



Let's Connect

Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre | Oct. 2016

The WOCRC celebrates 30th anniversary with Open House

Cold and rainy weather doesn't discourage community members from attending event



Lucky girl Zoe Landry is chosen to be part of one of Junkyard Symphony's acts.

Well over 400 members of the west end community celebrated the WOCRC's 30th anniversary at its Open House on Sept. 26, 2016.

This year's event marked an important milestone: the WOCRC has been making a difference in the community of far west Ottawa for 30 years. Appropriately, this year's Open House was bigger than ever before. After all, the Centre had much to celebrate.

"I was impressed with the amount of people that came out to the event," said Maria Friis, Community Developer for the Centre. "We do really great work so it was nice to celebrate that work alongside the community."

The annual event, usually held in September of each year, showcases the various programs the Centre and its partners offer through a

booth and display treasure hunt in which participants collect stickers from each visited booth in order to be entered into a prize draw. In most years, the Centre has offered free barbecued food.

In addition to these activities, this year's event featured live entertainment by Chris Dorey, Junkyard Symphony and Elliot Hirkala of the Centre's The ZONE Youth Drop-In. To mark the special anniversary, cupcakes were also offered.

Politicians, current and past board members and key players in the Centre's creation were present. Mayor Jim Watson, Councillors Wilkinson, Hubley and Qadri, and Member of Parliament Karen McCrimmon addressed the crowd.

However, Councillor Wilkinson was

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Western Ottawa
Community
Resource Centre



[www.wocrc.ca](#)

2 MacNeil Court
Kanata, Ont.
K2L 4H7

BN: 12821 9201 RR 0001



What's New?



New Website

We have launched a newly redesigned website. Check it out at [www.wocrc.ca!](http://www.wocrc.ca)



Executive Director Twitter Account

Executive Director Cathy Jordan is now on Twitter! @ED_WOCRC



We're on LinkedIn!

Follow us for job opportunities and other updates.



Walk-In Hours

Our crisis counselling walk-in and phone-in hours are:

Monday: 8:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.*

Tuesday-Friday**: 1-4 p.m.*

*Last walk-in is 30 mins before.

** No walk-ins on Wednesdays.



All Gender Washrooms

We have installed inclusive washrooms at our public facilities.

New Adult Day Program

We have opened a new Adult Day Program at Algonquin College. For more information please call 613-591-3686 or email info@wocrc.ca.

Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre – proudly serving the community for 30 years!

Thirty years ago, the Kanata Community Resource Centre opened its doors. The inaugural Board chaired by Marianne Wilkinson was determined to address identified community needs including sudden marriage breakdown, isolation, drastic income reduction due to job loss, and transportation to services in Ottawa. With a budget of \$27,000, the Board hired Peggy Feltmate as its first coordinator, and the rest is history.

Today, the WOCRC serves the entire west end of Ottawa (geographically, that includes the former City of Kanata and the former townships of Goulbourn and West Carleton) and offers a range of health and social services to meet the needs of the community. With the leadership from a Board of 14 community members, services provided by nearly 100 staff and over 200 volunteers, and a budget of \$6.7 million, the Centre provides programs and services to thousands of residents of all ages – from new parents and their children to supporting seniors to remain in their homes.

Over the past 30 years, the community has grown rapidly and the environment in which we work has changed significantly. Interestingly, the needs identified by the first Board are very similar to those identified by the community today. We regularly hear from our community about challenges such as access to health and social services (including mental health services), struggles related to low income, access to transportation, and affordable housing to name a few.

And so it is clear we have much more to do in the next 30 years – not only continuing to provide programs and services to meet the needs of the community, but also continuing efforts to address the root causes so as to prevent issues from arising.

As many know, I have announced my retirement.



Photo by Danielle Lynn Photography.

The WOCRC was fortunate to have only had two executive directors in its 30-year history: Peggy Feltmate from 1986 to 2003, at which time I had the honour of being hired. I am proud of the work of Peggy and I (and the team of board members, staff, volunteers and partners) as we grew the little resource centre to the strong leading organization it is today.

As we look back and celebrate our first 30 years, it is with excitement that I look forward to what is on the horizon for the WOCRC and our community and to passing the baton to the next executive director.

Sincerely,

Cathy Jordan
Executive Director

30th Anniversary continued from first page



Top-left: Councillor Marianne Wilkinson tells the story of how WOCRC started. **Top-right:** Executive Director Cathy Jordan accepts flowers from the Centre's Board of Directors and staff. **Left:** Junkyard Symphony wows the crowd with a tricky balancing and juggling act. **Bottom-right:** Junkyard Symphony calls out to the crowd for a volunteer. **Bottom-left:** People from WOCRC's past and present came together for a group photo.

attending in a different capacity: as an important player in the creation of the WOCRC and the Chair of the Centre's Steering Committee three decades ago. She, Heather Colls, the Centre's first Board Chair and Peggy Feltmade, the Centre's first Executive Director, spoke about the early beginnings of what is now called the Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre: "There were crises in the community and the community resource centre responded," Feltmate said. "After 30 years, they are still responding."

Due to the anticipated size of the event, the Centre hired Administrative Coordinator of the Ottawa Community Support Coalition, Michelle Hill, to plan the event.

"It was a pleasure working with the dedicated staff and volunteers as we celebrated Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre's 30 years of providing community care and services," said Hill. "This event truly demonstrated the wonderful services the WOCRC provides to the community."

Executive Director of the WOCRC
Cathy Jordan said she was thrilled with the event. "It was such an amazing night – the celebration of 30 years, the profiles of current programs and services and the involvement of the Board of Directors, volunteers, staff and the community," said Jordan.

The weather, a common topic that night, was cold and rainy and yet the turnout was impressive.

"It's inspiring that over 400 people showed up despite the weather," said Jordan. "And to have politicians and the Mayor – we know how busy he is – it really shows the support we have from our elected officials."

As for the planning of the event, Jordan is really proud of the Open House planning committee. "It's amazing what a small, yet dedicated group of staff can accomplish," she said. "It reminds me of a famous quote by Margaret Mead: 'Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has.'"



Findings from consultations on seniors living in rural settings lead to next steps

Led by a rural community development project funded by United Way Ottawa, the WOCRC has completed significant community engagement with residents of West Carleton and is moving forward on community-led action and implementation based on findings.

The project sought feedback on rural residents' needs to age independently in place, in their own community and preferably at home. The objective was to determine how the WOCRC could support this desire with the continued support from the United Way Ottawa Better Neighbourhoods funding.

Four hundred residents participated in the engagement process in multiple venues from October 2015 to May 2016. Feedback was gathered through forums, consultations, personal interviews and surveys and led to the development of an action plan by a task force of community champions and partners.

The results will change the WOCRC's current service delivery model to residents in rural west Ottawa with the goal of an engaged and empowered community invested in their own health and well-being. The Ottawa Social Planning Council will evaluate the entire engagement process and outcomes, focusing on community vitality. The evaluation was funded by the Rural Ontario Institute's Measuring Community Vitality Initiative, and will be the subject of the WOCRC's presentation at the Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation's conference "Building Vibrant Rural Futures" in October.

Reported by the community through feedback was the absence of resources that allow residents to remain living independently and has been labelled a top priority. Older adults leave their homes prematurely as there are neither long-term care beds – nor supportive or assisted housing units in this rural community – and move into unfamiliar urban and suburban settings.

Funding from the HRSDC and the Champlain LHIN will support the development of a senior peer support curriculum and ensuing model of service that will aim to reduce social isolation of older adults in rural communities. The peer support, or community helper model of social support will assist older adults with daily activities. At the present time, community helpers will provide unpaid and volunteer service.

The creation of a hub – a senior's centre that will include social, recreational, educational and wellness service opportunities and will provide access to transportation, education, volunteer coordination and services for those with a diagnosis of dementia – has been identified as a solution.

This model of service delivery for the rural community includes site development at three mobile rural hubs that will serve as home bases from which the WOCRC, the community, and other partners will offer a myriad of services. Current partnerships in this endeavor include AROW HealthLinks, the WCFHT Community Paramedic program, the WCFHT, the Alzheimer Society of Renfrew and Ottawa, Ottawa Public Health, local food groups and a number of faith communities.



Community consultation with rural seniors and caregivers in Pakenham at the Mills CSS Bridging Generations event in November 2015.

The WOCRC's LHIN- and Ottawa-funded transportation program and volunteer/paid driver program is currently under review and will be enhanced in order to raise awareness, reduce fees to engender equity (the current transportation fees to rural communities disproportionately disadvantages people in rural communities) and develop a local network of drivers, whose home base will be at a hub. The Centre is considering the possibility of developing shuttles for grocery shopping, as well as dedicated drives to appointments by stationing a WOCRC vehicle in the community.

In terms of community capacity building, a group of 19 West Carleton men, the Men's Ministry, proposed to develop a local network of residents available to help with small home maintenance activities. The engagement process identified that many older adults want local support and maintenance done by local people they can trust as they fear scams. The WOCRC is working with these and other community members to determine how the Centre can act as a shared platform and support these volunteers with training (mental health and addictions, signs of cognitive decline, communications, personal boundaries, etc.), funding, liability coverage, and communications support.

Lack of affordable, supportive or assisted housing was also identified as a priority. The WOCRC convened a meeting with the Anglican Diocese of Ottawa, who have both a mandate to build a specific number of affordable units, and a commitment to working rurally. The WOCRC offered to organize a meeting with others indicating an interest in rural housing, with a goal to collectively build a model of affordable housing for seniors that could work in rural settings and act as a hub for social supports. Since the original meeting in June, the Centre identified a number of other partners to engage, including the United Church Presbytery, social service and community support services partners, and other groups.

The WOCRC presents story of West Carleton engagement at Guelph conference this month

Director of Programs and Services Michelle Murray and Rural Community Developer Julie McKercher shared the story of the WOCRC's engagement with West Carleton to get at the "rural realities" and challenges of aging in place at the 2016 Building Vibrant Rural Futures Conference in Guelph.

They walked participants through the experience and identified key factors in the community-led process that resulted in the establishment of priorities and rural, place-based solutions. Over many months in 2016, staff heard from more than 400 rural residents through facilitated large scale forums, telephone

interviews, letters, emails, a blog, as well as one-on-one and by proxy interviews to arrive at the co-creation and grassroots program design that will support an innovative hub model for social service delivery in West Carleton.

The multiple approaches identified existing and potential assets and potential partnerships, priorities and one big "enabling solution" to facilitate aging in place for rural residents in West Carleton. Key themes to be explored are organizational leadership and commitment, front-end loading and the importance of co-creation.



Have your say: What matters to you in the City of Ottawa?

At the WOCRC, we've seen a 57% increase since 2011 in the number of clients accessing our Intake Counselling Services, yet funding for this service remains the same. This is consistent with findings in a recent Carleton University Centre for Urban Research and Education report , highlighting funding to community and social services 'significantly lags behind the rate of overall population growth' and hasn't kept pace with funding to other important City services.

In our WOCRC Counselling Services, we're seeing the impact of growing demand along with funding not keeping pace. The sheer volume has doubled but we have the same staffing. Previously, client appointments could be booked within two weeks. Currently, wait times are between three to five weeks, or longer. We used to respond to calls within 24 hours. Currently, our voice message indicates 72 hours. In one day, there were eight crisis walk-ins and 30 phone calls. For people suffering over a long period, that leads to increased mental health issues. Our highly qualified, experienced, dedicated, and compassionate Counsellors find it challenging to keep up with this level of demand. At times, they express a sense of feeling rushed with clients, knowing there are so many more clients to meet with.

We have made changes to try and meet the growing need but it takes time to re-think how to manage. We've shortened walk-in hours to allow for more client counselling appointments; we're redirecting clients who live outside our catchment area; we developed a group for clients struggling with anxiety and depression issues; we've partnered with organizations that provide housing and budget-related supports; we're training volunteers to support clients with complex applications for home energy cost assistance; we're proactively seeking students to support client demand; our program manager and qualified staff from other services are providing more front-line crisis counselling as back-up; and more.

We've reached a crisis point; we're beyond capacity. Although increased funding to meet the growing demand for services would support the immediate and growing crisis, pressures across the system are contributors. Long-term counselling has longer wait lists, so we're seeing more demand for short-term and crisis counselling. Given the increased cost of living, lack of affordable housing, and

rising cost of food, minimum wage isn't enough to cover basic needs.

It's a band-aid solution and we're meeting the needs of folks coming forward, but there is an epidemic of folks not making ends meet. It affects how families interact. It affects youth homelessness. It affects the increase in anxiety we're seeing in the past five years.

With Ottawa City Council commitment to cap property taxes at a 2% increase, trimming budgets and controlling spending leaves community and social services struggling to respond to growing demand. It's draft City Budget time and we all have an opportunity to have a say. What matters to you in the City of Ottawa? *Making Voices Count*, an initiative of Community Health and Resource Centres and City for All Women Initiative, alongside residents and community partners, has three requests of City Council this fall:

- Social Infrastructure: Provide a two-year additional funding envelope of \$500,000 per year in the 2017 City Budget for city-funded social services' crisis pressures.
- Social Infrastructure: To commit to working with community social service partners in developing a long-term social infrastructure investment plan. Our plan would address multiple and complex needs of a growing and increasingly diverse Ottawa population. Our plan would show Ottawa as a compassionate city, putting health and wellbeing of people first, especially those marginalized and in need.
- Transit: Our City makes funding the Low-Income Transit Pass (LITP) a priority, so that the LITP is available to all low-income residents starting no later than January 2017.

Written in collaboration by:

Cathy Lawery, Counselling Services Manager and Maria Friis, Community Developer, a combined 32+ years of working at the Centre.

¹ Steve Pomeroy and Maude Marquis-Bissonnette (2016): Is The City of Ottawa Balancing its Budget on the Backs of the Poor?. Retrieved September 23, 2016 from <https://carleton.ca/cure/wp-content/uploads/Is-the-City-of-Ottawa-balancing-its-Budget-on-the-Backs-of-the-Poor.pdf>

Volunteer Feature: Jim Mastronardi

After a career in high tech, Jim Mastronardi sees volunteering for the Adult Day Program as a way of balancing his life.

Jim Mastronardi is part of the Wednesday's Gentlemen's Club. That's what the clients who attend the WOCRC's Adult Day Program call themselves because the group happens to only consist of men.

"They thought I was one of the clients," says Mastronardi because he volunteers for the ADP every Wednesday. "It feels more like we're friends."

After a career in high tech, research and product development, Mastronardi sees volunteering as a way of balancing his life.

He lives close by and was curious about the fourth floor expansion of the WOCRC facility being built in 2009. He was looking for something to do after retiring from Nortel. Coincidentally, the Centre was looking for ADP volunteers, particularly men.

"It's hard to get male

volunteers," explains Brenda Delahay, ADP Program Coordinator, adding that it's unusual that the WOCRC's ADP sees so many male clients. "Across the city, day programs typically see more women." She jokes, "We must be good looking over here."

Mastronardi volunteered his time to the Centre between 2009 and 2010 and again from 2014 to present in ADP and transportation roles such as Meals on Wheels. He also works as a paid driver for the ADP, driving clients to and from the Program and to appointments on Mondays and Tuesdays.

Over his years of volunteering, he says he's developed a unique relationship with the clients.

"What I find fascinating is people here with a form of dementia problem will tell you about their past life in

detail like the kinds of cars they drove, their vacations; but don't remember what happened 15 minutes ago," Mastronardi says. "It jars me back to reality."

"He's concerned if a client is gone to long-term care," says Delahay. "He says, 'that's too bad.'"

Delahay says Mastronardi will do anything to make clients laugh, adding that staff and volunteers in the ADP can all act a little silly from time to time. For example, if soup is on the menu for lunch, he'll come up with a funny name for the soup like "Cream of Green Stuff."

"We'll throw away the rules of a game to make it simple and more fun," says Mastronardi.

Delahay says adapting activities to the clients is an important part of running an ADP. "We continuously update our assessment of



clients and rely on people like Jim when an activity is no longer appropriate for them," she explains further. "He takes initiative and lets us know when an activity is not working and suggests how to change it."

She does, however, say the Wednesday's Gentlemen's Club loves to play poker and other card games, adding she'd love a Euchre rematch against Jim in the near future.

Left: Adult Day Program volunteer and paid driver, Jim Mastronardi, began giving back to his community after retiring from Nortel.

Below: Mastronardi often allows himself to look slightly silly to get a laugh from clients. Here he is wearing velcro on his back (and a tin on his head) as a twist on the traditional game of velcro toss.



Call for Volunteers

Are you looking to lend some of your time and talent to your community?

The WOCRC is always looking for someone like you!

Contact our Volunteer Coordinator today at volunteer@wocrc.ca or 613-591-3686 and learn more about the great ways you can help your community.



Meet our Board of Directors: Mary-Ann Rowan, Vice-Chair

Mary-Ann's history with the WOCRC is an extensive one, having started in 2001. Her first contacts with the Centre were as a client, as a woman experiencing violence in her home.

Mary-Ann was referred to the WOCRC, where she attended appointments with violence against women counsellors. The appointments were disguised as shopping trips so her partner wouldn't know. Several months later, she fled her husband on a cold February night out in the country with her three children, a flashlight and a purse. Astonishingly, she says "no one heard us leave and the dog didn't bark."

She then began her volunteering career with the Centre as a greeter at the Champagne on Ice events and then on with the Centre's Peer Support Program as a peer supporter between court dates. "It was empowering to help out," she says. Though she is no longer actively volunteering with the Program as a peer supporter, she still remains active as part of the organizing committee for the December 6 Vigil and regularly attends its social action events and advocates on issues to promote change.

Additionally, she wrote an article for the Clothesline Project's Peer Supporter newsletter, which is an opportunity for

women and children to put messages on t-shirts along the theme of ending violence against women, and was involved with the annual vigil, in a client capacity where she was asked to tell her story of survival as a guest speaker. She was also interviewed on the Shelter from the Storm Radio Telethon, on CBC Radio by Kathleen Petty, and was a guest speaker at City Hall for National Victims Week. "Talk about going out of your comfort zone," she says.

Executive Director of the WOCRC Cathy Jordan suggested to Mary-Ann that she should apply for a position on the Board of Directors. She was selected and joined the Board in October 2011.

"The special thing she brings to the Board is a real understanding of the barriers faced by clients," Cathy says. "She brings this to the Board's decision-making."

Mary-Ann is on three Board committees: Board Development, Executive and Health Equity. She says she enjoys "knowing what's going on." Being on the Board has given her a voice and an opportunity to express her opinions.

She adds a unique perspective to the Healthy Equity Committee, as a member who lives with a disability. Board Members completed health equity



Mary-Ann Rowan is leaving the Board of Directors after completing her sixth year.

training last fall and she says she saw "the light bulbs going off in their minds." She adds that client stories show the Board why they're here. "It opens [our] eyes," she says.

"I so enjoy working with Cathy," she says. "People don't realize her dedication." Coincidentally, both Cathy's and Mary-Ann's tenure is coming to an end in 2017.

After six years of service on the Board of Directors, Mary-Ann is leaving in June. "The WOCRC will always hold a special place in my heart," she says. The Centre will miss her infectious smile.

Are you a client of the WOCRC? We want to tell your story!

What does this entail?

A staff member will interview you and write your story for an issue of *Let's Connect*. You can divulge as little or as much information as you're comfortable with. If you would like to use a fake name that's okay too.

What type of questions will we ask?

How and why you became a client, what your experience was receiving our services, how it changed your life, to name a few.

Why do we want your story?

As a non-profit organization that has as its mandate to help people, it's important to demonstrate the work that we do. We care about the people we serve and we want others to know that they can better their life as well, just as many of our clients have.

If you're interested in sharing your story, please call 613-591-3686 ext. 286 or email communications@wocrc.ca.

Donor Feature: Royal Canadian Legion Branch #638

Long-time donor Kanata Legion raises funds for the WOCRC through two campaigns

"It's amazing how much is raised in these small tins," says Doug Rowland, Chair of the Poppy Trust Fund of the Royal Canadian Legion Branch #638 (Kanata). He's referring to the poppy donation boxes around town from the end of October to just before Remembrance Day.

Through the Poppy Campaign, between \$85,000 and \$100,000 is raised each year from donations received for poppies and wreaths. The Kanata Legion donates a portion of these funds to the WOCRC.

The Poppy Trust must follow guidelines that dictate where donations can go and is approved by a panel and the Royal Canadian Legion Ontario Command. A mandate of the Trust is to help veterans in need.

The WOCRC, specifically Meals on Wheels, Community Support Services and the general fund, was chosen as a recipient because it largely serves the senior population, and likely veterans and/or their families.

"The breadth of your activities is amazing," says Moira Green, Poppy Campaign Chair of the Poppy Trust Fund. "If we help Meals on Wheels, we know it will help your other activities."

The Kanata Legion's Gaming Trust Fund also donates to the Centre but in a different capacity. Through Sunday Bingo and a weekly Catch the Ace raffle, the Gaming Trust Fund raises funds and normally donates between \$18,000 and \$20,000 every year to non-profit organizations in the west end. Chrysalis House, the WOCRC's women's shelter, is a regular



Chair of the Poppy Trust Fund Doug Rowland (left) and Poppy Campaign Chair Moira Green (middle) present Executive Director Cathy Jordan with a cheque.

recipient of this support.

Chairman of the Gaming Trust Fund, Clay Wheaton, says it's nice to give.

"We're familiar with Chrysalis House and we contacted them a few years ago to ask about their needs," explains Wheaton.

In addition to cash donations, the Fund bought Chrysalis House a snow blower and an oven – two items the shelter desperately needed. Since then, the Legion has been regularly supporting the shelter.

"We do it because we're good citizens," says Wheaton.

In addition to the items mentioned above, the Legion has made cash donations that were applied to general programming for the shelter.

Martine Dore, manager of Chrysalis House, says the Legion's donations have made an impact on the shelter. "Our relationship with the Kanata Legion has

resulted in some very tangible benefits to the women and children who have used our services throughout the years," she says.

The Kanata Legion and the Bells Corners Legion have donated to the Centre for a long time. For instance, since 2006, the Royal Canadian Legion Branch #638 supported the Centre with over \$27,700 worth of cash and in-kind donations.

"It's committed people like everyone at the Legion who help make our community a better place," says Cathy Jordan, the WOCRC's executive director. "These donations are an example of that commitment."

When asked about what it's like to donate, Green says money is secondary.

When you exchange a donation for a poppy, Green says remembrance is the most important thing: "The message of remembrance is what counts."

The WOCRC is a non-profit organization and relies on donations so we can continue our work.

Your support can help someone in need, right here in your community!

To donate online, visit wocrc.ca, call our office at 613-591-3686 or email us at donate@wocrc.ca.

Tax receipts are issued for donations over \$10.