

Let's

Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre  
**Connect**

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25<sup>th</sup>

Summer 2011

## WOCRC Community Development *Seniors From Around The World*

Article submitted by Maria Matthews, WOCRC Community Developer

“*Good morning. 早安. Доброе утро. Buenos días. ਗੁੜ ਮੇਰਨਗਿ.*” began Cathy Jordan, Executive Director of the Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre (WOCRC). Fortunately, Cathy got some help with the languages from the eighty or more seniors and their families and friends who gathered to celebrate the richly diverse multiculturalism in the west end of Ottawa. City Councillor Marianne Wilkinson and WOCRC Board member, Charanjit Wadehra, joined the festivities on June 14th at the Kanata Baptist Church. The WOCRC event was a-buzz with energetic mingling across multiple languages, Family Album storytelling, cultural dances, poetry, songs, and a delectable lunch from the Indian Punjabi Clay Oven in Kanata.

A great deal of planning preceded this special event. WOCRC approached the City of Ottawa and requested financial assistance in building a plan for multicultural seniors wishing to expand knowledge about barriers to accessing services and engaging

with the community. The City of Ottawa supported the idea through a one-year funding grant. Connections were made among seniors' groups with multiple and differing languages and cultural backgrounds: Russian, Spanish, Cambodian, Punjabi, Chinese, and Canadian-born. The result was



a WOCRC Multicultural Seniors Advisory Committee. By engaging in discussions, we learned that language, transportation, income, citizenship status, grandchild care obligations, and cultural norms are some of the unique factors that determine how multicultural seniors engage with the community.

We also learned the importance of story-telling and sharing those 'kitchen table' stories of hope, of courage, of loss and trauma, of healing and jubilation. And so, with the help of a story-teller and an actress, we witnessed stories shared in the oral tradition with the full animation of tears, laughter, and heart-felt emotion. There were stories of immigration and refugee experiences of social and political contexts around the world. Through these stories, we learned about connecting across cultures and across languages. We came to appreciate the importance of celebrating differences and understanding the multitude of similarities that form the fabric of our community. And so, with grateful appreciation to the Multicultural Seniors Advisory Committee, the stories were compiled into a book written in multiple languages, which was presented to each member of the Advisory Committee during the final celebration of the City of Ottawa-funded initiative "Seniors from Around the World".

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## WOCRC 2010-2011 Annual Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast Celebrating 25 Years of Volunteering

Reproduction of the following article was provided courtesy of the Ottawa This Week Nepean Edition, and was reported by staff writer/photograph, Jennifer McIntosh.

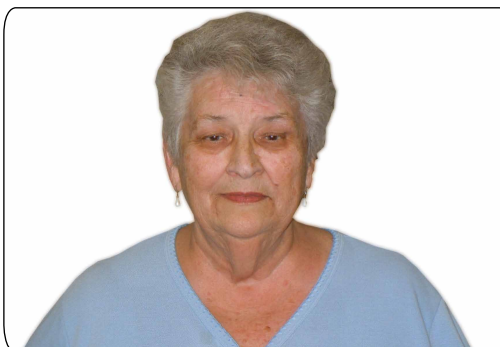
*"Volunteers provide nearly 20,000 hours of volunteer work a year. At minimum wage that is \$200,000 a year, and for a budget as small as ours, that is a big help!"* Cathy Jordan, Executive Director, WOCRC.

In the two years that Nepean Resident Doreen Reynolds has been volunteering with the Western Ottawa Community Resource's (WOCRC) Foot Care Clinic she has only taken one sick day. *"I remember calling another volunteer and they immediately asked me where Doreen was,"* said Cathy Jordan, Executive Director of WOCRC. Ms. Reynolds volunteers 50 hours per month calling to remind people of their appointments, and she often spends Saturdays at the clinic. *"She is always there to lend a hand,"* stated Cathy Jordan.

On May 6, Doreen Reynolds was presented with the Eva James Award in recognition for her contributions to the community. The award was named after a dedicated community volunteer who passed away suddenly in 1995. Eva James had enthusiastically volunteered in the community for over 15 years and was one of the key people who helped create what is now the WOCRC. Ms. James was also involved in local politics as a councilor with the now defunct City of Kanata.

Forty-seven volunteers were "pinned" at the volunteer appreciation breakfast in recognition of two, five and ten years of service. In addition to celebrating their volunteers, WOCRC was also

celebrating 25 years of volunteering. Kanata North Councilor Marianne Wilkinson, one of the first volunteers to get the ball rolling in the development of a community resource centre, regaled the group with stories about how the



Doreen Reynolds - WOCRC – CSS 2010-2011 Recipient of the Eva James Award

Centre came to be. *"There were four regional community centres inside the greenbelt, but nothing outside. We went to the powers that be and said we don't want you to run a community centre, we will run it, we just want a little bit of money,"* Wilkinson said. Armed with \$50,000 just enough to hire the first executive director Peggy Feltmate, the group moved into a small, cramped space at the Hazeldean Mall. *"It wasn't the best space, but it was cheap,"* Wilkinson said. Now the centre is housed at a brand new facility at MacNeil Court in Kanata.

Norm Sterling, the MPP for Carleton-Mississippi Mills, congratulated the volunteers and thanked the WOCRC for its service to the community. *"There are always people who fall through the cracks in the system and it's organizations like yours that are there to help them,"* he said. Judy Bower, a volunteer who has worked with the Peer Support group at WOCRC for 10 years, told the audience about her work. *"I find it amazing to be able to watch women rebuild themselves after all kinds of physical, mental and emotional abuse,"* she said. *"I have lost a lot of my shyness advocating for women and I hope to learn to be more patient."* Noreen Murphy started volunteering with the West Carleton Diners Club 10 years ago as a substitute for another volunteer and hasn't looked back. The Diners Club hosts a nutritional lunch, entertainment, and/ or educational program for seniors and adults with disabilities living in the community. *"All volunteers are aware you get more out of volunteering than you put in,"* Murphy said. *"My mother always told me to find a way to make myself useful."*

**For more information on volunteering, please contact Laine Johnson at 613-591-3686 x 280 or via E-mail at [johnson@wocrc.ca](mailto:johnson@wocrc.ca)**

## Executive Director's Message



*Celebration is the key word these days at the Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre (WOCRC). In June, the WOCRC's Multicultural Advisory Committee hosted their successful event "Seniors Around the World". And, in September 2011, the Centre will be celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of bringing care and community together in western Ottawa.*

As a member of the Coalition of Community Health and Resource Centres in Ottawa ([www.coalitionottawa.ca](http://www.coalitionottawa.ca)), the WOCRC recognizes the importance of responding to the diversity of needs within local communities and pays particular attention to those members of the community who are most vulnerable and at risk. One such example of diversity is multiculturalism within western Ottawa. The number of immigrants and visible minorities has experienced a significant growth since the Centre opened its doors in 1986. Between 1996 and 2006, the Canadian Censuses reported a growth in the number of immigrants living in the catchment area, with an increase from 12,570 to 21,795, while the number of visible minorities also experienced a sharp climb in population of 132% during those years. The WOCRC is proud of its history of support within the multicultural environment, and applauds the success

of the Centre's first-of-its-kind multicultural event held in the month of June. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Multicultural Advisory Committee for their tireless and dedicated work in making this event an excellent example of 'Diversity at its best!'

This summer is a busy time at the WOCRC, as staff prepare for the launch of the Centre's 25th Anniversary celebrations, which will be held on September 19th from 4:30p.m. to 6:30p.m. The anniversary celebration will incorporate an open house, and a trade show highlighting all the programs and services offered by the WOCRC. The open house will also complement the WOCRC's Annual General Meeting, which will be an opportunity for the Centre to provide members, partners, stakeholders, volunteers and the general population with an overview of the successes within the past fiscal year. So don't forget to mark your calendars and join in the festivities as we celebrate 25 years of 'Bringing Care and Community Together'.

## You're Just a Click Away to [www.wocrc.ca](http://www.wocrc.ca)!

The Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre (WOCRC) is pleased to announce the launch of its new website [www.wocrc.ca](http://www.wocrc.ca). Combining easy navigation tools, clear descriptions of programs and services, and an easy to remember web address [www.wocrc.ca](http://www.wocrc.ca), the new WOCRC website is the place to go to learn about who we are, what we do and why we do it!



## Royal LePage Shelter Foundation - Supporting Shelters Across Canada



Royal LePage Shelter Foundation - Supporting Shelters Across Canada  
- From right - Mary Brown and Terry Longhorn from Royal LePage Team Realty presenting a cheque to WOCRC's Martine Dore, Manager, Chrysalis House and Cathy Jordan, Executive Director.

On Wednesday, June 22nd, Mary Brown, R.L. Team Realty Owner, and Terry Longhorn, Broker, Royal LePage Team Realty presented a cheque in the amount of \$4,260.00 to the WOCRC's Executive Director, Cathy Jordan, and Martine Dore, Manager, Chrysalis House. The proceeds resulted from a garage sale organized by the Royal LePage Team office in Stittsville. The event was part of an annual national fundraising initiative hosted by the Royal LePage Shelter Foundation, whereby offices from across the country come together to raise money in support of local women's shelters and violence prevention programs. In its third year of hosting garage sales across the country, **the Foundation set new records by raising more than \$410,000.00.**



## WOCRC Peer Support Poster Contest *Love Shouldn't be a Battlefield!*

*"The message on the posters is so, so powerful...the contest helps to spread the word that violence is not OK." Cathy Jordan, Executive Director, WOCRC.*

On Wednesday, June 22nd, Cathy Jordan, Executive Director WOCRC, and Terry Longhorn of the WOCRC Peer Support program, awarded prizes to the winners of the Peer Support Program Poster Contest. Contestants were required to create artwork or take a photo that depicted what they wanted their friends to know about relationship abuse, and that love should never hurt you! "A healthy relationship is definitely a key," said first place winner Hailey Kehler, a grade 11 student at Sacred Heart Catholic High School in Sittsville. Commenting on the posters, she added, "It doesn't just affect the outside physically, but emotionally too." Hailey was presented with an iPod for her winning design. Lisa Cummings, who took second place for her "Stop and Look" poster, shared her reasons for entering the contest, "I think it's important. You want to trust the person



Starting from the Right – Honourable mention Kathrine Marincak, Second and First place winners Lisa Cummings and Hailey Kehler with WOCRC's Executive Director, Cathy Jordan and Shelley Evelyn, Peer Support Coordinator, and Terry Longhorn, Broker, Royal LePage Team Reality.

*you're going to be with, and by raising awareness people learn that there's help out there for them."* Honourable mentions were A.Y. Jackson students Nicole Madore, Lizz Jackson, Cynthia Ritchie and Kathrine Marincak.

Thanks to all who participated and supported the initiative of the WOCRC Peer Support Program.

## WOCRC Success Story

*The following Success Story was provided by Hai Bao Sun from the WOCRC Multicultural Seniors Advisory Committee. His story is also in a book entitled "The Stories of Multicultural Lives United in One Community", which features stories submitted by members of the Multicultural Seniors Advisory Committee.*

### *"Friends from Other Communities" by Hai Bao Sun*

“After retiring in 2001, my wife and I moved to Ottawa, Canada to live with our son and his family. Apart from doing some house work and taking care of our grandchildren, we only attended activities held by different local Chinese communities, had little understanding of mainstream communities. To make things worse, I lived a lonely life and became more isolated from the society after my wife passed away. Last August, I got a chance to attend the Multi-cultural Senior Advisory group being held by the Western Ottawa community Resource Center in Kanata Baptist church. In the past ten months, I got to know seniors from other cultures and their lives in Canada through interpretation, thus, built up friendship with them. We also discussed the community development, shared experience, attended activities in other communities and learned how to develop similar activities in our own community. I even shared our culture by inviting them

to join us in our Chinese New Year celebration.

In the past, I barely had any knowledge about other ethnic groups because of lack of opportunities. However, I now believe that there is no barrier in sharing our true feeling though the languages may be barriers. I am a stammer, I used to feel uncomfortable when speaking to the public, but I feel more confident now. As long as the interpretation service is available, I am willing to participate more in similar events in the future. I sincerely invite seniors from other ethnic groups to join the activities of Kanata Chinese Seniors Social Club. I wish that Canada would become a more multi-cultural community.”



## The Clothesline Project Breaking the Silence of Violence



Participants strike a powerful message while creating T-shirt art.



Each year, the Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre's Peer Support Program volunteers participate in The Clothesline Project. An international event, the objective of the project that started in Cape Cod in 1990, is to raise awareness of the issue of violence against women. To support the project and its goal, the WOCRC peer supporters organized an event in June, whereby community members gathered and participated in the exercise of painting T-shirts in support of 'Breaking the Silence' and giving other women a chance to heal from the effects of violence.

### What our Clients are Saying...

*"I am absolutely amazed with the Meals on Wheels Program. It's excellent in every way."*

*"As a caregiver and parent, it gives me many resources [EYC], and I love the fact that I can bring my kids to playgroups and programs – getting us out of the house and socialization for kids and me!"*

*"Mother Goose is an excellent program that supports parents by helping to develop language in babies. It further gives us tools (songs, rhymes) to help us get through daily life with our infants. A must attend for new parents...excellent!"*

*"My daughter is more confident. She seems to feel she has been given the "right" to speak more than before and is understood by others."  
[VAW – Child Witness Program]*

*"What wonderful facilitators and an encouraging and supportive group of women."  
[VAW Counselling Program]*



### Keeping You Connected

Let's Connect is published a minimum of four times a year – spring, summer, fall & winter – to keep you informed of news and activities at the WOCRC. If you would like to read more about a specific topic or have a story idea, please email [info@wocrc.ca](mailto:info@wocrc.ca) and we'll try to cover it in an upcoming issue!

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