



# CHATEAUGUAY / CHATEAUGUAY VALLEY COMMUNITY MATTERS DECEMBER 2020

## A Holiday Message

From the Executive Director

The month of December is a month of magical things!! We look forward to the first snowfall, the first sign of Christmas lights and Christmas music. In anticipation of celebrating with family, we prepare our shopping list and sense the excitement of connecting with family and friends. It is a time when we appreciate our warm homes decorated inside and outside to celebrate the holiday season. Baking will soon begin, and the smells of favorite foods will fill the house.

This year we have experienced many changes. We have lived day to day and week to week waiting for instructions on how we can live our lives and stay safe. Covid-19 is in charge of who we meet, where and when we shop, and if we go to work or work from home. We need to congratulate ourselves on the resilience we have shown throughout these last months through 2 seasons and now going into a 3<sup>rd</sup>.

I must say that the MWCN has been busier than ever. We have scaled down and learned how to zoom and virtual technology that was something to do if we had time has now become the new norm. Smaller groups are meeting safely in our 3 Wellness Centers that are equipped with the proper measures to ensure the safety of everyone. Our coordinators have adapted well and find it very pleasant to chat with our members and check in regularly organizing many activities within the constraints set up for us to stay safe. During these last months, MWCN have increased its membership to 340 and we now have 59 volunteers working with us in all centers.

As you see, life goes on and we have learned to move through a very challenging year discovering how creative we can be and the wonderful ideas each one of us brings to the table. We have learned to slow down and to be aware of the needs of others around us. We have learned that there are many individuals in our communities who are giving back in small and big ways. We have also learned how precious our seniors are to us.

Yes 2020 will certainly be known for change. We never anticipated how our world would come to a halt almost overnight and yet so quickly we adapted because we are not alone and we have each other.

Christmas will be different for sure and we will be creating new memories, so why not focus on making them happy times, with new opportunities to stay connected. I am excited thinking about the different things I can do to surprise my family. I can drop off special gifts for each member of my family. I will choose the gifts with care and this year I will return to writing Christmas Cards that will bring a little cheer. I can mail them or drop them off with a promise of a future get together once we have conquered the current challenge of a world pandemic.

I will write a story to my children and reminisce on Christmases past and the joy we all experienced together. I will take the time to write a special story for each member of my family that will include some special moments. This year I will purchase an artificial tree for the first time, and I will enjoy decorating it rather than rushing through it. Take care of yourselves and stay safe. Soak up each moment as it becomes a new memory. We are the designers of our own destiny and our families will look towards us for direction. Stay strong!!

### Montérégie West Community Network

The MWCN is a not-profit community-based organization whose mission is to serve the English-speaking community of the Montérégie West region. We provide a variety of social and cultural activities, assist members in gaining access to health and social services in English and provide volunteer services to those in need.

#### Want to become a member?

Please contact the MWCN with any questions or concerns using any of the contact information at the bottom of the page, we'll be happy to help you.

If you're already a member then please enjoy this month's Newsletter.

#### MWCN Board Elected officers:

**Executive Director:** Pauline Wiedow  
**President:** Lise Brunette  
**Vice President:** Merlin Halliday  
**Treasurer:** Tracy Wilkins  
**Secretary:** Chuck Halliday  
**Administrators:** Maria Fiozzi  
Jayme McClintock  
Don Rosenbaum  
Judith Picard  
Susan Parker  
Kosta Theofanos  
Marlene Davies

Montérégie West  
Community Network  
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## McGill Dialogue Bursary Program

In partnership with communities and educational institutions, Dialogue McGill provides initiatives for health and social services students to improve services in English, and to practice where they can meet the needs of the English-speaking population of Quebec.

We are proud to announce that our latest winner of a \$5,000 bursary is Huntingdon native, Leslie Rogers. Leslie is in her 3rd year of nursing at John Abbott College and is excited to complete her studies and jump into the health care system. Pauline Wiedow, MWCN Executive Director, presented Leslie with a cheque in the amount of \$2,500 now and Leslie will receive the 2nd installment during her final semester in the Spring.



Sabrina Raschella is a resident of Chateauguy and is raising her young family here. She is a nurse practitioner in Mental Health and has decided to return to her studies at McGill. Sabrina has demonstrated a desire to give back to her community since she moved to Chateauguy in 2011. Sabrina emphasizes the delivery of quality health care, taking into account the whole person. Sabrina desires to care for people in a way that helps them feel heard and valued. Sabrina has demonstrated her leadership capacity and tenacity in providing resources and opportunities to her community. MWCN wishes to congratulate Sabrina on her hard work and her commitment to the community. MWCN has a bursary program for health care students that we receive in our McGill Program and we are very proud to award Sabrina \$5,000.00 for the fall and winter semesters.

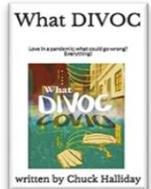


## Congratulations to one of our very own Board

### Chuck Halliday

The adventure begins...

### 'What DIVOC'



is a fictional story I wrote over the last few months. I have self-published the 1st Edition of a story that I hope is reflective, funny, and dare I even say maybe thought-provoking. It is by no means perfect (far from it) but it was a lot of fun to do and was my therapy during the initial stage of the pandemic. I'm open to all ideas, feedback, and suggestions. Don't be shy to let me know. I have a few plans in the works 😊.

Thanks for all the support already everyone. See Link [https://www.amazon.ca/gp/product/B08NF2QTG9/ref=dbs\\_a\\_def\\_rwt\\_hsch\\_vapi\\_tu00\\_p1\\_i0?fbclid=IwAR2fa4PrGX-g6\\_qu3D-ltQg2BuH\\_5YJgK-2Nk8kj8cHZtsKTSS1EyzclJBw](https://www.amazon.ca/gp/product/B08NF2QTG9/ref=dbs_a_def_rwt_hsch_vapi_tu00_p1_i0?fbclid=IwAR2fa4PrGX-g6_qu3D-ltQg2BuH_5YJgK-2Nk8kj8cHZtsKTSS1EyzclJBw)

### SAVE THESE DATES

#### ◇ Nov.12 – Dec.4 Nathan's Food Drive

We will be collecting canned food for the Chateauguy Food Bank. Contact free drop-off at our Chateauguy office or Bright Beginnings Daycare(255 Boul. D'Anjou, Suite 257-E, Chateauguy) as well as Obsession Bakery(210A St. Francis, Chateauguy)

#### ◇ Nov.12 – Dec.18— Toy Donation

We will be collecting toys for kids aged 0-18 months. Contact free drop-off at our Chateauguy office or Bright Beginnings Daycare(255 Boul. D'Anjou, Suite 257-E, Chateauguy)

#### ◇ Nov.25 & Dec.2, 9 — French Conversation (Limited space)

7-8 p.m. Online on Zoom.

#### ◇ November 27th — Coffee Group Support on Pain and arthritis

13:30 p.m. online (TEAMS) A guest speaker from the University of Montreal will talk about underlying mechanisms of chronic pain and future non-pharmacologically based treatments: How can we learn from the past, and what the future holds for us? Let's exchange our lived experience with forms of arthritis and chronic pain. Register at [info@arthriterivesud.org](mailto:info@arthriterivesud.org) to receive the link and the instruction.

#### ◇ November 30th — Last Doodle Challenge Workshop

2-3 p.m. Online on Zoom.

#### ◇ December 14th — Wellness Workshops: Introduction to arthritis

13:30 p.m. online (TEAMS) This will be a formal presentation about facts and statistics on arthritis; the difference between osteoarthritis and the various forms of inflammatory arthritis; nutrition and physical activity; assistive devices; and complementary therapies. Register at [info@arthriterivesud.org](mailto:info@arthriterivesud.org) to receive the link and the instruction.

#### ◇ Nov.30 & Dec.7 — Pinecone Workshop with Heather

at MWCN Office 10:00am to 12:00pm

#### ◇ December 3rd — Educaloi Webinar

From 1:30pm to 3:30pm Tools for Planning Ahead: wills, protection mandates, advance medical directives and powers of attorney.  
Online on Zoom

#### ◇ Dec.3 & 10 & 17 — Ins and Outs of Laptop Workshop

at MWCN Office 4:00pm to 6:00pm

#### ◇ December 14th — Christmas Craft with Heather

at MWCN Office 10:00am to 12:00pm

#### ◇ December 21th — Christmas member draw

#### ◇ January 20th — The Price We Pay for Safety-Managing Risk and Uncertainty in Life

10:00am to 11:30am Online on Zoom

## NEWS FROM THE HAUT SAINT LAURENT (VALLEY)

"The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members."

- Coretta Scott King

As a Spring 2020 graduate of the Information and Library Sciences Technician program I had already experienced a change of learning due to COVID-19. Learning from a distance became the new reality for the end of my program. As the summer loomed ahead and Coronavirus continued, I was concerned about my job prospects as many places had closed down and were changing their work formats. I was fortunate enough to become aware of the summer student job posted being offered at the Huntingdon Wellness Centre for the Montérégie West Community Network (MWCN). This summer student position was a great opportunity for me to learn more about the community that our group serves and as a result I was able to take on a new project coordinator position with a focus on intergenerational activities.

During these ongoing troubling times of COVID-19, we have been able to continue to offer multiple programs and activities, to help people cope and to break isolation. Some of these activities have taken place in house, with safety precautions being put into place and a reduced number of participants allowed to attend. We have also been able to introduce many folks to a new technology- Zoom.

### **The Heritage Treasures Museum Intergenerational Pen pal Project:**

The Heritage Treasures Museum is located in Howick and is run by volunteers. Its goal is to celebrate local history both with artefacts through outreach to the community. This project is in collaboration with The New Frontiers School Board, the Museum, Franklin Elementary School, MWCN and local seniors. We have matched students with seniors to exchange letters around a series of timely topics including Halloween, Remembrance Day, Christmas, and others. We hope to achieve a better understanding of the similarities and changes that both groups have experienced in their lives. For some of the students this may be the first time they have received a letter, for the seniors this may be a way to revive something that they grew up doing and can share with someone else.

### **A Trip through Time - History Activity:**

This activity was started as part of summer student work and I have had the privilege of continuing these talks to date. Each Thursday a predetermined

country, has been researched from their earliest history right up to present times. Along with a power point presentation a lecture and a lively discussion takes place and participants can offer comments, ask questions, and give their personal experiences to create a rich atmosphere of learning. This activity was taking place in person at the Wellness Centre until we entered the red zone. Since then we have adjusted and moved to the zoom format for the time being. This allows for more people to attend but takes away a bit of the ambiance. However, we all remain safe.

### **Weekly Bingo:**

Each Thursday afternoon we host a bingo game for members of our community. Since COVID-19 we have had to limit the amount of people allowed at the centre, however those that do participate are enthusiastic bingo players! We have prizes and refreshments- this activity is another great way to feel part of a group.

### **Book Nook and Book reviews:**

Our book nook and puzzle centre are up and running! We have an excellent selection of books that include many genres. We encourage people to take out books or settle in for a good read at the Wellness Centre. Periodically I post a book review of one of our books and publish in our newsletter.

I feel that the work that I do at MWCN has given me a better appreciation of our community. The heart and soul of our organization is about compassion and helping others, I am pleased to be a part of this organization.



Elliott Arthur  
Project Coordinator



## Sounds of Silence

The noiseless voice of creation, fall silently upon my ear  
In quiet meditation as I ponder thoughts I hear,  
Snowflakes softly falling, upon December ground,  
Sparkle amid the Christmas lights, so profusely there  
abound.

Plants and flowers bloom silently in the spring,  
Calling the earth to awaken and get going again.  
Worms creeping beneath the grass, where robins find a  
meal at last.

The silence of the sun, rising in the eastern sky,  
While the setting sun of eventide, sings a peaceful lullaby.  
The autumn moon, full in misty orange color,  
Praising the land for it's harvest splendor.  
The full moon in silver light, penetrating the night sky.  
Dance upon snowy meadows, like diamonds in grand  
supply.

A rainbow following the storm, a splendid sight to behold,  
A ribbon of celestial hope, to warm a heart gone cold.  
In my silence, I hear the best I can be,  
As the mind is stilled in knowing, the creator's plan for me.  
I'll cherish in it's knowledge, it's unspoken word,  
And listen to the silence that I have never heard.

- Norma Isobella Burdon 2019

## CHRISTMAS BUCKET DRAW

It's that time of the year and we are having a Xmas Bucket draw on December 21st!

It has been a crazy year and we want our members to know how much they are appreciated. Even though some of our activities came to a halt with respect to Covid-19 Safety protocols, we still managed to gather in small safe groups and held many informative meetings in a virtual setting – on Zoom. So, let's finish this year off with a wonderful gift for a lucky winner! We will announce the winner in our January Newsletter. Good luck everyone!



## VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH

Congratulations to Keith Leclair who was randomly chosen from our list of 59 volunteers working together to make our community a better place. Thank you to all our volunteers, we really appreciate you and your involvement with MWCN



## STAR Program

Do you know an employee, a volunteer or a team at a community or public organization who stands out for having made a special effort to improve the health and well-being of Montérégie's English-speaking community?

You are invited to nominate them for the Special Thanks and Recognition Program (Star Program)!

The Star Program, an initiative of the Regional Health and Social Services Partnership Table (RHSSPT), is a program that highlights individuals or teams who demonstrate support for the Montérégie English-speaking community.

Selected candidates will receive a certificate of congratulations, a gift card as a token of appreciation, and they will be featured in the newsletter publications and Facebook pages of diverse health organizations across the Montérégie.

To nominate a candidate or a team, please complete this form <https://fr.surveymonkey.com/%20r/TNYYYH5> or call us at 438-523-1665 before November 15th.

Your implication makes a difference!



## WOULD YOU LIKE TO BECOME A MEMBER?

If you like what you've seen and read about in this newsletter, please feel free to visit our office or give us a call for more information. If you become a member, you'll be sent all the upcoming activities and decide which ones are right for you. You will make great friends and even better memories. Come join us!

