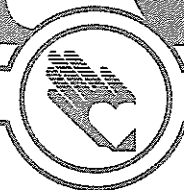


THE JOURNAL OF VOLUNTEER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

VRM

Summer ... 1995













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EDITORIAL

As we get ready to put another edition of The Journal to bed, it is interesting to look back at the course we have been sailing.

I came on board in the fall of 1992. We were charting a course. We asked the question; "Is Management of Volunteers a Profession?". We sailed boldly into 1993 exploring the fundamental issues of Recognition, Fund-raising, Taking Care of You and Negotiations. In 1994 we needed to identify the crew. We started the year with an excellent issue on Marketing and continued with Youth Volunteers, Corporate Volunteers and Rural Volunteers.

The underlying current that swept us into 1995 was 'change'. How do we deal with it, identify it, adjust to it, as it carries us along. Our charts and graphs are outdated or inadequate. To assist with the many S.O.S. signals, we devoted our winter and spring issues to the thought provoking subjects of Mentoring and Redefining Volunteerism.

Our summer issue should allow you to put your feet up and relax. However, this year we intend to push you to discover your expertise in understanding your own mission and abilities. "Are we becoming totally paranoid about the level of risk posed to volunteers and other staff? The simple answer is "no." says Lorraine Street in her article "The National Education Campaign on Screening Volunteers and Employees...". Ms. Street brings us up to date on legislative and public policy initiatives currently taking place both federally and provincially in Canada. She also presents clear and strong reasons explaining why these changes are necessary.

Some of these issues will strike managers of volunteers as something they don't want to think about. After all, this is the profession that attracts caring, trusting, helpful individuals. I still like to believe that fair beats unfair and justice beats injustice. This dialogue is now underway with most managers of volunteers struggling to re-educate themselves. See Mary Satterfield's article for an informal opinion and a practical application of 'Mediation'.

The discussions are intensely emotional. Linda Graff's article on Risk Management presents us with convincing straightforward points on how and why this area of management is indispensable. She explains how to convince your administration that you're not 'waving red flags', and how to put this easily understood process in place. Mary Ellen Panjer's article provides additional insights on this subject.

This issue brings together some excellent navigators who will strengthen us intellectually as well as giving us a new chart to follow.



Chris Jarvis is a member of The Journal of Volunteer Resources Management Editorial team.

MEDIATION: A NEW WAVE?

by Mary Satterfield

Everyone talks about "mediating a dispute." But what is mediation? Mediation is a non-adversarial method of resolving disputes. In effect, it is negotiation with the assistance of a neutral third party whose job it is to help the parties to talk to one another, to help them explore their needs and interests related to the problem and fashion a resolution that meets at least some of them. Solutions to a dispute are generally arrived at in response to the interests of the parties, rather than their fixed positions.

A way of defining interests is that they are the aspects of a problem which underlie the fixed positions of the parties. For example, "I want my job back" or "I don't want you in the building" are fixed positions. The needs and interests might be a belief by a person that they have been wrongfully dismissed from a job or their efforts are not appreciated. The corresponding needs and interests of the other person, the employer or supervisor, may be to respond to a complaint that something improper has occurred, or simply a belief that the person being dismissed is unresponsive to supervision. In both cases the needs and interests are important to any solution.

The function of the mediator is to help people to talk to one another and to negotiate in non-confrontive ways in order to begin to uncover the interests of each participant. This can enable the parties to begin to canvass possible alternatives and to fashion their own agreement.

How can mediation be used in a volunteer context? Where people are investing their own time, effort and commitment and the setting where they work is relying on the volunteer for particular tasks, mediation could be particularly helpful and applicable. Supervisors of volunteers are only too aware that, when a dispute arises with a volunteer, the immediate public perception will be that the volunteer, a member of the public, is unappreciated.

An example of a dispute concerning a volunteer where mediation could be helpful is a jurisdictional dispute, such as a difference of opinion between a volunteer and a paid employee in determining who does what work and under what circumstances. In exploring the interests of the parties, it should become clear fairly quickly that an interest of the volunteer is to give time, effort and talent to do a good job. An interest of the paid employee is to maintain employment. If there are position descriptions or a collective agreement, those documents would be considered as reflecting the interests of the adversaries. A resolution which is mutually acceptable should be available.

Mediation can also be valuable in re-negotiating a volunteer's agreement because of changing legislation affecting the tasks that are available to volunteers. The manager of volunteer's position may be that the volunteer can no longer carry out that task, but the volunteer may wish to continue to do the same job. An exploration of the needs of the manager to

manage and control the tasks of volunteers, but also to maintain good volunteers, might be some of the interests. The volunteer may feel unappreciated or cast aside and his/her worth needs to be recognized before a new agreement can be made. A mediator can be effective in helping each of them understand the other person's point of view and to negotiate new terms and new tasks.

How does one go about finding a mediator? The simple answer is to ask your friends. In any large metropolitan area there will be numbers of family mediators and community mediators. The yellow pages are also fruitful. It may be possible to obtain a mediator as a volunteer to help parties to resolve a dispute. In smaller centers, trained mediators are most likely to be found amongst social workers,

public health nurses and human service professionals or the clergy, many of whom are trained in dispute mediation.

Mary T. Satterfield

Lawyer, mediator and arbitrator, practicing family and estates law: family, estates, commercial and employment mediation and family arbitration in West Toronto.

Engaged as a mediator for the past 13 years, co-author and presenter with Genevieve Chornenki of a 40-hour certificate course.

Co-author of two legal guide books for non-lawyers: "Law for Social Workers: A Canadian Guide" and "Law for Volunteers: A Guide".

Member of numerous dispute resolution organizations.



LA MÉDIATION: UNE APPROCHE INNOVATRICE!

par Mary Satterfield

Tout le monde parle de "médiation de conflits" mais qu'est-ce que c'est vraiment? La médiation est une méthode de résoudre les différends de façon non-confliktuelle. De fait, il s'agit d'une négociation où une personne neutre aide les parties en cause à dialoguer, à explorer leurs besoins et leurs intérêts en rapport au problème qui les concerne et à trouver une solution qui répond tout au moins à certains de leurs besoins. Les solutions sont donc trouvées à partir des intérêts des parties en cause plutôt qu'à partir de positions bien arrêtées.

Les intérêts peuvent être définis comme les aspects d'un problème qui sous-tendent les positions arrêtées des parties en cause. Par exemple: "Je veux avoir mon emploi" ou "Je ne

veux plus vous voir dans cet édifice" sont des positions arrêtées. Les besoins et les intérêts de la personne pourraient se traduire par la conviction d'avoir été injustement congédiée ou la perception que ses efforts ne sont pas appréciés. Les besoins et les intérêts correspondants de l'autre partie, l'employeur ou le superviseur, pourraient être une réplique à une plainte concernant un incident déplorable ou simplement une impression que la personne congédiée n'a rien à foutre face à la supervision. Dans un cas comme dans l'autre, les besoins et les intérêts doivent être pris en ligne de compte si on veut trouver une solution.

La fonction du médiateur est d'aider les gens à se parler l'un l'autre et à négocier sans

confrontation afin de découvrir les intérêts de chacun. Cette façon de faire permettra aux deux parties de rechercher des solutions alternatives et de modeler leur propre entente.

Quel usage peut-on faire de la médiation dans le contexte du bénévolat? Là où des gens investissent temps, efforts et implication et là où existe une structure de travail avec certaines tâches attribuées à des bénévoles, la médiation se révèle alors une avenue très pertinente et justifiée. Les responsables des bénévoles savent très bien que, lorsqu'il y a un différend qui touche un bénévole, la perception immédiate du public sera que le bénévole, faisant partie lui-même du public, n'est pas apprécié.

Un conflit de juridiction est un exemple où la médiation peut être efficace dans le cas de bénévoles comme par exemple des opinions divergentes entre un bénévole et un employé au sujet de "qui fait quoi et dans quelles circonstances". A la lumière des intérêts des deux parties il ressort rapidement que les intérêts des bénévoles sont de donner temps, talents et énergie à faire du bon travail. Un des intérêts des employés rémunérés est de conserver leur emploi. S'il existe des descriptions de tâches ou une entente collective, ces documents devront être pris en considération, représentant les intérêts des parties en cause. Il faut trouver une solution mutuellement acceptable.

La médiation s'avère très valable également dans les cas de renégociation d'une entente avec un bénévole lorsqu'il y a un changement de législation concernant les postes dévolus aux bénévoles. Il peut arriver que les bénévoles ne puissent plus faire le travail qu'ils faisaient au paravant, même s'ils le désirent. D'une part, il sera intéressant d'explorer les besoins du (de la) responsable des bénévoles qui doit gérer et

contrôler les tâches des bénévoles tout en s'assurant d'une bonne qualité de bénévolat. D'autre part, il sera également important de reconnaître le sentiment d'être dépréciés et mis de côté que vivent les bénévoles avant de procéder à toute nouvelle entente. Un médiateur facilitera la compréhension des points de vue de chacun et négociera de nouvelles conditions et de nouvelles tâches.

Où trouve-t-on un médiateur? Simplement en parlant à vos amis. Dans les grands centres urbains, il existe des numéros de téléphone de médiateurs familiaux ou communautaires. Les pages jaunes sont une autre source d'information. Il y a aussi possibilité d'obtenir un médiateur bénévole pour résoudre les différends. Dans les plus petits centres, les médiateurs-attribués sont souvent des travailleurs sociaux, des infirmières en santé publique, des professionnels dans le domaine humanitaire ou des prêtres, la plupart d'entre eux ayant reçu une formation en médiation de conflits.

Mary T. Satterfield

Avocate, médiatrice et arbitre de pratique familiale et immobilière; médiatrice dans le domaine de la famille, de l'immobilier, du commerce et de l'emploi et arbitre pour la famille dans West Toronto.

Active dans le domaine de la médiation depuis 13 ans, co-auteure et animatrice d'un certificat de 40 heures avec Geneviève Chormenki.

Co-auteure de deux guides légaux à l'intention d'individus non-avocats: "Law for Social Workers, a Canadian Guide" (La loi et les travailleurs sociaux: un guide canadien) et "Law for Volunteers: a Guide" (La loi et les bénévoles: un guide).

Membre de plusieurs organismes de résolution de conflits.



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

Congratulations to Linda Bellisle of Georgian Manor, Penetanguishene, Ontario!! She was the winner of a 1 year subscription to the Journal. The draw was held at the OAVA conference in May.

SORRY! Here is the bio of Kevin Arsenault - we apologize for omitting it in the last issue of the Journal.

Kevin Arsenault is a consultant and freelance journalist from Charlottetown, PEI. Kevin will receive a Ph.D. from McGill University this spring, in Social Ethics.

RISK MANAGEMENT IN VOLUNTEER SERVICE

by Mary Ellen Panjer

Most businesses and organizations are committed to providing the best possible services for their customers, often with community volunteer assistance. Due to today's economic climate, many organizations are looking at the option of volunteers taking on an increasing number of tasks, in order to continue a quality service or program. This trend raises concerns about financial, legal, insurance and safety risks being faced by an organization, staff, customers and volunteers themselves. The best way to avoid lawsuits, grievances or insurance claims is to prevent them in the first place. Leaders of volunteers have the responsibility to learn about

government legislation, insurance and collective agreements and fundamental legal principles and precedents that affect volunteers and themselves. Developing and integrating a risk management strategy into an organization's operations can help control risks. Learning the fundamentals of risk management is the first step towards reducing risk.

Risk management is a term and process developed in industry more than thirty years ago and is frequently associated with insurance and claims

continued on page 14

— TAKING VOLUNTEERING INTO THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY: —

Risk Management is Indispensable

by Linda L. Graff

Introduction

Not too long ago in a workshop I was doing on risk management and policy development, I was helping board members and branch administrators of a large, provincial organization to identify policies that would reduce the likelihood of any of their hundreds of volunteers from injuring themselves and others. This was an organization that, like many, could not survive without volunteers, and that has a long tradition of assigning responsible, and even at times somewhat dangerous tasks to its volunteers. About three-quarters of the way through the day a gentleman stood up and said: *"This is all very interesting, young lady [!], but I don't know why we have to start worrying about all of these things now. We have been operating this organization since 1953 and no one has been seriously injured yet."*

What I have come to realize from that comment is this:

There are still a good many well-meaning people, some of whom are in positions overseeing volunteer work, and some of whom are ultimately responsible for the work done by volunteers, who still believe that volunteering is about Lady Bountifuls with bonnets and baskets administering unto the sick and the orphaned, rolling bandages and serving tea!

Without intending to be offensive to anyone, the response to that kind of thinking needs to be something like: "But it simply isn't 1953 any longer."

Risk Management - Why Now?

It used to be that when we recruited volunteers to work with children in rural education groups or urban leadership programs, we were just looking for people who liked kids, people who were looking to do good and had a bit of free time to do it in.

Now we not only have to worry about screening processes sophisticated enough to keep out the pedophiles, we have to worry about how to keep the gerontophiles (the newly defined perverts who get satisfaction from elder abuse) out of the home support programs! We have to worry about how to stop the treasurer from embezzling the agency funds, and we have to ensure that the volunteer who deposits the \$12,000.00 in bingo receipts at one o'clock in the morning every second Tuesday of the month doesn't get mugged on the way.

The risks associated with voluntary action come in many shapes and sizes, but one thing is certain: the risks are both bigger and more prevalent than ever before.

It might be a matter of debate whether people are actually more disturbed than ever before, or whether human problems are actually more complex than in times past. It is clear, however, that many not-for-profit organizations are taking on increasing responsibilities in the treatment and care of their clients. For example, individuals who just a few years ago would have been under direct and constant supervision in residential or institutional settings are now being served, as

they say, "in the community". The work of charities is more demanding and the management of charities is more complex.

As an integral part of these trends, the work being asked of volunteers is also increasingly complex, sophisticated and demanding. Volunteers are on the front lines, delivering the real services of our agencies, often side by side with paid staff and, as often as not, working directly with clients/patients/participants.

There is a very simple formula that accompanies these circumstances: ***the more demanding the work that we ask of volunteers, the greater the risks both to volunteers and being undertaken by volunteers on our behalf.*** As volunteers work more and more directly with clients, many of whom are increasingly vulnerable, the chances of injury, mishap, and abuse all escalate.

What follows is that our management of volunteer services must be concomitantly more sophisticated. As long as we confine volunteers to simple and routine chores, away from contact with our clients or the public, we can remain relaxed, cavalier, or even dismissive about their work. As soon as we choose to assign demanding, responsible and direct-service work to volunteers, we have an obligation to responsibly manage volunteers as the real workers we have asked them to become. As their employers, we have corresponding ethical and legal obligations to ensure that volunteers work in the safest manner possible, in the least hazardous environment that we can reasonably create.

Convincing Your Administration

To most managers of volunteer services, this will not be a new message. In fact, I work with more than a thousand managers of volunteer services

every year who report that they are **acutely** aware of the risks associated with the work of their volunteers. Often their biggest problem is convincing their supervisors, executive directors, or boards of directors that there's something to be concerned about. Many report they have simply been dismissed with comments such as "You're worrying over nothing", "Don't wave red flags," or "Let's leave well enough alone."

It seems that almost everyone who is not directly involved in managing volunteer resources still believes the old stereotype: that volunteering is not real work, but just unimportant fluff. Unfortunately, like the gentleman whose comment suggests that he thinks it is still 1953, people who hold such beliefs are frequently found directing agencies and sitting on boards of directors.

It can feel like an impossible task. And in fact, some managers do everything they can and still can not persuade their administration to take the volunteer services seriously. My advice here is keep trying and document all of your attempts for your own personnel file. Remember that you not only have a right to educate your organization about the work of the volunteer department, you have an obligation to inform those who will be held ultimately accountable for injury or loss about the kinds of risks that are being undertaken in their name by volunteers. It sometimes helps to remind administrators that if something does go seriously wrong, fall out will surely settle on the desk of the senior staff member. If a law suit does result from the actions of a volunteer, it will undoubtedly come to rest on the board table.

Engaging in a formal risk management process will be of enormous help to the Manager of Volunteers in identifying where risks exist, which ones need to be addressed, and what some of the alternative actions and mechanisms might be to control those risks.

The Process Of Risk Management

Risk management may sound, to many, like something rather mysterious and complex, or like something only specially trained people can do. In fact it is none of these. Risk management is a straightforward, easily understood process that all managers can put into place in any volunteer service. Risk management is made up of the kinds of tasks that every one of us engages in as we go about the routines of daily life. Risk management programs simply allow us to be more systematic about doing what all of us do all of the time: manage the myriad of risks that we encounter every day of our lives.

Risk management systems allow us to be more thorough and more proactive about risks, and that translates into prevention. Risk management allows us to see the risks coming, to decrease the likelihood that they will materialize, and to minimize the magnitude of the harm should they occur. Risk management is about protecting people (volunteers, clients, staff, general public) from harm and protecting the agency from liability.

There are many specific models of risk management, but all include these basic elements:

- identify risks
- evaluate risks
- control risks
- review

While this brief article does not permit space to fully describe the risk management process, there are a number of excellent resources now available. Steve McCurley wrote an article in Sue Vineyard's Grapevine (September/October, 1993) entitled "Risk Management Techniques for Volunteer Programs" that presents a quick

overview of the kinds of liabilities to look out for, and brief review of a simple, four-step risk management system. Two recent publications are also excellent tools: No Surprises: Controlling Risks in Volunteer Programs by Charles Tremper and Gwynne Kostin (Washington: Nonprofit Risk Management Centre. 1993); and Planning It Safe: How To Control Liability & Risk In Volunteer Programs by the Minnesota Office on Volunteer Services (1992).

Don't Delay

Do take the time to learn about this emerging dimension of volunteer program management. It does not take long to get up to speed on how risk management systems work, although it will take a sizable commitment to get one fully operational throughout your volunteer program. It is an investment well worth making. As Steve McCurley said about risk management systems in the article referenced above:

They will allow you to take responsibility and positive action to make your program the best it can be. And they will make it more likely that you never wake up one morning saying to yourself 'if only I had paid more attention to...'

Linda Graff has been in the business of volunteering since 1980. She is a Voluntary Sector and Risk Management Specialist, an impassioned advocate for the field of volunteer program management and a dynamic and popular trainer.



BOOK REVIEW

by Alan Currie

THE LAW AND VOLUNTEERS. A GUIDE*by Mary Satterfield and Karla Grower*

The author's aim is to provide guidelines to those who deal with legal issues involving volunteers. I know from the number of calls I receive from coordinators of volunteers that this guide will prove extremely helpful in providing a quick overview of situations we all face in not-for-profit agencies.

The guide is a small, short (78 pages) easily understood publication which can be dipped into to provide succinct answers to a wide range of legal situations including: accountability, insurance, confidentiality, human rights, board members, etc. Chapter 7 restates in concise and even more practical terms the legal issues raised in the preceding chapters.

A helpful appendix is the "Standards of Practice: Entry Level Competencies for the Management of Volunteer Resources" developed by the Ontario Association of Volunteer Administration. This section defines the entry level standard of care to be exercised by managers of volunteers in carrying out their varied duties.

One caution I have is that all the case law quoted is drawn from Ontario. There may be variations in other provinces which should be noted. The authors also add the caveat that "This book should not be relied on in any individual case and the advice of a lawyer should always be obtained."

I recommend it as a clear and concise guide for anyone dealing with volunteers who requires a quick reference for legal situations or is faced with the task of developing policies for their volunteer program.

Alan Currie is the Executive Director for Volunteer Victoria in Victoria, British Columbia.



THE NATIONAL EDUCATION CAMPAIGN

on Screening Volunteers and Employees in Positions of Trust with Children and Other Vulnerable Individuals

by Lorraine Street

It will come as no surprise to managers of volunteers in voluntary and public sector organizations that the issue of screening volunteers, especially those who work with vulnerable clients, is attracting more and more attention all the time.

No volunteer program is without risks, and proper management of volunteer programs demands that organizations take all reasonable and prudent precautions in an effort to ensure the safety of their clients, volunteers and other unpaid or paid staff. One fundamental aspect of risk management is the appropriate screening of individuals who undertake work on behalf of the organization in whatever capacity. Many organizations, especially those whose clients are vulnerable, have long insisted on thorough screening of staff, employing a variety of practices and procedures to try and screen out people who would do harm. This is especially true of organizations that serve vulnerable clients.

A working definition of "vulnerable" in this context would include children, frail elderly, people with disabilities - any individual who, temporarily or permanently, is less able or is unable to protect himself or herself from harm.

One screening procedure which is becoming increasingly common is the police records check. In a number of provinces, it is, or is being made, a requirement of agencies that receive funding from the provincial government. In Ontario, for example, the

Ministry of Community and Social Services issued a policy directive to its transfer-payment and licensed agencies earlier this year, requiring that a police records check be conducted on all new employees and volunteers who would be placed in a position of trust with children or other vulnerable individuals. In British Columbia, legislation has been tabled which, if passed, will require police checks to be conducted on all employees of funded agencies of the social services ministry. At this time, the legislation does not require that the same be done for volunteers.

There has been considerable debate about this development, given that a police records check is a relatively intrusive method of screening individuals. Many questions have been raised by organizations contemplating or compelled to use this method. But in the heat generated about the issue, we risk missing the light to some degree.

First and foremost, people ask - aren't we going too far? Are we becoming totally paranoid about the level of risk posed by volunteers and other staff? The simple answer is "no". The risks of harm in programs which see individuals working one-on-one in unsupervised settings are very real, and they escalate dramatically if the clients are vulnerable, and if part of the very nature of the activity or program is to encourage a close relationship. Stories of abuse of clients by their caregivers - be they family, volunteers, other unpaid community service participants, or paid staff - are

unfortunately not uncommon. We must do all we can to protect all who are part of our programs.

Will police records accomplish this? No. Not alone. This must be clearly understood by all who undertake them. A police records check should never be the first, last, or only method used to screen individuals, and it should never, ever be relied upon as the sole source of information about potential volunteers or employees. As part of a comprehensive screening process, which begins before individuals are accepted into the organization, and continues, in different forms, during the entire course of their service, police records checks are a useful tool.

The whole issue of appropriately screening individuals who will be placed in positions of trust with vulnerable people, particularly children, was the focus of a country-wide set of consultations conducted in 1994 by the federal government. An inter-departmental task group met with provincial officials, police, and representatives of voluntary and public sector agencies to discuss information systems that would assist organizations in their screening efforts. One of the recommendations of the task group was that extensive and comprehensive resource materials and appropriate training be developed on this issue, and made available to voluntary and public sector organizations across the country.

In November 1994, Solicitor General Herb Gray announced that the Canadian Association of Volunteer Bureaux and Centres (CAVBC) would undertake this task, in a joint initiative that includes Health Canada and the Department of Justice. The CAVBC is the national organization of Canada's 200 local volunteer bureaux and centres.

In the first phase of the National Education Campaign on Screening, the CAVBC is developing resource materials, including a Screening Handbook, a comprehensive guide to screening individuals, with an extensive section on relevant legislation and social policy in Canada. A training package is being developed to accompany the handbook. For more general audiences, an introductory video on the topic of screening, and a series of information pamphlets or flyers is also being produced. The materials will be launched at FOCUS '95, the second national conference on volunteerism, sponsored by the CAVBC (Halifax, October 12 - 14, 1995). The second phase of the Campaign will be the distribution of the various resource materials and the training of agencies and organizations across Canada over the next two years. Training will be sponsored by the CAVBC directly, and/or local volunteer bureaux and centres and other organizations. Training will be conducted through in-person workshops, and a variety of other media, such as training by teleconference. Individuals who wish to have their names placed on the mailing list for information about the National Education Campaign on Screening Volunteers and Employees in Positions of Trust with Children or Other Vulnerable Individuals are asked to contact the CAVBC at 1-800-670-0401.

Lorraine Street, Administrator, Canadian Association of Volunteer Bureaux and Centres.



WHIT AND WHIMSEY

by Lynne J. Savage

“Possession is nine points of the law” ... 17th Century

No doubt some of you are questioning the accuracy of the quote. Should it be ten points ... eleven points? Since I have no living relatives in the 300 yrs plus age group, I must rely on the accuracy of the Dictionary of Quotations and Proverbs, Chartwell Books, Inc. - “...It’s nine points...”.

In my possession I have numerous quotations relevant to LAW - some borrowed, some fabricated ... Here are nine of them.

1. Self preservation is the first law of nature.
2. A legal loophole is a law flaw.
3. A Community Service Order (CSO) is imposed *volunteering* as ordered by a judge.
4. Lawyers are the only people who can write a 10,000 word document and call it a brief!
5. A ‘*fine*’ is a tax for doing wrong.
6. A ‘*tax*’ is a fine for doing okay.
7. The length of a meeting increases with the number of people present.
8. No matter what happens, there is always somebody who knew it would.
9. Anytime things appear to be going better, you have overlooked something.

As you can see there are many laws including Newton’s & Murphy’s. Many people are capable of creating laws but only a chosen few have the authority to enact and enforce statutes and decisions.

The scientific law of gravity may assist you in keeping your ‘*feet on the ground*’ but it has a reputation of also ‘*weighing you down*’.

I propose a unique law for all people...the “Lifter law”.

“an inherent spirit of giving and sharing across the world.”

Unlike the law of gravity, this law will neither drag nor pull you down. It will lift you as you lift others ... in more ways than you can imagine!

Just this once, take the LAW into your own hands!

Lift and be lifted!

Lynne Savage is a speaker, writer and trainer whose philosophy is Laugh and Learn. She works from her Fern Avenue home in Niagara Falls, Ontario.



LOOKING AHEAD

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ITEMS OF INTEREST

Planning it Safe: How to Control Liability and Risk in Volunteer Program, Minnesota: Minnesota Office on Volunteer Services, 1992.

Volunteers and the Law, People's law School Press: Vancouver, British Columbia, 1988.

Adler, Simon, L.L. B., L.L.M. *A Guide to Non-Profit Boards and the Law: Kitchener, Ontario, 1990*

Satterfield, Mary T. and Gower, K. *The Law and Volunteers, Carp, Ontario: Johnstone Training and Consultation, 1993.*

Temper, C. and Kostin, G. *No Surprises: Controlling Risks in Volunteer Programs, Washington, D.C.: Nonprofit Risk Management Centre, 1993.*

Where to get Resources

Anyone interested in acquiring these resources can call (613) 256-5516 for a list of distributors. Any distributor wishing to be included on the list is invited to send their resource and price list to the JVRM.

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management. It began as a method of avoiding high insurance and worker's compensation rates and the principal objective was to protect physical and financial assets.

Risk is defined as "possibility of loss or injury: peril".¹ Risk management is defined as "a method to identify potential negative situations and to implement appropriate measures to prevent them".² The objectives continue to look towards eliminating or reducing risks, within an organization, that threaten the financial viability of the organization. In addition to workers' compensation, insurance and malpractice issues, risk management has evolved to preventing losses in physical and human resources, security, health and safety, environmental and administrative areas. It is also concerned with an organization's reputation in the community and the public relations that directly affect the organization's assets.

Risk management is appropriate for any organization involving volunteers, regardless of the organization's size. The system gives you, as a leader of volunteers, the "tools to protect your volunteers and gives them the confidence to perform their assignments".³

The goal of risk management is to improve performance by acknowledging and controlling risks. Through systematically assessing and controlling risks, organizations can protect the people it serves, provide protection to the organization's and volunteers' assets against loss, prevent or minimize accidents, decrease risks to employees, volunteers and the general public, and reduce uncertainty and scepticism concerning the volunteer program.

A risk management program begins with a policy statement. In developing this statement, identify the purpose of the risk management program, establish how it contributes to the overall mission of the organization, identify what action staff and volunteers can take on a regular basis to manage risk and establish who will oversee risk management efforts.

When a policy has been defined, the process of risk management is broken into five basic steps. "The success of risk management efforts is dependent on an organization's ability to implement each component in a comprehensive and balanced manner".⁴ Commitment to the rights and safety of everyone involved, communication of the commitment to risk management and consistency in following through with the commitment, are keys to success.

The five basic steps are:

Step 1: Look for risks/identify the risks

Acknowledge the reality of risks. Identify risks that may be associated with people, property, income and goodwill. Tools such as questionnaires, surveys, checklists and flow charts can help identify risks.

Step 2: Evaluate/measure risk

Evaluate the risk to decide which risks the organization or your department can tolerate, which can be controlled or reduced and what is out of your control.

Step 3: Select methods to control risks

The four most common methods are:

1. Avoidance: do not offer the service if it is too risky.
2. Modification: change the activity so the chance of any harm occurring and the impact of the potential damage are acceptable.
3. Transfer: shift the risk to another source through contracts with others to perform hazardous activities or ensure coverage by insurance.
4. Retain: Accept the risk and prepare for the consequences.

Step 4: Implement a strategy

Flexibility is key to implementing a risk management strategy if you are to meet changing needs and demands. Obtain support from everyone involved, (staff, volunteers, and administrators), to present a unified approach and increase the effectiveness of the strategy. Approach the strategy from facts, not symptoms.

Step 5: Monitor the risk management program

Review and revise the entire program at regular intervals. It is essential to keep permanent records and information on risk management issues for reference.⁵

Incorporating the above principles will help control many types of risks. Prevention is the primary strategy. By utilizing these five steps, leaders of volunteers may develop strategies in risk management for volunteer services.

Specific volunteer administration risk concerns can also be reduced with appropriate recruitment and screening of volunteers. Ensure that appropriate policies and procedures are in place and encourage competence and safety in all volunteer services. Policies and procedures provide consistency and are necessary to control risks. Policies and procedures "establish a standard for behaviour and a common body of knowledge; support unpleasant, but necessary requirements, provide a valuable orientation and training tool for volunteers, employees, board members and clients...help ensure operational consistency... strengthen your defence if you're sued".⁶

Effective use of policies proceeds through three phases: write it, follow it and review it. Once written, distribute policies so everyone is aware of them. Don't set standards that cannot be followed; a policy that cannot be followed opens the door to liability. Policies and procedures must also conform with the law, which is why you must keep aware of new legislation. Risk management policy and procedure examples might include: personnel and training policies, media relations policies; emergency policies, suspension/termination policies, and operations policies.

Volunteer service risks are mainly human, therefore it is wise to invest time and effort in selecting well qualified volunteers. Control risks by having clear procedures for recruiting, position descriptions, screening, releases, interviews, and documentation. Volunteers should be selected by using the same non-discriminatory practices that apply to hiring paid staff.

Once a volunteer is selected, orientation and training opportunities build competence and confidence. Proper education and training reduce risk. "The cost of not providing training opportunities can be measured against poor performance, poor utilization of skills, high volunteer turnover, low regard for volunteers, volunteer's inadequate knowledge of an organization/department's purpose and function and poor representation of the organization in the community. The more information a volunteer has about an organization, the more confident the organization can be that the standard of service to customers will meet community standards".⁷

Risk management is a process that is never finished. Every person involved in an organization has the basic responsibility to keep learning about safety and security programs, know the rules for their job, be alert to and report any hazards. By providing a risk reduced environment, the energies of the staff, the volunteer and the administrator can focus on services that accomplish the mission of their organization.

- ¹ Webster's Dictionary, 1990, p. 1018.
- ² Fisher, James C. and Cole, Kathleen M. *Leadership and Management of Volunteer Programs: A Guide for Volunteer Administrators*. San Francisco, California: Bossey-Boss Inc., 1993, p. 48.
- ³ Tremper, Charles & Kostin, Gwynne, *No Surprises: Controlling Risks in Volunteer Programs*, Washington, D.C.: Non Profit Management Centre, 1993, p. 1.
- ⁴ Stock, Richard G. & Lefroy, Sharon E. *Risk Management: A Practical Framework for Canadian Healthcare Facilities*, Ottawa, Canada: Canadian Hospital Association, 1988, page 7.
- ⁵ These steps were adapted from the Minnesota Office of Volunteer Services, 1992, *How to Control Liability and Risk in Volunteer Programs*. p. 38)
- ⁶ Tremper, Charles & Kostin, Gwynne, *No Surprises: Controlling Risks in Volunteer Programs*, Washington, D.C.: Non Profit Management Centre, 1993, p. 11.
- ⁷ Rozovsky, Lorne, *RRM Report: Rozovsky Risk Management Report*, Vol 6, Number 4, p. 3.

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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 Committee. All ads are subject to the approval of the Editorial Committee.

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 Committee.



**DEADLINES
FOR SUBMISSION AND THEMES**

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Deadline</u>	<u>Theme</u>
<i>Fall '95</i>	articles due on the 24th of August	Volunteers in Health Care
<i>Winter '96</i>	articles due on the 24th of October	Diversity
<i>Spring '96</i>	articles due on the 24th of February	Technology & Volunteerism
<i>Summer '96</i>	articles due on the 24th of May	Seniors



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