

# **Predictions 2020 Proceedings**

**Forum held November 16, 1999**

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## Preamble

What does the future hold? This is something about which most of us wonder. With a clear understanding of the challenges before us and the development of a common goal, to some extent that future can be molded. It was with this in mind that we held the Predictions 2020 forum. The intention was to bring together the ideas, hopes and concerns for the future that exist among human service providers and members of our community so as to better prepare for the future.

We were pleased to have representatives from several organisations that ranged from neighbourhood organisations and the Self-Help Food Bank to the Regional Municipality of Waterloo Social Services Department. We were also happy to have several students from Southwood Secondary School attend, as youth perspectives are so important, particularly when having a discussion about the future.

What will be the trends of the future? There are several major issues to consider, such as an ageing population, the role of technology, the changing nature of human services, the work environment and volunteering, and the changing role/power of local governments in light of greater globalisation of both business and politics.

The ageing of the baby boomer generation will have significant effects on the future provision of human services. For example, pressure on the health care system will greatly increase which could result in restricted access to some as the system becomes overloaded. It could also mean that attention will be diverted away from other human services. How will human services adapt?

How will our lives be further changed by new technologies? As Donald Norman, a professor of psychology and cognitive science, says, "Technology changes rapidly; people change slowly."<sup>1</sup> Does this mean that the gap in society between the technology (i.e. the Internet) literate and illiterate will grow as time goes on? As academic and writer Dale Spender points out, "Just as the information medium once changed from manuscript to print, now it is changing from print to digital. And just as those who were illiterate in a print based society have been kept 'out of the loop' and unable to participate fully in the community, so now are computer illiterate people facing a similar fate as 'outsiders'."<sup>2</sup> The issue of a societal gap resulting from rapid technological development and adaptation by only a portion of society could easily cause the gap between rich and poor to grow in this age where information (and access to information) is as good as gold.

How will technology affect the functioning and delivery of human services? Will it facilitate how human services operate, or will it marginalise people further? Will community organisations be reluctant to incorporate too much technology for fear of isolating some of their clients? Will small organisations secure greater access to resources, and be able to share innovative ideas better since organising person-to-person meetings can be difficult? Or will there be a loss of innovation through the lack of personal contacts as people meet less and less often? In short, will we drive technology or will technology drive us?

How will human services change? As the definition of the family unit continues to transform, how will human services respond? Similarly, the nature of Canada's population will continue to

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<sup>1</sup> Norman, Donald A. (1999). "Cognitive Prostheses," in *Predictions: Thirty Great Minds on the Future*, Griffiths, Sian ed., University Press, Oxford, p. 175.

<sup>2</sup> Spender, Dale (1999). "A Basic Human Right," in *Predictions: Thirty Great Minds on the Future*, Griffiths, Sian ed., University Press, Oxford, p. 254.

diversify culturally as more and more new people move to this country, requiring more attention to issues of culture and language. Might Canada eventually have more than two official languages? Not only will the type of services change, but so will the way human service providers operate. Will there be a pooling of resources thereby lowering the costs for individual organisations.

What will the working environment be like? Will there be fewer total work hours in a week? Will employee morale, rather than substantial time commitments become the road to higher productivity? Mark Hudson from *32 HOURS: Action for Full Employment*, believes that, "Lower absenteeism, lower burnout, less fatigue, reduced employee turnover and higher morale resulting from reduced work time all contribute to a more productive workplace."<sup>3</sup> Or will the workweek never end as employees are continually connected to the office (virtual or real) through remote communications? Will the working environment be more flexible to accommodate those who need to care for others such as children or dependent parents? At the present time this seems to apply mostly to women, but will that change in the future? Will productivity continue to mean "more" or will it mean "better"?

How will these changes affect the way the next generation grows up, and what values they will have? Are we preparing our youth adequately for the future? Aside from their social and emotional abilities, which author David Goleman<sup>4</sup> describes, what kind of interests will the youth have in social issues and participating in their communities? As Andrew Terry, a speaker who represented the youth in this forum, says, "I don't think the majority of us [read youth] have a perspective on society, and the problems in it." (p.24) Will mandatory volunteering as part of the high school curriculum affect the level of youth (and later, adult) participation and interest in their communities?

How will the role of volunteering change? Will it become something that is a relic from the past due to increased work loads as improved communications technologies allow employees to be reached at any time, and a disconnectedness in society evolves as remote communications become more prominent? Or will volunteering become easier as fewer work hours per week becomes the norm, and small/community organisations gain a stronger position in society.

What do you think? We have transcribed the discussion that took place at the Predictions 2020 forum where these and other thoughts about the future were articulated. Some of the themes you will see in this discussion are: youth issues regarding awareness of social issues, participation and volunteering; social policies and social services; the importance of having a voice; diversity and equity; and community. This type of forum is essential to preparing for the future. However, we must, "ensure that the things we talk about today do not simply become predictions that we sit back and wait to see happen, but become goals that we work toward" (Marco Campana, p.23).

"The future will belong to those who are prepared for it."<sup>5</sup>

Megan Brunswig  
Social Planner

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<sup>3</sup> Atkinson Charitable Foundation (November 6, 1999). "The Atkinson Letter: In the Neck of Time," in *The Toronto Star*, p. K3.

<sup>4</sup> Goleman, David (1999). "Winning the Battle for the Human Heart," in *Predictions: Thirty Great Minds on the Future*, Griffiths, Sian ed., University Press, Oxford, p. 136.

<sup>5</sup> Worzel, Richard (December 1999/January 2000). "Three Keys to the Future: Where are Associations Heading?" in *Association: Canada's Association Management Magazine*, p. 31.

## 1.0 Welcome and Context (Linda Terry, Social Planning Council)

Good morning everyone and welcome. My name is Linda Terry and I am the Vice President of the Social Planning Council of Cambridge and North Dumfries. Thanks very much for coming out to this exciting event to talk about the future of Cambridge and North Dumfries. We are looking forward to the discussion.<sup>6</sup>

Our goals for this morning are three-fold:

- 1) Encourage human service providers to think about what may be before us and how we might be able to achieve a positive impact on future directions. This includes looking at some projections into the year 2020 and being clear about some potential areas of caution that may lie before us.
- 2) Encourage the healthy exchange of ideas, especially with the participation of young people from our community. Hopefully we can begin to foster a collection of safeguards required to move us toward a healthier and safer future. Together we can make a difference.
- 3) Have some fun.

We have three major themes that we thought it would be appropriate to highlight this morning. We have three speakers who have spent the last few weeks thinking about these respective themes.

Malcolm Shookner will talk about federal and provincial social policy changes that have taken place recently and what the future might look like for us. We have also experienced some very fast technological changes. Marco Campana will talk about those. Then we'll hear from a young person who does not carry around with him the same baggage that most of us do.



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<sup>6</sup> This transcript of the Predictions 2020 event has been reformatted and edited for clarity.

## 2.0 Some Ground Rules (Gloria DeSantis, Social Planning Council)

Good morning everyone. I too am excited about being here this morning. Before we get started I thought we should highlight some guidelines for us all. I'll read these to you.

- 1) Since we all work in diverse fields, we all have diverse realities.
- 2) We are hoping for positive prescriptions, not only doom and gloom stories.
- 3) Each of our presentations will start from different places (e.g., current government context, a crisis within an agency, etc.) and that's OK.
- 4) Focus on the future of Cambridge and North Dumfries – although points about the region, province and country are inevitable.
- 5) Use our imagination.
- 6) Before you start talking, say your name so that we can attribute comments to the right people in the proceedings.
- 7) Please use the microphone so that we can capture everybody's comments verbatim. If you have written notes, please leave those with us so we can transcribe them right into our report.
- 8) Have fun!

If you don't have any questions, I'll let Janet Petras get us started.



### **3.0 Opening Presentation - Human Services and Population Change in 2020 (Janet Petras, Wheelchair Tennis – Tennis Canada)**

Good morning and welcome. I am here to bring introductory comments from the Social Planning Council. Three of us from the Social Planning Council created this ten-minute presentation – Richard Green, Gloria DeSantis and I.

I will integrate some Social Planning Council thoughts with my own experiences as the Manager of Wheelchair Tennis – Tennis Canada. It too is a non-profit organisation. I will focus on human services in general in Cambridge and North Dumfries, as well as offer some thoughts on population changes that may be before us.

#### **3.1 Here is what we have now:**

Canada's social welfare system is present in Cambridge and North Dumfries. But is it alive and well? The answer to this question depends on who you are and where your life experiences have taken you so far.

In Cambridge, the following services make up our social welfare system: health care, child protection, social assistance, child benefits, housing, counselling, independent living services, child care, public pensions, family services, disability benefits, education, rehabilitation services, health promotion, English as a second language, employment insurance, job creation and training programs, maternity and parental leave, adult education, breakfast and lunch programs for children, immigrant and refugee services, in-home care for those who cannot get out, supports for those who have mental health issues, etc.. As you know the list is very long.



### **3.2 Here are the trends we've noticed locally:**

The "New Economy" encompasses three major societal trends – technological, economic, and demographic. For each of these there are negatives and positives. For example, technology can help make work more efficient but it can also make some jobs redundant. We must not forget this era as one of profound shifts in values and ideologies as well. Discussions about the "deserving" and "undeserving" poor is but one example.

Within the past few years our communities have experienced many policy changes brought on by federal and provincial governments' shifts in values.

- There were serious cuts in 1995 to 1997 made to many human service organisations' programs that focused on preventative work. At that time a shift to more crisis oriented work ensued.
- Downloading of certain responsibilities to regional and local governments is occurring. For example, social and affordable housing and the national child tax benefit.
- Local and regional staff and elected officials are trying to discern how to deal equitably with money that has shifted to their areas of responsibility.
- The Fair Municipal Tax Act has seen charities having to pay more money in property taxes.
- People on social assistance have been stripped of their dignity by new policy developments.
- Women are still shouldering a disproportionate share of caring for dependent children and dependent ageing relatives.
- Local long-term care waiting lists for older adults are growing.
- There is an increasing proportion of people spending more of their income on housing costs (e.g., rent, utilities, mortgages, etc.)
- Women and children who are fleeing violence in their homes are staying longer at local shelters.
- The number of people who need food and/or meals has been increasing over the years.

This list could go on and on. In fact, many of you here will be talking about some of these details this morning so I won't go further.

### 3.3 Thinking about these issues, let's walk into the future, locally:

#### Population

- All age groups in Cambridge and North Dumfries show increases into the year 2020.
- The total population in Cambridge could move from 101,400 in 1996 to 132,300 in 2020.<sup>7</sup>
- The total population of North Dumfries could move from 7,820 in 1996 to 10,000 in 2020.<sup>8</sup>

#### Elderly

- There will be more people over 65 years of age – especially more “old elderly” (75+). In 1996 the total number of people over 65 in Cambridge and North Dumfries was almost 11,700. As we approach the year 2020, this number could reach more than 21,000.<sup>9</sup> This is a shift from about 11% to close to 15% of the population. This proportion is lower than what is being predicted as a national proportion.
- There will be longer life expectancies.
- The proportion of older women will increase and their life expectancies will be longer than men. “The high risk of poverty that is associated with being elderly, female, and living alone is a major problem today and a major challenge for the future.”<sup>10</sup>
- All this will be a result of better advances in medicine and technology, changes toward healthier lifestyles, and advances in disease prevention.

#### Youth

- The number of youth (i.e., under the age of 14) will remain constant, but proportionally, they will be smaller than the elderly. In 1996, the total number of youth in Cambridge and North Dumfries was 25,400, which is 25% of the total population. As we approach the year 2020, the number of youth could be 24,700, which is about 17% of the total population in 2020.<sup>11</sup>

#### Women

- There will be a greater number of older women since it is expected that women will continue to outlive men.

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<sup>7</sup> Regional Municipality of Waterloo, Planning and Culture Department (1998). *Statistical Profile – Population and Households*, p.10. This report presents projections into the year 2016. For simplicity sake, we have used these numbers for the year 2020.

<sup>8</sup> *ibid.*, p.10.

<sup>9</sup> Regional Municipality of Waterloo, Planning and Culture Department (1998). *Statistical Profile – Population and Households*, p.12.

<sup>10</sup> Health and Welfare Canada (1990). *Charting Canada's Future: A Report of the Demographic Review*, p.23.

<sup>11</sup> Regional Municipality of Waterloo, Planning and Culture Department (1998). *Statistical Profile – Population and Households*, p.12.

## **Immigration**

- If we do not maintain at least the current level of immigration in Canada, we will see a decrease beginning in 2011 in the population in Canada, and hence in Cambridge and North Dumfries, given current fertility rates and reproduction.<sup>12</sup>
- Immigration is far more diverse now in terms of the national, linguistic, religious and racial backgrounds and will continue into the future.<sup>13</sup> The impact of this diversity is largely an urban phenomenon.

## **Families**

- There will be continued pressure to define families in more diverse ways. This will assist in the formation of creative and alternative ways of informal caring. We have already seen this in “blended families” and same-sex couples raising children.
- There will be continued pressure put on middle age people – best known today as the sandwich generation – to care for their children and ageing relatives. This will continue to put emotional and financial strains on families. Most of this strain will fall on women’s shoulders.

## **Housing<sup>14</sup>**

- The number of households will grow more than the population given lower fertility rates and an ageing population.
- Demand for retirement housing will increase over the next 20 years.
- Demand for rental units in the core areas will increase.
- Demand for smaller, good quality homes that are close to amenities will increase.

## **Education, Schools and Child Care<sup>15</sup>**

- There will be a steady, stable demand for affordable and flexible childcare programs.
- There will be an increase in demand for adult education and training programs.

## **Leisure and Recreation Activities<sup>16</sup>**

- The older population will participate less in active sports such as hockey, tennis and skiing. There will be an increase in demand for less physical sports such as lawn bowling, curling, golf, and swimming.
- There will be growth in leisure activities such as cycling, walking, gardening, bird watching and special cultural events.

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<sup>12</sup> Health and Welfare Canada (1990). *Charting Canada’s Future: A Report of the Demographic Review*, p.2.

<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*, p.32.

<sup>14</sup> McKay, David (September 1996). *Demographic Implications for the region of Waterloo*, p.10-15. Prepared for the Regional Municipality of Waterloo and Planning Initiatives Limited.

<sup>15</sup> *ibid.*, p.15-17.

<sup>16</sup> *ibid.*, p.20-21.

## Transportation

- There will be greater demand for low floor buses with pick-up and drop-off at undesignated stops, especially when one considers the ageing population.
- Concerns about environmental issues will put pressure on the development of a better public transit system and cycling to work opportunities, to name but a few.

**“ The risk of pretending the past is coming back, is far greater than the risk of seizing new opportunities”.** Angus Reid

Given these predictions, what should we be doing to achieve the best possible future for all those who live in Cambridge and North Dumfries?

In an interview in 1998, Angus Reid said, “ The risk of pretending the past is coming back, is far greater than the risk of seizing new opportunities”. It is with this in mind that we ponder what may be before us, and offer some prescriptions/safeguards to help us land in a healthier place. These are not presented in order of priority – they are simply an eclectic summary of our observations.

Organisations in the voluntary sector play three key roles: delivering services, testing innovative models, and providing ethical leadership<sup>17</sup>. They are innovative because they can be flexible, cross-sectoral, engage in public problem solving and engage in experimental testing of new program designs. They can offer ethical leadership because they are not bound by immediate political agendas. “The voluntary sector can urge governments to move beyond immediate political agendas and can present an holistic view that reflects the needs of all citizens. Equally important, it gives a voice to interest groups – such as persons with disabilities or immigrants and refugees – that often get overlooked in the public discourse, even though they occupy an important place in the theory of a pluralist democracy<sup>18</sup>.

There appear to be four challenges to voluntary organisations.<sup>19</sup>

- 1) Voluntary organisations have experienced a sharp increase in demand for services based on five economic and demographic trends. These are: an ageing population; a changing immigrant population creating an increased need for language training and resettlement programs; the breakdown in families often resulting in stress of raising a family alone and in poverty; a prolonged recession fuelled by technological improvements; and decreased government support which has resulted in increased poverty, as well as a rapid increase in certain diseases or ailments which has required the development of new agencies.
- 2) Most sources of government revenue have been seriously eroded.
- 3) The voluntary sector is under increasing public scrutiny due to high profile scandals.

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<sup>17</sup> Torjman, Sherri (June 1999). *Unraveling the Threads of Democracy*, Caledon Institute of Social Policy, p.1.

<sup>18</sup> *ibid.*, p.2.

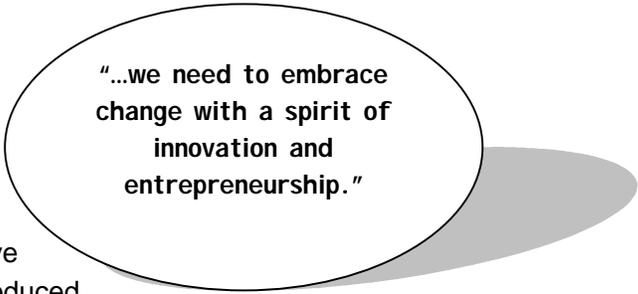
<sup>19</sup> Halton Social Planning Council and Volunteer Centre (April 1998). “The Voluntary Sector – Sustaining a Civil Society,” in *Community Dispatch*, vol. 2, no. 4.

- 4) The volunteer base has shifted away from the middle class homemaker due to women's participation in the workforce and the greying of the population. These give rise to creative solutions like family volunteering and volunteering in one's place of employment.

In order for our human service organisations to survive and continue to serve a necessary function in our society of tomorrow, we need to embrace change with a spirit of innovation and entrepreneurship. We need to consider mergers, diversification, defining/redefining our core business, use of electronic links to facilitate connecting clients to services, and creative ways of leveraging resources (e.g., time, space and expertise). We also need to ensure we collaborate instead of compete.

We will also continue to do some of the following:

- go after needed financial resources through donations, door-to-door canvassing, etc. Programs still need money to operate.
- seek out money recycled through lotteries/gaming. We will continue to apply for money wherever we can find it. Many of us have had to shelve certain principles. Others have reduced services.
- increase the role of faith communities in the delivery of services because of the reduction of government funding. This is not new. Faith communities have been involved for years. They have often been the first to respond to a new community need.



We need to develop programs and facilities today that permit and encourage multiple uses. For example, despite a prediction that the elderly in the year 2020 will be healthier than today, will they be skating in arenas that we're building for the under 65 year old group today? What seniors related facility could evolve from arenas? And what about schools? Many of us see schools as the hub of community life. Schools can be meeting places for very diverse community activities, beyond children's learning activities. Schools that are built today should be based on adaptable designs.

There is a healthy tension between centralised and decentralised services and their delivery mechanisms. United Way has an allocations plan, which stresses decentralised delivery. Some other tiers of government are trying to centralise these services. Will virtual offices become a reality?

We are at a point in our history where communities risk losing local control. How can we keep it? We need to mobilise the community to take greater control.

We need to be constantly at the policy and decision-making tables to reinforce the importance of community residents' voices in the shaping of our services, institutions and neighbourhoods.

We have to use our voices to speak out against the government preoccupation with the debt at the risk of reducing funding further for more and more social programs. Even with cuts to programs, our community has shown the capacity to bounce back. We have hundreds of volunteers, for example, emergency hot meal programs at churches that have begun to provide

services on a volunteer basis because of the lack of government funding. But do we want our system of services to be run like that?

We should fight to maintain the value base, which has made Canada one of the better places to live. If you fall on hardship there will be assistance to help you pull things back together again.

We should engage diverse groups of people in defining and resolving their own community issues.

If we are not able to change government policies, poverty will not be reduced. In fact, poverty will not only include young families with children, single parent families and those working for minimum wage jobs, but it will also include a larger proportion of older people, primarily women, who rely exclusively on government transfer payments.



“Family policies should explicitly recognise and reward different and diverse ways of being familial. Attempting to reinforce one family form over another will only harm people and undermine alternative ways of caring.”<sup>20</sup> We also need to seriously think about the role of created/voluntary families in our society. Should blood line and marriage be the sole focus of our definition of family? Probably not.

A move towards “women-friendly Canadian family policies” seems unlikely because of the diminishing safety net, a “profoundly shifting labour market and the redefinition of women as a special interest group”.<sup>21</sup> We should continue to be vigilant about the diversity of issues with which women are faced – reproductive issues, access to pensions if women have spent all their lives in unpaid family-based work, family violence, poverty, ethnic diversity, and living alone into a very old and vulnerable age.

Given the racial and cultural diversity that may ensue if the federal government undertakes a plan to increase immigration, Cambridge and North Dumfries should be prepared to re-think policies and programs offered by non-profits, governments and the private sector which may inadvertently promote racism and other forms of discrimination. Sensitivity training for many people that offer services may have to become a more important part of our learning. Making services available in other languages may also become important.

One of the most serious of issues that we will need to deal with locally and elsewhere, is the growing strain of caring for young and old dependants that will be placed on middle age people. This will beg flexible job environments and easier access to a multiplicity of services for the very young and very old.

Should we let technology replace face-to-face interactions? We don't think so because interpersonal, human relationships are important.

Will technology further separate the haves from the have-nots? We all have to work hard to ensure this doesn't happen. For example, the haves are able to find a variety of health care options over the Internet. If you don't have access to a computer or you don't know how to work

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<sup>20</sup> *ibid.*, p.198.

<sup>21</sup> McDaniel, Susan (1998). “Families, Feminism and the State: Canada in the 1990s and Beyond” in, *Power and Resistance* edited by Les Samuelson and Wayne Anthony, Fernwood Publishing, Nova Scotia, p.195.

one, then you don't have the same options before you. You may be worse off. Marco will talk more about this in a few minutes.

In Cambridge and North Dumfries, we will be encouraged to design and build active lifestyle communities and innovations in the continuum of retirement and assisted care facilities. Luxury housing developments for retirees will have to be balanced with the demand for more affordable housing. Differences of opinion exist about whether older people will want to live in segregated, adult lifestyle housing developments or in housing that is integrated with other age groups and lifestyles.<sup>22</sup>

Self-reliance is not only part of government expectations of individuals, but also of organisations. We need to recognise, though, that we are all interdependent. Too often we talk about self-reliance and independence as the only goals, yet even those of us who have jobs, and therefore economic self-sufficiency, still reside within a community of other supports. Access to family and friends, opportunity for higher learning and access to good health care all point to a system of informal and formal supports that reinforce the concept of interdependency. So let us be clear as we move forward into the next 20 years that we don't lose sight of what it means to live in a community.

This list could go on and on. Undoubtedly, most of you here can add further detail to many of these.

Now close your eyes and imagine if everyone in this room was elected to political office...What would you promote?...Who would you work hard to assist?...

Thank you.

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<sup>22</sup> Regional Municipality of Waterloo, Planning and Culture Department (1998). *Planning Ahead: A Publication for Customers of the Planning and Development Division*, vol. 3, no.3, p.4 & 7.

## 4.0 Federal and Social Policy (Malcolm Shookner, Ontario Social Development Council)

What might be the major social issues facing us in 2020 and what should we be doing now to prepare ourselves? What impact might these issues have on human services in Cambridge and North Dumfries? I have many thoughts to share with you.

### 4.1 Current trends and where they are taking us:

- The provincial government has radically changed its relationship with municipalities by cutting funding and downloading responsibilities for a wide range of programs and services.
- Municipalities have a much broader range of responsibilities for social programs with an inadequate resource base to draw upon.
- The provincial government operates on a business model through the de-regulation, downsizing, and privatisation of public services and assets.
- The provincial government changed from playing an active role with the voluntary and private sectors in social and economic development to playing a minimal role.
- The fiscal policy of tax breaks is reducing the capacity of governments to play a significant role in addressing social issues.
- The voluntary sector has faced a growing set of social problems with fewer resources.
- Ontario's society is getting more polarised, as the gap between the rich and the poor grows.
- The globalisation of the economy is undermining the responsibilities of governments to work toward the continuous improvement of living conditions and is contributing to the growing gap between the haves and the have-nots.
- Increasing social and economic insecurity are felt by many.
- Social cohesion is weakening as people are left to fend for themselves in the global marketplace.
- The social safety net is being dismantled through "reforms" to unemployment insurance and welfare.



**"The voluntary sector has faced a growing set of social problems with fewer resources."**

## 4.2 Quality of Life Index Project (QLI):

The QLI is a new tool developed by OSDC (Ontario Social Development Council) and SPNO (Social Planning Network of Ontario) for measuring and monitoring changes in living conditions, which affect our quality of life. This measures changes in social, health, economic, and environmental conditions.

From 1990 to 1999 we see several trends:

- the social safety net is being dismantled through “reforms” like those to unemployment insurance;
- quality of life declined in the ‘90s but is recovering by the end of the decade;
- there is a social deficit;
- there are growing disparities, and;
- we are not on a sustainable path.



Where will these trends take us in 2020? Maybe the following:

- more people living in poverty;
- serious polarisation between the haves and have-nots;
- communities strongly influenced by global market and mass culture;
- voluntary sector resources strained beyond capacity to deal with poverty, hunger, and homelessness;
- public services are downsized and privatised;
- local governments look to the private sector for help in financing public services;
- those most affected are women, children, and aboriginal peoples;
- communities are struggling to maintain their own identity and cultures;
- social cohesion is weakened as inequities grow, and;
- the QLI rating is below 100 (below what it is currently).

The Social Development perspective draws on the “sustainable human development model” from the United Nations Development Program. “The enlargement of peoples’ choices and capabilities through the formation of social capital so as to meet as equitably as possible the

needs of current generations without compromising the needs of future ones.”<sup>23</sup> Sustainable Human Development (SHD) provides an inter-sectoral framework of social, health, economic, and environmental conditions for human development and social development

Sustainable social development means:

- reduction of poverty and disparities;
- more equitable distribution of wealth;
- national standards for social programs;
- investments in community capacity building;
- investments in the human services system;
- public participation in planning and policy development, and;
- supportive social relationships.

If we make predictions for a sustainable future in 2020 we might see:

- a vibrant community with a strong sense of local identity and culture;
- public, private and voluntary sector partnerships in addressing poverty and disparities;
- major investment in human services and community development;
- fewer people living in poverty;
- more people living longer and healthier lives;
- a healthy local economy;
- improved quality of life for everyone, and;
- a record high Quality of Life Index (QLI) rating over 200!

Which path will we choose to the future? It's up to you....

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<sup>23</sup> United Nations Development Programme (1994). *Sustainable Human Development from Concept to Operation: A Guide for the Practitioner*, New York.

## 5.0 Technology in Social Services (Marco Campana, K-W Multicultural Centre)

### 5.1 Some quotable predictions about technology:

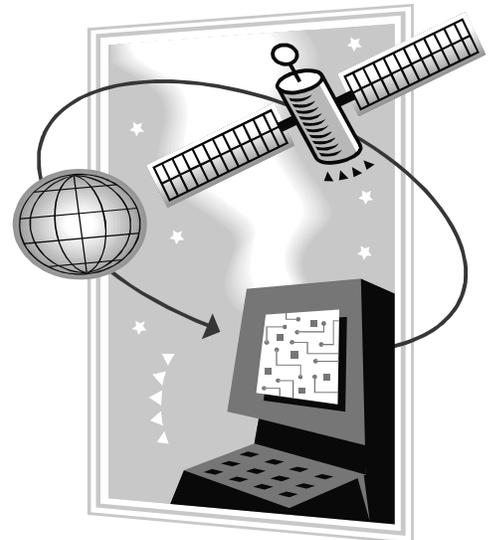
Before we look ahead 20 years it might be worthwhile to look back 20 years to see what a few people had to say about the future of technology.

“640K ought to be enough for anybody.”<sup>24</sup>

“There is no reason for any individual to have a computer in his home.”<sup>25</sup>

Even more telling is something that was said last year,

“Technology is the expression of the society; it is an expression of the values and the abilities of the people that generate it. It is indeed a most revealing indicator of our society. And the fact is that technology in turn shapes the values of a society and of its people.”<sup>26</sup>



### 5.2 Defining technology:

Simply put, technology is tools we use or processes we use to accomplish something. Technology is all around us. Here is just some technology we've become used to in our offices:

Computers	Coffee machines	Local area networks
Phone systems	Fridges	Internal email
Voice mail	Microwave ovens	Headsets for phones
Couriers	Heating and cooling systems	Ergonomic keyboards
Faxes	Scanners	Typewriters
Carbon copies	Modems	Palm pilots/personal devices
Photocopiers	Internet	Databases
Laser printers	Pagers	Pencils, pens
Colour printers	Cell phones	
Alarm systems		

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<sup>24</sup> Bill Gates, Microsoft Founder in 1981.

<sup>25</sup> Kenneth H. Olson, President of Digital Equipment, Convention of the World Future Society, 1977.

<sup>26</sup> George Bugliarello, <http://www.isepp.org/1998/drgeorge.htm>

### 5.3 Technology, the last 20 years:

Here is a quick timeline of the progress of technology over the last 20 years.<sup>27</sup>

1980 – DOS developed

"DOS addresses only 1 Megabyte of RAM because we cannot imagine any applications needing more." (Microsoft on the development of DOS.)

1982 - 80286 Released

1985 – Microsoft Windows

1989 – World Wide Web

1994 – Netscape version 1 released

1995 – Windows 95 released

Let's focus on information technology, because that's what I'm most familiar with and I think that it is the technology we hear the most about these days.

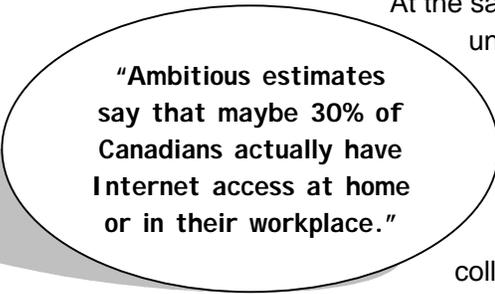
### 5.4 Where are we now with information technology?

The Internet has rapidly become a commercialised phenomenon, driven by business and commerce, becoming a world of entertainment and information. It's estimated that computers double their speed and capacity every 18 months. Public access to the Internet is increasing in major urban centres. Computer prices are dropping as their capacity increases.

We're bombarded with advertisements and information about the next best "killer app" and telling us to "imagine a world...".

At the same time, the gap between the technology haves and have-nots is constantly growing and will most likely continue to increase. Owning a computer and getting high speed Internet access is still out of reach for many people in our society. Ambitious estimates say that maybe 30% of Canadians actually have Internet access at home or in their workplace.

At the same time, information is available in an unprecedented quantity. You're a click away from medical advice, a company's annual report, your member of parliament, a friend living across the ocean, news all day every day, more information than you could ever actually make effective use of in a given day. The ability to collaborate with colleagues without geographic barriers is possible.



**"Ambitious estimates say that maybe 30% of Canadians actually have Internet access at home or in their workplace."**

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<sup>27</sup> <http://ox.compsoc.net/~swhite/timeline.html>.

Sharing information and resources, collaborating with each other in an open and transparent way. They say that almost anything is technologically possible, what could the future hold?

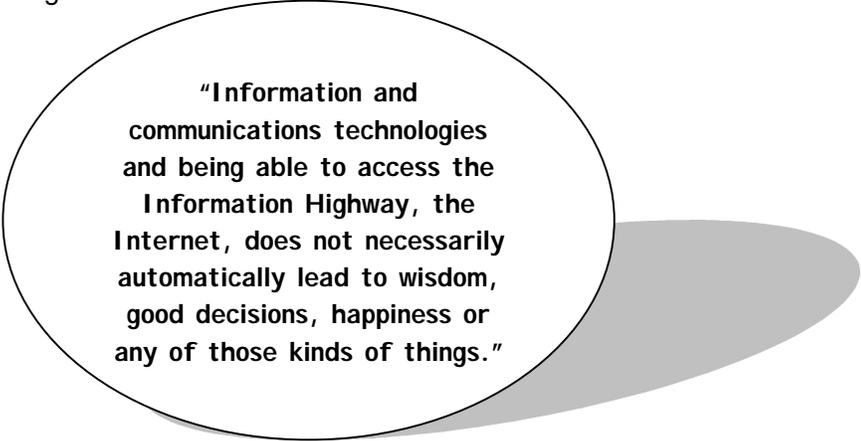
## 5.5 What could the future look like?

“Information and communications technologies and being able to access the Information Highway, the Internet, does not necessarily automatically lead to wisdom, good decisions, happiness or any of those kinds of things. And we need better decision making in many areas of life and the information and communications technologies may help us get better information, but good decision making for a just society will depend on wisdom, judgement, analytical skills, and values just as they always have, and wisdom we are told comes from experiences of life, sense of history, the natural and social sciences, from ethics and philosophy, and not the computer chip, and so the kind of people we create out of this society will be more important even than the kinds of technologies we have.”<sup>28</sup>

Some interesting trends, outlined by the Communications Research Centre of Industry Canada:<sup>29</sup>

There is a heightened expectation for interfaces that are better-designed and simpler to use. A new generation of non windows-based computer interface technologies are on the horizon that will be improved sufficiently during the next decade including:

- speech recognition and natural language interfaces;
- virtual reality environments;
- intelligent agents;
- information filters, and;
- social presence in collaborative environments;



**“Information and communications technologies and being able to access the Information Highway, the Internet, does not necessarily automatically lead to wisdom, good decisions, happiness or any of those kinds of things.”**

The practical consequence of heightened expectations for more sophisticated user interfaces is a need for much more complex software.

Demand for ubiquitous communications services offering access to anyone, anywhere, at anytime, appears to be worldwide. Among service offerings that are driving the systems and support technologies required to provide ubiquitous communications are:

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<sup>28</sup> David Crane, Economics Editor, Toronto Star, <http://www.candesign.utoronto.ca>.

<sup>29</sup> <http://www.crc.ca>.

- wireless public telephone, office communication services and multimedia services;
- remote mobile data communication services;
- secure communication services;
- personal security services, and;
- mobile information services like position location, vehicle identification, weather and route.

Apparently, the future is wireless, secure, and personal!

There is, and will continue to be, increasing demand, dependency and requirement for access to information wherever and whatever it is. The emerging future global network will provide a powerful and versatile environment for business, education, culture, and entertainment. Sight, sound, and even touch will be integrated through powerful computers, displays, and networks. People will use this environment to work, study, bank, shop, entertain, and visit with each other. Whether at the office, at home, or travelling, the environment and its interface will be largely the same. Security, reliability, and privacy will be built in.

Customers will have the choice of different levels at varying price points. It is intended that this dramatically different environment will provide a more agile economy, improved health care (particularly in rural areas), less stress on the ecosystem, easy access to life-long and distance learning, a greater choice of places to live and work, and more opportunities to participate in the community, the nation, and the world.

Welcome to Utopia!

## **5.6 What does it all mean for us as non-profits?**

What I think this means in some practical terms is that people will be looking, as they always do, for communities of interest, places to join and belong. They will also be looking for some way to manage the information overload that already exists and will continue to grow. The advent of “My Yahoo” (<http://my.yahoo.com/>) where surfers can personalise their Internet interface will only grow and become more popular.

What that means is the way we provide and communicate information will have to change and there will be more urgency to share information and resources. The Internet could actually force some organisations to become more collaborative, which can be quite threatening. The culture of the Internet is about openness and sharing. It flies in the face of traditional economic models, where things are generally offered to consumers for free. This trend will most likely only continue and those that don't subscribe to it will find themselves left behind by those who offer the public access to information and resources.

So, we can see the future as an opportunity or a threat, but the reality is that things are moving at an exceptionally fast rate of change. The question is whether we will seek to be swept along or try to drive some of that change in our interests.

We could end up with a world where:

- people are isolated in a room or cubicle with Email contact to the rest of the world;
- meetings happen via video-conference with us wearing sensory suits so that we can nudge our virtual neighbours;
- the job is never-ending as you can be reached 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and;
- Privacy is lost in the workplace as your boss can monitor your Email, calculate your keystrokes per hour, clock how long (exactly how long) you were in the washroom.

Or could it look like a place where the Internet becomes a tool for us to support our communication and community building? Are we looking at using it as a tool for social change, social participation, community outreach, education and training?

Some questions we need to ask ourselves:

- How do people relate to information? What information and content do people need? How will people tell their stories?
- How do we build a community? How do we do it now?
- We can't divorce ourselves from the fact that we're already trying to answer those questions now regardless of new information technology. Technology might give us another way to help answer the questions, but it itself is not the answer.
- How do we create electronic space, electronic platforms which are specifically carved out to serve civil society and non-profits? One of the things that the average person is losing in this society is their voice. We need to work to build something that Mark Surman, an Internet Consultant, has called an Electronic Commons, an electronic space where we can talk about what it is to be a citizen, what we want our society to look like and ideas for how we can get there.<sup>30</sup> Most of us don't want to organise a revolution and we don't

necessarily want to stand on street corners to have the discussion. We need more spaces where ideas can be shared, not intellectualised, and we need to ensure that the so-called "end users" are there, moving the process along, not just following.



**"We need more spaces where ideas can be shared, not intellectualized, and we need to ensure that the so-called "end users" are there, moving the process along, not just following."**

Most of us are divorced from information

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<sup>30</sup> <http://www.candesign.utoronto.ca>.

technology tools and what they are creating. We have become a world of experts and we rely on them for our future. If you define an expert, as I have heard it defined, as someone who knows more and more about less and less, we may be heading down a very narrow path, one that is a bit too enamoured with technology from a product perspective rather than a process perspective.

By process, I'm talking about something that all of us are already engaged in, the social development and community development process. Information technology has been made quite incredibly useful for the business and corporate community. In our work we are being told ever more to work more like a business, generate revenue, become competitive, serve our customers, etc.. While we have much to learn from the business community, we must ask ourselves, if they are meeting us halfway and learning from what we have to offer. Are we asking them to?

Personally, I have a love-hate relationship with newer information technologies. I use them every day and couldn't really see my life without them now, but I think it's important to be sceptical, and think critically and question the conventional wisdom of our times. Questioning and thinking critically means becoming informed and that takes time - a luxury many of us don't always have. But it is time well spent, because this technology is shaping our lives and the lives of the people we serve. They are more likely to be the technology have-nots and therefore it is important that we try to be points of access and information for them.

That doesn't necessarily mean that they'll walk into your organisation and hop on a computer and surf the net, or maybe eventually it does. But, for now, think of how you can bridge the technology gap for them. It doesn't even have to mean stepping out of the role you already play for them, it just means adding another tool to your repertoire. You're already a bridge to something for them. Think of this as an extension of that role.

When we talk about technology we need to keep in mind that, for technology to be useful and used by us, it must be incorporated into the work that we already do. If we just make it something that gets added to our work we will end up being driven by it. And it *will* drive us because the obsession in our society with technology is not going to go away and it will affect us, whether in private or at work.

To get anywhere in the future that we think we want to go, we need to step back and learn the basics. We need to work together to develop standards so that anyone can work with the information we create.

So, what are some of the fundamental questions we need to ask ourselves?

- a) We need to know what some of the trends are:
  - How can we better track and respond to community trends?
  - What is useful to the people we serve? What is useful to us?
  - What government policies can help us? How will the government's vision affect us?
  - What is the industry "vision" for this technology? How will that affect us?

- b) We need to make a concerted effort to become technologically literate: (Welcome to your learning curve!)
- Where does this technology fit into my day-to-day work? How can it help me to accomplish the goals of my work, my organisation, my vision of what my community should look like?
- c) We need to look at how we define community development:
- Are we prepared to share with each other more and more?
  - How are we positioned to work through the information and power issues that technology represents? By this I mean that if information technology does indeed become ubiquitous, how will we change what we do to still be important to our clients?

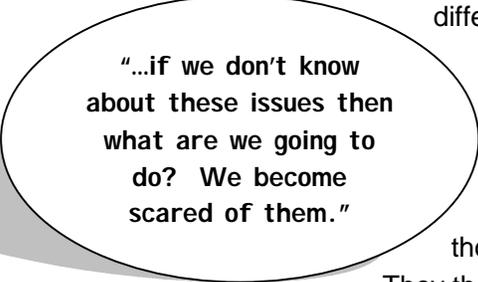
Ultimately, the role of Community Information Centres and Social Planning Councils will become even more important to us all as we look to work and collaborate across our various community sectors.

One thing is for sure. This kind of discussion and sharing of ideas cannot end today. This kind of forum is important, but it's difficult for us all to get together like this. With the Internet we can bridge this geographical gap and continue our discussion online, either via the Web or via Email. Those of us here today who are interested can ensure that the things we talk about today do not simply become predictions that we sit back and wait to see happen, but become goals that we work toward.

## 6.0 A Young Person's Perspective (Andrew Terry, Southwood Secondary School student)

I'm Andrew and I'm from Southwood. I'm eighteen years old. Hopefully I'll be going to University next year. I'm going to study History and Political Science - as it's what I'm interested in, and it has a lot to do with society.

When I was asked to do this, I looked at a lot of the issues facing society, such as poverty, malnutrition, and homelessness. But I decided to look at it from a slightly different perspective. I decided to look at the "haves" - what we have and what part we have as youth (18 years of age and under), and the way the haves view the "have-nots." I think this is a very serious subject because we're going to be the leaders of tomorrow, in ten years or so, when we're out of university and we're doctors, and lawyers, and politicians. We're going to need some sort of perspective on society, and right now, I don't think the majority of us have a perspective on society and its problems. I think that's a big problem. For whatever reason we have been sheltered from the problems of the world. Maybe it's because we're not eighteen, we're not officially adults, we can't vote, or our parents don't want us to see the horror of society's problems. Whatever it is, we don't have the education of knowing what's going on, and this results in a lot of misconceptions. I see this in my school, however, in other schools it might be different.



**"...if we don't know about these issues then what are we going to do? We become scared of them."**

In my history class we have a current events part of the class, about whatever is going on in the news. One day the 'squeegee kid' issue came up. I found it interesting that a majority of the kids in the class thought that these people prefer to be 'squeegee kids'.

They thought that this was something good, that squeegee kids are making lots of money, and that they'd *rather* be on the street. Or they thought that these kids have places they can go like shelters. They think, "There's shelter everywhere, so what's wrong? There is no real problem". I heard people saying this and I thought, "You don't even know. You don't read the news. Where are you getting this perspective from?" Maybe it's from their parents... Whatever, it is a problem. The youth don't have a perspective on these issues.

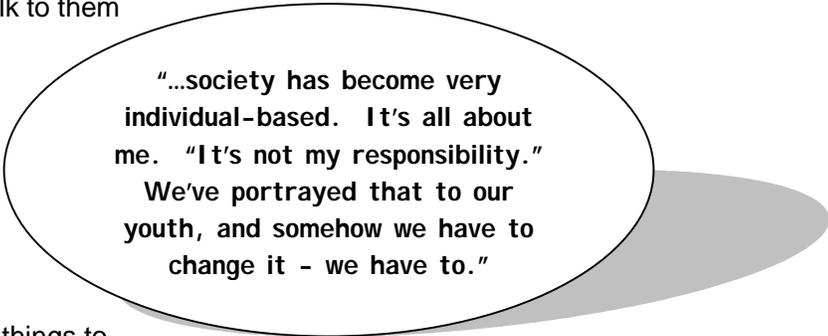
As a perfect example of the adult population sheltering youth, my mom was telling me today about a play that was written by a high school drama teacher. It was being put on by a bunch of high school students called 'Live and Uncensored', and it deals with sexual issues like AIDS, and unwanted pregnancies. Last year, fifteen high schools got to see this play. This year it was scheduled to be all over Waterloo County, but a Board of Education trustee found that it wasn't appropriate for high school students. Now I'm sorry, but it *is* appropriate for all high school students because we are becoming adults and if we don't know about these issues then what are we going to do? We will become scared of them. And when we are confronted with them, when we're adults, be it sex, homelessness, poverty, or whatever, we won't have a way to look

at them and we won't be familiar with them. We'll see them, get scared, and then not talk about them.

That's the worst thing. This is exactly what we're doing now by not talking about the problems in society. If you were to ask, I guarantee that ninety-nine percent of the school would not have a clue what the Social Planning Council is. And that's bad. It's not good because social planning is very important in society because we need to deal with issues.

There's definitely a set of values, or something, that we are not talking about. That's the way a lot of people under eighteen look at it. They won't look at issues because their parents decide that they don't want their teen to see what's going on. They don't want their teen to be subjected to these things, so we as youth don't talk to them about it and don't see what's going on. Therefore, people believe that it must not be going on.

And when we become adults we're going to be making political decisions - we will be voting. These are the issues we should be dealing with. It shouldn't just be about tax breaks, and things to do with us. It should have to do with not just "me", but society. When the youth become adults, when they vote, they need to say, "Look, there's a problem with homelessness," and then a political party might deal with it. But if they don't, if they don't care about it, then they're not going to use the most important forum we have of voting, where we can express our views. Voting is a basic right and it's a way that we can all express ourselves. If the majority of people don't care about it, the political parties won't care about it.



**"...society has become very individual-based. It's all about me. "It's not my responsibility." We've portrayed that to our youth, and somehow we have to change it - we have to."**

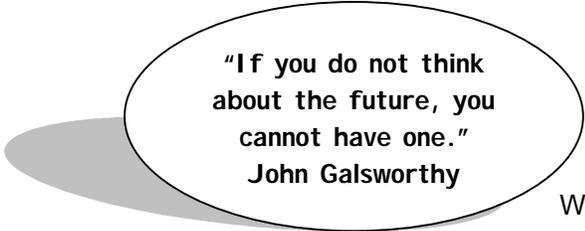
This is a major problem. I think that, definitely, society has become very individual-based. It's all about "me". "It's not my responsibility." We've portrayed that to our youth, and somehow we have to change that - we have to. I wouldn't know how to go about it, or to tell you to set this or that up, but we have to find an imaginative way to change the way youth think because they will become society.

We'll become the adults and, hopefully through our awareness, the problems will be dealt with. If they're not dealt with, the problems will just stay there. Is that what we want? I don't think that's what we want. We want the problem to be dealt with. The only way to deal with problems is for us to be aware and to get out there and vote; to get involved with social planning and tell other people about these problems. If that means having the play at our school, or having social planning organisations come to the schools, or having it as part of the curriculum to talk about these things then so be it. For example, a course could be developed, or five minutes could be set aside for current events in each class. Right now, not every class has this as it happens at the preference of the teacher. Let it be mandatory - let them talk about it because we need to discuss things. If things aren't discussed then nothing will change and that's wrong.

## 7.0 Round the Circle Contributions

### 7.1 Carol Lakeman, Preston Heights Community Centre:

I'm going to take a little more of a human focus, trying to get away from technology because I think basically what's happening is the tendency to lean on watches. Where I come from, I volunteer at Preston Heights community, I'm on the board of directors there, I'm on the executive committee, and I am on the parent teacher counsel at Parkwood Public School. I spend a lot of my time in the community. I pulled a quote out that I'd like you to hear, by a man called John Galsworthy, "If you do not think about the future, you cannot have one." I feel that the issues today are very important and for people to be able to see that what we do is important. I personally feel that in order to glimpse the future, you need a fair grounding in the present and past, to try to understand the giant strides of society in the last century. The ideas of family since the 1950s help us understand our place in society today. As we rework our ideas of what constitutes a family from mom and dad, two kids and a dog, to encompassing a much larger view of single mothers, single fathers, extended families, and same sex couples with children, we have the opportunity to educate and nurture ourselves into the global village we all envision. As our modern version of neighbourhood associations and community centres emerge, the potential for each to become the hub of each town or neighbourhood and a link to all others is inspiring.



**"If you do not think  
about the future, you  
cannot have one."**

**John Galsworthy**

I would like to take you on a little virtual journey through my community centre in November 2020. I'll be 63 years old; my grandchildren will be twenty-one, and twenty-three. Today is the day I jokingly call my Wal-Mart day. It's my day to be greeter at the community centre. It's also the day I walk with Mrs. Smith, who is seventy-five, to the nurse practitioner to have her blood pressure checked. When I arrive, I check the schedule board; another full day. Upstairs in the 'Great Room', we have our caregivers support group - it's having a training session. Today's training is monitoring home medical units and injections, with a little hands on, with oranges. Afterwards, today being one of their days off due to Home Care relief, they get to relax and enjoy the day however they would like. School now runs year round, with three or four two-week vacations a year. This is a break week, so next door we are running a day program. Mr. Jones, a retired music teacher, has come in for music appreciation for a large group, and small lessons for the older interested kid. Christmas crafts and open gym are to follow. Today our teen group is showing off their kitchen skills, preparing the Friday night community dinner (this one is to celebrate George and Fran's fiftieth wedding anniversary). The grandchildren will be providing a little entertainment with the latest drama troop comedy on the joys of marriage. So it looks like a hundred again for dinner, with a dance to follow. The beat of marching music trots down the hall, as the pre-school children wear off some of their formidable energy. Oh to be forty-three again. The job-sharing staff is meeting in the boardroom to work out a schedule for the upcoming month, and the volunteer appreciation

for the weekly coffee crew. Young Cathy is leaving on a tour of duty at the space station, she will be missed. She is awfully good with the infants and the happy baby crew. Thank goodness they finally ironed out the old video phone connections. The employment outreach department has a co-op group in this morning to work on the software promotion for the United Way presentation to the federal government on their engineering plan for a new multimedia centre. Counselling has a great group in the office, you can hear laughter seeping under the door. Humour is such good therapy. Mind you, touch therapy seems to make healing much quicker. Well my feet are getting tired, time to go home and slip my feet into my sensory bath, and take that long needed trip to our new twin city, Guatlahara, Mexico.

Briefly in closing I would like to say, from my own community involvement, none of these ideas seem too far-fetched, if people like yourselves stay on the path that you have your feet firmly on, centres like this may be an expectation of every new neighbourhood we may have the pleasure of living in.

I hope this provides a slant that's slightly different – with a human touch. This is where the human touch comes in: we need to remain involved, we need to let people know we're out there, that there is a centre we can go to where we can access technology and the social aspects we need. The opportunities are so rewarding.

## 7.2 Carol Ariss, Volunteer Bureau of Cambridge and North Dumfries:

It is our belief that volunteerism in 2020 may indeed be the following:

- Volunteering is a culture rather than something one does in their spare time.
- Volunteering is a culture adopted by the corporate sector for all levels of management.
- The next step from compulsory retirement at age 50 is the volunteering profession.
- There is a Ministry of Volunteerism that supports and recognises the voluntary sector as a professional link to communities.
- Volunteerism is recognised by all as a means of community development.
- The roles between government and the volunteer sector are clear: the government no longer says “volunteers do or will do”, and consultation takes place before the fact.
- There is a universal statement that clearly defines what the word “volunteer” means and what a volunteer does. This clarifies corporate volunteerism, co-op placements, mandated community service, and community involvement as a school requirement.



**In the year 2020:  
“There is a Ministry  
of Volunteerism...”**

- Volunteering via the Internet has increased concerns about the risk factors of clients and volunteers around issues of screening and decreases the abilities for those with limited computer and English skills to become involved.
- The increased demand and constraints on families leaves little time to volunteer.
- Volunteerism is no longer accessible or spontaneous because of the focus on the measurement of outcomes in facts, risks, and liabilities.

### 7.3 Marion Whistance, People Assisting in Transporting Elderly Residents (PATER):

I know some of you are familiar with the PATER program. PATER stands for People Assisting and Transporting Elderly Residents. That's exactly what we do. We use a team of volunteers to take the elderly of Cambridge to their medical appointments: the things they have to do that family and friend can't get to. So that's where I'm coming from.



**"The...shrinking social services, and homemaking services, [leaves] seniors who have little income and little family support with very few options..."**

One of the biggest challenges we will be facing in the year 2020, is the ageing population movement. There will be more people over the age of sixty than any other age group, and I'll be one of them. I feel I have a stake in solving these problems.

There seem to be a few key issues: Housing availability and affordability: with government cutbacks in housing construction, and the only senior housing being built, it seems, is for those with incomes to support a relatively expensive lifestyle. The poor are being left behind.

Quality of life: the cut backs have resulted in shrinking social services, and homemaking services, leaving seniors who have little income and little family support with very few options, and they are unable to cope.

Many people will be retiring with no safety net, savings, insurance policies, investments, or pension funds. Due to today's policies, in both industry and government, to employ people on a part-time basis with lower wages and no benefits, these people are left with nothing to rely on.

Will this then result in fewer seniors and newly retired people taking up volunteer positions? To some extent volunteering costs time and money.

In my opinion, we'll be looking at a large gap between the rich and the poor, and if society does not address the problem then many low-income seniors are looking at a very bleak future.

I just have one closing comment. Malcolm, in one of his comments at the end of his presentation, said that, "it's up to you." Yes, it is up to us, but government and business hold the purse

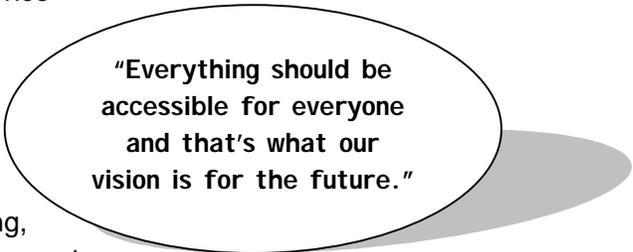
strings, and where are they today? Where are they at this meeting? I believe that all levels of government were invited today, and I don't really see any recognisable faces from local government, provincial government, or federal government. Surely they are the people who should be listening to what we have to say, and where are they? I would really like some answers to that question. Thank you.

#### **7.4 Cindy Guy, Independent Living Centre of Waterloo Region:**

I just want to give you a little history about the Independent Living Centre. We're an organisation that was started eighteen years ago by the Mennonite Central Committee who felt that there was a need in Waterloo Region for this type of service. Basically we are a disability organisation and we provide services such as: peer resources, advocacy, information referrals, a number of attendant service programs, outreach, and four twenty-four hour housing projects. Attendant services to us is finding personal care assistance and homemaking for people with disabilities. So, basically my comments will be concerning the disabled population.

To touch on our successes as well as challenges, I think one of our successes is that we have certainly been a forerunner in helping the community to become more aware of physical disabilities, their needs, and that kind of thing. Persons with physical disabilities are more accepted now in the community. It's not unusual to see someone in a wheelchair working at the bank, riding on the bus, and that kind of thing. We, as a community, don't look at it as something unusual anymore. I think there is still a long way to go. We, as an organisation, work with people with disabilities all the time, so it still seems strange to have so many people come up to me and ask how to approach or talk to someone in a wheelchair. So we still have a long way to go, but we're getting there.

We have some successes. A lot of the social service delivery method that we utilise and promote is a self-directing model. We look at our consumers, not like they're ill and in need of medical assistance, but as people in need of physical assistance. They can make their own decisions, they understand the risks they're taking, and they take responsibility for that. I think more people are choosing that sort of delivery method and I think that is something we have been very successful at providing.



**"Everything should be accessible for everyone and that's what our vision is for the future."**

Here in Cambridge, certainly, a recent success is the opening of our Kiwanis Village project on King Street. We recently opened that. That was something we had received funding for about five years ago and it has taken this long to find a facility so that we're able to actually start the project.

That leads me to one of the first challenges, again, housing - not only affordable but accessible as well. There's really no affordable accessible housing in this area. We certainly have had

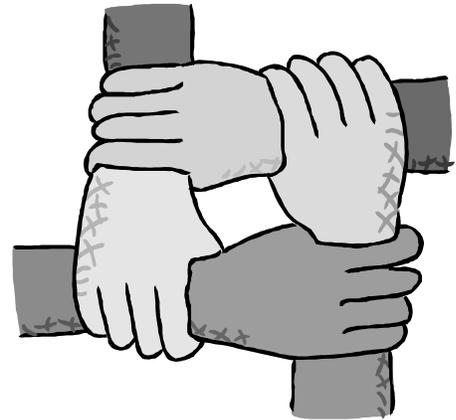
great success in those kinds of programs - in getting them set up, but still I think there is not enough funding. There are still people living in hospital situations who could be successful living in the community. But these people are still in hospital at a cost to the taxpayer, when they could be utilising the independent living philosophy in their communities. So I think that's a challenge - the lack of housing.

We as an organisation have had a substantial increase in our funding and have grown a great deal. Therein lies a challenge – as you grow substantially and your funding is limited to a certain extent, there is always a challenge to have the manpower to accomplish what you need to within that growth. So that's a bit of a struggle for us.

The ageing population is a concern as well. The ageing population, as far as people with disabilities go, have changing care levels and needs. So we are trying to cope with that. The population as a whole as they age become faced with some disabilities, and their choices of maybe staying independent in their own home and how they access services, and what is out there for them - that is also a challenge that we are trying to face.

We are also facing a shrinking work force in our particular service industry. After talking to lots of other organisations we seem to all be facing the same thing. Several things influence this, I think, such as: the hospital opening up some extra services for the ageing population in the hospital, and more health care being available outside the hospital, so that nurses that were at one point out there and available are being snapped up. So there is definitely a shrinking pool in the workforce. That is definitely a challenge, and something we are trying to overcome.

I think, education and educating the community are also challenges. We're trying to educate the community on persons with disabilities but I think we also need to educate people about being more barrier-free. For that I think people need to understand what "barrier-free" means within programs and buildings so that everything can be accessible for everybody. It doesn't really cost any more to become barrier-free and it still means that everybody can use it. Our vision probably for the future would be to not remember a time when buildings had steps going up the front of them. Everything should be accessible for everyone and that's what our vision is for the future.



## **7.5 Todd Landon, Alison Neighbourhood Association:**

I don't have anything formally prepared but just sitting here I thought of a few things. Just based on our centre, the Alison Neighbourhood Community Centre, I guess what I'm going to talk about is forming partnerships. Our centre came to be when St. Anne's Catholic School, in the southeast end of Cambridge, put on an addition. The city, through the Alison Neighbourhood Association, put in the new addition: an activity room, office, and storage rooms. And certain

parts of the day we get use of the gymnasium of the school. When the gymnasium is not in use by the school we have access to it. We don't pay rent, it's our access, as well as to the kitchen. I'm sure everyone in Cambridge has seen shared use of the YMCA pool; it's also a city partnership. Another city partnership is the Ice Park. You see more of that happening - where people in organisations can share resources. A good example of that in which I was involved last year, was a place in Toronto called the Harmony Community Centre. It's a Catholic school and a community centre all in the same facility, sharing resources that the school may only use once a day, like the industrial arts room where you have the wood shop, the music room, or the gymnasium, so that the facility is used all the time and it's not being wasted. That's something I see happening in the future - where all these partnerships make better use of the resources available.

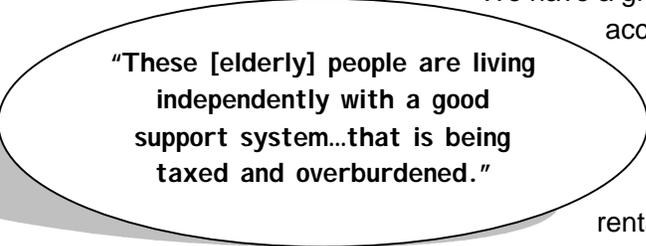
## 7.6 Gary Foran, South Waterloo Housing Authority:

I'm really impressed by the courage of the youth and their enthusiasm. I've been around many, many, many years.

I was just in a seniors building yesterday, people whose home I visited in 1969. They were sixty-five; and we were building. We had tremendous growth in the community. In those days it was Galt, Preston, and Hespeler, so I did home visits all around town. In fact I did the whole region, at that time.

We opened a building on Walter Street, we opened one on Grand Avenue, and then we opened them all over the city. We have eleven seniors buildings just on the south end of our region. Those people now are ninety, ninety-five, even one hundred, and these people are living independently with a good support system. A good system that is being taxed and overburdened, because, depending on the funding issues we've talked about, we're living longer for sure, and that is well and good.

Our volunteer board has allowed us to put elevators in two-story walk-ups. We were the first in Ontario - the argument from Toronto was, that, well, it's only two stories. The point is that as we age the stairs are more of a problem and we deal with the physical challenges as well. The younger people at sixty-one might have a wheelchair too, so now they may enter the second floor. We've put handrails in and things, to help with the comfort of the seniors. We are all really proud of that.



**"These [elderly] people are living independently with a good support system...that is being taxed and overburdened."**

We have a grave concern however, that rental accommodation is very minimal as far as construction goes today - the rental market is tightening up. Landlords with two or three bedroom units are often renting to singles or couples, so that's taking those rentals out of the market for families.

But it's the affordability. On our waiting lists, which are in the hundreds of families and seniors, it is affordability that is the primary problem. Some people pay fifty percent or more of their income to rent and that's a major concern.

In relation to the technology angle Marco was talking about, we have a one stop access now at our Cambridge office so that if you're interested in non-profit or co-op housing, or any kind of low income housing in the south of the Region or the whole Region of Waterloo, you can make your application up and it will be centralised in our office. We're located at the Main Street mall, you can walk in. We're accessible. You can decide where you want to be in the city, but of course the problem is its turnover. It's the availability issue again. So those are issues that have to be discussed by the regional government.

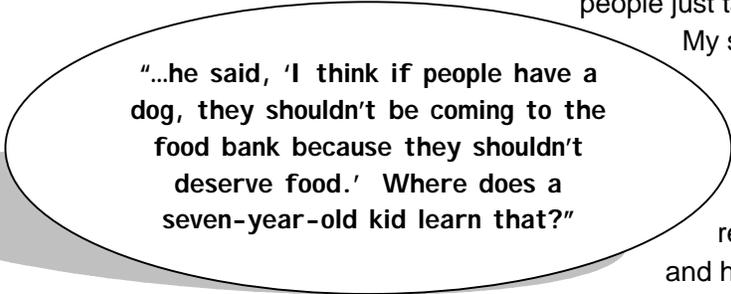
The provincial and federal governments are withdrawing from the social housing issue and giving it to the regional municipalities. A social housing transition committee has been put in place in Waterloo Region, and we are looking at these issues trying to look at governments first of all, that if they do make a regional housing commission, that there is representation from all parts of the region. We are confident that with regional involvement we will have an understanding of what the need is in the Region of Waterloo.

But again it goes back to where do the dollars come from to provide more housing for seniors and families. This has led to the partnership that has been established with the Independent Living Centre. This is great to an extent, but we haven't got the units. That's what we must face in the days ahead. I don't have a solution at this point.

## 7.7 Pat Singleton, Cambridge Self-Help Food Bank:

I think of being told over the last three years, and over the last two and a half years at every meeting I go to - they tell me I won't be here in twenty years. However, numbers continue to increase and though I really want them to be better, I'm still here.

Probably if I had to identify myself with anyone here it would be Andrew. I was a single mom, and raised my kids on the food bank for several years, and the food bank was just part of who I was and who my kids were. They didn't get to play hockey - you know all the kinds of things people just take for granted, my kids didn't have.



**"...he said, 'I think if people have a dog, they shouldn't be coming to the food bank because they shouldn't deserve food.' Where does a seven-year-old kid learn that?"**

My son studied history at the University of Windsor, and ended up working at the food bank as a warehouse manager. So he was working for \$6.85/hour. At a wedding reception he fell into an amazing job and here he is now, five-years later or

more and I flew out last week to see him out west. He

lives in a little town called Maple Ridge, making more money than I could ever care to think about. But the neat thing was, I took my two granddaughters out shopping, and there is this

really neat thing where you rip a coupon off - it's called BC something or other - for food banks. So you rip off the coupon and pay two bucks and that goes to the food bank, and they have to buy locally grown food or whatever. My granddaughter didn't skip a beat, and she said, "Grandma, you have to take a coupon."

My granddaughter was a superstar at her school so I got to go to the school. I was watching kids come in: no ripped coats, no zippers out of coats, everyone had really neat coats. Also, cars were amazing in this town, and I was sitting there thinking these kids don't know anything any different. They eat breakfast made at home. My daughter in law helps the kids with homework for hours a night. If they want ten bucks for a choir shirt they get ten bucks. And I thought, "Wow, my grandchildren have the opportunities my kids never had." But if my son does not encourage them to look after other people, who is going to?

At Thanksgiving we had kids come to tour the food bank and help sort. These kids were Cubs. Cubs are what six, seven years old? The first kid came in the door, and looked at a can and said, "Dog food? You have dog food?" We said, "Yeah." And he said, "I think if people have a dog, they shouldn't be coming to the food bank because they shouldn't deserve food." Where does a seven-year-old kid learn that? I looked at the kid and said, "Do you have a dog?" He said "Yeah." I said, "So if your dad loses his job, because you know companies close sometimes, and you need to come to the food bank you'll have to check off this box that says you have a dog. I would have to tell you that if you want food, you have to get rid of your dog." He said, "but we really like our dog." Where did that seven-year old kid learn that if you have a dog, you shouldn't be coming to the food bank?

Tomorrow night is the fashion show. There is a particular store, that when they found out that the show was for the food bank, they didn't want to clothe Lucy Zillio, one of the celebrities. They said, "There's no way our clothes are going to the food bank. Who at the food bank would wear our clothes?" I know we have to impact one person at a time.

Forty percent of the students that come to us are court mandated. They are kicked out of school for three days, and in three days I am supposed to teach them how to have a desire and a love for the fact that they have breakfast every morning. If they blew up a bomb in a microwave, why do you expect that they want to spend their time at a food bank? That's a major problem I have, we have to work individually.

Todd I think of you and I think, if I have to ask myself to go to one more thing that is so bloody over-extended and low paying, we are going to lose good people because we can only do so much. It's becoming more difficult for participants to access services, and we need to continue to work together to put more things under one roof. The OP2000 [Opportunities 2000] piece has really helped us with the decentralising of services. I listen to Malcolm talk about all these things, and I hear he got a \$10,000 advanced funding, and we desperately need a computer. We've asked the government so many times it would curl



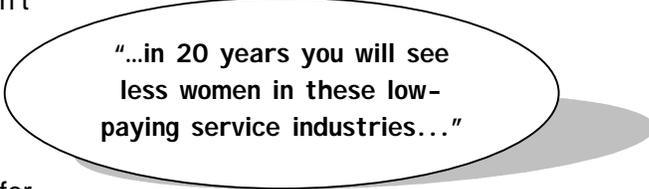
your hair, but now it has to go to the province. They wouldn't buy it. We go to the food bank to get food. We were not allowed to buy computers, so how can we work with the government to define this is who we are, and this is what we do, and when you give us money, stop putting it in such a distinctive little box, because there is so much we need to do with it.

I had this person who came in with ten twenty-dollar bills. They said, "You can have this providing you don't give it to one family that smokes." So if I was going to buy food with this I had to make sure it went to people who did not smoke. So I'm going into the whole thing of why things work the way they do, and then I just asked if I could use it for the baby food program.

I always like to throw in a quote when I can. One of the quotes is, "He who is present at a wrongdoing and lifts not a hand to prevent it, is as guilty as the wrong doers." So when I hear someone like Andrew, I have hope because sometimes it can get incredibly cynical. I hate looking at the haves and the have-nots, but thank you Andrew.

## 7.8 Katie McCrae, YWCA:

Coming from an organisation that works with women and their families, I have some 2020 predictions for women. I see in twenty years, an over-representation of women in manufacturing and technology, and high-tech professions, software development, automation, and automation design. In our country women tend to live longer than men. Although I guess that will change in twenty years too, maybe the ages will come together. But maybe I am speaking more now with a look to the future, that if you are 58 and you have worked for many years and have health problems, and have raised kids, and now you can't really work full time anymore, should we be forcing you to upgrade, retrain, go back to school, and get a full time job? Is there nothing that we can offer before you are eligible for CPP, if there still is CPP then. Can we not offer more support?



**"...in 20 years you will see less women in these low-paying service industries..."**

I would like to see an under-representation, especially of women in that age bracket, at any service industry. That in 20 years you will see less women in these low-paying service industries - especially older women.

I really loved the idea (I have seen a couple of them) of the model that Todd mentioned of the community centre, library, and school all in one. And I hope maybe in Cambridge that will come together a little more.

## 8.0 Discussion

### 8.1 Youth Concerns - Awareness

**Question:** I was wondering about something that Janet brought up. I was wondering if I could turn this question to Andrew as a representative of the young people. Janet said that there was a preoccupation with reducing the debt at a loss of social services. I wonder if that's different for you as a young person. Maybe it's just me, but I feel reducing the debt is a really important thing as well, and I wouldn't want to put all the eggs in the social services basket, and I wonder if that's an age thing - that we as young people are going to have to deal with debt and that whatever we do to reduce the debt especially benefits us down the road. Is that something that you feel is an issue as well?

**Answer from Andrew:** At school we are doing a federal-provincial simulation where we simulate the debt problem in real life. We take on a certain role, our school this year is the federal government, and when our group or team meets to talk, debt comes up. We know our Prime Minister is thinking about reducing the debt and - although personally I have mixed opinions - I think there is a definite awareness of the economics of our future so in that area there is more of a concern about how much we are going to pay later on, although, it may not be an age difference but just the way that society has turned out, and what our values are now compared to twenty years ago.

**Comment:** My personal feeling is, as Andrew was saying before, that it's more of an individual concern. So, we're not really concerned about the country but we're more concerned about how we are going to be living when we're old. We are concerned about the debt, but we're more concerned about our future and how life is going to turn out for us, whether we're living as a have or have-not.

**Comment:** Regarding what Andrew was saying about how we as youth don't know - that we ignore things. I think what needs to happen, when groups like Todd's go into schools and talk - you need to go back and be there, and keep going back. Because if you come and talk to us once, then you just leave, we say, "Oh yeah that's nice," and then we just push it aside and try not to think about it because we always don't talk about these issues. If you keep coming back and saying this is what's going on and that you need to help, it will peak interest, and it will keep the interest there. More people will come out because the issue is there, and people will have to address it. Kid's won't just think, "Yeah that's a nice presentation I hope someone helps," rather they'll step up and say, "Maybe I should go and do that."

## 8.2 Youth Concerns – Volunteering

### Student Involvement:

**Question / Comment:** I was wondering if you think the institution of the community service within high school programs now, will make a difference. And whether there's a way that organisations can utilise the high school students in volunteering and considering them into the volunteering core now, as it is part of their education. Now, my two teenagers are in high school. I keep thinking with my teenagers that the whole involvement in volunteering is a good thing, and I was just wondering, do you think that it is good?

**Answer:** I think that the community service in high school will raise interest - if any program is in the school it creates some interest. Get it there and it will generate interest. I don't think it's as hard as it has to be. It's pretty simple.

**Comment:** I've tried to go to Glenview Park, and Monsignor Doyale School with flyers asking for volunteers to come to the centre, as we're just dying for volunteers at our centre because basically it's me trying to keep track of sixteen kids at an open teen night event. We even offer the honorarium thing, and we just aren't getting interest. I talked to two groups of thirty students, and out of those sixty people I got two people that are actually running the program, and that's even offering a \$7/hour honorarium. I was also approached by Glenview, as they want something besides detention - they want people to volunteer instead, which was interesting. This teenage volunteer thing is good in the long run, but it's initiating it that's going to get it going.

**Comment:** We have a club at school called the Key Club. The club is totally devoted to volunteering. I'm not sure how strong ours is but I think if you just make your presence known... I was talking to the debating coach about whether we could have a discussion group. If we had a discussion group and representatives of the Social Planning Council were there, they could instigate a talk about volunteerism in school. People are concerned about getting involved at school, but not outside of school. Perhaps if there was another group in school, it would be beneficial.

**Comment:** Right now in school there is not a lot of interest, but that's just because there hasn't been anything at all. It's got to start somewhere, it's not going to start big, but it has to start in primary school, some people might say that's too young, but it's not.

**Comment:** I think you're pointing to an interesting issue, it's about creating a culture of some stuff Carol was talking about. In terms of a culture of volunteering, that volunteering is this thing you do above and beyond all the other things you do in your life, like raising children, and doing a job, looking after an ageing parent. It's about integrating it more, having it become an attitude - that's what you were saying as well Andrew. It's neat to see the problem-solving spontaneously erupt, which is partly the exciting part of getting a bunch of diverse people together. Problem solving is just a part of things we do really well if we had the opportunity, whether it be virtually or here in person for the discussion.

**Comment:** Just to speak to the community involvement piece, we have been working for the past year with the separate school board on the mandated ministry forty hours of community involvement for students. That starts this year for grade nine students, next year grade nine & ten, so eventually it will be all through the high school grade levels. They will have to do forty hours of community involvement in order to graduate. We have worked through the manual basically in this area, schools are taking it that it is the responsibility of the student and parent to make sure this happens. Parents are going to have to sign everything. It is not the school's responsibility to find a volunteer placement for the student.

So what we have in this manual is (I talked to the school board yesterday, and it will probably be in the students' hands in December) the responsibilities of the ministry, the school board, the teachers, the parents, and the students. You will be receiving forms that need to be signed. You have to find a community agency that you can be involved in and that person will need to sign that 'Andrew' has been here for ten hours. That will go back to your school advisor, or whoever it is. There is also a form that your principal must sign, because there is a form that says what is eligible, and what is not eligible. We wrote to the different principals in the Cambridge area

(that's our responsibility) saying that we as a volunteer bureau centre would be happy to come into the school and put on a community information fair and to bring agencies with us so the kids can find out what is happening. Also we have produced a manual in our office that lists a lot of the



**"They will have to do forty hours of community involvement in order to graduate."**

opportunities available for students. Students are welcome to come in and use it and we will be putting it in the high schools by the first of January and will be keeping them updated.

My fear is that Pat [from the Food Bank] is going to get a phone call from all these keeners, saying "Hey I want to come and do the food bank." It's a known fact that they can only deal with so many people. I can't. PATER can't use them because of the age. It's a great thing, and I think it will eventually get us to the culture we need to be, but, unfortunately, possibly with the ages we're looking at right now, it's hard for community organisations to involve students unless it's a special thing.

The schools are saying, ten hours this year, ten hours next year. Ten hours is a terrible thing to offer an organisation, unless it is a special thing. Hopefully it will work into something else, and it will work into something meaningful. One of the things we've addressed because of the age of these kids is, come January or February when they are working with you guys, we'll put them on the board of directors with a mentor. They'll learn about the organisation. They'll learn how the community interacts and how it partners. Those are things that they can transfer to their resume when they are getting out in the work world and say that that's where they picked up some of they're experience.

There are things happening, but it's all new, and it makes things really tough. So hopefully we'll see all of you at the information fair.

### **Community Involvement:**

**Comment:** I was going to say something before when Carol was done. You perked my interest towards the community. I was fearing that we might be moving away from the sense of community. In Cambridge, as we grow larger, which we have been since the amalgamation of Preston, Hespeler, and Galt, we've become so much larger and it's kind of a problem now. My father tells me that he could walk the streets of Galt at one time and know almost every other person on the street, and now, he does not know anybody walking by. Possibly, with the growth in the community, we're not introducing ourselves properly. I go to church and I don't know anyone in the community basically. I think we have to get back to our roots and try to form a community base again.

**Comment:** Personally, I think that's all involved with having community service in schools now. It generates interest in the community and that's needed.

**Comment:** I think that, hopefully, community service in the school will make a difference, I guess my concern is with how are they going to be placed in schools, and how are they going to be monitored.



### **Schools - Point of Contact?**

**Comment:** I just want to say one thing. We try to involve schools in a lot of projects and I think one thing that happens is that our letters and so on go to the principal because you need to go through the administration. But we can't go right to the students or the board, and it doesn't always trickle down. There needs to be a fostering of a better relationship between these students and the administration, Vice-Principal, and Principal. It also depends on how busy the school is, or the resources. I know they don't have the resources and it doesn't always make it to the students.

**Comment:** Perhaps, as well as sending it to the principal, you could also send it to the Student Council President. We have committees and one is an Internal-External committee that deals with the community. I'm on the committee, and usually we don't hear anything from the external, we just hear things from the internal. Maybe you are sending it to the principal but it's just not getting to us. If you sent it to our Student Body President, he would for sure look at it and then pass it down.

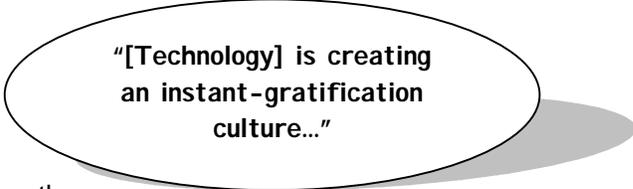
## **8.3 Technology - General**

**Question:** I'm interested in asking Malcolm a question. I'm old here. Technology scares me. I think its exciting, and what you said was exciting, but what bothers me is how do we guarantee that technology will work for us. Because you see, I'm so infuriated by going to the bank, and every teller says to please use that bank machine. Everywhere I go it's impersonal and I enjoy

chatting with the teller at the bank. You lose the personal stuff with technology. I think technology is such an ally and it's a way we save money as government money dries up, but how do you keep the human element?

And the other thing that's part of the question is regarding technology's emphasis of what I'll call speed for lack of another word. We used to send a letter and then get a reply after a while, now people send faxes and email, and we have a reply in twenty minutes and it just adds to our craziness. It's such a wonderful resource but it adds stress and pressure to us. How do you balance this?

**Answer from Marco:** It's creating an instant-gratification culture, answering the second part first. In some ways there's a new trend towards what people call the simplification of your life. But the trend is for those who can afford it of course because you're moving it out of the suburbs and out of the city into a more relaxed environment. It is a concern. I've caught up with it myself, when I'm sending an email and expecting to get something back immediately, and in some settings it has become a norm, and in some settings it hasn't. Part of it is how you define your relationship with technology. For example, for me, I send an email to friends but I know they only check their email once, twice or three times per week. Whereas if I send something to maybe a business, I expect something back and I have had that same sort of frustration – "Why aren't they getting back to me immediately? This is a customer service issue." So it is defining what we see as service, and how we're told to define what service is as well.



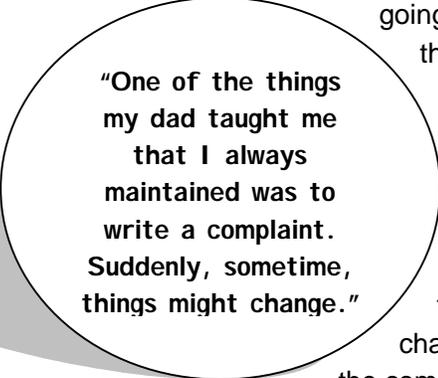
**"[Technology] is creating an instant-gratification culture..."**

In terms of the first question, up until recently I was the same way - I hated using the automatic bank machine. The first time I put a deposit in and heard that thing clank and it sucked it out of my hand... What if I did something wrong? I've pretty much grown up with technology, but now I hate standing in line. I go to an automatic teller now because there is a line of fifteen people standing there for the tellers because there are only one or two tellers. So it's almost a self-fulfilling prophecy that they're asking me to go to a automatic bank machine, because the service charges are cheaper, and because they're being overwhelmed at the desk there. So how do we change that? It's a catch twenty-two for me because part of it is I think, becoming knowledgeable about technology so you know what you can, therefore, turn around and demand. Because we're not sure what we can ask for now, because they're saying go over there and it's much easier ...use it this way and that way.

I don't have an easy solution to the things like the reduction in human services, because I think it's a problem - the way we look at technology – that it can replace human beings. In reality it can't - especially in social services. The idea that you can replace, say, a counsellor with a computer to answer questions through a natural language depending on what you say is a ridiculous kind of assumption.

Part of what I think is interesting, especially with the ageing population, is that there is going to be a larger demand, say in banks, for that kind of personalised service. As populations age they want to engage someone in a conversation. You want to ask a question and even want to know the person.

On one hand, it was interesting, Liz and I were discussing this on the break, how do you demand something when the trend is totally against it? It's a utopian, critical mass kind of idea - we have to go to the banks en-masse and say that this isn't acceptable and that they must put people in place, but that's what they're heading towards. We have to try to figure out ways of perhaps



**"One of the things my dad taught me that I always maintained was to write a complaint. Suddenly, sometime, things might change."**

going to a different bank or credit union where people are there and they are encouraging you to actually walk up to the teller and get the major banks to lose your business. It's consumer choices, and I think that is very important to recognise. We are dependent on the banks, yet they are also dependent on us.

A perfect example of the absurdity of the economy is that we do what they tell us to do. We pay the service charges they demand yet there are other alternatives in the community. But it takes time to know what those alternatives are, to research them a little bit, and go out of your way a little bit to that place that isn't right downtown. Those things are issues, but there are choices like to go to a different branch or a different kind of branch. One of the things my dad taught me that I always maintained was to write a complaint. Suddenly, sometime, things might change. And if enough of us don't complain, and enough of us say, "Oh, that's the way it is"... Again Liz and I were discussing the issue of choice. We're being told that's the way it is.

Well, if we don't vocalise our opinions about it and if we lose our voices by just following what they are telling us to do, why would they change? And there have been some examples, and they're very rare, of some banks closing down branches in very small communities, and members saying "I'm not going across the street to the other bank, there is excellent service here you cannot close this branch," and enough of the people did it so that the branch was left open. There are pockets of examples where we could readily change these incredibly corporate disturbers. But they know we have those options, to demand the customer service.

A recent article I read was related to software development. We all use software on computers that crash on a constant basis, computers that have much more software than we ever need. People are not listening to the consumers of that software. And someone was interviewing people who work in the software industry who said they hate the consumer. They hate us because they don't think we're intelligent enough in our consumer choices - demanding that these products work better. These things that sustain these computers that are going to build the future, we are not telling the makers of them that we want them to be better, more user friendly, and more ergonomically designed. We don't tell the banks we want better service. Part of it is we need to go to them and tell them what we want, use our consumer choices to go to other alternatives and use consumer choices, especially those that are more community-based. It's a simplistic argument, but the most important thing is "Do you have choice?" Do you have choice within that particular bank? If you do make change, or if you don't take your business somewhere else, you have that choice. If you use it maybe they'll make changes. There's no simple answer, but choice is a big part of it.

## 8.4 Technology – the Have-Nots

**Question:** Marco, you talk a lot about technology but the people community groups work with are like four, five and six, or seniors who can't make it to the food bank. How will technology help those people, because one that can't make it to the food bank...

**Answer from Marco:** And that's one of the biggest issues, the have and the have-nots. I think responsibility is ours in some ways if we're moving to a technological society. In theory, let's say twenty years down the road, you have someone who is coming to you for housing. Instead of calling around to all the different housing agencies or calling a landlord, you have at your disposal some sort of electronic database that will insure that this individual's needs are met in this place where it is customised, in a sense, to what the person needs. And you can find that somewhere in the community it requires a lot of community co-operation.

But the reality right now is that their access to technology is extremely limited, which is part of what I'm talking about. We need to work towards ourselves becoming technologically literate because we are a bridge for those kinds of things and those people along the way. Because they don't have access to it in their own home we need to provide them with the training and information they need. We as organisations need to take responsibility of helping bridge that gap.

We do a lot of work with people around unemployment, and we use the Internet in my agency to go to job banks for people and print stuff out for them, maybe they can't get to the HRDC Job Bank even when it's a local one. If they are able to make it to our office then they have access to a number of different resources so we can be a bridge to them right there – immediately. Because, say, they're not literate - they can go to a computer and we help them read what is on it. So we're mediating the technology for them. It's a really important point to make that we can't assume that everyone in a community is going to become technology literate. I don't think it is something that is even desirable. People might then make demands about how we intermix with that technology. We bring the technology to them in a way that's useful to them.

When we're talking about things like food banks and shelters, you may not see a need for technology to intermix with your client, but what about your colleagues, what about sharing ideas that work. What about reaching beyond your immediate area and interfacing with a colleague saying, "I have this issue, we have this funding crisis, how would you deal with it?" Suddenly the knowledge base we work with increases, and we share and collaborate more about ways to serve our clients. In twenty years from now, will the have-nots be greater? Will they have access to technology? We have a certain responsibility to ourselves to become the technology haves, to transfer some of that to the clients as well. It's a question of why would we use the technology.

We have to look at the work we already do now. If you chose not to use technology, I don't think there's a big problem in that, if it's an informed choice. I have friends who refuse to use the Internet, they have the money to do it, they're technically literate. They made the informed choice that they would rather pick up the phone to call a friend than email them. It's a personal choice. They made it knowing what some of the opportunities are, so we in these agencies need to know

what some of the possibilities are and then say this is too much for them. I think that because of the trend towards technology it's our responsibility to our clients to make those informed choices for them.

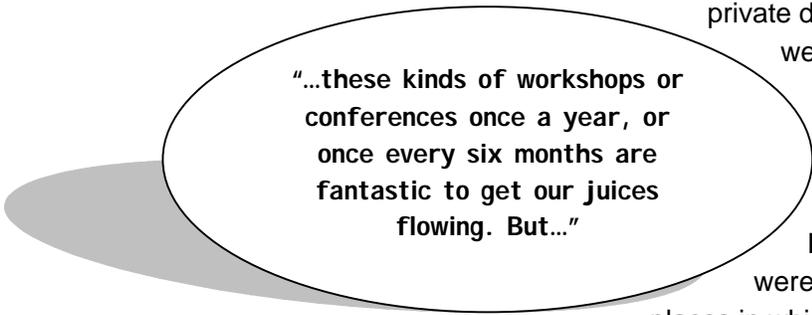
## 8.5 Forums for Discussion – Continuing Predictions 2020

**Comment:** I was just going to say, that I think these sorts of forums are a wonderful way for people to voice their opinions. I worry that from my point of view among youth it's not known enough. Like, I know at our school there were announcements made about this forum and only three people besides Andrew came. In other schools nothing was said - and then people won't say anything. Some things need to be said, and things that need to be addressed won't be said - and things will go unchanged. I think that public awareness in the school system for this sort of thing needs to be more focused and kids need to be informed that they can come out to speak their minds and it's not just ignored. People are going to listen and things can be changed through their involvement.

**Comment:** I guess I just would like to see this happen yearly - this type of a forum where we can find out about and talk to each other. I learned a lot from being here today - finding out what people's trials and tribulations are, and objections and objectives for the future. It's been interesting to find out that there are other organisations having the same struggles and same accomplishments that I am having. I would like to see something like this happen annually or biannually to keep up to date with everyone.

**Comment:** I definitely agree. I think meeting annually is important but I think during the year we could work towards each one of these meetings. We could do that in a way that respects privacy and so we have some sort of a space where we can talk. Not to continue my random rant on technology but there is one way of doing that, well, there are many ways with technology of doing that, where we can maintain a discussion. Whether it's through private e-mail or through

private discussion areas on say the SPC website in some way. But I think the point I come to is that these kinds of workshops or conferences once a year, or once every six months are fantastic to get our juices flowing.



**"...these kinds of workshops or conferences once a year, or once every six months are fantastic to get our juices flowing. But..."**

But then we go back to where we were in our day-to-day tribulations, the places in which we work, and we come back a

year later and we are really talking about some of the same things. We are learning from each other in the few hours we spend, but what about during that intervening time? What about talking to each other about the things we talked about today and keeping the discussion going. Then when we come together next year we may have to look towards something instead of revisiting what we talked about last year and seeing where we are. We already know where we are together. So I would say that to go year to year it is important to get together physically. But

there are also ways we can do this as a group or in spaces using the technology that already exists, possibly in an easy, low-tech way.

**Comment:** Another initiative that I am involved in, and a number of people are involved in, is OP 2000 [Opportunities 2000]. And we have talked about trying to get more community members involved in the dialogue. So that is something to include people that as agencies we work with – families, individuals, children... making sure that our striving for technology doesn't exclude them. Maybe we need more face to face interaction.

## **8.6 Food Banks - Imagine a World...**

**Comment from Malcom:** In the year 2020, imagine a world without food banks - that's the kind of world we want, although we shouldn't put you out of a job, Pat. Twenty years ago there were no food banks, now there are more food banks than there are McDonald's franchises. Access to food is a matter of right not a matter of charity. Imagine a world where the charity model was just a quaint historical reference rather than something that is shoved down our throats as a way of life. Imagine a world where the kids in high school were being asked to volunteer, and had never heard of a food bank, and their choices for volunteering were in areas where they are more productive for everyone. Imagine a world where social and economic rights, and access to food is a right that everyone in this country has. Imagine a world where those rights are respected and protected by the governments so that the quaint charity model of food banks and clothes drives are unnecessary. Because we believe that everybody should have an adequate standard of living we respect those human rights and we work together with our governments to ensure that people have a job they need, enough money, and enough food to live, and where kids can be active in their communities. To me, food banks are everything that is wrong in our society, and everyone who works in them would rather be doing something else. But now when you drive down the street and you see tacked on to the telephone poles public library turn right here, food bank turn right here...They're institutionalised, and that should not be something we want for the future. We should be living in the world 2020 when we forget what food banks are all about.

## 9.0 Closing Comments, Gloria DeSantis

There are just a couple of things that struck me about this morning and I will highlight those for you. There was a quote that I heard a little while ago; it was actually in an interview with Angus Reid in 1998. I thought it struck me as quite appropriate for this morning. The quote is: "The risk of pretending the past is coming back is far greater than the risk of seizing new opportunities." I think we've all been struggling this morning with seizing the new opportunities. Some of us have a more vivid sense of what those opportunities might be, others of us are still a little bit cloudy, but I think the beauty of it is like most things, the more you talk about it the more you explore it, the clearer it becomes.

There were some common themes that I got quite excited about hearing this morning. They include things like:

- 1) Can we drive change or we will be swallowed up by it? This is perhaps the biggest challenge we have here today.
- 2) Will we be able to make clear informed choices? Most of us struggle to do that now. Will we be able to continue to do that? Can we do that with a little bit more predictability?
- 3) How can we maintain local voices and local ownership regardless of whatever government structure we land with? That's a clear message that I have been hearing from everybody here, and it is another challenge I think we have before us.
- 4) The cultural openness and sharing despite what technology might be pushing us toward, and seizing the opportunity to create what we really want for our community are other serious questions.
- 5) The fifth point, community development, is important to all of us and will continue to be. And community development has a very broad definition. Community development manifests itself in very different forms locally.
- 6) I also heard this notion about a move away from the "me" based attitude and a challenge for all of us who put that within the context of community volunteering where we see volunteering as just a part of who we are – it's much more integrated. So the challenge around the "me" based attitude is a serious question we need to pay attention to.

These are things that struck me as really, really important for all of us as we move forward. I think we have some board members of the Social Planning Council here and I know that I have some serious questions about the role the SPC can play in supporting a whole variety of initiatives in the community, and supporting the non-profit sector - which is what we do around research and planning issues. What I'd like to ask you here today whether there are some clear expectations or suggestions on your part that we need to take into consideration. Yes, we have agreed to produce the proceedings from this but that's perhaps not as action-based as it could be so maybe that's a challenge that we can have a little bit of discussion about right now and we

can also make sure that the doors are open, the phone lines are open, the emails are open. So is there anything other than what we have heard already, which is quite a diverse discussion ...are there things that SPC should be doing from this point forward?

**Comment:** I think sometimes Gloria, I won't speak for others, although I think this is a piece of what I struggle with. We sometimes cannot say what we maybe really wanted to say about some things because of fear where our money is coming from. We hesitate to speak out which is really hard because it goes against who we are, philosophically. So I think sometimes we as agencies and organisations hope that's a role that the SPC could take for us. And yet at the same time I am aware that you probably also have your own restraints. There are times when I would love to take the whole thing out in the newspaper and say this is in my heart what I feel but I can't and so I personally look towards the SPC at least get the dialogue going or get people to start thinking about some of the things.

**Comment:** Perhaps we should have an annual forum like this one.

**Comment:** What about keeping the discussion going? Then when we come together next year we may have to look towards something instead of revisiting what we talked about the last year.

## 10.0 Farewell, Linda Terry

I want to thank everyone who attended today our Predictions 2020 event, on behalf of the Social Planning Council board. I think its given at least myself as a board member of the SPC some food for thought particularly around our organisation and I want to thank you all for coming, and certainly our four speakers as well.

We will be sending all of you copies of the proceedings.



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George Bugliarello <http://www.isepp.org/1998/drgeorge.htm>

## Appendices

### Appendix A – Detailed Agenda

8:45	Arrival, coffee	Ann at registration table, give out nametags, etc.
9:00	Welcome & introductions	Linda Terry
9:10	Overview of the forum - some ground rules	Gloria DeSantis
9:15	Opening presentation from SPC – Human Services & Population Changes in 2020	Janet Petras
9:30	Federal and provincial social policy	Malcolm Shookner
9:45	Technology in human services	Marco Campana
10:00	A young person's perspective	Andrew Terry
10:15	Refreshment break	
10:30	Round-the-circle contributions	Everyone
11:55	Closing comments	Gloria DeSantis
12:00	Farewell	Linda Terry

## Appendix B – The Flyers

# Predictions 2020

**What is the Social Planning Council hoping to accomplish?** The Social Planning Council of Cambridge and North Dumfries is hosting a forum called Predictions 2020. There are three main goals for this event.

- Encourage human service providers to think about what may be before us and how we might be able to achieve a positive impact on future directions.
- Encourage the healthy exchange of ideas, especially with the participation of young people from our community.
- Have some fun.

We will be creating a large circle for an open discussion. First, we'll hear from the four speakers who'll inspire some thinking for all of us. Then we'll go around the circle to hear from everyone. We will audiotape the entire forum so that we capture people's thought verbatim. Nonetheless, please bring a copy of what you plan to say for us as a backup.

**Who should attend?** We are hoping that at least one person from many human service organisations will participate.

**How can you prepare?** Take some quiet time to think a little about the changes you've seen recently in our communities and organisations. Then think about where these issues might land 20 years from now. Keep in mind the following:

- describe the 'here and now',
- describe 'the future' - 20 years from now, and
- prescribe what you believe we should be doing now to affect positive change for the well being of our community.

We know you all have fascinating insights to share. Each person will be given 5 minutes to present his/her thoughts.

**What might we discuss?** Where will technology take us in the provision of human services? Will we be closer to achieving a "civil society"? What could be the role of private corporations in supporting human services? What values and attitudes will prevail regarding vulnerable people in Cambridge and North Dumfries? Will we have reduced family violence? Will there be a guaranteed annual income for all? Will we have a proper, specialised transportation system? What will the non-profit sector look like in 20 years?

We'll make sure participants receive free copies of the forum proceedings. The Social Planning Council reserves the right to not publish offensive material



**Social Planning Council of Cambridge and North Dumfries**

is proud to sponsor, as a celebration of "Our Millennium"

and our 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary,

# Predictions 2020

Tuesday, November 16, 1999

9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

Preston Memorial Auditorium Banquet Hall, Cambridge

## **AGENDA**

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9:00	Welcome & introductions	Linda Terry
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