



Editor's Note

Welcome to the May issue of CVAC's Newsletter!

April Showers bring May flowers and with that comes our second issue of the CVAC Newsletter to brighten your day. Thank you to everyone who made our first newsletter such an overwhelming success!

Enjoy informative articles this month from *Joining VA Organizations Has Many Benefits* to an article entitled *Ask For What You Want* (be careful what you wish for as you may just receive it). Special thanks to members [Tammy Lorette](#) and [Hilary Feindel](#) for helping us get this newsletter all together and into your email box this month.



Tawnya Sutherland, CVAC, CIMS
[Mediamage Business Solutions](#)

Founders Note

What an Amazing Group of VAs

Elayne Whitfield, CCVA, MVA, PREVA
[Executive Assistance](#)

Janice Byer, CCVA, MVA
[Docu-Type Administrative Services](#)

As a Virtual Assistant, you are part of a growing industry that takes pride in helping others with projects that do not necessarily generate revenue for their business or that are simply overflow. VAs have become essential partners in the growth of their clients' companies... we have become indispensable.

Administrative Professional's Day took place on April 21st. This is a day where bosses and clients get a chance to show their assistants just how much they mean to them and how much they are valued. We hope you were recognized and that you celebrated the fact that you are part of an industry that is growing by leaps and bounds. See how some of our CVAC members celebrated this special day by going to [page 3](#). Have a great month everyone! ❖



JOINING VA ORGANIZATIONS HAS MANY BENEFITS

By Janice Byer, CCVA, MVA
[Docu-Type Administrative Services](#)

Recently, while providing an up-and-coming Virtual Assistant (VA) with some startup information, she asked me a very interesting question, "Why do you and other VA's join organizations?"

I guess I take for granted the reasons why I belong to several VA organizations. But, to those that are new to any industry, joining an organization made up of your competitors is a valid concern.

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Some organizations have members that are from a variety of walks of life (i.e. small business organizations, etc.) while others are more specified and include only members from a specific industry (i.e. VA organizations).

I cannot speak for those in other industries but, for myself and some others I know and associate with in the VA industry, there are several reasons why we join organizations specific to our knowledge. Actually, most of these reasons are probably similar for other organizations and their participants and why they join.

So, why do I join industry specific organizations? Several reasons:

Networking. This is one of the main reasons for joining any organization and is actually part in parcel with all the other reasons I will list here. Networking with anyone and everyone is essential to the growth of any business, including a Virtual Assistance Business.

This industry is still fairly young and by networking with your peers, we can all work together to increase the exposure of this industry, thus increasing the visibility of each individual's business.

The opportunity to work with fellow VAs. With the increased exposure and acceptance of the VA industry, many veteran VA's are finding their workloads are getting to a point where they are having to outsource some of their work themselves. If they don't know about you they won't even have the chance to consider sending you some of their overflow. Not to mention, most VAs specialize in certain procedures and, should a task come up for a client that is not one of their specialties, they may need to subcontract the project.

Learning from your fellow members. No matter if you are an experienced VA or new to the industry, there is always something to learn from others.

Veteran VAs have been there and done that so they have the voice of experience to offer. Those new to the industry can sometimes be an excellent source of new & fresh ideas.

You have the chance to get involved in new ventures. Many veteran VAs collaborate to initiate new ventures and projects to help enhance the industry. Usually, during the start up phase of these new ventures, it is common to work with those that you know and respect and have them involved in the process. By being a member of an organization and staying involved, you

become visible to your fellow VAs and thus may be requested to become involved in the newest industry-boosting project.

And finally, one of the perks of joining an organization is the joy of making new friends.

When working from home, which is where most VAs operate their businesses, isolation can become an issue. So being a member of a VA organization results in making friends with fellow VAs, and reducing the isolation aspect. These friendships can also result in a mentor type relationship where the two (or more) of you share ideas that will help to boost each other's businesses and even you personal lives. (Such is the case of myself and my best friend Kathy Ritchie of Ritchie Secretarial Service – www.thebestva.com)

To sum it all up, being a member of an industry specific organization has many benefits and shouldn't be viewed as associating with the enemy. Try to think of your relationship with your fellow industry members as 'coopetition' rather than 'competition'. By working together we can build the industry as a whole, our own individual businesses and even our personal lives.

Janice Byer, owner [Docu-Type Administrative Services](http://www.docu-type.com) provides professional, creative and affordable virtual office assistance and small business website design. She is a Certified Canadian Virtual Assistant (CCVA), Master Virtual Assistant (MVA) and co-founder of the Canadian Virtual Assistant Connection. She is also the author of [Surfin' The Net - Docu-Type's Virtual Collection of Links](http://www.docu-type.com), which is filled with the secrets of her success. Visit her website for more information and to get your copy. ❖

JOIN CVAC

BECOME A MEMBER



CVAC is by Canadian VAs, for Canadian VAs. Members of CVAC are in a variety of stages of running their Virtual Assistance businesses in Canada. Some have just started, while others have been at it for some time. By being in these different stages, we can share the do's and don'ts of running your business. Veteran VAs have "been there and done that" so they can enlighten others as to what works and what doesn't. New VAs have a fresh perspective and bring new ideas to the group.

Whether you are already established in the VA industry, just opened your virtual business, or are in the research process of setting up your own VA practice and are seeking guidance, CVAC is for you!

Read more about the benefits of joining CVAC at <http://www.cvac.ca/member.php> ❖

ASK FOR WHAT YOU WANT

Elayne Whitfield, CCVA, MVA, PREVA
[Executive Assistance](#)

A few months ago I was sitting at my computer having read a couple of emails from the different VA lists that I belong to about people having their VA businesses mentioned in the news. I had sent out press releases on different occasions with very little success (one mention in a small paper and one resulting VA assignment) but I was really imagining a whole article about me and my Virtual Assistant business.

I thought of phoning the local newspaper editors and suggesting that they write an article about me but my stomach was starting to hurt at the thought of them calling me an idiot and slamming the phone down. My imagination continued to play out the scenario which ended in a broken eardrum, a broken heart, a battered self esteem and congestion due to the huge cry I would have to endure.

I wished that I was one of *those* people who could just make the call. After much hemming and hawing I decided that what I would attempt would be to *pretend* to be one of *those* people and just do it.

I picked up the phone and dialed the number of the editor of our local paper hoping, wishing and praying that I'd get his voicemail. As luck would have it he picked up the phone. I slipped into my role and told him that I was a local Virtual Assistant, explained what a VA was and how beneficial VAs could be to all local small businesses and then *told* him that he should write an article about me, my practice, the industry and the benefits to small businesses.

There was a pause and I cringed, waiting for the slam of the phone when he replied that he totally agreed, thought it was a wonderful idea, had never even heard of a Virtual Assistant and insisted that two articles be written; one for the regional monthly business publication and one for the local newspaper. He told me that he would assign a writer the next week. He did and two articles were published the very next month.

The moral of this story is that you don't have to be one of *those* confident, self-assured people that can just pick up

Please let us know of any get together's or CVAC member events that are taking place in your area. We will list you on our event calendar, broadcast the details of your event to the members and we'd love to post a picture of the event too!

CVAC will contribute financially to local networking or trade show events. [Contact us](#) for more information. ❖

the phone and ask for what they want...you just have to *pretend* that you are and do it.

Even your absolute worst case scenario won't end your life (probably) and the result is much more likely to be what you as a competent, enlightened and informed business person believe it should be.

Elayne Whitfield is the President of [Executive Assistance](#), Virtual Assistance and Website Design as well as the Director/Co-founder of CVAC (Canadian Virtual Assistant Connection). ewhitfield@executiveassistance.org. ❖

Administration Week Highlights:

Cindy Greenway from Victoria Business Solutions used to work in a gov't office & celebrated Admin Week having breakfast in the office served on Royal Albert China. At coffee break, all phones were covered by others & the group (6 of them) would go for coffee together. On Admin Day they were given \$\$ & went to a really nice restaurant for lunch. They got flowers & a card as well.

Hilary Feindel from Feindel Company celebrated on the company credit with her staff (6 of them) by going for some fine dining over lunch at Elliott House in Mississauga. Hope everyone did something special!! ❖

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

UPCOMING TELE-CLASSES

Marketing - May 12, 2004 by Janice Byer – details to follow
Watch for more tele-classes at <http://cvac.ca/teleclasses.php>

NEWMARKET LUNCH – 1ST WEDNESDAY OF EVERY MONTH

THE BUTTERY

NORTH EAST CORNER OF DAVIS DR. AND YONGE ST.

17565 YONGE ST., NEWMARKET, ON 905-836-0300

12:00 NOON

MEMBERS: LISA MARTYNUIK, DIANNE MOON, MARION TRIPP, SUSAN JESSOP, DEANNA SMYTHE, TERRI DONAVAN, ELAYNE WHITFIELD

BRAMPTON LUNCH – 2ND FRIDAY OF EVERY MONTH

CASEYS, TRINITY COMMON CENTRE (HWY 410 & BOVAIRD DR)

BRAMPTON 905-799-8464

12:00 NOON

MEMBERS: LISA IVALDI, ELAYNE WHITFIELD, JANICE BYER, HILARY FEINDEL, ZIZI VOLFOORD-HULL, AMY EWART

GTA VA BREAKFAST – 3RD SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH

PERKINS FAMILY RESTAURANT (HOLIDAY INN)

600 DIXON ROAD (DIXON & MARTIN GROVE) 416-240-9741

10:00AM

BARRIE LUNCH - 4TH THURSDAY OF EVERY MONTH.

MANDARIN RESTAURANT, BARRIE

12:00 NOON ❖

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

Congratulations to members of CVAC who have achieved recognition as a Virtual Assistant:

Calgary, Alberta – City Light News, April, 2003

These friends are go-getters in business by John Syrratt
Calgary residents, Denise Hill and British-born, Angela Boorah have been good friends for years. Boorah now rents a suite in the Hills' home where they work together in a bright and spacious basement office operating two businesses. Hill owns H.I.S. Secretarial & VA Services, and they both run Divine Design Creative Services. These women are go-getters!

Hill, an administrative assistant at a private school in Calgary for many years, found herself not wanting to go back to work after one winter break. She gave her notice for the end of June, 2002.

In February of that year, Hill researched home-based secretarial services on the Internet. "I found there was a great need," she noted. "I had to determine the climate in Calgary regarding the market and the pricing for my services."

The name H.I.S. Secretarial stands for honesty, integrity and service. She had a website developed, did some local newspaper advertising and her business began to grow.

Hill started doing administrative work for Eddie Simon, a well traveled musician and singer. Simon got Hill involved with the Alberta Gospel Music Association (AGMA) and she soon joined the Board.

Boorah was looking for work and Hill helped her send out some resumes, and at the same time, Boorah helped Hill with a mailout. "We found we worked well together," Hill said. They then landed a large contract with a consultant. The secretarial business was doing well.

When the work slowed for a season, the two friends began to think of other ideas. A musician friend called and told them that there was a big need among artists and musicians in having promo kits to present to music producers. The ladies did some more research and located a supplier for the kits and have become the Canadian dealer. The new venture was named Divine Design Creative Services. A friend quickly set up a website and they attended a music conference, created some packages and done some promotion. Several AGMA musicians have already placed orders, and Divine Design is now expanding to provide Memory Kits for Weddings or Funerals, Presentation Kits for Real Estate Developers, and even Living Will kits. Their new business is beginning to take off.

FEATURED CVAC

MEMBER

BETH DOMAN



Beth Doman, owner of Sun Dog Graphics, has been operating as a freelance design studio since March, 2003.

Sun Dog Graphics focuses on creating complete visual identity packages for start-ups, including logos, letterhead, business cards and websites. She believes that having a strong visual identity will give the professional appearance sole entrepreneurs are looking for. This in turn results in supplying the confidence the small business person needs, to get those big clients!

Beth has been working in the multimedia and design field for six years and has a Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree from the well-respected Nova Scotia College of Art and Design in Halifax. At college she studied digital photography, traditional photography, art history and multimedia design.

She, her partner Daniel, and their two lovely dogs have lived in 4 different provinces and have seen the country from coast to coast. She adores horses, and is fortunate enough to have her mother's Canadian Horse to ride and train. This spring she hopes to take lessons over cross-country jumps. Maybe a two-day event this fall!

Currently under contract at the University of Victoria as a web and graphic designer, Beth hopes to ramp down to half-time in the fall and concentrate on growing her business. *Freelance is truly free!*

BETH DOMAN

Sun Dog Graphics
250-415-8346
www.sundog-graphics.com ❖

Warm Welcome to New CVAC Members:

- Nelson Cardoso
- Marilyn Millington
- TiffanyLubinski
- Veronica Cross
- Faith St. Aubin
- Chantelle Abanilla
- Jill Foran
- Fariyal Karmali
- Penny Sharman
- Wendy Banks
- Lesley Merchant

Also thank you to all those members who also renewed their CVAC memberships this month. You make our Canadian Virtual Assistant Connection complete. ❖

VA QUESTION AND ANSWER TIME



Q: When I'm surfing the internet and I already have IE open and I click on a link, sometimes it opens up a new window in IE but it only opens more vertically than horizontally. I want it always to open maximized. Is there a way I can do this?

A: You are in IE and click on a link that opens a new window. When that happens, manually widen the window that just opened by moving your cursor to the edge of the window (you will get a double-ended arrow). Just click and drag the arrow to widen the screen. Do this on each side of the screen that needs adjustment. Then you can close the window. From there on in, each "2nd window" that you open should retain the same dimensions as the one you have adjusted.

Q: I am wondering what is the best way to add a "Check Box" in Word. I have a consent form to make up with about 11 yes/no and 5 other boxes to add to a document.

A: Using your "Forms" toolbar there is a "Check Box Form Field". Once you have inserted the check box into your document you can right click on it go to "Properties" and set it to the size you want.

Q: How do you convert a Word Perfect document to a Word document?

A: Open the file in Word Perfect and save as a Word document.



Have a suggestion for our newsletter?

Nature gave us one tongue and two ears so we could hear twice as much as we speak ... Epictetus
Email us at info@cvac.ca ❖

Q: What is I'm InTouch and what can it do?

A: In Touch allows you, using remote access, to access the clients' outlook email, calendar, contacts etc. WHILE they are working on their own computer. You can't do this with GoToMyPC. If you're working on the remote computer then they can't be. I'm InTouch is also less expensive. With I'm Touch you can access any of the programs on the clients' computer (the same way as you do with GoToMyPC) but, to me, it seems faster than GoToMyPC.

Q: I have a client wanting to send me her Outlook contacts so I can set up groups for her and then send them email messages. I personally use Outlook Express, but have Outlook on my computer. Can someone please tell me the easiest way to do this?

A: Have your client go into the contact list, select all and copy into mail window attachment line and email to you. (you may have to do this in installments depending on numbers and size). Change your settings to have outlook as your default mail server, in the email properties from your control panel. You may have to set up accounts if you've never used Outlook before. Once you add your clients contacts, by selecting and dragging them into your contact list, you can create distribution lists. Right click in contact white space.

Q: I'm making a template for a client with lots of formulas. Is there a way to protect the sheet so he can only plug numbers in and not accidentally delete the formulas?

A: You can protect the formulas by using tools/ protection/protect sheet for each cell that has a formula. And if you assign a password only known to you, your client will not be able to accidentally delete the formulas.

For more on Questions and Answers, Please visit the archives at: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/CVACconnection>



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