

Making Kenora HOME

COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS
FOR HOMELESSNESS

Kay'shi'daay'ing - Where We Live

www.makingkenorahome.ca

NEWSLETTER

Volume 7, Issue 1: Spring 2014

Week of Action Against Poverty - Small Actions, Big Spirits

This year's event promoted small, individual actions to deepen community commitment to alleviating poverty in our City. All local financial institutions joined together to support People First in their Red Ribbon Campaign. Fifteen hundred ribbons were distributed to 25 locations. Following this thematic unity, the Kenora Ministerial Association opened Week of Action (WAAP) with Prayers From the Pulpit on Sunday, February 9. The community again gathered together for the Focus on Food Security Resources Workshop. Service groups met to map resources and organize efforts to efficiently meet the needs within Kenora. A working group has been formed to respond to identified gaps and facilitate biannual review meetings.

Schools also contributed to the week's success. Confederation College brightened with their participation in Wear Red Day on February 14. College students developed and launched a facebook page for easy public recording of WAAP activities.



Confederation College Wear Their Care

for the benefit of the centre's patrons. All 239 students wore red at Ecole Ste. Marguerite Bourgeoys and fundraised a total of \$300.00 to donate to the Kenora Fellowship Centre. Mlle Kaitlin Bryck's grade 3 class agreed to give up individual valentine treats to pass through donations to the school drive.

Warmth was on many people's agenda during this year's event. The Lake of the Woods District Hospital held a mitt, hat and sock drive. The six boxes of donations were shared between the Fellowship Centre and Saakaate House.

Beaver Brae Secondary School benefitted the Kenora Fellowship Centre through the grade 10 civics class's winterwear drive. Yvonne Bearbull spoke to the class on the importance of their contribution as the piles of warm clothing were handed over

The health unit staff raised \$127.71 for the Fellowship Centre while the staff of Legal Aid Ontario and the Kenora Community Legal Clinic raised \$135.00 for Helping Hands. On February 10 the Making Kenora Home members donated all ingredients for a lasagna dinner and volunteered to prepare, serve and clean up to give the usual Helping Hands volunteers a day off of their very important work. Crossfit Kenora followed

the next day with the donation of a chicken dinner for all. The Valentine's dinner at Knox Church counted 67 diners wearing red in support of our action week and brought in a pile of food donations for their food share cupboard. An Indian Taco Lunch project by the Kenora Fellowship Centre successfully raised much needed funds for their programming. Numerous donors and volunteers stepped forward individually to benefit local community resources. These donations were kept private and not reported to the community tally.

Attending to the development of affordable housing, Keystone Lock & Safe donated door locks and installation to the upcoming Habitat duplex build. We are always pleased to see direct action on affordable housing.

The Kenora Senior's Coalition did a telephone tree to advocate for the needs of low income cardiac patients. The streaming of patients to Thunder Bay and Hamilton for cardiac care rather than Winnipeg has created financial burdens on low income citizens. Members of the coalition contacted our MPP to protest the provincial health care policies that have created this issue.

Every year, community commitment deepens as more join in the recognition that Kenora is

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and we must support each other in making Kenora
a community that cares.

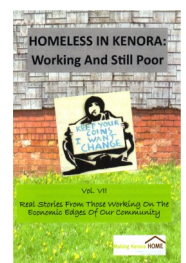


Piles of Caring at LOWDH

Working & Still Poor Book Release

The seventh Homeless in Kenora booklet series was released on February 11 at the Kenora Public Library. The stories within this booklet come from those who are employed at minimum wage or seasonal work. They eloquently speak about the challenges of living on the financial edge of homelessness. Copies are available from our

web site for downloading or from the Northwest Community Legal Clinic. Copies of the entire Homeless in Kenora series to date were donated to both the Kenora Public Library and the Keewatin Public Library.



Poverty Challenge Reaches Families

The *Walk in Our Shoes Poverty Challenge* featured two families who volunteered to live on the equivalent of social assistance for five days. Their blogs were excellent commentaries on the issues they faced. Participants were energetic in researching resources and bringing attention empathetically to those who struggle daily living on low incomes. As a community we learned more about the dynamics of local poverty. Amanda Griffiths steered her children, Anaiya and Jackson, past the temptations offered by well meaning relatives in order to complete the challenge. Gerry and Angela Boucher led their children, Branson, Owen and Kate through a tech free week to bring deeper understanding to the issues of poverty. As Kate commented, "Being poor sucks!" The blogs are still available for review at



Moms Prepare to Budget

www.makingkenorahome.ca

Housing Pillar

Reinforces KSAMH Task Force

A fifth Pillar has been added to the Kenora Substance Abuse and Mental Health Task Force. Under the shared leadership of Cst. Bob Bernie, Jennifer Carlson, Nan Normand and Michelle Queen, the new committee will focus on the need for affordable, accessible and appropriate housing options within the City. Understanding that stable housing is core to the Task Force's goal of reducing substance abuse in the community, the group has set their mission to generate more homes to meet the needs of those who are low-income. For more information, email Jen Carlson at jcarlson@nwhu.on.ca.



Shelter Closure Coverage

Increases By Caring Commitment

The closure of the Kenora Fellowship Centre daily between 4 pm and 8 pm caused great concern as winter set in. The closure was necessitated by funding shortfalls. Instead of hand wringing, several local groups stepped forward and committed to assisting in providing respite from the winter's chill, food to hold back hunger and a warm welcome to our most marginalized citizens. This is Kenora at its best.

When the shelter's need to close for 4 hours daily to ensure fiscal sustainability, *Helping Hands* quickly organized to offer two hot meals weekly during the shut down period. With nothing but good intentions, Cynthia Peloquin pulled together a small group of dedicated volunteers and donors to begin serving supper out of the Jubilee Church hall. Since the first meal was prepared, Helping Hands has continued to forage for donations and seek volunteers to sustain the project. The Helping Hands-Hot Meal Program is open to all between 4 pm and 7 pm every Monday and Tuesday. Visit their facebook page to find out about meal plans and donation needs or contact Cynthia at 467-8145.

Jubilee Church of God has extended their outreach to include meals served on Saturday and Sunday evenings from 4-7 p.m. during the winter season. In addition, use of the site facilities has been donated to Helping Hands for meal service on Monday and Tuesdays. Contact Pastor Frank Kowal at 407-3620.

On Fridays, Shelter From The Cold operates from 4-7 p.m. Volunteers offer a space to meet, snack and connect at *St. Albans Anglican Church*. Call the church office for further information at 468-6227. Opening Our Doors is the *Knox* congregation's commitment to covering the shelter gap within Kenora. Every Wednesday, members welcome and feed those in need of shelter between 4 pm and 8 pm. The church also hosts the Agape Table on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays during the school year. For further information contact the church office at 468-6923.

"The Government of Canada is committed to helping vulnerable Canadians through Housing First, a proven evidence-based model that will deliver better results for those in need. The approach involves moving homeless individuals into immediate and permanent housing, then offering support for addictions, mental illnesses and life skills development. This model has worked internationally, and it has shown clear success in communities across Canada."

*The Honourable Candice Bergen,
Minister of State (Social Development)*

March 13 2014 international Housing First Partners Conference (HFPC)



And the Building Continues.....

Habitat's Kenora Chapter has begun planning for their second build which is scheduled for early 2015. In the meantime all of the necessary planning and preparations are underway including fundraising. We expect to be holding family selection information meetings in Spring 2014. Stay tuned for information on dates and location. If you've been doing some winter renovations, hold on to extra flooring, lumber etc. for the Habitat ReStore day happening May 24! More details to come!



Volunteering

--Never Too Young, Never Too Old

At the Helping Hands dinner on February 10, Nora Silk prepares for the meal and Hunter Morgan mops up after the event. Hunter is 4 years old. Nora is ageless. Between them, they prove that you are never too young or too old to make a difference in the community that you live in.

