Computer Folder and File Naming Conventions

The Goal of our Computer Folder and File Naming Conventions is to save time in being able to find any electronic file, regardless of someone's knowledge of the file contents. This can easily be done by disciplining ourselves to adopt the following habits of effectively putting files in helpfully named folders and using the date-and-name file saving procedure (outlined below):

1. **Make sure there is a folder named for the subject matter of whatever you're working on <u>before</u> you go to save it.** All folders for the Administrative Office work should be off the Administration folder. For instance, if you are creating minutes to a Board meeting, there should be a folder entitled: Administration\Board of Directors. [Anyone, even if they know nothing about the Buffalo Urban League, should be able to look at the Administration \Board of Directors folder and figure out what files are in that folder. *If you need help in how to create, rename or remove folders or files, see anyone from the Technology Team.*]

2. As you go to save a file in an appropriately named folder, (even if others have not done this before you) **develop the habit of naming the file with the YYMMDD date in the very beginning of the file name.** [For instance, if you have typed the minutes of the Board of Director's meeting that took place on December 15, 2003, you would place it in the Administration\Board of Directors folder and name it: 031215 Minutes of the Board of Directors.doc

   This name means that these are minutes of a Board meeting that took place in the year 2003, in the month of December and on the 15th day of the month. Even someone who knows nothing about that file would be able to tell exactly what it is by looking at that file name. What you put as the whole file name after the date isn't as important as putting the YYMMDD digits (with no spaces) at the very beginning of the file name. [Don't forget, be sure to put the two digits of the **year** fist, then the two digits of the **month**, then the two digits of the **day** last before a space.] For instance, you could call the same file 031215 Board Minutes.doc. The great benefit of starting a file name with YYMMDD consistently is that the computer always organizes up the file names (in any program) according to the date. This saves hours of looking for files when you are looking for information related to the time of year. Plus, the more descriptive you are at naming what the file is about (after the date), the more time you'll save when you're trying to find things.]