

Connections

YOUR INFORMATION DESTINATION



IN THIS ISSUE

Making research about volunteer involvement work for you

by Wendy MacDonald



Research and knowledge related to leadership and management in the voluntary sector have grown exponentially in recent years. Investment by a variety of stakeholders has produced exciting and diverse work with the potential to enhance the practice and outcomes of nonprofit organizations and the staff and volunteers which support them. Ironically, as research and knowledge grow, many practitioners have less time to monitor, assess and integrate appropriate information. Furthermore, time and motivation to conduct or participate in applied

research initiatives is often not an accessible option to most busy nonprofit staff and volunteers.

Much of this Canadian research, created in the past seven years, is related to volunteerism. Prior to 1998, little research-based information about volunteer involvement had been published in Canada. Today the scope and depth of related information has almost become overwhelming. All levels of government, as well as other funders, are investing in knowledge generation about citizen engagement through volunteer involvement. Millions of dollars are spent each year to generate research-informed knowledge.

What does this mean to the average volunteer or staff member? At first glance very little, unless they make the effort to identify, access, read, assess, discuss and integrate appropriate knowledge into their practice and daily activities. However, new information generated through ongoing research is useful in enhancing personal and organizational effectiveness. It also has the potential to support resource requests, enhance policy development, and generally raise awareness throughout society about the value of the voluntary/nonprofit sector and volunteer involvement specifically.

(Continued on page 2)

| | |
|---|----|
| Making research about volunteer involvement work for you | 1 |
| Charities feature - new in Edmonton Journal | 3 |
| Good news, bad news - maximizing your media messages | 4 |
| Exciting news! RCVO catalogue now online | 5 |
| Courses | 6 |
| Learning Opportunities | 7 |
| An update on not-for-profit insurance issues | 8 |
| AAFRE book donation to RCVO | 9 |
| Not just another acronym ...What the CVI means to you! | 10 |
| Character in fundraising - principle number two: fervency | 11 |
| Book Review | 12 |

Each day we are given stones. Which do you build, bridges or walls?

H. Jackson Brown

(Continued from page 1)

Most research falls into two general categories: applied research which links knowledge with possible application to “real world” situations and academic research which creates new knowledge but leaves interpretation and practical application to the user. In the volunteer management field there are few academic research publications, but applied discussions of research from many disciplines contribute to the body of knowledge about volunteer involvement.



Interested in learning more from research but overwhelmed by the volume and/or language? Start your quest by becoming familiar with several reliable sources that you find interesting and readable. Most publications have web-based or hard copy summaries (abstracts) that can be reviewed without reading the full document. If the abstract interests you, review the entire report. Most academic and applied research publications are available online free of charge or through subscriptions to individual periodicals or journal databases. The RCVO has access to many such publications. Contact us if you would like to discuss locating materials. A thoughtful web search will also yield many excellent works.

You may find the conclusions from the research to be most helpful, but don't avoid learning more about how the work was done. Also ask yourself how credible the source is and if the conclusions are useful within your environment. Are there other contextual issues that you should consider? For example, a piece of

applied research may be well done with practical application, however, if the product or pilot project isn't congruent with the values or context of your organization, you may need to reconcile your actions.

Two extensive research projects provide an excellent source of foundational information upon which to build. Both the National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating (NSGVP) conducted in 1998 and 2000, as well as the National Survey of Nonprofit and Voluntary Organizations (NSNVO) initiated by Statistics Canada in 2004, provide much insight into volunteer involvement in Canada.

The NSGVP is an ongoing source of information about the motivations, activities, and barriers of Canadian volunteers. In addition to the many user friendly reports and fact sheets created when the surveys were first published, many additional resources have been developed and continue to be generated. From geographic specific data about volunteer profiles in your region of Canada to age, gender, employment, and cultural specific information, NSGVP continues to be a rich and practical source of information that can easily be used to guide planning for volunteer involvement in programs, organizations and communities. Go to www.givingandvolunteering.ca to review the wide range of information available in numerous formats. A highlight of the site is Nora McClintock's "Understanding Canadian Volunteers", a practical and comprehensive guide to using the NSGVP to enhance your volunteer program.

The NSNVO is a relatively new source of research data that provides an indepth profile of Canada's voluntary/nonprofit sector organizations. It has already helped many organizations raise awareness about the breadth, size and impact of

the sector, as well as providing more accurate planning data.

The Canada Volunteerism Initiative (CVI) aims to build the body of knowledge on volunteering and volunteerism in Canada and to transfer knowledge to voluntary organizations to enhance their capacity to benefit Canadians. A national initiative that has supported numerous research and pilot projects, CVI has added a wealth of information to the resource base related to volunteer involvement and the practice of volunteer management. Past and current research and pilot projects supported by the CVI can be found at:

- www.kdc-cdc.ca
- www.volunteer.ca. Choose CVI Community Support Centre.

These sites include many projects, undertaken by Canadian researchers, post-secondary institutions and nonprofit organizations. Downloadable manuals, kits and other tools often accompany the full text and summary research reports. Indexes of the projects by year, theme, and province make the vast site easier for navigation. Many of the resources can also be found in the RCVO (www.rcvo.org) or online through the John Hodgson Library at Imagine Canada, www.nonprofitscan.ca

The “Non-Profit and Voluntary Sector Network” is a research oriented, free newsletter that identifies many useful links to research oriented projects and events in Canada. It is published by The Centre for Voluntary Sector Research and Development at Carlton University in Ottawa, www.cvsrd.org or www.nvsn.org. This organization supports a “Community of Inquiry”, individuals from all backgrounds who are interested in voluntary sector research issues.

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

The Association for Volunteer Administration (AVA) publishes “The Journal of Volunteer Administration”, (not currently available electronically). Go to www.avaintl.org/products/journal.html. Both current and past issues contain diverse American and some international research specific to volunteer engagement.

Other less formal, but always informative sources to monitor for new and applied work are E-Volunteerism and EnergizeInc which both reflect Susan Ellis’s passion for innovative and thoughtful information about engaging volunteers (see sidebar). In addition, Canadian Linda Graff is well known for identifying excellent volunteerism information sources worldwide, through her local and international work, www.lindagraff.ca.

Add value to your work and achieve your organization’s mission with meaningful volunteer involvement. Even a few hours a month, invested in identifying and reviewing relevant research, can improve your practice and keep your organization and community truly experiencing the value of volunteerism.

Watch for “Focus on Research” in future issues of RCVO’s *Connections* and plan to attend the “So What? Linking Research and Practice in the Voluntary Sector” Breakfast Dialogue Series at Grant MacEwan College (see “Workshops” in this edition of *Connections*). □

Wendy MacDonald is the Program Chair of the Voluntary Sector Management Program at Grant MacEwan College in Edmonton, Alberta. She can be reached at macdonaldw@macewan.ca.

Bookmark the following sites for ongoing research information about volunteer involvement in Canada and abroad.

- www.ivr.org.uk (Voluntary Action)
- www.istr.org/pubs/voluntas (Voluntas)
- www.energizeinc.com and www.e-volunteerism.com (Energize, Inc.)
- http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/publications/aust_journal.html (Australian Journal on Volunteering)
- www.philanthropy.com (Chronicle of Philanthropy)
- www.volunteering.org.uk (Volunteering England)
- www.arnova.org/nvsq.php (Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly)
- <http://www.josseybass.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-NML.html> (Nonprofit Management and Leadership)
- www.nonprofitscan.ca (Imagine Canada)
- www.volunteer.ca (Volunteer Canada)
- www.givingandvolunteering.ca (NSGVP)
- www.cvsrd.org (The Centre for Voluntary Sector Research and Development at Carlton University)
- www.arnova.org (Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action)
- <http://www.avaintl.org/product/journal.html> (The Journal of Volunteer Administration)

Research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose.

Zora Neale Hurston (1891-1960)

Charities feature - new in Edmonton Journal

Watch for the Sunday edition of the Edmonton Journal for its new feature page, Engage. You will find it on the back of the first section (section A). It is “dedicated to the contributions,

impact and issues facing Alberta’s Voluntary and Not-for-Profit Sector.”

Each edition features a column on an organization (What’s It All About), a column on issues related to the sector, a list of volunteer opportunities and some fast facts and stats in the “Did You Know” box.

The columnist, Shari Narine, is out in the community researching and interviewing and says she has content for months.

Hopefully this regular feature on charities in the Journal will provide an example for other newspapers, large and small.

Good news, bad news - maximizing your media messages

by Andrea Collins

Andrea Collins, APR, of ROI Communications was a presenter at the Volunteer Alberta Fall Round Table, October 13, 2005. These are the key points from her remarks.

Many non-profit organizations have a love-hate relationship with the media – they want them there when their Volunteer Week activities or other special events are in full swing, and far away when the accountant runs off with the funds or the boiler bursts. It's important for every organization to learn how to get media coverage when you want it, manage media when an issue arises, and develop positive long-term relations with media.

Be Prepared

Having a professional communications volunteer on your board or staff is an important first step. But if you are unable to recruit someone who's in the know, ensure that your president or director charged with communications has media training. Your organization has important messages to convey to its stakeholders and the public – media is your easiest, least expensive option. However you'll only get results when you do it well.

Taking a course in media relations or booking a corporate trainer for your senior staff and board are the best options. If time, geography or budget precludes those options, you will find useful books in college and university libraries (the RCVO and Grant MacEwan College libraries), bookstores (business section) or visit online sources such as Volunteer Alberta (www.volunteeraberta.ab.ca) or Volunteer Canada (www.volunteer.ca).

Make sure to have a written plan before you begin to communicate with media. It can be part of an overall marketing plan or a plan specific to an event or to media relations, but should include your goal, your objectives, your campaign date, your audience, your strategies, the tools you will use, your budget and the way you will measure success. It should also identify your principal spokesperson.

Be Proactive

The best media relations strategy uses a proactive approach, i.e. you go out to media with well-written news releases, useful story ideas or an event that will catch their interest. Be sure to use a multi-media approach – your local newspaper is a natural, but don't forget the closest daily, radio station or TV station (many smaller cities have a presence for local news even when the parent station may be in Calgary or Edmonton), or the newsletters of community organizations. Find out how they most like to receive written information (fax or e-mail) and follow it up with a phone call. Don't forget the columnists or feature writers/hosts; it's often best to approach them by phone first and pitch your idea with enthusiasm.



Key Messages

Crafting messages and events that will interest media is important. You are competing for their time and space among hundreds of organizations, e.g. The Edmonton Journal receives more than 200 news

releases per day. Write out the 2-5 key messages you want to convey, concisely and clearly. They should be written in descending order of importance with the most important and timely tidbit first. Use the key messages for media interviews (but don't read them, convey the intent of the message in your own words). Put them into written formats you need: news release, ad, brochure, web site, speech, etc.

News Releases

Don't call your story "news" unless it has a news element (matters to a large number of people, is unusual or unexpected, affects public opinion, captures the imagination). If it's a notice of a community event, you don't want to contact the news director, you want the person responsible for public service announcements (PSA). Only hold a news conference if you have something to show or someone to meet that is interesting, and can't be properly communicated through writing, e.g. celebrity guest appearance, people in costume. Make sure there is something visual for the TV cameras and photographers, and if you can, get them involved, e.g. I held a celebrity limbo contest at the media launch of Cariwest – most media had a contestant and gave it great coverage. However news conferences take elaborate preparation – you may just want to arrange a photo opportunity for media, e.g. Sherwood Park always gets great coverage because they let local media know when the linesmen are stringing signs for Volunteer Week along major corridors, or the mayor hoisting their flag.

Buffer Bad News

Sooner or later some negative media attention may come your way. If it's "small potatoes," you can buffer bad news by giving out the information along with other positive information. But if it's more serious,

(Continued on page 5)

Exciting news! RCVO catalogue now online



We are pleased to announce that the RCVO's library catalogue is now available online!

Thanks to a significant, targeted, multi-year grant from TransCanada Pipelines, the RCVO has been able to catalogue its many items and make that information available to you on our website. We encourage you to visit www.rcvo.org and click on Library. There you will find helpful guides to answer your questions and assist you with your search.

What is listed in the catalogue? You will find items including information files, books, periodicals and audio-visual and electronic resources.

These resources include information on:

- Board Development
- Non-profit Agency Management
- Fund Development
- Volunteer Management
- The Voluntary Sector

Who can use the RCVO Library?

People in the Edmonton area are welcome to visit the RCVO onsite and browse the collection. Alberta-based organizations and individuals may request and borrow resources. Anyone, regardless of geographic location will find the RCVO's online catalogue a valuable source for information and research.

An important part of the library consists of files of information. These files comprise a collection of thousands of items such as:

- journal articles
- book excerpts
- newsletters
- conference proceedings
- research papers
- government documents
- brochures

There you will find practical information on subjects such as how to develop a healthy and productive board, how to organize a fund development campaign and how to manage risk in your organization. Individuals and agencies within Alberta may request copies of items through the online catalogue by using the "Add to List" feature.

Some of our items are located in MacEwan's Learning Resources Centre (LRC) and may easily be borrowed through your local public library as part of The Alberta Library (TAL) system.

Please visit our website and make use of this wonderful new resource.

(Continued from page 4)

you need to be prepared. Have an issues management or crisis communications plan developed in advance, along with templates for news releases, etc. Then when something occurs you only have to "fill in the blanks."

Make sure the plan includes a way to inform the key people in your organization about the situation so that they are armed with the key messages they need to provide a cohesive response or can direct a reporter to the designated spokesperson.

I have managed media for a bomb scare, vice-president of a national company being arrested for making death threats, a cover model arrested for doing drugs, more than one labour strike, a malpractice suit when a patient died in surgery, and a guest

celebrity who made inflammatory statements about gay rights. Don't follow your first instinct and try and duck (they'll find you!). Be open and honest about the situation. Never try to "spin" the information to confuse or persuade, don't offer your personal opinion or "guesses" on what happened. If you haven't any facts yet, say you'll get back to them in half an hour and do it. Give out only the facts you know, and keep trying to get answers to the other questions. If the attention is over a legal issue, you only need to say "no comment, this is before the courts." If it's regarding an individual, emphasize that it is an individual involved and give out positive information about your organization. If human tragedy is involved, always start with your sympathy (but don't automatically accept blame, that's for the courts and the insurance companies to determine).

Summary

Here are five basic principles that can guide your public and media relations:

1. Good communication cannot overcome bad judgment.
2. Information should come from the most credible source.
3. Build a relationship - practice public and media relations on a regular basis.
4. Understand legal restrictions and obligations.
5. You can't "manage" public or media in times of crisis. ☐

Andrea Collins, APR, is president of ROI Communications, an Edmonton based communications consulting firm. She is an accredited member and past president of the Canadian Public Relations Society, and teaches public relations and writing at MacEwan College and University of Alberta. She can be reached at 780-433-7209 or andrea.collins@shaw.ca

Courses

MACÉWAN

Voluntary Sector Management Program

We're Changing & Growing

MacEwan's Voluntary Sector Management Program (VSMP) is developing additional programming to serve you and the community in new ways. To accommodate these changes, the current credit certificate in Voluntary Sector Management (Volunteer Management or Fund Development majors) will permanently conclude June 2006, with no credit courses offered July 2006 to July 2007.

Watch for new credit and non-credit programming to be launched Fall 2007. During the 2006/07 academic

year, look for seminars and speaker series sponsored by the Resource Centre for Voluntary Organizations at www.rcvo.org

The following are credit courses that will be offered from March to May 2006:

Working With Not-for-Profit Boards and Committees

Classroom, VSMT 116 (740)
Tues, Mar 21, 28, Apr 4, 11 & 18, 2006, 6-9 pm, \$195 (includes materials)

Instructor: Toni Lashbrook

Fund Development Approaches IV: Planned Giving and Major Gifts

Classroom, VSFD 148 (740)
Thurs, Mar 23, 30, Apr 6 & 13, 2006, 8 am-4 pm, \$395 (includes

materials), Instructors: Kathy Hawkesworth and Dree Thomson-Diamond

Facilitating Learning in Nonprofit Organizations

Classroom, VSMT 122 (740)
Fri & Sat, Apr 7, 8, 21, & 22, 2006
8 am-4 pm, \$395 (includes materials)

Instructor: Thelma Ketler

For more information, contact:
Pat Sonnenberg at
780-497-5268, e-mail:
sonnenbergp@macewan.ca or
go to www.macewan.ca/vsm or
view/download the Winter
schedule.



Vitalize 2006 "Unleashing Opportunities"

June 8, 9 & 10, 2006
Shaw Conference Centre
Edmonton, AB

"No person who is enthusiastic about his work has anything to fear from life. All the opportunities in the world are waiting to be grasped by the people who are in love with what they're doing."

- Samuel Goldwyn

Join Vitalize 2006 to 'unleash opportunities'. The conference offers over 50 sessions, all geared towards enhancing Alberta's voluntary sector.

Each and every day in Alberta, volunteers and staff work hard in hundreds of voluntary sector organizations. They are actively involved in making a difference in improving their communities. Our quality of life and our community strength depends on the vibrancy of these organizations and the support they provide to the province. Alberta's voluntary sector organizations touch virtually all aspects of society from social services, human rights, education, environment, health and faith to arts and culture to sports and recreation. Alberta thrives because of this diverse, talented and committed sector.

Keep the momentum going. Grasp the opportunities and unleash the power of Alberta's Voluntary Sector. Participate in the 18th "Vitalize" Annual Provincial Voluntary Sector Conference.

Registration fee of \$120 includes conference sessions, conference kit bags, meals, plenaries and incredible entertainment.

Sponsored by the Wild Rose Foundation, Alberta Community Development, and the Alberta Lottery Fund.

Visit the Vitalize website for updates on the program sessions and registration information at www.vitalizeconference.ca.

Learning Opportunities

“So What? Linking Research & Practice in the Voluntary Sector”

2005/2006 Series

- **March 7, 2006 - Kelly Sloan**
 - **April 19, 2006 - Keith Seel**
- 8:30-10:30 a.m., Room 6-313H
City Centre Campus, Grant
MacEwan College, Edmonton, AB**

In recent years there has been a massive increase in the quality and volume of applied research regarding best practices in managing and leading nonprofit organizations, involving volunteers, human resource management in the voluntary sector and securing financial resources for charitable organizations.

Grant MacEwan College, through the Resource Centre for Voluntary Organizations (RCVO) and the Voluntary Sector Management Program, is once again offering a series of information sessions and discussions, called the “*So What?*” series, aimed at increasing knowledge and dialogue about applied research with community organizations.

The **March 7, 2006** breakfast dialogues will feature Kelly Sloan, Muttart Fellow and Executive Director, Edmonton YWCA. This session will present research findings from Kelly’s fellowship topic, ‘Enhancing Nonprofit Board/Executive Director Relationships’. This research was undertaken as part of The Muttart Foundation Fellowship Program.

The **April 19, 2006** breakfast dialogue will feature Keith Seel, Director, Institute for Nonprofit Studies, Mount Royal College. This session will present research findings from Keith’s project, ‘What Does it Mean to be a Governor? New

Approaches to Board Development’. This project was supported by Volunteer Canada Community Support Centre.

Watch for further information regarding the “*So What?*” series on our website at www.rcvo.org (events), or call the RCVO Event Hotline at 780-497-4780.

Board Leadership 2006 From Concept to Practice A Conference for Board Members of Voluntary/ Nonprofit Organizations Saturday, March 18, 2006 8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m. City Centre Campus Grant MacEwan College Edmonton, AB

The success of your voluntary/nonprofit organization depends upon board effectiveness.

These topic areas will be the focus of the 2006 Board Leadership Conference. Join board members from Alberta’s nonprofit sector to share experiences, discuss challenges, celebrate successes and develop additional skills and strategies to support your Board in moving ‘from Concept to Practice’.

- Understanding the roles and responsibilities of board members
- Understanding liability issues related to boards and board members
- Understanding the role of board members in fund development
- Creating effective strategic plans that get implemented
- Developing effective policies for your organization
- Developing effective hiring practices for the executive director

- Developing an effective board by nurturing healthy board relationships
- Strengthening the board through effective self-assessment

Registration fee: \$80.25 (includes GST), pre-registration is required. Deadline to register is March 9, 2006. For more information visit www.rcvo.org (events) or call the RCVO Event Line at 780-497-4780.

Fundraising Success: Where to Start and How to Build It! Saturday, April 22, 2006 City Centre Campus, Grant MacEwan College, Edmonton, AB

Achieving success takes resources! Are you raising funds in a small organization; or starting a new fund development program; or just learning the basics? Then this workshop is for you. Come and explore the answers to key questions on regulations, the people needed on your development team, the right tools to use, and how to compete with high profile campaigns.

This workshop was created with the support of TransCanada Pipelines to create awareness, build confidence and provide resource materials and sources for further learning with regards to fundraising programs.

For details check out our website at www.rcvo.org or call 780-497-5616.

PIPA Conference 2006! April 26 & 27, 2006 Calgary, AB

Inaugural conference on the *Personal Information Protection Act*. For conference information, go to: <http://www.pipa2006.ca>

An update on not-for-profit insurance issues

by Val Mayes

There is no question that the issue of insurance for not-for-profits is complex and often difficult to understand. We have had discussions about tort reform, diversity of the sector, agents, brokers, insurers, clients, codes for data collection, hard markets, off-market options, solvency tests and risk management strategies! Part of the problem is that there are so many factors involved in creating the problem that there is no one action that will provide a solution. However, some small steps have been taken recently to begin addressing some of the factors, and there is reason to believe that the situation has improved for some groups.

For example, in Alberta we have seen the creation of the **Alberta Voluntary Sector Insurance Council (AVSIC)**, which has been working on a number of fronts over the past two years. The council was developed as the result of meetings that brought together representatives from the insurance industry, the voluntary sector and the Government of Alberta, beginning in early 2004. Initial meetings identified a number of issues related to property insurance, automobile insurance, commercial general liability insurance, sexual abuse coverage, Director and Officers' policies and Errors & Omissions. The specific concerns related to the different types of insurance varied, but *cost, the availability of coverage and limitations on coverage* were the most common.

This dialogue was helpful in clarifying issues as well as developing a better understanding on the part of representatives of both the insurance industry and the voluntary sector as to what drives changes in insurance rates and coverage, and

why the changes that have occurred during the "hard" insurance market of the past few years have had such a dramatic impact on so many organizations.

One of the early results of these meetings was the bulletin issued by the Assistant Deputy Minister of Pensions, Insurance and Financial Institutions on Nov. 23rd that the S.E.F. No. 6a endorsement is not required in situations where people use their vehicles for volunteer purposes and are reimbursed for mileage and expenses. Differing interpretations of this requirement had been identified as a problem, and this clarification had an immediate impact on affected organizations.



In January 2005, the group that had been meeting informally agreed to establish the **Alberta Voluntary Sector Insurance Council**. Its purpose is: *to provide a mechanism for the voluntary sector, the insurance industry and the Government of Alberta to address insurance-related issues affecting the broad voluntary sector*. In this context, the term "voluntary sector" refers to those groups and organizations whose work is not-for-profit and governed by a board of volunteers. It does not include quasi-non-governmental groups (quangos) such as hospitals, and universities.

A planning meeting was held on April 26, 2005 at which the Terms of Reference were adopted and a work plan developed. Subsequent meetings were held in June and October of 2005 and January of 2006.

The Council is chaired by Liz O'Neill, Executive Director of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Edmonton and Area, representing the voluntary sector, and Jim Rivait, Vice President of the Insurance Bureau of Canada (IBC) is the Vice Chair. Other members of the Council include:

Voluntary Sector

- Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations (ECVO)
- Calgary Chamber of Voluntary Organizations (CCVO)
- Alberta Council of Women's Shelters
- Volunteer Alberta
- HIV Edmonton
- Boys and Girls Clubs of Alberta
- South Regional Joint Planning Group

Insurance Industry

- Independent Insurance Brokers Association of Alberta (IIBAA)
- Representatives of insurers and brokers: IBC and others

Government of Alberta

- Superintendent of Insurance
- Community Development
- Justice
- Representation from other departments as required.

To date, the AVSIC has accomplished the following:

- Information sessions were held in Edmonton (July 12/05) and Calgary (Sept.12/05) to inform stakeholders about the Council and its plans. Reports from the sessions can be found on the ECVO (www.ecvo.ca) and CCVO (www.calgarycvo.org) websites.

(Continued from page 8)

- Connections were made with the Voluntary Sector Forum initiatives, including inviting Connie Berry of the VSF (www.vsf-fsbc.ca/eng/liability/index.cfm) to attend a meeting of the Council to provide updates.
- Connections were made with IBC at the national level, and Grant Kelly and Erica Wieder from Toronto have attended meetings to provide updates on IBC national activities. As well, the IBC website has now included information on risk management for non-profits www.ibt.ca.
- A pilot training event was held in August with underwriters from Royal & Sun Alliance, the ECVO and an MBA student working on insurance issues.

- Funding was secured to develop and deliver training on an Insurance Tool Kit for not-for-profits. The Tool Kit will be launched in March 2006.

The Council has also kept in touch with efforts underway in other regions. In November 2005, the Atlantic Canada Task Force on Insurance Availability and Affordability released its final report, as well as a Voluntary Sector Study it had commissioned. Both these documents can be found on the ECVO website (www.ecvo.ca) in the Insurance Issues section. Although somewhat lengthy for the casual reader, these documents contain a number of excellent recommendations that are worth considering.

One of the most frequently mentioned topics in all the reports and discussions has been the need for

not-for-profit groups and organizations to become better insurance customers, to be more informed about what insurance products they require and how to get them. The soon-to-be-released Tool Kit will help address this need, and organizations can also take steps themselves. It is always a good idea to ask plenty of questions of your broker, to carefully read all the documents received with your policy, and to compare with others to see what they are paying. As consumers of insurance products, not-for-profits should be as well informed as possible.

Stay tuned for more announcements in the coming months! ☐

Val Mayes is the Executive Director of the Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations (ECVO). She can be reached at ecvo@interbaun.com.

AAFRE book donation to RCVO

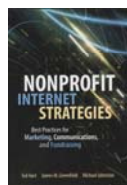
The RCVO warmly thanks the Alberta Association of Fund Raising Executives for the gift of six valuable and informative fund development books. This is a fine example of the AAFRE organization supporting and promoting knowledge development not only for its members but for others as well.

The presentation was made at AAFRE's January meeting where we were reminded of the strong connection between the two organizations through many years. In 2005 AAFRE recognized the service provided by the RCVO to AAFRE and its members by awarding it an Outstanding Service Award.

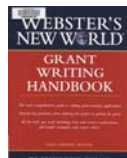
And now, another "recognition". The following titles have been added to the RCVO Library collection thanks to AAFRE.



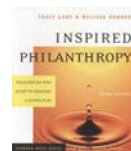
Prospect Research: A Primer for Growing Nonprofits by Cecilia Hogan



Nonprofit Internet Strategies: Best Practices for Marketing, Communications and Fundraising by Ted Hart, James M. Greenfield and Michael Johnston



Webster's New World Grant Writing Handbook by Sara Deming Wason



Inspired Philanthropy: Your Step-By-Step Guide to Creating A Giving Plan by Tracy Gary and Melissa Kohner



Made Possible By: Succeeding with Sponsorship by Patricia Martin



Strategic Fund Development: Building Profitable Relationships That Last by Simone Joyaux

Please check our website at www.rcvo.org and click on "Library" to find out how to access these books or e-mail us at rcvo@macewan.ca.



Not just another acronym.....What the CVI means to you!

by Joelle Fawcett-Arsenault

VSI, RCVO, ECVO, CVI.....in a sector deluged with acronyms and stretched for time, many may find it easier to live in ignorance and go about their day-to-day business rather than attempt to decipher what each could possibly stand for. However, as a core program working for the benefit of volunteers in the voluntary sector, the **CVI** is something you should know about.

Thanks to the CVI, Alberta non-profit and voluntary organizations know about risk management, appropriate screening, recruitment and recognition measures that can make or break an organization. Organizations have the opportunity to apply for funds to run innovative pilot or research projects, and access the resources resulting from past funding. Volunteer Centres are offered professional development funding to strengthen the services they offer to their communities. Thanks to the CVI, Alberta's voluntary sector organizations, their employees and volunteers (current or potential) have the support to ensure they can not only meet their missions, but surpass them.

The **Canada Volunteerism Initiative** (CVI) is a federally funded program that is delivered in Alberta by **Volunteer Alberta**, a leadership organization for the voluntary sector. Facilitated by the national centre, **Volunteer Canada**, every province

and territory has a unique CVI program, adapted to meet each area's needs. With the **core goals** of encouraging volunteerism, supporting the development of organizations that depend on volunteers and working to make all volunteer experiences positive ones, the **CVI** is fundamental to supporting the **civil society** we all desire.

The work of the CVI in Alberta is guided by the Alberta Local Network of the CVI, an advisory-like group of individuals working or volunteering in the sector, usually for organizations with their own network of organizations to which they are connected. These leaders provide insight into what the sector needs to continue to provide the essential services Albertans depend on. From assessing Alberta's capacity to support volunteerism, risk management, insurance, training to volunteer recognition, the CVI, working with Volunteer Alberta is an essential **capacity building** organization in Alberta and Canada.

What does the CVI mean to you?

The CVI is an important demonstration of the commitment of the federal government to the voluntary sector. It offers support to volunteer centres and other organizations that provide direct services to volunteers or voluntary organizations, ensuring that services are available to consumers as needed. The Alberta Local Network Coordinator works closely with Volunteer Alberta to augment existing resources, link people to these resources and to fill gaps that exist in the sector. We celebrate

National Volunteer Week (are you ready to celebrate your volunteers? If not, call us!), International Volunteer Day and Global Youth Service Day. We celebrate and support Albertans to help each other as they always have, and with support, always will.

If you need direction, information, resources or the like, contact us at 780-482-3300 or toll free 1-877-915-6336 and visit our website at www.volunteeralberta.ab.ca.

We are here for you! ☐

Joelle Fawcett-Arsenault is the CVI Capacity Building Manager, Alberta Local Network, Volunteer Alberta. She can be reached at cvi.joelle@volunteeralberta.ab.ca



Celebrate Volunteers!

Global Youth Service Day:
April 21-23, 2006

National Volunteer Week:
April 23-29, 2006

Character in fundraising - principle number two: fervency

by Roger Breault



This article is the second in a series on the subject of seven character traits to develop to become an effective, productive and authentic fundraiser. It is written with the intent to fill a sizable gap in the formation and education of those who want to be true fundraising professionals.

Most fundraisers don't work for a religious charity. Our supporters aren't driven by a theology that fosters automatic positive responses to our requests. Somehow, we must convey our fervor and belief that a gift to our cause makes a difference. If there is any doubt about that in our mind, we're probably working for the wrong charity or in the wrong profession altogether.

The process begins and ends with fervency. How strongly do we deem that "ours" is a good cause? Of course, we cite "pat" answers; a donation will increase "the quality of life" is a common response. As fundraisers, we sometimes switch allegiances, work for different agencies. Proper execution of the mechanics of fundraising isn't enough. To feel good, we must believe in our agency with all our might. Winning fundraisers are fervent about their charity and they show it.

"God, I want patience and I want it right now!" Devout fundraisers know that there will be obstacles, they expect them, and even prepare for them. Fervency translates into a firm and unyielding commitment to

making objectives. More than that, it presupposes problems, that we can learn from them, grow and make our organization grow with us through due diligence.

It's said that one of the most important qualities that a professional fundraiser must develop is persistence. It's true. When analyzed, this character trait derives most of its power from an unwavering devotion to the cause. It begins within us if it's going to manifest booming results.

One of the best books fundraisers can read is Dr. Robert Schuller's *Tough Times Never Last, But Tough People Do*. Disguised as a book on motivation, it gives professionals practical and sound advice on all aspects of the business. True, Schuller wrote the book sighting examples of fundraising for a religious cause, nevertheless he effectively makes a conscious effort to apply the principles of fervency to the secular world. It's "a must read" for anyone interested in developing a strong and genuine character in fundraising.

The application of the principle of creative visualization as a channel to convert plans to reality is central to fundraising. This idea takes its strength from a fervent belief in the cause we are advancing. In the end, it's faith that makes it happen for us: faith on our organization, faith in our donors, faith in our plans and faith in ourselves above all. That's what grants us the satisfaction of a good day's work and a successful career in the vocation.

It matters little what others think, what external stimuli drive us to raise money; successful fundraising must be authentic. We can learn to overcome outside forces: negative friends, foes, pain, grief, or the fear of failure. A fervent belief in our cause helps us surmount even the most difficult challenges. Fortunately for us, this character feature can

grow in us. How? Through daily creative visualization and "possibility thinking", we can realize what we advocate devotedly.

Fervency is a fundamental character trait in fundraising. As Henry Ford stated: "Think you can or think you can't, you're probably right". It's those of us who muster up enough courage and faith on our beliefs that give positive credit to our beloved profession.

A Short List of Selected Readings on the Subject of Fervency in Fundraising:

- LeBoeuf, Michael
The Greatest Management Principle of the World
- Schuller, Dr. Robert
How to Be the Person You Want to Be
- Schuller, Dr. Robert
Tough Times Never Last, But Tough People Do
- Victor, Dr. Mark
How to Sell Yourself to Anyone ☐

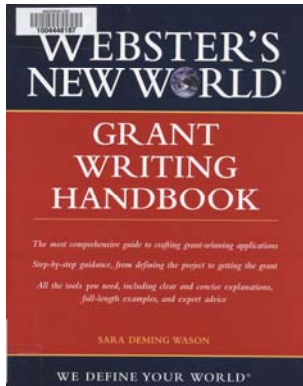
Roger Breault, MCS, CFRE is a private fundraising consultant and manager of Fund Raising Consultants of Alberta. He can be reached at 1-866-420-3338, toll free or 780-455-3338.

**Conference of Champions
AFP 43rd International
Conference on Fundraising
April 2-5, 2006
Georgia World Congress Center
Atlanta
<http://conference.afpnet.org>**

**13th Annual National CAGP-
ACPDTM Conference
April 18-21, 2006
Hyatt Regency Hotel
Calgary, AB**

An educational conference for gift planners, fundraisers and professional advisors. Visit website and on-line registration at www.cagp-acpdp.org

BOOK REVIEW



Webster's New World Grant Writing Handbook

by Sarah Deming Wason
HG 177.W37 2004

Although this book is an American publication, it is an excellent foundation work to include in your personal or organizational library. It presents a good balance of theory and best practice information. The following sections of the book are particularly useful.

Part II – “The New Philanthropy” includes topics such as globalization, donor trends, collaboration, accountability and venture philanthropy. The caution to not get caught “in the donor as god” syndrome captures the challenge faced by non-profit organizations of building meaningful, trusting relationships with funders.

Part III – “Defining the Project” stresses the importance of all levels of the organization being supportive of the project, adhering to “mission-fit” and ensuring organizational readiness.

Part IV – “Finding the Right Funders

for Your Project” provides a comprehensive overview of how to identify potential funders, with an emphasis on tips for organizations with limited resources.

Section V – “Approaching Funders” includes templates for letters of inquiry and concept papers.

The remainder of the book focuses on the development of a proposal, including organizing and writing the proposal and proposal review and follow-up. Sample proposals are provided in the appendices.

Two sections of this book set it apart from the vast array of books written on the topic of writing grants and proposals. These are stewardship and characteristics of an effective fundraiser (the person). Through the inclusion of this content, the author encourages the grant/proposal writer to reflect on his/her core values and personal strengths.

RCVO Contributors

Roger Breault
Andrea Collins
Joelle Fawcett-Arsenault
Wendy MacDonald
Val Mayes

Editor: Lynda Robertson
Production: Wendy Kuzio

RCVO CONNECTIONS

Published 4 times/year free of charge. To receive this newsletter, contact the RCVO at 10700 – 104 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta T5J 4S2 Phone **780-497-5616** or toll free in Alberta at **1-877-897-5616**. Fax **780-497-5634**. E-mail: rcvo@macewan.ca

The Resource Centre for
Voluntary Organizations is
supported by :



The Muttart Foundation

MACEWAN

