



The Connector

Volunteer BC Newsletter – September 2005 Edition

September has pretty much come and gone. Where did the time go? For some idea, see below!

Provincially Speaking

updates from Volunteer BC

AGM Marks An Incredible Year for Volunteer BC!

On Monday, September 26 we celebrated another successful year at our annual general meeting at Richmond City Hall. We were delighted to be holding the AGM in conjunction with the Launch of 2010 Volunteers Now. President David Kimpton and 2010 Volunteers Now CEO Mary McKillop signed a Memorandum of Understanding between the two organizations at the event. Part of the Launch was the official unveiling of the VolWeb project which is a partnership project involving Volunteers Now and Volunteer BC. VolWeb has been designed, built and tested but there will still be much development and many adjustments to come. To get a look at this exciting new website go to www.VolWeb.ca. We look forward to hearing your feedback.

Also at the AGM, our keynote speaker was Erin Barnhart who reported on her year of studies as a Fulbright Scholar here in BC studying BC volunteer centres. Our volunteer centre members were all visited by Erin and her report is of interest and value to all. We have no doubt that Erin's perspective and observations will be very useful as volunteer centres go forward in the coming years.

UBCM

Our AGM took place just as the Union of BC Municipalities started its convention at the Vancouver Trade and Convention Centre. We were there with our Volunteer BC display providing information about VOCBC and its upcoming activities, and encouraging municipal politicians and staff to consider getting a volunteer centre started in their area if one does not already exist. We prepared information sheets on all volunteer centre members and added the relevant information sheet to our general information packages for each delegate who stopped by to see us. For those from areas that have no volunteer centre we included some information about how to start one.

During the 2 days Volunteer BC was at UBCM, we met with more than 125 people representing 78 communities from all corners of the province. This included mayors, councilors, regional district reps, town administrators and MLA's. All were extremely proud of the volunteer activity in their communities but several consistent messages of concern were repeatedly raised. While volunteer participation is very high, most are very concerned about volunteer burnout. There seems to be fewer young people coming in to replace the retiring older volunteers. There is a need for recognition programs and ideas, and a desire for youth volunteering initiatives to get more young people involved. While this was not new information for us, it was valuable to know that municipal representatives are aware of the challenges we are facing in the voluntary sector. It confirmed for us that when we do our planning, the entire province will benefit from our initiatives.

It was also very encouraging to hear how many towns without volunteer centres are making the effort to do volunteer recognition and support the volunteers of their communities. We hope to highlight some of the most innovative communities in the coming year. We will also be in touch with many people who requested more information and will be contacting volunteer centres individually to let you know about specific conversations we had with your local representatives.

Thanks to the Board members who took time to plan and prepare the display and who staffed the display throughout the two days.

Digital and Print Design Services Company lends a hand

The Information Refinery is a full-service media production company that has been serving BC for 10 years. The company provides organizations of all sizes with professional, scalable, one-stop solutions to their media needs. Services provided include website design and maintenance, print design (identity, reports, flyers, brochures, posters etc.), digital presentation and CD-ROM design, photography, illustrations, music and audio production, video production, and 2D and 3D animations.

Established in 1995 by two university professors with over 20 years experience in research and development of computer-based multimedia applications, The Information Refinery has been working for businesses such as the Boundary Bay Airport, Gescan, architectural firms, and businesses and organizations in different fields. We are delighted and grateful that they have sponsored the design of our annual report this year.

The Information Refinery will provide services with discount or in-kind for nonprofits or charitable organizations. For more information, please email info@opentrain.com, or call 604-278 7320.

Back to the Classroom

learning opportunities to build a stronger sector

CVI-BC Volunteerism Academy

Near the end of October the British Columbia Network for the Canada Volunteerism Initiative (CVI-BC) is hosting a learning opportunity for regional community leaders from around British Columbia. Participants have now been chosen from around the province and all are looking forward to a fruitful couple of days of discussions and workshops. After the Academy they will be returning home to their communities with ideas and knowledge to help strengthen and develop voluntary effort in their areas.

VOCBC Forum – building knowledge and understanding to move forward

Based on members' input, the Voluntary Organizations Consortium of BC (VOCBC) is planning two events this Fall. We have approached the province and are excited that the BC government is interested in a dialogue with the voluntary/non-profit sector. This reinforces our need to clarify and prioritize strategies for strengthening the sector. The first session entitled "What We Know – a Roundtable for Leaders in the Voluntary Sector" will take place October 14th at the YWCA Vancouver. The goal is to generate a policy discussion paper identifying priority research needed to strengthen BC's voluntary/nonprofit sector. This will focus VOCBC's activity for one of our five strategic plan objectives, and help us to brief Minister Olga Illich and the Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts.

The second session which will be held in early December will involve many of the representatives from session one plus representatives from government, particularly from the Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts to open a dialogue about how government can work with and support the sector in its development for the greater good of all BC communities.

This is an opportunity to help shape Provincial Government support for BC's voluntary/nonprofit sector. The response to our invitation to participate in the October event has been strong. We are endeavouring to ensure that the participants represent a broad cross section of the sector and the wide geographic areas of the province.

Centre Stage

news from the volunteer centre movement

Holding On!

Langley Volunteer Centre has had more than its fair share of adversity so far this year. They were still recovering from a flood in February when Volunteer Bureau coordinator Pam Brackenbury was struck with acute appendicitis in May. Just as she recovered another disaster! A fire destroyed the building in June. The summer has been spent relocating to a temporary home while coping with staff changes in administration. But they are surviving through all this chaos and continue to offer volunteer centre services to their community. They are planning to rebuild and they can truly say "Nothing can stop us!" We wish them all the best. Things can only get better.

New Faces and a well-deserved award

As everyone knows by now, BC got a new volunteer centre in Powell River which opened over the summer. Having successfully brought their dream of a community volunteer centre to fruition, Volunteer Powell River was given a demonstration grant of \$20,000 by 2010 Volunteers Now. The grant was presented to them at the Volunteer BC AGM. Using the grant they will be able to demonstrate their community development success engaging a variety of partners to recognize the value of volunteerism and further to demonstrate the action they all took by establishing a volunteer centre through strategic planning and implementation.

Their efforts are a result of taking the excitement and enthusiasm of the 2010 Games, using that as a leverage point and growing a needed volunteer centre collaboratively. Congratulations to Powell River!

Growing and thriving

We are happy to note as well that Squamish volunteer centre is now on a firmer footing with municipal support and Sunshine Coast is back in action partnering with their local Visitor Information Centre. Oceanside Volunteer Centre in Parksville is developing and Fraser North Volunteer Centre is now operating successfully in a partnership with SHARE Society in Coquitlam. There is discussion in other areas of the province about opening new volunteer centres and we have been receiving inquiries and requests for materials. It is great to see such wonderful vitality in the volunteer centre community.

Inside the Invisible Infrastructure

news from across the sector

FYI - Funding Opportunity

Enterprising Non-Profits (ENP)

ENP is a funding program that provides matching grants to non-profit organizations in BC who are interested in starting or expanding a business. The program was established in 1997 in response to requests by organizations for support in the development of revenue-generating enterprises, as a way to stabilize and diversify their funding base, and enhance their programs or services. ENP program funding enables organizations to conduct planning activities related to the development of a business venture. The program provides matching grants of **up to \$10,000** to between 15 and 20 organizations annually. Organizations must commit matching funds for the business and/or organizational development process. Matching funds can be cash or in-kind.

Important Dates:

Fall/Winter 2005

Orientation Session - October 12, 2005 (in Abbotsford)

Grant Application Deadline: November 25, 2005

Contact Information:

For more information or to register for an upcoming orientation, please send an e-mail, including your mailing address to Pearl Wu at: pearl_wu@vancity.com.

Millenium Foundation Scholarships

The Canada Millennium Foundation is recruiting new volunteers to serve as volunteer scholarship assessors for its Millennium Scholarship awards. These volunteers assess the applications for scholarships. Nominees should demonstrate a commitment to the qualities recognized by the awards – community engagement, leadership and an interest in innovation. If you know of anyone who is suitable and might be interested, please contact us for a copy of the criteria and the application form. You can get more information on the Foundation from their website at <http://www.millenniumscholarships.ca/en/index.asp>. Although the deadline for applications to become an assessor has past, the Foundation advises us that they will be continuing to accept applications.

Plugging In

navigating what's new on the web and in technology

VolWeb.ca

Don't forget to check out this new resource as mentioned above. Also check the 2010 Legacies Now website at:

<http://www.2010legaciesnow.com/Content/VolunteersNow/VolunteersNow%20Home.asp?langid=1> for what's new with **2010 Volunteers Now**.

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