

# CILT's Volunteer Vibes

**Volume 9, Issue 3  
December 2007**

## **Volunteer Program Update: CILT's volunteers attend the "Terry Fox Hall of Fame Luncheon"**

The Terry Fox Hall of Fame is a tribute to the courage and spirit of Canadians who have triumphed over their disabilities and to those who have helped them strive toward their goals. It marks the achievements of physically disabled persons who have provided inspiration, hope and help to others. It honours individuals who have worked for Canada's citizens with physical disabilities. The Terry Fox Hall of Fame officially opened in February 1994.

On Monday November 5th, 2007 CILT's volunteers attended the CFPDP (Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled Persons) Luncheon for Terry Fox Hall of Fame Inductees. We had a great lunch, followed by opening remarks made by the Honourable David Crombie, Lieutenant Governor, David Onley, made a lovely speech, followed by a presentation to this year's inductees: Elizabeth Grandbois, Joanne Smith and Lauren Woolstencroft.

### **Elizabeth Grandbois:**

Elizabeth Grandbois has worked tirelessly to increase public awareness and understanding of ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease) since she was diagnosed with the disease 10 years ago. When she found out how little was known about the disease, she felt she had to do something. Elizabeth's Concert of Hope first took place in 2001 and over the next 6 years the concerts have raised \$ 2.5 million for ALS research and support services. Elizabeth also published "In Dreams" in 2002 as an inspiration to other people living with ALS and a one hour documentary "Elizabeth's Hope" has been shown to more than 8000 viewers nationally and internationally.

### **Joanne Smith:**

A reporter, producer, activist and a powerful force for change. Joanne Smith lives her life to the fullest. After becoming paralyzed at 19 in a car accident, she developed an active interest in media and disability related issues. As a reporter and producer for private and public broadcasters in Canada, she uses her career to dispel misconceptions about people with disabilities and to address issues that

affect them so they can live with greater acceptance and independence in our society. Joanne is a dedicated mentor and volunteer for many disability organizations across Canada.

### **Lauren Woolstencroft:**

One of Canada's best kept secrets is Paralympic alpine skier Lauren Woolstencroft, a congenital triple amputee, who last season was 1st overall as well as 1st in the slalom and Super G in World Cup standings. In 11 World Cup starts this year, the defending World Cup champion won 10 medals – 9 gold and 1 silver. During her skiing career, Lauren completed an electrical engineering degree at University of Victoria and she currently works for BC Hydro.

### **Initiative on Diversity in the Volunteer Sector**

*Taken from Volunteer Canada, [www.volunteer.ca](http://www.volunteer.ca)*

#### **Does the Canadian voluntary sector reflect Canadian society?**

The growing ethnic and racial diversity of Canada and its relevance to the voluntary sector has been an issue that has had considerable focus in recent years, especially through various aspects of the Voluntary Sector Initiative. As Canadians of diverse origins increasingly wish to integrate into the mainstream of Canadian life, the voluntary sector has the potential to play a key role in facilitating that integration.

The sector plays a vital role across Canada in building strong social, economic and cultural infrastructures, and advancing social, economic and cultural cohesion. It includes organizations that work in the areas of health, sports, social services, immigrant settlement services, equity and human rights, community safety, culture, education and international development.

Cities and communities of all sizes have vibrant voluntary organizations. Helping these organizations to include and serve the diversity that is their reality is the challenge of this Initiative.

**Host organization:** Volunteer Canada. With support from the Voluntary Sector Forum and in partnership with several visible minority and other voluntary sector organizations

**Time frame:** September 2005 - August 2008

Focusing on the boards of directors of national organizations is one way to address the challenge of increasing the response to diversity in today's Canada. If boards become reflective, it follows that the decisions they make for the organizations will better include, reflect and cater to the diversity of our society.

**Contact:** [Diversity@volunteer.ca](mailto:Diversity@volunteer.ca)

## The IDVS Projects

The IDVS will include 10 discrete but interrelated projects which all need to be carried out more or less simultaneously, although some need to begin earlier than others. They are listed as separate projects to highlight the multi-faceted nature of the IDVS. In an effort to seek financial resources for each one, we recognize that funding agencies might be more interested in some projects than others.

### **Research:**

- Research on existing initiatives on diversity in the voluntary sector, and on available resources and literature; research on the current status of visible minorities on boards in the voluntary sector; and survey currently used best practices

### **Communications:**

- Sensitizing the voluntary sector on the need for more diverse boards (and to think beyond tokenism)
- Sensitizing minorities on the needs and opportunities that exist in the broader voluntary sector -- on boards and as volunteers
- Developing a multi-faceted communications strategy

### **Training and Mentorship:**

- “[Diversity training](#)” for boards of directors
- Training and mentoring of potential and new board members
- Leaders-in-training: providing a youth focus as a long-term investment in this initiative
- Twinning “mainstream” and visible minority organizations

### **Services to Voluntary Sector:**

- Developing a “talent bank” of potential visible minority board members across the country
- Confidential “diversity audits” to assist voluntary sector organizations

## **The IDVS will have a five-part structure:**

- A core group of staff who will manage the various projects of the IDVS on a day-to-day basis (full-time, part-time and/or on contract)
- A Reference Group that will provide advice on objectives and strategies (made up of well-known and respected visible minorities and others).
- A team of champions who will promote the diversity goals with NGOs across the country.
- The IDVS is hosted by an existing organization, Volunteer Canada, which will provide administrative support on a cost-recovery basis, and have administrative and financial responsibility.
- The entire initiative will have the active support of leading organizations in the voluntary sector.

It is important to note that this initiative will not be starting from scratch but rather will be building from what is happening in this field, and trying to turn the examples of existing best practices into widely used practices by a large number of organizations in the voluntary sector.

## **Quiz: What Motivates You to Volunteer**

The I Volunteer Quiz was adapted from the work of American researchers E. Gil Clary, Mark Snyder and their colleagues. Their study, "Volunteers' Motivations: A Functional Strategy for the Recruitment, Placement and Retention of Volunteers," was published in *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*, vol. 2, no. 4, summer 1992.

### **What motivates you to volunteer? What gets you out on a cold night in February or pushes you to add an hour to an already long day?**

For each of us, the reasons are different, but motivated we are. More than 12 million Canadians volunteer. Knowing your motivation makes you a better volunteer, so take our quiz to find out. Canadian Living Magazine partnered with Volunteer Canada to develop and distribute the I Volunteer Quiz in celebration of the International Year of Volunteers, 2001.

Check off the answer that best describes you and then submit your answers to find out what your answers reveal.

- 1. Your boss asks for volunteers from your department to help out at a charity bingo. You sign up because:**

- (a) It'll be a good chance to get to know your boss better.
- (b) You've never been to a bingo game and want to check it out.
- (c) Your friend from production is going.
- (d) You know you'll feel good about helping out.
- (e) The cause is one that's near and dear to your heart.

**2. You're a new mom adjusting to being home full time on maternity leave. Which of these volunteer activities are you most likely to undertake?**

- (a) You continue to sit on the board of the teen crisis centre because you've committed yourself to the kids.
- (b) You offer to help out with your company's United Way campaign by making some calls from home.
- (c) You decide to put volunteer work on hold because you don't have any extra emotional energy right now. You'll volunteer again when the idea of getting involved gives your spirits a boost.
- (d) You decide to volunteer as a guide at the local museum a couple of afternoons a month. You've always wanted to explore the facility, and this is your chance.
- (e) The cause is one that's near and dear to your heart.

**3. Your 10-year-old's teacher is looking for volunteers for the next school trip. You sign on:**

- (a) Because you'll feel good if you go and bad if you don't.
- (b) Because it's important for parents to be involved.
- (c) To spend time with your child and his friends. It'll be a hoot.
- (d) If you're interested in the destination.
- (e) If you can get the time off work.

**4. Your mom has belonged to the women's auxiliary at your church for 30 years. You:**

- (a) Join so you and your mom can spend some time together.
- (b) Offer to raise funds for her latest project among your co-workers.
- (c) Have never even considered joining. You've always followed your own passions – now it's saving the polar bears.
- (d) Have decided against joining because you went to a couple of meetings and didn't get the same lift you do from your other volunteer activities.
- (e) Join because the work the auxiliary does has made a big difference in your community.

**5. Imagine that you're an accountant and you're sometimes asked to do the year-end for a local charity. You:**

- (a) Wish they'd stop asking. You do enough number crunching at work and would like to do something completely different in your volunteer time.
- (b) Always say yes. You see it as part of your responsibility to your community.
- (c) Say yes. The people are so grateful that it gives you a good feeling.
- (d) Take on the job if you know and enjoy the people you'll be working with.
- (e) Say yes. It's an expected part of your "real" job to do some pro bono work.

**6. A colleague at the office is going through chemotherapy. You:**

- (a) Know she's worried about being away from work, so you keep her up-to-date on projects.
- (b) Plan a potluck for her and some close friends when she's feeling up to it.
- (c) Lobby your charity-giving committee at work to donate more to home-care services now that you've seen firsthand how much they're needed.
- (d) Bring her a casserole whenever you can. Somehow you feel better knowing she doesn't have to cook.

- (e) Do an Internet search for her to learn more about her experiences and help answer her questions.

**7. Your sister has political aspirations and is running for the local school board. You:**

- (a) Rally friends and family to campaign – win or lose, it'll be fun to work together.
- (b) Set up coffee parties with prominent people in the ward, including people with whom you would like to do business.
- (c) Work with her to focus her platform. Help her clarify the values you both hold dear.
- (d) Design and build her website – it's something you've always wanted to do.
- (e) Tell your sister you'll do whatever she asks. She needs you.

**8. You and a close friend have always done the Terry Fox Run together. She can't go this year. You:**

- (a) Also decide to bow out for a year.
- (b) Decide to try something new.
- (c) Invite a co-worker to come along.
- (d) Go by yourself anyway. Terry Fox's dream has always inspired you.
- (e) Love that walkathon – of course you're going.

## **Volunteers**

**V**aluable is the work you do.  
**O**utstanding in how you always come through.  
**L**oyal, sincere and full of good cheer,  
**U**ntiring in your efforts throughout the year.  
**N**otable are the contributions you make,

Trustworthy in every project you take.  
Eager to reach your every goal,  
Effective in the way you fulfill your role.  
Ready with a smile like a shining star,  
Special and wonderful - that's what you are.

## **Disability Awareness Corner: Living With Vision Loss**

© *Information taken from the CNIB website: [www.cnib.ca/en](http://www.cnib.ca/en)*

Vision loss can affect anyone, at any age. It changes how a child learns to spell, read and play; how a young adult prepares for school and a career; or how a senior interacts with friends, family and caregivers.

In this article you will find practical information about living with vision loss - from helpful hints and survival tips to a primer on guide dog etiquette - as well as links to educational and leisure activities to suit every interest.

### **Tips for Independent Living**

Vision loss does not mean that cooking, exercising, socializing or enjoying a good book become impossible. A few simple adjustments in and around the house will help ensure that the everyday activities you enjoy are still within reach.

### **Doing Things Differently in the Kitchen**

Countertops can be painted to contrast with dishes, cookware, and other items - hardware stores can help you find the correct paint for the task.

Outline counter edges and electrical outlets with wide tape of a contrasting colour. Use light-coloured dishes on a dark tablecloth, or vice versa.

Mark frequently-used settings on the oven or other dials with a thick swipe of bright nail polish or a 'bumper dot'. Re-label jars and canned goods using a thick black marker and sticky labels.

Remove small throw rugs from the kitchen - they are not easily seen and may be a tripping hazard. Keep cupboard doors and drawers closed at all times and make sure that everything is always put away in its proper place.

Use the 'clock method' to identify where certain foods are located on a plate. For example, 'the rice is at three o'clock and the beans at seven o'clock.'

### **In the Bathroom**

Use illuminated and magnifying mirrors. Use coloured toothpaste so it shows more on the white bristles of a toothbrush. Use towels that contrast in colour with the bathroom décor. Use a rubber-backed mat in the tub. Float a brightly coloured sponge while running the bath water. The sponge will indicate how high the water has risen.

Throw out old medication. Label current medication with a thick black letter on each bottle; keep a large print list in the medicine cabinet explaining what is what (e.g. "Blood pressure pills. Take one each morning.")

Pick up the bath mat after each use and fold it over the edge of the tub to prevent tripping.

## **Out & About**

Careful planning, preparation and good organization are the first steps in traveling safely, whether it's to the corner store on foot or across town by bus.

CNIB offers training from an Orientation and Mobility instructor to help people with vision loss travel more confidently and independently around your home, school, workplace and neighbourhood. Use large-print cheques and writing guides to make signing easier.

## **Tips Used by People with Vision Loss When Traveling in the Community**

- Identify coins by touch and fold paper money or separate it in your wallet by denomination.
- Take a moment to let your eyes adjust when switching from a bright environment to a dimly lit one or vice versa.
- Carry a magnifier and/or penlight to read labels, price tags, elevator buttons or directions.
- Use a mini tape recorder to make a shopping list instead of struggling with a handwritten list.
- Tell the bus driver in advance which stop you require and sit at the front of the bus.

## **Interacting With Someone Who Has Vision Loss: Tips for Friends and Family**

Whether you're working in a facility or assisting someone in their own home, be sensitive to the fact that you're on their 'turf.' Don't move things around or make adjustments without consent from the person with vision loss.

Ask what the person needs before stepping in with your own ideas. Talk about what you think would be helpful, but always start with what the person with vision loss identifies as most important to them.

Adjusting to vision loss takes time. Quite often, people with vision loss find it hard to ask for assistance out of embarrassment, frustration or fear of being a nuisance. Take the initiative and offer help as often as you think it is appropriate.

Be specific with your offers. Instead of an open-ended offer, such as "Let me know if you need anything," try a more concrete offer such as "I am driving to the store. Would you like to come?"

## **About the Braille System**

Braille, invented in 1829 by [Louis Braille](#) (1809 - 1852), is one of the many tools used by people with vision loss to facilitate lifelong learning and independence.

Braille uses a [system of small raised dots](#) that are read using the fingertips and can be used to represent everything from words to math and music. For people with vision loss, braille is also the key to literacy, leading to successful employment and independence. It provides the tools to read and write independently, and helps build skills in spelling, grammar and punctuation.

Braille can be found almost anywhere that print is found - watch for it on restaurant menus, ATM keypads, business cards, textbooks and sheet music. The possibilities are almost limitless!

Braille is a tactile system of raised dots representing letters of the alphabet. To read braille, the fingers gently glide over paper that has been embossed with the braille code. For note taking, a pointed instrument is used to punch out the dots on paper held in a metal slate. The readable raised dots appear on the other side of the paper.

## History

Braille has been an effective means of communication for blind persons since 1829 when it was invented in Paris, France by Louis Braille. Louis Braille lost his sight at the age of three as a result of an eye injury. As a young boy at school, he became frustrated with the large and bulky raised letter alphabet used to learn reading and writing skills. Later in his life, a French artillery officer, Charles Barbier de la Serre, gave him the idea of reading by a tactile code.

After many years of experimenting, Louis Braille developed a successful reading and writing system that today is used around the world.

## The Braille System

The basis of the braille system is known as a braille cell. The cell is comprised of six dots numbered in a specific order. Each dot or combination of dots represents a letter of the alphabet. For example, by checking in the braille alphabet, you will see that dot 1 is the letter "a" and dots 1 and 2 the letter "b".

## Braille Alphabet

⠠	⠡	⠢	⠣	⠤
A	B	C	D	E

⠨	⠩	⠪	⠫	⠬
J	K	L	M	N

⠠	⠡	⠢	⠣	⠤
S	T	U	V	W

⠠	⠠	⠠	⠠
F	G	H	I

⠠	⠠	⠠	⠠
O	P	Q	R

⠠	⠠	⠠
X	Y	Z

### Braille Numbers and Symbols

Numbers and punctuation signs are also represented in braille. By looking at the chart below, you will see that braille numbers are announced by a sign using dots 3, 4, 5, and 6. The use of dot 6 just before a letter indicates a capital.

1	2	3	4	5			
⠠	⠠	⠠	⠠	⠠			
,	;	:	.	!	(	)	"
'	:	⠠	⠠	⠠	⠠	⠠	⠠
6	7	8	9	0			
⠠	⠠	⠠	⠠	⠠			
"	'	.	-	—			
⠠	⠠	⠠	⠠	⠠			

### The Importance of Braille

Braille is to the blind person what the printed word is to the sighted individual - access to information and contact with the outside world. It is the building block for language skills, a means to teach spelling to blind children, and the most direct contact with the written thoughts of others. Braille books are available in all

subject areas, ranging from modern fiction to mathematics, music and law. As with print, braille is used for taking notes and labeling objects. Braille-adapted devices such as watches, games, playing cards and thermometers are examples of some of the practical and recreational uses of braille.

## **Learning Braille**

Like any new "language", braille takes time and practice to learn. Braille is taught to blind persons as part of CNIB's adjustment to vision loss program. It is also taught in schools within the community. Sighted volunteers transcribe the original printed text into braille.

It takes eight months of training before volunteers become certified CNIB brailleists. The rigorous training program conforms to standards set in cooperation with the [Braille Authority of North America](#). Further training is required before brailleing educational material for students or specializing in transcribing music into braille.

Braille is produced in a number of ways. It can be transcribed from the original printed text on a machine that resembles a typewriter. The braille writer has six keys which correspond to the six dots of the braille cell. Computers are also used to transcribe and reproduce braille texts. The electronic revolution is changing the way braille is produced, stored and retrieved, making it easier to use in the work place.

## **Braille = Choice**

There is a clear need to teach braille to children with vision loss at a young age. Sadly, though, discrimination and misguided ideas about what is best for children have, in the past, acted to deny many children access to braille. There are too many distressing stories of children who were told they were too physically inept to learn braille, of parents who were told that braille skills were not necessary because their child could read enhanced print, of educators who decided that braille was too difficult and too different, of policy-makers who figured that technology had replaced the need for braille and that programs to support braille were no longer necessary. Children who are denied braille are denied an equal chance to be literate.

It is better to teach braille to a person with low vision who may never need to rely solely on braille, than never to teach braille to someone who may need it in a few years. We must give every child who has vision loss the chance to learn braille.

## The Confusion Over the Need for Braille

Some people who are blind and visually impaired lead fulfilling, independent personal and professional lives even though they do not read or write braille. The successes of these exceptional people may confuse others about the need for braille. For most people, braille is the key to success.

[The Canadian Braille Authority](#) is a national group of users, producers, and teachers whose mandate is to promote braille as a primary medium for people who are blind. For more information about braille, contact [CNIB](#) in your community.

### Quiz Results

If five or more of your answers were in one category, that indicates your volunteer personality. If your answers are spread across two or more categories, you have a variety of motivations for volunteering.

#### Self-Improver

Your volunteer work is an important part of what makes you feel good about yourself and it improves your mood when you're down. You're inner-directed and you need volunteer work that satisfies those feelings. When you choose your volunteer work, listen to your heart. It doesn't really matter what you do as long as you come away with good feelings. That's what will keep you coming back.

#### Experience Seeker

You're curious about people. You like to learn new things and visit new places. When you get interested in something, you like to learn everything there is to know about the topic. As your interests change, your volunteer work may constantly change, too. When you choose your volunteer path, go with your latest passion.

#### Altruist

Self-Improver	d	c	<b>a</b>	d	c	<b>d</b>	e	<b>e</b>
Experience Seeker	b	d	d	c	a	e	d	b
Altruist	<b>e</b>	a	b	e	b	a	c	d
Connector	c	<b>e</b>	c	a	<b>d</b>	b	<b>a</b>	a
Job Seeker	a	b	e	<b>b</b>	e	c	b	c

You have a strong sense of persona

I values and you're clear about what issues are important to you. You'll stay with your volunteer commitments as long as you can see progress, however slow it is in coming. Once you've committed to a cause, you stick with it, so choose carefully from the start.

### **Connector**

You're part of a group who gets asked to help out in a lot of different organizations because you fit in well and you enjoy spending time with other volunteers. You like volunteer activities that allow you to work with family and friends and you're always up for the next walkathon; the cause itself is secondary.

### **Job Seeker**

You see your volunteer work as an extension of your work life and you're happy as long as you're learning new work-related skills or networking with people who can support you in your career or business pursuits. Before you get involved in a volunteer activity, assess it carefully for a good fit with your career goals. That way, you'll stay motivated.

### **CILT News**

CILT staff would like to wish you all the happiest of holiday seasons and best wishes for the New Year. CILT will be closed from December 24, 2007 and will re-open on Wednesday January 2, 2008.

Thank you for all of your hard work and dedication over the last year. CILT takes great pride in its volunteers because you always put forth 110% and the staff really appreciate it. We are very proud of our volunteers and look forward to see you all in the New Year.

***Happy Holidays!***