

Baby Boomers: Who Are They? & Why Should We Care?

- 77 Million Baby Boomers born between 1946 and 1964 (in 2008 are ages 44 - 62)
- Most educated and financially secure generation in history
- Volunteer at higher rates than past generations did at the same age
- Nearly 2/3 of Boomer non-volunteers want to get involved but don't know how
- Have been in workforce & have professional skills they want to share to make high level of impact





Great Expectations:
Boomers and the Future of Volunteering
VolunteerMatch User Research Study



Presented by: **MetLife Foundation**

How Are Boomer Volunteers Different from Senior Volunteers?

- More physical ability than previous generations; 4 of 5 expect to work past 65 -- 50 is the new 30!!
- View retirement very differently -- see second half of life as a source of social and individual renewal, not as a time to just rest and relax
- Think some of their most important contributions lie ahead ("patron saint" is Jimmy Carter)
- Not simply extending the years of working and volunteering -- looking to add deeper meaning
- Different perception of aging -- don't call us "Seniors," "Retirees," "Elderly" or "Older Adults!"

More About Boomers . . .

Because They Are:

- Activists →
- Consumers →
- Workers →

Boomers Expect:

- Opportunities that Inspire
- An Abundance of Volunteer Options
- Professionally Managed Volunteer Programs

Source: Reinventing Aging: Baby Boomers and Civic Engagement Harvard School of Public Health, 2004



Why Involve Volunteers in the Library?

- Enhance or Expand Services
- Gain Community Connections
- Specialized Skills
- New Energy & Ideas
- Develops a Group of Strong Library Supporters
- People Who are Engaged Give More



Long Overdue: A Fresh Look at Public Attitudes About Libraries in the 21st Century

- Americans who are active in the community and vote regularly are more likely to have a library card and favor taxes to support libraries.
- These are also the people that local politicians are most likely to listen to.
- However, these highly engaged citizens are generally unaware of funding issues that threaten library services.

Source: A Report by Public Agenda supported by Americans for Libraries Council and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, 2006

Re-Think & Re-Imagine

- “To attract Baby Boomers to volunteering, experts on aging agree that nonprofit groups and others must boldly rethink the types of opportunities they offer -- to ‘re-imagine’ roles for older American volunteers that cater to Boomers’ skills and desire to make their mark in their own way. This is vitally important to ensuring that the potential of this vast resource is tapped to its fullest.”--

Keeping Baby Boomers Volunteering: A Research Brief on Volunteer Retention and Turnover, Corporation for National & Community Service, 2007

Transforming Life After 50 Library Assessments

“Many boomers are interested in putting their advanced and varied skills to use as community volunteers. However there seems to be a disconnect between their intent to volunteer and their actual participation because they do not find the opportunities they want.”

Ability to Adapt

“The failure of organizations to **respond to new trends** in volunteerism will not only **prevent them from accessing the time and skills** of highly motivated and talented volunteers, but will also **limit their fundraising capabilities.**”

Source: Reinventing Aging: Baby Boomers and Civic Engagement Harvard School of Public Health, 2004

Get Involved: Powered by Your Library

- Potential partnership with VolunteerMatch on a special library recruitment portal
- Training on how to create non-traditional volunteer jobs and how to re-tool volunteer programs
- Libraries as hubs for civic engagement.








