



MARCH. 2022

MONTÉRÉGIE

WEST COMMUNITY NETWORK



A word from Pauline



The month of March brings up thoughts of different memories we have experienced in recent years. In 2022 it means the second anniversary of living in a pandemic. In the last 2 years we have all lived through so many emotions of anxiety, fear, uncertainty, indecision, and grief. However, this March we are realizing how resilient we are. The month of March has traditionally represented the many things we have had to look forward to and this year is no different as we pass into the season that brings hope and puts a new spring in our step as the days grow longer and the sun becomes warmer. It is the time when we will soon see the sap running in the maple trees, a sure sign that the land is reawakening.

MWCN is always thankful for the members of our community who encourage us as we have welcomed so many of you who joined many of our zoom activities that have been offered throughout the winter. We cannot help but see the way many of you have taken the opportunity to gain experience and learn new things in order to connect with each other and also to join in on many of our zoom activities in art, bingo, travelling through time, workshops on self-care, managing disputes, first-aid and so much more. Well, this March is going to see some great activities in person that you will not want to miss. Register as soon as possible as some events have limited space. The Chateauguay Legion will be hosting an Irish stew dinner, Irish music, and a storyteller, in person but there is limited space as this event is free for Legion members and MWCN members. Pincourt has a lunch and learn with Dr. Joe Schwartz, presenting Humour, Medicine and Magic in person and Huntingdon members will be enjoying a corned beef and cabbage lunch; these 3 events in March are FREE for members.

We do not want to forget to mention to all of you fabulous WOMEN to make sure that all our grandmothers, mothers, daughters, working women, single women, career women..... ALL women REGISTER on line to our March 8th International Women's Day on ZOOM from 1- 4pm. Let us Celebrate together!!! We have wonderful prizes that our community businesses are donating such as four - \$500.00 SPA Gifts that will be drawn along with more great gifts to be won just by participating. The list will be posted shortly on our website and Facebook page at mwcn.ca. You will see which businesses and funders that are supporting our event.

The MWCN staff are looking forward to seeing many of you as we March our way out of winter and towards new adventures and discover new opportunities to celebrate our resilience together.

Pauline Wiedow - Executive Director



International Women's Day

*March 8th
from 1:00 - 4:00 pm*

On ZOOM

Join us for a very special event
celebrating

Women Empowering Women

*"Together we can inspire one another to make a
difference in our communities"*

Speakers:

Geneviève Lachance,
Mayor of St Lazare

Rose Fierimonte,
Pioneer leader in the female
construction industry

Amy Ovens,
Welding Instructor

Whitney Hiemstra- Jutras,
Breast Cancer Survivor

Special guests "Singers"

Diane Morrison & Kathy McFall

Exciting Prizes & Surprises

*Please make sure to Register using
the following link:*

www.bit.ly/MWCN-Womens-Day

Or on our website: www.mwcn.ca



Basic French

I was recently approached to write about the lifelong learning class that I am teaching every Wednesday night for our English-speaking members who are interested in improving their French. This is a group with a very basic knowledge of French who wish to have an opportunity to practice and learn French in a safe space.

Upon my retirement from the aerospace industry, about 10 years ago, I began looking for something to do in my spare time in my community.

It was around this time that I joined the Montérégie West Community Network (MWCN) and at that time was teamed up with our now president, Lise Brunette, to volunteer with her for English and French classes.

It was not long after, when I took the leadership of this much needed project helping community members practice and learn a second language. Consequently, I have been teaching the basic French classes for the last 6 years and conduct two 10-week sessions, one in the fall, and one in the spring.

Every year I am encouraged by the participants and how eager they are to learn a second language; the group consists usually of 5 to 15 participants and most of them are woman. During the 10 weeks, I try to make it enjoyable, by removing the stress of a classic classroom.



I want to create a place where they can feel safe to express and practice what they learn. I am always amazed to see women who are retired and are still open minded enough to try to learn the official language of Quebec.

The age group can vary from 12 years of age to 83 years of age and commit to learning French for many different reasons that are motivating them.

What encourages me to want to get out and meet with these community members on a weekly basis is the fact that I can help someone and make a difference. To realize at the end of the program that the participants have had a good time while learning and that they have an opportunity to meet new members of the community. This also allows me to meet new people in the area and welcome newly arrived community members to our country. The exchange of cultures provides an occasion to also learn more about their cultures.

I will continue to offer my services to the community and the MWCN for as long as the need is there, as the reward I receive, I believe, makes me a better person.

Georges Bujold

Celebrating Resiliency

The MWCN team recently participated in a training session on the topic of resiliency. During one of the sessions, we were asked to think about someone past or present in our lives that we thought exhibited great resiliency. This question was followed by the question, “what is resiliency to you?” “What makes some people or communities more resilient than others?” Needless to say, I found these questions very intriguing.

During the conference and after much reflection the following is what I learned.

There are multiple types of resilience that can grow and enhance our lives. We can speak of resilience in one person or the resilience of a whole community and the different types can be seen everywhere.



Here are a few examples of where we can find resilience: -physical resilience; social resilience; mental resilience; community resilience.

There are also some main characteristics of a resilient person which are very interesting.

Some examples of these characteristics are as follows:-self awareness; realistic; keeping calm under pressure; empathy; self-control; self-motivated; and optimistic. Where do you see yourself in these characteristics?

I think having a resilient community and having resilient residents goes hand in hand, being socially connected, within one’s community is so important. Resilient communities promote individuals with a sense of community through social, cultural, and physical activities. Highlighting the positive within one’s community, and having a mindset that can easily adapt to change.

Many of us have faced new challenges over the last 24 months, but I think this is a good time to remember that you all have resiliency skills within you.

Being resilient won’t make your problems go away but being resilient can give you the ability to see past them, find enjoyment in life and better handle the stress. If you aren’t as resilient as you’d like to be, you can develop skills to become more resilient. Staying socially connected via zoom or in person are both wonderful options. All of us at MWCN look forward to continuing to share our resiliency with you, together we are more resilient.

Nora Donnelly

Understanding 9-1-1

Being aware of the logistics of calling 9-1-1 is so important.

MWCN hosted an info session presented by Fernando Afonso of Ville de Pincourt – First Responders. Some of the most interesting facts from this presentation included the following:

1. Did you know that no matter where you call 9-1-1 from, it is the address of the 'billing' information that appears as your location. Therefore, it is so important to clarify the first question that is asked by the 911 Operator – "What is your address?"

This allows the dispatcher to contact the closest emergency personnel to your location.

(If you are calling from a cell phone, it is the nearest cell tower that shows your approx. location).

2. Did you know that if you are transported by an ambulance, you do not have your choice of hospital.

This is determined by the type of care that is required, as different hospitals have specialized units that are more equipped than others to address the situation.

3. Did you know that Ambulances are FREE for individuals 65+, military personnel, persons on welfare or anyone in a vehicle accident.

(The average cost is approximately \$120 but can be claimed under medical expenses).



Lorie Marcotte

March: The month of green celebrations!

Every year in March everyone becomes Irish. The celebrations begin with green drinks, Irish stew for dinner, and we are lucky to be surrounded by many weeks of St. Patrick's Day Parades. This year, the city of Chateauguy announced the St. Patrick's Day Parade will be held on Sunday, March 27th at 1pm.

At MWCN we are hosting a variety of St. Patrick's Day Celebrations. Chateauguy is hosting a Lunch and Learn at the Legion, Branch 108 on Wednesday, March 16th, including renowned storyteller, John David Hickey, and Irish Stew for lunch.

The Huntingdon Office is hosting a corned beef and cabbage lunch on March 17th at the United Church. The Vaudreuil Office is hosting a Lunch and Learn with Joe Schwarz on March 24th at the Saint Patrick Catholic Church.

If you would like to join any of these in-person Irish celebrations, please contact your local MWCN office.



Tonya Wright

Let's Chat

The opportunity to practice their English and a friendship to boot - Who would have thought?

A few months ago, the Montérégie West Community Network (MWCN) collaborated with the CISSS de la Montérégie-Ouest to offer an opportunity for any employee wishing to practice their English with an English speaker. This initiative was inspired by the personal experience of Karissa Clayberg, Liaison Officer for the English Language Access Program at the CISSS de la Montérégie-Ouest. When she first moved to Quebec, she really wanted to practice her French. It was only after making very patient, French-speaking friends who gave her the opportunity to practice, was she was able to improve. In addition to a wonderful discovery of colloquial expressions, musical, artistic, and cultural references, these exchanges brought increased confidence and a reinforced desire to stay in Quebec long-term.

There are currently 26 staff and community volunteers paired together. So far, overall feedback from exchange participants has been very positive.

Employee perspectives:

This is definitely the case for Susan Girard, a mental health educator at the CISSS de la Montérégie-Ouest for 33 years. For Susan, the opportunity to participate in a language exchange would allow her to practice her English, be more confident and, at the same time, help her better interact with English-speaking users. It is certainly not easy to strike up a conversation with a stranger, especially in one's second language, and Susan noted that she was very nervous at the thought. However since being partnered, she has noticed a boost in her language abilities, and a greater fluency in her conversational skills.

She had even had the opportunity to meet her partner and his spouse in person at a restaurant - something they plan to do again when health measures permit. Susan highly recommends the experience: "The people we are paired with are very open and generous with their time, and we don't feel judged despite our mistakes. We develop a bond with the person, and the fun we have outweighs the nervousness."

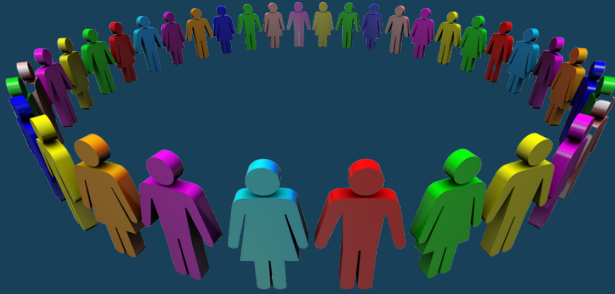
For Sophie Miousse, also an educator (intellectual disability 7 years and older). She was also nervous for her first exchange, but she was pleasantly surprised that her partner immediately put her at ease. She is happy that this exchange offers her flexibility: she and her partner talk when it is convenient for them, on topics that interest them, and for as long as they want. It's a win-win situation! She expressed that she always looks forward to her Thursday night discussions with her partner, as it is always a lot of fun!



Karissa Clayberg

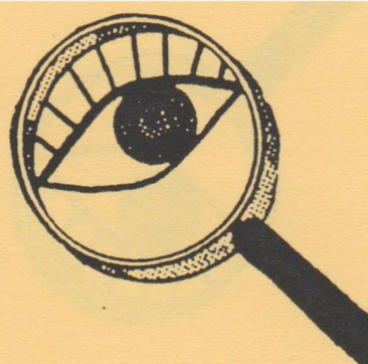
When things get tricky

Composed by April Donnelly, member of MWCN



When life gets tricky,
And you start to feel icky,
Shout out to MWCN.
They will welcome you into the fold,
And make you feel bold,
With many things to do,
And likely refreshments too!
Three cheers for MWCN!

News From Our Partners



LOW VISION SELF-HELP ASSOCIATION Wednesday, March 9th, 1:30 to 3:00 p.m.

Will hold its monthly meeting virtually on Wednesday, March 9, 1:30 to 3:00 p.m. Workshop discussion about methods and technologies we are using to read books, magazines and newspapers from CELA, public libraries and other sources.

Visit www.LowVisionSelfHelpAssociation.weebly.com. To know how to join our Zoom meetings, phone Irene Lambert at 514-626-2649 or Maria Friozi at 450-692-5944.

Online Webinar: Identifying Elder Abuse? What Are Your Rights If You Suspect You Are a Victim of Elder Abuse? Is Mediation An Option?

Wednesday March 16 2022 10:00 AM-noon

Presenters: **Daphne Nahmiash, Ph. D.** - President, Handicap-Vie-Dignité
Associate member, McGill University Research Centre for Studies in Aging (MCSA)

This webinar will be discussing the different types of senior abuse, how to prevent abuse, and will provide information on legal recourses.

To register, send us an email by March 15 at info@seniorsactionquebec.ca. Please include your name, contact information and name of organization. An email confirming your registration will be sent within 2-3 business days.



Community Health and Social Services Network