



# SUVGOP

## *2019 MEMBER SURVEY*

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- *Who you are*
- *What you told us*
- *What we're doing next*

## *Key takeaways from the survey:*

- There is a high degree of interest in identifying winning strategies in Northern Virginia, and a deep interest in hearing from speakers on this topic.*
- There is a hunger to cultivate a stronger sense of GOP community in Northern Virginia.*
- There may be a substantial number of GOP supporters who would like to become more active in the party and are looking for a gateway in.*
- Attendees of SUVGOP events, such as potlucks, have expressed interest in tangible projects to take home to work on in their own time.*
- Seeing GOP organizations experimenting with social media, issue identification, communication, and other areas energizes and motivates activists.*

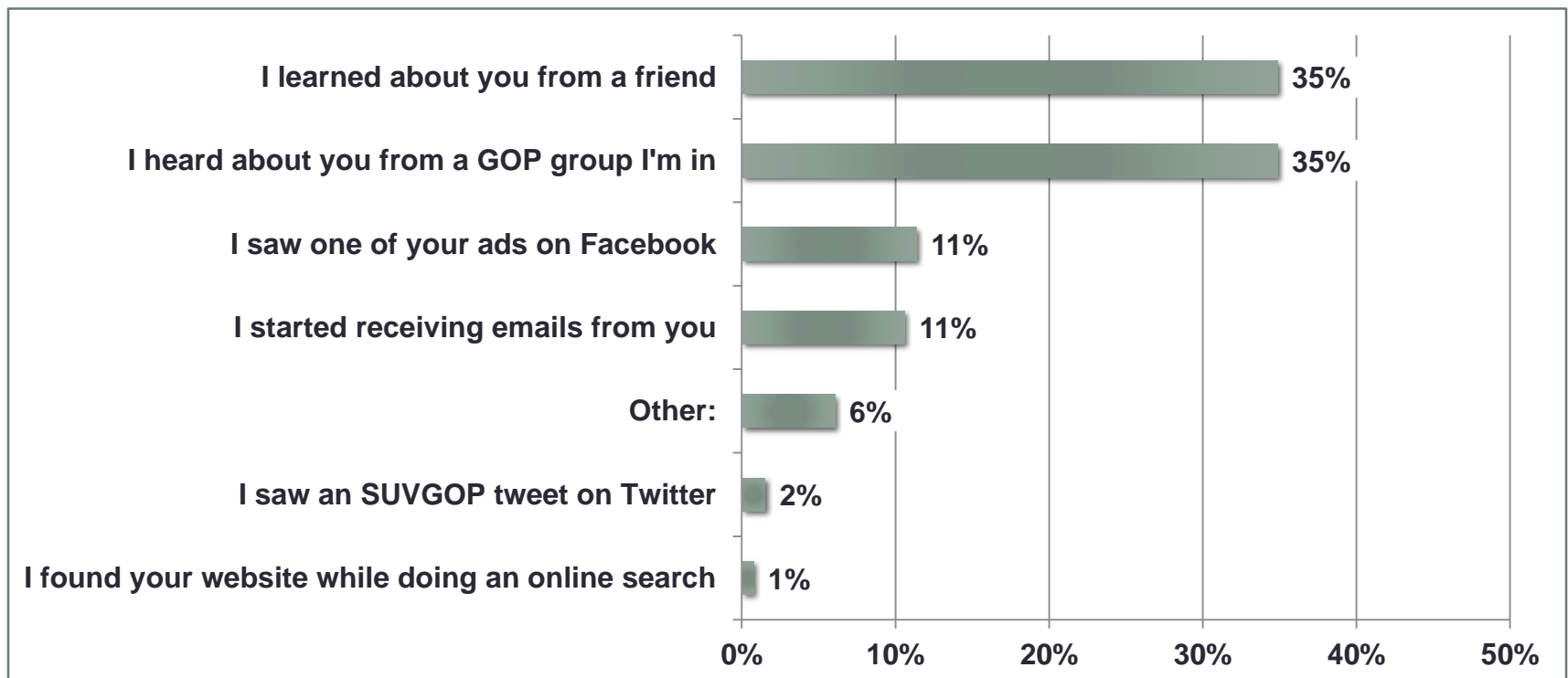
## *Why do a survey?*

In order to get a snapshot of our membership, we held an online survey from 27 February to 16 March 2019 and solicited input through our email newsletter, Facebook page and website.

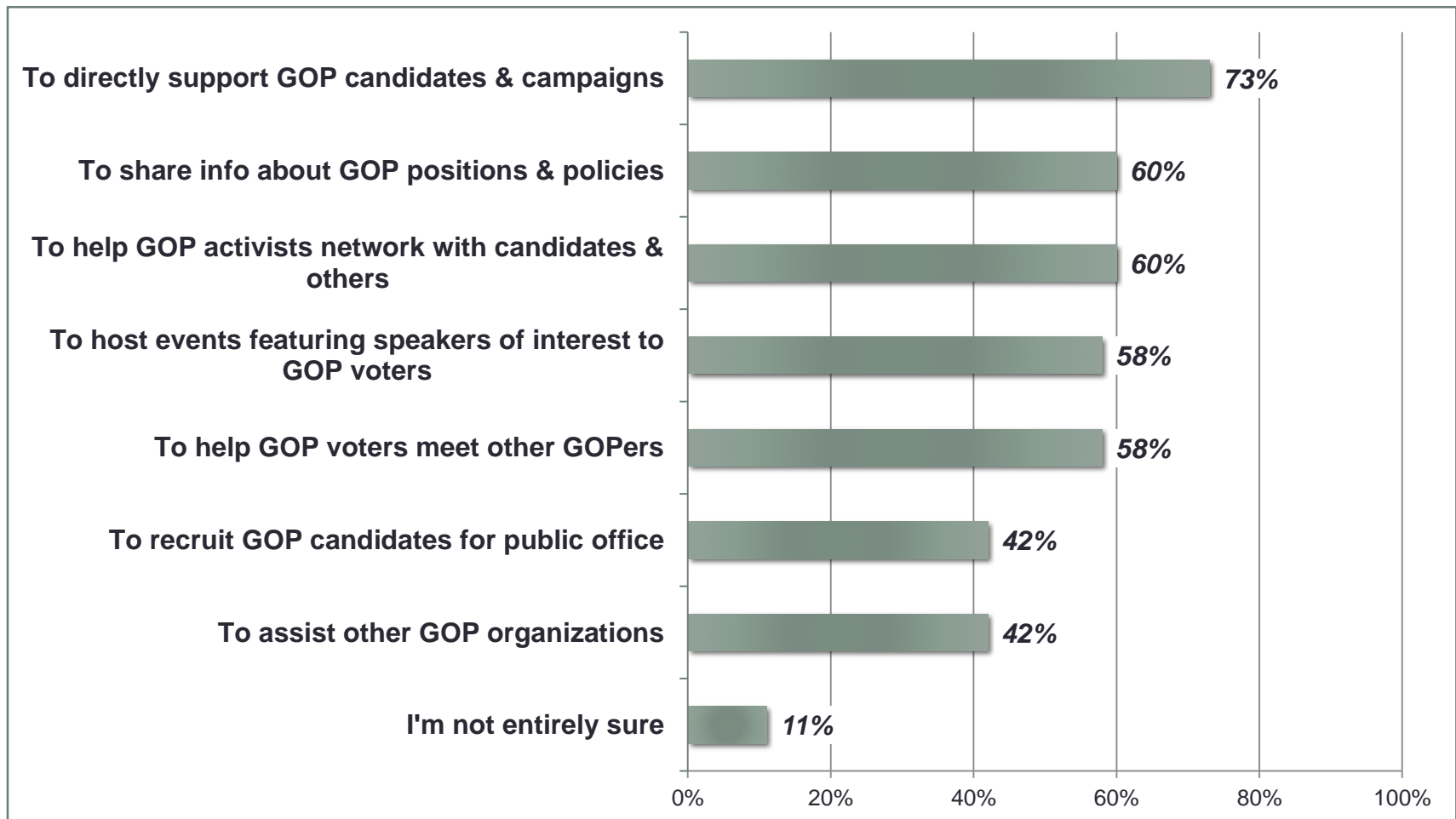
- *132 people responded, with 95% completing the survey in its entirety.*
- *Our questions ranged from asking for feedback on SUVGOP's mission and events to getting a basic demographic profile of our members.*
- *This information will allow us to better plan for and structure our events, position ourselves for growth in the suburbs, and give us a benchmark to measure our progress.*

## *How you learned about us*

Most SUVGOP members (70%) learned about us by word of mouth from personal friends or other GOP groups. In addition, one-fifth of our members either learned of us through Facebook ads or started receiving emails from previous email lists.



## *Your take on what SUVGOP's goals are*

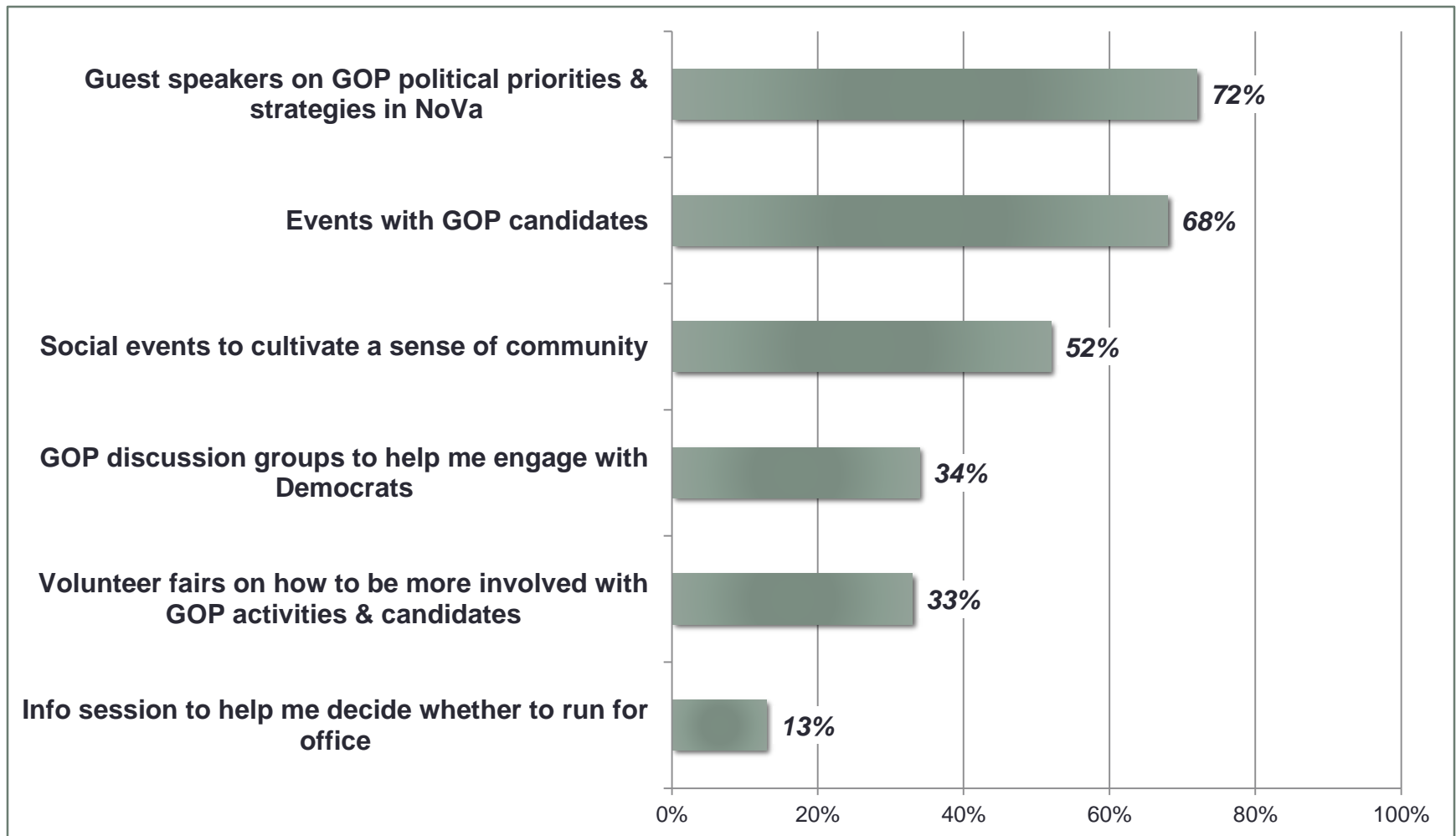


## *More input on SUVGOP's goals*

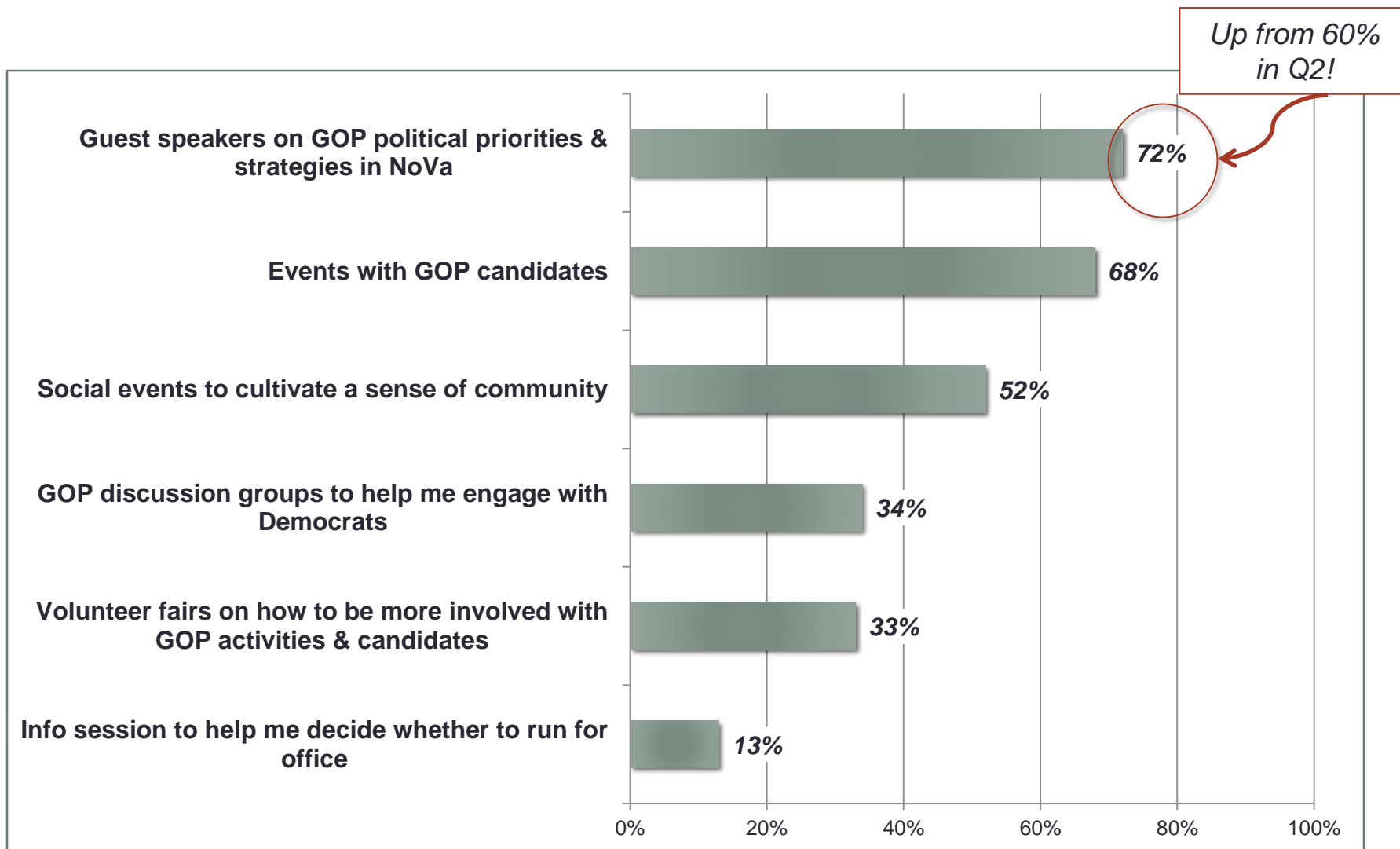
Your comments focused on three areas: research, community-building and confusion over role (vis-à-vis official organizations). Some examples:

- *To learn how the GOP can win in the suburbs, utilizing many of the above options*
- *Research why the GOP has struggled in Fairfax County, then work towards discovering solutions to overcome those reasons, which may include hosting events, supporting candidates, and grassroots activities*
- *To provide a media site where one can find information about Republican events. Also to provide opportunities for individuals to mingle with like-minded folks*
- *To understand needs of community & help R candidates position issues, grow party*
- *To recruit Republican volunteers to work on behalf of Republican candidates*
- *What sets you apart from other GOP groups?*

## *What kind of events would most interest you*



## What kind of events would most interest you





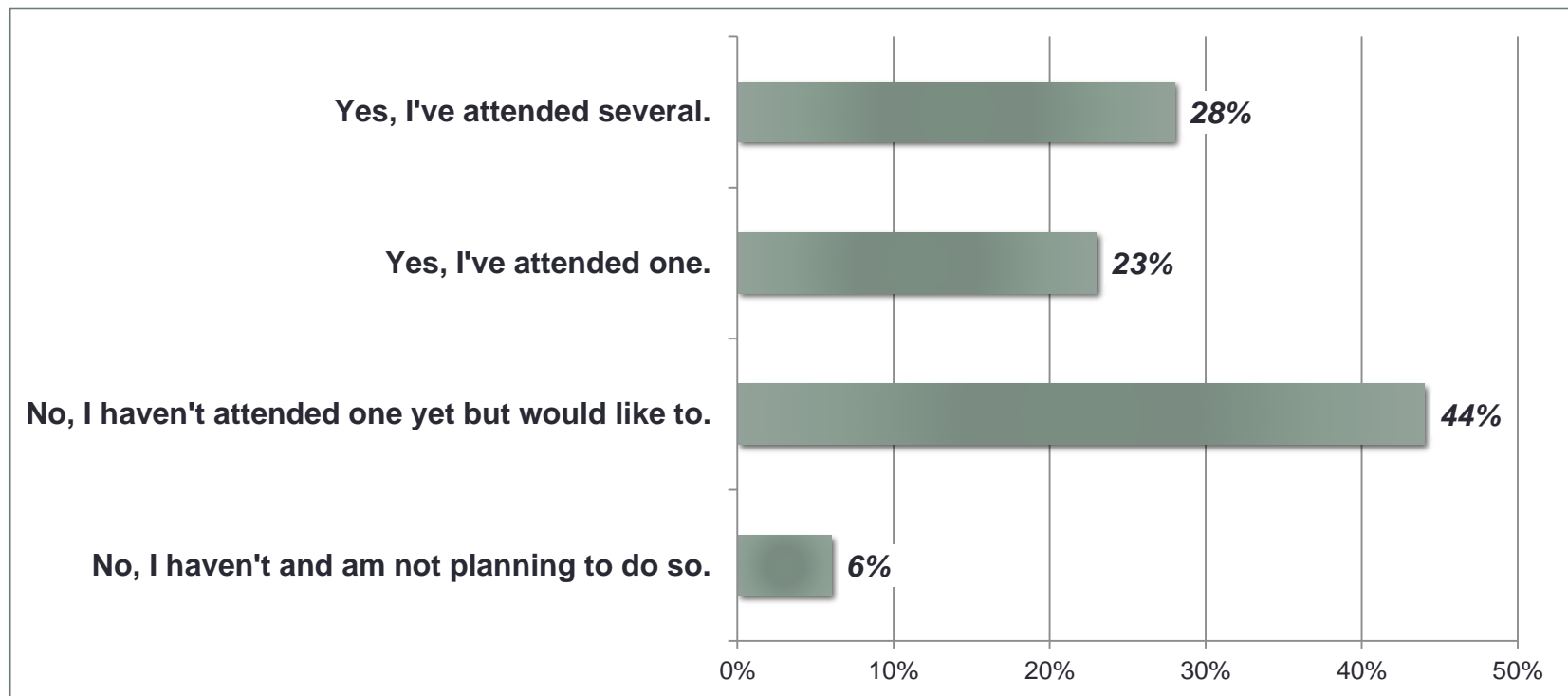
## *Your comments on the kind of events you'd like to see*

Your ideas included understanding election-related data trends, setting up working groups, and more networking opportunities:

- *Bring in conservative incumbents to explain why we have lost the political initiative and how we might regain political leadership.*
- *A place where we can [get] data on outcomes of elections. We don't hear about results of elections. Sure there are headlines of winners and losers but what about hearing why there were winners and losers. What worked, [what] did not work.*
- *Presentation and discussion of facts and trends in VA elections, how to deal with the unfavorable trends, and how to build upon the favorable.*
- *Policy working groups for activists engaged in specific issue areas.*
- *Professional networking, discussions in how to improve GOP units*
- *Information from experts using laymen's terms on topics like global warming*
- *The party would be wise to focus on teaching conservative values and helping young voters see those values in themselves rather than being too focused on specific candidates. Focus on winning hearts and minds, then winning elections will follow.*

## *How many of you have attended one of our events*

Half of survey respondents have attended at least one SUVGOP event so far. Most of those who haven't say they would like to attend one in the future.



## *Your ideas for improving our events:*

### Ideas for event activities, future planning:

- *Have sign up sheets for volunteer opportunities available at functions. Have a plan to recruit more people to get involved & invite them to future activities. Recruit more attendees by inviting members of other FB groups with similar agendas & interests.*
- *Provide immediate action items. Identify, advance, people with common goals and political interests to network in order to encourage future collaboration.*
- *Can we draft letters on our positions to our congressional representation?*
- *More info on strategy and on assessments of various VA races.*
- *Breakdown into committees*
- *What is the 1 year, 3 year, 5 year plan? How does your strategy fit with RNC (and what is the state Republican committee strategy)?*
- *Make me more confident that there was some actionable plan to turn the effort into support, money, and VOTES*

## *Your ideas for improving our events: (cont'd)*

### Suggestions for event logistics:

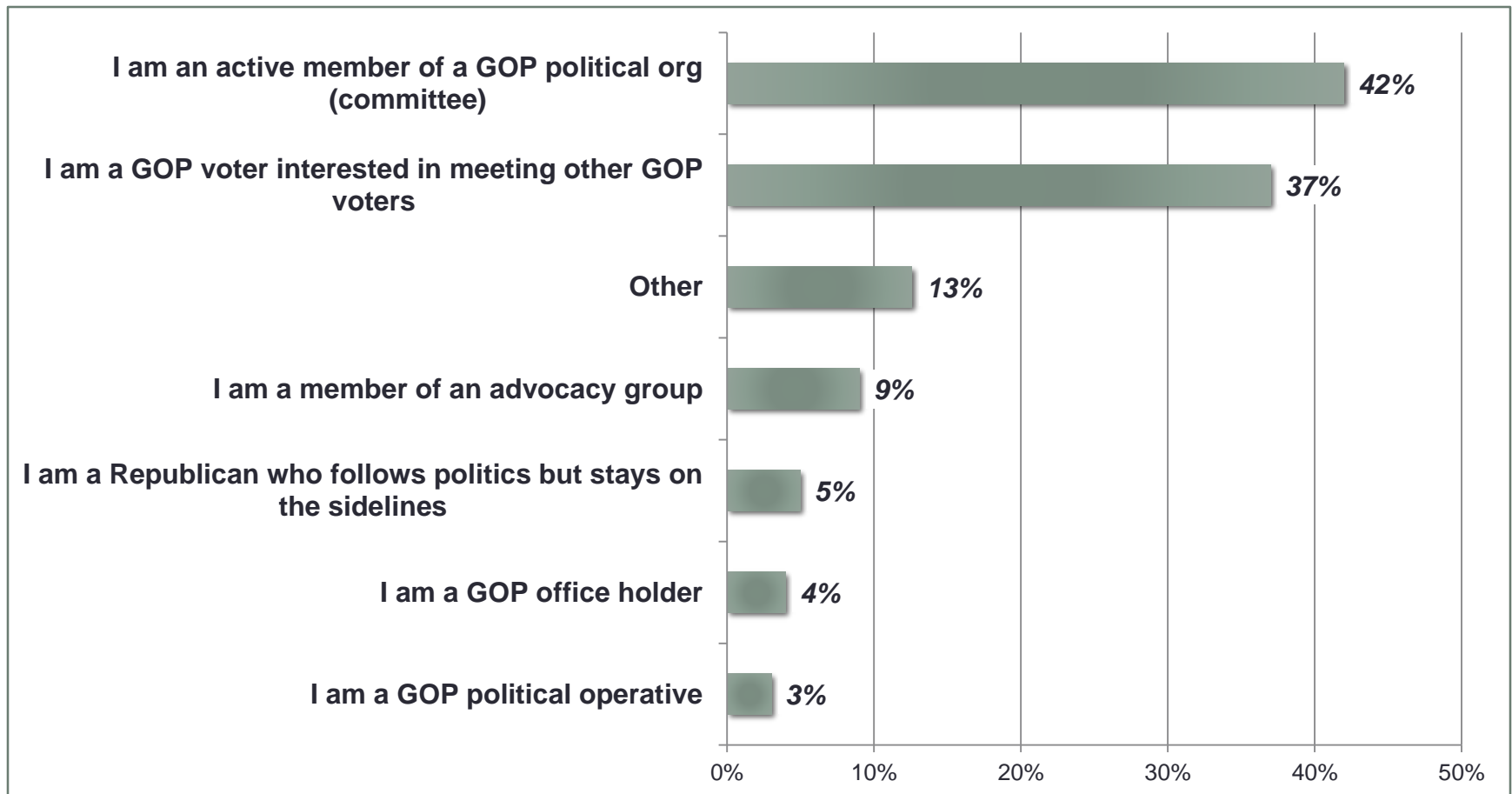
- *Maybe some ice breakers or something. It took a while for someone to talk to us and didn't feel welcoming at first.*
- *An agenda and better idea of what you all were going to talk about and which public officials and candidates might be attending . And a microphone.*
- *More advanced notification....greater than a week at a minimum.*
- *Move events throughout the region*
- *I think the events I have attended get too far into the weeds (tactical).*
- *Some candidates spoke too long*

### General:

- *Very pleased with what you are doing - keep up the good work.*
- *You could not [have made it better]. Because this group is in start-up mode and explaining and gaining consensus on the goals is a necessary function.*

## Member backgrounds

Many SUVGOP members are activists — but a significant number (42%, total) are not. *(This is an important distinction!)*



## *Your take on what's most valuable about SUVGOP:*

### Community-building and engagement

- *Events that help build a Republican community / conservative fellowship*
- *Meeting other interested people in a smaller setting.*
- *Desire to broaden the Republican tent / Desire to broaden the party, or we die.*
- *Trying to make new inroads & ways to expand our base, interaction with others in GOP*
- *Opens the door to the average everyday, northern Virginia person to be engaged and involved, without the push to become far right*
- *Utilizing social media to advocate, inform and persuade voters about GOP message*
- *Great communications with members - not too much or too little, and goal-oriented.*
- *Engagement. I feel many of your volunteers are engaged, but if you can figure out ways to get more people aware and engaged, it will be extremely valuable.*
- *I appreciate the fact that you've identified an issue in Virginia that the suburban areas must be engaged rather than simply surrendered to the left.*
- *Seeing a coordinated effort to battle the blue wave*

## *Your take on what's most valuable (cont'd)*

### Cross-jurisdictional awareness:

- *Information about Republican activities outside Arlington*
- *working across multiple GOP units/multi-county approach (multiple respondents)*
- *Networking and meeting other Republicans in the area*

### Volunteer opportunities & candidate support:

- *Access to volunteer opportunities.*
- *Helping to recruit volunteers to assist the FCRC and Republican candidates*
- *Helping push the Republican message.*
- *Helping Republican candidates hone their messages for suburban voters.*

## *What you'd like to change*

### Volunteer activities & engagement:

- *Maybe start small neighborhood groups. How to bring former Republicans back to the table.*
- *Get more folks outside of GOP circles engaged.*
- *Have committees on research, data*
- *This is an assumption, as I'm not completely familiar with all of your programs, but I think Fairfax Republicans in general need to outreach to the minority communities more. I firmly believe this is why we lose in Fairfax.*
- *More activities for 11th CD*
- *Clarify donation expectations and etiquette. I'd like to attend events to get started, but don't know if it's customary to donate at these events and if so, how much.*
- *I would like to see a little more info on who founded and why, as well as the possibility of serving on volunteer committees tasked to reach a defined goal.*
- *Writing campaign on key issues to our congressional officials. Also group visits to congress to inform on SUV positions.*



## *What you'd like to change (cont'd)*

### Meeting & event logistics:

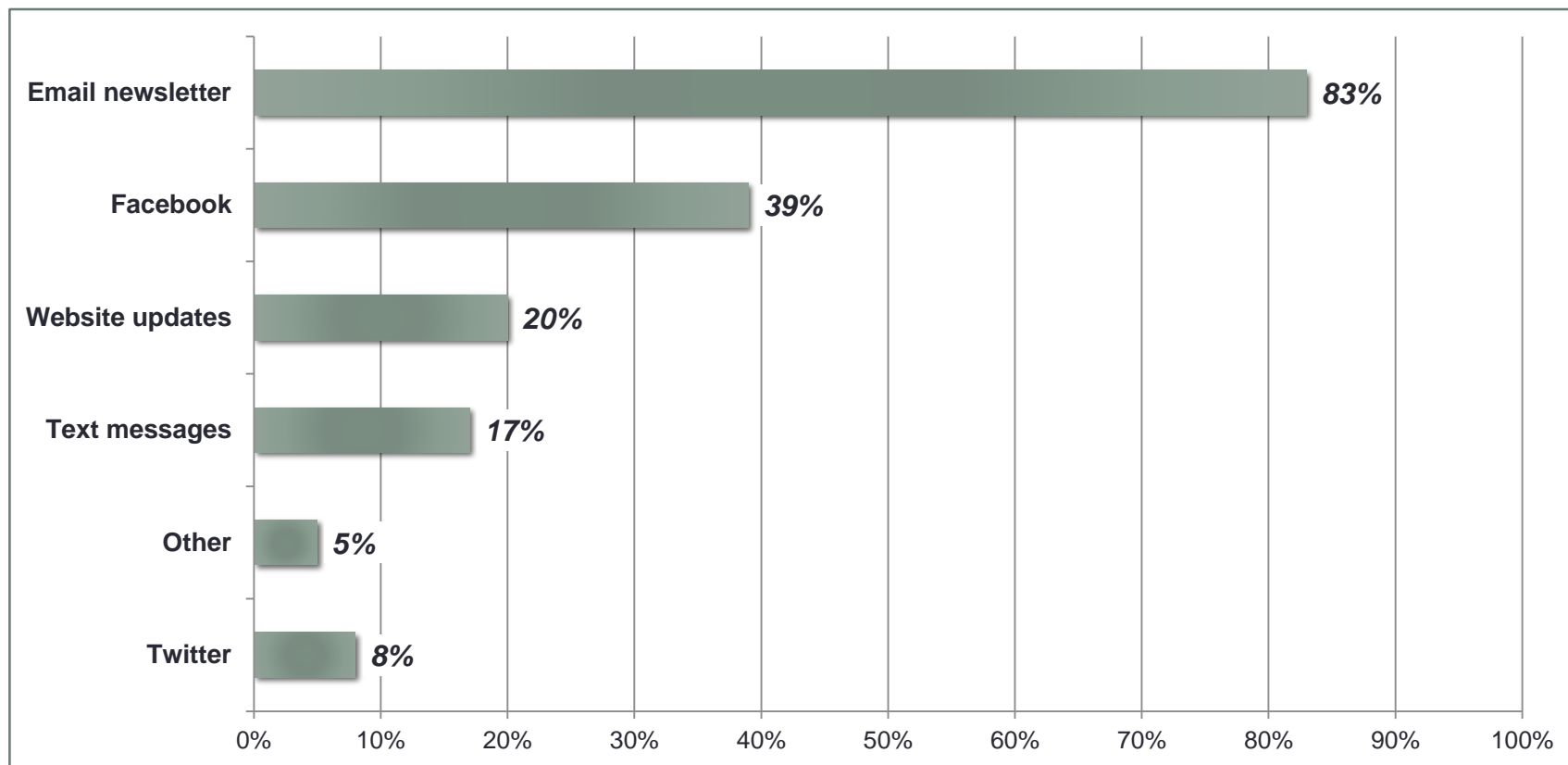
- *Kid friendly events*
- *More casual meet ups on a regular basis to to engage more community members.*
- *Meetings would be in a more centralized area*
- *Include more Arlington / Do events closer to the eastern part of the county*
- *Have events at different times/days of the week.*
- *Keep focus on current-year elections (2019).*

### Other comments:

- *Not enough information yet about you (several respondents)*
- *Your mission is very broad... To support Republican candidates in our region. Isn't that what we're all doing?*
- *Give them [SUVGOP] a more defined mission.*

## *How you'd prefer to get updates*

Our newsletter is by far the most popular way our followers prefer to get updates, with Facebook coming in second.



## *Your input on activities, elections and other topics:*

### Thoughts on activities & outreach:

- *Older voters need to be visited and their transportation requirements met on election days, including early voting*
- *Candidate and support training. Sponsor high school Republican clubs.*
- *Need to do more on voter registration & post mortem on election results, what worked*
- *Have events in other parts of NoVa. Seems like everything is in McLean / 10th*
- *I'd like to attend gatherings but it's difficult with 2 young children. Saturday would probably be the only day of the week I could attend.*
- *Please do a text messaging system. It's easier to keep up with events and not get drowned in emails.*
- *Is there a functional equivalent to the Heritage Foundation at the state level? Specifically, a group that can advocate for a set of solutions to become policy. Northern Virginia has unique challenges (transportation, affordable housing) that can be easily addressed with more spending. This means that for state and local races, the GOP has no alternatives to provide to suburban voters, pushing them to Democrats.*

## *Your input on activities, elections, and other topics (cont'd)*

- I would like to see you draw out professional women and have professional networking for women. (...) Bring out women executives, small business owners, who have an appreciation for the kinds of issues we support. In the process women who aspire to be like them could find a mentor and be able to help SUV more with time and money. We need to show women in the community that we understand everyday economic issues. I very much like the concept of SUV, [but] we need to have men and women working together. If someone doesn't have time for a county or city committee, I would rather see someone have an avenue like SUV to volunteer, especially after people age out of Young Republicans. Having men as auxiliary members of GOP women's clubs isn't the best way of utilizing their talents.*

### Elections:

- Please do more to unseat Gerry Connolly.*
- The Left is in complete disarray and meltdown. Now is the time, without modifying the conservative focus, to offer an alternative to the disenfranchised of the Left who might read your message.*

## *Your input on activities, elections, and other topics (cont'd)*

### General appreciation:

- *Keep doing this. NOVA is a lonely place to be a Republican*
- *Thank you for all the work you do, you are appreciated!!*
- *Thank you for hosting events in the area!*
- *Thank you for doing this. The GOP is at risk of losing so much these days.*
- *Bravo for trying something new and innovative*
- *Keep up the good work. It's more important than ever. (multiple)*
- *Thanks for your efforts!*
- *We are facing some significant challenges and risk losing a conservative (or even a moderate) voice in NoVa. It's simply scary.*

## *Your input on activities, elections, and other topics (cont'd)*

### Other:

- *I attended the pot-luck at the Centreville Firehouse. I thought it was great, but these events should probably not be held every month. I once belonged to a group which had a very successful pot-luck picnic. So the organizing group decided to do it monthly. The second one had about half the number of participants, and the third one had even fewer. And that was the end of the pot-lucks. I would hope that your pot-luck events would not meet the same fate.*
- *I think organization is key to future success as well as coalition building between and among different center/right of center groups. Need to build coalition among moderates, constitutional conservatives, populists, libertarians and independents. Get frustrated by in-fighting.*
- *Hopefully all the Republican groups are working together to elect Republican candidates and not split the voting bloc.*

## *Digging a little deeper*

When we examined the survey results by gender and age range, several interesting differences emerged:

- *Women tended to learn about SUVGOP from friends and identified themselves primarily as GOP voters. While most women (60%) have not yet attended an SUVGOP event, they are significantly more interested than men in social events and GOP discussion groups. Nearly half would prefer to get updates via Facebook and one in five would like to get text updates.*
- *Members under 55 are most interested in events focused on political strategies, social gatherings, and political candidates (in that order), though most (63%) have not yet attended anything. Only a plurality (41%) lives in Fairfax, with one in five residing in Loudoun. Over half would prefer updates via Facebook, with one-quarter requesting updates via text message.*

## *Top differences in responses (women vs. men)*

Top responses	Women	Men
<i>How did you learn about us?</i>	From a friend (35%)	From a GOP group (39%)
<i>What events are most interesting to you?</i> <i>(after “GOP priorities &amp; strategies,” the #1 choice of both)</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) GOP candidates (71%)</li> <li>2) <b>Social events (63%)</b></li> <li>3) <b>GOP discussion groups (49%)</b></li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) GOP candidates (61%)</li> <li>2) <b>Social events (50%)</b></li> <li>3) <b>Volunteer fairs (35%)</b></li> </ol>
<i>Have you attended an event?</i>	No (60%)	Yes (54%)
<i>If yes, how would you rate the event?</i>	Very satisfied (76%)	Satisfied (45%)
<i>Which term best describes you?</i>	GOP voter (42%)	GOP activist (44%)
<i>How do you prefer to get updates?</i> <i>(after “Email newsletter,” the #1 choice of both)</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Facebook (45%)</li> <li>2) <b>Text messages (21%)</b></li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Facebook (36%)</li> <li>2) <b>Website updates (20%)</b></li> </ol>



## *Top differences in responses (55 & under vs. over 55)*

Top responses	55 & under	Over 55
<i>What events are most interesting to you?</i>	1) GOP priorities & strategies (71%) 2) <b>Social events (67%)</b> 3) GOP candidates (56%)	1) GOP candidates (76%) 2) GOP priorities & strategies (74%) 3) <b>Social events (46%)</b>
<i>Have you attended an event?</i>	<b>No (63%)</b>	<b>Yes (58%)</b>
<i>If yes, how would you rate the event?</i>	<b>Satisfied (53%)</b>	<b>Very satisfied (55%)</b>
<i>Which term best describes you?</i>	<b>GOP voter (39%)</b>	<b>GOP activist (48%)</b>
<i>Where do you live?</i>	1) Fairfax County (41%) 2) Loudoun County (22%)	1) Fairfax County (75%) 2) Loudoun County (10%)
<i>How do you prefer to get updates?</i>	1) Email newsletter (73%) 2) Facebook (58%) 3) <b>Text messages (24%)</b>	1) Email newsletter (90%) 2) Facebook (30%) 3) <b>Website updates (21%)</b>

## *What we're doing next:*

- More experimentation:
  - Podcasts of candidates and issue experts, and targeted podcast promotion (already begun).
  - Social media issue campaigns on one or two issues of specific suburban interest identified during last year's survey efforts.
  - Analyze Democrats' use of social media and how we might develop our own social media counterprogramming.
- Taking leadership of the Northern Virginia Republican Business Forum (NVRBF) – a place for professional and political networking and relationship building at the intersection of business and GOP politics, including efforts to reach minority- and women-owned businesses and young professionals.
- Continued potluck dinners throughout NOVA for networking, getting to know candidates and activists, and building community throughout NOVA.
- Small, informal neighborhood living room meetings of GOPers looking to get more involved in the Republican community.