

From the Editor

Our first contribution is written by Doug Jamieson who addresses the challenges faced by nonprofit organizations in building relationships in a “networked” age. Doug Jamieson is an experienced traveller in cyberspace. He started online in 1981 with a 300-baud modem and an acoustic coupler, dialing into online databases and information sources and using these as strategic business tools. As the Internet evolved, he anticipated its significance and potential and moved to help nonprofit organizations understand it and use it effectively for their own ends. In 1995 he conceived and created Charity Village (www.charityvillage.com) the huge and groundbreaking award-winning site that today enjoys the heaviest traffic of any nonprofit-oriented site in North America. He is the author of *NPO Webmaster*, the first book written to help nonprofit organizations plan, design, produce, promote and maintain successful Web sites. His contribution in this issue describes clearly the changes in communication patterns brought about by the Internet and provides very practical advice on how nonprofit organizations can use it to their advantage.

Most readers will have heard of the Supreme Court of Canada’s important decision in *Vancouver Society of Immigrant and Visible Minority Women v. M.N.R.*. A series of three contributions addresses the implications of this decision for Canadian philanthropy. The focus of the decision was the meaning of “charity” under the *Income Tax Act*. The Supreme Court decided by a majority of four to three that the particular organization in question was not qualified to be registered as a charity. Our treatment consists of a synopsis of the case written by the editor and two short comments, one by Wolfe Goodman and the other by Arthur Drache. Both authors are distinguished practitioners in matters relating to charity law and both therefore provide an informed commentary on the implications of the decision.

Professor Jim Phillips of the Faculty of Law at the University of Toronto has written another of his legal updates – an easy-to-read and informed view of developments in the law affecting charities and nonprofits. He touches on the decision in *Vancouver*, but focuses more closely on a recent Federal Court of Appeal decision on the meaning of charity – *Alliance for Life v. M.N.R.* He also examines the holding and implications of two recent Supreme Court decisions on vicarious liability, *Bazely v. Curey* and *Jacobi v. Griffiths*. These two decisions effect a substantial change in the law of vicarious liability and may have a significant impact on the activities of the sector. Readers may know that in one of the two cases a nonprofit organization was found vicariously liable for sexual assaults perpetrated by one of its employees, in the absence of any finding of fault on its part. Finally he looks at a problem most charities might wish they had. A foundation in the United States found itself with more

money than it could possibly spend. Could the *cy-près* doctrine be applied to help it with its problem?

We close this edition with a short history of the Canadian Centre for Philanthropy and the Index to volume 14. As on previous occasions, the latter was compiled by Claudia Willetts, M.L.S.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Stevens". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first letters of "David" and "Stevens" being capitalized and prominent.

DAVID STEVENS
Editor