

THE JOURNAL OF VOLUNTEER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

VRM

Spring ... 1996










VOLUME ... 5.2

TECHNOLOGY & VOLUNTEERISM



OAVA

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Ontario Association for
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ISSN 1192-1676

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Published Quarterly

Subscriptions can be sent to:
The Journal of Volunteer Resources
Management
1310 Upper Dwyer Hill Road
RR #2, Carp, Ont., Canada K0A 1L0

Send all correspondence to the above address.

*Typeset and Printed in Ottawa at
Aarkade Design & Offset Printing Inc.*

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EDITORIAL

Who would have thought 10 years ago that we would be surfing the net to link up with counterparts throughout the world or have the capability of doing volunteer recruitment electronically? The information age has hit the voluntary sector big time!

Some managers of volunteers see these technological advances as exciting. Others need time to adjust and are more cautious before embarking on the information highway. In this issue of the Journal of Volunteer Resources Management we have tried to present the latest information on this ever changing topic and will explore various windows of opportunity open to us.

In the main article, "Management of Volunteer Services and the Internet", Bill Robinson does an excellent job at deciphering the services that Internet offers: e-mail, newsgroups, and World Wide Web.

Liz Weaver's article, "Technology and Volunteerism" cautions us that technology has a very real role to play in our profession but we have to manage it and not let it manage us. Maggie Milne's article has lots of "food for thought" and she heeds us to rest our minds daily, in the midst of this fast moving technology.

James Wilkinson talks about opportunities for volunteers who are technologically adept especially in the area of community networks and Bev Humphrey recounts how her agency, Pathways To Independence has benefited from this new way of communicating.

Last but not least, the Editorial Team is graciously offering a glossary of techno-terms for those of us not yet caught up in all the computer jargon. Enjoy!

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MANAGEMENT OF VOLUNTEER SERVICES AND THE INTERNET

by Bill Robinson

Introduction

It is difficult to read a newspaper or watch TV these days without encountering the Internet. This is not surprising. The Internet has doubled in size for each of the last few years, and there are now an estimated 50 million people on the "net". Most businesses are seriously investigating the value that the Internet can bring to their operations.

Volunteer sector work is the equivalent of 730,000 full time jobs in Canada, so managers of volunteer services must constantly be seeking new ways to manage their resources. Like their private sector counterparts, they should also investigate what Internet can bring to their organizations. This article addresses the questions: "Are there some useful Internet applications for the management of volunteer services? How much do they cost? How could we use them?"

Internet Services

What can you do on the Internet? The key value of the Internet is that it enables several million computers spanning the globe to talk to each other. The services that the Internet offers are all very simple in concept. Some of these are:

- e-mail, which is used to send memos and letters,
- newsgroups, or discussion groups, and
- the World Wide Web, a source of information on people and organizations around the world.

Let's look at each of these services in a little more detail.

E-mail

E-mail provides virtually instantaneous delivery of memos and documents around the world (minutes vs days for ordinary mail or "snail mail"). Depending on your e-mail service, it should pay for itself in 10 to 20 letters per month, compared to Canada Post. E-mail is well suited for short impromptu communications, especially when there are more than one addressee.

An example of an e-mail application is a network we are planning for Rotary District 7040 (Eastern Ontario, Western Quebec, and Northern New York). Our District Governor will use e-mail to send out information to club presidents and secretaries, including our district bulletins. User feedback and costs will be tracked and compared to the current mail and fax systems to decide on the utility of the network. However, an increase in spontaneous communications between different clubs on our community and international projects could well turn out to be more important than costs.

Newsgroups

Newsgroups or discussion groups are organized into several thousand different topics. For example, at **soc.org.nonprofit**, you will find discussion of issues relevant to non-profit organizations, while **soc.org.service-clubs.misc** is a

newsgroup for service clubs. A recent visit to **soc.org.nonprofit** revealed discussions on nonprofit mission statements, golf tournaments for fund raising, board member responsibilities, and an announcement of a new Canadian web site.

You can simply read a newsgroup or you can participate by posting questions or opinions. You should read the FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) before posting to a group to avoid asking the same old questions. Many FAQs are also an excellent source of information on a particular topic. For example, I read the FAQ for **alt.support.crohns-colitis** when I was suffering from irritable bowel syndrome, and found it to be very helpful. The **alt.support** hierarchy covers topics as diverse as arthritis, breastfeeding, cancer, diabetes, epilepsy, right on through the alphabet, all topics of interest to specific volunteer groups.

World Wide Web

The World Wide Web is a source of information on what organizations are doing around the world. Information can be presented creatively through the use of graphical interfaces, pictures and charts, and links to other Web sites. For example, CharityVillage at <http://www.charityvillage.com/cvhome.html> is a Canadian Web site which uses the metaphor of a city street to present a wide variety of volunteer resources. Travel down *Main Street* and visit the *Nonprofit News* for coming events, people on the move, survey of the month and letters to the editor. The *Career Centre* has information on career opportunities. You can catch a bus at the *Bus Station* to

Canadian and international associations or Canadian nonprofit organizations. The rather foreboding <http://...> is simply a Web address, much like a telephone number.

The Contact Center Network Home Page at <http://www.contact.org/> provides a directory where global volunteer and nonprofit resources are arranged by country and by issue. Topics covered include nonprofit management and fundraising sites, organizations that can help you get a computer, free or low cost web space providers, and promoting your web site. Yahoo, a general Internet directory at <http://www.yahoo.com/>, can be used for searches on other topics.

There are several Web sites that provide a clearinghouse of opportunities for groups and individuals to give their time and talents to deserving local nonprofit agencies. You can e-mail or call the organization that interests you for more information. Some of these web sites are:

<http://cfn.cs.dal.ca/cfn/CommunitySupport/vrc.html> Halifax /Dartmouth Volunteer Center

<http://www.meer.net/users/taylor/> San Francisco Bay Area Volunteer Information Center

<http://www.teleport.com/~bizave/portland/volunteer/> Portland Volunteer Center

<http://www.terrymax.org/volunteer/> Houston Volunteer Center

These sites attract computer literate individuals to an organization. Many of these sites are supported by the United Way.

Getting Started

Getting started requires a personal computer equipped with a modem, which allows your computer to communicate with another computer over phone lines. A 14.4kbps modem is more than adequate for primarily text-based services such as e-mail and newsgroups, and is passable for the Web. New technologies will greatly improve service access and performance over the next few years.

Internet is accessed through an Internet Service Provider (ISP). The costs of Internet service vary with the services accessed:

- Freenets, as the name implies, are free. They are a good means for getting started, but access is usually difficult due to busy lines, e-mail delivery can be slow, and services and online time are usually limited.
- Several independent ISPs charge \$5 per month for unlimited e-mail.
- Costs for complete service covering e-mail, newsgroups and the Web will cost from \$10 to \$30 per month. The e-mail, newsgroup reader, and web browser software are free, but a nominal setup fee of approximately \$30 is usually applicable.

Costs for setting up and operating a web site will vary depending on its volume of information and graphical content. A service provider may be prepared to donate service as a community service and for recognition on the web home page. Or perhaps a service club would contribute towards setting up a site. There are volunteers who may be eager to set up and operate a web site to gain experience.

Summary and Conclusions

This article has attempted to explain Internet capabilities which can supplement and enrich communications within and between volunteer organizations, in the same city and around the world. Using the Internet is merely part of a total communications strategy, and should be viewed for its ability to augment other modes of communications. Some of the activities that the Internet can support include:

- mail and mailings,
- tapping expertise to solve problems,
- learning about what other volunteer organizations are doing, and how they approach problems and opportunities,
- volunteer recruitment, and
- marketing and creating awareness.

For those who want to learn more about the Internet, The Canadian Internet Handbook, by Jim Carroll and Rick Broadhead, is available in most bookstores.

Bill Robinson received his B.A.Sc and M.A.Sc in Electrical Engineering from the University of British Columbia. He is responsible for technical conference management at Nortel Technology. He serves on the technical program and cyberspace committees of several international conferences, and is the Canadian representative and vice-chair of the International Telecommunications Union Technology Forum to be held in Geneva in 1999. Bill is past president of the Rotary Club of Nepean-Kanata and is a Paul Harris Fellow of Rotary International. Bill's e-mail address is wrr@magi.com.



TECHNOLOGY AFFECTS VOLUNTEER ACCEPTANCE

by James Wilkinson

Be it a five line telephone system, intercom, fax machine, photocopier or computer, today, administrative volunteers need to be technologically adept. As a matter of fact, their acceptance as a volunteer may depend greatly on their technological skills.

A Changing Society

It cannot be disputed that computers, perhaps the most significant of the modern products, play an ever increasingly important role in our lives. Whether it's at work or at home, it is hard to think of an industrial or service sector today which *does not*, in some way, involve the use of computers. The Recreation and Social Service fields, two of the larger fields of volunteer participation, are themselves becoming more computerized.

Many, if not most, of these professionals use computers for work that was previously handwritten or typed by supporting clerical staff. Budget cutbacks affect these fields as much as they do any other. To reduce the workload of secretarial staff, recreation and social service professionals are required to either type many of their own letters, reports, records and even meeting agendas. Even rough copies or drafts are often typed first before being retyped by support staff. Databases are replacing paper records which affects everything from equipment lists (facility/equipment managers) to

membership records in various organizations. Staff prefer to delegate the simple tasks of data-entry or file/records updating or mass mailings. YM/YWCA's, municipal recreation departments, non-profit fund-raising organizations and even local associations or self-help groups all make use of the computer. Therefore, their volunteers often consist of individuals who have one or know how to use one.

Obviously, most of the traditional volunteer positions will always exist. There will always be a need for Boy Scout or Girl Guide leaders, for holiday gift-wrappers, cooks for community potluck suppers and delivering Christmas food baskets.

The New Wave of Volunteer Opportunities: FreeNets

The latest movement towards communication networks is freenets. They may be thought of as local town halls where members of a specific community may talk to each other either directly (keyboard to keyboard) or by leaving E-mail (electronic mail) in E-mail boxes or by looking at bulletin boards. A computer and modem is required.

They are different from the Internet. Rather than connecting individuals from all over the world (although it is possible), they serve to connect members of a local region or municipality. As the name implies, the

service is free although donations are usually solicited from individuals, corporations and levels of government.

For the novice "net surfer" a freenet, or community network, is an effective training ground for learning about how to use an on-line system.

Some freenets will involve volunteers in various capacities. A "help desk" may exist specifically to help the rookie member get connected. Volunteers may also translate postings into different languages depending on the demands of the membership. Volunteers with hardware and software skills assist in the operation of the system. In some cases, they even assist information or content providers (local businesses, community groups or other non-profit organizations) to setup a menu or page listing information regarding the provider. Volunteers may even perform live help sessions in the local public library to assist new users and promote their community network. The need for face-to-face interaction still exists so events and parties do occur for the volunteers and network members.

Community networks operate with thousands or even tens of thousands of members and have a Board of Directors.

The Bottom Line

Although the roles of the volunteer may vary, each must be able to use freenet. Almost all communications between the volunteers or between the volunteers and members will

be on-line. Individuals will chat directly with each other, read posted announcements and send and receive mail.

To use freenet, a person must know the essentials. Once the basics are understood (how to access menus, on-line tools and service) then the volunteer may be of great assistance.

Interestingly enough, since the freenet is a computer-supported environment, it is influenced by trends in the computer on-line industry (hardware/software changes). This means the volunteers must be able to adapt. Computer technology, especially telecommunity and programming, changes regularly and volunteers must continually learn about new devices and programs.

In general, as a response to society's trends, one can use involvement in a community network as a way of learning about telecommunication. This is one step in ensuring that computers, or the changes which they bring about, do not become obstacles for a person with a big heart and a little extra time.

James Wilkinson is currently the Projects Co-ordinator for the National Capital FreeNet in the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton and has managed volunteers for both the City of Nepean (1995) and the Quebec Easter Seal Society (1990-94).



A GLOSSARY OF TECHNO-TERMS FOR COMPUTER NON-LITERATES

LEXIQUE DES TERMES TECHNIQUES POUR LES PROFANES DE L'INFORMATIQUE

A Gift from your JVRM Editorial Team

Bits and bytes: Units of data, they tell techno-nerds how much storage space a disk or file has.

Bubblejet: A type of printer that blows ink at the page.

CD Rom: Like the CD's in your stereo system but for your computer; apparently holds a lot more bits and bytes than the magnetic disk or diskette.

CPU: The motor that runs your computer or in techno-terms: central processing unit.

Computer: Modern invention that acts as typewriter, calculator, telephone, etc and cajoles you into believing that it will save you time.

Cursor: That point (highlighted square or underline) on your computer screen that indicates where you are working

Cyber space: Describes the no-man's land on the internet.

Data base: An information storage program that allows you to organize and re-organize data in a number of different ways. If you are really smart and you have a semi-sophisticated data base program, you can make fancy graphs and charts.

Autoroute de l'information: appellation désignant l'ensemble de la technologie qui transmet l'information par les ondes, les lignes téléphoniques et le système de câble

Base de données: programme pour emmagasiner l'information qui vous permet de disposer ou de redispenser les données de plusieurs façons. Si vous êtes vraiment habile et possédez un programme de base de données quelque peu sophistiqué, vous pourrez faire des dessins et créer des tableaux complexes.

CD Rom: disque optique numérique à lecture seule où sont stockées et consultables des données (texte, son, image), semblable au CD de votre stereo

Disquette: disque carré de petites dimensions en plastique magnétique souple servant à emmagasiner de l'information dans votre ordinateur comme dans un classeur

Bits et Bytes: unités de données qui indiquent l'espace disponible d'emmagasinage de l'information sur un disque ou dans un fichier

Chiffrier: grille composée de cellules pour vous aider à calculer votre déficit annuel; semblable au livre bleu du vérificateur d'autrefois

Directories: What your computer uses instead of file cabinet drawers; each one has multiple files in it and you get to organize it all.

Disk: Little square piece of magnetic plastic that acts as a filing cabinet for the information stored in your computer; comes in a variety of sizes and rainbow colours!

Diskette: Term of endearment for disk.

Dot matrix: A type of printer that prints characters based on a grid of tiny, tiny points.

Hardware: The box, the printer, the keyboard: all those things that you can touch.

Information Highway: Another term for all the technology which brings us information through the airwaves, phone lines and cable systems.

Inkjet: A type of printer that shoots ink through tiny holes in a pattern it gets from the computer.

Internet: The world-wide network of computers which are connected to exchange information.

Laptop: A small portable computer that you can use on your lap, the keyboard and CPU being together. Really does work better on a desk if your lap is otherwise occupied.

Laser printer: Another type of printer that prints using a laser beam.

Curseur: repère lumineux (surbrillance d'un caractère ou soulignement) sur votre écran cathodique pour indiquer la position du prochain caractère

Espace cybernétique: zone mal définie du champ élargi des communications et de ses régulations

Imprimante à jet d'encre: modèle d'imprimante dont les caractères d'impression sont formés par des gouttelettes d'encre projetées sur le papier grâce à une grille directionnelle

Imprimante à laser: autre modèle d'imprimante qui fonctionne grâce à un rayon laser

Imprimante matricielle: modèle d'imprimante dont chaque caractère est représenté par une configuration de petits points

Initié(e) de l'informatique: personne versée dans le domaine de l'informatique

Internet: réseau universel d'ordinateurs interconnectés dans le but d'échanger de l'information

Logiciel (software): ensemble de programmes et procédures nécessaires au fonctionnement d'un système informatique

Matériel (hardware): la boîte électronique, l'imprimante, le clavier; tous les éléments physiques qu'on peut toucher

Modem: appareil qui permet à votre ordinateur d'agir en tant que téléphone et de communiquer avec d'autres ordinateurs

Modem: The piece of equipment that allows your computer to act as a telephone and talk to other computers, compliments of Ma Bell.

Mouse: Cute little rodent that is partial to country structures. Also, device that helps you move your cursor all over your screen so that you can get where you want to go easily.

Operating system: Basic instructions to your computer that helps it run programs; in other words, the computer's very own operating manual. Example: DOS

Port: A connection on the back of your computer which allows you to connect a printer, a modem or other piece of hardware.

Software: The "instructions" that tell your computer what you want to do.

Spreadsheet: A grid of "cells" that helps you calculate your annual deficit; much like the auditor's blue book of old.

Techno-nerds: Individuals who understand all about this stuff.

Techno-peasants: The rest of us.

Web: Another way to describe the internet.

Wordprocessor: A fancy name for the typewriter in the computer. Makes re-typing obsolete and helps you re-arrange things at the click of the mouse.

Ordinateur: invention des temps modernes qui joue à la fois le rôle de machine à écrire, de calculatrice, de téléphone, etc. et prétend vous épargner du temps

Ordinateur portatif: ordinateur de petites dimensions dont le clavier et l'unité centrale de traitement de l'information sont intégrés

Port (d'accès): connexion à l'arrière de l'ordinateur pour brancher l'imprimante, le modem ou d'autre matériel

Profanes de l'informatique: nous tous

Répertoire: c'est ce que votre ordinateur utilise à la place des tiroirs du classeur; chaque répertoire contient plusieurs fichiers prêts à être traités

Souris: joli petit rongeur qui affectionne les bâtiments de la ferme. Egalement, petit dispositif trotteur qui facilite le déplacement opérationnel du curseur sur l'écran

Système d'exploitation: ensemble de directives de base visant à commander l'exécution des programmes de votre ordinateur; bref, le mode d'emploi propre de l'ordinateur

Traitement de texte: autre appellation qui désigne la machine à écrire intégrée à votre ordinateur. Evite de re-dactylographier et permet de réorganiser le texte à l'aide de la souris trotteuse

UCT: le moteur qui fait fonctionner votre ordinateur ou, en termes techniques, l'unité centrale de traitement de l'information.



TECHNOLOGY AND VOLUNTEERISM

by Liz Weaver

Information and technology are pervasive, invading all corners of our lives and requiring our immediate response. Our desks and offices are filled with technology from intricate telephone systems to multifunctional fax/modem/printer/copiers. Few desktops are clear of computers and many of us are networked or on the Internet. We are in the information age.

The cable links assist us in accessing the information beyond our doorsteps... but what about the people we serve, our volunteers? How can we use the technology to enhance the volunteer experience and not depersonalize it? Are we becoming slaves to the continuing computer cash grab which makes us want faster computers, better printers, modems, colour monitors, computer networks and the windows environment? The little screen and cursor in front of us may be replacing the volunteers that we use to see.

Technology has a very real role to play in our profession but we have to manage it and not let it manage us. The data that we input into our computers has to be accessible to us. In these times of funding cuts, we are being asked to justify our roles and the contributions made by our volunteer services. Computer technology can assist us in data collection and statistics. Electronically we can compute the value of volunteer services and import it into presentations and programs.

Technology can also link us together. Recently "Grapevine" published four pages of "volunteering sites on the internet". Imagine connecting with other agencies and programs around the world that are providing similar activities. Your programs could take on a diversity never before experienced. Volunteer recruitment could take place electronically. Distances could be brought closer together. We could increase the professionalism of volunteerism by accessing new sources of information and conferencing.

While the information age can provide enormous opportunities, there are many challenges to consider as well. While the cost of computers is dropping, in order to meet the new technologies you need computers which have the appropriate memory and programs available. We're no longer satisfied with basic word processing, we need all the bells and whistles. But do we? How much of the work that we do requires more than the basics? Cost is a factor.

Companies have been integral in helping agencies decrease computer costs. If you can connect with a company that is upgrading its computer system, you may be able to save yourself and your agency some money. However, many companies sell off their computers to their employees first and so you may be left with the dregs. And while you think you are getting a bargain, buyer beware... make sure the computer can fit in

with your existing programs, printer or network. There are times when the cost of a network card, special programs, and installation, added together, becomes more than the price of a new system.

Opportunities lie ahead on the information highway. To help you get to the on-ramp, consider starting slowly. Look for a volunteer

who might have the skills and interest to get you connected. Find a partner agency who is on the internet and surf with them. Make a connection with a reputable computer dealer who will provide you with technology and on-going support that is affordable. With the support of a computer consultant, develop a plan.

Technology Needs Assessment Form

ITEM	DATE OF PURCHASE	OWN/LEASE	SERVICES PROVIDED	ENHANCEMENTS DESIRED	COST

Technology Growth Plan

ITEM	COST	ENHANCEMENTS EXPECTED	POTENTIAL PROBLEM	TIMEFRAME TO BRING ON-LINE

The plan is very important. It can save dollars and headaches. Identify in the plan your existing system, what you like and don't like about it, areas of potential growth, a reasonable budget and a timeframe for implementation. You might also want to

consider potential funding sources like foundations if you want to kick start you plan. New technologies can then be assessed against the plan. Through the implementation of a plan you organization can grow and thrive and meet the challenges of tomorrow.



WHIT AND WHIMSEY

by Lynne J. Savage

TECHNOLOGY. A world of convenience and creativity for some; an atmosphere of anxiety and incomprehension for others.

DON'T BE FRIGHTENED. TECHNOLOGY as in "No Logic" sounds scary!

THINK of it as TECH "**KNOWLEDGE**" Y. "Acquainting with; learning"

Age may reveal your "range of experience" but attitude determines your enthusiasm and willingness to learn new stuff!

Those of you who have volunteered in a clerical/office setting may fondly or annoyingly recall these trusty tools:

pencil, fountain pen, ink, ballpoint pens, coloured pencils, markers, highlighters, manual typewriters, black/red ribbon, typewriter erasers, correction strips, onion skin (it's not a 'typo', it's **onion** skin), carbon paper, liquid paper, gestetner, electric typewriter, electronic typewriters, daisy wheels, cartridges, photocopiers, desktop publishing, computers, floppy disks... We are in an electronic world.

There is a new generation of potential volunteers out there who know what magic comes from today's technology. We **want** and **need** these people.

We must also help volunteers who want to grow by giving them opportunities in the ways of tomorrow. Not everyone wants to learn about these 'modern gadgets', but those who do should be encouraged and offered a chance to participate.

Speaking of those who don't want to learn... my husband Dave will not touch the digital alarm clock/radio or use the V.C.R. He also refuses to use the ABM (Automated Bank Machine). I have given him a set of clearly written 'how to use' directions for each item with no luck until the other day...

You see, when most of us moved our clocks forward, Dave **didn't** adjust the digital clock in his truck, so he arrived at the bank an hour late. It was closed. Fortunately, he used the 'how to' instructions to withdraw money from the ABM.

Did he reset the clock in the truck? No. He says he's had enough stress for one day... and besides in the fall there'll be no need to change it!

*Lynne Savage is a speaker and writer whose philosophy is **Laugh and Learn**. She welcomes your comments at (905) 371-0700 or by writing to her at 7340 Fern Avenue, Niagara Fall, Canada, L2G 5H2.*



LOOKING AHEAD

1996 Conference on Volunteer Administration May 21-24, 1996
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CDVH Annual Conference, "Opening Doors" June 9-12, 1996

Le Clarion Hotel, Hull, P.Q.

For more information, contact: Mirielle Roy at (613) 782-2761

Manitoba Association of Volunteer Administration October 15, 1996

Winnipeg

For more information contact: Barb Gemmell at (204) 477-5180

1996 International Conference

on Volunteer Administration October 16-19, 1996

Calgary, Alberta

For more information, contact: Anton Walker at (403) 282-5328

ANNOUNCEMENT

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1/2 page ads: \$200.00 • 1/4 page ads: \$125.00 • Business Card ads: \$75.00

Please make cheques payable to OAVA: Journal of Volunteer Resources Management.

JVRM will welcome members' letters, be they complimentary or critical, regarding what your journal means to you. Editorial Committee

NORTHERN ONTARIO BUSINESS

“THE COMPANY YOU KEEP”

by Maggie Milne

RELECT IN THE DARK

Let's go back a decade to the office of the eighties. That's when computers would eliminate the need for paper; when teleconferencing would replace travel to meetings; when you could fold a dollar; and when the report (as well as the cheque) were truly in the mail system. People still whistled while they worked. Life in the eighties was slow, at least the flow of information on a yet undiscovered cyber highway jogged along in a steady rhythm.

No one ever really said, "Fasten your seatbelts for the ride of you life". How did we get to the constant deluge of voice mail messages on non-human networks, the access to mammoth knowledge of the universe, the stress of being in touch every moment? Can we shut this system down or will it control its own destiny as we tag along?

Do you know that we receive more information in a day than our grandparents did in a month?

While we have changed the technology in the workplace, few employers have recognized the need for fresh skills to cope with the psychological side of doing business in a fast environment. We've graduated to running marathons daily; a ten mile jog ten years ago was manageable, but today's road requires different training, rest and nutrition. Feeling a little worn out by the routine? You may be attempting to fit outmoded work habits into an information-based model.

In Eastern cultures, *reflection* is valued as a tool on the job. Reflection is fertile ground for growing resilience, your umbrella to cope with the downpour. It's the way to change gears, replenish your system and your soul. Give yourself permission to rest your mind daily.

Do you take time out every day to think in total silence – no intruding noises and interruptions.

Can you get outside to focus on one minute bit of nature, such as the detail in the bark of a single birch tree? Do you have access to water, concentrating on the color blue to relax your mind? Can you sit with someone in silence, communication through the comfort of shared thoughts, much like our Native Elders have taught?

When the sounds of silence make you uneasy; when you cannot find the time to invest in your well being; when technology drives your relationships; when you remember to take your cellular phone and forget to pick up your kids; when you haven't heard anyone whistling lately... it's "time to stop" time.

Your mind is your personal limitless cyber space. It has been programmed to be simultaneously strong and fragile, limited and limitless. Dot calm: a magic genetic component guarantees that you are the only one capable of accessing that extremely important web site. Enjoy the stop sign on the head highway for a change!

Maggie Milne, The Speaker with SISU (*Guts, Drive and Perseverance) bases her Strategic Human Resources firm in the urban forest of Thunder Bay. Maggie Milne International (1986) has a reputation for innovative professional development in Canada, Australia and the United States. Maggie is the first Canadian consultant to be licensed through MIT to deliver "The Organizational Learning Inventory", based on a Systems Thinking approach. She writes a regular column for Northern Ontario Business. Her book, Circles of Choice, as well as audio-learning is now available.*



A SMALL AGENCY RIDES THE HIGHWAY

by Bev Humphrey

Technology is a wonderful "new" way of communication and while quite a few of us have been using computers, e-mail and the Internet to communicate for some time now, some people have not had the experience.

Our agency, Pathways to Independence, employs 65 people. The majority of these people work alone on a 12 hour shift in supported homes located within a 40 km. radius from our main office. Our methods of communicating with each other were traditional – telephone, notes, or travelling to the home. Many times when we would want to talk with someone, they were off duty and not scheduled back until the weekend – just when we would be off. Sometimes it would take quite a while to get a message out or a response to our questions. To add to this, the staff themselves were feeling isolated and far removed from what was happening within the Agency, resulting in poor staff morale and suspicion of "management".

It was felt that if each home had a computer installed and a modem to hook everyone together via e-mail, we could help to alleviate some of the communication difficulties and hopefully eliminate the felling of isolation the staff had. This was thought to be a great idea, so we installed a computer with e-mail in each of our seven homes and provided training for all staff, but like the proverbial horse, you can lead them to the computer, but you cannot make them use it. We provided training but still some staff were hesitant to use the computer for fear of doing something wrong. To add to this, we had the usual equipment problems and many times, people who wanted to use the e-mail, could not.

That was two years ago and now with on-going training, almost all staff are comfortable with the computers and e-mail. Reports are prepared on Work Perfect, memos are sent and recently, to keep everyone informed of what our agency is doing, we have begun to copy minutes of all our committee meetings and send them via e-mail. We even have a technology committee where staff can view new and exciting innovations to upgrade our systems and make decisions of how much we can afford to spend.

Just recently we added the Internet to our system at the main office. It was felt that the Net would be useful for us to seek information related to our own services for the disabled as well as information on our services. We now have our own Web Page with information on our services and supports for persons with an acquired brain injury (ABI). Training on the use of the Net is being offered to our staff as is time to use the Net for their own interests.

The cost to install the systems was high and so will be the cost to keep them up to date. However, we have seen the cost as negligible when compared to the morale and communication difficulties we had in the past.

Bev Humphrey has worked with the disabled for 24 years. Currently, she is Program Support Manager and Co-ordinator of Volunteers at Pathways to Independence in Belleville, Ontario.



JOURNAL OF VOLUNTEER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Editorial Process and Guidelines for Authors

Objective

The 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 of 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 either on diskette or on typed, double spaced pages. Submissions should be written according to "The 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:

	<u>Words</u>	<u>Pages</u>
Lead Article	2000	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 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. All ads are subject to the approval of the Editorial Team.

Suggested Guidelines:

1. Only 1/4 page and 1/2 page ads will be accepted.
2. Ads must be camera-ready.
3. A maximum of one page of ads will be permitted per issue.
4. Ads are to be placed near "Items of Interest" or toward the end of the issue.
5. Job ads are not recommended.
6. Cost is to be determined by the Editorial Team.



DEADLINES FOR SUBMISSION AND THEMES

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Deadline</u>	<u>Theme</u>
Summer '96	articles due on the 24th of May	Seniors
Fall '96	articles due on the 24th of August	Special Events Volunteers
Winter '97	articles due on the 24th of October	Labour Relations
Spring '97	articles due on the 24th of February	To Be Announced



A SPECIAL THANKS ...
... to Aarkade Design & Offset Printing Inc.
for their help in producing this journal.