

Intell April 12/03

Saturday p. D2

**L**ori Varrin lives in Campbellford, works in Belleville, attends university in Peterborough and is in the midst of renovating an 1867 schoolhouse.

How does she do all these things?

"There is a lot of advance planning," she replied without hesitation.

"You have to make sure you make the time to study and get your work done ... I also spend a lot of time in the car."

Varrin is on contract as the fundraising co-ordinator at Volunteer and Information Quinte and is currently busy planning two public events for the agency — the Mayor's Walk for Volunteers being held April 27 and the Ladies Golf Tournament in July.

She has also been studying for the final exam in her psychology course at Trent University. She writes that three-hour exam later this afternoon (Saturday, April 12) and it counts for 15 per cent of her final mark.

And whatever free time she musters is spent helping her boyfriend renovate their century-old schoolhouse in Campbellford.

"Every once in a while I get a meltdown and I just want to sit and relax and not do anything," Varrin said. "But that passes after a few hours and then it's back to putting one foot in front of the other."

There is one thing Varrin has going for her — she is young. At 28 years old, she has the stamina to juggle work, school and personal responsibilities.

"There are only 24 hours in a day and eight of those are for sleep. That leaves me 16 hours a day to get all my stuff together."

The Peterborough native worked in a number of retail jobs after completing her schooling there.

Varrin moved to Oshawa when she was 26 years old to work on a municipal election campaign for a city councillor there. After her successful election, Varrin became her special assistant.

She was laid off almost a year later.

In September 2001, Varrin was hired on a contract basis to do special events and health promotion for the Heart and Stroke Foundation, Durham East area office.

"I planned things like women's symposiums and assisted with such events as the Big Bike for Stroke and a major hockey tournament," she said.

When Varrin's contract expired last August, she left Oshawa to live with her boyfriend in Campbellford.

"After a few weeks of not being able to find a job, I came to VIQ and asked if I could

help out in any way. They had some events that needed managing and I know how to manage events and, thankfully, the staff and board were happy to have me," she said.

Varrin started as a volunteer last September. In early November, VIQ staff

inquired about some 'job creation' funding through Human Resources Development Canada and she was able to acquire "one-time funding only."

Her contract as VIQ's fundraising co-ordinator started in December and continues until Sept. 19. She doesn't know what will happen after her contract expires but she's hoping to remain in the area.

For now, Varrin's focus is on planning VIQ's annual Mayor's Walk For Volunteers.

"It's pretty much a full-time job for me, working on the mayor's walk. When you're doing a big event, there are a lot of details to be worked out, like making sure the day runs smoothly and getting the people out to participate," she said.

When that's done, she will begin planning in earnest for the agency's Ladies Golf Tournament scheduled for July 10.

"I have done some of the early planning for the event. The location is chosen, sponsors confirmed, format is in place and some of the early inquiries into auction prizes have been done. But there still is a lot more to be done."

During her time at VIQ, Varrin has also been juggling school work as well as a part-time student at Trent University.

She enrolled in a psychology credit course last fall and that has required her to attend a lecture and lab (four hours) every Wednesday afternoon at the Peterborough campus. She also had about six hours of reading every week and several hours more to complete weekly assignments.

When today's exam is over, Varrin will still need 19 credits to graduate with honours from Trent.

She is hoping to do three credit courses in the next school year and then become a full-time student in September 2005.

"Being a mature student has some interesting pitfalls in that you still want to support your lifestyle and pursue an education with minimal money. It leaves you juggling your chequebook," Varrin said.

She had better get used to that because her goal is to graduate in 2007 and enter law school.

"I want to focus my studies on people with mental illness in the justice system."