



Connecting our Community

A publication of the Madawaska Valley Association for Community Living

Message from the Executive Director

2014 was a year dedicated to the process of creating the new MVA CL Strategic Plan.

I would like to start off by saying thank you so much to everyone who participated in this process.

The strategic plan was created in consultation with people supported, employees and community partners. We had over 72 participants who contributed their time and thoughts!

This plan will guide our actions over the course of the next three years, helping us to ensure that we are aligned and on track to achieve our goals. Please be sure to visit our website www.mvacl.ca to review our plan, and our new organizational chart.

During this time of great change and transformation, it is our hope that we will continue to improve our service provision and find creative and innovative ways to support people with intellectual disabilities.

Along the way we will support and celebrate employees and volunteers, who are instrumental in providing supports and ensuring that individualized goals are realized.

We will continue to work collaboratively with our community partners to create a strong, welcoming community without barriers.

Please support/join us as we work to make this vision a reality.

There is much work to do, but by *Working Together to Improve the Quality of Life for People with Intellectual Disabilities* we can achieve great things.

Yours Truly

Darcy Lacombe

Executive Director

Rhys Geddes Denning - PEI

If you recall in one of the previous newsletters there was an article about Rhys and his job as a Crossing Guard. Rhys used his earnings from this job and other money that he had been saving for over 2 years to go on his dream trip.

This trip took Rhys and a companion to Prince Edward Island.

He left from Barry's Bay on August 22nd and drove by car to the train station in Ottawa.



Rhys then took the train to Moncton New Brunswick. Once in Moncton a car was rented and they drove to Prince Edward Island.

Once in PEI they stayed at Kindred Spirits Country Inn and Cottages, which is located in the Cavendish Resort area. Rhys then spent 5 days exploring the island. He enjoyed a musical, carriage ride to the ocean, a tour through a Ripley's Museum and a wax museum. He spent time swimming in the ocean and the Gulf, even though he said "the water was freezing." The main reason that Rhys wanted to go to PEI is that his favorite novel is Anne of Green Gables so one of the highlights for him was touring these attractions as well as the location that Road to Avonlea was filmed. He also went through the birthplace of Lucy Maud Montgomery.

Rhys left Moncton on August 29th and was back in Ottawa on August 30th and returned home to Barry's Bay that day.

Rhys gave a presentation on his trip along with pictures at the Learning Center on January 30th, 2015.

When asked what he was going to start saving for next he said "a trip to Prince Edward Island".



AODA

The government enacted the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) in 2005, which set out a clear goal and timeframe to make Ontario accessible by 2025. The Act lays the framework for the development of province-wide mandatory standards on accessibility in all areas of daily life. Ontario has accessibility standards in five areas:

- Customer service
- Employment
- Information and communications
- Transportation
- Design of public spaces

Accessible customer service is about understanding that people with disabilities may have different needs and finding the best way to help them access goods and services.

In 2012 MVACL implemented these standards by means of updated;

- accessible customer service policies which included use of service animals and support
- persons
- practices and procedures
- customer feedback
- Staff training

The end of 2014 MVACL issued their Multi Year Accessibility Plan to meet the mandatory standards for AODA. It is accessible on our Website.



This year's objective is to meet the "Employment" Standard.

The Accessibility Standard for Employment will help make accessibility a regular part of finding, hiring and supporting employees with disabilities.

Organizations will have to:

- let job applicants know that recruitment and hiring processes will be modified to accommodate their disabilities, if requested.
- build the accessibility needs of employees into their human resources practices.
- create a written process for developing and documenting individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities.
- help employees with disabilities stay safe in an emergency by providing them with individualized emergency response information when necessary.

Nicholas MacAuley - Re-Connecting in the North

By Nicholas and Diana MacAuley

Nicholas MacAuley has ancestral roots, through his dad, the late Ennis Crowe, to a Cree community on Hudson Bay in the NW corner of Ontario. There are no roads into this remote reserve except during wintertime when the Muskeg is frozen, so travel to and fro is by air (or a long haul along the waterways!)

In mid-July 2014, Nicholas and his mother Diana boarded the CN train in Toronto en route to Sioux Lookout, a 30 hour journey. They slept in a room with bunk-beds and had a washroom with an alarm button. The toilet was flushed by another similar button. You can imagine the confusion!

From Sioux Lookout, they flew with Wasaya Air into Fort Severn, where several family members were gathered to greet and transport them the mile or so into the village.

Nicholas and his mother stayed in a Teacherage in the school yard, which was across the road from the baseball field. To Nick's delight a baseball tournament was in progress during his first week in town, and he was welcomed to join in the fun.

Nicholas reunited with his family, especially with his 3 aunties, his 2 uncles and his brother Myers! They are wonderful people.

The highlight of the 2 week visit was their fishing expedition with George Kakekaspan on his big 4 wheeler. Travelling over rough, berry strewn mounds of moss and earth they motored 5 miles north to the Hudson Bay coast, then they crossed the Pippiwatin River where Nick caught a beautiful trout. Heading West through the Muskeg, a mother Polar bear and her two cubs were spotted in the distance. George accelerated and pretty soon Nick had a close up view of the magnificent creatures. Mother bear stood up on her hind legs to peer at her pursuers, wagging her head, then began to lope to the safe open water of the Bay, her yearlings at her heels. What a thrill to have been so close to these free beauties! Almost as exciting as seeing bears, Nicholas noticed 2 Sandhill cranes standing and flapping their wings.

Nick was invited to feast in his cousin's teepee. What great wild food! They ate goose, moose, caribou, whitefish, bannock, macaroni salad, cake and of course, tea. After eating the family played games and Nicholas chopped wood.

This journey has been such a special opportunity for Nicholas to re-connect to his family after a long absence. Nick says that his next trip will be to visit his brother Lucas, in California.

2014 was a busy year for the Fundraising Committee at Madawaska Valley Association for Community Living and we had great support from our community partners to create different fundraising opportunities.

We were approached by Metro to host a BBQ outside the store. It was a joint venture in that all food was donated by Metro and MVACL hosted the event with 100% of the proceeds going directly to MVACL. Valumart also held a campaign to collect a voluntary dollar on grocery bills for us called "Give A little Help a lot". The Cookies for camp was also started in 2014 and seemed to be a hit with all of our Lite Lunch customers.

MVACL held a cash raffle draw again, which was a big success. The winners this year were 1st Place Sue Tice, 2nd Place Mike Desrochers and 3rd Place Robert Young . The first place winning ticket was sold by two of our supported people Fern and Maurice who shared a \$ 100.00 prize for selling the winning ticket.



Maurice and Fern posing with their win.

We also held our Annual Dance on October 25th, 2014 and all who attended had a blast dancing to the 50's and 60's tunes of the Heart Beats.



Nick with Tracey and Judy who are dressed as pink ladies

Nick with the support of Sherry did an amazing job as the MC for the evening raffle draws. There were a lot of great prizes thanks to our sponsors.

Going into 2015, fundraising is more important than ever to help MVACL continue to help supported persons with financial requests such as assistive devices, dental requests and orthotics just to mention a few. If you have creative ideas and are interested in helping out please join us.

We are always looking for new members and fresh ideas and 100% of every dollar raised goes towards helping people we support.

Come make a difference!

Personal Outcomes Measures Training

In the spring of 2014 MVACL and Community Living Upper Ottawa Valley were successful in attracting a Trillium Foundation grant to deliver Personal Outcome Measures training. This partnership will deliver training to staff in both agencies as well as representatives from other community based organizations.

The funding is for 3 years and the plan is to deliver 3 training events a year. 3 workshops have been delivered so far with the venue alternating between Pembroke and Barry's Bay. A total of 16 MVACL staff have participated and the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive not just in terms of the training itself but how the learning will lead to improvements in the way we provide supports and services.

There will be additional training for selected staff with the aim of designating 2 'Reliable Interviewers' and 1 accredited Trainer for each agency by the end of the 3 year period.

This means we will have the capacity to provide training to all staff in the organization.

The approach builds on the person directed planning which MVACL already facilitates. It adds value by providing a way for people who are supported to measure personal outcomes and determine themselves whether they are 'present' or 'not present.' The data collected during the assessment process is then used to identify how individual supports can be enhanced as well as how MVACL as an organization is able to make improvements.

People supported by MVACL are already benefitting from their involvement as interviewees in the training. Examples include a review of rights restrictions, a referral for specialist support and helping to increase natural supports through regular church attendance.

In Memoriam

Hede Spittler

October 15, 1930 - January 23, 2015



MVACL has lost a long time friend and supporter with the passing of Hede.

Hede (mother of Kirk), served on the Board of Directors of MVACL from 1991 to 2004. She also started and continued to work on the Wilton Cheese Fundraising Effort until her death in January.

Hede always showed her continuing support in all fundraising efforts of MVACL; from purchasing raffle tickets to attending dances.

In 2012 the Board of Directors awarded Hede with a Lifetime Membership for her unwavering support of MVACL.

Hede will be greatly missed by everyone she came in touch with.

Welcome

Please join us in welcoming Rose Miller to the MVACL Board of Directors. Rose believes in the value of the service that MVACL brings to the community. She is a Teacher at MVDHS, and she brings with her the experience of working with students of all abilities.

New staff in 2014:

Alana Burgess - April 24, 2014
Amber Kuiack – Feb. 11, 2014
Amanda Levean – Feb. 11, 2014
Philip Kuiack – June 6, 2014
Renee Deschamps – June 9, 2014

Babies born in 2014 :

William July 2014 (boy) Kaitlyn Liedtke
Gracie March 2014 (girl) Elisha Brotton
Avery March 2014 (girl) Rebecca Brydges
Kyper July 2014 (boy) Mandy Schoenfeldt & Simon Fero
Scarlet August 2014 (girl) Eric Visneskie
Hailey October 2014 (girl) Maeghan Dombroskie

Congratulations

Simon Fero and Bonnie Kluge on the completion of your DSW Diploma. Great job!

If you are interested in the DSW apprenticeship program, please contact Peter Fright at mvacpfright@bellnet.ca

Get Involved in Community Living Become a Member!

A voting membership fee \$15.00/non-voting membership fee \$10.00

Connecting our Community is published by: Madawaska Valley Association for Community Living
19491 Opeongo Line, P.O. Box 1178
Barry's Bay, ON
K0J 1B0
(613) 756-3817
info@mvacl.ca
www.mvacl.ca



MVACL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Bridget Gutoskie (President)
Corinne Higgins (Vice President)
Lavina Prince (Honorary Vice President)
Jane Visneskie (Treasurer)
Joanne Hartwig (Director)
Edna Yutronkie (Director)
Rose Miller (Director)

MISSION

Working together to improve the quality of life for people with intellectual disabilities.

VISION

We envision Madawaska Valley Association for Community Living as a leader in providing service and supports that promote inclusion of all. We seek a community without barriers where people can achieve personal success and fulfill their dreams.