

Volunteer Action - Volunteer North Shore Newsletter

Practical Policy

This issue of Volunteer Action will focus on the importance of the development of policy in organizations. Many North Shore organizations are reviewing their operations, particularly their volunteer programs. In a strategic way the review is happening in light of the continued retirement of the baby boomer population, and in a more tactical way with respect to the approaching 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Games coming next February. Over time it is always pragmatic to understand what organizational policies are in place and identify what might be needed to guide future decision making in a changing environment.



Policies are the necessary directional instructions for any organization. Policy development can be seen as labour and time intensive, but any volunteer driven organization that has clearly defined and well communicated policies and procedures is well served over the long term. Clear policies help to reduce risk and clarify the intent of an organization's approach to reach a specific goal or objective.

A policy is a fundamental principle of how the organization will be managed. Policy making and approval are usually the responsibility of the Board of Directors. Although many boards develop policy as part of their work, some boards use a model where draft policies are created through a committee structure and then sent to the board for discussion, revision and ultimately approval. Initiating policy can seem daunting for organizations just starting out, but remember that following a simple few guidelines can make policy development more manageable.

Policy statements are brief and to the point. Policies put the basic mission, beliefs and values of an organization into practice using clear and concise statements. In general, there are five main criteria for effective policies. Policies should be: logical, simple, fair, balanced and workable.

Con't on page 4...

- <http://www.volunteerbc.bc.ca/resources/governance/p.html>
- <http://www.npgoodpractice.org/Resource/SampleVolunteer-ManagementPoliciesProcedures.aspx>
- <http://volunteer.ca/en/can-code>

Check out CELEBRATE! for information on volunteer awards and recognition.

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CELEBRATE!

Celebrate your volunteers' contributions by recognizing their commitment and nominate them for one of the following awards.

No Deadline

 Order of Canada

www.gg.ca/honours/nat-ord/oc/oc-info_e.asp


 Governor General's Caring Canadian Award

www.gg.ca/honours/awards/cca/01_e.asp

Deadline Specific

 Order of British Columbia (March 10, 2009)

www.protocol.gov.bc.ca/protocol/prgs/obc/obc.htm

 North Shore Community Volunteer Spirit Award (March 20, 2009)

<http://www.nscr.bc.ca/volunteer/volunteer.html>

 Me to We (April 10, 2009)

<http://www.metowe.com/awards/>

This Place: A Story Walk - Volunteers & Contributors Wanted

The First North Shore Eco-Arts Festival is on April 4th and 5th, 2009. It will be held at John Braithwaite Community Centre and the surrounding area. As part of this festival, a Story Walk will take participants through the Lower Lonsdale area, telling the stories of the people who live, work and learn in North Vancouver.

What's a Story Walk?

A Story Walk is a chance to get to know each other and our city by the stories we tell about this place.

Storytellers of all ages are invited to share their stories about living, working or learning in North Vancouver. Stories may be about being born here or coming here from somewhere else. They may be about the land, the people, a street corner, or a favourite local view. Most of all, they will be *your stories*.

Selected stories will be printed on full colour posters and postcards, with illustrations from local artists. These will be displayed and given to the public at stations along a mapped walking route between John Braithwaite Community Centre and the North Shore Neighbourhood House during the festival. A booth where people can learn about the project and share their stories will also be set up. Any stories that are not selected for printing will be displayed at the booth.

How can I get involved?

We need volunteers! Volunteers will help spread the word and gather stories from across North Vancouver. They will come to an orientation and be provided with an information package to present to interested groups. Volunteers will then work with one or two groups to help them create stories to be included in the project.

We need stories! We are looking for writers of all ages to contribute stories – especially ESL and literacy students. Also, if you attend or teach a group, and would like a volunteer to help you collect stories, please let us know. To submit a story of 250 words or less (some editing may be required), send it to Surya at the email below. Please include a short paragraph including your name, what neighbourhood you live in, and why life-long learning is important to you.

We need art! We are looking for artists of all ages to help us illustrate the stories. If you or your students would like to contribute photographs, drawings or other art to this project, please call or email us soon.

To help us make this project come to life, contact: Surya Govender, North Shore Literacy Outreach Coordinator sgovende@capilanou.ca or 604-722-1424. Submission Deadline is March 23rd, 2009.

Volunteer Burnaby—Training Opportunity

Volunteer Burnaby is hosting an ***Introduction to Volunteer Management*** training series. Over five evenings in March workshops on the volunteer management cycle will be presented. This is a great introduction for those new to the sector or a good refresher for those wishing to sharpen their skills. Participants will learn about planning, recruitment, orientation & training, supervisions & evaluation and recognition. This training will be required to participate in Burnaby's ***Advance Management of Volunteers*** training programs. The basics of what you needed to know about managing volunteers but had no one to ask will be covered in this overview of the volunteer cycle. This popular course fills fast and course registration closes March 7th. To register go online to <http://www.volunteerburnaby.ca/training/index.html>.

(Source: Volunteer Burnaby - Training)

Volunteer Burnaby's training page can be found at:

<http://www.volunteerburnaby.ca/training/index.html>



Volunteer North Shore Planning & Information Meeting

Mark Your
Calendar



Thursday May 21, 2009

10:00 - 11:30 am

The Community Room 203 at North Shore Community Resources
2nd Floor Capilano Mall, #201 - 935 Marine Drive, North Vancouver, BC

Agenda:

- Mybackcheck.com—Criminal Records & Security Checks Presentation
- Round Table Discussion

A meeting reminder with an agenda will be circulated 1 week prior to the meeting. If you haven't already, please RSVP to Nancy Hollstedt by phone at 604-982-3311 or by email to nancy.hollstedt@nscr.bc.ca.

Practical Policy - continued from page 1

A consistent format should be given consideration and applied when constructing policies. Suggestions for format include: the policy title or name, the policy itself, and the date the policy was established. Optional formats include the policy's procedures, the policy statement - which clarifies why the policy is considered important, and the status of the policy - if it is under revision, deleted from the policy list, is new etc.

Procedures are related to policies, but a policy is not a procedure. Procedures are the details of how to carry out the intent of the policy. Procedures need to be flexible enough to be changed with changing circumstances. Procedural changes should not affect or compromise the intent of an associated policy nor should it automatically require a change to the policy. Some policy manuals include procedures within the document and others use an operational manual to set out procedures within an organization. For a smaller organization using the combined policy and procedure format is usually most effective as it provides a single location to access information for staff and/or volunteers.

Policy work is an important strategic program component of all volunteer driven organizations as it ensures that the guiding principles of an organization are clearly articulated.

Nancy Hollstedt

Volunteer North Shore is the volunteer centre that serves the communities of the City of North Vancouver, the District of North Vancouver and the District of West Vancouver.

Volunteer North Shore:

- Helps people find volunteer work
- Helps organizations find volunteers
- Promotes volunteering as a benefit to the community
- Works with organizations to develop, implement and maintain effective volunteer programs

Volunteering is a vital part of our community and Volunteer North Shore is here to make sure voluntary effort is encouraged, sustained and increased.

Volunteer North Shore is just one of the valuable programs and services offered by North Shore Community Resources. North Shore Community Resources, conveniently located on the 2nd floor at Capilano Mall, is the North Shore's multi-service information and referral agency.

*Many thanks to the
individuals and
organizations who
contributed to this issue of
Volunteer Action.*



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Connecting You to Community Services!

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