

Consider helping a local organization



Michele Kading
COMMUNITY
CORRESPONDENT

ST. VITAL

Spring is in the air. Temperatures are rising. Snow is melting.

In the non-profit world, another sure sign of spring is the annual general meeting (AGM) and the search for people willing to serve on the board of directors.

I encourage anyone over 18 years of age to consider this option. It is a great way to serve society. Retirees can stay connected with the local community while meeting new people. Young adults will gain valuable experience for their resumes. Professionals will gain respect by supporting the non-profit sector.

Begin by following your passion. Identify a few local organizations that interest you. Are you passionate about a particular health issue? Do you care about the environment? Do you want to support programs for homeless people, homeless pets, children, teens, seniors, or newcomers? There is no shortage of worthy causes. Volunteer Manitoba (www.volunteermanitoba.ca) maintains a list of organizations that are seeking board

members.

Research the organizations that interest you. Do you support the mandate or mission of the organization? Having a shared vision will motivate you to stay involved for several years. Many organizations have two- or three-year terms for board members. This allows new board members to learn the ropes in the first year and perhaps serve as an officer (president, vice-president, secretary, or treasurer) in subsequent years.

Don't be intimidated. Most board positions (directors-at-large) do not require any specific expertise. Organizations look for responsible adults with honesty and integrity who will listen, learn, ask questions, make suggestions, and take initiative. People with community connections or a knack for cultivating relationships are invaluable for fundraising and recruiting volunteers.

It is often desirable for the board to have some expertise in accounting, law, fundraising, education, communication, or social media. If you have skills or experience in one of these areas, you will strengthen almost any non-profit organization.

As a board member, you will:

- Become familiar with the bylaws, mission, policies, and programs;
- Review materials prior to meetings;
- Attend board meetings and the AGM;
- Review financial statements and ask



Supplied photo

Board meetings and group events, such as the winter walk of the Save Our Seine board of directors, are opportunities to meet future friends with similar interests.

questions;

- Promote the organization to others;
- Contribute to fundraising efforts;
- Contribute to the vision.

Take the plunge. Volunteer to be a board member for an organization that is close to your heart.

Elections for the Save Our Seine board will be held at the AGM on Tues., April 3 at the Morrow Gospel Church. Contact saveourseine@gmail.com if you are interested.

Michele Kading is a community correspondent for St. Vital and the executive director of Save Our Seine.