

Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport September 2021 Travelers Aid Activity Report

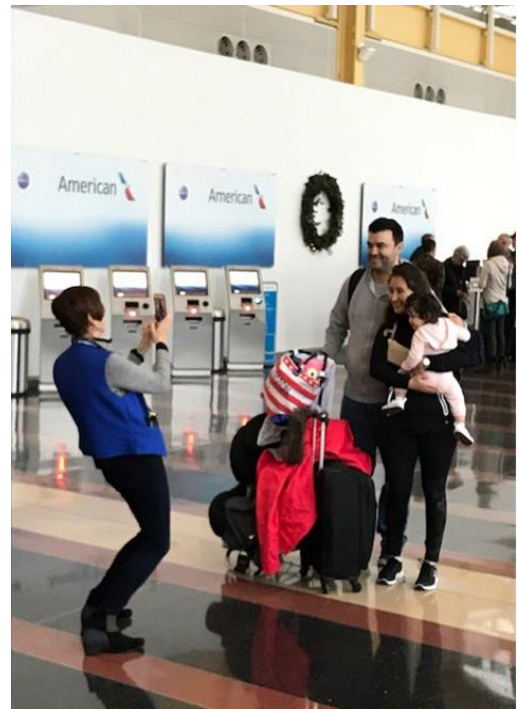
Desk	Terminal A	Info B	Info C	Bag N	Bag S	Mobile Guides	TOTALS
Customer Assists	4,027	11,462	5,825	3,876	2,331	454	27,975
Volunteer Hours	238.5	440.5	390.5	175.5	91.5	22.75	1,359.25

Volunteer Spotlight



Pender McCarter, a longtime member of the National Press Club, recently submitted four photos for a members’ photography exhibit. These pictures included one of his Travelers Aid volunteer partner, **Rosemary Schwartzbard**, helping passengers at Reagan National. As you can see she was tremendously enthusiastic about interacting with this family, stepping in as a photographer as well!

Pender retired after a 45-year career in education, journalism, and public relations. His career included more than 30 years with IEEE, the world’s largest professional association for the advancement of technology. Pender spearheaded two United Nations forums promoting high-tech opportunities for young females in both developing and developed countries. He arranged a Press Club luncheon for Neil Armstrong’s presentation of the “Greatest Engineering Achievements of the 20th Century.” Pender also set up a Press Club preview of “Codebreaker,” a film biography on Alan Turing. He has taught PR writing at Howard University and addressed the LGBT Class of 2000 at Duke University. Pender has been a volunteer for 8.5 years and this summer he gave us a supportive boost by posting a volunteer recruitment ad on his Dupont Circle’s community list serve.



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Assistance Stories

Volunteer **Jeanette Clay** received a phone call at the Info B desk from a frantic daughter whose 73-year-old, non-English speaking, mother was dropped off for her Delta flight to Atlanta. The flight was delayed due to weather which would cause her to miss the connecting flight. Her mother was not traveling with a cell phone and the daughter was concerned that Mom wouldn't know what to do and would be stranded. Jeanette went to the Delta's ticketing counter and asked them to call the gate and have the mother call her daughter for instructions for a rebooked flight. The daughter called again to report the flight was now cancelled so she arranged to pick her mother up from the airport. Jeanette called the Baggage South desk where volunteer **Beronica Salas** was working and she in turn made an airport-wide page in Spanish asking the mother and daughter to meet at Info B. When neither woman appeared at the desk, Jeanette called the daughter to ask her ETA. The daughter had already arrived and had Mom with her. The mother had borrowed a cell phone at the gate and made the arrangements herself. Perhaps this daughter needed a bit more faith in Mom's ingenuity!

A woman stopped by the Info B desk and asked volunteer **Ken Lane** for assistance. She was headed to JFK for a connection to her international flight and discovered she needed to submit a form to Delta before traveling. The woman was very close to her departure time. She told Ken the form was in her personal email, but he could not access it at the desk computer. Instead, Ken got the web site address and printed the form for her. It was in French, and it appeared to be a Health Department clearance form which the woman was able to fill out by hand. She quickly headed back upstairs to the ticket counter to complete the check-in process.

While working at the Info C desk, volunteer **Will O'Bryan** was approached by a G-2 employee who had picked up an arriving Miami passenger needing wheelchair service. The passenger did not speak English and her cell phone had died. Though communication was difficult, Will discovered that the woman was supposed to be picked up, but no one had arrived yet. He made both an audio and visual page, called his husband for help with translating, and then went outside on the arrivals level with a handmade sign. Will then utilized his own phone charger to charge the passenger's cell phone. Will was able to make a WhatsApp call on the woman's phone to a family member who in turn made the arrangements for her to be picked up.

Staff was asked a question on September 2nd at Info C that was new to all of us. A woman stopped by and said her husband was just buried at Arlington National Cemetery. She now had a small velvet bag that contained the spent shells from the 21-gun salute, and she wondered if she could get take them through the security checkpoint. It was suggested that she inform the TSA officers before going through the line so they could be aware and provide further instructions.

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Ed McGee was visited at the Info C desk early on a Saturday morning by two employees from the organization, G-2. This group provides wheelchair and queuing services for both American Airlines and Southwest. One of the men lost his wallet near gate 38 and the other was helping him search for it. Ed asked them a few questions and learned they had gone back to Gate 38 but did not find the wallet. He sent the two men to the AA baggage office's lost & found and placed a call to the non-emergency police to see if the item had been turned in to them. Twenty minutes later the two men returned and happily reported the wallet had been found and was indeed with the American Airlines baggage office personnel. They were very grateful for Ed's help.

A very excited woman came up to **Anne Fesmire** and **Staff** at the Info C desk on September 9th. She had just arrived on Delta from Atlanta to be a part of her brother-in-law's last flight as a pilot for American Airlines. Her husband, a pilot for Delta Airlines, was flying in with his brother on the AA flight to also be a part of the celebration. The plane was due in at 4:00pm at gate 36 with the expectation of a water cannon arch to honor the pilot's last flight. Since gate 36 can be seen perfectly from Info C it was recommended that she first view the arrival there before going out to the gate. Anne and Staff sent her upstairs to the AA ticket counter for a GAP, Gate Access Pass. The volunteer who followed Anne, **Ken Lowrie**, confirmed that the pilot did indeed receive the honor of the water arch later that afternoon. All involved thought this was a very poignant situation to share.

An airline agent brought **Denise Schossler** a very large set of architectural drawings that had been left by a passenger on the ticketing level. She immediately made a page, but no one responded. The company's name was on the documents, so Denise called them. The company's receptionist quickly contacted the project manager who was very anxious to get the drawings back. The firm arranged for a courier service to come to the airport, and with the help of **Staff**, the architectural plans were placed in the Lost & Found office. Denise checked in with this office the following day and was relieved to learn that the drawings had been successfully picked up.

An employee from the Brazilian embassy called Info C on behalf of her boss who had left his i-Pad on an American Airlines plane. **Michael Goodman** went down to the AA baggage office and found the item there. The AA lost & found personnel told Michael the assistant from the embassy was welcome to pick up the i-Pad if she had the owner's name and knew the password to open it. They even let Michael use their phone to call the embassy, so he was able to immediately report the good news.

A man came up to Info C and told **Phyllis Talbert** that his wife had left her cell phone in the car when he was dropping her off. He knew it was urgent to get it to her, so Phyllis took the phone and hurried out to the gate only to see the plane pushing back. Though Phyllis had given her usual "*ole college try*" there was nothing more she could do except bring the phone back to the traveler's husband.

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Saturday volunteers **Joe Amato** and **Peter Silvia** helped a man find his son's Apple Watch. The young man had traveled through the South Pier checkpoint the previous day and thought that was where the watch was lost. Joe took the father to this location and the TSOs (Transportation Security Officers) reported all the items from Friday were already at the TSA lost and found. Joe called the airport police who agreed to meet the father at the lost and found. The watch was there! Dad stopped back at the Info Desk to thank the volunteers and said everyone could not have been any nicer.

A gentleman stopped by Info C and left two Metro cards with instructions to give them to volunteers **Michael Goodman** and **Anmarie Emmett** "for their great service." The previous week they had helped this man and his wife find their way to the Metro with advice on how to best navigate the system. These generous travelers are the grandparents of Washington Football Team player # 94, Daron Payne. They came into town to watch their grandson play on the defensive line. Anmarie, a former Washington Redskins season ticket holder, was thrilled with this unexpected meet & greet!

A man, who had just picked up his great aunt, came back to the airport when they both realized she did not have her cell phone. Volunteer **Sandy Hershey** was working at the Info C desk and immediately headed out to gate 54 where the woman had arrived. No one there knew anything about a lost phone being turned in. Sandy next tried American Airlines customer service in the New North Concourse but again came up empty-handed. As a last resort she asked two nearby housekeepers and yes, they had found a cell phone! It was discovered near gate 54, and they tagged it and indeed had left it, at the AA customer service desk. Sandy went there with the two ladies, retrieved the phone, and brought it back to the very grateful nephew. A great example of going the extra mile!

We have 12 volunteer trainees in various stages of orientation. **Mark Moscato** reports that on her first day of training, **Barbara Sloan** helped him at Bag North with a Spanish speaking family. They came to the airport to meet their father who was arriving from Texas and had questions about his gate. Mark began to provide some rudimentary assistance using his high school Spanish when Barbara told him she was fluent in the language. She walked with the family upstairs and showed them exactly where they could wait to greet their father.

Another one of our new folks, **Lynn Jason**, was paired for her 2nd of 4 training sessions with veteran volunteer **Kate Madrick** on September 26th. She said, *"We had a productive session and helped a LOT of people. Kate is such a positive and welcoming personality and we 'clicked.' There is a lot left to learn, I am sure, but I felt confident with all I gleaned from the training materials and my core knowledge. I also spent a little time with Christine, (Christine Luong) and she is also a delight! So far from all I have met, the members of this team are truly outstanding! I am honored and grateful to have been selected to participate.*