

*Providing a support program for persons
living with mental health problems*

Our Harbour/Le Havre à nous

Newsletter Spring-Summer 2011

95 Lorne Avenue, Saint-Lambert, J4P 2G7 Tel. (450) 671-9160

Our Harbour joins in the South Shore Walk



Our Harbour friends stood out in their bright blue T-shirts and even brighter smiles as they took to the streets of Longueuil on a walk to promote mental health awareness.

Our
Harbour
invites our
valued
friends and
supporters
to join us
at our
Annual
General
Meeting
on
Monday,
June 13,
2011.

Visit the new
Our Harbour
web site

<http://ourharbour.org/>

Email us at:

our.harbour@rocler.qc.ca

LE HAVRE À NOUS ASSEMBLÉE GÉNÉRALE ANNUELLE

Lundi le 13 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 au
450-671-9160

Courriel : our.harbour@rocler.qc.ca

OUR HARBOUR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**Monday, June 13, 2011
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

Jim Moran shares his experience as an Our Harbour board member

I was secretary of **Our Harbour** from its inception until last January when I resigned my post. In fact, it was I who suggested the “harbour” part of **Our Harbour**. We had decided on just **Harbour** until we discovered that some other organization already had that name registered so we were forced to add the “our” to be recognized by law.

As secretary, I was a member of the executive committee: I co-signed legal documents and cheques. My main job as secretary, however, was to organize all board meetings, keep the by-laws, prepare and send out agendas, take minutes, distribute them before the next board meeting and file them after they were approved. Except for the monthly board meetings and the aftermath of typing, I had little else to do.

As I'm not much of a people person, I had little contact with the residents and their volunteers, whom I much admire. I've worked for the Outreach and Fundraising committees and on several occasions have been out to local events such as bazaars or bake sales to give a public face to **Our Harbour** with our pamphlets and picture board. Once I even addressed a church congregation about our chronic needs – volunteers and funds. I had some success. I took a hand in the early newsletters with articles and editing. Now, as you read this, you might volunteer to become the new secretary of **Our Harbour**. I stopped being secretary because I'm getting old and my short-term memory fails at times, too often for a secretary! But I'll still root for **Our Harbour**.

All members of the **Our Harbour** organization wish to thank Jim for his years of service. We have been blessed to have him on board.



Many thanks to all those who came out to support the South Shore walk for mental health. We had over 200 people for our first annual walk here on the South Shore. Congratulations to Our Harbour members for their great participation in the walk. Congratulations also to the high school students of Chambly Academy, Centennial and Heritage for volunteering and helping with security.

What do you like best about living at Our Harbour? Here are a few words from the residents....

Robert: Exercising in a relaxed environment. We focus on the individual to accomplish matters in life. Our Harbour provides a stable environment.

Sabina: The quality of life in Our Harbour is incomparable.

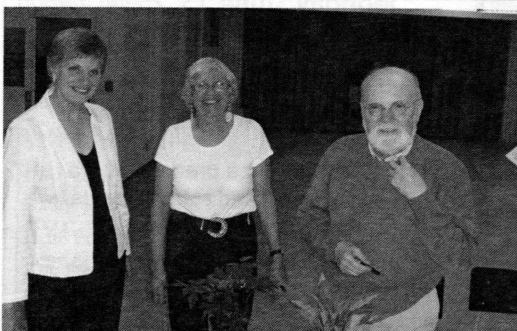
Almut: I like the people, the volunteers and the coordinators. My fellow residents are kind and considerate and we have a lot of fun being around.

And the final word goes to our newest resident

Teresa: I want to thank the organization of *Our Harbour* for helping me finally get my life back on track. Thanks to you Perveen, the staff and the wonderful volunteers for literally helping to save my life one day at a time. Thanks and God bless.

These remarks were collected by **Diane Horvat**, the residents' representative on the *Our Harbour* Board.

The residents would also like to thank the South Shore Community Partners Network for helping them complete their 2010 income tax forms.



Jim shares a smile with Judy and Catherine

Our Harbour was an extraordinary experience

Being a first-year stagiaire can be a little intimidating as you have to get your feet wet in the field and are unsure of what to expect from your placement, its staff and its environment. My experience with Our Harbour has been an extraordinary one. Never could I have imagined being so welcomed, encouraged and inspired in an environment that was at the time so unfamiliar to me. The coordinators and members were eager to have me on board and immediately treated me as though I had always been a part of their team. Our Harbour is truly a wonderful organization and I feel lucky to have been able to experience being involved with so many individuals who selflessly and willingly give their time to others. The volunteers and coordinators at Our Harbour are inspiring; I have never met so many compassionate and dedicated individuals in one setting. The lengths to which they go to in order to ensure that each resident has a safe and stable home, a sense of esteem, friendship and belonging is amazing. They also continuously work towards breaking the stigma of mental illness, making Our Harbour the organization that it is; a community, a friend, a family. I would like to extend my gratitude to the coordinators, board members, volunteers and residents for providing me with such rich knowledge, encouragement and learning experience, something I believe I will carry with me for the remainder of my studies and for rest of what I hope will be a successful career in social service work.

Stephanie Vezina is a Social Service Student at Dawson College

"First impressions mean a lot" as we welcome Jennifer

I am most impressed with the services Our Harbour offers! As a new member to this organization, I must say there should be more community-based programs like this because it functions exceptionally well. Our Harbour truly meets the definition of "grassroots". In my short time here, I have seen an incredible support system enabling the residents to take charge of their lives and enjoy the freedom to make decisions for themselves with some structure in place to keep them grounded. This, of course, would not be possible without the assistance of the volunteers. The outstanding and wonderful support given by the volunteers really creates a feeling of home among the five apartments. The residents, too, are very supportive and caring of each other. They are all very involved with activities such as going to the cabane à sucre or the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts. In addition, they are always willing to help the community in any way they can as their way of showing appreciation and giving back. Our Harbour creates more than a feeling of belonging and acceptance; I feel as though I have a second family here.

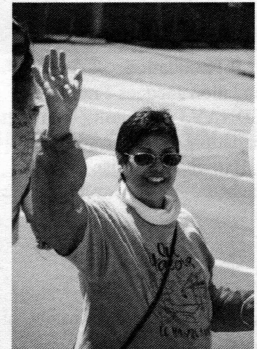
Jennifer Gilkes, Assistant Coordinator

Editor's Note: Jennifer was recently hired as our part-time Assistant Coordinator to replace **Jocelyn Saulnier** who has moved on to a full-time teaching position. The Our Harbour family joins me in thanking Jocelyn for her valued service and extending our best wishes for her future success.

Ami Québec offers a South Shore support group for caregivers of people with a mental illness. For information call 514-486-1448

As of 2011, the bi-monthly support group will now meet on Wednesday evenings at a larger space at the Greenfield Park Baptist Church, 598 Bellevue N. in GFP

OUR HARBOUR VOUNTEERS NEEDED



You are invited to join the Our Harbour family of volunteers and supporters. For information on various tasks you can help with contact; **Mary Ann Bresba** at 450-656-1157.

*One in five Canadians
will be affected by
mental illness during
their lifetime.*



*Canada Post will be
issuing this colourful
stamp in support of
organizations working
in the mental health
field.*

*By asking for it when
buying stamps you are
helping to make a
difference.*

Our Harbour is grateful to all our supporters for their generous donations

EJLB Foundation
 Fondation Jacques-Francoeur
 FEDNAV Community Committee
 Fondation André-Gauthier
 St. Barnabas exercise group
 The Men's Holy Cross, Wine & Dine
 Park Players, Greenfield Park
 St. Lambert Lions Club
 Time Out, Greenfield Park
 St. Barnabas Church Coffee Fund
 QUART South Shore
 Good Shepherd Leisure Club, Brossard
 Nicole Ménard, MNA Laporte
 Catherine Gillbert
 Sandra Libby
 Jim Moran
 Margaret Collins
 Eleanor Whyte
 Robert Lanctot
 S. Jennifer St. Germain
 Olga McCormack
 Jane Lawrence
 Eleanor Beattie
 Linda Magher
 Ann Reid
 Raymond Ferguson
 Michael Malone
 Elsie Patterson
 Christopher Noble
 Richard Janik
 Audrey Bean
 Paul Carrier
 Audrey Arsenault
 Beppie Boudens
 Judy Cruchet
 Cathy Sauve (gift in kind - computer screen)
 Irene Frail
 Kay Stewart
 Okill Stuart
 Barbara & Gerald Alfonso
 Colette Barbery

Our Harbour Priorities 2011-2012

Mission Statement

The purpose of *Our Harbour* is to provide a supportive long-term housing program on Montreal's South Shore for people living with mental illness who choose to receive services in English. This includes life-management support, links with resources in the surrounding community and individual assistance in integrating with society. *Our Harbour* also educates the wider community about mental illness.

Our Harbour will continue to provide excellent supportive housing for its residents. This will be done by providing a supportive community that will maintain the quality of the housing, assure the residents' medical and therapeutic needs are met, provide volunteer support and friendship, and encourage the residents to organize activities for themselves. We will also maintain our contacts with the other health and social service agencies, L'Agence de la santé et des services sociaux de la Montérégie, churches and community organizations. We will continue to advocate for the mentally ill.

In particular we will

- Hire an archivist for the summer to collect all past material in both hard copy and electronic form
- Hire a volunteer recruiter to contact companies, employee organizations, cultural and religious communities on the South Shore to introduce them to Our Harbour's services.
- Open a volunteer position to initiate and introduce newly recruited volunteers to Our Harbour.
- Develop a list of board member responsibilities and prepare as a pamphlet;
- Establish a nominating committee two months before each annual meeting;
- Emphasize the importance to each board member of recruiting new members
- Hold an event prior to the annual meeting at which current members bring as a guest a potential new board member
- Use the newsletter to highlight board activity, the rewards of being a board member and the annual need for new board members
- We will make cultural sensitivity an integral part of everything we do at Our Harbour by the following means: include cultural sensitivity in volunteer training; We will look for government grants to help in our outreach to cultural communities; send newsletters to the English-speaking leadership of cultural communities; use resources in Montreal such as ACCESS for more information about services to cultural communities on the South Shore; have copies of appropriate documents in other languages available in the office.
- Develop outreach kits that meet the needs of cultural communities
- Hold an annual potluck dinner for the families
- Look at an appropriate time to open Apartment 6
- Continue to support a Dawson College stagiaire
- Continue to help each individual resident with goal-setting and help him/ her to achieve these goals
- Optimize occupancy of long-term residents in each apartment.
- Continue to contribute to the expansion of the Network of Community Supported Housing for people living with mental illness throughout Canada.
- Continue to target areas of special psychiatric and medical needs of the residents and bring resources to bear in order to meet these needs effectively.
- Look for funding to set up day programs for our residents that will improve their quality of life and enhance their self-esteem.

Join us on June 13, and together we can make these priorities happen.