



Canadian Journal of Volunteer Resources Management

Issue 18.2

ADVOCACY

2010

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ISSN 1192-1676

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EDITORIAL

“Courage consists not in hazarding without fear; but being resolutely minded in a just cause.”
(Plutarch)

Our theme for this issue, advocacy, can often spark fear or distrust in those who do not really understand what the term means. A few articles in this issue include definitions, as if the authors have anticipated that readers may be confused. I confess, I was in that bewildered group, and now have a clearer understanding not only of its meaning, but of the many shapes and sizes advocacy takes on through the energy and fortitude of those determined groups and individuals you will read about in this issue.

Volunteer Canada’s successful endeavours are a testament to their focused determination and realistic goal setting when dealing with politicians and policy makers within the federal government. Ruth MacKenzie, from Volunteer Canada, shares with us how organizations can advocate for their profession by offering tips and tools to foster good relations and cut through bureaucratic red tape. Yvon Trepanier shows us how personal circumstance fostered creativity and ingenuity that paved the road to his becoming an advocate for Canadians living with Parkinson’s disease. How do volunteer organizations reach common ground with government regulations such as Alberta’s PIPA (Personal Information Protection Act)? Evan Romanow explains how both came under scrutiny in 2007.

“Peer Expert” Tammy Stadt believes that with community support volunteer agencies can collectively establish a cause worth fighting for, promote it through education and then spring potential volunteers into action to advocate for their agencies. Learn about the Elizabeth Fry Society with Nazgol Namazi’s article, and how the Society not only advocates for women by giving them a voice for social justice, but also provides valuable support services and programs for rehabilitation, reintegration, and so much more.

In our resource review, Ruth Pentinga highlights key points for nonprofit boards to follow when they begin the process of advocating for the groups they represent. Ewa Nosek shares how her sudden unemployment with a public service employer led to not only revelations about voluntary sector policy, but about herself, and how she set about to use her experiences to advocate for others and to effect positive changes. Many people advocate on a regular basis in volunteer management positions, but those who need more direction will find lots of helpful ideas in Emanuela Ducharme’s article on how to enrich and further the cause of advocacy.

Whether advocacy comes to you through circumstance or you ardently pursue it, I hope the sage advice and experience from the contributors in this issue will help to create passion and courage in you to plead and work hard for your cause, whatever it may be.

Fear not, go forth and advocate!

Jennifer Campbell, CJVRM Editorial Team

ADVOCATING AT THE FEDERAL LEVEL: VOLUNTEER CANADA'S EXPERIENCE

by Ruth MacKenzie

When the current government announced that it would create a Prime Minister's award for volunteering as part of a more broadly-based commitment to volunteerism, we were very pleased at Volunteer Canada. When the 2010 federal budget allocated new funds to promote volunteerism within the New Horizons Program, we rejoiced even more. Both commitments showed that engaging in advocacy is worthwhile.

Volunteer Canada has been deeply involved in advocacy as a key aspect of public policy work for a number of years. We consider it to be a necessary part of the way in which we fulfill our role as a capacity-building and networking organization. Our role is not merely to advocate on our own, it is to provide tools to groups in the voluntary sector so that they can do their own advocacy.

Volunteer Canada's approach to advocacy builds on practical expertise and shared values. We are very connected to the grassroots and also have strong corporate connections, both of which are tangible assets when dealing with elected officials. Our focus is on leveraging our natural assets and framing issues related to volunteerism in a way that cuts across partisan lines.

Volunteerism can have different connotations to different political families. To some it is a story of empowered citizens and local activists working hand-in-hand with government; to others it is about people taking responsibility for their own communities and not relying on government. The current federal Government explicitly stated that latter view, in its most recent Throne Speech: "Too often . . . grassroots efforts are hobbled by red tape. Too often, local solutions are denied access to government assistance because they *do not fit the bureaucratic definition of the problem.*"¹

In our advocacy efforts with government we bear these differences in mind. We believe we have a

message that will resonate across the spectrum, but we are sensitive to the diverse mindsets of the people with whom we engage in dialogue.

Over the past year, Volunteer Canada's advocacy efforts focused on:

- volunteering and generational shift;
- youth engagement;
- the need for capacity building in the voluntary sector; and
- an over-arching federal government role in fostering and promoting volunteerism.

We worked with the federal government's National Seniors' Council, a citizens' advisory body. In that work we called upon the expertise gained from an earlier corporate-sponsored project on baby-boomer volunteering. The fact that the 2010 budget included funds for volunteering among seniors seems to indicate that our efforts bore some fruit. The following paragraphs highlight our progress and achievements in dialoguing with government to advocate for volunteerism, from youth to seniors.

Early in 2009, when Montreal MP Justin Trudeau got a private member's motion on youth volunteerism onto the Commons' agenda, we worked closely with him. The bill was voted down. However, it did succeed in raising the issue of volunteering in Parliament.

In the fall of 2009, when the Commons Finance Committee invited groups and individuals to make presentations to its annual pre-budget hearings, Volunteer Canada decided to highlight the experiences of its members across Canada. Rather than propose a "boutique" (narrow focus) tax measure, Volunteer Canada suggested that the federal government appeal to the broader public by making a small but strategic investment in building the sector's capacity to recruit, retain and manage volunteers.

Our message reached receptive ears. The recent Throne Speech evoked the need for increased voluntary sector capacity: “Too often, the efforts of communities falter not on account of a lack of effort or heart, but because of a lack of expertise to turn good ideas into reality”.²

Volunteer Canada also worked with Senators, MPs and party officials on the notion of a stronger federal government role in volunteering.

Challenged by Volunteer Canada’s President to do so, the final report of a Senate Committee on Aging recommended further study of volunteerism in Canada. Liberal Senator Terry Mercer decided to champion that cause, and Volunteer Canada has supported his efforts. We provided Senator Mercer with a short paper outlining some of the issues a Senate study of volunteering might consider.

Finally, we have engaged in dialogue with officials from a number of political parties, encouraging them to consider drafting a platform on volunteering for the next election campaign.

In summary, the policy-making operation in Ottawa is a complex web of overlapping responsibilities and power relationships. Organizations that hope to succeed in moving the policy dial must be willing to study that web and take the time and effort to connect with it in a variety of ways. Volunteer Canada’s success this year has been because we have designed our strategy with the needs and concerns of policy makers in mind.

Here are some tips for organizations looking to do the same:

- 1) Focus on the value-added advantage you bring.
- 2) Provide useful materials to political and policy professionals.
- 3) Be open to opportunities, but be cautious about drifting away from your mission.
- 4) Be persistent. Get “face time” with political

people, especially those on the government side –make several calls, send numerous e-mails.

- 5) Understand that government operates in concentric circles. By establishing good relations with the outer circles, you can get through to the inner circles.
- 6) Be patient, realistic and respectful of the multiple demands on political people.

Volunteer Canada has a number of resources to assist voluntary organizations and boards get started in their own policy activities. One of those is: “*Advocacy on the Agenda: preparing voluntary boards for public policy participation*”. That resource is available on our web site at www.volunteer.ca.

*Note from the editor: A review of this resource by Ruth Pentinga is available on pg. 14 of this issue.

Ruth MacKenzie is President of Volunteer Canada, a national nonprofit organization that promotes volunteerism through research, advocacy, and awareness campaigns.

Footnotes:

1. Jean, Michaele, “Speech From The Throne” (House of Commons, Ottawa ON, Mar. 3, 2010), <http://www.speech.gc.ca/eng/index.asp>.
2. Ibid.

PIPA AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT: LEGISLATE OR EDUCATE?

by Evan Romanow

On January 1, 2004, nonprofit and voluntary sector organizations in Alberta became subject to Alberta's *Personal Information Protection Act* (PIPA). PIPA was Alberta's response to the *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act* (PIPEDA) – federal legislation which specified how private sector organizations could collect, use or disclose personal information in the course of commercial activities. Nonprofit/voluntary sector organizations in Alberta remained exempt from PIPA, provided they did not engage in commercial activities. However, that was expected to change in 2007 when a committee of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta (the Alberta Select Special PIPA Review Committee) recommended bringing “all not-for-profit organizations fully within the scope of the Act” (Recommendation 5, Final Report). This is the brief story of how the voluntary sector was able to demonstrate that the needs of the sector and those of government could be realized mutually.

The first step in response to initial concerns about the potentially arduous legislation was to understand the needs and policy interests of stakeholders within the sector. Katherine van Kooy, President and CEO of the Calgary Chamber of Voluntary Organizations (CCVO), would prove integral in providing the foundation for encouraging professionalism in the sector when developing organizational best practices. The CCVO conducted a series of surveys, forums and interviews within the sector on understanding what tools and resources can be developed to help organizations understand and implement best practices for handling personal information.¹ Consultative processes helped develop an understanding of the implications if PIPA was fully applied to nonprofit organizations.

Based on additional consultation with the sector, concerns emerged that legislation requiring organizations to either adapt their current practices or introduce new policies around confidentiality and personal information would present significant

challenges and impediments for many nonprofit and voluntary sector organizations. An additional concern was the capacity of organizations to undertake drastic legal and risk management re-organization required by the legislation to protect personal information. This was especially important considering approximately 58 per cent of Alberta's 19,000 nonprofit/voluntary organizations are run entirely by volunteers. Legislative requirements may also compound escalating financial challenges as nonprofits continue to grapple with declining donations from Albertans, a decrease in community investment budgets from corporate Alberta and diminishing funding from all levels of government.

Volunteer Alberta, CCVO and the Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations began working with Minister Heather Klimchuk's staff in Service Alberta, to gauge the best method of encouraging an increased awareness of the need to protect personal data. However, the question was whether to legislate or to educate. Advocates for organizations engaging volunteers strongly felt that something other than a one-size-fits-all solution was needed. Furthermore, it was felt that education rather than rigid legislation would need to be part of any solution. The goal was to provide guidance to assist organizations to protect personal privacy and to advance the needs of voluntary organizations. This was especially important for those working under legislative or regulatory requirements by virtue of their contracts to deliver services for the Government of Alberta. The sector shared concerns and suggestions with Service Alberta and the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Alberta about ways to develop education and outreach opportunities on privacy legislation and best practices.²

Ultimately, the *Personal Information Protection Amendment Act, 2009* (Bill 54), introduced by MLA Jonathan Denis, did not require all nonprofit/voluntary sector organizations to comply with PIPA regulations. Bill 54 modified the act to

include breach notification and data transfer requirements. Importantly, the final decision of the Minister was based on the nonprofit/voluntary sector assuming and maintaining the highest standards of personal information protection. Bill 54 clarifies PIPA's existing provisions regarding personal employee information and the retention of personal information and includes some revised consent provisions to better address longstanding business practices. Service Alberta Minister Heather Klimchuk felt the amendment would "result in better protection for Albertans' information".³

It is worth noting that Information and Privacy Commissioner Frank Work expressed disappointment that certain nonprofit agencies will be exempt from the new rules. "Many of these organizations collect highly sensitive personal information that should be subject to legislative protection."⁴ Volunteer Alberta and others were of the opinion that legislation alone would not have the desired effect without a vigorous and thorough education plan. Legislation's only value in this regard is that it would give the Government of Alberta the ability to prosecute and/or penalize an organization. The value of a concerted education and implementation plan is that it provides the sector with the ability to manage its own responsibilities through strengthening risk management practices. In fall 2010, Volunteer Alberta will lead seminars throughout Alberta on implementing best practices to protect the personal information of Albertans. The sector will be able to learn what is required to improve information protection policies and practices as efficiently as possible. This will happen by the delivery of educational seminars via videoconferencing (through iCCAN – Innovative Communities Connecting and Networking, available in over 80 locations) plus several in-person regional seminars.

Through persistent, yet focused advocacy, Volunteer Alberta and other nonprofit/voluntary sector

organizations in Alberta were successful in shaping the policy outcome of the Personal Information Protection Amendment Act of 2009, to *not* require all nonprofit/voluntary sector organizations to comply with PIPA regulations. Instead of legislating change, collaborative actions between the provincial government and the sector were taken to implement and increase nonprofit/voluntary sector best practices for protecting personal information. A balance was struck between protecting personal information and privacy, without unduly straining the capacities for delivering charitable services to communities throughout Alberta. Targeted and constructive advocacy for policy development brought favourable results for the nonprofit/voluntary sector.

Evan Romanow is Manager, Communications and Policy with Volunteer Alberta.

Footnotes:

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2. Calgary Chamber of Voluntary Organizations (CCVO), "PIPA, (Personal Information Protection Act) Background," Calgary: CCVO, 2009. <http://www.calgarycvo.org/our-work/policy-issues/provincial-government/pipa-personal-information-protection-act>.
3. Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Alberta, "Commissioner Reacts to Changes to Personal Information Protection Act," Edmonton: Legislative Assembly of Alberta, October 28, 2009.
4. Ibid.

A CHALLENGE OF INSTABILITY IN VOLUNTEER RESOURCES EMPLOYMENT

by Ewa Nosek

In my career managing volunteers, I have experienced more inspiration than challenges. However, my biggest challenge in the voluntary sector came when the agency that I was working for suddenly closed. Surprisingly, this has happened to me twice, leaving me to question my career path. Life in the voluntary sector is complex and often conflicting; after all, we are dealing with intricate dynamics involving boards of directors, staff, volunteers, clients, various stakeholders, funding agencies and the general public.¹ I want to share my challenges and how I overcame them so that others may learn from my experiences.

After several years of employment, with a long-standing public service organization, my colleagues and I were invited to a meeting where we were told that due to unfortunate events, the next workday would be our last. We were shocked. Recent occurrences warned of imminent change but did not indicate unemployment. We received neither compensation for outstanding vacation or severance pay, nor compensation for lieu time or expense payments as there were no funds remaining to pay us. Termination pay was not discussed. Imagine our further surprise upon hearing that a police investigation was underway requiring our witness statements!

Looking back, I cannot recall where my fortitude came from. I had several conflicting concerns: for myself, for my volunteers and for the board members left to deal with the consequences of alleged fraud.

I turned to the Ministry of Labour. The Employment Standards Act states that “Ontario imposes personal liability on directors for employees’ unpaid wages and vacation pay. ‘Wages’ include severance pay, termination pay and overtime pay”.² I faced a moral dilemma: could I hold remaining volunteer board members liable for my wages when another person was allegedly responsible? I called colleagues for assistance but none had similar

experiences to draw from.

“While results from the Volunteer Manager Survey indicate that almost six in ten (58%) of managers of volunteers had sought professional advice or support from a local volunteer centre, 39% had sought advice from Volunteer Canada and 19% had sought advice from the Canadian Centre for Philanthropy. Just over one in ten (11%) had approached all of these organizations for professional advice or support.”³ I contacted every association related to volunteer management for professional advice; unfortunately, not one was able to respond to my inquiries with definitive answers and some did not return my inquiries at all.

Recognizing that “change happens” and having anticipated the change, I was able to monitor and adapt to the inevitable.⁴ My recommendation: conduct a quantitative and qualitative evaluation of an agency prior to employment. Prospective employers/organizations should share their Annual General Reports, including audited financial statements from current and previous years and show a paid receipt of Board of Directors Liability Insurance if requested; if they cannot (or will not), thank them for the interview and look for another opportunity.

The multi-layered effects of the crisis on staff, volunteers, clients, funders and creditors were monumental. According to Statistics Canada, seven per cent of Canadians volunteer on boards.⁵ How well they are trained and made aware of their fiduciary responsibilities is not documented. I believe that all potential board members should read [20 Questions Directors of Not-for-Profit Organizations Should Ask about Fiduciary Duty](#).⁶ My experience has taught me that “organizations are most adaptive when they are almost out of control or hitting ‘rock bottom’”.⁷ At this stage, the adaptive nature is of little consequence to the dying agency.

The board had been using a governance model and those remaining were very appreciative of any assistance from a past employee, more familiar with day-to-day operations. Thus, I became a volunteer. My energies focused on crisis management for my volunteers and ways to support, inform and lobby to promote change. Upon organizing a final volunteer meeting where legal details were provided by remaining board members, I acknowledged their shock but focused my efforts on validating volunteers' feelings and helping them focus on what they could control. "Successful change initiatives focus their efforts on the proactive steps... that create energy and engagement around the change."⁸ I elaborated on the value they had brought to the organization and highlighted their competencies and individual contributions. My positive communication style incorporated new volunteer engagement options that volunteers could explore when ready. By empowering volunteers to look forward, they were better equipped to resolve their personal grief relating to the situation.

The Canada Volunteerism Initiative's ICT (Information, Communications and Technology) study claims that "the more Managers of Volunteer Resources experience job stress, the less they use email for organizational purposes".⁹ Personally, the technology was very helpful as several volunteers were away for various reasons. Creditors banged on doors, a police investigation was in full swing and closure loomed. As my opportunity to share Board approved information narrowed, email communication facilitated messaging.

As the former PIPEDA¹⁰ Privacy Officer, my personal values and professional ethics would not allow me to ignore the legislation I upheld as an employee. I volunteered my services to personally pack volunteer and client files that were then prepared for secure archival storage. Some colleagues advised against getting involved in this manner; others called me courageous. I believe "courage often

means making choices between several bad options."¹¹

Our profession unfortunately did not have any legal advisors and as an unemployed individual I could not afford legal counsel. Relying on my own research, I refrained from commenting on events; being sued for slander and libel by any individuals or agencies was not part of my plan. I accessed great networks of objective and supportive individuals. Gaining confidence from the instability, I continued to believe Eleanor Roosevelt: "no one can make you feel inferior without your consent". I was willing to make decisions and take the first step towards my future. I did not risk my personal integrity or reputation or compromise my professional standards of excellence but firmly retained a sense of optimism.

"Two million people are employed by nonprofit organizations - over one million of them full-time."¹² They are predominantly women who are trying to balance work and family life.¹³ Thankfully I am one of them, dedicated to socially meaningful work. I share with many a passionate commitment for volunteerism and its place in the fabric of our society. "We don't just do good works. We are irreplaceable and our services are invaluable. We have the stats to back this up. Now it is time to start showing it."¹⁴

In order to attract and retain these individuals, the nonprofit sector needs to define legal rights and issues as they relate to their employees. I believe that awareness, research and further education needs to take place regarding what occurs to employees in the voluntary sector, when an agency goes bankrupt or programs or services are suspended. Our professional associations must provide support services and increase their involvement in the issues that affect the integral individuals supporting citizen engagement in Canada. Managers of volunteer resources need to know their rights and have a clear plan of action. This information is essential to

improving our professional profile and the working conditions of individuals employed in this sector.

Ewa Nosek has over 16 years of experience in the volunteer sector, working for both national and regional not-for-profit organizations. She is currently Coordinator of Volunteer Services for Public Health at the Region of Peel. This article is abbreviated from Ewa's CAVR certification paper. For more information about certification, visit www.cavrcanada.org.

Footnotes:

1. Chloe O'Loughlin, VOLUNTARY SECTOR LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES Examples, Current Challenges, Complexities and Learning Outcomes Discussion Document (Ottawa: National Learning Initiative, September 2003) 73.
2. Mary T Satterfield, Karla K Gower, The Law & Volunteers: A Guide (Carp, Johnstone Training and Consultation, January 1993) 48-49.
3. Fataneh Zarinpoush, Cathy Barr, Jason Moreton, Managers of Volunteers: A Profile of the Profession (Toronto: Imagine Canada, 2004) 16.
4. Spencer Johnson, MD., Who Moved My Cheese (New York, New York: G.P Putnam's Sons, 2002) 74.
5. The Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector in Canada. National Survey of Nonprofit and Voluntary Organizations (NSNVO), (Toronto: Imagine Canada, 2006) <http://www.imaginecanada.ca/files/en/nsnvo/sector_in_canada_factsheet.pdf>
6. Jane Burke-Robertson, 20 Questions Directors of Not-for-profit Organizations Should Ask about Fiduciary Duty (Toronto, Ontario 2009).
7. O'Loughlin 83.
8. Hiatt 102.
9. Yvonne Harrison, Vic Murray, James MacGregor, The Impact of ICT on the Management of Canadian Volunteer Programs, Information and Communication Technology: Beyond Anecdotes (Toronto: Canadian Centre for Philanthropy, 2004) 18.
10. Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act, Office of Privacy Commissioner of Canada, 2000 <http://www.privcom.gc.ca/legislation/02_07_01_e.asp>
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12. Community Newspaper Article 2 - Seeing the Community, (Ottawa: Voluntary Sector Forum, June 2005) <http://www.vsf-fsbc.ca/eng/resources_tools/press/jun05c2.cfm>
13. Zarinpoush 18.
14. Strengthening the Capacity Nonprofit and Voluntary Organizations to Serve Canadians: Recommendations based on the national Survey of Nonprofit and Voluntary Organizations (Toronto: Imagine Canada, 2006) 24

WHY DO I VOLUNTEER TO BE AN ADVOCATE?

by Yvon Trepanier

I did not start out to be an advocate for anything or anyone. It seems like advocacy just came my way. Perhaps I liked to voice my opinion when I did not agree with the status quo.

When I was a teacher in Vancouver I volunteered as a rowing coach. This role was not referred to as “volunteer” since it seemed to be part of the job and was therefore expected of all teachers. Rowing was a trendy sport and was popular with the students. However, I realized that because most of the extracurricular activities were sport oriented, many students were still not involved in any activities. So I decided to do something about it – to advocate on behalf of those students, to find suitable but fun activities for them. I began by looking at what I could offer them. At that time I was teaching Japanese and noticed several students had an interest in Japanese animation. So I set up an anime club. It was a very successful venture and it even encouraged some students to apply to the Emily Carr College for the Arts and a future career in animation. Another opportunity for an extracurricular activity presented itself when I combined the unused greenhouse on the school property with my interest in gardening. I organized the horticulture club (we named it the horticulture club because it sounds better than garden club on a university application form).

After being diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease at a young age, I moved to a cottage near Victoria. At this time of personal crisis I was helped by the services offered by the Victoria Epilepsy and Parkinson’s Centre (VEPC) so I decided to join the organization. They provided many different programs but I soon noticed that most of the services were aimed at seniors and that very little was offered for the growing numbers of young onset Parkinsonians. So I decided to do something about it, and I became an advocate for the young onset group. Soon I was invited to volunteer as a VEPC board member, and before long I was asked to be chair of the board.

At this point I noticed that the Victoria region was not participating with other Parkinson’s societies nationally. Once again, I decided to do something about it; so I began attending the national organization’s meetings, and before long I was asked to be on the board of Parkinson Society Canada (PSC). It was a good time for me to be involved, as PSC was beginning to recognize the need to actively advocate on behalf of people right across Canada who were living with Parkinson’s. Shortly after joining the board, I was asked to chair the newly formed advocacy committee. A lot of work was needed to better the lives of people with Parkinson’s disease so once again I decided to do something about it. Since that time, I have been involved in activities that advocate for Canadians living with Parkinson’s.

The work of our advocacy committee is very broad. It includes writing letters to insurance companies to appeal decisions in which insurance was denied, collaborating with PSC’s regional partners to enable treatments and services for all Canadians living with Parkinson’s, bringing Parkinson’s to the attention of all levels of government and working specifically with Health Canada to ensure Parkinson’s disease is part of their agenda. Our committee ensures that people with Parkinson’s are actively involved, so that their own voices are always heard.

When you volunteer for a cause, it is usually because you care for that cause and the people or animals or plants that it serves. And sometimes you volunteer because those people or animals or plants need a voice – and that is advocacy. Why am I continually asked to join advocacy committees? It is probably because I complain a lot! A complaint is a voice in need – so I decided to do something about it!

Yvon Trepanier is a professional languages teacher from Vancouver and an active volunteer for Parkinson Society Canada, both nationally and in Southwestern Ontario. He now lives on a hosta farm near London, Ontario.

WHAT DOES IT REALLY MEAN TO ADVOCATE FOR OUR PROFESSION?

by Emanuela Gennaccaro Ducharme

I am sure many of my colleagues in volunteer management have wondered how to advocate and perhaps have asked themselves the question every once in a while: “Why do it at all?” I know I have voiced similar questions from time to time. What does it really mean to those of us in the field of volunteer management to advocate for our profession?

Princeton University’s Wordnet dictionary defines the verb “to advocate” as:

- pushing for something;
- pleading for a cause or propounding an idea;
- arguing the case of another;
- speaking in support of something;
- supporting someone to make their voice heard; or
- speaking up for oneself.¹

With that definition in hand, the answer could be very simply stated as, “Yes. Of course we are advocates.” But how exactly does this play out?

I can safely share that I take on the role of “advocate” on an almost daily basis. I address questions and statements around:

- why to engage volunteers;
- how to engage volunteers;
- what is the purpose of a volunteer management framework; and
- the issues and dilemmas around lack of time, complexity of roles/multiple hats, lack of content matter expertise, lack of legislation guiding the work, lack of upper, middle and frontline support.

The list could easily go on and on. Likely, many of us have these questions and statements posed to us on a regular basis. We are asked to respond and provide clarity, which of course we do.

What?

If we accept that we are advocates for this field of work, then we need to go beyond being “content matter experts” of volunteer management theory and process. We need to go beyond providing the responses to such questions or statements. It is so much more.

So what does more look like?

There is a process before us that we must accept to take on and lead. The process will assist us in building a supportive environment, not only for our volunteers and the programs that require their efforts, but will also support us as professionals who oversee such programs. There are probably a thousand and one opportunities where we can present our case, push the envelope forward and have the conversations about all that encompasses the world of volunteer management. This is a multi-layered approach. It is not a sprint but more like a marathon relay. Look at this as an opportunity. We as advocates, as volunteer management professionals, no matter what our specific title, have incredible opportunity to influence change from all levels and from various angles of our organizations and industry. My personal view is that there is no one-size-fits-all approach and each program/organization may need a somewhat different spin on how best to tackle the area of advocacy.

Now what?

Let us consider just a few opportunities where we can contribute and make even small changes that could have an impact and ultimately influence change. Opportunities like an active membership in your local Association of Volunteer Administrators. In my community it is the Hamilton Administrators of Volunteers. Building a relationship with your local volunteer centre will assist you in staying current and on top of what is going on within the sector. Network with local colleagues, share and learn from one another, understand the local climate

around your work, both internally and community-wide. These connections are instrumental and there is so much value in fostering this level of awareness, especially when looking through the advocacy lens. Consider those local relationships as key components to our roles as advocates. Another consideration is to have a pulse on what is happening provincially through groups like PAVR-O in Ontario. It is imperative that we as professionals become more aware of the issues at hand, who is leading the charge, and consider how we can contribute. In addition, utilize industry resources, such as the Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement, Industry Standards of Practice, and other Core Competency tools, and speak to these documents to help support what we do in the field. Once we have equipped ourselves we then have a responsibility to communicate, inform, educate, and encourage the awareness building with those around us. As advocates we should look for the opportunities to lead the conversations that provide the influence and confidence to promote change.

Are we advocates? Most certainly, and the opportunities are endless.

Emanuela Gennaccaro Ducharme is a Volunteer Management Specialist for the Community Services Department, City of Hamilton, current Past-President of the Hamilton Administrators of Volunteers and Chair of the PAVR-O Certification Committee.

Footnotes:

1. wordnet.princeton.edu

Newsbits

Thank you and very best wishes to Joan Wyatt who has recently retired from the CJVRM editorial team. Thanks also to Carol Cheung who has wrapped up service as a Regional Representative. A warm welcome to Maria Redpath, who joins the editorial team and Lisa Michetti, our new Regional Representative in Edmonton. If you are interested in volunteering with CJVRM, please inquire by email to contact@cjvrm.org.

LOOKING AHEAD

PAVR -O Conference 2011
June 1 - 3 in Mississauga, Ontario.

Visit www.pavro.on.ca for more details.



THE ELIZABETH FRY SOCIETY OF OTTAWA: ADVOCACY FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

by Nazgol Namazi

What is advocacy? The act of supporting or defending a cause is defined as advocacy, but more specifically it is the act of seeking justice for those who are not able to stand up for themselves and have their voices heard. The Elizabeth Fry Society of Ottawa is a nonprofit organization, which advocates for the rights of women and girls who are in conflict with the law and find themselves tangled in our complex criminal justice system. Our main goals are to influence policies affecting women and to ensure that women receive equal access to social services.

Since equity plays a significant role in receiving justice, our vision embodies social equity and social change through a holistic approach to programming that will be beneficial to our clients, members and the community as a whole. Therefore, our main purpose for advocacy is to ensure that women receive substantive equality regardless of race, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or social and economic status.

This organization offers three volunteer programs where volunteers have the opportunity to advocate, get involved and make a difference in their community. The Court Support and Accompaniment Volunteer Initiatives Program offers an opportunity to the volunteers at the Courthouse to provide information and assistance to women and girls attending court proceedings. On the other hand, the Court Release Program provides support and services to individuals released from custody while at the Courthouse. This may include clothing as needed, referrals to shelters, referrals to a variety of Elizabeth Fry counselling programs and other social agencies available in the community. Volunteers can also assist women to engage in activities at J.F. Norwood Transitional House.

As a volunteer Court Worker I provide assistance to anyone who walks into our office. I refer women to community programs provided by Elizabeth Fry as well as other social agencies within Ottawa to help

them overcome addiction, anger and other personal problems. The main purpose of these support services is to reintegrate the women into society. As part of my daily tasks I visit women in the cell block to find out if there is anything Elizabeth Fry could possibly help them with including contacting family members, friends, and lawyers. As part of their release plans, the women are often interested in Elizabeth Fry programs such as Theft Prevention, Anger Management, Youth Diversion and Community Justice. Essentially, we actively collaborate with all the community service providers to ensure that women receive the help that they need to rehabilitate and prevent further conflict with the law.

One of the main reasons I decided to join this organization is because I firmly believe that effective social services are necessary to assist women involved in the criminal justice system, since their issues may be due to deeper social problems. Being part of this organization provided me with a new perspective on the various barriers faced by those who are socially vulnerable, particularly women.

Women have historically been disadvantaged and have suffered as a result of prejudice and stereotypes in Canadian society. In my opinion, women who become criminalized or are at risk of becoming criminalized are often victims themselves. The underlying social problems involved in their circumstances such as poverty, abuse and addiction reduce their chances of receiving social justice. These women are disadvantaged because many lack education and financial independence, which renders them marginalized. To promote equality, it is crucial to advocate for the rights of these women.

Race is also a major factor in terms of one's inequality. Aboriginal women are further disadvantaged because their specific needs are often ignored when they are in conflict with the law. When the justice system fails to address their issues,

Elizabeth Fry Society intervenes by providing community-based resources to fit their specific needs. These services are essential for women to obtain proper housing, gain financial independence and increase self esteem.

Therefore, when someone is in conflict with the law, knowledge of the criminal justice system and the social services available become fundamental. Nonprofit organizations provide valuable services to those who are disadvantaged and experience prejudice. Elizabeth Fry relies heavily on volunteers to take up their cause and promote social justice. The friendly staff and volunteers at the Courthouse will gladly provide information to any prospective volunteer regarding our programs. Volunteering at Elizabeth Fry is an extremely rewarding experience and I highly recommend it to anyone interested in social equity, particularly those who advocate for the rights of women. I consider myself a proud member of Elizabeth Fry Society and will continue advocating for social justice.

Nazgol Namazi is a third year student at Carleton University majoring in Law. She enjoys volunteering for various organizations that promote social justice and human rights. She has been volunteering for Elizabeth Fry Society of Ottawa since May 2009.

We are experimenting with a new format this issue – we hope you like it!
Feedback on the new format or other topics is welcomed at subscriptions@cjvrm.org

Thank you very much to everyone who completed the Canadian Journal of Volunteer Resources Management 2010 Readers' Survey online at www.cjvrm.org. Your feedback helped us in determining themes for 2011 issues and in laying out this new format for the Journal. Congratulations to Christine Martin from Evergreen who was the lucky winner of the Chapters gift card!

Deadlines for Submissions and Themes

Issue	Deadline	Theme
Volume 18.3	Articles due end of September 2010	Recruitment & Screening
Volume 19.1	Articles due end of December 2010	Education & Training
Volume 19.2	Articles due end of March 2011	Recognition
Volume 19.3	Articles due end of August 2011	New Trends

RESOURCE REVIEW: ADVOCACY ON THE AGENDA

by Ruth Pentinga

Advocacy on the Agenda – Preparing voluntary boards for public policy participation Volunteer Canada, 2003.



Available at:

<http://volunteer.ca/files/boardadvocacymanual.pdf>

Getting nonprofit boards charged-up about advocacy to effect public policy is the tone of this resource. And, some nonprofit boards may ask: “why would we take the time to get involved with this?” This resource provides some very convincing arguments as to why. It offers valuable how-to steps, some tools, options, suggestions, recommendations, additional resources and even samples for those who are keen to explore the idea and/or undertake the exciting venture of advocacy.

Managers of volunteer resources who are fortunate enough to work with their board may find this tool helpful to get their board energized about advocacy. It may prompt a board that is feeling a little winded, out-of-the-loop or disheartened to get involved on a broader level that may ultimately help with their organization’s issues and community’s concerns.

Advocacy on the Agenda discusses how boards can keep advocacy in the back of their minds as members build “a culture of participating in the public process”, to the point of action. Managers of volunteer resources are in an excellent position to help boards identify issues to be addressed as they are involved in all areas of the organization. To ease any misgivings, they can also work internally to recruit

board members who possess advocacy experience.

This is a practical resource to inform any decision making process around advocacy by laying out the dos, the don’ts and the how-tos. Boards can decide to address the federal, provincial or municipal governments depending upon the issue. Broad details of each level of government are explained as well as how to go about approaching each level. The advantages and challenges of creating coalitions with other organizations to address issues are also outlined.

The resource cautions that the issues to be addressed should be narrowed down to one or two. Any spending on political activities is limited to within the acceptable parameters and allowable activities for charities. In addition, consulting with the charity’s lawyers is always a prudent exercise throughout the process. The authors advise having a clear position and presentation and knowing the issue and target audience before stepping into the public process.

Boards are made up of skilled, experienced, enthusiastic and connected individuals who could in fact work to make a real impact and difference on a broader scale in public policy. Boards may not be aware that they are already involved in advocacy. It is “at the heart of all non-profit and charity organizations – incorporated into their mission statements – as they act as advocates for the clients they serve”. We function in a political system that allows for “broader involvement of the public decision making process” and, given that permission, why not speak up? It is our Canadian democratic right and responsibility. We cannot solve all the internal problems of our own organizations without addressing the larger root problems that cause many of them in the first place. We have to look outside of ourselves and in so doing effect real change.

Ruth Pentinga is the Director of Volunteer Resources at the Yonge Street Mission in Toronto.

PEER EXPERT

by Tammy Stadt

Question: How do I get volunteers to advocate for an issue that is important to my agency?

Response: In the community health centre sector, any advocacy work starts with education on the issue. Our starting place is the passion and interest of the individuals and the community as a whole. For example, our Centre recently hosted a forum with Dr. Ted Boadway from the Ontario Medical Association to speak on the health effects of air pollution. Of the eighty community members in attendance, approximately twenty expressed interest in being further involved. The issue itself became our volunteer recruitment tool with the education session serving as the foundation of the orientation process. Creating terms of reference for what the group wanted to achieve gave us a basis for volunteer position descriptions. The organization used the interest from the community as a measuring stick for determining resources allocated to the issue.

During the education process we make a concerted effort to avoid using the words “advocate” or “advocacy”. We have found that asking someone to advocate can be a scary proposition as many community members do not understand the word, what you are asking or why. In one session, the use of these terms resulted in the resignation of one senior volunteer who expressed concern that she did not want to “relive the 60s”.

Merriam-Webster Dictionary of law offers the following definition:

ad•vo•ca•cy

1 : the profession or work of an advocate

2 : the action of advocating, pleading for, or supporting a cause or proposal¹

Advocacy does not need to be so scary. Is the act of volunteering itself not the greatest form of advocacy? If the volunteer who works at our coffee bar or makes friendly visits did not support our cause we would be pleading for someone who does. Where

would many of the changes in our political, economic and social systems be without the volunteers? The answer is simple – nowhere.

Within a community development/capacity building approach, the volunteer is empowered to help develop the actions (position duties and responsibilities) to create change. We know that the most successful positions are created when volunteers provide input into defining their duties. Using this approach, retention is higher as the volunteer wants to achieve the identified change in their community. They either stay until the change has been achieved or commit to creating change in other ways, such as committee or board membership.

I think Margaret Wheatley stated it nicely: “I work from the firm belief that ‘Whatever the problem, community is the Answer’”.² The challenge for us as managers of volunteer resources is to remember that education can engage individuals in our community to advocate for us. They can plead for or support the day-to-day activities that help our organizations achieve our mandates, encourage fundraising initiatives that keep our doors open and be the social change which ensures our profession is recognized and supported.

Tammy Stadt is a Community Health Worker with the Barrie Community Health Centre. Tammy is a member in good standing with PAVR-O, CAVR and the Barrie Association of Volunteer Administrators (BAVA). She is also a Regional Advisor for the Canadian Journal of Volunteer Resources Management.

Footnotes:

1. advocacy." Merriam-Webster's Dictionary of Law. Merriam-Webster, Inc. 12 Apr. 2010. <Dictionary.com <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/advocacy>>.

2. Margaret Wheatly , as quoted in Bank of Ideas e-newsletter, <http://www.bankofideas.com.au/Newsletter/Nov09/newsletter1109.htm>

CANADIAN JOURNAL OF VOLUNTEER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Editorial Process and Guidelines for Authors

Objective

The Canadian Journal of Volunteer Resources Management is intended:

1. to serve as a credible source of information on the management of volunteers in Canada;
2. to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and to encourage networking among managers of volunteers;
3. to provide a professional development tool for managers of volunteers;
4. to recognize and encourage Canadian talent in the field of management of volunteers;
5. to include in each issue at least two articles that will consider different views on a specific and predetermined theme.

Target Audience

The Journal's intended audience includes managers of volunteers, educators, media and funders of not-for-profit organizations across the country.

Submissions

All manuscripts will be accepted on diskette or via e-mail in either Microsoft Word or Word Perfect. Submissions should be written according to "Canadian Style - A Guide to Writing and Editing" - Secretary of State, Dundurn Press. External reviewers may be engaged to review content if deemed advisable by the committee.

The revised draft is edited for clarity and consistency by the Editorial Team.

The edited version is returned to the author for acceptance along with an approval form for signature.

The signed form is to be returned to the Editorial Team within a week along with any suggestions for final revisions.

Format and Style

Authors are asked to respect the following word counts:

	Words	Pages
Lead Article	1000	5-6
Secondary Article	700-800	2-3
Book Review	150	1

The lead article will look at the topic in some depth and will normally require the author to conduct research into current trends and perspectives on the subject.

The secondary article will adopt a more practical approach, including personal experiences and opinions.

Advertising

Limited advertising space will be allowed in the Journal, for materials of direct relevance to managers of volunteer service, and as long as it conforms to the guidelines set out by the Editorial Team.

Guidelines:

1. Only ¼ page and ½ page ads will be accepted.
2. Ad must be camera-ready.
3. A maximum of one page of ads will be permitted per issue.
4. Job ads are not recommended.
5. Cost is to be determined by the Editorial Team.