

ON OUR WAY TO THANKSGIVING:

Awaiting.....  
The Arrival of Two Time Capsules

From Ivan’s pen to you.....

1990...a small group gathered at Plaza del Monte Conference Center in Santa Fe, NM to launch the Voluntas Time Capsule on Volunteerism on a sixty-year journey to the future, Thanksgiving Day, in the year 2050. Rev Fred Swearingen called upon us to wager our lives upon the future...



Back Row: Danny Randall, Francis "Bitts" Bryan, Carolyn Swearingen, Fred Swearingen, Ron Hale  
Middle Row: Donna Marie (Schroeder) Randall, Lynn Gary, Mary Mokler, Liz Bryan, Ivan Scheier  
Front Row: Kim Cline and baby MacKenzie  
(This photo was taken by Bruce Cline)

The Capsule was the only one we know of created solely to honor volunteering as the special heritage of free people everywhere (at least a dozen countries represented, and the idea suggested by a great Canadian friend, Rob Cole). The core of the Capsule is 300 messages, about equally divided between adults and children under 12, many of whom we hope will survive to see the opened capsule in 2050, or thereafter. In these messages, on archival paper, the writers were asked to address whomever opened the capsule, identifying:

- what they most valued about their own time and hoped would be preserved;

- what they saw as the chief problems of their time they hoped would have been dealt with (the children overwhelmingly mentioned environmental degradation and war); and finally
- whatever they wanted to say to the people of the future (one older woman especially wanted to send a message to her granddaughter, not yet born).
- The children, incidentally, were also asked to draw pictures of themselves as they saw themselves at that time (1989) and as they expected to look in 2050. As far as we could tell, the main difference was that in 2050, they wore glasses and had bowlegs.

Along with the messages, the Capsule contains many artifacts related to volunteering; for example, bumper stickers, buttons, posters, pins, books, magazines, newsletters, newspapers, catalogs, workshop programs, videos, volunteer firefighter’s hat, a volunteer board game, art, an audio tape of a great volunteer song, a soup can, and a vial of cheap perfume. We made every effort to make the contents preservable, e.g. wrapping in plastic, but can make no sweeping promises on that. In particular, we are unable to guarantee that the Girl Scout cookies will still be fresh.

Unlike most Time Capsules, this one has journeyed widely through space as well as time. Never buried or sunk in concrete, the Capsule has traveled to nearly six communities in three states. Included were two retreat and reflection centers, two libraries, one reflection garden, and a barn in northern Minnesota. The Capsule finally came to rest in 2001, in Denver at Regis University, on the fourth floor of the Dayton Memorial Library at Regis Boulevard and 50<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

On September 20, 2001, in a ceremony at Regis University in Denver, the Millennium Caplet was dedicated, and the Voluntas Capsule re-dedicated for the last fifty years of its journey.

Certainly unplanned as such, the date followed by little more than a week the terrible tragedy of “9/11” in New York City. Nothing could have sent a clearer message that hope survives hatred, and that terror cannot deprive the future of compassion.

The 50-years, 2001-2050, might be the best way of conceiving the time span of the Voluntas Capsule as well as the Caplet. This is because, though first launched in 1990, with approximately 90% of its final contents which were never removed, we continued to add some contents for about three years until the Capsule was finally sealed physically. A few years after that, a crack developed in the Capsule’s outer skin and some of us couldn’t resist slipping a small item or two through this small opening in time, until it, too was sealed just before the 2001, ceremony. In all this, those who open the Capsule should have no trouble recognizing that we were “only human”, and remarkably temptable ones at that!

About 400 individuals participated in the creation of the Voluntas Capsule in one way or another; another 200 additional people for the Millennium Caplet. All volunteers, of course. What could be more appropriate for volunteers than to see the Opening of the Capsules – or that it even occurs at all! The nightmare, especially with buried time capsules, has always been that no one will remember to “dig it up”, even remember where it is, or that it ever was!

(I will be 124 years old at the time and no doubt slowing down a bit (actually, probably completely). But as a long-dead busybody, let me make a few suggestions for 2005 to 2050).

In Peace,  
Ivan Scheier

*Ivan Scheier*

Mary Lou McNatt  
2001 Millennium Caplet

*Mary L. McNatt*

Preparing for the Opening of the Capsule and Caplet:

Suggestions for the 2005 to 2050 preparation for the opening of the Capsules.

- First find a good young person, or several, 15-25 years old. Old enough to understand and commit, but young enough likely to still be alive in 2050 (60-70 years old).
- Also identify younger family members such as those relatives of Mary Lou McNatt listed below:
  - Leta McNatt, age 10 (2005), CO
  - Quinlin McNatt, age 8 (2005), CO
  - Larissa McNatt, age 9 (2005), CO
  - Skylar Daniels, age 1 (2005), KS
- Give them a copy of this brochure. Share with them your own experience with volunteerism, and ask them to make a note about six months or so before opening date, say Spring 2050, to become a part of the Capsule opening.
- List your possible celebration contacts here:

### Preparing for the Opening of the Capsule and Caplet:

Suggestions for the 2005 to 2050 preparation for the opening of the Capsules.

- Contact the Regis University Library to remind them of opening date and ask if you can attend. Please remember, in all that follows, that in any possible sense of “ownership” of the Capsules, they “belong” to Regis University’s Library system, which will have cared for their safety for almost fifty years.
  - If and as they still exist, contact any or all of the following organizations with a potential stake in capsules:
    - Points of Light Foundation
    - Association for Volunteer Administration
    - ENERGIZE Inc. whose current President was a principal consultant to the Capsule project
    - Denver Directors of Volunteers in Agencies
    - International Time Capsule Society, Oglethorpe University, Atlanta, GA
    - The media, by all means.
- Most presumptuously, from this distance in time, let us further suggest that the Capsules should actually be opened, and very carefully, at least a week or two before the formal opening to see what remains useable inside, and can contribute to the formal opening ceremony (e.g. maybe a video of the rededication ceremony in 2001).
- Moreover, after the formal Opening, it might be decided to have a second “gala” after tracking down some of the 1990’s-children, about 150 of them, who contributed their message to the original Capsule, and are now about 65-70 years old.

*Permission is granted to reproduce this 2005 flyer to share with others or to request copies send an email to:*

Ivan Scheier -- [ivan@zianet.com](mailto:ivan@zianet.com)  
or  
Mary Lou McNatt -- [mlmcnatt@indra.com](mailto:mlmcnatt@indra.com)

**Share this brochure with family and friends who will be around to celebrate the opening of the Capsules (2050).**

***Pen your story for volunteerism  
to share here.***

[illegible]

## ON OUR WAY TO THANKSGIVING

### Awaiting the Arrival of Two Time Capsules

## Opening of the Voluntas Time Capsule and the Millennium Caplet

# Thanksgiving Day 2050

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

**Housed at:**  
**Dayton Memorial Library**  
**Regis University**  
**3333 Regis Blvd.**  
**Denver, CO 80221, U.S.A.**  
**303-458-4100**

**Date for Opening:**

# Thanksgiving Day 2050

*If that day, sadly is no longer celebrated, a suggestion would be December 2, 2050, the sixtieth anniversary of the launching ceremony.*

**Time Capsule's location:**

**Dayton Memorial Library  
Regis University  
3333 Regis Blvd.  
Denver, CO 80221, U.S.A.  
303-458-4100  
[www.regis.edu](http://www.regis.edu)**

When you get to the Dayton Memorial Library archives at Regis University you'll see a copper cube 2 feet tall, 2 feet wide and one foot deep which, (please take our word for it) weighs about 90 pounds! On the front of the Capsule are incised the words:

*"To be opened November 23 in the year two thousand and fifty "Nothing Happens Unless First a Dream" (Carl Sandburg)."*

Residing with the Capsule is the Volunteerism Millennium Time Caplet, similar in purpose, though somewhat smaller in size. The Caplet was created in 2001, as part of the United Nations International Year of the Volunteer by Mary Lou McNatt and colleagues to celebrate volunteerism in the new millennium and served as an updated companion to the Voluntas Capsule.