

**The International Journal of Volunteer Administration (IJOVA)  
in the Department of 4-H Youth Development and Family and Consumer Sciences  
at North Carolina State University**

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**Historical Background**

The Association for Volunteer Administration (AVA) is an international professional association with members that are engaged in the management of volunteers in non-profit, governmental, school based, quasi non-profit, and similar organizations. The organization has existed since its formal charter in 1961 as "The American Association of Volunteer Services Coordinators" (AAVSC), adopting its current name in 1979. The current mission of AVA is to "advance volunteerism and enhance quality of life locally and globally by engaging leaders of volunteers through professional development, networking, and quality products and services." As of January 1, 2006, AVA had approximately 2,100 paid members, with approximately 90% from the United States, 10% from Canada, and a few from other nations.

Over the years, thousands of individuals and organizations benefited significantly from AVA's major programs and services, including (but not limited to) the Certified Volunteer Manager certification program; The Journal of Volunteer Administration (JOVA); quarterly Member Briefings; the CyberVPM on-line list serve and chat room; and the Volunteer Management magazine. As well, the annual International Conference on Volunteer Administration brought the best experts and instructors in the volunteer administration profession together to educate individuals managing volunteers on all levels of experience, resulting in new friendships, camaraderie, and the renewal of old friendships.

**Recent Situation**

AVA has recently experienced a tremendously difficult period. According to an open letter e-mailed to the AVA membership on February 23 by Ellen Didimamoff, AVA Board President:

*I am truly saddened to inform you that AVA is in the process of closing its doors on March 1, 2006 because there are no funds to continue operating. Starting in June 2005 the board persistently asked about the financial status of the organization. The board never really was given a true picture of AVA's financial situation until January 2006 when it learned that AVA was \$300,000 in debt. . . . On February 3 the board, staff, and three pro bono attorneys met via teleconference to discuss options for the future of AVA, including bankruptcy and dissolution. The decision was a difficult and emotional one for the board to make. . . . The professional credentialing program (CVA) and The Journal of Volunteer Administration, both copyrighted, will have temporary "homes" for now-places where their credibility and integrity will be preserved. Individuals who have been committed to these programs are planning to continue in their roles. Unfortunately, this past weekend AVA's dear colleague Mary Merrill, journal editor, passed away. Those involved in the transfer of the journal to "a new home" are also committed to carrying on her work.*

While AVA has provided a variety of products and services to both members and volunteer administration professionals at-large, one premier product and service is The Journal of Volunteer Administration (JOVA). AVA assumed the publications of The JOVA in 1982, and the 2005 volume was number 23 (XXIII). Four issues of The JOVA are published per each volume. During 2005, approximately 42% of the organization's total members are paid JOVA subscribers (i.e., 882 subscriptions) at an annual subscription rate of \$65. The former seven-year editor of The JOVA (Mary Merrill, a private consultant in volunteer/leadership development who resided in Ohio) died very unexpectedly in February. Dr. R. Dale Safrit, Associate Professor and Extension Specialist in the Department of 4-H Youth Development at North Carolina State University (NCSU) in Raleigh, served as the JOVA Associate Editor since 1998, and was been asked to assume the Editorship of The JOVA by the AVA Board President, the Board Vice-president for Professional Development, and the acting AVA Executive Director.

In light of the Board's decision to dissolve AVA as of April 22, Mary Merrill had begun investigating transferring The JOVA to another non-profit organization (i.e., 501c3 organization) that would serve as its new "home." According to the pro bono attorneys for AVA, The JOVA could be transferred legally to another "like organization" (i.e. another 501(c)3 ). This transfer concept had been approved by the AVA Board and acting Executive Director with advice from the organization's pro bono attorneys. In the days immediately preceding her untimely death, Mary Merrill had been engaged in preliminary conversations with a faculty member and JOVA editorial reviewer at The Ohio State University to possibly transfer The JOVA to the University. However, Ohio State had decided not to pursue the opportunity, so as of March 1, 2006, The JOVA was still without an organizational home.

### **Legal Transfer of The JOVA to NC State University**

The new Editor worked with both the AVA Board and NC State University attorneys to officially transfer The JOVA to North Carolina State University and specifically the Department of 4-H Youth Development. The transfer was effective as of April 18, 2006.

Under its land-grant university charter, NCSU qualifies as a 501(c)3 organization. This official and legal transfer is especially appropriate with respect to:

- NCSU's current emphasis upon University engagement and outreach, seeking to extend the resources of its Raleigh campus to better serve the citizens and communities of North Carolina, the United States, and beyond;
- Both the historical and contemporary foci of North Carolina Cooperative Extension as one of the country's largest volunteer-based community education and development organizations;
- The volunteer development focus of the NC 4-H program, that engages more than 43,000 teen and adult volunteers annually to deliver educational programs throughout the state;
- As of July 1, 2006, the Department of 4-H Youth Development will officially be merged with the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences, resulting in even larger faculty and staff numbers working with community-based volunteers; and
- Dr. R. Dale Safrit's current professional faculty responsibilities as a tenured full professor in teaching, research, and service as focused upon continuing professional education (i.e., professional development) in nonprofit organizations, and specifically 4-H youth development programs.

Under the transfer, NCSU and the Department of 4-H Youth Development obtained:

- the copyrighted name of The JOVA, including all rights and privileges pertaining thereto,
- all organizational files and archives related to The JOVA,

- all inventories of printed copies of past issues,
- the AVA membership list, and
- The JOVA subscription list.

Additionally, AVA verified that NCSU and the Department would not to be held liable for any financial debts or liens related to either the AVA organization or The JOVA incurred before April 22, 2006.

### **The International Journal of Volunteer Administration**

As a result of the April 18 transfer, Dr. R. Dale Safrit now serves as Editor for The JOVA, and has appointed Dr. Ryan Schmiesing (The Ohio State University) as Associate Editor. Dr. Schmiesing has served as a JOVA manuscript reviewer for more than seven years. Both Drs. Safrit's and Schmiesing's time devoted to their editorship for The JOVA are contributed as in-kind by their respective host university. Dr. Safrit contracts at an hourly rate for both a copy editor and layout editor.

As of July 1, 2006, The JOVA will be renamed The *International* Journal of Volunteer Administration (IJOVA) and move immediately to an on-line publication format only. Four (4) issues of Volume XXIV will be published in 2006-2007 with the following targeted posting dates and respective foci: July 1, 2006 (Vol. XXIV, No. 1): Trends and Transitions; October 1, 2006 (Vol. XXIV, No. 2): Volunteerism and Health Care; January 1, 2007 (Vol. XXIV, No. 3): Volunteerism and the Other Sectors; and April 1, 2007 (Vol. XXIV, No. 4): Volunteerism and Holistic Community Development. The Department of 4-H Youth Development will develop and host a web site for The JOVA to which the four issues of Vol. XXIV will be posted for general access to any reader with access to the Internet. The four 2006-2007 issues will also serve to market The IJOVA to future paid subscribers.

Financial support for The IJOVA's current transition publication year of 2006-2007 is graciously being provided through a targeted gift to the North Carolina 4-H Development Fund by IMPACT: A Fund for Change through Volunteerism (i.e., The Volunteer IMPACT Fund, to which The UPS Foundation is a lead contributor.) Thus, all four issues of Volume XXIV will be public domain, available free of charge to anyone with Web accessibility. Beginning in 2007, The IJOVA will move to a subscription only publication. Proposed subscription rates as of July 1, 2007 would be an individual subscription rate of \$40; and prorated organizational subscriptions per member of \$30 for 101-200 members, \$20 for 201-500 members, \$10 for 501-1500 members, and \$5 for more than 1500 members. Dr. Safrit has already had very positive conversations with the executive directors of several large volunteer-based associations and non-profit organizations regarding future organizational subscriptions for the groups' members.