

WEEK OF ACTION AGAINST POVERTY 2012 Report

WAAP 2012 had a quieter feel to it. Most donations went to the two builds scheduled for this year (Habitat for Humanity-Kenora; Kenora Affordable Housing Group). Activities ranged from a pool tournament to a charity crafts sale to presentations to our local politicians. Actions seemed smaller in scale but more personalized.

Keynote events included the Act Local concerts, the Poverty Challenge, the Homeless In Kenora Book Launch and Prayers from the Pulpit.

Each year there is a noted trend that emerges-this year it was donations made by persons who were not financially comfortable themselves. ODSP recipients worked at the Red Ribbon campaign and made their own donations to charities. Patrons of the Fellowship Centre offered to help other agencies in town with small tasks as a show of appreciation.

Donations spanned broadly from lock systems for the womens transitional units under construction by Keystone Lock & Safe to handknitted items courtesy of the Kenora Metis Warmth and Wellness Group to a beauty Makeover by Melanie for one of the moms attending the Minto Family Resource Centre. Of course concerts and cupcake sales also popped up through the community.

Media coverage remained excellent. To date there have been 13 items in local newspapers and another 5 noted in local newsletters. These were relayed extensively to other communities, particularly after one article was picked up by the Huffington Post webnews. At that point we could no longer count postings. We were pleased to see ONPHA report on our activities. Within short order, Dan McNeil of the KDSB included comment on housing cost in Kenora as part of an interview on the higher costs in the north that are borne by the services board. There were also five radio spots reported and 9 kenora online postings.

Expansion Opportunities

Although the City Council did declare the Week of Action, there were not any municipal efforts within the week's activities. Recommendations to increase municipal participation need to be brainstormed.

Agencies and schools had reduced participation this year. It was recommended that

1. inter-agency challenges might stimulate project development and
2. presentations be made at the Board and managerial levels earlier in the school year to encourage student participation

Local service clubs have always been generous so requesting their engagement in WAAP seemed to diminish what they do year round. Having service clubs challenge each other for the wear red or red ribbon campaigns would increase their participation without pressing for donations.

The business community as a whole does not have a high profile during the week. Engagement has been very low keyed and scattered. It is not donations that are sought but rather promotion of the week by all sectors as an indicator of cross community collaboration.