

From the Editor


We lead off a new volume with an “issues” issue. Jacquelyn Wolf has polled a number of influential charities and reports on their views of the main concerns facing the voluntary sector today. Identifying them is only the first step, and she pursues the question of how to organize for protection and progress.

One issue that forms a common theme in all these articles is how to involve those who have traditionally not been involved. Dr. Joseph Wong recounts how the United Way of Greater Toronto identified and reacted to the challenge of the changing composition of the society in which it operated. Valerie March and Ratna Omidvar echo some of Dr. Wong’s themes in their piece on fund raising among different ethnocultural communities. These challenges also affect the direction of community foundations, as Marjorie Sharpe discloses.

David Baker argues forcefully that the meaning of “charity” should be re-examined, with a view to restoring some of its original sense of favouring the disadvantaged, not with handouts, but with the power to make their own way in society. In the days of tight funding, both public and private, this might involve cutting back the causes that qualify for special legal and tax treatments as charities, in order to foster the cause of the most needy.

Expanding the concept of charity and the functioning of charities so that all residents of Canada find their place in them is a theme that will support a good deal of discussion. Readers can expect to see more articles develop the topic in future issues.

Readers need not however expect that all our contributors will be based in Toronto. In order to encourage those from across the country to add their voices, we are reproducing at page 50, a list of possible topics for articles, as developed by the Editorial Board. Anyone who would like to write on any of them, or on some other topic relevant to Canadian charities, should write directly to me at the address shown on the inside cover, or contact me by fax at (416) 326-2699. I am happy to work with contributors to help them develop ideas submitted in outline.



John Gregory
Editor