On-Line Tools to Assist with Volunteer Management

Facebook – www.facebook.com (mobile apps available for multiple phone and tablet devices)
The Event function in Facebook can be used to invite volunteers to participate in an activity, track who plans to participate, and easily communicate with volunteers who have signed up. Facebook's Group function lets the event organizer manage a group of volunteers for a one-time event or an ongoing volunteer opportunity, and it allows volunteers to discuss and plan upcoming activities and get notifications of updates. Advantages of Facebook include: it is free; many chapters already use Facebook to communicate with members and the public; and it facilitates recruitment of new volunteers by relying on the network of friends of current members and volunteers. Facebook is not a good option to maintain other information about volunteers, such as their addresses and phone numbers or number of volunteer hours worked. It also doesn't allow volunteers to sign up for specific time slots for an event in the way SignUpGenius does.

SignUpGenius – www.signupgenius.com (mobile apps available for multiple phone and tablet devices)
SignUpGenius is designed for recruiting and managing volunteers for specific events or activities. In a few steps, event organizers can create an event Web page and identify specific tasks and time slots for which volunteers can sign up. One of the advantages of this tool is volunteers can easily understand the range of tasks or activities available to them and can sign up at times that are most convenient for them. This dramatically simplifies the process of managing volunteers because organizers don't have to attempt to assign volunteers to certain activities or develop complex schedules to ensure activities are covered by volunteers over multiple hours – the volunteers effectively manage that process. SignUpGenius also allows organizers to communicate (via email) with people who have agreed to volunteer, including with automatic reminders. A disadvantage of using SignUpGenius is volunteers have to take multiple steps to change the tasks and/or times for which they initially signed up.

EventBrite – www.eventbrite.com (mobile app available for multiple phone and tablet devices)
EventBrite is another tool to register or volunteer for events. It is simple for organizers and volunteers to use and collects basic information, including names, email addresses, and number of participants. Organizers can view a list of attendees and check-in volunteers using a smartphone. Advantages of this tool include ease of use and the ability to accept registration fees or other payments online. (Note: EventBrite receives a percentage of any fee for payment processing.) On the other hand, EventBrite does not allow organizers to customize the information they collect (such as age of children) and it can be cumbersome for attendees to change or cancel registrations.

SurveyMonkey – www.surveymonkey.com (mobile app for Apple devices only – iPad, iPhone, iPod)
SurveyMonkey is an option for creating and distributing online surveys to chapter members, volunteers, or the public. The most basic version is free while multiple other versions with more capability have subscription fees. SurveyMonkey can be used to gauge interest in hosting new activities, gather opinions on chapter priorities, or to get feedback on a past event. With this tool, it is simple and relatively quick to develop and send out basic surveys and view responses (there are no statistics involved and responses are listed in summary form for each question). However, the free version limits surveys to 10 questions and some of the more helpful features for analyzing and presenting results, such as downloading results into an Excel spreadsheet or displaying graphs in PDF format, are only available in the paid versions.