



Administrators of Volunteer Resources BC
www.avrbc.org





PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Spring has finally arrived! It's a time of renewal and moving forward and isn't it nice to do so with a little bit of sunshine and spring flowers?

We had a great Learn & Lead Day on February 28th with a workshop by Rick Lynch. It was an excellent start to the day. Rick presented on *Developing an Environment that Supports Volunteers*. It was an interactive session building on the knowledge participants have acquired in past workshops and in their careers. The session looked at ways to create a work environment in which volunteers are welcomed and valued and make the maximum contribution to the agency.

That afternoon we had our 41st Annual General Meeting with 39 members participating. Key highlights for the meeting were the budget presentation and the changes to the Constitution & By-laws.

The Board received approval to move forward with the re-development of the AVRBC website. This is an exciting opportunity to take another step into the age of technology and develop a website that is more interactive and provides great resources and tools for our membership.

The Constitution & By-laws were revised and modified by a committee of myself, Sandra Palmer, Jan Halliday and Charlene Robson. It was a lot of work and I want to thank each of these members for their contributions. The changes will be updated shortly and the revised document will be posted on the website.

I am pleased to let the membership know that we have established an **Advocacy Committee** and a long-standing AVRBC member Rose Vidas has agreed to join us as the Committee Chair. Years ago AVRBC had a Community Awareness Committee and with the changes in technology and the way that we conduct our business, the work of this committee was merged with our Communications Committee. In reviewing the work throughout the year

and the work that we would like to achieve, I believe that it is timely for us to once again re-structure the committees, delegate the work differently and the establishment of the Advocacy Committee will bring a new dimension to AVRBC. Rose has already started working on getting her committee members. So, if Advocacy is your area of interest, you may contact Rose. Her bio is included in this edition.

I would also like to introduce Joan Ryan as our new Treasurer. Joan is a long-standing AVRBC member and most recently had a role as regional representative for the mid to North Island. The Board looks forward to working with Joan in her new role.

And we also had to say goodbye. Muffet Chambers completed her two-year term as Secretary. This is often a challenging role, keeping all of us organized, organizing meetings, distributing material, logging the mail and answering inquiries but she did it with ease and she was very much appreciated.

On behalf of the Board of AVRBC I want to thank the membership for your support and encouragement as we continue to do the work on behalf of the organization. We look forward to and welcome feedback and questions from all of you. So please, don't hesitate to contact one of us at anytime. Our contact information is noted in this edition as well.

Enjoy the Spring!

Debbie Kennedy, CAVR
President, AVRBC

2008-2009 AVRBC Board of Directors

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Regional News



South Island Region luncheon last week at Swan Lake Nature House. Clare represented the executive.

Lower Mainland

The Lower Mainland AVRBC group hosted a workshop in January on "Presentation Skills" with dynamic presenter Carol Boothroyd. It was well attended and attracted several new members.

Lower Mainland AVRBC group will be meeting on April 3rd. Contact Regional Reps Jenny Budge jbudge@surrey.ca and Gloria Laird glaird@scienceworld.ca for more information.

South Island

In January the South Island sponsored "Developing Effective Orientation and Training Programs" with presenter Lillian Whitmore resulting in five new AVRBC members. Beth Cougler-Blom stepped down as Regional Rep to turn her attention to her new daughter Chelsea Paige born on February 27th and weighing in at 8 lb. 11 oz. Beth has done a terrific job, partnering with Nancy Martens (nancy.martens@viha.ca), to promote AVRBC and bring value to members in the South Island. Bonnie Van Volkenburg (bonnie@volunteervictoria.bc.ca) has stepped in to share regional representative responsibilities with Nancy Martens to provide the leadership for the South Island group.

Mid North Island

It is a pleasure to announce that Teri Bonner will be taking over as Regional Representative for the Mid North Island, allowing Joan Ryan to move to the position of Treasurer for AVRBC. Teri's email address is volunteer@sosd69.com and she will be continuing the great work that Joan has started, notably helping with the organization of the upcoming professional development workshop that is scheduled to be held in Parksville on May 15th with Lillian Whitmore presenting her workshop on "Developing Effective Training and Orientation Programs".

North East

Jesse Bowen jbowen@hospiceprincegeorge.ca will be partnering with the Prince George Volunteer Centre to bring Lillian Whitmore's workshop to members and non-members in the Prince George area on March 27th.

Plans are underway to provide professional development opportunities in other regions including the Kootenays and the Okanagan at later dates. Stay tuned for further updates.



South Island Regional Reps, Beth Cougler Blom and Nancy Martens giving out certificates at the Overview of Volunteer Management Course sponsored by Volunteer Victoria on December 1, 2007



South Island Region luncheon at Swan Lake Nature House.

NATIONAL
VOLUNTEER
WEEK

APRIL 27-MAY 3 2008

www.volunteer.ca/NIW

South Island AVRBC **Mentoring Pilot Evaluation**

In the fall of 2005 the South Island AVRBC region created a mentoring program that evolved into a six-month pilot project from January 2006 – June 2006. Before an evaluation could be done, three of the five committee members working on this project changed jobs, another got sick and I had an accident. I am very pleased to provide this evaluation of this mentoring pilot. We started small with three mentor / mentee matches.

One match never got off the ground. From my investigations the mentee was too busy, unorganized and not committed to having a mentor. The mentor is open to trying this again with another individual.

In another match, the mentee's role at work changed effecting her time commitment to a

mentor relationship. She stated that a first time face-to-face meeting with a potential mentor is preferable to only having telephone or email contact.

The third match was extremely successful meeting and exceeding the mentee's goals. This mentoring match assisted her in learning the ins and outs of coordinating volunteer resources. She is now an AVRBC member and truly appreciated having this opportunity with her mentor.

Based on my findings after talking with the mentors and mentees about their experiences and expectations of their mentoring experience I have determined that:

An initial informal gathering of mentors and possible mentees is preferable to having initial telephone or email contact. An informal gathering provides the opportunity for them to visit and to determine whether or not there is 'chemistry' between them for before moving forward in setting up a mentor / mentee relationship.

It was suggested that we have a 'training session' to prepare and discuss the mentoring role with the potential mentors prior to being matched with a mentee. It's interesting to note that the successful match happened face-to face over breakfast or coffee and they shared similar working environments. The other matches did not have this commonality, which may have affected the match, i.e. mentee asking questions for which the mentor had little experience. There is a need to recruit more AVRBC members to specifically work on a mentoring program. In recent months three long-term AVRBC members in the South Island region have retired and I hope that they will continue involvement with AVRBC as mentors to new members.

Nancy Martens

AVRBC South Island Co-Regional

Representative

March 12, 2008



VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT AND ACTIVISM A NEW PARTNERSHIP?

By OzVPM Director [Andy Fryar](#)

"Let him that would move the world, first move himself." (Socrates)

Most of what I write in this column each month relates directly to the field of volunteer program management. More specifically I frequently tend to focus on offering challenges about ways we can think differently about what it is that we do, espouse ruminations to help us better appreciate the role we have in our agencies and try and stress the influence that I believe we hold, both individually and collectively, in our broader communities.

All these ideas are great in their own right and certainly have lots of merit; they encourage us to continue to grow our thinking in ways that can help our profession to develop and evolve. They also form the basis for ongoing debate, discussion and dialogue throughout the sector. As many of you would be aware, I've just finished co-leading the 2nd Australasian Retreat for Advanced Volunteer Management in Brisbane^{*}, which unlike most conventional conferences seeks, from the outset, to have clear actions associated with the outcome of the event. It is not simply a 'talkfest' and it is more than just an opportunity to escape from the piles of paperwork and pressures of running a successful volunteer program for a few days. It is instead an opportunity for delegates to make consolidated change, both individually and collectively, to the field of volunteer management in Australia, New Zealand - and maybe even further abroad. The true relevance of this hit me when I was recently sent a copy of Joy Noble and Fiona Verity's new book called "Imagine if." - a handbook for volunteer activists^{**}. As a general rule, activists don't appear to consider themselves to be volunteers - or often even a part of the voluntary sector - rather they see themselves as simply being 'activists' - people with a passion who aim to get things done.

Dictionary.com defines activism as " the doctrine or practice of vigorous action or involvement as a means of achieving political or other goals". I really love the use of the word 'vigorous' in this

definition, as I believe (and I have gone on record as saying this before^{***}) , that we all too often miss out on making real change, due to the fact that we often become victims of our own need to be perennially 'nice'.

This thought caused me to think about the fact that while there are plenty of good reasons for organisations like OzVPM to continue to stimulate debate about the development of volunteerism, there is an even bigger incentive for us to all be 'doing' something to make that happen.

As it eventuated, this actually became a theme throughout the retreat - firstly in the fact that as a profession we need to be re-evaluating the place in the landscape where our profession has evolved to, and secondly in considering better ways to develop methods to promote the place that volunteering - and as a consequence volunteer program management - actually hold in our society.

In fact there was a great example just recently in the UK of the volunteerism sector banding together to fight an injustice within its ranks. As I understand it, the Department of Work & Pensions (DWP) had made a new ruling, departing from a long standing tradition that stated that volunteers on government benefits would need to foot the cost of their own lunch expenses - whereas volunteers who were salaried would be able to claim a refund for theirs. The result was volunteer involving organizations and VPM practitioners across the UK pulled together and mounted an 'in-your-face' campaign protesting the injustice - with the pleasing result that the DWP did an 'about face' on its position.

So here's the deal - I think it is high time we learnt a lesson from our activist cousins and became more like them! If volunteer program management is to gain in its recognition as a profession, then we need to be the ones who are vigorously promoting that cause - both as individuals and as a collective.

To help you think through what this might involve, let me suggest the following:

- Let's place a standing item on the agenda of every volunteer managers network meeting which discusses the actions the group members,

and the network as a whole, have made to promote our cause

- Like all good activists, let's actively plan ways that we can demonstrate our cause and raise public awareness to those we need to be targeting
- Let's encourage volunteer centres the world over to go beyond seeing volunteer managers as simply a source of training revenue, but rather to join the cause and better help us to promote the role of volunteer program managers within the volunteering landscape
- Stop making excuses for not joining professional VPM Association's such as AAVA in Australasia, MOVE in Singapore , CAVR in Canada , SAVM in Scotland or AVM in the UK . There is strength in numbers.
- Remember that activism works on an individual basis too - real change starts with your agency
- Promote International Volunteer Managers Appreciation Day on November 1, and look for ways to educate others as a part of celebrating our great profession
- More advanced VPM's must understand that a basic tenet of being considered 'advanced' should be to become more active in fighting the injustices associated with the fact that VPMs are not as well recognized as some of our aligned HR cousins
- Dare to speak up .even if it means you might get your head lopped off from time to time!

Support and encourage one another

As you can see this is a call to action, and there are many ways that we can all become more actively involved in forging change for volunteer program management - to ensure that we receive due acknowledgement for the work it is that we do.

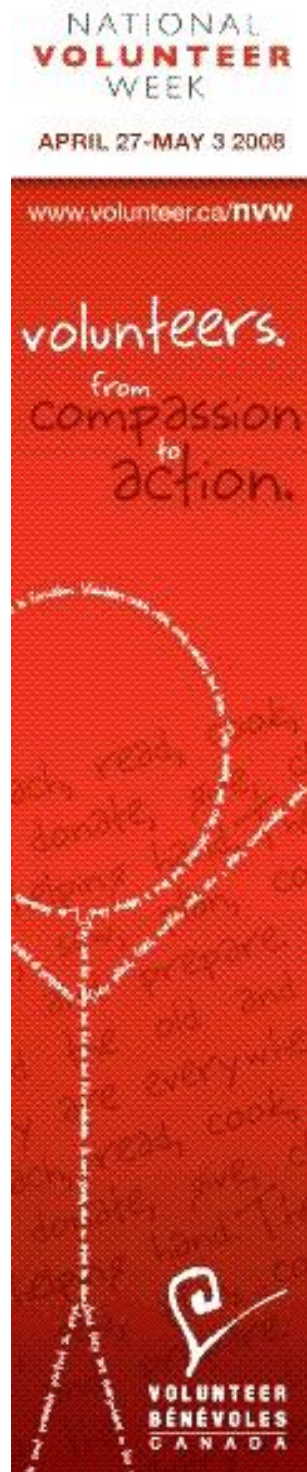
Let me leave this month's hot topic with a quote from Auschwitz survivor Elie Weisel who said, "There may be times when we are powerless to prevent injustice, but there must never be a time when we fail to protest." Maybe now is our time to protest!

Why not share your thoughts on this topic - or your ideas about how we can all become more active and mobilized.

* See www.vpmretreat.com.au

** We hope to have Joy and Fiona's new publication available through the OzVPM Bookstore soon.

*** See <http://www.ozvpm.com/pasthottopics/march04.php>





Canadians have a rich history of volunteering and community involvement.

Volunteers are on the front lines of all of our community services – community

health care, heritage and arts, maintenance of green space, disaster relief, volunteer firefighting, minor sports – the list is endless. The work of the volunteer is essential work. National Volunteer Week (NVW) pays tribute to the millions of Canadian volunteers who donate their time and energy.

NVW is the biggest celebration of volunteers and volunteerism this country has and Volunteer Canada is taking the lead on the celebrations again this year.

The 2008 campaign was developed to help organizations and individuals from coast to coast to coast deliver their own NVW celebrations the week of April 27 to May 3. To help you say ‘thank you’ to volunteers, we have developed a wealth of resources and products. If it is posters, postcards, volunteer recognition materials or free downloads you are looking for, or if you simply need some tips in event planning or promoting NVW locally through media – we have it all here through this one-stop-shop website.

Join us celebrating National Volunteer Week this year. Explore www.volunteer.ca to find the products and resources you need to deliver your very

Advocacy Committee Chair- Rose Vidas

I have been an AVRBC member for the last 12 years and have served both as the Lower Mainland Regional Representative as well as the Regional Coordinator. My belief in community volunteering landed me an exciting volunteer position over a 4 year period, as a coordinator for a two day children’s festival in the Tri-Cities. Little did I know that this would be my launch into the professional world of volunteer management. In my personal life, I have volunteered with Rogers Cable TV, organized the Kwayquitlum Klassic Fun Run, chaired the

School District #43 Emergency Preparedness, and most recently the 100th year Anniversary Gala for the Alzheimer’s Society. Oh yeah, I almost forgot all those hotdog and doughnut sales at my children’s school!

Professionally, after graduating from SFU, I worked as a social worker for 7 years for the Ministry of Human Resources. With a change in careers, I landed my first job in volunteer management at the Greater Coquitlam Volunteer Centre. It was during this time, that I finished a Non-Profit Management Certificate Program at VCC. From here I was challenged to develop a first ever Volunteer Services Dept. (in 117 years!) at St. Mary’s Hospital in New Westminster. After the closure of St. Mary’s, I had



Rose Vidas is Director of Volunteer Services at Saint Michael’s Centre in Burnaby, BC

the good fortune of moving to St. Michael’s Complex Care and Hospice where I currently work as the Director, Volunteer Services. I truly

“enjoy” what I do and I’m grateful for the opportunity.

I’m the mother of two adult children, who keep me grounded, happy, well-loved and for ever pushing me to strive bigger and bolder. Oh yeah, did I mention how they keep me humble and poor! My husband and I hope to travel well into our retirement whereby I will have to learn a new language, live in another part of the world and wear beads and sarongs much to my children’s dismay! For you cat lovers out there, I’ve recently adopted two kittens from the SPCA – “Zsa-Zsa” and “Ava” and they do come with all the attitude that their names suggest.

I’m a strong believer of AVRBC. The numerous friendships and professional benefits I’ve acquired over the years has encouraged and inspired me to join the ever developing vision of adding value to its membership and profession as a whole.

News from the Learning & Development Committee – April 08



Rick Lynch, co-author of *Volunteer Management*, spoke about Developing a Supportive Environment for Volunteers at the 2008 Learn & Lead Day.

The Learning & Development Committee is currently working on developing a speakers' bureau and we will be seeking your input soon. The purpose of the speakers' bureau will be to compile the names and contact information of speakers, trainers and facilitators offering workshops and presentations of interest to administrators of volunteer resources.

The speakers' bureau can act as a resource for regional reps and volunteer centres who organize educational opportunities for our members by providing them with workshop topic ideas and a list of potential presenters for each. The speakers' database may also include information such as: speaker bios, workshop descriptions, handouts, testimonials and evaluation summaries that can be helpful when evaluating and selecting potential workshop facilitators.

It's also an opportunity for our members to share their knowledge and expertise in the field by registering as a potential trainer with the speakers' bureau.

Stay tuned for more details on this new initiative...



AVRBC partnership for the Learn and Lead Day and Leadership Richmond Conference 2008 at Richmond City Hall on February 28th, 2008.

If you would like to join the Learning & Development committee or become involved with this project, please email Lindsay Baker, Chair, at

lbaker@volunteerrichmond.ca.

FROM THE COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE



Three AVRBC Banners have been produced by the Communications Committee to provide the different regions for presentations, workshops and trade shows a better way of displaying the benefits of membership.

The Communications Committee completed a membership survey of the website relevance, significance and use. The results gave validity to the observations made over the years by all the members on regards to all the challenges that the present format has. At the AGM you, the members, overwhelmingly approved the plan of action to revamp the AVRBC website, therefore we are putting a call out for a couple of committed volunteers to join a Website development committee that will include a member of the Executive Committee and a member of the Communications Committee. To be a member of this committee you don't have to be physically present but accessible via internet to review and elaborate on the RFP (Request for Proposal) process and the selection of the successful bid to bring about the much needed changes to the website.

If you wish to participate of this valuable process send your expression of interest and a summary of the related experience you bring to the work of the committee by emailing Oscar Cruz, Communications Committee Chair to oscar@volunteerburnaby.ca -

For more information on this process please read the AVRBC Website Survey Executive Summary at www.avrbc.org