
Voice of English-speaking Québec

Annual Report 2006 - 2007



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Official Language Communities Program with the department of Canadian Heritage.*





Voice of
English-speaking
Québec

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Voice of
English-speaking
Québec

**Board of Directors
2006 - 2007**

Robert Donnelly, President
Jennifer Johnson-Blouin, 1st Vice President
Ed Slattery, 2nd Vice President
John Klassen, Corporate Secretary
Bill Donnelly, Treasurer
Walter Raymond, Member-at-Large
Teresa Spyksma, Member-at-Large

| | |
|--------------------|------------------|
| Joan Beattie | Russell Kueber |
| Stephen Burke | Ann Martell |
| Nicole Anne Daigle | Job Patstone |
| Kevin Dobie | Edgard Pitre |
| Daniel Gross | Paul Shay |
| John Haberlin | Ed Sweeney |
| Michael Keane | Brigitte Wellens |



Staff

Helen Walling, Executive Director
Jennifer Alexander, Executive Assistant
Jan Anderson-Toupin, Newcomers' Facilitator
Maureen Gurrie, Secretarial Support
Jean-Sébastien Jolin Gignac, Project Coordinator
Mac Wigfield, Community Connection Advertising Sales

Mission Statement

Voice of English-speaking Québec is an autonomous non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of a dynamic English-speaking community in the Greater Québec and Chaudière-Appalaches region and to the promotion of its interests.

VEQ has four primary roles:

Act as a hub of information for the community - VEQ gathers and clarifies information on the community including statistical data and needs assessments. It also disseminates this information through the proper channels. VEQ is proud to offer its information and referral services to members of the community and newcomers. Our website, www.veq.qc.ca, which features a well-consulted Job Bank, and the community portal website, www.veqcc.qc.ca, are key information hubs that VEQ helps to maintain. Two other vibrant examples are the *VEQ Community Page* of the *Quebec Chronicle-Telegraph* and of course our *Community Connection* directory.

Foster community cohesiveness - VEQ creates opportunities for various segments of the community to gather together, whether it is simply to get to know one another better, to share common interests, or to work together for a common cause. This role is expressed through the organization of events such as the AngloFUN Gala, Celtic Day at Ball Park, happy hours, and our annual bus service to the Shannon Irish Show.

Support the development of the community - VEQ acts as a catalyst for the development of new initiatives of benefit to the community. Our Youth Advisory Committee and Leadership Table are two examples of VEQ sponsored “think tanks” that have generated fresh approaches to old problems. The support that the VEQ Advocacy Committee offered to DDO’s Parents’ Committee with their efforts to save their high school is yet another example of how VEQ actively supports community development.

Promotes the interests of the community - VEQ identifies issues of interest to the community, researching and preparing positions, and where necessary, presenting these positions to the proper forums or authorities. We also facilitate debate on issues and work for consensus whenever possible. VEQ has been actively working to raise the visibility and promote the interests of the local English-speaking community through our interactions with local Francophone and Anglophone organizations involved with youth; in particular Université Laval, la Chambre de commerce, and our contacts with municipal, provincial, and federal elected officials.



President's Message

It's been another remarkable year for VEQ, proving that for our organization, life must begin at 25!

In addition to maintaining a range of information and welcoming services, we undertook the largest consultation with our community that we have ever done, meeting with more than 175 people in all parts of the Québec / Chaudière-Appalaches region. The input from these meetings went directly into VEQ's first comprehensive Strategic Plan, guiding our efforts for the next two years.

Our Leadership Table allowed us to bring the concerns of our community directly to the elected leaders of our region.

The VEQ Youth Initiative went from strength to strength with new partnerships that will enhance educational and employment opportunities for our young people in the future.

And VEQ continued to give province-wide leadership in organizations like the QCGN.

At 25, VEQ succeeded in showing our neighbors that we have a great deal to contribute to the development of the Québec / Chaudière-Appalaches region.

And we showed the federal government that we are an incredible cost effective partner. The Government of Canada has a legal obligation to enhance the vitality of Official Language minority communities across the country; VEQ leverages a modest budget with the energy and commitment of talented staff and dedicated volunteers who accomplish amazing things with very limited resources.

So I want to thank all VEQ's volunteers, especially the members of our Board of Directors, and our remarkable staff for their hard work and accomplishments.

This year, I also want to recognize the contribution of a great friend of VEQ's over many years, former MNA for Jean-Talon, Margaret Delisle. Her support on a number of issues has been critically important for our community, its institutions, and individual members. Thank you, Margaret.

It's an exciting time to be part of VEQ; at 25 we're just hitting our stride!



Robert Donnelly
President

Executive Director's Report

This year has again seen VEQ Board Members involved in many activities that have provided important services to our constituency.

In the spring of 2006, several members of the Executive Committee were involved in a strategic planning exercise that helped us focus on our organizational priorities for the next few years. To do this properly, the Board decided to go out and “connect” with our community. From September to November 2006, various Board Members and myself met with over 175 people to listen to their concerns and to validate our own ideas about what VEQ should be doing for the English-speaking community of our region (see page 6).

We were very pleased to hear from the majority of the people their appreciation for VEQ's services. We were also encouraged that the priorities the Board had set after our Future-Forum in 2003 – advocacy, newcomers, youth, and community events – continue to be at the top of people's agendas for action.

In 2006 - 2007, we continued to focus on services that we have been providing for a number of years and developed an innovative service for newcomers to Quebec City called “Finding Your Niche” (see report). We prepared our latest community directory, which has been called a “lifeline” by many that we met in our consultation. We continued to build VEQ's youth initiative, developing even more partnerships for the benefit of our young people. Our visibility with prominent political officials was enhanced through meetings that we sponsored with our community's leaders, and we continued providing venues for our members to connect and network through various happy hours. We have also spent

countless hours working on a special 25th edition of our Annual General Meeting, as well as getting the ball rolling for our community's plans to mark the 400th anniversary of the founding of our city in 2008.

All our work and efforts could not have been possible without committed volunteers, dedicated staff, and the support of our membership.



Helen Walling
Executive Director

Communications

The members of the Communications Committee include Jennifer Johnson-Blouin (Chair), Walter Raymond, Ed Slattery, Jennifer Alexander (Staff), and Helen Walling (Staff).

The mandate for the committee includes:

1. Aid and support the Board of Directors, Executive Director, and the various committees in their mandate, by providing them with the appropriate tools to communicate information on their policies and decisions or events to the members, public groups, or government bodies.
2. Suggest to the Board of Directors a long-term action plan to increase and sustain the organization's visibility, and develop the said plan in accordance with Board resolutions.
3. Make recommendations to the Board of Directors regarding any communications issues.

This year our accomplishments include:

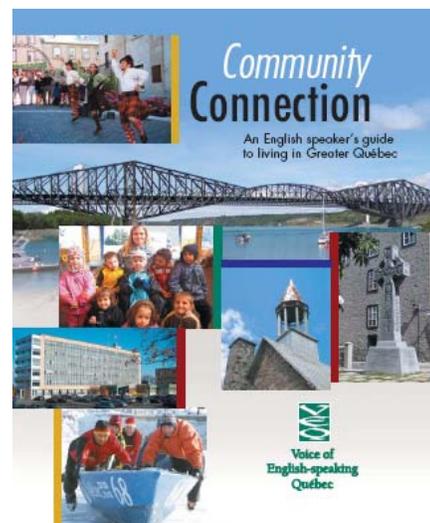
Overseeing the production of the latest edition of the *Community Connection* Directory. This year's directory includes some new features such as maps and dividers to help identify the different sections, to compliment its much appreciated format.

Preparing weekly articles for the "Community Page" situated on the back page of the *Quebec Chronicle-Telegraph*. VEQ continues to support the community-at-large by subsidizing the QCT's Community Calendar where organizations and groups can list their upcoming activities.

VEQ continues to maintain and sponsor three websites - www.veq.qc.ca, www.veqcc.qc.ca, and www.ccnqc.ca. Each site provides information in an easily accessible manner. The Job Bank is situated on VEQ's principal website and this tool continues to be one of the most highly consulted pages and is of great service to both employer and job seekers.

A newsletter was distributed last spring electronically and by mail to the VEQ membership. In addition to this traditional format, VEQ has started using a new program to produce efficiently visually appealing email bulletins to send to its membership. If you would like to be on this mailing list, please submit your e-mail address to our office.

Work is also underway on producing a general new pamphlet for the organization with a special insert with information for newcomers to the region.



**New Community Connection
Directory Cover**

Community Consultation

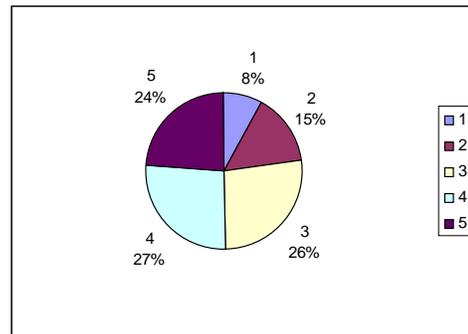
Last year, Board Members along with the Executive Director dedicated more than 200 hours to meet with people from our community to get a better understanding of their needs and to take the opportunity to validate our programming with them.

From September through November 2006, the Board Members met with over 175 people from Stoneham, Valcartier, the South Shore, Thetford Mines, and the Quebec City region. People from all age groups were contacted and consulted.

Some of the results from our consultation were encouraging; we feel very proud to know that our programming is appreciated by most of the people that we met. The majority felt that the fields of interest that we had chosen at VEQ's 2003 Future-Forum (and that have been guiding our actions over the last few years) are still relevant today. They definitely wanted us to continue to maintain our advocacy role, our Newcomers Service, our youth initiatives, as well as our community events. They particularly appreciated the information role we play through our community directory, the back page of the QCT, and our newsletters.

These findings were presented at a special Board meeting in October and became the basis for building our Strategic Plan for 2007 - 09. We are pleased with our renewed action plan focusing on advocacy, newcomers, youth, information referral and community events.

Thanks to the Board Members who spent many evenings and weekends meeting numerous groups and thanks as well to all those groups who opened their doors to us and shared their thoughts and concerns.



The above chart represents to what degree English-speaking community members feel connected to their region. The scale ranges from not very connected to very connected (1 to 5).

Community Events

VEQ has the mandate to organize community events that bring members of the English-speaking community together to socialize.

This year, VEQ sponsored a number of exciting events in addition to our Annual General Meeting and “Meet and Greet”:

VEQ helped to publicize the AngloFUN Gala, an evening of fun and laughter at the Théâtre de la Bordée in June 2006 organized by *Le Grand Rire*. Nearly 100 members attended this special event. Participants greatly enjoyed the outstanding line-up of Canadian comedians and VEQ benefited from the increased publicity while providing an interesting social event to the English-speaking community.

VEQ hosted a special Halloween Happy Hour, in October 2006, at the Star-Bar. More than 100 people showed up for this successful initiative. This community “Meet and Greet” was also used as a special farewell for Karen Macdonald. Approximately 15 newcomers welcomed the chance to gather together and socialize with the English-speaking community.

VEQ hosted in February 2007, a Carnival celebration at Casey’s Bar and Grill with over 75 people participating. VEQ was proud to note that over 20 newcomers enjoy their time with other community members and VEQ Board Members and staff.

Once again this year, VEQ proudly provided bus transportation to and from the 41st edition of the Shannon Irish Show. Approximately 15 people boarded the bus to enjoy this annual show.

400th Anniversary of Quebec City

A working committee was created and several meetings were organized to begin the preparation for numerous activities that will take place during the May 2 - 4 weekend in 2008. VEQ has reserved a room at the Quebec City Convention Centre for a Gala evening on the Saturday of that special weekend.

25th Anniversary Committee

This committee met many times in preparation for this year’s annual general meeting which will also serve as a venue to celebrate VEQ’s 25th anniversary. We hope that everyone who attends will appreciate the time and effort put into organizing this celebration.



**VEQ Staff
Halloween Happy Hour**

Employment Services

VEQ maintains a well-consulted, online Job Bank, which can be viewed at www.veq.qc.ca. Positions requiring strong English skills or bilingualism are posted here. The site features both regular and summer employment offers available locally. It also provides links to job postings with the federal and provincial public services.

This community service is offered free-of-charge to local employers. Over 167 employment offers were posted on our site in 2006 - 07. The variety of jobs available has broadened dramatically over the years. A few examples of the interesting positions featured on our site, over the past year, included the following:

- Application Software Consultant
- Call Centre & Sales Specialist
- Executive Assistant
- Games Designer
- Producer
- Project Manager
- Research Assistant
- Technical Support Specialist

VEQ also works in partnership with the Valcartier Family Centre's FORT Program. This program, funded by Emploi-Québec, assists English-speakers with their search for employment. These services are offered free-of-charge at their Sainte-Foy and Valcartier offices. Job seekers can receive vocational counselling from professional guidance counsellors, information on the job market, assistance with résumé production and translation, interview preparation, access to internet and fax machines, and more.

VEQ continues to work in collaboration with the Chambre de commerce de Québec and the Community Partner

Group (CPG) to expand the visibility of our organization's employment services. VEQ was also an active part of the Multilingual Zone during the 2007 Quebec City Employment Fair partnering with Emploi-Québec, Québec Multilingual Committee, Québec Chamber of Commerce, Expotech, Eastern Québec Learning Centre, Valcartier Family Centre, Université Laval, Quebec Chronicle-Telegraph, CeDeC, and Séjours Linguistiques VTE to help jobseekers see bilingualism as an increasingly valuable asset on the Quebec City job market.



**Multilingual Zone
Quebec City Employment Fair**

Leadership Table

The VEQ Leadership Table initiative began in the spring of 2005. The purpose of this committee is to give the leaders of our community's institutions an opportunity to meet 3 - 4 times per year to share what is happening in their institutions and to look at opportunities to support each other.

Quebec City's 400th anniversary has been a topic of popular discussion at the table. The group has been discussing how the English-speaking community will participate in the upcoming celebrations. A working group was created to focus on the festivities. The group prepared and submitted a grant application to the 400th Anniversary Organizing committee.

Another main theme discussed by the table was employment and human resources. Vanessa Leger from the human resources consulting firm Groupe Perspective was a guest speaker at one of the meetings. She spoke about the need for bilingual employees in our region. It was encouraging to hear this perspective from an informed source and learn that this idea is not just wishful thinking on our part.

Another important role of this table is to ensure that those in power understand the importance of the presence of a vibrant English-speaking community for the development of the region. VEQ has organized numerous political meetings this year including:

- Christiane Gagnon, Bloc Québécois MP
- Josée Verner's office, Minister of International Cooperation and Minister for La Francophonie and Official Languages
- Philippe Couillard, Minister of Health and Social Services
- Margaret Delisle, former MNA for Jean-Talon
- Andrée Boucher, Mayor of Quebec City

Through these meetings, members of the Leadership Table were able to share their concerns with elected officials so they can better understand our issues and actions.



Meeting with Mayor Andrée Boucher

Newcomers

The Newcomers' Committee is comprised of Bill Donnelly, Gisèle Giguère, John Klassen (Co-Chair), Teresa Spyksma (Co-Chair), Brigitte Wellens, and Jan Anderson-Toupin (Staff). The committee's mandate involves:

- Helping English-speakers establish themselves in a predominately French-speaking region.
- Assisting newcomers in locating the services they need in English and helping them connect with the local English-speaking community.
- Accelerating the integration of families and individuals into the region.
- Developing a more vital and dynamic English-speaking community over time.

Embracing English-speaking newcomers is vital to the growth of our community. Every five years, 25% of our region's population is renewed through newcomers. VEQ has a long time history of reaching out to newcomers. Our office distributes hundreds of information packages to new arrivals. Our staff meets one-on-one with individuals who have recently moved to the region and respond to innumerable e-mail and telephone inquiries from Anglophones contemplating relocation to this region. However, our volunteer board felt there was a need to do more to help newcomers feel at home here. This year, thanks to a grant from CHSSN/RECEPPP, we were able to launch a pilot project designed to assist and support English-speaking newcomers as they put down roots in the Quebec City region.

In November 2006, VEQ began offering monthly *Finding Your Niche* sessions free-of-charge to English-speakers who had recently relocated to the region. Over

60 newcomers attended a series of five information and networking sessions. Session themes ranged from a mini language school fair featuring local French second language training programs to an interactive history review entitled *Everything You Always Wanted to Know about Québec History But Were Afraid to Ask*. Seasoned newcomers Ed and Carol Sweeney, Sonja Taylor, and Michèle Thibeau added a touch of warmth to the evenings as they shared their own newcomer's survival stories. Events such as these provided newcomers with valuable information and a chance to get to know other newcomers.

The pilot project concluded in March with the *Winds of Change* Newcomers' Workshop / Supper hosted by Holland Centre. Newcomers related quickly to the stimulating presentation on cultural adaptation and the need for resiliency. Those in attendance applauded the efforts of VEQ and the local English-speaking community for their efforts to make them feel more at home here.

Session evaluations indicated that these evenings provided attendees with new insights and strategies to help ease their adaptation process. Participants unanimously recommended the sessions to others and hoped they would continue in the fall. VEQ plans to offer another series starting this fall.



***Winds of Change* Workshop**

Youth

The Youth Committee consists of Robert Donnelly (Chair), Nicole Anne Daigle, Bill Donnelly, Sarah Lefebure and Jean-Sébastien Jolin Gignac (Staff). Their mandate is to foster the growth and vitality of the English-speaking community by increasing youth and community awareness concerning the various employment and educational opportunities for bilingual and qualified people in Quebec City region.

The Youth Committee continued to develop a print and web-based information tool called “Bilingual in Québec City ... un atout déterminant” for students, parents, teachers, and guidance counsellors highlighting the numerous educational and employment opportunities for bilingual youth in the Greater Québec/Chaudière-Appalaches region. An electronic copy of the three editions can be viewed on our website www.veq.qc.ca.

Our Youth Advisory Committee strengthened partnerships with 16 French- and English-speaking stakeholders concerned with youth issues. The success of these meetings was due to the contribution of CEGEP Champlain - St. Lawrence and Université Laval students, representatives from Service Canada, CEGEP Champlain - St. Lawrence, Valcartier Family Centre, Forum Jeunesse de la région de Québec / CRÉ Capitale-Nationale, Université Laval, Emploi-Québec, Groupe Perspective, Jeffery Hale, Eastern Québec Learning Centre, Ville de Québec, Québec / Chaudière-Appalaches CeDeC, and Québec High School.



Youth Advisory Committee Members



Info Tool
Bilingual in Québec City..
un atout déterminant

VEQ participated in *Québec : une région jeune*, a local forum looking at strategies to counteract the youth out-migration in the Quebec City region. VEQ was also invited to participate in a Canadian Heritage Official Languages Support Programs Directorate brainstorming day called “Journée de réflexion sur la jeunesse” held on March 7, 2007 in Gatineau. We had the chance to present the successes and challenges facing our region’s English-speaking community’s youth and to increase our awareness of the reality of French-speaking minority communities outside the province. Representatives from three foundations representing all the provinces and territories except Québec and guests from

Youth

Montreal, Ontario, Manitoba, and Alberta were present to share expertise and knowledge in the sector of youth challenges from a linguistic minority context.

VEQ is actively involved in numerous committees that are focusing on bilingualism and/or youth like the Quebec City Multilingual Committee, the Community Partners Group, and the CEGEP Champlain - St. Lawrence Business Program Advisory Committee. Our implication in these committees allows us to promote our objective of creating links between local employers and bilingual youth with different partners.

VEQ also continued to be involved in a mentoring project with CEGEP Champlain – St. Lawrence’s Business Administration Program students. The purpose of the project is not only to offer students a regular internship opportunity, but more importantly to give them a possibility to develop a mentor relationship with an experienced professional.



Richard Walling (Holland Centre) with intern Guillaume Bisailon



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**Balance Sheet
As of March 31, 2007**

| | <u>2007</u> | <u>2006</u> |
|--|-------------------|------------------|
| ASSETS | | |
| CURRENT ASSETS | | |
| Cash and cash equivalents | 31 478 | 46 392 |
| Accounts receivable | 77 620 | 26 464 |
| Advance to VEQ Foundation | 642 | 642 |
| | <u>109 740</u> | <u>73 498</u> |
| CAPITAL ASSETS (note 3) | <u>7 023</u> | <u>6 772</u> |
| | <u>116 763 \$</u> | <u>80 270 \$</u> |
| LIABILITIES | | |
| CURRENT LIABILITIES | | |
| Accounts payable and accrued liabilities | 11 898 | 16 496 |
| Funds for programs in progress (note 4) | 37 154 | - |
| | <u>49 052</u> | <u>16 496</u> |
| NET ASSETS | | |
| INVESTED IN CAPITAL ASSETS | 7 023 | 6 772 |
| UNEXPENDED REVENUE | 60 688 | 57 002 |
| | <u>67 711</u> | <u>63 774</u> |
| | <u>116 763 \$</u> | <u>80 270 \$</u> |

Prepared by Bernier Mercier Comptables Agréés SENC



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**Changes in Net Assets
For the Year Ended March 31, 2007**

| | <u>2007</u> | <u>2006</u> |
|--|------------------|------------------|
| NET ASSETS INVESTED IN CAPITAL ASSETS | | |
| Balance - beginning of year | <u>6 772</u> | <u>8 367</u> |
| Purchase of capital assets | 2 503 | 858 |
| Depreciation of capital assets | <u>(2 252)</u> | <u>(2 453)</u> |
| Changes in net assets invested in capital assets for the year | <u>251</u> | <u>(1 595)</u> |
| Balance - end of year | <u>7 023 \$</u> | <u>6 772 \$</u> |
| UNEXPENDED REVENUE | | |
| Balance - beginning of year | 57 002 | 60 942 |
| Excess of revenue over expenditure (Expenditure over revenue) | <u>3 937</u> | <u>(5 535)</u> |
| | 60 939 | 55 407 |
| Changes in net assets invested in capital assets for the year | <u>(251)</u> | <u>1 595</u> |
| Balance - end of year | <u>60 688 \$</u> | <u>57 002 \$</u> |

Prepared by *Bernier Mercier Comptables Agréés SENC*



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**Revenue and Expenditure
For the Year Ended March 31, 2007**

| | <u>2007</u> | <u>2006</u> |
|---|----------------|-----------------------|
| REVENUE | | |
| Government grants (note 6) | 188 915 | 192 365 |
| RECEPP (Newcomers) | 7 100 | - |
| Citadel Foundation | 10 000 | - |
| Interest | 262 | 147 |
| Other | 1 722 | 3 028 |
| | <u>207 999</u> | <u>195 540</u> |
| EXPENDITURE | | |
| General operations (see schedule) | | |
| Salaries and benefits | 119 850 | 116 599 |
| Honorarium | 18 044 | 24 141 |
| Travel | 3 613 | 5 546 |
| Publicity | 19 177 | 16 315 |
| Workshop | 1 000 | - |
| Operating costs | 42 378 | 38 474 |
| | <u>204 062</u> | <u>201 075</u> |
| EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENDITURE (EXPENDITURE OVER REVENUE) FOR YEAR | <u>3 937</u> | <u>\$ (5 535) \$</u> |

Prepared by *Bernier Mercier Comptables Agréés SENC*



Voice of
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