

## New house for Nazareth

There is to be an important new residence for women in downtown Montreal. Nazareth House, for over 40 years a haven for men in need, is renovating a property around the corner to accommodate women who have struggled with similar problems of mental illness, addiction or homelessness. It is scheduled to open next January.

“It will be called Anne’s House,” explains **Sheila Woodhouse**, executive director, “named after the sister of one of our board members. It will have 28 studio apartments and small communal kitchens on each of its three floors. The main floor of the house will boast a large kitchen, TV and computer rooms and areas for such interactive activities as yoga and art classes. The idea is to provide a family-like environment to reduce their isolation and encourage a sense of community.”

Nazareth House, originally a refuge for the destitute and dying, now provides living quarters for 21 men. They reside in the central building as well as in neighbouring apartments rented by Nazareth for its more autonomous residents. For further information: 514 933 6916.

## Camp Positive turns 21

When Catholic Community Services (CCS) opened a summer camp for victims of HIV/AIDS in the Laurentians in 1992, it was essentially a palliative care service. With the advent of antiretroviral drug treatment, campers now enjoy a host of recreational activities as well as therapeutic attention to their needs. It’s a popular venue: Camp Positive now welcomes up to 100 visitors each year from across the province.

“This week together helps break their isolation,” says **Ashley Allen**, CCS camps coordinator. “For many, it provides an opportunity to restore their self-esteem. And afterward, they benefit from the strong support network that continues beyond the camp.”

## Black communities in spotlight

The decision of AKA, the 3000-member association of American Black sororities, to hold its annual conference in Montreal in July has bolstered the drive of local Black communities to highlight their situation. It is AKA’s practice to lend some service to grass roots organizations in conference venues. Here they have linked up with the African-Canadian Development and Prevention Network (ACDPN), which counters the problem of high-risk Black youth through strengthening Black families.

“We’ll be hosting, with Concordia, a breakfast meeting and round table discussion of local issues with AKA board members,” says **Leith Hamilton**, ACDPN project manager. “Concordia and ACDPN have already been discussing the development of community partnerships to address child welfare issues. There are many cases of such cooperation in the U.S., and we hope that AKA can link us to the most successful groups there. AKA is also going to help us plan a Black family summit conference in February next year. This is really big for us.”

In preparation for these encounters, ACDPN surveyed the city’s Black communities for their everyday experiences and challenges in accessing health and social services. They cited systemic discrimination, in terms of colour, language and culture; lack of information about services and gaps in their availability. Financial pressure was a major concern: over 73 percent of Montreal Blacks earn under \$30,000 a year. “There are challenges on all sides,” Hamilton says. “But we’re moving forward.”

## McGill eyeing the Vic

Amid speculation as to the future of those historic MUHC buildings being emptied as medical facilities are transferred to its super hospital site in NDG, one promising possibility has come to the fore. McGill has formally expressed a wish to take over the Royal Victoria Hospital complex for medical research and teaching. Government approval would of course be required, and financing is a prime consideration.

## AMI in the ER

AMI-Quebec is now providing another line of assistance to families of people who are mentally ill. For the past year, an AMI worker has been assigned to the Douglas Institute, to provide support to families arriving with someone in crisis. While busy emergency room nurses are tending to the patient, the AMI worker is there to offer information and support that the family might require. Over 165 families have used that service so far.

“One of my preoccupations has been how to reach out to families earlier,” says **Ella Amir**, AMI executive director. “Often, especially if it’s their first emergency situation, the family is too overwhelmed to ask for help for themselves. Or, they want to think the problem will soon go away. Our staffer, who is an experienced care giver, can give them immediate assistance and/or point them to resources they might need in the future.”

The Douglas has provided funding for the pilot project until the end of this year. “It’s been a very worthwhile effort so far,” says Amir. “I would like to see it continue.”

## Send in seniors’ stories

Seniors Action Quebec is calling upon English-speaking Quebec seniors to contribute stories about their families’ and communities’ history to Collecting our Stories, a project that will highlight anglophone roots in the province. The resulting publication and video will be widely dispersed.

“As well as celebrating our anglophone heritage,” says **David Cassidy**, Action president, “we’ll make sure that this collection gets to governments at all levels. We want to show that English-speakers have strong roots in Quebec and that we have a right to be considered part of the Quebec family.”

A preliminary report will be ready for October 1, National Seniors’ Day. To make a submission and for further information: 514 868 9044, ext. 229.

## Center casts a wider net

Since it was founded in 1999, the West Island based Family Resource Center (FRC) has been steadily broadening its focus from helping children with learning disabilities to address a wider range of young people’s emotional needs. An innovative program designed to assist young adults between 17 and 25 years old has just completed its first, very successful, year of operation.

“We were finding that a lot of young people over 17 were really floundering,” says **Carrie Goldberg**, executive director. “There’s an assumption that young adults are mature enough to take care of themselves. But that isn’t always true. Even with a CEGEP or university education, many lack self-confidence and aren’t aware of their skills.”

The FRC program has provided counselling and mentoring to 21 young adults over the past year, some in support groups, some individually. “While helping them with their emotional needs, we guided them in developing projects and business plans,” says Goldberg. “It was amazing: we discovered a couple of incredible entrepreneurs.”

The next project will be aimed at children from six to 11 years old who have been, or have the potential to be, in conflict with the law. Called SNAP®, Stop Now and Plan, it was designed by the Children’s Development Institute in Toronto. Successfully delivered there for over 30 years, this is the first time it will be applied in Quebec.

“The Pierrefonds police identified this problem in our region,” explains Goldberg. “They recruited our Center as the community organization to lead a partnership with them and local school boards. It’s called the Projet communautaire Pierrefonds.”

“This is a really exciting program,” Goldberg affirms. “Children 11 and under whose behavioural disorders have brought them into contact with the police can’t be charged and so can’t be ordered to treatment. But they could well be on the road to criminality. If we can catch them in time: wow!”

## Focus on healthcare financing

Quebecers may soon see a major change in how their healthcare is paid for. A panel of experts, chaired by **Wendy Thomson**, director of McGill's School of Social Work, is now studying how a system of "patient-based funding" (PBF) might be introduced here. It is an approach that over the past 30 years has been widely used in Europe and the United States and is currently being adopted by other provinces of Canada.

"We'd be practically the last place in the western world to implement PBF," Thomson says. "But it's not a new concept to Quebec: it has been recommended in previous studies and is strongly endorsed by the health network. The government has now decided to move ahead."

Under PBF, the government would pay hospitals for the services they provide, based on the number of their patients and the severity of their condition. "Our hospitals are now responsible only for the package of funding they are given," says Thomson. "So they have to restrict their activities; that's why we have waiting times. Under PBF, it's not just a question of volume: hospital payments would also be based on quality of care."

Like any payment system, there are risks to consider. Providing more and better treatment could lead to increased spending. "However, the goal of PBF is to treat patients properly without increasing cost," Thomson affirms. "And you'll know what you're getting for the money you're spending. Right now we don't really know what anything costs."

Thomson asserts that PBF would bring more flexibility and efficiency to Quebec's healthcare system. That it would improve access and quality. "That's what it's designed to do."

Thomson's panel will be submitting its recommendations to the government in the autumn. Implementation of the new system would be introduced over five years. "It would be quite a big change," says Thomson, "but much for the better."

## NOVA now accredited

NOVA West Island has just received formal accreditation from Accreditation Canada (AC), the national body charged with assessing the level of operational excellence and quality of care provided by Canadian healthcare organizations. AC evaluators met with NOVA volunteers, staff and clients, reviewed its policies and procedures, and discerned the strengths and weaknesses of its operations. It was a demanding exercise.

And it was not necessary. The century-old agency (it was originally part of the Victorian Order of Nurses) chose to put itself through the rigorous evaluation process. "Public healthcare organizations have to do this," says **Marie-France Juneau**, executive director. "Because we're private, we do not. But we wanted this kind of external appraisal to assess what we were doing and to improve where needed. It was a lot of work, but very worthwhile in terms of increasing our credibility."

The AC evaluators were impressed. "They gave us a 94 percent score straight off," says Juneau. "A couple of practices – management of violent behavior and fall prevention procedures – needed to be better implemented to move us into 100 percent status. Overall, AC observed that NOVA's most important strengths were our devoted volunteers, dedicated and competent staff, multiple community partnerships and our unique client-centred services. Our biggest challenges are our physical environment and increasing community healthcare needs."

## Looking at health literacy

The Quebec Network of Health Promoting Institutions (HPI) chose health literacy as the theme of its first annual conference in March. This network of hospitals and health service centres, the first of its kind outside Europe, operates under standards set by the World Health Organization. International guest speakers shared their knowledge of addressing what has become a serious concern. See: [Destination Health](http://www.santemontreal.qc.ca) at [www.santemontreal.qc.ca](http://www.santemontreal.qc.ca).

## Art and service meet

The Volunteer Bureau of Montreal held another successful art auction on April 25. A repeat of its innovative Timeraiser event of last year, this evening brought together 300 participants willing to bid for art works by paying with volunteer hours. Some 5,065 hours of volunteer help were raised for the 35 nonprofit organizations in attendance. The 35 artists displaying their works benefited to the tune of \$17,976.

## CBC boosting volunteerism

CBC Montreal has launched a new program to promote volunteerism in the city. Once a month, the station's "Do Crew" will match up viewers, listeners and readers to take on a volunteer activity that will benefit a local nonprofit community organization. Each event will involve 8 to 15 volunteers for two to four hours. Interested organizations and volunteers should contact: [monique.lacombe@cbc.ca](mailto:monique.lacombe@cbc.ca).

## Too few doing too much?

In a recent survey by BMO Financial Group, 70 percent of Canadians reported that they had volunteered for a charitable organization in the past year. That figure zoomed to 80 percent for Canadians under the age of 35. On the other hand, 2012 Statistics Canada data show that 10 percent of Canadian volunteers accounted for more than half of all hours donated in 2010.

## \$ for seniors

New federal and municipal funding is now available for projects addressing seniors. Under Canada's New Horizons for Seniors Program, organizations may receive up to \$25,000 a year for senior-oriented projects. Deadline for applications is September 6. For information: [www.seniors.qc.ca](http://www.seniors.qc.ca). Under its new senior-friendly city program, Montreal is calling for project-funding applications by June 28 at <http://ville.montreal.qc.ca/portal/aines>.

## In brief

**Caroline Arsenault** is the new manager of CCS' The Teapot.

Dr. **Richard Massé** was named coordinator of the Quebec Network of Health Promoting Institutions.

Dr. **Katherine Moxness** has been appointed executive director of the West Montreal Readaptation Centre.

Centraide of Greater Montreal has named its co-chairs for the 2013 fund-raising campaign: **Marc Parent**, president and CEO of CAE, and **Michael E. Roach**, CEO of CGI.

The QCGN has issued a call for nominations for the 2013 Sheila and Victor Goldbloom Distinguished Community Service Awards. Deadline is July 31. For information: [www.qcgn.ca](http://www.qcgn.ca).

Seniors Action Quebec has a new address at 1819, boul. René Lévesque, bureau 400, Montréal Qc H3H 2P5. Telephone: 514 868 9044, ext. 229.

The Alzheimer Society of Montreal is hosting a telephone workshop on Caring without exhaustion: take care of yourself at 2 p.m., July 18. To reserve: [www.caringvoicenet.com](http://www.caringvoicenet.com) or 1 866 396 2433.

A pamphlet on Healthcare Services in Quebec is available in English, and 10 other languages, at <http://accesss.net/formationsorganisme.html>.

Legal information on a wide variety of topics, including health, housing, employment and family law, is available from nonprofit Educaloï, at [www.educaloï.qc.ca](http://www.educaloï.qc.ca).

The Montreal Children's Hospital will be 100 years old next year.

**The editor welcomes story ideas: 514 937 4309**

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