



From the desk of the Executive Director:

There have been many events and changes since our last newsletter. We have welcomed many new staff members and our focus on increased staff training opportunities has been most successful. As our skills increase we are capable of developing new approaches that improve the quality of our service. Our dedicated staff team are responsible for the many new opportunities that have been presented to the individuals we support and the results have been most favourable. Our organization is thriving, and as part of our evaluation planning we are seeking accreditation from CARF (Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities), an international organization.

Our relationship with our bargaining unit remains strong and we are preparing to renegotiate our collective agreement. Over the past few years our funding partner, MCSS, has been in a position to offer our organization enhancements to staff wages and some operational expenses, and we are hoping that the commitment for an allotment of annualized funding for 2010 will be met. Over the past year we have been working with our partnering agencies in Renfrew County to meet the requirements of the MCSS transformation agenda. So far, MVACL was able to create one residential and three day-support spaces to offer to individuals on the Inclusion Renfrew County wait list. We are aware that there are individuals in our community who are in need of supported accommodations and we are proud of the fact that we have been able to meet this need when we have been requested to do so. I am very proud of the members of this organization who assist us with this great accomplishment.

Marion



MVACL

Madawaska Valley Association for Community Living

www.mvacl.ca

Spring 2010

In an effort to revitalize, Activities Plus has undergone some aesthetic changes over the last few months. Visitors will notice our Community Access Program (CAP) site has been redesigned, offering computer users easier access to workstations and the printer.

Visitors can also read up on the latest news in our cozy new reading corner, where we also feature the work of area artists on a rotating basis. Other changes include the addition of a new storage room, more cupboard space in our kitchen area, wireless speakers, new artwork, and the installation of new coat hooks. A new Nordic Track elliptical machine will also be added in April, and like our treadmills, can be used free of charge.

We also welcomed Paul Mayfield to the MVACL team as Activities Plus Coordinator in early October 2009.



The new Activities Plus reading corner (left), and our re-designed CAP site.

MVACL Board of Directors

President, Bridget Gutoskie Vice-President, Lavina Prince
 Treasurer, Jane Visneskie Secretary, Jane Beahen

Directors

Laura Anderson, Corinne Higgins, Carrie Hogan, Terry Johnstone

MVACL Mission Statement

We envision a community that welcomes and values the participation and contribution of all its citizens. We seek a community without barriers, where people with intellectual disabilities can engage in meaningful work, obtain decent and affordable housing and have full access to the resources and opportunities that will make each day purposeful and help each citizen realize their dreams and aspirations.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Spring greetings to everyone!

Just a brief note to once again thank everyone for all the support they have shown MVACL, by being involved with our various fundraisers over the past while. Notably, Hede and Cindy, who take care of the monthly cheese fundraiser, as well as Cindy and Jess, who volunteer their time working the MVACL table at the Farmers' Market. The Board of Directors is also gearing up to host our annual golf tournament later this spring. Come out and swing with us!

We are ready to participate in the accreditation process, and support Marion and all staff with the effort needed to accomplish this over the next year.

We also remind you to take a moment to renew your membership. We look forward to your continued support.

Bridget



Dust off your golf clubs and gear up to support MVACL at our annual golf tournament, scheduled for June 13th at Wolf Ridge. Call the main office at (613) 756-3817 to sign up your team for the tournament, and to order cheese and find out more about membership.

HUMAN RESOURCES



A big welcome to Tracy Stoppa (left) and Jenny Napier (right), who joined MVACL's residential program in 2009. Tracy is a life-long resident of Barry's Bay, while Jenny joins us from Sharbot Lake.

Hello from the Human Resources department! We (Colleen and Darcy) would like to thank all staff for your patience and understanding while we continue to formalize and develop the MVACL "HR department."

We have been very busy working with ComVida, our new Employee Management System (EMS), which has scheduling and human resource information components, and soon, a client information component. We have also created an information flow chart so that you may direct your questions to the office accordingly.

Please feel free to contact us with any suggestions, questions, or concerns you have regarding any HR-related material. We look forward to working with all of you to maintain an effective and supportive work environment at MVACL.

Darcy

MVACL Social Committee

A big thank you to following employees who have volunteered their time as part of the new MVACL Social Committee: Wendy Brotton, Amanda Foy, Jenny Brotton, Cassandra Lagassie, Laurie Kincade-Votour, Marcie Campbell and Karen Hawthorne. Our first meeting was held in early March, and discussions focused on planning events that would help foster a sense of community within our growing organization. Many great ideas were brought forth, and it was decided that we would host an MVACL volleyball tournament and BBQ in mid summer for employees and their families.

Connecting our Community, another proposed social committee project, will be a newsletter distributed to MVACL staff, board and management on a monthly basis. This internal communication piece will serve as a welcome to new hires, celebrate upcoming birthdays and other relevant milestones, provide information on union updates, notify staff of upcoming training opportunities, as well as provide regular updates on the social committee and planned events. Look for the first *Connecting our Community* newsletter to arrive in late April.

Have an idea for an event or activity for MVACL staff? Let us know via our mailbox at the office, or contact me at Activities Plus.

Lisa Allen



SWEET MEMORIES OLD FASHIONED CANDY SHOP

As the busy summer season approaches, Sweet Memories is preparing to nearly double its inventory to meet the demands of increased traffic. Those with a sweet tooth will be able to find truly old-fashioned, kettle-cooked fudge, peanut brittle and "retro" candy like Sherbet Fountain and Bottle Caps, and, as always, eight flavours of The Pop Shoppe.

Also new to Sweet Memories is the introduction of flavoured coffee and tea, as well as hot chocolate. The past year also saw the installation of three laptop computers to the porch area, providing customers with the opportunity to surf the net with a high-speed connection. The store will also be adding three tables to the porch area in the coming months, allowing customers to enjoy their beverages and sweets in a relaxing environment.

