

**Kay'shi'daay'ing - Where We Live**

How I Ended Up Here – (as co-chair for Making Kenora Home Community Hub)

The winter appears to have come early this year and with it the heartache of knowing there are people in Kenora who don't have a long term, warm and safe place to call home. My husband and I have lived and worked as settlers in the Treaty 3 area since 1978, first in Red Lake, where our two children were born, then in Dryden and most recently in Kenora where we moved in February 2014. My work took me downtown so I was soon face-to-face with clear evidence of the number of vulnerable people who spend their days on the streets of my new community and the reality made me very sad. Our own efforts to find a home in our new community quickly brought us to a personal understanding of the lack of affordable and appropriate housing stock in our community and before long we also came to understand that all aspects of the housing spectrum – from emergency shelter and crisis housing through transitional/supportive/social housing to home ownership, particularly for the younger generation who are job-insecure or under-employed and seniors who are living on a fixed income – almost all aspects of the housing needs of a Canadian society were less than ideal in Kenora.

My search for answers led me to ask questions, volunteer time and give resources to those organizations already addressing the issue. Eventually I found my way to the **Making Kenora Home** community hub where a group of committed volunteer citizens have been working for more than a decade to figure out solutions to the challenge. I'm what people call a 'policy wonk' so a group that is focused on researching solutions and then advocating for change, facilitating dialogue, promoting attitude change and collaborating on projects – as opposed to delivering programs or owning property – was a group I knew I could love. I am privileged to share the chair's position with Dianne Pelletier who embodies a depth of insight and history that I am heavily dependent on for any wisdom I might have about the issues of poverty and homelessness in Kenora.



Recently I attended the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness national conference. I listened and learned about the face of homelessness in our country alongside of over 1000 other participants. There were multiple highlights and I want to share the two points that impacted me most.

1) There are many communities across the country - bigger, smaller and same size as Kenora – who have successfully adopted the *Housing First* model for addressing chronic homelessness. The federal government endorses the *Housing First* philosophy and Making Kenora Home has advocated for this evidence-proven model, yet Kenora remains far behind in implementing this model locally.

2) Having attended many conferences over time, I was struck by the demographic shift amongst the participants. Generation X and Y have come into their own time. In speaking with them, I was reminded how smart and generous the younger generations are and it fills me with hope for the future. We older ones may have the free time to co-chair community hubs but our job is going to be to get out of the way of our young leaders who will demand justice and be willing to take the action necessary to end homelessness in Canada and in Kenora. Bring it on.

I have lots to learn and a desire to be useful in making positive change in Kenora and area. Feel free to contact me at [makingkenorahome@hotmail.ca](mailto:makingkenorahome@hotmail.ca) if you or your service group or community group would like to talk about how we might change the face of homelessness and poverty in our city. I would love to hear what you think.

*Jennifer McKibbin*

## Hunger Doesn't Take A Vacation Campaign

### *Minto Summerfest*

The sun shone, the burgers sizzled, the games delighted and access to service agencies was facilitated at the annual summer celebration in the Minto neighbourhood.

Over a hundred people attended this year's event including both school boards and nine service agencies.



### *Street Picnics*

We had excellent contribution and volunteerism this year. Thirty-six volunteers served a total of 278 meals. The fun that rose up out of the camaraderie, games and music was incalculable. Special appreciation goes to the groups who sponsored



individually themed weeks. All of the fish fry preparations (including fresh bannock) and

servicing was done collaboratively by **MNO** and **ONWA**. The **Lakeside Baptist Youth Group** completely

catered the Italian Festival. Pies, service and clean up were contributed by **Women In Black** for the full Thanksgiving dinner.



### *Stuff A Boat Foodraiser*

Four emergency service teams challenged each other to gather food bank donations. The event took place on Friday afternoons in August. Treaty 3 Police won the event by bringing in 836 lbs. of food and \$815.35 in cash donations. Safeway and K-Sports helped sponsor the foodraiser that bought \$2033.32 in cash and 4020 lbs of food to the Salvation Army, Minto Parent Child Resource Centre, St. Albans Cathedral Shelter program and Kenora Fellowship Centre



*It's Coming.....*

*Week of Action Against Poverty is coming February 12-18, 2018. Make your plans to be included in the community count. Do it at the office, do it you're your family, do it in the classroom, do it with friends. The options are endless. Talk, sew, bake, collect, sing, craft, advocate--take action to show the heart of Kenora!*



[www.makingkenorahome.ca](http://www.makingkenorahome.ca)

For further information call Nan at the Northwest Community Legal Clinic 468-8888.

## What is Making Kenora HOME?

*A concerned group working on solutions for homelessness in our community.*

### Guiding Principles

- ❖ **EQUALITY:** *We are all created equal within this world that we share*
- ❖ **INCLUSION:** *Every person living in Kenora is a part of our community*
- ❖ **SHARING:** *As a community we must care for each other*
- ❖ **SELF DETERMINATION:** *Each person has the right to choose his or her own path providing that path does not hurt another*
- ❖ **EMPOWERMENT:** *We are accountable for our own actions and need to look inward first*