



AUGUST & SEPTEMBER 2023



MONTÉRÉGIE

WEST COMMUNITY NETWORK

A word from Pauline



Dear Community Members,

So many of us are in vacation mode. It is so short-lived that we need to soak up the sun, listen to the rustling of the leaves in the wind, and enjoy the simple songs of the different birds. I am enjoying my garden this summer as it comes alive in colour. The different flowers, showing themselves at different points and becoming so vivid from the warm rain. As I drive along the 30 to my office throughout the summer, I watch the farmers planting and each day the showers come and water consistently.

I could almost see the corn growing before my very eyes. In June, we began enjoying the fruits of the season, such as cherries and strawberries. Bonnie, one of our members, declared that her pear tree has an abundance of fruit. In July, I began to enjoy radishes, shallots, and fresh tomatoes from the garden. How lucky are we that now, we can pause, and despite the chaos in the world around us, we can say how fortunate we are to be living in Canada, enjoying an abundance of everything.

Pauline Wiedow - Executive Director



We recently lost a longtime member of MWCN, Zorica Derkovic who was 94. We had just been planning her 95th birthday in January in the garden at Mary Elizabeth Noonan. Zorica was a very special person who was very active and wanted to join in so many things and always enjoyed helping others.



Zorica, who is originally from Croatia, was always so thankful to Canada who took her in despite her having a handicapped child. She had been waiting 3 years in a refugee camp in Italy. We will celebrate her life on August 6th at 2pm at St-Edwards Presbyterial Church. All are welcome. We invite you to contact us by calling 514-804-3064 to reserve your seat and learn more about this very dedicated Canadian Lady.

MWCN Annual General Meeting

Although MWCN has been in operation since 1999, our 1st Annual General Meeting was in 2004, the year we received our Charter. The MWCN's 21st Annual General Meeting was held on Tuesday, June 13th from 4-7pm at the Chateaugay Legion Branch 108. We are so thankful for this partnership which we have developed and which offers opportunities to support each other.

There were 60 members present to hear the reports from our coordinators in Pincourt, Huntingdon, Hemmingford, Chateaugay, and Candiac. There was also the report from our Employability Coordinator who works in the entire region of the Montérégie West which includes a territory of over 100,000 English-speakers. Of course the Accountant, Jonathan Dionne, from the accounting firm of Brodeur & Letourneau also presented our well-balanced financial statement for deposit.

We want to thank the Board Members who served from 2021-2022 and 2022-2023, Merlin Halliday, Don Rosenbaum, and Frank Cholette who have decided to step down at this time. Your implication in the work of supporting the MWCN and the increased responsibilities that growth requires has been very valuable. We know that we will be working together in another capacity that will be equally important to sustaining our organization. Thank You!

Now it gives me great pleasure to introduce the new members of the board. Some have 1 more year to complete, and the newly elected members come in for a 2-year mandate. We stagger the numbers to ensure continuity.

Lise Brunette - President (Roussillon)

Laura Bustamante - Director (Beaubarnois / Salaberry)

Sherry Comeau - Director (Vaudreuil-Soulanges)

Marlene Davies - Director (Roussillon)

Carolyn Galloway - Director (Vaudreuil-Soulanges)

Chuck Halliday - Secretary (ex officio) (Roussillon)

Maureen Hoas - Director (Roussillon)

Lucy Khatchadourian - Director (Vaudreuil-Soulanges)

Jayme McClintock - Director (Haut St-Laurent)

Harikrishnan Nair - Director (Roussillon)

Susan Parker - Director (Roussillon)

Tracy Wilkins - Director (Roussillon)



Congratulations to all and I look forward to working with you as we continue to embrace the many challenges that are coming our way to improve the quality of life for the English-speaking community. We want to ensure that our presence and our support at the different tables will represent each member adequately. Thank you for your trust and confidence.

Pauline Wiedow - Executive Director

Travelling Tips for Seniors: Ensuring Safe and Comfortable Adventures

Dear members,

We hope this newsletter finds you in good health and high spirits. The summer is here, and as the world opens for travel, we understand that many of you are eager to embark on new adventures and explore different destinations. To ensure your travel experiences are safe, comfortable, and memorable, we have gathered some valuable tips specifically tailored for you!



- 1. Invest in Travel Insurance:** Before embarking on any journey, consider purchasing travel insurance. It provides financial protection in case of unforeseen events such as medical emergencies, trip cancellations, and lost luggage. Research reputable insurance providers that offer comprehensive coverage suitable for your needs.
- 2. Pack Smart and Light:** Packing essentials can make or break your travel experience. Create a checklist to ensure you have all the necessary items, including comfortable clothing, medication, toiletries, and travel documents. Consider packing a small first-aid kit, a universal adapter for electronic devices, and a comfortable pair of walking shoes.
- 3. Accessible Accommodations:** When choosing accommodations, prioritize accessibility. Look for hotels or vacation rentals that offer rooms with grab bars, non-slip surfaces, and wide doorways. Additionally, inquire about wheelchair ramps, elevator access, and proximity to amenities such as pharmacies and medical facilities. Advanced bookings are recommended to secure suitable accommodations.
- 4. Plan for Comfort and Flexibility:** Travelling should be a pleasure, not a hassle. Opt for direct flights or choose a route with short layovers to minimize stress. If travelling by car, plan for regular breaks and make sure to have comfortable seating arrangements. Consider travelling during off-peak times to avoid crowds and enjoy a more relaxed experience.
- 5. Stay Informed and Take Precautions:** Research your destination thoroughly, including local customs, health and safety guidelines, and any travel advisories. Keep copies of important documents such as passports and identification in a safe place. Stay up to date with the latest protocols and guidelines regarding travelling in the country you will be visiting, and consider bringing hand sanitizer, masks, and disinfectant wipes.
- 6. Stay Connected:** Inform your loved ones about your travel plans and share your contact information with them. Consider using a smartphone or tablet to stay connected during your journey. Download useful travel apps such as weather updates, language translation, and navigation tools to enhance your experience.

Remember, travelling is a wonderful opportunity to create cherished memories and embark on new adventures. By following these tips, you can ensure a safe and comfortable journey. We wish you happy travels and unforgettable experiences as you explore the wonders of our region and beyond.

Bon voyage!

Matt Mardini - Program Manager

Spring Highlights: Pen pal Connections, Meeting Carole Mallette, and Joyful Music for Seniors

Nora Donnelly - Outreach Coordinator, Huntingdon

On June 1, a heartwarming event took place as the grade 9 Ethics class from Chateauguay Valley Regional High School met their senior pen pals, led by their dedicated teacher, Coralie Beghuin, and MWCN's Project Coordinator, Debra Wright. The long-awaited gathering allowed the students and seniors to finally meet in person, fostering connections and creating memories that will last a lifetime. From lively games to heartfelt conversations, the event proved to be a magical and humbling experience, demonstrating the power of intergenerational bonds and the importance of meaningful exchanges between generations. Forty-eight students were matched with seniors and community members to exchange letters. Everyone is looking forward to another session this fall.

Our office was fortunate to receive special funding from two different offices. The office of Carole Mallette (previous office Claire Isabelle) and Claude Reid. Carole is the Députée de Huntingdon à l'Assemblée Nationale, and Claude Reid is from the office of the Assemblée Nationale du Québec. The funds were to purchase equipment and outdoor games to engage seniors and to help keep them physically fit. One of the items purchased was pickleball equipment. In partnership with one of the NFSB sites in Huntingdon, pickleball is played 2 times a week from 1-4pm. Carole Mallette enjoyed a tour of our Centre with Pauline, and the Huntingdon staff, and got to see pickleball being played at HAEC. Pickleball has allowed so many people to enjoy physical activity, form new friendships, and bring forth an overall sense of community spirit. Perhaps an inter-regional tournament could be in the future.

As part of the organizing committee of the "Concertation Des Aînés" Du Haut-Saint-Laurent the Huntingdon MWCN office has been working very hard at securing musical talent and participating at many HLM's, Long term Centres, as well as Private Senior Residences with music, and exercises. This is an extremely important initiative to help break the isolation of our seniors, many of the residences experienced an outdoor activity for the first time since Covid. This activity allows seniors to experience the joy of live music and provides essential social connections. Music forms connections between various cultures, and has the power to bring people together, uniting their uplifting feelings, while helping them have less feelings of being alone. Music is the symbol of connecting people and their values based on shared experiences, all in all, a very important social activity.



MWCN Community Spirit Awards

MWCN is absolutely delighted to announce the well-deserved recipients of the NFSB program who have been awarded the prestigious Community Spirit Award certificates and \$100 bursaries. This recognition stands as a resounding testament to their unwavering dedication and invaluable contributions to our community. We take immense pride in acknowledging their extraordinary achievements. It is worth highlighting that this remarkable initiative was conceived by the visionary Georges Bujold, a long-time member and volunteer for MWCN. It brings us great joy to see how it has flourished over the past seven years. Heartfelt congratulations are extended once again to all the recipients, who have truly made a positive impact!

Sharon Vocino - NPI Châteauguay/Candiac



Fiyinfoluwa Ibinabo Adediran - NOVA Career Center
Oceane Gauthier - Howard S. Billings Regional High School
Makayla Mayo - St. Willibrord Elementary School
Olivia Taylor - Mary Gardner School
Isabella Soares - Centennial Park School
Kayla Meitin - Harmony Elementary School
Maïka-Bella Hampson - Ormstown Elementary School
Dong Kyu Kim - HAEC
Annabelle Roberge - Heritage Elementary School
Alexandre Gendron - Howick Elementary School
Gabrielle Dumas - Châteauguay Valley Regional High School
Angus Bell - CVCEC
Peyton Haineault - Gault Elementary School
Erika Humphreys - Hemmingford Elementary School
Brandyn Hallé - Franklin Elementary

How We Can Help You

MWCN is here to discuss your needs in your job-seeking process. As the Employability Coordinator for the Montérégie West Community Network (MWCN), I am here to help provide references, guidance and support in your job-seeking process. You can discuss any challenges with me that you are having during your job search process.

For instance:

- Feeling unsure of what kind of job you want and in what field of interest
- Clarifying what factors are important for you in the job description (Ex. benefits, salary, friendly working atmosphere, proximity to home, flexible schedule, clear expectations, English workplace, work that you enjoy)
- Language barrier / not confident in your French conversational or written skills
- Not knowing where to find or how to look for a job
- Not having enough time to search
- Help preparing your CV and cover letter
- Feeling anxious and unconfident about your performance during interviews
- Feeling discouraged in your job search process
- Unsure why your candidature is not being accepted after many interviews
- Looking for guidance in your entrepreneurial venture
- Lacking required job equipment or specific clothing
- Needing credential recognition to formally recognize your skills based on a curriculum, occupational standard or competency framework.

Job seekers looking for guidance and support in their job search process can contact Joanne to book an appointment at 450-691-1444 or joanne@mwcn.ca.

Joanne Basilières - Employability & Mental Health Coordinator



Employability Community Job Board Facebook Group

Joanne Basilières - Employability & Mental Health Coordinator



Did you know that we have an Employability Community Job Board Facebook group and an Employability Instagram Profile?

This Facebook group serves as a forum for community members, employers and job seekers in the Montérégie West to share work opportunities. We have been regularly posting work opportunities in our region that are accessible to English-speaking Quebecers. When you join, you will be asked some membership questions so we can allow the right people to join in. You do not have to be a MWCN member to join.

The purpose of this Job Board Facebook group is twofold:

- The Facebook group is intended to be a place where job seekers can post if they are looking for employment (and in what field), but also as a place for local employers in the Montérégie West to share opportunities.
- Sharing existing job postings for the region is encouraged for all members. If you, or anyone you know, has news about any jobs that are available and accessible to English speakers, you are welcome to add them to the Facebook group too.

We also post job search tips & tricks, resources, as well as professional development events, workshops, or other related activities. Here are the pages to LIKE to get connected with us:

Facebook Group: [Montérégie West Community Job Board](#)

Instagram Profile: [MWCN Employment](#)



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Download Our App

Download our App and stay up to date with everything we've got going on



We are delighted to invite you to download our brand-new Mobile Application, available on both Apple Store for IOS devices, and Google Play for Android.

While the app is in the beta version, it is a great opportunity for us to better connect and communicate with our community members.

MONTÉRÉGIE WEST COMMUNITY NETWORK Our Offices in Five Regional County Municipalities

Roussillon - 255 Blvd. d'Anjou, Suite 203, Chateauguay QC J6J 2R4 / 450-691-1444

Candiac 9 Blvd. Montcalm N, Suite 512, Candiac, QC J5R 3L4 / 438-455-2747

Beauharnois-Salaberry - 72 Rue des Écossais, Beauharnois, QC J6N 1Z1 / 450-691-1444

Vaudreuil-Soulanges 117 Cardinal Leger, Pincourt, QC J7W 7A8 / 514-425-0399

Haut-Saint-Laurent/Chateauguay Valley - 72 Dalhousie, Suite 201 Huntingdon, QC J0S 1H0 / 450-264-3596

Jardins-de-Napierville - 476 Rue Frontière, Hemmingford, QC J0L 1H0 / 514-249-5539