

## **Week of Action Against Poverty 2008**

This was the year that our youngest citizens stepped forward to show their support of action against poverty. Activities included participation in Wear Red Day by Confederation College, Kenamatewin, Adult Learning Line, 5 elementary schools and the Circle of Friends Daycare. Over 1,000 reported wearing red on Feb.14 in an act of community solidarity. People First, Kenamatewin and the Northwest Health Unit made and distributed 275 red ribbons community wide. Other participating organizations included the Kenora Court House, legal Aid Ontario, Ontario Works, Kenora Community Legal Clinic (KCLC), Grandmothers to Grandmothers, Kenora Association for Community Living (KACL) and the LOWDH lab staff.

The Band of Awesome, a group organized by Cammie Carpenter, age five, held a concert that raised \$100.00 for anti-poverty work. Another elementary school student, Tanner Langlois, organized a tooney day at Lakewood School. Valleyview School constructed a wall of kindness and held a winter clothing drive. Due to scheduling difficulties, the Chemical Agents' youth concert will be held at a later date.

The business community wasn't far behind our youth. WalMart held a successful donations drive to benefit the local food bank. The TD Bank selected the school breakfast program as their targeted action. Scotiabank, CICB, HoJo's, Gardewine and Chicken Chef also participated in their own activities. Making Kenora Home newsletters were distributed through 9 local businesses. Staff at Canadian Tire, KCLC and WalMart did fundraisers for their selected charities.

"Up From The Streets" featuring seven local artists was held at Sunset Gallery. The popular show was held over for a second week as public interest remained high. The key attractions were two original works by Norval Morriseau that were painted in Kenora in the early 1970's. All of the featured artists had lived on the streets of Kenora or had been close to someone on the streets. It was a display of talent, dreams and reality that reflected the diversity of those who found themselves homeless in Kenora. Gallery staff estimated that 125 individuals came through the doors to view the show.

The Kenora Ministerial Association held "Prayers Against Poverty" on February 10 and sponsored an interdenominational volleyball tournament on February 16. Bodyworks held a meditation on leadership with regards to poverty issues. Community

conversations took place at the New Horizons Senior Centre-Keewatin, the Baptist Study group, Bethesda Lutheran Lenten services and at Sharon's birthday party. Food drives also were held by KACL and the Campbell Clan.

The Kenora Sexual Assault Centre (KSAC) committed to the sponsoring of a single parent family and KCLC will be donating a community meal at the Fellowship Centre as part of their 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. Making Kenora Home flipped pancakes to live music at the community breakfast held February 14 at the Fellowship Centre. Shaw cable aired the award winning documentary on homelessness, Invisible People, throughout poverty week.

The week of action is always exciting. It reveals the heart of Kenora.