



Canadian Journal of Volunteer Resources Management

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RECOGNITION

2011

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Letters commenting on articles are welcome, but may be edited for brevity and clarity.

EDITORIAL

I must admit that I love it when someone unexpectedly says “Hey, thanks for that!” After nearly forty years of marriage, my husband still looks to me for words of praise for having finished a simple chore from the household ‘to do list’, the kids still beam when told “I’m proud of you” and if they in turn say “thank you mom” well....words cannot describe the happy feeling that produces!

Back in the winter of 1993 CJVRM’s Editorial Team put together an important issue on Recognition. Its editorial said “it will become common to look at recognition as a management process, to equate it with such things as creating policies and support systems that strive to meet the volunteer’s motivational needs and, in turn, the client’s needs”. Eighteen years later we see that through education, training and hard work volunteer resource management has become a solid profession with policies and procedures to guide and support us in our work. However, while we can have a well-thumbed manual on the management of volunteer services to guide us, the important chapter on meaningful recognition is always painfully thin.

Meaningful recognition often requires inspiration. This issue covers a lot of ground . Read it from cover to cover and you will discover new and exciting ways to recognize the broad spectrum of your volunteers.

The nonprofit sector is very lucky to have the expertise and support of Volunteer Canada, not just during National Volunteer Week, but year round. Paula Speevak Sladowski brings us up-to-date with the latest research on who is volunteering and what they expect and need from their volunteer experience. Anna Paranich’s article continues discussing the challenges of motivation and retention. She created a volunteer position that she calls ‘Development Facilitator’. I know that you will seriously consider adding this to your list of recognition ideas.

When planning this issue we let our imaginations run wild. We solicited and received many excellent articles. Marianne Wade clarifies who can receive Canada’s highest honour, the Order of Canada. Debi Zaret describes how a new volunteer program built in volunteer recognition right from the beginning. You, our readers, sent in some exciting recognition events that you have organized. While we could not reprint them all, we have included five to share with you here. When Maria Redpath was faced with three key challenges with one of her volunteer teams, she got busy and planned a very creative recognition event that more than satisfied her objectives.

All managers of volunteer resources put a lot of time and energy into their recognition events. Volunteers always seem pleased but what do they really think? We interviewed three volunteers to find out in our article “Three Volunteers. Three Takes on Recognition”.

We were all touched by Marlene Beitz’ article. She sums it up best when she says “Volunteers may start to give their time to a cause or purpose in which they believe, but they will stay where they have been cared for and where they have been acknowledged in individual ways”.

Chris Jarvis, Editorial Team

VOLUNTEERING RECOGNITION IN A CHANGING LANDSCAPE

by Paula Speevak-Slawdowski

How does the evolving landscape of volunteering influence volunteer recognition practices? What are the implications of the changing demographics, the state of the economy, the proliferation of new social media and shifts in public policy? How are organizations responding to the trend towards skills-based, short-term volunteer involvement? “Passion, Action, Impact”, the theme of National Volunteer Week 2011, reflected this dynamic environment.

Volunteer recognition, which is the focal point of National Volunteer Week, is also the foundation of volunteer resource management year-round. In addition to volunteer appreciation events, cards, awards and the myriad ways to say “thank-you”, recognizing what Canadians are looking for in their volunteer experience will help organizations develop more holistic and integrated volunteer recognition practices.

In *Bridging the Gap: Enriching the Volunteer Experience for a Better Future for our Communities*, seven key characteristics of volunteering were identified. These may not be surprising to the seasoned practitioner, however, few organizations in the study indicated that they had dedicated resources and strategies to respond to these realities and fewer organizations were linking them to volunteer recognition.

Key characteristics of volunteering are:

1. Volunteering changes throughout our lifecycle.
2. Volunteers today are different.
3. Volunteering is a two-way relationship.
4. Volunteering is personal.
5. Volunteering is a way to transfer and develop skills.
6. Volunteering in groups appeals to all ages.
7. Finding satisfying volunteer opportunities is not easy for everyone.

Recognizing where volunteers are in their lifecycle and what role volunteering plays in their life can be a critical part of the recruitment, retention and recognition process. In addition to their passions, skills and interests, the conditions, schedule and format of their volunteering is as much a factor for people in selecting organizations in which to engage.

Baby-boomer volunteers (born between 1946 and 1964) have been of particular interest in the field of volunteer resources management. While not a homogenous group, baby-boomers are living longer, working longer and have multiple demands on their time. Many are caring for aging parents, supporting adult children, travelling and helping out with grandchildren. Having flexible, seasonal, low-pressure volunteer opportunities may appeal to those at this point in their lifecycle. Accommodating these circumstances may be the most powerful form of volunteer recognition because it recognizes the other things that are important in peoples’ lives.

The diagram below illustrates the range of lenses through which Canadians are searching for satisfying volunteer opportunities.¹ By recognizing that people are looking for volunteer opportunities that meet different search criteria, organizations can better understand the strength of potential matches. Knowing how important each lens is to individual volunteers, and not only at the initial interview, can provide a basis on which to check in on volunteer satisfaction or to revisit at evaluation points. The core to this approach to recognition is to stay tuned in to how volunteering fits into individual life journeys.



Today’s volunteers are more goal-oriented; their work, family and social lives are more structured; and they are more tech-savvy. People are more often in temporary positions in the paid workforce, are more mobile, independent and prefer shorter-term volunteer assignments. Volunteer recognition

practices that respond to these trends might include targeted volunteer assignments that are organized efficiently, that allow volunteers to take their own initiative, with clear intended outcomes. Letting volunteers know the impact of their volunteer time can be one of the highest forms of volunteer recognition.

Volunteering is a Two-Way Relationship and Builds Social Capital

If you agree that volunteering is a two-way relationship, how do you balance the needs of your organization with the interests of volunteers? It begins with creating an accepting and open dialogue about the benefits that volunteering offers. Having a professional interest and/or personal goals for volunteering does not negate the generosity of spirit and a desire to contribute or give back to the community. Some may want to get involved to make business contacts, to develop their leadership skills, to scout out potential employers, to get exposure to broader social-political issues, to build their curriculum vitae or to get references for contracts, proposals or educational programs.

Making it comfortable for potential volunteers to express what they are looking for helps determine whether or not there is a potential match. In addition to these more concrete benefits of volunteering, having a sense of belonging, being valued and making common cause with others can satisfy our needs on a human level. Again, recognizing that volunteers have goals and attending to them is a very powerful form of volunteer recognition.

It is important to recognize and respond to these trends with volunteer opportunities that appeal to volunteers today. This can be challenging for one-to-one volunteering, such as visiting, tutoring and mentoring, where building a trusting relationship can take time. The research also shows that many people, especially baby-boomers, are looking for meaning in their lives and that many would like to volunteer in direct service to others. Volunteer Canada will be exploring this in future research. “Volunteers: Passion. Action. Impact.” is the theme of this year’s campaign. It is based on the individual

volunteer super-heroes across Canada who dedicate themselves to making their communities better – and making Canada a great place to live. National Volunteer Week was first proclaimed in 1943 as an initiative to draw the public's attention to the vital contribution of women to the war effort on the home front. In the late 1960s, the focus was revived and broadened to include all community volunteers.²

This 2011 National Volunteer Week campaign reflected some of the trends we identified in our research; that volunteers are as passionate as ever, in addition to being more purposeful in their volunteering; that people are ready for voluntary action, if we can create the conditions and opportunities that meet their goals; that volunteers have a huge impact in communities; and that they want us to tell them about the difference they are making. Volunteer recognition is highlighted during National Volunteer Week but, as noted, it is also integrated into volunteer resource management year-round by recognizing the volunteers’ lifecycle points, goals, skills, action, passion and impact!

Volunteer Canada is very interested in hearing how the trends in volunteering that have emerged though our research have influenced your volunteer resource management practices and about your innovative volunteer recognition strategies. Volunteer Canada provides leadership on citizen engagement and volunteerism in Canada. For more than 30 years, Volunteer Canada has been developing programs, leading national dialogues and conducting research and training around volunteerism and civic participation.

Paula Speevak Sladowski is the Director of Applied Research and Public Policy at Volunteer Canada. Volunteer Canada partners and collaborates with volunteer centres nationwide. Paula teaches nonprofit management and governance at the University of Ottawa and Carleton University. The research report, Bridging the Gap can be accessed at www.volunteer.ca/study.

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MOVING BEYOND BANQUETS AND PINS: MAKING THE CONNECTION BETWEEN VOLUNTEER MOTIVATION AND RECOGNITION

by Anna Paranich

What motivates Canadians to volunteer? As managers of volunteers, we can likely list the most commonly cited motivators: contributing to one's community, meeting new people and helping a cause close to one's heart. More and more though, what seems to be appearing in my organization's volunteer applications (and yours as well, I am sure) are the skill development, resume building and networking opportunities that can come with a quality volunteer experience. Volunteers are now, more than ever, expecting to deliver an outcome rather than just volunteer their time. What does this mean for the future of our volunteer programs? For me, it means that I will need to re-evaluate my volunteer positions to ensure I am attracting this "new" volunteer. It also demonstrates the importance of linking volunteer recognition and the entire volunteer involvement cycle to these evolving motivations and expectations.

Organizations are expected to clearly define the roles and boundaries of volunteers BUT many volunteers want the flexibility to initiate what they have to offer.¹

Was my organization ready for this? I still needed youth volunteers for summer day camps and volunteers to hand out programs and assist with crowd control at special events. I also work in a unionized environment where "high skilled" often translates to "staff only". Most of the higher-skilled positions that we do offer are still very structured and rigid. Regardless of this, these positions garner more interest than we can accommodate, making us turn individuals away. What was really needed was some flexibility within our program to accommodate a different volunteer, looking for a different experience.

Not for profit organizations are, in my view, struggling to create enough meaningful positions that truly challenge and address the needs of today's volunteers. They are having a hard time going to where the volunteer is.²

So, how would I move from formal banquets and service pins to this new volunteer recognition culture, while honouring the work and commitment of a large group of volunteers that have been involved in my organization for years? Better yet, how would I engage a new group of volunteers

looking for a unique and challenging opportunity to ensure the continuing success of my organization?

What I crafted was an opportunity that was flexible in nature, challenging, project-based and offered highly skilled volunteers the chance to connect with others and share their expertise. The position also allowed my agency the opportunity to rejuvenate a tired volunteer recognition program by injecting a few more personal, learning based opportunities. I began to draft a position description to promote the opportunity at my city's upcoming Timeraiser event. We named the position Development Facilitator. It would allow a volunteer to translate their skills in a particular area into a workshop or lecture for the current volunteer pool. The workshop would be developed by the volunteer and, subsequently, a meeting with me would occur to ensure we were on the right track. I would then draft an invitation and send it out to my volunteer pool as a way of saying thank you. Because the workshops would cost little and would require minimal time to coordinate, it worked best to offer one every few months with a different focus. This meant that the workshops would become more personal and relevant to different types of volunteers. This would be very different from the large (and often impersonal) banquets previously coordinated.

We named the position Development Facilitator. It would allow a volunteer to translate their skills in a particular area into a workshop or lecture for the current volunteer pool.

To date, my organization has coordinated three workshops by highly skilled volunteers as well as a volunteer-led Wellness Fair at our National Volunteer Week event. The first two workshops were a series that focused on personal wellness and making the connection between mental and spiritual health with physical health. There were 21 participants at the sessions. The Development Facilitator led participants through a process called the Emotional Freedom Technique, which had participants focusing on their own thoughts and how to improve certain aspects of their lives. Being able

to connect with volunteers on a more personal level (as opposed to what happens at larger, more formal events) was a valuable side benefit of this gathering. The third session focused on green growing techniques, with an experienced volunteer presenting on aquaponics - growing vegetation without soil. He spoke about a project he is working on and then facilitated a panel discussion with other experts he had recruited. One was a young local organic farmer and the other was a graduate student also speaking about local food production. Over 20 people attended this session as well. The panel discussion and Q&A afterwards was so lively that I had to cut it off as our facility was closing.

My program's first ever Wellness Fair was a conference style recognition event held during National Volunteer Week. Speakers from the community were intermixed with some high-skilled volunteers from other departments to deliver informative sessions on topics such as composting, backyard naturalization, yoga and "upcycling". We hosted 100 volunteers from our program.

The Development Facilitator position has proven to be attractive to a certain group of volunteers. These are individuals that, previously, I might have been turning away. They truly appreciate this unique opportunity to share their specialized skills, without having to worry about the logistics of organizing a workshop. And the turnout and engagement of our other volunteers at these workshops certainly demonstrates the value of this new initiative.

Responding to changing volunteer motivations and expectations, while retaining volunteers with more traditional motivations, can be a balancing act.

Does training and professional development lead to retention of volunteers? Yes. As with recognition activities, the adoption of training and professional development practices yields a positive influence on retention, independent of the influence of other practices and organization characteristics.

Volunteer programs do not and cannot change overnight. Responding to changing volunteer motivations and expectations, while retaining volunteers with more traditional motivations, can be a balancing act. Mastering those outcomes efficiently and effectively is an art. I believe that by introducing the Development Facilitator volunteer position to my organization, I have moved one step closer to linking volunteer recognition to motivation while at the same time injecting some life and energy into a tired volunteer recognition program.

Anna Paranich is the Program Manager, Volunteer Services with Community Facility Services for the City of Edmonton, Alberta.

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NATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR CANADA'S VOLUNTEERS

by Marianne Wade

Volunteers across this country devote their time, energy and money to causes that enrich our society. Their compassion and generosity do not go unnoticed and the desire to recognize their efforts in a gracious, tangible and lasting way is reflected in Canada's honours system. The centerpiece of our honours system is the Order of Canada, established in 1967 by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. It is a society of honour which recognizes a lifetime of outstanding achievement, dedication to the community and service to the nation. The Order consists of people from all sectors of Canadian society whose varied contributions have enriched the lives of others and made a difference to this country. The Order of Canada's motto is *DESIDERANTES MELIOREM PATRIAM* (They desire a better country), words its members bring to life.

The Order of Canada is motivated by the spirit of celebration, inclusion and citizenship. Its inclusivity is reflected in the nomination process; any citizen or group may submit a nomination for an individual who deserves special recognition simply by writing

to the Chancellery of Honours. All Canadians are eligible for the Order of Canada, except for federal and provincial politicians and judges, who may not be considered while holding office. Also, the honour cannot be conferred posthumously. The Order celebrates individuals whose life and work have set a shining example for others both in Canada and throughout the world: community workers, educators, human rights advocates, artists and designers, scientists and researchers, entrepreneurs, philanthropists, environmentalists, caregivers and volunteers. Their contributions represent a broad spectrum of achievement and service. The Order's constitution permits non-Canadians to be considered for honorary appointments for outstanding achievement that brings honour to Canada and/or lifetime contributions to humanity at large.

Nominations are accepted throughout the year. The nomination form should be complete and include the name, title, birth date, citizenship and complete address of the nominee. The form should be accompanied by biographical notes, such as an up-



Order of Canada Insignia awaiting presentation

Photo credit to Cpl. Dany Veillette, Rideau Hall

to-date résumé, detailing the career and achievements of the nominee. Specific information with respect to responsibilities, time frames, dates of active participation in organizations and all official honours/awards also assist the Advisory Council in making a decision. In addition, the Chancellery requests the names of at least three persons who would support the nomination and who could provide information about why the individual deserves the honour. It is important to note that a letter-writing campaign to support a nomination will not influence the outcome.

When a nomination is received, the Chancellery of Honours conducts thorough independent research before presenting it to the Advisory Council, a process that usually takes approximately a year since the Advisory Council meets twice a year to review nominations. The eleven-member Advisory Council, chaired by the Chief Justice of Canada, reflects the diversity and excellence of Canadian society. The Council's recommendations are presented to the

Governor General, who as Chancellor and Principal Companion of the Order approves all appointments. To mark the 60th anniversary of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's accession to the Throne, the Governor General announced the creation of a new commemorative medal which will be available in 2012. The Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal will be a tangible way for Canada to honour Her Majesty for her service to this country while at the same time recognizing the exceptional accomplishments of Canadians. The Chancellery of Honours, as part of the Office of the Secretary to the Governor General, will administer the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal program. During 2012, 60,000 deserving Canadians will be recognized for their contributions to Canada or to a particular province, territory or community, or for their outstanding achievement abroad that has brought great credit to our country. Nominees must also be a citizen or permanent resident of Canada. As well, this medal can be awarded posthumously as long as the recipient is alive on February 6, 2012, the date of the 60th anniversary of The Queen's accession to the Throne. Information on the nomination process will be announced later this year through the Governor General's website.

If you know of an individual whose contribution has enriched our nation, we invite you to submit a nomination for the Order of Canada to the Chancellery of Honours. To do this, or for more information about Canada's Honours System, please visit the Governor General's website at www.gg.ca. Nomination forms for the Order of Canada are also available from the Chancellery, Rideau Hall, Ottawa, ON, K1A 0A1 or at the following link [Nomination form \(pdf ---738Kb\)](#).

Marianne Wade, Program Analyst, Orders Section, Chancellery of Honours.

NEWSBIT

IYV + 10: 2011 marks the tenth anniversary of International Year of the Volunteers.

To tap into the build-up, visit:

<http://www.worldvolunteerweb.org/iyv-10.html>



EDITORS' CHOICE: CREATIVE VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION IDEAS

The importance of recognizing volunteers for their wonderful work cannot be over emphasized. However, finding a great volunteer recognition idea can be a daunting task. Here are some of the CJVRM editorial team's favourite volunteer recognition ideas brought to us by managers of volunteers across Canada, which can help you in saying "thank you" to that special volunteer.

Idea 1

Every month in our volunteer e-newsletter, we profile a volunteer or group of volunteers, highlighting all the great work our diverse team is doing. This year, we converted these profiles into a series of laminated posters which are now outside our centre. People can "meet" some of our volunteers and also leave a message in chalk of what volunteering means to them. Parallel to this, we have launched a blog post with a photo gallery of these great volunteers, also encouraging people to leave comments. We hope through this effort, to make all of our volunteers feel valued during National Volunteer Week and beyond.. We hope this will also raise awareness amongst the public and our stakeholders of the amazing impact of our team and inspire people to get involved. Through these kinds of initiatives, I really believe that we can help volunteers feel valued while also helping an organization's whole community to value its volunteers.

You can view the blog at:

<http://info.evergreen.ca/en/blog/entry/a-big-thank-you-to-evergreens-volunteers/>.

Christine Martin, Manager, Volunteer Development, Centre for Green Cities

Idea 2

Last September we had a "Fun Fair" party in our parking lot and picnic area at Yonge Street Mission for our volunteers and student placements. It was like a grade school fun fair in every way – the kind you imagine or know of today in our children's schools. It was such a huge success and so well received that we are doing it again this coming September.

We invited our volunteers, their children or grandchildren if they wanted and they were also allowed to bring an adult guest with them. Our event included:

- Fun fair games which everyone was invited to play, such as: sucker pull, Frisbee golf, bowling, darts (the magnetic kind), etc. and we had also some little prizes for the games;
- face painting and fun crafts;
- balloon artist clown, who donated her time to make really amazing balloon hats and figures for people;
- group of jamming, impromptu musicians struck up a corner of music and singing;
- thank you poster boards, made ahead of time so that when the volunteers arrived they got to walk down our "walk of fame" which had photos of volunteers busy in their roles, names of volunteers who we wanted to thank, etc. hung up so they could see themselves in action;
- gift room where volunteers would go to "shop" for a gift of their choosing. We collect these donations throughout the year so we have no expense for these gifts but they are nice: vases, DVDs, CDs, books, clocks, t-shirts, etc.; and
- food of varying sorts and tables and chairs for those who wanted to sit. Thankfully our main course Indian dinner for 300 was donated by a very generous group.

Our staff ran the booths and games, painted faces and served food so our volunteers could enjoy themselves. After all, our jobs are enhanced by our volunteers involvement so it was our way to say "thank you".

Ruth Pentinga, Director of Volunteer Resources, Yonge Street Mission

Idea 3

Our organization has volunteers who serve overseas, sometimes for extended periods of time. We had a couple who spent three years in Africa working on a special agriculture and nutrition project. I asked them to submit some of their favourite photographs

to me. As a thank you gift, I used these photographs to design a beautiful collage and had it professionally printed to look like a canvas painting. At the bottom of the collage of pictures we wrote a large THANK YOU and what they were recognized for. It turned out beautifully and was very much appreciated. The art work is now hanging in their home.

Another idea we have used targeted our episodic in-house volunteers. A couple of months before our Volunteer Appreciation Event, we took a photograph of each of our volunteers engaged in their volunteer task. We then printed 5x7 copies and placed them in frames engraved with a special quote – giving thought to what each person would find meaningful.

Carol Sybenga, ServiceLink Program Manager

As a thank you gift, I used these photographs to design a beautiful collage and had it professionally printed to look like a canvas painting.

Idea 4

At Markham Stouffville Hospital, volunteers are acknowledged for their contributions during National Volunteer Week. What is different at our hospital is that volunteers are recognized for their length of service to the hospital first verbally at our Volunteer Luncheon and again during our annual Service Awards Reception which is attended by staff, physicians and volunteers who have achieved 10, 15, 20, 25 or 30 years of service. This sends a powerful message to everyone that volunteers are an integral part of the health team and not an entity unto themselves.

At the 2010 Service Awards Reception, 33 volunteers celebrated 20 years of service to the hospital and one of the 20 year celebrants, a 92 year old volunteer (who started at the tender age of 72 years), received a standing ovation from staff and physicians. It was a beautiful sight to behold! As leaders of volunteers, we are proud of our volunteer's milestones at the hospital; but to have

the respect and acknowledgement of staff and physicians on the achievements of our volunteers is truly amazing.

Sue Bautista, Coordinator, Community Resources, Markham Stouffville Hospital

Idea 5

Volunteer Ottawa will be celebrating Volunteerism with an exciting new fundraising event, A Night at the VOscars! The VOscars are the first of their kind in Ottawa and will be held in September.

Volunteer Ottawa is rolling out the red carpet and asking volunteers, nonprofits and local businesses to dress up to the nines and strut their stuff down the red carpet (complete with paparazzi!). Like any signature awards ceremony, we have planned a great lineup of entertainment. The top three nominees in each award category will be announced in advance, then at the event, the host will open the envelope to unveil the winner to a captive audience.

The VOscars will recognize those who raise the awareness of volunteering, to provide innovation in and around volunteering and/or encourage volunteerism in the Ottawa community. There are seven categories of awards that Volunteer Ottawa will be seeking nominations for: Best Volunteer in a Leading Role, Best Volunteer in a Supporting Role, Best Corporate Volunteer Program, Best Non-Profit Volunteer Program, Best Volunteer in a Professional Field and the Mayor's Award for Volunteer Spirit. Of course, what would the VOscars be without the Lifetime Achievement Award.

Kelly Eyamie, Web & Communications Manager, Volunteer Ottawa

VOLUNTEERS RECOGNIZING VOLUNTEERS

by Debi Zaret

Dress for Success Ottawa was founded in 2010 to promote the economic independence of disadvantaged women in the National Capital Region by providing professional attire, a network of support and the career development tools to help women thrive in work and in life. We have been incredibly fortunate to have over 100 volunteers involved with the organization during the past year. Ensuring effective volunteer resource management practices, including volunteer recognition, is essential for our ongoing success. We have been blessed with incredible community support in terms of volunteer involvement. Formal recognition for our entirely volunteer-run organization will be critical to retention.

Volunteer involvement with Dress for Success (DFS) Ottawa ranges from the founders (now the board of directors), members of a variety of start-up committees, wardrobe consultants, boutique organizers, sorters, coordinators of volunteer resources, scheduling and special events volunteers. Volunteer involvement with DFS Ottawa is diverse and extensive. We have reached a number of milestones during the past year, thanks to the incredible dedication of our volunteers.

Here are some of our strategies which help ensure that volunteer recognition remains a priority:

- We ensured that our annual budget included funds for volunteer recognition, as we acknowledged the need for a formal volunteer recognition program from the onset.
- As part of our fund development strategy, we sought a corporate sponsor for our volunteer resource management program and annual volunteer recognition event.
- As a token of our appreciation to all those volunteers who assisted DFS Ottawa during its formative phase, we held an informal holiday volunteer recognition event for members of the start-up committees. Just the fact that we acknowledged everyone's commitment during the past year was well appreciated.
- Whether it is an informal thank you in an email or a more formal acknowledgement of

the incredible volunteer dedication in our newsletters or on our website, we are constantly saying "thank you – we could not do this without your support!"

- As co-founders and now members of our Board of Directors, we acknowledged the need to celebrate our own accomplishments. We are a group of seven professional women who have put our heart and soul into the founding of DFS Ottawa. We held a celebratory dinner during the holiday season to celebrate our successes.
- We plan to hold quarterly volunteer meetings. Not only will these meetings serve as a vehicle for saying thank you but will also provide opportunities for professional development and networking which we see as a form of volunteer recognition.

Probably the biggest form of recognition is for volunteers to see the smiles and gratitude on the clients' faces when they had been suited with their new, professional attire

Probably the biggest form of recognition is for volunteers to see the smiles and gratitude on the clients' faces when they had been suited with their new, professional attire. Our reality for the past year was that we were often consumed with such small details that we often lost sight of why we exist to serve. Having the experience to participate in a suiting, totally grounds us and in my opinion was the best form of recognition as we assist women who are less fortunate in the Ottawa area towards self-sufficiency!

Debi Zaret runs Capacity Building Consulting (www.capacitybuildingconsulting.ca) and is Co-Founder and Vice-Chair, Board of Directors of Dress for Success Ottawa (www.dressforsuccess.org/Ottawa)

RECOGNITION, ABOVE AND BEYOND

by Marlene Beitz

“Wes* was a human version of a wonderful gift. Most often gift-wrapped in a flannel shirt and blue jeans and topped with his signature wide-brimmed felt hat (like the bow that tops the present), he was every coordinator’s dream volunteer. I met Wes on my second day as the Coordinator of Volunteers for a community support organization. Upon introduction, I learned a lot about Wes, including his interest in writing poetry, his affinity with nature and his love of asking questions that had no answers. But he slowly shared other things too – he was a widower, lived alone and was never blessed with children. Volunteering became his passion.”

The human connections we make vary in depth and purpose. These connections involve sharing on some level the elements that make us unique. We may share details about family, our work or stories from our past, and on a deeper level, things that make us happy or sad. As a coordinator or manager of volunteers with boundaries, time constraints and processes to be followed, it is not always easy to connect with volunteers on a uniquely personal level. Most of us would attest to the fact that commitment can usually be measured by the extent of the connections we make. When someone feels a connection, feels that they are appreciated for their “self” and feels that they are recognized for their individuality, they become a vital part of the “whole”. They are enmeshed. As the people responsible for placing volunteers into the vital roles that serve and enrich the lives of others, it behooves us to make those connections and to keep on recognizing what is individual about each person we meet.

“Wes volunteered a lot. He delivered Meals on Wheels several times a week and was almost always available to fill in if needed. During Christmas holidays, he delivered meals so everyone else could be home with their families. We all knew that if anything happened to Wes, there would be an enormous void to fill. But he liked to be involved and we certainly liked his level of involvement. Plus, every senior on his route

enjoyed seeing him bring a hot meal, together with a side of light-hearted conversation.”

To really “recognize” an individual has its challenges. We are well versed in the options for formal recognition through events and public bestowing of awards and the informal recognition of the daily thank you. But recognition can go so much further. The dictionary provides multiple meanings, including this one somewhere down its list: “acknowledgment of validity”. There is so much to acknowledge in the volunteers that care so kindly for the most basic needs and emotions of others. We all do our best when we are cared for, nurtured, valued and validated. A fellow coordinator of volunteers, one of my mentors, compares our relationships with volunteers to family, saying that the circle of care moves in many directions. Volunteers may start to give their time to a cause or purpose in which they believe, but they will stay where they have been cared for and where they have been acknowledged in individual ways.

“One day, Wes asked to be taken off the Meals on Wheels roster for a while. He said he was going through some medical things and hoped to be back soon. When I called him intermittently over the following weeks, he did not share much information, declining visitors, saying that he was thinking of us. But he did not return. Wes died alone without much involvement from others. We heard from his brother that his cancer had moved quickly but that he had not been in pain.”

We share the journey. We are eagerly there when a volunteer offers their gifts so generously. Who would guess that when the stranger walks into our office for the first time, that we might form that connection and travel with them through this journey of acknowledgement and recognition? We guide them through the stages of placement, orientation, monitoring and evaluation (if we are doing our jobs correctly). Are we there for them during the sad times and at the end when their stories need to be told and when they deserve the most important recognition of all? It is our

responsibility to acknowledge their very individual value and to honour all that they have given.

“The Celebration of Life for Wes was as unique as he was. We read his poetry, provided the tributes and told stories that made us laugh and cry. We shared with his extended family all of the special things he had done for others. Most of all, we honoured him as our gift — his felt hat, gently placed atop his body at rest.”

* Name has not been changed – so that recognition of this individual may continue.

Marlene Beitz, a Coordinator of Volunteers in Georgetown Ontario, is also a writer specializing in policies and accreditation for non-profit organizations. She has coordinated volunteers for community support organizations for many years, and has just completed a term as President of Halton AVA (Halton Association of Volunteer Administrators). She volunteers with a local Distress Centre and with the United Way.

Understanding the Profession: An Occupational Standard for Administrators of Volunteers

Join the dialogue to develop an occupational standard for administrators of volunteers, and help define your profession by sharing with us what you do! Help us capture the essence of what your profession entails, and where the profession is headed. The occupational standard will provide the foundation for the development of key human resource and career planning tools and will help:

- New practitioners to understand their management and leadership role
- Offer guidance to experienced administrators about professional development paths
- Assist executive management in supporting and strengthening the function of volunteer administration in their organizations
- Provide educators and trainers with a tool to assist curriculum development that is consistent with real-world practice

You are the experts, so your participation is critical! Have your voice heard. Sign up to participate in:

- The national occupational standard development workshop; a 2.5 day event in Toronto that will take place in September 2011*
- One of five regional validation workshops; 1 day sessions held in Vancouver, Winnipeg, Toronto, Montreal and the Maritimes in November 2011*
- We will be creating a pool of candidates from which participants will be selected with the goal of balancing regional and sub-sectoral representation

Contact Erica Paradis at eparadis@hrcouncil.ca for more information or to indicate your willingness to participate.

*The HR Council will cover costs of participation including travel, per diems and accommodation. The HR Council will not pay for the time associated with doing the work being asked of the participants.

HR Council
for the **Nonprofit Sector**



Canadian Administrators
of Volunteer Resources
Administrateurs canadiens
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The HR Council gratefully acknowledges support from the
Canadian Journal of Volunteer Resources Management.

THREE VOLUNTEERS. THREE TAKES ON RECOGNITION.

Recently, the Canadian Journal of Volunteer Resources Management interviewed three volunteers about their motivations for volunteering and their perceptions of volunteer recognition. Though at very different life stages, each volunteer was asked the same questions.

Kathryn Vant by Rachel Stoparczyk

Kathryn Vant is a wife and a mother of three children ages seven and under. She is a paediatric physiotherapist, working three to four days per week in the Ottawa school system. Kathryn is also a lifelong volunteer, having first become involved as a helper with her mother's volunteer activities. Kathryn currently serves as the Volunteer Coordinator on her children's school council, as a classroom volunteer, a soccer coach and the convener for the under-5 age group in her children's soccer league. In the past, Kathryn has also volunteered with her children's co-operative nursery school, Ottawa Therapy Dogs, Big Sisters, St. John Ambulance and many other organizations.

CJVRM: Why do you volunteer?

Kathryn: I usually volunteer when something sounds like a fun opportunity. I get excited about opportunities to get involved in things that I am passionate about. I often find I have to stop myself from doing too much, because there are so many interesting opportunities available.

Motherhood, however, is the most important thing to me. I volunteer now with activities that allow me to spend more time with my family. Through these activities, I get the opportunity to meet my children's friends, to see what they are doing in the classroom and to be more engaged in their lives.

For me, a good volunteer job is rewarding, challenging and interesting. I like to know that I am contributing my skills; I volunteer not to impress anyone or to build my CV, but for a greater benefit.

CJVRM: What makes you feel valued as a volunteer?

Kathryn: It is important that I get pleasure from the volunteer activity but also that others appreciate my

work. It is always meaningful to hear that someone I work with thinks I am doing a good job. For example, another mom from our school council recently commented to me that my organizational skills will be appreciated in the soccer club. Her comment made me feel that my participation is valued within our community.

I also appreciate the sense of community that is built through volunteering. I like working with people who share my interests and values. It is a great way to make new friends who support and appreciate each other for their contributions.

On the other hand, it is a real turnoff for me if my volunteer activity is not well organized. If I do not feel useful, I end up feeling like I am wasting my time, and I do not feel valued. In those situations, I am unlikely to want to continue my involvement with the organization or activity.

CJVRM: What was the most meaningful recognition you have received? Why?

Kathryn: A personal thank you is most touching. When my dog and I finished volunteering with Ottawa Therapy Dogs, the staff on the dementia ward that we had been visiting organized a collage from the residents. This was particularly meaningful because it was so unexpected. I had a similar feeling when the long term care centre presented me with a mug, just because I never expected to get something formal in return for our volunteering. I also enjoy and appreciate special gatherings where the group's volunteers are 'treated' to tea or a luncheon.

Surain Roberts by Ruth Vant

Surain Roberts is a 17-year-old high school student who is currently a volunteer with the Ottawa Children's Treatment Centre (OCTC). His parents have always been avid volunteers. He began his volunteer career at the young age of nine, tagging along with his mother, licking envelopes for her causes. As he grew a little older, he began volunteering at sports camps to help get his foot in the door for possible summer employment prospects. Then he started thinking of a future

career in medicine, and his volunteering turned towards places like OCTC. But now, he says, he continues because he loves it. He also heard about a one-month opportunity in India and quickly offered his services. While there, he worked with another youth helping to prepare brochures explaining serious childhood conditions such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Down's syndrome.

When asked what makes him feel valued as a volunteer, Surain replied, "It's not the people who help me do the volunteering, but the people who I help and the impact I can make – that's where I feel valued." He went on to explain that the best way he feels recognized and valued at OCTC is that he is made to feel part of a bigger purpose, part of a larger family, and not just a "disposable volunteer being used".

...the best way he feels recognized and valued at OCTC is that he is made to feel part of a bigger purpose, part of a larger family, and not just a "disposable volunteer being used".

Surain believes that the sentiment behind certificates of appreciation is good, but this type of recognition is not something that he needs or craves. The most meaningful recognition for him came after his month in India. At first, he and his partner spoke with many parents about their children's ADHD and Down's syndrome – skeptical parents who did not want to help them at first. But as their work continued, the two youths were eventually accepted and given the information they were seeking. At the end of the project, both young volunteers gave each other a mutual "pat on the back" and were able to say with pride "We did this! We made this happen!"

One may think that Surain is an anomaly among today's young people. But he gave assurance that many of the teens he knows are just like him. He said that in his high school of approximately 500 students, there are 10 to 15 who have already given 400+ volunteer hours. He is not in this group yet. But give him time – he is still only in grade 11.

Maureen Tourangeau by Chris Jarvis

Maureen Tourangeau started volunteering soon after she married some 54 years ago. Maureen found herself organizing an event that hitherto she had no previous experience with...a Fun Day at a new park. Once the Tourangeaus were settled in their new home, she followed most of her neighbours and joined the new community association. When her children came along it was a natural progression to volunteer in their schools and with their extracurricular organizations. She worked on a hot dog program at school, raised funds for Cubs and Scouts and sat on the Parents Advisory Council at High School.

In those days if children needed special medical care it meant going for treatment to either Montreal or Toronto. The mothers in the Ottawa community recognized that a hospital specializing in the care for children was badly needed. Maureen joined the community group that started organizing coffee parties and collecting donations. Over time, out of this group, the Women's Auxiliary for the Valley Children's Hospital was formed. With a name change it became the Auxiliary of the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO). It was unique in that it was the only Auxiliary that was a member of the Hospital Auxiliaries of Ontario without a physical hospital. The Auxiliary raised enough money to set up the coffee and gift shops and moved into the newly built hospital debt free.

Maureen was now very involved with the Auxiliary. Since it was officially recognized as an Auxiliary, the members were allowed to take part in training at the Riverside Hospital and attend Hospital Auxiliaries Association of Ontario conferences. As the plans to build the hospital proceeded, the Auxiliary began the job of planning and running the coffee and gift shops. They had no experience and the learning curve was sharp. These were all young, energetic women with small children, committed to a common goal of building for the community. They were motivated by the pleasure of forming life-long friendships and the satisfaction of being able to do things that they never would have had the

opportunity to do otherwise.

The experience from those early years gave Maureen the confidence to take on other volunteer commitments. She has remained very involved with the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario for over 44 years. She has been volunteering with the Canadian Cancer Society since 1978. She is very politically involved. One of her biggest challenges and accomplishments was sitting on the District Health Council for eight years.

What makes Maureen still feel valued as a volunteer after all these years? She feels her efforts are appreciated and that she has contributed to "making things better". Her strong interest in the well-being of others gives her a tremendous feeling of personal satisfaction. When projects were difficult she found it personally satisfying to find solutions. All of this was possible because she belonged to an organization that provided competent training and cooperative professional support. She looks with pride at today's skilled enthusiastic volunteers that are part of CHEO's Volunteer Association and feels lucky when she thinks about the wonderful managers of volunteer resources that have come and gone while she has been there.

Maureen feels lucky to have been recognized over the years. She was presented with the Canadian Confederation Medal and the Queens Jubilee Medal for her volunteer work. She was nominated "Citizen of the Year" in the City of Nepean, while she did not win she was thrilled to have been nominated. When Queen Elizabeth was in Canada in 2010, Maureen was invited to Toronto to attend the state dinner. Maureen has been "written up" by Mary Cook in the local seniors' newspaper "Forever Young".

These are all awards where time and energy went into submitting a nomination, the effort made to nominate her plus the honour associated with these awards is very gratifying. Maureen, however, will be the first to emphasize that "you can never personally thank volunteers enough".



Imagine Canada is offering a 2011 SectorCast webinar series – 13 one-hour presentations on topics of interest to the charitable and nonprofit sector.

Upcoming SectorCasts include:

- Millennials: How to engage youth in your mission (October 19)
- Best Practices in Corporate and Foundation Fundraising (October 26)
- Advocacy in the Nonprofit Sector: What we've learned about advocacy and advocacy training (November 2)
- La philanthropie au Canada: enjeux et défis pour la prochaine decennia (November 9)
- Diversity at Work: New trends and learnings (November 23)

Contact sectorcast@imaginecanada.ca for more information.

DRIVING TEAM BUILDING THROUGH RECOGNITION

by Maria Redpath

How do you recognize the contribution of a key team of volunteers, recreate a positive team atmosphere and address knowledge gaps in the team? The Canadian Cancer Society in Ottawa was faced with these challenges a few months ago.

We have a large team of volunteer drivers who assist people undergoing cancer treatment to get to and from their appointments. In the fall of 2010 there were a number of changes introduced provincially that negatively affected the morale of the driver team. These changes coincided with the end of our transportation dispatcher's contract, further unsettling the drivers. Over the next couple of months it became apparent that many of our drivers were not aware of the way the Society organized and ran the driving program. We needed to find a creative way to address these issues.

Instead we decided to share with [the volunteers] the feedback we had received from our client survey (94% satisfaction rate)

In order to recognize the team, we deliberately chose to stay away from the usual volunteer recognition format where service and volunteer awards are handed out. Instead we decided to share with them the feedback we had received from our client survey (94% satisfaction rate), the wonderful comments from our clients in the many thank-you cards and to give the drivers a chance to meet some of our current and former clients in a social setting.

To help rebuild a positive team we decided that the event would be for drivers, by drivers. We asked two volunteers, who deliver the driver training for new volunteers, to be our masters of ceremony (MCs) and the staff took on the behind-the-scenes role. We built lots of time into the program to allow the drivers to mix and mingle with the rest of their team and the special guests (current and former clients) while enjoying great coffee and baked goods.

To address the knowledge gap, we designed a short,

fun quiz on the transportation program policies and asked everyone to complete it when they arrived at the event. In keeping with the fun theme, it was not only bragging rights that were at stake, there were also prizes to be won.

On the last snowy Saturday of January, 50 of our active drivers joined us at our Celebrating Success event. They willingly completed the quiz and we were delighted to see them all discussing how to answer each question with one another. Our drivers were thrilled to meet our special guests and our guests told us how much they enjoyed meeting each other and so many of our drivers. At the end of the event one of our former clients spontaneously took the microphone and expressed his heartfelt gratitude for the assistance he received during his weeks of radiation treatments. A fitting end to our celebration event.

"I cannot thank you, the drivers and the Society sufficiently for the drives you provided to me during my 16 treatments at the Ottawa General Hospital. The rides there made the process at least a hundred times easier, in every possible way: physically and psychologically. Thanks to you all, I have completed my sessions with minimal stress and fatigue."

- Former Client

The recognition and team building did not stop with the event; we followed up with a newsletter with pictures of the event, the results of the clients' survey, client comments and of course the quiz questions and answers. We wanted to include our whole driver team (all 150 volunteers) including those who were unable to join us.

A month after the event we conducted a short survey of our driver team to determine whether or not this type of event was meaningful to them and to gather ideas for future events. We are keen to continue to build a positive team environment.

Our driver team have told us how much they enjoyed the opportunity to meet one another, to find out how former clients are doing, to understand what is important to our clients and why there are certain "rules" in place for this transportation program.

“All the drivers enjoyed the chance to see you folks and meet each other. The quiz was a good idea that would be worth repeating in future-- a good way to have fun, but also instill reminders about ‘the rule book’”.

- Current Driver

Anecdotally, team morale has improved considerably over the last few months and the drivers appear to be aware of the way the program is run.

Planning for another event this fall is underway and by popular request from our transportation team we

will be extending the invitation to other volunteers who support people living with cancer. It seems our drivers cannot get enough of meeting other volunteers.

Maria Redpath is the Community Engagement Supervisor for the Canadian Cancer Society in Ottawa. She is an Ottawa Administrators of Volunteer Resources board member, a member of the Canadian Journal of Volunteer Resources Management editorial team and an active community volunteer.



National Summit

for the Charitable and Nonprofit Sector

Strengthened connections.

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For additional details on the National Summit and the National Engagement Strategy visit www.imaginecanada.ca/nationalsummit

FINDING SPONSORS FOR YOUR VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION PROGRAM

by Volunteer Alberta

Question: How do I find a sponsor for my volunteer recognition program?

Answer: Securing a sponsor for your volunteer recognition program can be a great way to offer unique recognition to your volunteers while also building partnerships with businesses in your community. While some organizations may be hesitant to seek out sponsorship opportunities because they seem like a lot of work or are unsure about where to start, there are some simple steps that will help your organization decide if sponsorship is right for your program.

Regardless of what business a sponsor is in, or the size of their company, they will have similar basic requirements. A business will want to ensure they get a good return on their investment by supporting a worthy cause. Provide them with sufficient information about the work that your organization does and how it provides benefits to your community. Sponsors want to strengthen their position in their market and distinguish themselves from their competitors, so offering unique sponsorship opportunities may offer an appealing way for them to “stand out from the crowd”. Businesses want to build loyalty among existing customers and develop future customers, while improving their image in the community.

Once you have considered how to meet some of the basic requirements sought by sponsors, target specific organizations to discuss sponsorship opportunities. The following questions will help you to develop a plan as you search for a sponsor:

- Who do you know? Brainstorm with your committee about businesses and organizations you can approach for help.
- Know what you want - do you need financial assistance, or would gifts in-kind, such as food or a volunteer recognition item, be as good as money?
- Who will be participating in your event? What businesses support or would target that group?
- Be sure to offer current sponsors the right of first refusal before approaching others.

Next, consider what kind of sponsorship opportunities your organization could offer a potential sponsor. One option may be to give them exclusive, or industry exclusive, sponsorship of an event; however, if you follow this route, ensure that this does not conflict with any of your current sponsors or partners. Another option is to ask a company to provide or pay for volunteer recognition items for every volunteer who participates in your program or attends a recognition event. Be sure you will have sufficient quantities for everyone if you follow this route. You could also have a speaker, meal or presentation sponsored by a business, or hold an event at their location. Ensure they are recognized in pre-event advertising, signage, event programs and during the event itself.

Lastly, there are a number of ways to recognize your sponsor. Some options include:

- Invite them to attend your event and to make a brief statement about their support for volunteers. Be sure to designate a committee member to greet and accompany sponsors at the event.
- Ensure signage or verbal recognition at an event.
- Mention the sponsor in your advertising or profile in your newsletter or event program.
- Include their name in newspaper or radio advertising for your event.
- Provide plaques or other tokens from your organization. Some sponsors like to receive this kind of recognition, others might dislike that you spent money recognizing their donation. Ask the sponsor what is meaningful to them.
- Write a letter of thanks on your organization’s letterhead recognizing the sponsor’s contribution. Tell them how their participation made a difference and how activities would have been affected without their support.
- Have a written agreement confirming what the sponsor or partner will provide, and what your organization will provide in return. Be sure to include whether they are an exclusive sponsor, an industry sponsor or one of a

number of supporters. Nothing will sour relations with a sponsor faster than unmet expectations or finding out that a competing business is involved in your event. Ensure their experience with your organization is a positive one.

While it may take some work, a successful sponsorship arrangement can provide benefits to your organization, your volunteers and local businesses – so start exploring your options!

Volunteer Alberta is Alberta's only provincial capacity building organization for the nonprofit/voluntary sector. Since its founding in 1990, Volunteer Alberta has worked to promote, celebrate and enable volunteerism in Alberta. It has evolved to become a bank of knowledge on the voluntary sector and now has hundreds of members representing a variety of sub-sectors, such as arts and culture, social services, education and health. You can reach them at www.volunteerallberta.ab.ca

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CJVRM Submission Deadlines and Themes

Issue	Deadline	Theme
Volume 19.3	Submissions closed	New Trends
Volume 20.1	Articles due end of December 2011	Volunteer Management Cycle: The Basics
Volume 20.2	Articles due end of March 2012	Occupational Standards
Volume 20.3	Articles due end of August 2012	20 th Anniversary Issue

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.