

[Databases selected:](#) ProQuest Newspapers, ProQuest Research Library**For those with big hearts and tight schedules ; Web sites offer one-time volunteer opportunities; [Chicago Final Edition]***David King, Special to the Tribune. Chicago Tribune. Chicago, Ill.: Dec 11, 2005. pg. 4*

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Abstract (Document Summary)

Other information: Through 1-800-Volunteer.org, chicagovolunteer.net has more than 4,000 volunteer opportunities with nearly 600 non-profit organizations, public educational institutions and government agencies. Chicagovolunteer.net targets volunteers of all ages, and the nature of the orientation required before a given project depends on the organization responsible for that event. (Note: Chicagovolunteer.net offers both one-time and recurring volunteer opportunities.)

Full Text (1094 words)*(Copyright 2005 by the Chicago Tribune)*

QUALITIES OF LIFE.

While you're busy clicking away on those shopping sites, take a moment to check out some Web sites that make it easy to connect with one-time volunteer opportunities.

Illinois and neighboring states have one of the highest regional rates of volunteering in the country, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. But people who have volunteered in the past cite lack of time as the main reason for not doing even more.

"I think lately more people are beginning to do episodic, or one- time, volunteer projects," said Annette Sommer, volunteer services coordinator for the Volunteer Center of Northwest Suburban Chicago. "They still feel that they want to be able to help out," despite working longer hours and wanting to spend time with family.

For those who want to volunteer without making a long-term time commitment, several Web sites can help. The following sites, some of which include opportunities with post-event socializing, all have databases of one-time volunteer events in the city and/or suburbs.

All of these sites allow you to sign up for an event online and are free to use.

Chicago Cares

www.chicagocares.org

Background: Founded in 1991, Chicago Cares has created almost every volunteer opportunity that it offers.

Interface: Users browse volunteer opportunities through a monthly calendar of events. A username and password are required to sign up for an event, and first-time volunteers must attend an orientation session either at the time of their first project or at the Chicago Cares offices, 300 W. Adams St.

Other information: The Chicago Cares site lists more than 100 events per month. It offers only hands-on volunteer opportunities, as opposed to administrative or fundraising ones, and includes events for young people and families.

Strengths: Though it requires no minimum time commitment, Chicago Cares is best suited to those who are devoted to volunteering, because the organization wants to establish a personal connection with each volunteer. The site's interface will appeal to people who want to search for events by day of the month.

Chicagovolunteer.net

www.chicagovolunteer.net

Background: The chicagovolunteer.net site went live in 2001 and recently pooled its volunteer listings with those of 1-800-Volunteer.org, a national site. In effect, chicagovolunteer.net acts a portal site for 1-800-Volunteer.org.

Interface: A basic search allows you to select a category of event and choose a geographical area; an advanced search adds criteria such as keyword, appropriateness for families or young people and accessibility to public transportation. To sign up, you must register for an account, with which you can keep track of your recent and upcoming events.

Other information: Through 1-800-Volunteer.org, chicagovolunteer.net has more than 4,000 volunteer opportunities with nearly 600 non-profit organizations, public educational institutions and government agencies. [Chicagovolunteer.net](http://chicagovolunteer.net) targets volunteers of all ages, and the nature of the orientation required before a given project depends on the organization responsible for that event. (Note: [Chicagovolunteer.net](http://chicagovolunteer.net) offers both one-time and recurring volunteer opportunities.)

Strengths: You'll find extensive search criteria and comprehensive account features, including the ability to track the number of hours you've volunteered and to upload a resume for organizations to see. Perhaps to the service's credit, the parent organization of chicagovolunteer.net, the Volunteer Center of the Community Resource Network, has served the Chicago area for more than 60 years.

One Brick

(www.onebrick.org)

Background: The One Brick site has grown from serving San Francisco to include chapters for Chicago and New York.

Interface: The One Brick site does not require a username or password to see or sign up for events. You choose an opportunity from a monthly calendar and then see information about the event and the organization, as well as a map showing the meeting place. To sign up, you give only your name and e-mail address.

Other information: To date, One Brick has had volunteer opportunities with more than 50 organizations in the Chicago area. Events generally last two to four hours, and volunteers go to a nearby cafe or restaurant afterward to socialize. Volunteers are mostly from 24 to 37 years old and are divided about equally between the sexes. No orientation is required for One Brick events.

Strengths: One Brick seems best suited to adults who want to choose an event by date and for whom the social aspect of volunteering is important.

Social and Service Chicago

(www.saschicago.org)

Background: Itself a non-profit organization, Social and Service Chicago, or SASC, is a smaller-scale service that began in 2002 and specifically targets unmarried people in their 20s and 30s.

Interface: The SASC Web site is being updated. Currently, you can choose events by day of the month and must have a username and password to sign up to volunteer. Account holders also can post profiles and communicate with one another through a message board. The new version of the site will allow members to add pictures to their profiles and post their own volunteer opportunities for others to see.

Other information: For all of its events, SASC tries to maintain an equal balance of male and female volunteers. At the end of the event, those who are interested usually go for something to eat or drink.

Strengths: Like One Brick, SASC should interest adults who want to select an event by date and want to get to know fellow volunteers.

VolunteerMatch

(www.volunteermatch.org)

Background information: A national site, VolunteerMatch has served as a clearinghouse for volunteer opportunities since 1998.

Interface: A basic search for events covers area of interest and geographical area; an advanced search includes a keyword, age group and whether you're volunteering as a group. First-time users can browse opportunities but must sign up for an account to register to volunteer. Account holders can upload a resume of volunteer experiences for organizations to see.

(Note: As with [Chicagovolunteer.net](http://chicagovolunteer.net), VolunteerMatch offers one-time and recurring events alike.)

Other information: For the Chicago area, the site currently has more than 1,000 volunteer opportunities. The nature of orientation-- if it's required--depends on a given event, and some projects, such as those that involve working with children or in a shelter, require a background check.

Strengths: VolunteerMatch has an easy-to-use search interface and extensive listings. The ability to upload a resume should appeal to those more devoted to volunteering.

[Illustration]

PHOTOS 2; Caption: PHOTO: At a Chicago Cares event in 2003, volunteers Carolyn Caponigriberk and Jeff Berk painted rooms at Altgeld Elementary School. Chicago Cares offers only hands-on volunteer opportunities and includes events for young people and families. Photo for the Tribune by Margo Cohn. PHOTO (color): Searchable Web sites make finding one-time opportunities to help your fellow man, woman and child easier than ever.

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