

## Camp Weredale celebrates its 75th

One of the English-speaking community's oldest children's camps turns 75 this year. Camp Weredale, on Lake L'Achigan in the Laurentians, was established in 1934 to provide a summer respite for the 125 residents of the Montreal Boys' Home (a Red Feather agency founded in 1870). After several mergers of residences for youth in care, the camp was also opened to girls, in 1981.

"We've certainly evolved over the years," says **Howard Martin**, executive director. "A significant number of our clients now come from foster homes within the Batshaw Youth and Family Centres network. We welcome over 300 children during the summer, although because of the numbers, they come for two weeks at a time instead of two months. And last year we started including mothers and children from Elizabeth House."

The primary focus of the camp has not changed however. Young people in supervised residences because of personal difficulty or family neglect are treated to recuperative "down time" in the country. For them the camp program is still highly structured, with two counselors for every seven children. Martin has served as executive director for the past 28 years, staying on after his official retirement 12 years ago. "For me it's a labour of love," affirms Martin.

## New policy for helping handicapped

The Quebec Cabinet, on June 4, adopted a major new policy aimed at ensuring the rights and equality of handicapped persons in the province. After over two years of consultation with community and government organizations, of organizing province-wide discussion tables and committees to explore specific issues, the Ministry of Health and Social Services presented its proposal, À part entière: pour un véritable exercice du droit à l'égalité. This sweeping 10-year program contains 413 measures designed to increase the participation of handicapped Quebecers in all aspects of society. Details of the program are available at [www.msss.gouv.qc.ca](http://www.msss.gouv.qc.ca).

## Goldblooms honoured with award

The Sheila and Victor Goldbloom Distinguished Community Service Award has just been established to recognize individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to the vitality of Quebec's English-speaking community. Created by the Quebec Community Groups Network, the new award also honours its namesakes, both of whom have an extraordinarily strong history of dedicated service to their community.

The award is designed for persons who have demonstrated leadership and commitment to the English-speaking community, as either a volunteer or a professional. Nomination deadline is July 15. For further information: [www.qcgn.qc.ca](http://www.qcgn.qc.ca).

## Nazareth House joins CCS

Nazareth House, a downtown haven for the impoverished and the abandoned for nearly 35 years, has become part of the CCS (Catholic Community Services) network. The charity was founded by retired engineer Dennis Hadley, who died in December, his wife Lucille, who has just retired and Sister Georgette Côté, who died three years ago. Under the new arrangement, Nazareth will remain autonomous, but will benefit from the administrative oversight of CCS.

The Hadleys began their charitable life in 1958 when they came to Montreal and began working at Benedict Labre House. Two years later, they moved to Griffintown, feeding hungry neighbours and taking needy people into their home while also volunteering at homeless shelters. They and Sr. Côté opened the Nazareth House facility in 1975. During the following years, they fed and housed street people, set up one of the first AIDS hospices, rescued and buried old people abandoned by their families. Nazareth House staffers continue their tradition of helping the destitute.

"We're very pleased with this new partnership," says **Bruno Mital**, CCS managing director. "It's another opportunity for us to serve the community."

## **New centre for kids with special needs**

On May 1, a new “Centre of Dreams and Hopes” opened in East End Montreal. The facility offers therapeutic and recreational activities for English-speaking children and young adults with intellectual and/or physical disabilities. With 180 clients, served by 15 music, speech and occupational therapists, the Centre is a result of community need and community enterprise.

“Ten years ago there were no services in English for our children,” says **Josie Primiani**, mother of a special needs child and executive director of the Centre. “So 20 parents formed the EAST Foundation (with Primiani as executive director) to address that need. The Rivière-des-Prairies CLSC gave us space and we hired someone to give weekly music therapy sessions. We’ve gradually added other specialists as money became available.”

That is not government funding. An anonymous donor paid to rent space at the de Vinci Community Centre for several years. Starting with small bazaars, the foundation now runs an annual golf tournament and an autumn gala to raise money to hire professionals and to pay staff. “We have a great community helping us,” says Primiani. “And local companies donated most of the labour and materials for renovating the building housing the new Centre.”

The opening of the Centre means that in addition to the regular weekend schedule, therapy sessions will also be offered during the week. With up to 15 beds available at the Centre, a respite program for caregivers will also be introduced in September. As will an adult continuing education program for special needs persons over the age of 21. For further information: 514 941 1560.

## **Major move in mental health care**

Major changes in delivery of healthcare services to the mentally ill are imminent. As of November 2, the single point of entry to the healthcare system for all such patients will be their local CSSS. The government will launch publicity in September.

## **Guiding girls away from gangs**

A distinct new program designed by the Black Community Resource Centre (BCRC) aims to dissuade teenaged girls from being tempted into street gang culture. Called “Expressin’ Life”, the program combines art and discussion to raise self-awareness and self-esteem among girls at risk. It is to be introduced in 10 high schools of the English Montreal School Board in the fall.

“Girls of 13 and 14 are very vulnerable to external factors that affect their self image,” says **Dorothy Williams**, BCRC program director. “Media misrepresentation and sexual exploitation of women can be very damaging, while involvement with gangs can be very dangerous. We want to open up new avenues of thought to them.”

Weekly workshops will cover such themes as the implications of gang culture, how to avoid risky situations, recognizing corrupting friendships, developing the right body image. Participants will express how each topic affects them through various artistic media.

“We hope that they’ll come away from each session having learned a lesson,” says Williams. “We want to lead them to more independent thinking, to recognize that it’s all right not to join the herd. And we’re conducting workshops for teachers on the same issues so that these positive messages can be re-enforced.”

## **Canadians are good givers**

Nearly 23 million Canadians over the age of 15 – 84 percent of the population – donated time or money to charities in 2007, according to a survey just released by Statistics Canada. Forty-six percent did volunteer work, to the tune of 2.1 billion hours.

Donations were up 12 percent from 2004, to a total of \$10 billion. The most generous donors were Albertans, giving an average of \$596; the national average was \$437. Yet again, Quebecers were the least generous of all, averaging only \$219.

## Task Force makes headway

The Task Force set up a year ago to improve delivery of English health and social services in Greater Montreal has been busy. Its ultimate goal is to bring the service providers and community resources together in common cause. The first step was to sound out the preoccupations of each sector.

“We’ve made positive headway on both fronts,” says **Janet Forsyth**, member of the Force’s steering committee. “First we met with the human resources directors of the public establishments, because these are the people who deal with the nuts and bolts of services delivery. They told us that finding bilingual anglophones to hire is getting more and more difficult. That’s equally true in both the east and west regions of the island.

“At the same time,” says Forsyth, “community organizations, which are expected to provide more and more services, are not receiving the same government support as their francophone counterparts. Adding to that problem, they all must now be officially accredited or they will not receive referrals from public institutions. Partnerships that have been functioning for years are at risk.”

Forsyth sees myth busting as an important role of the Task Force. “There is poverty and exclusion among English-speaking Montrealers,” she affirms. “We’ll be studying that issue in detail and will present our findings for public discussion.”

## Palliative Care Council turns 15

When **Kappy Flanders** was caring for her dying husband, she was not aware of the palliative care that could have eased her burden. So, in 1994, she spearheaded formation of the Council of Palliative Care, a nonprofit organization she chairs with Dr. **Richard Cruess**. Its goal is to increase public awareness, public support and access to palliative care. As well as lobbying vigorously for funding for palliative care facilities, the Council organizes workshops and public lectures for the community. For information: [www.council-on-palliative-care.org](http://www.council-on-palliative-care.org).

## New facility for Lethbridge

The Constance Lethbridge Rehabilitation Centre has opened a new facility in Kirkland that offers significantly enhanced services to its West Island clients. It is to be named after Edith Strauss, a deceased client, volunteer and donor who provided funds for the treatment of needy handicapped persons. The Montreal Health and Social Services Agency provided funding for renovation and for the 10-year leasing of the building.

“We already had a solid base of clients on the West Island,” explains **Ghislaine Prata**, Lethbridge executive director. “I expect that their numbers will rise as more people become aware of the services now available locally.”

Along with its basic rehabilitation services, the new Centre is also offering driving evaluation and a vehicle adaptation program. There is a full technical aid service that allows for the onsite fitting of wheelchairs, prosthetics and other aids for daily living. “Last year, over 800 West Islanders had to travel into N.D.G. for this service,” says Prata.

The Centre also boasts a special teleconferencing room, named after Marylee Kelley, a former board member and widely known volunteer. “Various service centres in outlying regions will be equipped to receive technical assistance from our mechanic to make repairs to therapeutic devices,” Prata explains. For further information: 514 487 1891.

## Additional dollars for Alzheimer’s

**Margaret Blais**, minister responsible for the elderly, has introduced a 10-year, \$20 million annual fund to assist families caring for a relative with Alzheimer’s disease at home. The government will provide \$15 million, the Chagnon family foundation the balance. The fund will be administered at arm’s length from the government by a board of directors that includes community members. Community organizations will be able to apply for grants for such projects as respite care, home care and caregiver training.

## Action on aging is on the agenda

The Special Senate Committee on Aging tabled a report in April that calls for dramatic changes in this country's approach to its senior citizens. According to Senator **Sharon Carstairs**, Committee chair, "...There are serious gaps to be addressed in health care, housing, transportation and support systems... Some seniors are being denied their rights... We have to reorganize ourselves in ways that transcend jurisdictional issues and focus on the needs of our citizens at different stages of their lives...."

The committee recommends that the federal government take immediate steps to promote active and healthy aging and to combat ageism; that it undertake major national initiatives to create and improve care programs; that it ensure the financial security of older Canadians; that it facilitate the desire of Canadians to age in their place of choice; and that it act immediately to implement changes for those populations for which it has a specific direct service responsibility, and in relation to Canada's official language commitments. For the full report: [www.senate-senat.ca/age-e.asp](http://www.senate-senat.ca/age-e.asp).

## Quebec keen on volunteerism

Not one, but two, Quebec ministers have set their sights on boosting the voluntary sector. **Sam Hamad**, Minister of Employment and Social Solidarity, was first off the mark. In April, he announced a million-dollar budget to promote volunteerism, and to develop new "tools" for the training and recruitment of volunteers. The Réseau de l'action bénévole du Québec will carry out the various measures recommended by a government task force.

In May, the new junior Minister of Social Services **Lise Thériault** (appointed last December) announced that in the coming autumn she, too, will launch a project to incite Quebecers to volunteer. In an interview with *La Presse* the minister decried the lack of volunteer action here, claiming to be inspired by Ontario and the United States, where there is such a strong tradition of helping others.

## In brief

**Julie Beauvilliers** was re-named board chair of the Volunteer Board of Montreal.

**Rosemary Byrne** has been named chair of the board of Volunteer Canada.

**David Dussault** has been re-appointed chair of the CCS board of directors.

**Kappy Flanders**, founder of the Council of Palliative Care, received an honorary degree from McGill University.

**Evelyn Joncas** has been appointed coordinator of Training and Consultation at the Volunteer Bureau of Montreal.

**Edith Low-Beer** received an honorary degree from the University of Montreal.

**Leandro Tolentino** is the new executive director of Nazareth House.

The Bishop Crowley Memorial Awards for distinguished service to the English-speaking Catholic community were presented in May to Janet and Richard Macklem, Donald Myles, and to 40 parish religion teachers.

CARP (Canadian Association of Retired Persons) is calling for nominations for its New Vision of Aging for Canada awards. It is to pay tribute to volunteers who have contributed to the quality of life of Canadians as they age. Deadline for nominations is July 31. For information: [www.carp.ca](http://www.carp.ca).

The McGill School of Social Work will host the annual Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences next May.

The editor welcomes story ideas: 514 937 4309

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