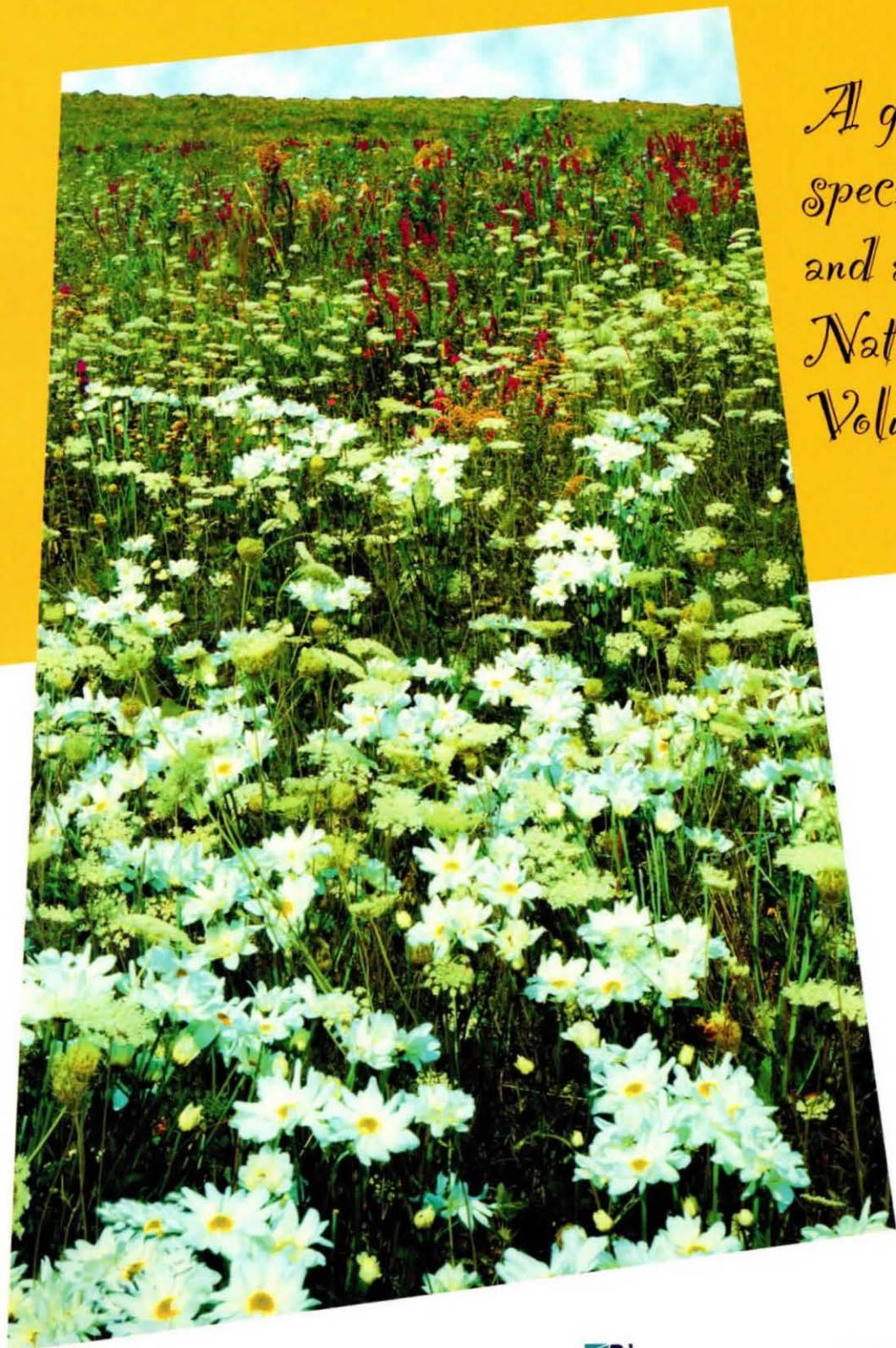


Activity Guide 1999

A guide to planning
special events
and activities for
National
Volunteer Week



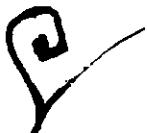
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Activity Guide 1999

All guide to planning special events and activities for National Volunteer Week



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To order additional copies of this guide or for more information, please contact Volunteer Canada by phone at 1 800 670-0401 or by email at volunteer.canada@sympatico.ca.

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Foreword

Spreading the seed of volunteerism

National Volunteer Week is just around the corner, and once again, we are celebrating volunteers as our greatest natural resource . . . with a twist!

We are combining this theme with the fact that the Shasta daisy is the national flower of volunteering and with the fact that there are now 7.5 million volunteers in Canada . . . and growing.

Just like the Shasta daisy, a perennial flower which comes back annually, keeps growing in size, and can be separated and replanted, volunteers help themselves, volunteer programs, and communities to continually grow and thrive.

This year, National Volunteer Week takes place from April 18-24. What better time of year than spring to be thinking about daisies, rejuvenation, and rebirth? This year, we hope that all citizens will "plant" or "replant" themselves in the voluntary sector to contribute to the growth of volunteerism and the revitalization of communities across Canada.

The Activity Guide will help you plan some special events and activities in your area to help spread the seed of volunteerism. Enclosed are ideas for promoting National Volunteer Week, for sponsorships and fundraising, and for recognizing those special volunteers who have already blossomed in your organization and community.

We hope you will find this information useful after National Volunteer Week. We all know that volunteerism doesn't just bloom in spring—in fact, it is in season all year long.

The 1999 Activity Guide includes useful ideas from volunteer centres across Canada, the U.S. and the U.K. Many thanks to these centres—we know you will find value in their contributions. Please take a moment to fill out the attached questionnaire after National Volunteer Week is over to tell us about your activities and events. Remember: next year's guide will only be as good as the information we receive from you!

If there is anything we can do to help make your National Volunteer Week a success, please call us toll-free at 1-800-670-0401 or visit our website at www.volunteer.ca.

Good luck and enjoy!

Promoting Volunteerism

Adapted from Promoting Volunteerism by Janet Lautenschlager. Published by the Community Partnerships Program of Canadian Heritage (formerly Voluntary Action Program), 1991.

Background

Canadians have a long tradition of helping individuals, communities, and causes. Yet this sense of responsibility for the well-being of fellow citizens and for the quality of life in our society needs to be continually nurtured. Increased recognition and public awareness of the crucial role played by volunteers is one important way to help ensure the growth of the spirit of volunteerism.

The promotion of volunteerism encompasses many activities and processes and takes a great variety of forms. In many communities, National Volunteer Week is the highlight of the year for publicly honoring volunteers, and by extension, for advancing public understanding of the vital role played by volunteers and voluntary organizations. Ideally, however, promoting volunteerism is a year-round effort.

Innovative, creative strategies are needed to promote volunteerism. These should be specific to each organization. Board members, staff, and volunteers need to work together to plan, execute, and monitor a promotions strategy.

The promotions strategy

Effective promotion strategies must include:

A planning framework

- why (the rationale, purpose, goals, and objectives)
- who (the target audience)
- what (the specific message you want to communicate)
- how (the best way to communicate your message)

Promotion objectives

- to inform the public about volunteerism
- to stimulate or maintain interest in volunteerism
- to educate the public about volunteering
- to encourage the public to volunteer

Specific promotion goals

1. Short-term goals

- to inform the community about outstanding volunteer efforts
- to recognize and thank volunteers
- to bring people to a special event
- to report on continuing or new programs, services, and activities

2. Longer-term goals

- to increase public awareness of the role of volunteers in your organization
- to recruit new volunteers
- to maintain or increase membership
- to foster closer relations with local media
- to develop a strong, positive image of your organization

Target audiences

Every voluntary organization has its own array of publics—each with their own interest and needs—which could be targeted as a special audience for promotion activities. Potential audiences may include:

- volunteers
- members
- boards of directors
- current and potential donors
- the community at large
- special interest groups within the community
- community leaders and opinion makers
- media
- community institutions
- local businesses
- chambers of commerce and boards of trade
- unions and professional associations

- government representatives
- other voluntary organizations and groups

The promotions approach

It is important to remember that the mode of communication you choose is at least as important as the actual message to be conveyed. To find the most suitable and effective channel for your message, research and a careful assessment of the available options are necessary. When deciding on the best ways to communicate your message, remember to keep in mind:

- the purpose of your promotion activity
- the specific message to be communicated
- the intended audience
- the available resources
- the cost-effectiveness of the approach
- the type of message
- the type of impact desired
- the time required
- the degree of professional expertise needed and its availability

Vehicles for direct promotion

- organizational literature (newsletters, bulletins, annual reports, media kits)
- personal presentations (speaking engagements, news conferences, media interviews, person-to-person communication)

- special events (open houses, receptions, volunteer fairs, volunteer awards ceremonies)
- displays and exhibits (billboards, community bulletin boards, corporate windows, information booths and displays)
- promotional materials (handouts, direct mail, audiovisual presentations, promotional and recognition items)

- DJ chatter sheets
- letters to the editor or opinion page articles

Using the media as vehicles for promotion

- media to consider include: newspapers, magazines, radio, television
- types of messages can include: public service announcements, paid advertisements, features, columns, documentaries, news stories, editorials

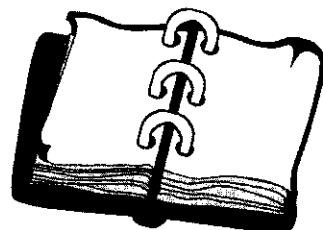
Promotional tool kit

Hand out kits to promote the work of your centre and your volunteers. Items in the kit can include:

- promotional or recognition items (certificates, cards, buttons, magnets, bookmarks, ribbons, pens, balloons)
- brochures
- posters
- speeches, presentations, official statements
- public service announcements
- news releases and media advisories
- fact sheets on your organizations and on volunteerism in general

Notes

Take this opportunity to jot down your promotions goals and objectives, your target audiences, and ideas for promotion.



Sample Speaking Notes to Promote Volunteerism

Sample One: Speaking Notes with a National Focus

This week, communities across the country are paying tribute to their volunteers and reflecting upon the countless ways in which they help individuals, organizations and causes.

Who are Canada's volunteers? They are men, women and youth from all backgrounds and walks of life who willingly give their time and talents for the benefit of others. Canada's volunteer force reflects the diversity of our society, and for that we are a stronger country. Our volunteers are active citizens, rather than observers. They are people who put their values and beliefs into action, sometimes quietly and sometimes boldly.

There are tremendous benefits to be derived from volunteering – from job skills and new experiences through to the personal satisfaction to be gained from helping others. These benefits can be powerful motivators for people to give generously of their time.

Together, Canada's volunteers have a profound impact on virtually every aspect of our society. They inject more than \$16 billion worth of

services into the voluntary sector annually.

Volunteers have helped make Canada the best country in the world in terms of its quality of life. Over the years, volunteer-driven efforts have molded the character of our communities. So many services and programs that we cherish today depend on volunteers, whether on the front-line or on the board of administration. Yet all too often, volunteers are taken for granted.

In an era of rapid change, it is more important than ever to nurture the spirit of volunteering and to instill this ethic in our children, who will be the volunteers of tomorrow. To ensure that volunteerism continues to thrive in the 21st century, it is essential that the efforts of today's volunteers be brought to light and applauded.

Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in optimism – a fundamental commitment to the future. During National Volunteer Week, let's celebrate the spirit of giving and sharing that characterizes the Canadian way of life. It's certainly something we can take great pride in.

Sample Two: Speaking Notes with a Community Focus

Volunteers are the heart and soul of our community. When they offer their skills to help individuals, groups and causes, they are expressing their values and concerns in their daily life.

National Volunteer Week is an opportunity to thank the many citizens of this community who take time out from their busy lives to do volunteer work. Their dedication and enthusiasm are truly remarkable.

This is also a fitting time for us to reflect upon the vital contribution volunteers make and the impact that their collective efforts have on our community.

Over the years, volunteers have shaped and improved virtually every aspect of life in this community. Their efforts have touched every one of us in some way.

Volunteering is about commitment and caring. It's about helping others, advocating for a cause you believe in, or tackling an urgent social problem. It's about working together with others who share a common goal to bring about the "power of one" – the difference that individuals can make in the life of the community, as well as in their own lives.

Volunteering is a prime example of active citizenship. It helps build a sense of community... of belonging, of being connected to others in spite of our diversity.

As a community, we must never become complacent and take our volunteers for granted.

We need to cultivate dedicated and skilled volunteers on an ongoing basis. By publicly recognizing the crucial role of volunteers during National Volunteer Week, we are helping to ensure a strong volunteer corps and a vibrant community – for today and tomorrow.

Sample Three: Speaking Notes with a Theme

The vital role of volunteers in community-building

As we confront the next millennium, there is a widespread feeling among Canadians that the time is ripe to revitalize our community and renew our commitment to one another as citizens. In these tough economic times, we have become acutely aware of how critical it is to maintain the quality of life in our communities and ensure the well-being of our citizens.

In earlier days, the ideal community was tightly-knit and homogeneous—a relatively small place where citizens could find comfort and security in knowing and caring for one another. In modern society, we have a greatly expanded and diverse population base and a radically different style of life. The challenge today is to create a shared vision for a community that will be responsive to a rich diversity of backgrounds and needs.

Vital to any strategy of community renewal are the many volunteers who donate their time and talents to help individuals, organizations and causes. Over the years, volunteers have had a profound influence on the lives of countless Canadians, and they have molded the character of our communities. As catalysts for positive change, they have helped make Canada the envy of the world for its quality of life.

As a nation, we cannot afford to take our volunteers for granted. We simply have too much to lose. We must continually strive to cultivate the spirit of volunteerism in our communities... and to instill this sense of generosity and caring in our children, who will

be the next generation of volunteers.

By publicly recognizing the crucial role that volunteers play (as we do during National Volunteer Week), we are helping to ensure a strong volunteer corps and a dynamic community – for today and tomorrow.

Sample Four: Speaking Notes with a Theme

Volunteers as "human capital" in our communities

National Volunteer Week is a time to showcase the efforts of the many citizens of our community who take time from their busy lives to help others and support the causes they believe in. By getting actively involved, all of these volunteers are helping to keep our community healthy.

What is it that makes a community strong and dynamic? Essentially, it's the ordinary citizens who care enough to help others and to work together toward a common goal that ultimately benefits us all. Without a doubt, volunteers are the heart and soul of our community.

To maintain the quality of life in our community and to ensure the well-being of the people who live here, we need to develop the potential of our citizens. One important way to do this is to nurture the spirit of volunteerism and empower those who have already chosen to serve as volunteers.

In providing support and training to their volunteers, voluntary organizations are building the 'human capital' that our community needs to thrive in the 21st century.

It has often been said that people are the ultimate renewable resource. Then, volunteers are surely "our greatest natural resource". And the investment we make in volunteers will pay many dividends in the future.

As a community, we need to keep the goal of preserving and strengthening our volunteer

corps front and centre on our collective agenda! We can start by putting the spotlight on the vital role they play and applauding the contribution they make to our community – not only during National Volunteer Week but throughout the entire year.

Tried and True Promotional Events and Activities

Window Display

—City of Wetaskiwin Family and Community Services



During National Volunteer Week, a local volunteer collects T-shirts and caps from a variety of community organizations to create a downtown window display. This display not only promotes volunteerism in general, but also promotes community voluntary organizations.

Wall Collage

—Volunteer Centre of Calgary

The volunteer centre collects posters from member organizations to make a wall collage. Visitors to the centre will get a visual picture of the variety of organizations that use volunteers in delivering their services. The collage serves to promote volunteerism and the local organizations that rely on the services of volunteers.

Profile-Raising Activities

—Harrogate and Area Volunteer Bureau

The volunteer bureau spends four months planning comprehensive action to raise the profile of local volunteering. Events include a program listing local voluntary opportunities sponsored by local businesses, a competition which encourages local secondary school students to think about volunteer work by asking them to design the front cover of the program, and a full-day's entertainment to attract people and get the volunteering message across.

Drawing on the Volunteer in You: A Caring and Sharing Event

—The United Way of Windsor-Essex County and the Windsor-Essex Association for Volunteer Administration

Drawing on the Volunteer in You is the title and theme of an art event to promote youth volunteerism and to recognize the spirit of sharing and caring of youth in the community. The event requires participating youth to volunteer time, energy, and talent to depict their personal visions of volunteering in art form.

Four art event entries are selected and made into a poster to promote youth volunteerism at the community, provincial, and national levels. All entries become a part of the permanent United Way collection to promote youth volunteerism at community events all year round.

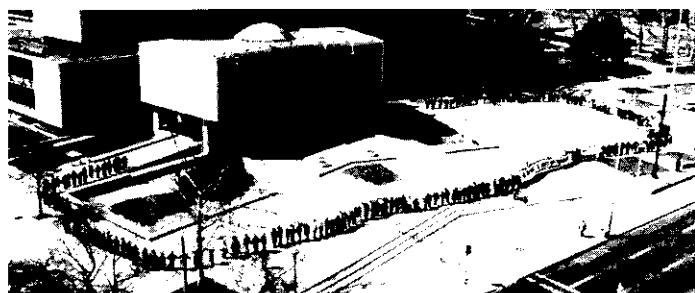
Volunteer Thermometer

—Information and Volunteer Centre for Strathcona County

Strathcona County keeps track of the number of volunteer hours in their community with the volunteer thermometer. Agencies, schools, churches, community and service groups record the number of hours donated by thousands of people in the community.

Circle of Caring

—Volunteer Centre of Hamilton & District



Volunteers representing nonprofits, agencies, and corporations hold hands to create a human chain around city hall. The event allows volunteers and agencies to demonstrate the strength and diversity of volunteerism while promoting its importance to the community. Promotional materials can also be made available at city hall to further promote volunteerism and your organization.

Volunteer Scroll

—Community Volunteer Centre Association of Lethbridge

The centre presents a scroll of names of the many volunteers registered through member agencies. The list promotes volunteers as the

heart and soul of the community.

Display and Training Event

—Sutton Borough Volunteer Bureau

The volunteer bureau puts up a display in the local library and holds a training event next door at the Liberal Arts Centre. Over 180 participants are trained in first aid, equal opportunities, legal responsibilities for committee members, stress management, and assertion. A reception and "Street Raid" is held later, where volunteers distribute volunteer bureau leaflets.

Display booth

—Volunteer Canada

Set up a display booth at local schools during National Volunteer Week to raise awareness and recruit volunteers. Have the student reps announce the booth during homeroom or have them create posters to put up around the school.

Volunteer-A-Thon

—Volunteer Centre of Calgary

This is a province-wide, two-hour special which showcases the outstanding work of community organizations and volunteers on CBC Television. Local agencies are profiled on the show, volunteers are interviewed from the audience, and a live remote highlights volunteer centre member agencies. Volunteers are encouraged to call in and donate a gift of time. All hours are tabulated at the end of the show.

Garment Bag Tags

—Volunteer Centre of Winnipeg

The Volunteer Centre of Winnipeg attached a small tag promoting National Volunteer Week on 7,000 garment cleaning bags throughout the city. The dry-cleaning company displayed the National Volunteer Week poster in their 26 locations across Winnipeg for one month. A great three-way promotional idea!

Church Bulletin

—Kings Volunteer Network

Local churches are given inserts about National Volunteer Week and the centre to include in their bulletins. The bulletins help promote the value and spirit of volunteerism among the congregation.

Promotional Bus

—The New Forest CCS and Volunteer Bureau

The volunteer bureau hires a converted library bus with bare walls ready for posters. Each half day of Volunteer Week, the bus is in a different, well-situated, blocked-off location in the area. Banners, posters, and tabletop displays from local voluntary organizations are part of the promotional bus.

Theatre Night

—Kings Volunteer Network

A local movie theatre donates space during National Volunteer Week, and movie-goers are charged \$2 per person to help the theatre break-

even. The city's mayor and volunteer centre representatives speak about and promote the importance of volunteering before the movie begins.

"Role Call"

—Stockport Volunteer Bureau

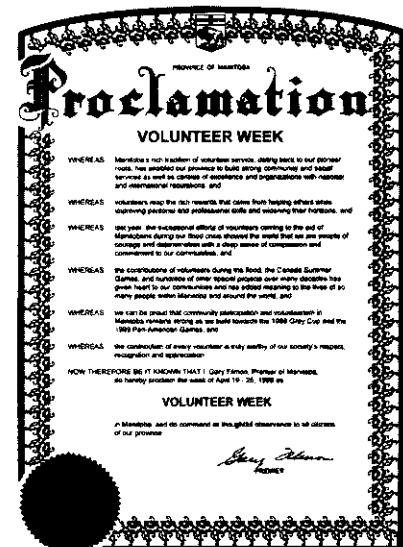
The volunteer bureau holds a novel "Role Call" on a hand-made deck chair. The object of the event is to ask people who do any type of volunteer work to sign the roll and add a description of the type of volunteer work they do. The deck chair generated a lot of interest and as a result, the bureau was able to distribute promotional materials. The bureau also reports that new volunteers were recruited during the week of the exhibition.

Official Proclamation

—Volunteer Centre of Winnipeg

Government officials can proclaim the third week in April National Volunteer Week. This proclamation promotes

volunteerism, the necessity of volunteers throughout the province, and National Volunteer Week.



Indoor Golf Tournament

—Volunteer Centre of Hamilton & District

The centre organizes an annual indoor golf tournament for the local corporate sector during the winter months. A local company donates the space while its employees design the course.

Area corporations who enter teams in the tournament enjoy a day of golfing and networking while the centre is able to promote the value of volunteerism and the services it offers. Local media who cover the event help spread the word that volunteering can be fun and rewarding.

Charity Fashion Show

—South Holland Volunteer Bureau

The volunteer bureau celebrated Volunteer Week—and its first birthday—with a Charity Fashion Show, whereby volunteers modeled clothes from local charities.

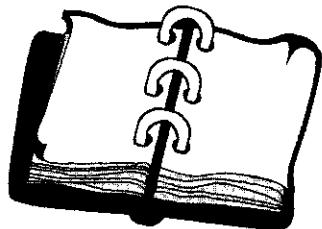
Mock Cheque

—Lowestoft Volunteer Bureau

Area volunteers presented the local MP with a mock cheque representing the value of time of volunteers interviewed in a one-year period and placed by the bureau. The MP was very supportive of the work of the volunteers and spoke to them individually about their work.

Notes

Take a moment to jot down some ideas to promote the work of your organization and of your volunteers.



Strong publicity is a hallmark of a successful sponsorship. Get your media sponsors on board first.

By Judith Barker, publisher of the *Sponsorship Report* and sponsorship consultant for nonprofit organizations.

Reprinted with permission.

What's every charitable event organizer's worst nightmare? Nobody buys tickets; nobody shows up. The same nightmare haunts sponsoring companies. Never forget that sponsors want strong, positive publicity for the dollars they have invested. All this means that getting the word out about a sponsored event or project needs to be very high on the "to do" list of the imaginative, energetic person with responsibility for lining up sponsors.

At the outset, it's worth understanding that the media/sponsored-event relationship works both ways. The media have time and space that they need to fill with events of interest and importance to their audience. With this in mind, a wise approach for sponsorship seekers is to go for sponsorship from the beginning rather than PSAs (public service announcements)—which often run after midnight and even then get scant

attention.

Most experts advise that event organizers provide a media sponsor with exclusivity in its genre, be it print, radio, or television. This doesn't mean that other media cannot know about the event – and indeed you will want to do all you can to create advance publicity – it just means that the sponsor will not find itself promoting its competition as it publicizes the event.

Remember that the most important thing the media can get from a sponsorship is exposure for itself. Media want their name, logo, or call letters out in front of their markets after the newspaper is discarded or the radio and TV are turned off. For this reason, media are happy when a variety of methods are used – including direct mail, on-site signage, programs, letterhead, tickets, press releases, T-shirts, and anything else a savvy event organizer can think of.

When approaching broadcast media, sponsorship seekers will want to keep in mind the power of the Canadian Radio and Television Corporation (CRTC). When it is time for broadcasters to renew their license with the CRTC, they have to demonstrate what they have contributed to the well-being of the community. To associate with your charitable organization can be very appealing to a media sponsor, so make certain you give prominence to the cause your organization serves in discussions with potential media sponsors.

Building relationships between the event organizer and the media are well worth the time and energy required. Sponsorship seekers will want to try for personal contact with media personnel. The in-person meeting is preferable

to confining the relationship to the telephone. Discussing a proposal over lunch can make a huge difference (as between getting and not getting the sponsorship). Media are inundated with sponsorship requests, and personal likes and dislikes and plain old chemistry can play an important role.

A final point: creativity counts. Event organizers should strive to make their event an event. Media are always on the alert for something unusual and exciting, so if your project is exceptional or a bit off-beat, your chances of drawing in a media sponsor are significantly improved. Creativity works in the matching of an event and media partner too. Sometimes when event organizers go to a smaller radio station or a trade paper, for example, they are well rewarded with better support than can be provided from major media.

For more information, please contact *The Sponsorship Report* by phone at (416) 466-4714, by fax at (416) 466-7770, by email at jbarker@sponsorship.ca, or visit www.sponsorship.ca.

Fundraising Volunteers Come in Five Distinct Types

By Ken Wyman CFRE, President of Toronto-based international training and consulting firm Ken Wyman & Associates Inc. Reprinted with permission. For more information, contact Ken Wyman at (416) 362-2926 or e-mail him at KenWyman@compuserve.com.

Fundraising becomes easier when a non-profit group has the right array of volunteers. What are the right types? Twenty years of experience have lead me to cluster them into five unique styles.

1. *The Decision Makers*

- When decision-makers are good, they can ask the vital questions and make brilliant decisions even when all the information is not available (and it almost never is). They create clear policy, workable strategy, and rational plans.
- When they're bad, the meetings last forever and the group never acts.
- Ask your team to admit if they know they are bad decision-makers. Get those people out of decision-making roles — fast! — they'll probably thank you for it. Ask who are good decision-makers. Any one who does not reply that they are good or bad— is so bad they couldn't even decide.

- Boards should be made up primarily of decision makers. Every working group or task force needs at least one.
- If you have to recruit decision makers, look among people who are successful in running businesses, non-profit groups or government teams.
- Look for people who have taken decision-making courses, or are trained in disciplined fields such as architecture, engineering, medicine, and so on.

2. *The Power Brokers*

- These high-powered, well-connected people have clout. They make a few important contacts with major donors — or at a minimum they lend their names. They open doors, impress donors with their credibility, and collect favors. Use them only for maximum impact.
- They don't have to be on your board, although it may impress donors more if they are. In many cases they don't want to be on the management board and attend all those boring meetings.
- Many groups find it useful to create a special group for them, often called the "Friends of..." or "The Business Council for...". This is not to be confused with the "Advisory Council" which is for people with expertise in your work, such as scientists, artists, clients, health care providers, and so on.
- Power brokers are a huge help in getting donations from corporations, foundations, government and major individual donors. When a power-broker is the guest of honor at a special event, it can attract people to buy tickets. When

the right person signs a direct mail letter, more people open the outside envelope, read the letter, and send money.

3. The Expert Advisors

- People who look at fund-raising and say "Been there, done that" are a huge help – especially if you are trying a new type of fundraising.
- These experienced volunteers can share their expertise to help you avoid reinventing the wheel. These advisors help out in publicity and media, accounting and financial management, law, fund raising, and staging events.
- They may not want to do the nitty-gritty work. Their job is to keep you pointed in the right direction, warn you of pitfalls, and help solve problems.
- Find them in other non-profits, where they have worked as staff or volunteers on similar kinds of fund-raising. Recruit them from faculty who teach public relations, advertising, fund-raising, or whatever expertise you need.

4. The Managers & Organizers

- "Clones" is the affectionate name I use for these people, for all the times you work late muttering "the only way I'll get through this work is if I were twins".
- These are people you trust almost as much as yourself. They make intelligent decision. You know they are intelligent, because it is the same decision you would have made, if you'd had time to really think.
- They get the job done quickly, without

reminders. They come back with new ideas.

- Give them the freedom to act, not rules to follow.
- They are rare and valuable. Recruit them by looking for incredibly organized people.

5. The workers

- "Drones" is the word I've heard used to describe them – and it fits. Bees can't make honey without a hive full of drones, and only one queen bee. This is not a term of disrespect. Highly intelligent, competent people go through "drone-mode" at some point in their lives. Some may be great in one of the other categories in their day-job, but become drones when they put on the volunteer hat.
- Everyone occasionally wants the freedom from decision-making that comes with being a worker.
- To manage them you must recognize that they are task-oriented. Ask them to do something and they will — usually, if the directions are clear. With a reminder, or three. And when they finish, they stop and wait to be told what to do next. Some are great envelope stuffers; others can take major responsibility for a precisely defined campaign, with a good instruction manual.
- Don't wait for them to approach you – they won't. But if you fail to ask them to help, they may be insulted.

That's the summary of the five types. Your task is to determine which category fits your volunteers and potential volunteers. You may well have people assigned to the wrong role – in

which case it is no surprise if they are not doing a great job.

People's roles may change over time. Allow them to change categories as they need to.

Don't assume people in one category can take on the other roles, unless they are good at them. Expecting too much of people leads to burn-outs.

However, recognize that people may fit the different roles at different times. My friend Jack is an expert on computers – but don't ask him to do data-entry work. Jack is also willing to do the grunt-work at special events – but don't ask him to manage one. And when we needed a donation from a church, it turned out Jack was a power broker who knew the right people.

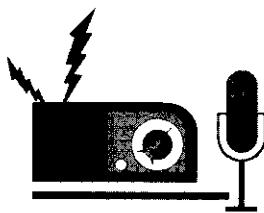
When you have the right people in the right roles, fundraising is much easier.

Tried and True partnerships

Radio Salute to Volunteers

—Volunteer Action Centre of Kitchener-Waterloo & Area

In the past, the centre has given a radio salute to volunteers. Here's how it works: A local radio station donates fifty radio spots to recognize volunteers during National Volunteer Week.



Submissions are made by voluntary organizations and include information about what their volunteer does and why their participation makes a difference. A local party supply store donates and delivers balloon bouquets to all the volunteers featured in the radio salute. Where possible, they deliver the bouquets to the volunteer's workplace to further promote the concept and value of volunteerism, while promoting their own business. The radio station has the opportunity to increase its listenership, while the agency where the volunteer works is also recognized. Everyone wins!

Banners

—Kings Volunteer Network

Vinyl, grommetted promotional banners are attached 10-feet high on telephone poles in three areas surrounding the volunteer centre.

Supporters who want to have their name on the banner are charged a one-time fee of \$50.00. The centre makes a \$25.00 profit on all banners "sold".

Outdoor display boards

—Kings Volunteer Network

Local businesses are asked to choose from a list of 30 volunteer slogans to put on their outdoor display boards during National Volunteer Week. Through this partnership, the centre is able to promote volunteerism while the business promotes itself as a caring company.

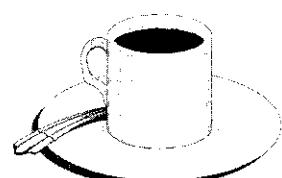
Adopt-an-agency

—Volunteer Centre of Wetaskiwin

The centre provides local agencies with a workshop on window display design, and pairs them up with area businesses. The agencies design the business' window to promote volunteerism and to raise awareness about the centre's role in the community.

Beverage Coupons

—Kings Volunteer Network



Local restaurants and coffee shops donate coupons for a free beverage during the month of April. Volunteer centre representatives randomly distribute these coupons as a way of scouting for and recruiting volunteers. This partnership serves to increase the number of volunteers going through the centre while increasing the number of customers at each given restaurant.

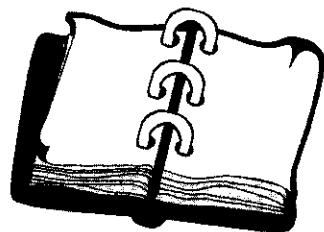
Display Booth

—Volunteer Canada

Set up a display booth in the lobbies of local businesses to raise awareness about your volunteer centre, to promote National Volunteer Week, and to recruit volunteers. This activity helps create new partnerships—or maintain established ones—with local businesses and opens the door for potential future sponsorships.

Notes

Jot down some ideas for possible partnerships with local businesses or for fundraising in your community.



Recognizing Volunteers

Source

Connors, Tracy Daniel, Ed., *The Volunteer Management Handbook*. John Wiley and Sons Inc., 1995, pp. 222-243.

Hawthorne, Nan. *Sound Volunteer Management*,
www.sound-volunteer.com.

McCurley, Steve and Rick Lynch, *Volunteer Management: Mobilizing all the Resources of the Community*. Heritage Arts Publishing, 1996, pp. 115-126.

A volunteer's pay is the recognition that he or she is an equal and respected partner of the organization. As a result, recognition must be an integral part of the management process so that volunteers feel valued within the organization they work for.

An effective, targeted recognition program can support your organization in many ways. If managed properly, your recognition program will motivate volunteers by satisfying their individual needs and supporting your organizational goals. If managed properly, your program will:

- Contribute to productivity

Volunteers who are given meaningful asks will feel rewarded by their own accomplishments. They benefit from this while the organization benefits from making good use of a precious commodity.

- Contribute to retention

By identifying and addressing the specific needs of individuals and providing recognition that satisfies these needs, you are more likely to

encourage your volunteers to stay with your organization.

- Contribute to morale

As your organization demonstrates concern for your volunteers through appropriate task assignment and performance recognition, your volunteers' personal satisfaction and willingness to participate will increase.

Recognition programs which typically fail are those which:

- base rewards on what the managers value rather than what the volunteers value
- assume certain rewards to be good for everyone without regard for individuality
- are inconsistently administered
- are external to the volunteer, with no connection to the work or person
- offer rewards whether performance merits it or not
- assume that the organization's mission is sufficient justification to volunteer, with no recognition or celebration of the volunteers' work
- offer excessive recognition and celebration

Recognition programs which typically work are those which:

- base rewards on an appreciation of the individual volunteer as a unique person and

which addresses individual needs

- are based on individual jobs or tasks
- have consistent reward policies, resulting in a sense of trust that effort will receive the proper reward
- recognize longevity and special contributions frequently
- offer rewards which can be shared by teams of volunteers or the entire organization

Ten guidelines for recognition

- give it or else
- give it frequently
- give it via a variety of methods
- give it honestly
- give it to the person, not to the work
- give it appropriately to the achievement
- give it consistently
- give it on a timely basis
- give it in an individualized fashion
- give it for what you want more of

Matching the recognition to the volunteer

Many people believe that the best way to recognize volunteers is to throw them a party or hold a similar recognition event during National Volunteer Week. However, your efforts will be ineffective if you don't follow the above guidelines.

In order to recognize the efforts of your organization's volunteers most effectively, you must first understand what motivates people to volunteer.

Four typical motivators of volunteers include:

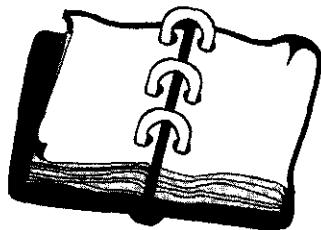
- Praise. Individuals who are motivated to volunteer by praise typically enjoy recognition for their talents and like being singled out for their accomplishments. Since these volunteers enjoy a program where their volunteer efforts are readily seen by others, offer them public recognition at an event, a recognition spot on your website or in your newsletter, or a letter thanking their boss, teacher, or family.
- Affiliation. Individuals who are motivated to volunteer for affiliation enjoy opportunities to get together with others with similar beliefs, backgrounds, and goals, and don't often find working alone very satisfying. As a result, you should recognize the efforts of these volunteers through social get togethers, a name-badge, or a public posting of all your organization's volunteers.
- Accomplishment. Individuals who volunteer for a sense of accomplishment enjoy seeing concrete evidence of their work and like practical, tangible projects. To recognize these volunteers effectively, offer them certificates of accomplishment at specific stages in their work or a special place to put completed projects.
- Power and influence. Individuals who are motivated to volunteer for power and influence typically like persuading people to see or do things their way, enjoy showing people a better, easier way of accomplishing an objective, and like positions where they can help make decisions or train people. These volunteers will

most appreciate titles or rank insignia, a special parking spot, or involvement as a speaker at your organization's workshops.

Remember, an effectively-managed volunteer recognition program will not only keep your volunteers motivated, but will ultimately benefit your organization and help you reach your goals.

Notes

Take this opportunity to jot down some ideas for recognizing your volunteers.



Tried and True Volunteer Recognition Events and Activities

Interesting and Unique Ideas

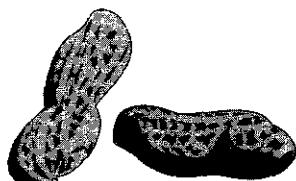
Reprinted with permission from Energize Inc. Check out www.energizeinc.com for more ideas!

Thanks for "Raisin" All Those Funds

One idea to recognize volunteers is to take a small box of raisins, attach a strip of magnetic tape to the back and attach a small note saying "Thanks for raisin all those funds". These can be put on refrigerators or filling cabinets at work.

Here are a few other versions of this idea:

Give your volunteers a bag of mixed nuts with a note attached stating, "We would go 'nuts' without your support!". This is a great, but simple, recognition for volunteers.



Use votive candles for National Volunteer Week. Wrap them in cellophane and tie them with a note stating, "You light up the lives of so many!". You can also use notes stating, "You lighten our load by volunteering."

Name sake Awards

Use a special method of recognition by naming awards after long-standing, stellar volunteer role models.

Bookmarks

Use children's drawings to make a bookmark. Laminate it and include a message on the back. It's a wonderful token and also inexpensive!

Thank-you posters by children

The United Way does the usual recognition dinner, certificates, plaques, personally signed letters, etc. However, the United Way of Gloucester County's most popular recognition program is "Thank You Posters" created by children from local agencies. These hand-drawn posters are very popular and hang in the main lobby of several large companies. They don't cost much to produce, just some posterboard and crayons/markers. Plus, the children enjoy creating them and often create more than one. They have been doing this for five years now and the activity gets more popular each year.

Volunteer Caring Kit

The Volunteer Caring Kit can include:

- Paper clips: Paper clips have many uses, just like each volunteer has many talents. Paper clips are also used to hold a program together and provide guidance to youth.
- Rubber Bands: Rubber bands represent the flexibility that all volunteers need to have. You can adapt to any different situation. As volunteers, you can also stretch your own

abilities to have new opportunities.

- Band Aids: Band aids help others and are sensitive to others feelings, just as volunteers have to be keyed-in to the feelings of those they work with.
- Coin: This coin represents a quarter to call and ask for help and to remind you that you are not alone.
- Paper Bill: this money calculates the contribution that volunteers make to a program through their donation of time.
- Balloon: This balloon expands and grows as you learn from others.
- Heart Sticker: This heart represents the ability to reach out to youth. You care about our youth and what they are doing.
- Mint: This mint represents the fact that each of you is worth a mint. Volunteers are very special and really make a difference.
- Lifesavers: Lifesavers represent the special contribution to a program that each volunteer makes and emphasizes that each of us are unique and different just like the rainbow of colour of lifesavers and that there is a place in the organization for everyone.
- Safety Pin: A safety pin to remind you that you are bright and sharp and utterly indispensable.

Compile all these items in a bag and photocopy the "instructions of the caring kit". Give each volunteer a small token.

A Personal Note

It's not earth-shattering, but volunteers really appreciate and respond to the personal notes sent out periodically by the Wheelchair Recycling Program Manager. On their organization's note-cards, or specially chosen cards for the individual volunteer, the volunteers are reminded of how important his/her efforts are to the organization. A recently accomplished task or project is emphasized and shown how it affected the organization's operation. When a volunteer group is hosted by the organization, the number of volunteers is multiplied by the number of hours they've worked, then divided out to let the volunteers know how many (non-stop!) eight hour days it would have taken the tiny staff to complete the same volume of work. It's often quite staggering!

Personal Notes from Recipients

One agency that serves the deaf by reading and interpreting information recognized their volunteers in a very special way. The volunteers didn't usually interact with the clients, since the reading was done over the radio. At the recognition event, each volunteer had a letter at his/her plate that was dictated by a listener of the show for which the volunteer read. The letter spoke about the reader and how his/her tone of voice made the listener feel and how it helped the listener to hear the piece of the newspaper that was read (or whatever). The letters were typed on special paper and framed nicely.

The coordination of it was work, of course, but the recognition didn't take any time away from the event, which already had a full agenda. The

volunteers reported it was the recognition with the most impact they had ever received. They heard directly from their listeners and learned how important they were – personally.

Mini-Grants to Volunteers

For several years, the County Commissioners (of Colorado USA) have awarded mini-grants to volunteers in the County government volunteer programs. Volunteers submit proposals for grants that will benefit the work of their volunteer program, the clients served by the volunteer program, or the program volunteers. Examples of this are: a demonstration project; the enhancement of a current project; the purchase of a piece of equipment or supplies that will improve or enhance the volunteer experience or the volunteer program; training or publications that will increase volunteer skills or knowledge. Awards are made at a Commissioners' meeting followed by a reception. The volunteers are recognized publicly as are the very creative programs in which they work.

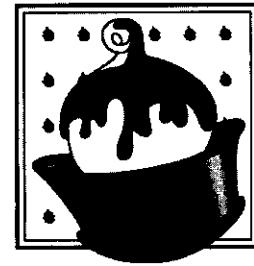
More than a Plaque or Certificate

Some ideas that are not the usual plaque or certificate:

- Send a "thought-you'd-like-to-know" letter to the volunteer's employer, acknowledging his or her positive contribution to your organization.
- Ask volunteers or staff members to train other volunteers or staff members, to lead meetings to give presentations, etc.
- Forget separate luncheons for deserving staff and volunteers. Bring them together for a joint recognition lunch in their honor.

- Send an anniversary card to volunteers or staff, highlighting their year(s) of service. Note how they made a difference in your organization over the past year.

Ice Cream Sundaes Show How Volunteers Help a Program



One Community Action Agency relies heavily on volunteers for everything from filing to riding school buses. An event was celebrated recently where each of the program directors discussed how volunteers helped to run the programs. While each director talked, their staff helped to build brownie sundaes.

One program started with the foundations (plates), the next put the brownies, then the whipped topping, cherries and nuts until we had 150 sundaes. It symbolized visually how our volunteers affect each part of our organization and by working together we can accomplish great things!

A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words!

For two months before the recognition event, the director of volunteers of a mental health centre began to take photographs of volunteers while they were "on the job". They thought this was for PR purposes. At the event, each volunteer received a photo of him/herself in a matte frame imprinted with a 'thank you' message.

A Lasting Impression

Graduating student volunteers can be given a special seminar on resume writing, with emphasis on how they can describe their volunteer work as a credential that would impress prospective employers or university admissions officers.

Volunteer Mural

Many years ago Columbia, South Carolina had a construction project going on downtown with a rather ugly protective wall. The Volunteer Centre coordinated a community-wide volunteer recognition event that started with permission to paint this wall (it surrounded a complete city block) and the donated services of an artist who painted an outline all around it of people of every description tugging together on a rope.

The local agencies were asked to submit photographs of a representative volunteer. The photos were blown up and placed on the faces of the painted people in the mural. And then, on a designated day, all the volunteers from all the agencies were invited to come out and paint in the rest of the mural with all sorts of color! The mural painting itself generated publicity that day (and new knowledge of volunteering in the community) and the mural stayed up for the duration of the construction project.

Student Recognition Certificates

—Volunteer Victoria

Volunteer Victoria recognizes the valuable contribution of youth volunteers by sending Youth Recognition Certificates to high schools

and elementary schools. The certificates are presented at the schools' Awards Day ceremonies.

Commemorative Tree

—Community Volunteer Centre Association of Lethbridge



Each year, a commemorative tree is planted in honor of the community's volunteers, with a different volunteer group representing Lethbridge's volunteer corps each year. The city donates the labor to plant the tree in the Volunteer Grove of Trees, a local business sponsors the tree, and an agency dedicates the tree to volunteers.

Park Bench

—Halton Social Planning Council and Volunteer Centre

The centre dedicates a park bench to the area's volunteers. The bench—which overlooks a lake—is bought with a grant from the city. The centre holds a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the dedication of the bench.

Volunteer Certificate

—Sefton CVS Volunteer Bureau

The certificate, which is signed by the city's Mayor, is believed to help enhance a volunteer's job prospects, promote good practice, and raise the status of volunteering. In order to qualify for acceptance into the Volunteer Certificate activity, voluntary groups must adopt good practice and agree to a job description with the volunteers.

At-A-Glance

Recognition Ideas

—Volunteer Action Centre of Kitchener-Waterloo & Area

Recognition when a volunteer joins your agency

- Send a letter of welcome (maybe a small welcome gift too)
- Provide a good role description, issue name tag, ID card, etc.
- Provide an orientation (including an agency tour)
- Assign a space to the volunteer (place to put coat, purse, on-going work, etc.)
- Publish names of new volunteers in employee newsletter
- Introduce the new volunteer to other staff
- Connect the volunteer with their team leader
- Develop a talent inventory
- Provide a nursery

Recognition on a daily or weekly basis

- SMILE!
- Informal thank you from staff and the volunteer's supervisor

- Document their time for future evaluation
- On the job praise – with specific comments
- Provide good supervision
- Seek feedback from volunteer (suggestions/improvements)
- Show awareness / sensitivity to religious practices of the volunteer (holidays, customs, prayer rituals)
- Have agency board members talk with the front line volunteers
- Take time to talk
- Say "We missed you."
- Recognize personal problems and needs
- Use a volunteer suggestion box

Recognition on a monthly basis

- Volunteer of the Month
- Set aside time for supervision and evaluation
- Articles in newsletters
- Provide scholarships to volunteer conferences/workshops
- Letters to the editor about your agency's volunteers

Recognition at the Completion of a Special Event Project

- Say "thank you"

- Send letter of thanks to the volunteer, their boss, their school or their staff supervisor
- Write an article about the project for local newspapers or agency publication
- Take the volunteer(s) out for lunch or a coffee break
- Promotion, give the volunteer more responsibility
- Wall of fame, post up a picture of the volunteer with a summary of the project
- Write a letter to prominent public figures

Recognition at Meetings with Staff or Groups

- Report on the volunteer projects and individual volunteer accomplishments
- Praise the volunteers to others (have staff who are experiencing success with volunteers in their programs become your best advocates with the staff who may be struggling)
- Show slides or video of the volunteers at work
- Invite volunteers to staff meetings
- Provide volunteers with outside training resources

Recognition on Occasions and at Events

- Send your volunteers a birthday card
- Have an informal birthday party (a cupcake with a candle)

- Send a get well card
- Remember special event in their lives (child's wedding, job promotions, anniversary)

Recognition when a Volunteer Leaves your Agency

- Give a letter of thanks
- Give a certificate / pin of appreciation
- Write a letter of recommendation
- Write a letter of appreciation / commendation to present employer
- Have an exit interview

Where to Recognize Your Volunteers

- Volunteer Office or lounge
- Hallway in building / cafeteria
- In the community
- At shopping centres – display boards
- In the media, newspaper articles, cable TV shows, professional journals
- In your organization's newsletter or on your website