

Providing Support & Housing for persons
with mental health problems

Our Harbour/Le Havre à nous

Newsletter Spring/Summer 2010

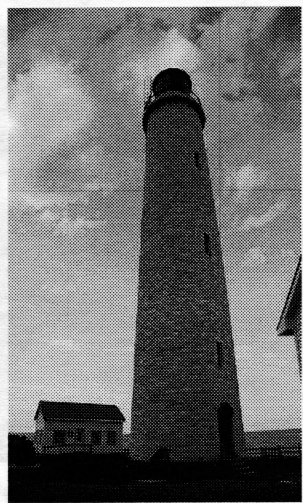
95 Lorne Avenue, Saint Lambert, J4P 2G7 Tel. (450) 671-9160, email: our.harbour@rocler.qc.ca

Renewing Commitment for 2016

*Our Harbour
extends to you, our valued
Friends and Supporters,
an invitation to
join us at our
Annual General Meeting
on Monday, June 14th.
Invite your friends who
may be interested in
joining our team.*



Catherine Gillbert, *Our Harbour* President, leads us through the day.



LE HAVRE À NOUS ASSEMBLÉE GÉNÉRALE ANNUELLE

Lundi le 14 Juin, 2011, à 19h30

à la salle de l'église
Saint-François d'Assise
844, rue Notre-Dame, Saint-Lambert

La réunion sera précédée par une
période de questions et un léger
goûter à 19h00

Pour des renseignements, appelez le
450-671-9160

Courriel : our.harbour@rocler.qc.ca

OUR HARBOUR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Monday, June 14, 2010
at 7:30 pm

St-Francis of Assisi Church Hall
844 Notre-Dame, Saint-Lambert

The meeting will be preceded by
a question period and
refreshments starting at 7.00 p.m.

For information call
450-671-9160

Email: our.harbour@rocler.qc.ca

Our Harbour; stakeholders come together

On April 24 2010, some forty friends* of **Our Harbour** gathered at *St Gabriel's Church* in St Hubert to renew their commitment to the organization and to produce a road map for the next six years. We had an informative, pleasant and, at times, emotional day that produced positive results.

After coffee and muffins, we began by sharing our experience in **Our Harbour** and telling others what it meant to us. There was a commitment to the model, inspired by *L'Abri en Ville*, which participants found to be economical, sustainable and produced effective and measurable results. The residents particularly had some positive words to say – we offer a permanent address, stability, peace, and community. Their physical and mental health improves and this gives them a secure feeling about the future. We have not had a more affirming response to our work over the past few years.

After sharing these responses with the whole room, we divided into stakeholder groups and brainstormed changes in the broader society that will impact **Our Harbour**. Ideas that came up included better understanding and treatment of mental illness, more government funding, more media coverage of mental illness, both positive and negative, differing views among baby-boomers of the role of volunteer work in retirement, and the demands on students to do voluntary community work.

*Stakeholders' conference included representatives from these key areas:

- Residents
- Their Families
- Board Members
- Volunteers
- Donors
- The Faith communities
- Members at Large
- Health and Social Services

The goal of the conference was to discover common ground as **Our Harbour** plans its next six years of service within our community.

In the afternoon, we sat down to decide, in the light of these trends, what we want **Our Harbour** to look like in six years and how would we get there. There will be more activities and programs to improve the physical and psychological wellbeing of the residents and to encourage more family involvement. We realize that we must increase the visibility of **Our Harbour** in the wider community and we came up with many ways to do this. We want to enrich the volunteer experience so that all the volunteers feel that they belong and again we have a list of the ways that this can be achieved. All together it was a creative and thought-provoking day.

The most important part however, has yet to come. We will need all the energy and enthusiasm of our participants to implement our recommendations and to meet our goals. We wish to thank **Christopher Schock** for his knowledge, guidance and encouragement throughout the planning process; we would never have had this special day without him

We also extend our thanks to the planning committee for their hours of hard work and **St Gabriel's Church** for allowing us to use their space.

"Because of my lifelong diagnosis of Schizophrenia, I often felt like I was living on a small isolated island. **Our Harbour** has served as a boat to bring me back ashore and into the community around me."

Craig (Current Our Harbour Resident)

"Québec's new directive on Mental Health, uses models like **Our Harbour** for providing support housing as they way they should go."

John Britton

(Former Montréal regional Health Service adviser)

"We in the Faith Communities still have a role in supporting **Our Harbour**"

Susan Gardner- Ecumenical council



Our Harbour invests in our Volunteers

During the start of the New Year, **Our Harbour** replied to our great team of volunteers' request for more training and some basic knowledge about what to do and what to watch for when working with our residents.

Many of our volunteers take an interest in **Our Harbour** based on personal experience. A good part of the first session covered the history, the value and the philosophy of **Our Harbour**, and the important role our teams of apartment volunteer plays. Among our invited speakers were Eleanor Beatie, of *L'Abri en Ville* and their long-time apartment visitors; Bob and Mary Bas. Featured was a mix of our own **Our Harbour** volunteers, with each adding their own testimonials; Dianne and Jim Denny, Mary Ann Bresba, and Judy Cruchet each spoke about how rewarding they have found their experience. Invited guest Susan Oliver, of the *CSSS Champlain*, provided a brief psychiatric perspective from a professional service provider's point of view, an important role for groups like **Our Harbour**.

During our second session in March, we reviewed different diagnosis and treatments, and how community involvement can affect recovery. Volunteers looked at and discussed their guidelines and ethical responsibilities. We also covered specific behavioral problems and coping strategies. Volunteers discussed their role and ethical responsibilities and the guidelines they should follow when dealing with Residents, family members, and other volunteers. A lively 'values' promotional activity followed where participants listed both their strengths and weakness. The final section of the morning covered how to deal with specific behaviors and offered tips on how to relate to someone with certain disorders. While possible reactions were explored, never once did any of our volunteers express a concern or fear of violence by the residents. As we gathered for lunch it was clear despite personal apprehension, we must always focus on wellness not the illness.

Apartment News

In general, the residents in each apartment continue to do well. We are still looking for suitable residents to fill the apartments and our volunteers are providing great support. Currently two Bachelor students in the Occupational Therapy Program at the *Université de Montreal* are doing a two month (35 hour) *stage* with us and have taken on the task of teaching cleaning and general housekeeping/cooking, etc. to one of the residents. They came in at a time when the regular volunteer was away on vacation. Additionally, three students from *Heritage Regional High School* are doing a school project and profiling a community based non-profit organization. We are so glad they picked **Our Harbour**.

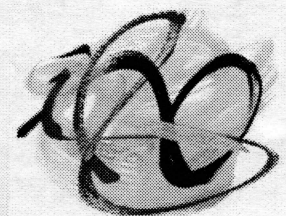
Over the winter months, three of our residents went to winter camp with *Centregens* and had a great time. The first months of the year are big birthday months and these were celebrated with a flare. Six of our residents and two volunteers went to see a play at the Centaur Theatre. They enjoyed it so much; they are now looking forward to attending their next play. Other activities included a trip to the Basilica to see the light show and hiking on Mount Royal.

On the volunteer front, we hosted two volunteer training sessions in the New Year. We had more than 25 people registered, and many thanks to the residents who helped set-up and serve the lunch. Presently our goal to have an appropriate number of volunteers for the apartments has been met; however, this can change and we would truly enjoy having a few more volunteers. Training is provided and we can assure you the rewards are plentiful. Like all families, the **Our Harbour** family can be a challenge, but that is what makes this job so rewarding.

Our Harbour family extends our sympathy and care to Perveen, our most valued coordinator, on the recent passing of her dear mother. You are in our hearts and prayers.



Sharing both our knowledge and experience



OUR HARBOUR GREETING & NOTE CARDS

Design donated by
Saint-Lambert Artist,
Denyse Tessier

A set of 8 beautiful
greeting or note cards,
(blank message inside)
\$20 per set

Proceeds from the sales
, will benefit the work of
Our Harbour

To order your cards today,
please call Judith Moran at
450-672-8450

Email us for a colour copy

Our Harbour - always an interesting place to be ...



With many thanks to our volunteers, our residents have been able to take in a number of activities from climbing Mount Royal to enjoying that most tasty of Quebec traditions - *les cabanes à sucre* where a sweet time was had by all.

"I feel a real connection with the volunteers of Our Harbour", says Robert, "they feel like friends".

Enjoying an afternoon at the theatre



Through our contacts, we have been provided with free tickets to the Centaur current season, so our residents and volunteers can now enjoy the unique experience of live theatre.

"Wow!! Live theatre is so different than going to a movie" says Allan a resident, "I like it a lot".

Because of your kindness; we are making a difference in peoples lives.

*"As a parent ... You give me hope"
Carole Lanthier (family member)*

Along with the annual generous donation from the **EJLB Foundation** and **FEDNAV Community Committee**, we thank all our Government, individual and community financial supporters, with added thanks to **Corlab** (for our new banner) and **Park Players** (Community Theater). *Because of your support, we are making a difference.*

TOP 10 MENTAL ILLNESS MYTHS

- ◆ Mental illness is a single, rare disorder.
- ◆ People with a mental illness never get better.
- ◆ If you are diagnosed with a mental illness, kiss your chances of a brilliant career goodbye.
- ◆ Mental illnesses are not true medical illnesses like heart disease and diabetes.
- ◆ If you have a gene (or genes) that been associated with a mental illness, you will experience a mental illness.
- ◆ If mental illnesses are biological, then psychotherapy is useless.
- ◆ The mentally ill are weak or lazy.
- ◆ The mentally ill are insane.
- ◆ The mentally ill are more violent.
- ◆ We who are working with the mentally ill always know what we're doing. Not true, often we are just good people trying to make a difference. So please do join us!

New Ami Quebec offers a Free Tele-support group for caregivers of people with a mental illness. For information about the variety of topics and support groups offered call 514-486-1448.

Mental illness affects one Canadian family out of five. We also lose a billion dollars of economic productivity each year because of mental illness.

Did you know these famous people suffered a mental illness? Ludwig van Beethoven, Agatha Christie. Ernest Hemingway, Vincent van Gogh, Charles Darwin, to name but a few.

Kevin Erskine-Henry, Editor