was a steak and potatoes kind of girl. Now I like tofu!!!

*What is the most unusual place that you have traveled?*

Truthfully, Eugene, Oregon is the most unusual place that I have travelled. I feel like I could wear a tutu and combat boots around town and no one would say anything to me. People don't tend to pass judgment. I can participate in an Opera and also go to a wild country fair. I have never been to a city which supported recycling so faithfully that people dig through trash to save some recyclable, reusable goods. It's very strange to me, but also beautiful.

*What is your favorite restaurant?*

Ta Ra Rin in Eugene. It has the most delicious Thai food.

*What was the last book you read?*

Dare I say it? The Twilight saga. To redeem myself, I am currently also reading "Eating Animals" by Jonathan Safran Foer.

*Who is your personal hero?*

When I think of "hero," I think of super-hero. Xena is my hero. She is tough, smart and knows that a woman can do anything a man can do.

*If you could change anything in our industry, what would it be?*

I would change financial aid salaries and make them much higher. After working in admissions for three years and generally getting paid more for a much easier position, I feel that financial aid counselors should get paid so much more. Financial aid is infinitely more complex and stressful. In fact, everyone in financial aid should get a \$10,000 raise right now.

*Do you have any advice for your fellow aid administrators?*

You should be asking lots of questions even if they seem really strange. I have been known to ask some doozies, such as: "How can someone have a negative AGI?" and "Why don't we include plastic surgery in the budget?" and "Doesn't anyone in admissions tell students they may have too many credits to get funding for the rest of their degree?"

*If you were not in financial aid, what would you be doing now?*

I would be lying on a grand piano, singing in a nightclub lounge in a red sparkly dress or going to college for a doctorate. They are both tempting.

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*Who is your personal hero?*

Don't really have one.

*If you could change anything in our industry, what would it be?*

I would like to see more financial aid for students in the middle of the spectrum. I believe that students who come from middle class backgrounds deserve financial help just as much as other students. These students are just above the cut-off for many federal aid programs but they need help beyond student loans. I wish that there were more that could be done for these students.

*Do you have any advice for your fellow financial aid administrators?*

Breathe...and just keep doing what you do.

*If you were not in financial aid, what would you be doing now?*

Working odd jobs trying to figure out what I would like to go to Grad School for.

## *OASFAA Executive Council*

*by President-elect Bert Logan, Lane Community College*

Nominations are now being accepted for the 2011-12 OASFAA Executive Council.

Positions to be elected:

- President-elect
- VP - Community College
- VP - Proprietary School
- VP - Public 4 Year
- VP - Private 4 Year
- Secretary
- Treasurer

Please send your nominations to Bert Logan ([loganb@lanec.edu](mailto:loganb@lanec.edu)), along with contact information for your candidate. You also may nominate yourself by contacting Bert at the above email address or by going to member services on the OASFAA website and clicking the volunteer form ([www.oasfaaonline.org/docs/forms/memVolunteer.html](http://www.oasfaaonline.org/docs/forms/memVolunteer.html)) to list "elective office" as your volunteer interest.

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**Bryce Majors** and **Heather Hall Lewis** were recently promoted from Counselors to Assistant Directors at the University of Portland.

**Pete Rooks**, Associate Director at the University of Portland, left the Financial Aid Office to join the University's School of Business as Executive Director of the Program for Leadership.

**Doug Severs** became Director of the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships at Oregon State University, effective May 5, 2010. He previously served as the Director of Financial Aid at Idaho State University and the University of Nebraska.

**Sue Shogren**, NELA Services, announced she will leave her position on September 3, 2010.

**Molly Walsh** joined the staff of the Financial Aid Office at the University of Portland, effective June 1.

**Rick Weems**, past OASFAA and WASFAA president, and most recently Associate Vice Chancellor of Enrollment Management at University of Alaska, Anchorage, took the position of Assistant Vice President for Enrollment at Southern Oregon University in Ashland, beginning July 19.

**Lakia Wilson**, formerly with Clark College in Vancouver, joined the University of Portland Financial Aid Office as Financial Aid Assistant.

**Melissa Wolfe** left the University of Portland in June to move to Colorado.

*If you or someone you know has received a promotion, taken a new job or experienced a significant life event, e-mail: [smsnogren@gmail.com](mailto:smsnogren@gmail.com).*

## On the OASFAA Calendar

Sept 30	Newsletter submissions due
Oct 28	Executive Council meeting
Dec 15	Newsletter submissions due
Dec 16	Executive Council meeting
Jan 12	Financial Aid 101
Feb 2	Annual Conference (3 days)
Mar 31	Newsletter submissions due

## On the Lighter Side



I just had a student who had questions on her dependency status ask me how she would go about becoming an orphan.

In an email we received recently, a student wrote: "I need to drop one of my classes, but in doing that I would only be at 9 credits. So without going to school full time will my financial aid be provoked?"

We got a chuckle out of that. Remember to never provoke your financial aid!

*Share your amusing or surprising financial aid anecdotes with people who understand. To protect the innocent, we will not publish the names of contributors or their institutions!*

*Simply email: [smsnogren@gmail.com](mailto:smsnogren@gmail.com)*

## In Closing...

"In general, **volunteering** is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services. Volunteering is generally considered an altruistic activity, intended to promote good or improve human quality of life, but people also volunteer for their own skill development, to meet others, to make contacts for possible employment, to have fun, and a variety of other reasons..."

*Source: [www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)*

