

Week of Action Against Poverty 2017 Report

The tenth week of action took place February 12-18. Most events were contained within this time period although several events were scheduled beyond these parameters. The major events, [Walk A Mile In Our Shoes](#) challenge and [Our Emerging Adults-Bringing Transitional Aged Youth Into Community](#) conference, have been reviewed in separate reports. Projects were clustered thematically around youth (50%).

The *City of Kenora* issued their **proclamation of support** on January 17 and *People First* began their annual task of assembling **red ribbons** for distribution to the community. These ribbons signify awareness of local poverty and commitment to support actions to reduce the impacts of this socio-economic condition. In addition, on February 14, the municipal council released their **State of Housing Report** which recommends incentives to encourage affordable housing development.

As is traditional, *community spiritual leaders* opened with **Prayers FromThe Pulpit** on February 12. Local *financial institutions* joined in **publicizing the week** and undertook their own actions to raise awareness of local resources. The *CIBC* launched **Kickers & Knickers** to provide new underwear to patrons of the Fellowship Centre. *Copperfin Credit Union* showcased the Lake of the Woods Community Foundation as a strategic resource for **funding poverty**. **Window decorating** was also undertaken by a local clothing store (*Twice Is Nice*) and *Legal Aid Ontario/Northwest Community Legal Clinic*.

Schools

King George students ran a school wide **food raiser** on behalf of the Minto Family Resource Centre. The children donated over 200 food items for the benefit of low-income families locally. In addition, an individual family added bags of hand knit mittens for the youth whose families utilize the Minto FRC services.

Keewatin Public School students (grade 1 / 2) made individually decorated Valentine **gift bags** for the patrons of the Kenora Fellowship Centre which brought smiles to the recipients who have not celebrated Valentine's day in many years.

St. Marguerite Bourgeoys rocked the valentine theme on Wear **Red day** as students donned the week's signature colour in support of caring actions towards low-income citizens.

St. Louis School is still organizing their school-wide **event** which is to be scheduled soon. This school has never missed a year of participation in Week of Action Against Poverty.

Community Discussion

The *KACL Arts Hub* organized a **potluck Ted Talk**. A dozen participants had a lively discussion on empowering the impoverished and **collected socks** for donation. The *Fellowship Centre* **discussed economic marginalization** through the lens of the Truth and Reconciliation process. A *local citizen* also scheduled a coffee klatch to continue the conversation regarding the importance of **participating in reconciliation process** as a strategic response to developing an understanding of poverty dynamics. The *Kenora Seniors Coalition* raised their concerns about **health care supplies** that are not covered under the Ontario Drug Benefit and committed to focussing on this issue over the course of the next year.

Triple Play

Because Scotiabank's Hockey Day came to Kenora during week of action, there was a natural linkage between sports participation and poverty. Several groups stepped up to fundraise for Triple Play which sponsors low income youth into sports and arts activities. *Island Girl* donated \$10 for every Kenora **dinner jacket sold** that week. Following a joint tailgate lunch, the *Legal Aid Ontario* and *Northwest Community Legal Clinic* offices made their **donation** to Triple Play. A **Girl's Hockey Marathon fund raiser** benefitted both *Triple Play* and the *Rideout Community Centre*.

Food Security

The Hot Meal Challenge brought in six commitments. A **pancake breakfast** was sponsored by the *Kenora Federal NDP* to kick off the Week of Action. *The Kenora Chiefs Advisory* served up **lunch** to patrons at the AGAPE Table. *Making Kenora Home* provided a **Valentine's dinner** to those who are usually served by Helping Hands. The fifth group is pending scheduling. An *individual youth* made and **distributed 30 lunch bags** to the homeless and hungry on the streets of Kenora. *Community Mental Health Support Services* made and delivered **200 hot breakfast wraps** around town on February 15 to surprize appreciative citizenry.

Transitional Aged Youth

Local youth who emerged from the societal care had the opportunity to put their experiences forward through three communication projects to increase awareness of this growing demographic within the homeless population. *Youth* provided their stories in writing through the **Homeless In Kenora booklet**, through a **photovoice project** and through **direct presentation** at the Our Emerging Youth conference. The anonymity of the booklet and photographic commentary was the preferred process for communication. Both projects have been posted to the Making Kenora website.

Other events included a **fundraising concert** by Richard Inman at *Unfixed*. A portion of the proceeds went to the Kenora Fellowship Centre. The *Philanthro-Bros* successfully fund raised enough to cover the cost of a **washer, dryer and stove** for the Minto Family Resource Centre. This is their third big project.

As usual, media coverage was wonderful. All local media and CBC Radio Thunder Bay promoted and reported on local events despite the competing interest of Scotiabank's Hockey Day Celebration which took over the community in the later part of the week. The Daily Miner News published an empowering editorial about the worth of Week of Action Against Poverty in developing local social justice.