

## Goldbloom Awards announced

The Quebec Community Groups Network has announced recipients of the 2014 Sheila and Victor Goldbloom Distinguished Community Service Awards:

**James Hughes**, past executive director of the Old Brewery Mission, co-founded Youth Employment Services (YES) and is now president of the Graham Boeckh Foundation, which is dedicated to improving the lives of persons affected with mental illness.

**Eric Maldoff** was chair of the Montreal Children's Hospital for 17 years and founding volunteer president of Alliance Quebec. For over 30 years, he has been involved with multiple organizations that promote English-language minority rights and access to health and social services.

**Marjorie Sharp** has long been active in women's and human rights. She helped establish L'Abri en Ville for individuals with mental health issues, Auberge Madeleine for battered women and Elder-Aide for seniors.

## Centraide kicks off campaign

Centraide of Greater Montreal launches its annual fund-raising campaign on October 2 with its March of 1000 Umbrellas. It is so-named because 1,000 people participated in the inaugural umbrella march, in 1991. This year over 20,000 donors, volunteers, and representatives of Centraide-funded community organizations will join the downtown march to the Place des festivals for the official launching ceremony.

Theme of this year's campaign is "Giving brightens lives". Campaign umbrellas will bear the slogan "Umbrellas go free" because after the parade the umbrellas will be left at public pick-up locations across the city, such as libraries, cafes and community organizations offices. Montrealers are invited to use them until the end of the campaign on December 18.

## New refuge spaces for women

Good news for vulnerable women seeking refuge, there will soon be additional accommodation for them in downtown Montreal. Two longtime shelters are expanding their space and services to broach the ever-expanding problem of women in distress.

Auberge Madeleine is opening its new quarters at the end of September. It will provide temporary shelter for up to 26 women fleeing violent or stressful situations. They will also receive emotional and professional assistance in tackling their particular healthcare needs. Instead of shared accommodation, they will have private rooms, an important consideration in their vulnerable state.

Nazareth House will be opening its new Anne's House for homeless women in January. It will have 28 studio apartments, with small communal kitchens on each of its three floors. There will be a range of interactive activities to provide a family-like environment to reduce their isolation and encourage a sense of community.

It is estimated that there are at least 6500 homeless women in Montreal. Add the growing numbers who need temporary shelter from threatening situations, and the problem looms large.

## Changes to affect anglo services?

As part of the Quebec government's announced austerity measures, major reform of the health and social services network is on the way. Abolition of the 18 regional HSS agencies and fusions among the 180 local HSS centres will change the face of healthcare delivery in the province.

The fate of some English-serving institutions may hang in the balance. The attempted merger of the Constance Lethbridge Rehabilitation Centre with its francophone counterparts, rather than with the MAB-Mackay Rehabilitation Centre, its neighbor and linguistic relative, has sounded an alarm. The anglophone community is expressing its concern.

## Aboriginal children at risk

The statistics are daunting. The rate at which First Nations children are placed in out-of-home care in Canada is over ten times that for non-native children. Five percent of the country's child population, they account for 18 percent of neglect and maltreatment investigations in the child welfare system. But that dire situation is due to change.

In August this year, the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada and the Assembly of First Nations filed a human rights claim with the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal charging the federal government with systematically discriminating against First Nations children by underfunding on-reserve child welfare services.

**Nico Trocmé**, principle of the McGill School of Social Work and leading researcher on native children's welfare, testified as an expert witness. "I've been directing national studies on the situation for 20 years," Trocmé explains. "Our data served as part of the argument for this legal challenge."

Trocmé points up two basic issues. "For so long, the federal government only funded removal of children, not funding the types of home-based social services to aboriginal families and communities that all other Canadians have access to. That's the initial injustice. On top of that, they've not addressed the poverty, housing and substance abuse that are the driving reasons for child neglect.

"That's why we're intervening at a very basic level," Trocmé says. "The Tribunal has the power to order the government to fund services at the same level as exists for all other Canadians. The challenge will then be to develop alternative, family-centred services, within a First Nations model."

Closing arguments by Tribunal interveners end in October, with a ruling expected early in the new year. "After the ruling – about which I'm very optimistic," Trocmé affirms, "we'll certainly remain involved; this is a priority area that we at the School will be engaged in for several decades to come."

## Palliative care 40 years in Canada

The term palliative care was coined in Montreal by Dr Balfour Mount, a pioneer in the field. In 1974 he initiated a uniquely comprehensive palliative care service at the Royal Victoria Hospital that included an inpatient unit, an outpatient clinic, consult service, bereavement support and a home care program. He founded Palliative Care McGill (PCM) which boasts an exceptional academic program and network of palliative care services that has served as a model for the world.

The wide reach of PCM is exemplified by its International Congress on Palliative Care held in Montreal in September. This biannual assembly has been attracting specialists in the field from all over the world for 20 years. Over 1600 people from 59 countries attended this year's congress. Persons from all disciplines serving palliative care patients shared in a wide range of discussion on topics ranging from innovative practice models to cutting-edge research.

At this year's gathering, delegates drafted a resolution to have hospice/palliative care included in the United Nations Sustainable Goals program. To sign this resolution: [www.palliativecare.ca](http://www.palliativecare.ca)

## Men Wanted

Batshaw Youth and Family Centres needs male volunteers to act as mentors or "big brothers" to its young male clients. "Most of Batshaw's volunteers are women," explains **David Hurley**, coordinator of volunteer services. "It's a challenge to get men involved in this kind of volunteering; they tend to favour helping out with sports activities. But it can be a very rewarding experience for guys, and it makes a big difference in the kids' lives."

Some Batshaw boys live at home, but many are in foster care or group homes. "Mentors can get them out into the community, and expose them to enriching activities," says Hurley. "We especially need Black and aboriginal men for role models." For information: 989 1885 ext 1234.

## Tackling teens' mental health

While awareness of the extent of mental illness in Canada has been steadily growing, one aspect that is only now attracting more attention is the plight of young people faced with mental illness. Whether affected by their own illness or that of people around them, they have not been part of the mental healthcare equation. In fact, it is reported that mental health care is so dysfunctional that 50 percent of teens do not get the care they need.

Help is at hand. A national project was launched in June to help youth deal with mental health issues. It is a five-year Canada-wide research program led by Dr. **Ashok Malla** of the Douglas Mental Health Institute. Its \$25 million cost is being shared by the federal government's Canadian Institutes of Health Research and the Graham Boeckh Foundation.

On another level, Batshaw Youth and Family Centres is moving to improve the agency's approach to addressing issues of mental health problems among young violent offenders. "We're equipping our frontline workers with information and tools to get a better grasp of the situations they encounter," explains **Sam Barile**, clinical activities specialist. "A one-day conference in January will bring them together with professionals in the field for the first time to look at this issue in a more global way. It's a start to our giving everybody a way of better communicating with each other. A series of training workshops will re-enforce that experience."

Another new development is a research program designed to help children whose parents suffer from bipolar disorder. It has been found that the stress these children suffer can cause serious problems in the long term: as adults, they are likely to develop disorders three to four times more often as those who grew up in bipolar-free families. Dr **Mark Ellenbogen** of Concordia University is leading a research project called RUSH (Reducing Unwanted Stress in the Home). Ellenbogen is looking for families with children between six and 11 to participate in his study. Participants will receive \$360. For information: 514 848 2424, ext. 5456.

## Seniors set to go

Results of recent research on Quebec's English-speaking seniors will be revealed at a special one-day provincial conference in Montreal on October 6. Organized by the Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN), attendees (by invitation only) will discuss the sociodemographic statistical data and the pan-Quebec consultation with seniors compiled for its Seniors Research Project.

The launch is partnered by Seniors Action Quebec, founded two years ago as a new advocacy group to promote the interests of Quebec's English-speaking seniors. "The information compiled by the project researchers is laying the groundwork for our upcoming action in the field," says **Ruth Pelletier**, SAQ president. "The concerns expressed by seniors will establish regional priorities and set the stage for developing action plans in the regions."

At the same time, SAQ is working on its own organizational plans. "We're getting into a major membership drive," says Pelletier. "We need more numbers to raise our profile, to have more clout. We're looking for both individuals and organizations – membership is only \$20. Money is always a concern, so fundraising activities are in the works. We're holding a one-day conference on dying with dignity, putting on a play on elder abuse and having a big variety show in the spring." For information: [ruthpelletier613@gmail.com](mailto:ruthpelletier613@gmail.com).

## Bullies beware

Quebec is going after bullies, and it is inviting all Quebecers to participate. An anti-bullying forum, to be held October 2, will bring together a broad spectrum of professionals concerned with the issue to contribute to development of a government action plan. The public and community organizations are invited to offer their opinions online or to submit proposals for action in the form of more detailed briefs. This public consultation continues until November 30, and can be accessed at [forumintimidation@mfa.gouv.qc.ca](mailto:forumintimidation@mfa.gouv.qc.ca).

## Montreal-led dementia research

Dr. **Howard Chertkow**, McGill professor and director of the memory clinic at the Jewish General Hospital, is directing a major dementia research program involving some 350 scientists in 20 teams across the country. The \$55.5 million Canadian Consortium for Neurodegeneration and Aging will focus on preventing and delaying disease and improving the lives of patients and their families. Their research is expected to accelerate progress toward a cure by 2025.

## Referrals show up system gaps

The Information and Referral Centre of Greater Montreal has noted that while the number of people at risk keeps growing constantly, the ability of community services to handle their requests for help has been becoming increasingly limited. According to the Centre's data, some of the most significant gaps occur in the unmet needs of seniors and the homeless, the lack of food assistance in some areas, transportation for seniors and the sick, mental health services and a shortage of social housing.

## Chinese volunteers on the rise

Chinese Family Services of Greater Montreal (CFSGM) is enjoying a boom in volunteerism. Last year the agency welcomed nearly 300 new volunteers, growing their numbers to over 1,000. They are a multicultural group, comprised of students, golden agers and new immigrants. All are eligible for the special volunteer awards of excellence the CFSGM offers each year.

## Seniors merge in the East

Four satellite seniors groups in Montreal North have been saved by merging with the Almage+ Centre in the east end. After five years of operation, these groups faced dissolution because of sponsors' budget cuts. REISA (East End Network of English-speaking Services) facilitated the Almage union.

## In brief

**Ralph Dadoun** was appointed director general and CEO of St. Mary's Hospital Centre.

**Jacquie Demers** is new executive director of the Montreal Diet Dispensary, succeeding **Marie-Paule Duquette**, who has retired after 45 years with the organization.

**Ozlem Erten** has been appointed manager of CSS Family/Child Services.

**Sara Saber-Freedman** was elected president of the board of MAB-Mackay Rehabilitation Centre.

The Foundation of Greater Montreal has a new address: 505, boul René-Levesque ouest, bureau 1000, Montréal H2Z 1Y7.

The English-Speaking Catholic Council is holding a community rally on November 14 at le Novel Hotel. For information: 514 937 2301, ext 256.

The annual Low-Beer Memorial Lecture, at 7 p.m. October 30, will feature a retired army Lieutenant-colonel speaking on PTSD. For information: [www.amiquebec.org](http://www.amiquebec.org).

The first **Kim Kurtz** Memorial Volunteer Awards were presented by Batshaw Youth and Family Services in the spring.

AMI-Quebec is offering a series of workshops on Caregiver Coping Skills, starting on October 28. For information: 514 486 1448.

October 1 is National Seniors Day.

International Volunteer Day will be held on December 5.

The editor welcomes story ideas: 514 937 4309

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