

JANUARY 2021

Montérégie West Community Network

The MWCN is a not-profit community-based organization whose mission is to serve the English-speaking community of the Montérégie West region.

We provide a variety of social and cultural activities, assist members in gaining access to health and social services in English and provide volunteer services to those in need.

Want to become a member?

Please contact the MWCN with any questions or concerns using any of the contact information at the bottom of the page, we'll be happy to help you.

If you're already a member then please enjoy this month's Newsletter.



2021 has arrived!! MWCN would like to wish a Happy New Year to all of our members, partners, volunteers, and colleagues. At this time as we leave 2020 behind with all the challenges it presented us with, let's welcome the new year with renewed hope, and a fresh vision for new beginnings, new ideas and a new energy. We look forward to working with all of our community members this coming year and thank you all for making 2020 a year whereby we had opportunities to meet many new neighbours and walk alongside those who were finding it difficult. Many of you contributed by helping us in the community as you volunteered and shared your talents and time so that we could help so many find joy at Christmas through your creations and spirit of giving. Our lives are richer because of what you bring us. Thank you for the privilege of serving the English-speaking community throughout the Montérégie West. The MWCN staff are eager to meet you and support you throughout the coming year. Do not hesitate to contact one of our offices. Cathy Cyr, Nancy Landrigan, Shannon Keyes and I are here in the Chateauguay office. Kim Wilson and Elliott Arthur are eager to meet you at our Wellness Center in Huntingdon and Lorie Marcotte and Clément Bergeron are working at our Pincourt Office and always ready to assist.

Be well and Be safe.

Pauline Wiedow
Executive Director

MWCN Board Elected officers:

Executive Director: Pauline Wiedow
President: Lise Brunette
Vice President: Merlin Halliday
Treasurer: Tracy Wilkins
Secretary: Chuck Halliday
Administrators: Maria Friozzi
Jayme McClintock
Don Rosenbaum
Judith Picard
Susan Parker
Kosta Theofanos
Marlene Davies

COMMUNITY SERVICE COMES IN ALL SIZES

Santa's elves were very busy the past few months in preparation for the holidays and a few of them live in our very own community! Some youth saw a need that needed to be filled and took it upon themselves to help out. The following are some of their stories:

READING JOYS FOR CHRISTMAS TOYS

Each year during the holidays Chateauguy Helping Hands, a local organization, collects toys for needy families. A few years ago, Summer Bay Rose Wyeth decided she wanted to help, so she started collecting used books that she would then sell for \$1.00 each to raise money to purchase toys that would then be donated back to Helping Hands.

This year, MWCN and Bright Beginnings Learning Program partnered with Summer by promoting her initiative, collecting some books on her behalf and by awarding her a 2020 Recognition medal from the Royal Canadian Mint for her outstanding effort on behalf of those less fortunate. Summer was thrilled, "I will wear my medal with pride and will always be grateful to everyone who have supported and inspired me." The future looks bright with youth like Summer leading the way!



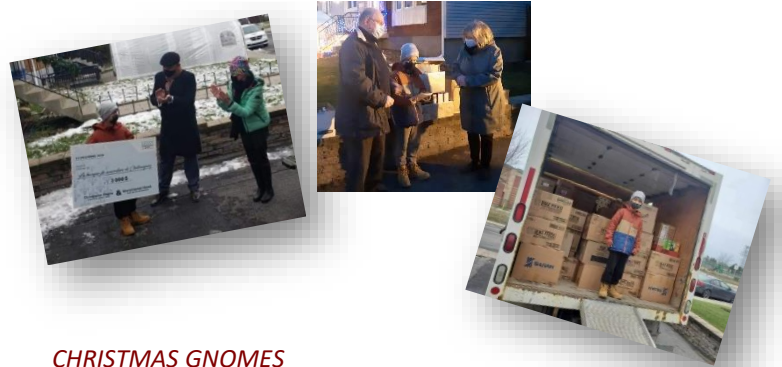
Summer proudly displays her 2020 Recognition medal from the Royal Canadian Mint awarded to her from MWCN.

NATHAN'S FOOD DRIVE

When the Chateauguy Food Bank was running low on food, 11-year-old Nathan Leduc-Lavigne decided he wanted to help. His goal was to fill his parents' two cars with food to donate to the food bank, but his idea snowballed when the community got wind of his initiative and stepped up to help him achieve his goal, and then some! MWCN supported this outstanding young man by promoting his event and collecting food on his behalf through our Chateauguy office and the Bright Beginnings Learning Program.

When the dust finally settled Nathan collected 92 boxes of food, 42 boxes of toilet paper and 24 boxes of paper towel; enough food and supplies to fill his parents' cars multiple times!

In addition, Christopher Skeete, MNA for St. Rose and Marie-Chantal Chassé MNA for Chateauguy dropped off a cheque for \$3000.00 for the food bank adding to the \$1500.00 Nathan collected himself. Nathan was both surprised and pleased with the outcome saying, "I wasn't expecting this much food", "When I see somebody is happy, I feel happy." He is now hoping to make his food drive an annual event. Nathan was also awarded the 2020 Recognition medal from MWCN. Well done, Nathan!



CHRISTMAS GNOMES

The Huntingdon Beavers (boys and girls aged 5 – 8 yrs.) were busy making 15 Christmas gnomes from cedar and pine branches supplied by Beaver leader, Shawn McNamee (shown below with Beaver, Isla McNamee) and with help from MWCN who provided 20 kits of scissors, glue, paint and brushes. The finished gnomes were then donated to bring some Christmas cheer to local senior's residences, the Huntingdon Hospital Long Term Care and MWCN offices. Great job Beavers!



Christmas Gift Basket Winners

Bill Fillion
Carol Ryall Robichaud
Marlene Davies

NEWS FROM THE HAUT SAINT LAURENT (VALLEY)

Visits to Seniors Residences

MWCN, the Elgin and District Pipes & Drums and the 1st Huntingdon Beavers collaborated in a community project that touched generations. MWCN was approached by bagpipe player and local Beaver leader, Shawn McNamee for a list of local residences to play Christmas bagpipe music. At this time, Shawn was also looking into ways his Beaver group could be more involved within their communities. Together, we came up with an idea for the Beavers (youth ages 5 to 8) along with help from their parents, to create Christmas Gnomes to be delivered to residences at the same time as the bagpipe music visits would take place. This idea meant being innovative as it was not possible to bring everyone together. MWCN Executive Director, Pauline Wiedow offered funds to create individual art kits to be lent out to families and with the guidance of local artist, Nadeanna Tannahill, instructions were done up and printed to go home with each package.

The Gnomes arrived at the Wellness Center upon completion and from there were transported to nine local senior residences on Friday, Dec. 11th along with the bag pipe music. Seniors were at their windows or doors opened, just a smidge, to better hear the beautiful sounds. It was a nice winter day which also brought some bundled up seniors outside to enjoy the carols. Following the music, each residence was given a Christmas Gnome to display at their center.



MWCN Volunteer of the Month

Congratulations to Corine Savage of Huntingdon for being chosen volunteer of the month. Each month names of our volunteers go in a basket to be drawn. Corine helped to decorate our Christmas tree and the center to bring some Christmas cheer to all who entered.

MWCN Christmas Gift Baskets

Each year we celebrate our members with a beautiful Christmas basket draw. This year's winners were John Stirling from Godmanchester, Yvon Chicoine from Godmanchester and Dorothy Mays from Ormstown. Congratulations to the winners.

Christmas is all about giving The Wellness Center has been collecting non-perishable food items and new or gently used toys to donate to our local La Bouffe Additionnelle (food bank). A monetary donation was also given by our Walk n' Talk group for the Rudolph Run/Walk to help with Christmas baskets. Thanks to the generosity of our community, someone's Christmas will be a little bit happier.

MWCN was thrilled to donate gift bags consisting of handmade afghans and socks to the 9 seniors of Kay's Residence in Huntingdon. Everyone was so happy to receive these special gifts. Thanks to all the volunteers who worked so hard to make this happen.



A New Collaborative Initiative

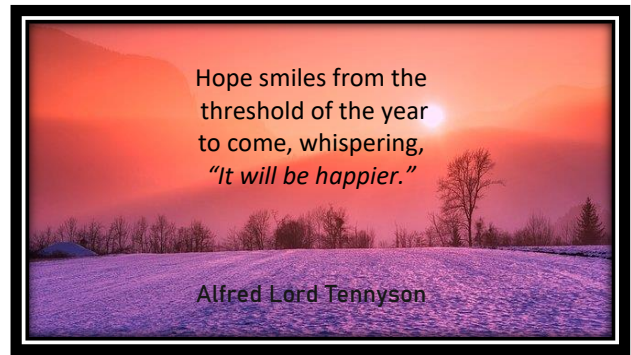
“We're All In This Together” is a **collaboration between the English Language Arts Network and Seniors Action Quebec**, and a community initiative to reach Quebec’s English-speaking seniors during the COVID-19 pandemic. We are creating a **web series for seniors** to help them battle isolation and fear during these difficult times. These **bi-weekly episodes**, directed by Montreal-based, award-winning filmmaker Bobbi Jo Hart, are going to feature entertainment, activities and conversations **designed to reach out to those in need of support and remind them that we are, indeed, all in this together.**

For the next nine months, we will be releasing **18 episodes** that will be easily found on YouTube and Facebook for anyone who wants to enjoy them. Even if you aren’t a senior but you know one, watch the series together! The first episode, **Holiday Baking: Making Sugar Cookies with Hainya & Linda** already aired on December 11th.



“We are so happy to be able to bring some much-needed entertainment and support from amazing Quebec-based artists to our seniors” says Vanessa Herrick, Executive Director at Senior Action Quebec. “We have all been through a difficult time and it is more important than ever to pull together and make sure that our loved ones know that even if we can’t be with them, we are all in this together, and they are not alone.”

This is also a great opportunity to take a moment and make sure that the seniors around you are able to access the internet and take advantage of all of the online resources out there for them.



ACES

STAY ACTIVE, CONNECTED, ENGAGED AND STIMULATED AT HOME THIS WINTER!

FREE ONLINE AND TELEPHONE SESSIONS

A 10 week student-led pilot project.

We are looking for individuals of all ages and abilities who are interested in enhancing their well-being through online recreation therapy.

For more information contact Erica Batner at erica@recreotherapy.com

RECREO THERAPY

This event is funded in part by CHSSN via Quebec

SAVE THESE DATES in 2021!

- ◇ **January 12, 19 & 26** – Tablet Basics – In office 4pm – 6pm
- ◇ **January 20** – CHEP Program: The Price We Pay for Safety- Managing Risk and Uncertainty in Life - 10:00am to 11:30am Online on Zoom
- ◇ **January 24** – Educaloi: Tools for Planning Ahead – 1:30 – 3:30 online on Zoom

WOULD YOU LIKE TO BECOME A MEMBER?

If you like what you’ve seen and read about in this newsletter, please feel free to visit our office or give us a call for more information. If you become a member, you’ll be sent all the upcoming activities and decide which ones are right for you. You will make great friends and even better memories. Come join us!

