



Bringing Care Home

The South West CCAC Staff Bulletin

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It Takes a Village ...

With the help of the South West CCAC and other community supports, Irene Blackwell is enjoying a full life



"It's like the community is hugging you when you need help."

That's how Irene Blackwell describes the support she receives from the South West CCAC and other organizations in the village of Exeter, just north of London.

It hasn't always been easy for Irene. Her husband Stuart passed away in 2006, just a few years after they moved to Exeter from their farm. Her daughter Mary's husband, Al, also became seriously ill. The younger couple moved in with Irene, and Al received palliative care at home.

Irene has had three knee replacement surgeries, and has received services from the South West CCAC for many years. "Our goal," says Mary Morley, Irene's South West CCAC case manager, "is to promote independence as much as possible, and to use the resources in our community to enhance our clients' well-being. We are trying to keep people like Irene

at home longer, and provide them with quality of life where they are."

Personal support worker (PSW) Margaret Wareing visits Irene every Monday for two hours to help her with showering and dressing. Margaret has been working in community care for more than 30 years. "What I enjoy about this work is the smile on the client's face when I walk in," she says. "They are so appreciative of even the littlest things."

Irene attends Dining for Seniors, a community dining program, on Tuesdays, and the Exeter Adult Day Centre on Thursdays. Tammy Antaya, Coordinator of the Day Centre, says seniors like Irene enjoy the opportunity to get out, chat with friends and participate in programs designed to keep

them active and engaged. "It's a safe and welcoming environment," she says, "and perhaps most important, it's an opportunity to be with others."

The dining program is operated by Town and Country Support Services, which also provides Irene's PSW service and installed her Lifeline emergency response system. As it happens, Irene and Stuart served on the Town and Country board for ten years before they retired.

It all adds up, as Irene says, to a warm and safe embrace that keeps her comfortable in her own home. "My helpers have been lifesavers on so many levels," she says. "They're strangers at first, but not for long. It's hard to imagine what I would do without them all."

Tender loving care embraces South West CCAC client Irene Blackwell (3rd from left). Her team includes (l to r): Mary Morley, South West CCAC Case Manager; Jean O'Rourke, Service and Supportive Housing Co-ordinator, Town and Country Support Services; Irene; Margaret Wareing, PSW, Town and Country Support Services; Tammy Antaya, Midwestern Adult Day Services Co-ordinator; and Mary Moody, Irene's daughter.



South West
Community Care Access Centre

CASC

CCAC

Centre d'accès aux soins communautaires
du Sud-Ouest



We Are One

A message from
Sandra Coleman, Executive Director

What a difference a year makes!

Just a year ago, we stood on the verge of a major change – six organizations about to become one. It was exciting but let's face it, it was also daunting. There was so much to do, and so little time to do it. The organizational changes were complex and absorbing,

and they had to happen without any negative impact on our clients. After all, they are at the heart of everything we do.

The South West CCAC is nearly one year old. Most one-year-olds have a birthday party and eat chocolate cake with their hands. As you will read below, we're planning a get-together too (but hopefully the table manners will be better!).

We are one in another sense, too. South West CCAC staff members across this vast region have come together during the past 12 months. We have gotten to know one another and started to share ideas and develop

solutions. At our December all-staff meeting, we had a chance to mark this sense of oneness by presenting each staff member with a special pin – a circle of caring wrapped around a team of care providers with the client at its heart. I hope you will all wear this pin with pride – you earned it!

As the holiday season approaches, I hope you will all take time to consider how far we have come. Remember that change is never easy. Give yourselves a collective pat on the back for working hard and smart. During the holidays, take time to relax and re-charge. After all, we still have lots to do!

For my part, I simply want to say thank-you from the bottom of my heart. Your support, enthusiasm and dedication have made my job a joy. When I feel my energy flagging, I am inspired by you, and by the courage and tenacity of our clients.

As the clock chimes midnight and 2008 arrives, we will all be celebrating in our own ways. But we will be together as we face the challenges of the year ahead. We are truly one.



At the December 4 all-staff meeting, Sandra Coleman (centre) enjoyed presenting South West CCAC commemorative pins to London staff members like Marie Davies (left) and Tina Hickey.



"We're All in this Together"

The South West CCAC plans a get-together for all staff

"Of course we all get together electronically on a regular basis, but being face to face is different. The Stratford event will help to strengthen our growing sense of being part of one strong organization."

That's Mary Fonger, Executive Assistant, talking about the South West CCAC special event planned for Thursday, April 10. Mary is helping to plan a stimulating

and fun day of learning. The theme, "We're All in this Together," reminds us that we are all working as one to meet challenges and improve care. Staff from across the region will be bussed to the sparkling new Stratford Rotary Centre for the day.

Brett Richards will be one of the featured speakers. Brett is President of Connective Intelligence Inc., a global

consulting firm. The goal of Connective Intelligence is to "develop and connect cognitive and emotional intelligences to help people achieve a higher level of effectiveness."

Our keynote speaker is a closely-guarded secret (mainly because we haven't finalized who it is yet!), but you can count on being inspired and energized.

The day will also feature the first ever Rewards and Recognition event developed by the Staff Quality Council.

Stayed tuned for more details ahead.

Celebrating a Special Time of Year

Across the South West CCAC, offices are preparing for the holidays by decorating and enjoying lots of good cheer. Not surprisingly, the most important aspect of this shared celebration is helping others. "I think it's all about what we do at the South West CCAC," says London's Ingrid Hicks. "We want to give to those in the community who need us."

Here are a few of the activities under way this year:

- ❖ "Decorate your area" and "Dress your Desk" contests
- ❖ **Contributions** to local Christmas charities like the Huron County Christmas Bureau
- ❖ London and Area Food Bank **Challenge**
- ❖ Christmas dinners and **parties**
- ❖ **Goodies** and hot cider in the office
- ❖ Salvation Army **Angel Tree**
- ❖ Christmas **raffle**
- ❖ Trip to the One-of-a-Kind **craft show** in Toronto
- ❖ Support for a **family** through Christmas Care or Salvation Army

Woodstock Angel Tree. Tina Calic > (left) and Myrna Powell proudly display staff-purchased gifts for 44 needy Oxford County children.

Darlene Alexander (left) and Mary Sickinger trim the tree in Stratford.

"We've been doing the Angel Tree for years. It makes the spirit of Christmas very real."
Marilyn Pearson, Woodstock

Christmas cheer in London. (1 to r): Heather Patterson, Ingrid Hicks, Rosalie Markham, Mark Kruger, and Carol Hernandez.

"Celebrating at the office makes people happier."
Ingrid Hicks, London

Christmas came early > for Shirley McDougall in Owen Sound. She won a festive wreath, donated by Katie Harrison, in a fundraising raffle for United Way.

Organizing Christmas giving in > London. Standing (1 to r): Carole Nelson, Steve White, Sumit Saini, and Danielle Thuss. Seated: Cheryl Jermyn.

< Robin Smith catches the spirit in St. Thomas.

"We don't want to see families go without at Christmas time."

Linda Suplat, Seaforth

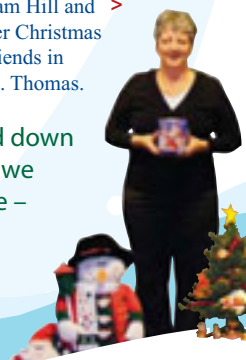
"My best memories are of supporting needy families. Our staff is very generous."
Sheila Rolph, Stratford

"We're thrilled about adopting a family ... It brings joy to our office at Christmas."
Susan Evans, St. Thomas

Pam Hill and > her Christmas friends in St. Thomas.

"Sometimes we get so bogged down with our day-to-day work that we forget about the fun side of life – like decorating the office!"
Anne Woods, Owen Sound

Festive greetings from Delphine Staley in Stratford.





In Owen Sound (clockwise from bottom of table): Darlene Turner, Faye Bistretzan, Carol Anne Wright, Heather Misener, Karen McArthur, Deb Wilson, Cathy Whitehurst and Jean Wilson.

Strength in numbers

Big finish for United Way

South West CCAC campaign co-ordinator **Liz MacDonald** reports our organization raised more than \$12,000 this year – a strong showing thanks to our collective effort! Kudos to chefs at each site for creating an amazing region-wide fundraising chili lunch on Dec. 4. Thanks to all who led the way at their sites!

Owen Sound: **Liz MacDonald** and **Cathy Mitchell**

Walkerton: **Brenda Kaake**

Seaforth: **Laurie Henderson** and **Laura Johnston**

Stratford: **Delphine Staley** and **Sheila Rolph**

London: **Cate Patchett** and **Leanne MacKenzie**

St. Thomas: **Dorothy Geddes**

Woodstock: **Marilyn Pearson** and **Christie Birch**



Stratford's ladies who lunch (clockwise from bottom left): Sheila Rolph, Jen Dixon, Cheryle Harris, Mary Flewitt and Pat Roesner

Kelsi Break (left), Oxford County United Way Campaign Co-ordinator, joined Sue Pettit at Woodstock's chili lunch – Sue had just learned she'd won a paid day off!

Win-Win

A year ago, **Sue Pettit** joined our organization in order to stay with her clients in the small part of Norfolk County that was included in the South West CCAC. Maybe it's a sign she made the right decision – Sue recently won the United Way draw for an extra day off with pay! Congratulations Sue, and have a wonderful day.



Reserved Parking

Eight lucky staff members in London won a United Way draw for prime monthly parking spots – congrats to **Sharon Ramsey**, **Rachel LaBonte**, **Lori Gonsalves**, **Gail McDougall**, **Deb Dixon**, **Nancy Dool-Kontio**, **Mark Kruger** – and especially **Gert Crighton**. She won a special spot for the whole year!

Thanks for a job well done

I would like to express my great appreciation of the tremendous effort and accomplishment I have seen amongst you across the South West CCAC and its partner provider agencies. You've made tremendous strides together to create your vision of Client-Driven Care. I would also like to commend you on your video package which I will certainly be promoting for educational purposes at UWO. It is an indispensable tool for creating ongoing achievement in quality home care.

Your unfailingly collaborative approach is a true example of transformative leadership and it is a great privilege to serve as one of your research partners. I look forward to continuing to work with you in furthering your vision in 2008. My best wishes for your health, happiness and success.

Sincerely,

*Carol McWilliam, Professor, School of Nursing,
The University of Western Ontario*

Client-Driven
CARE



^ Anita Cole's big day.

You Go, Grads!

Anita Cole graduated with a BSc(N), Distinction, from the University of Victoria, Nov. 2007.

Joanne Halashewski graduated from the Health Care Office Assistant program at Fanshawe College London, Oct. 2007.

Karin Burrows proudly announces her husband, Ross, graduated Oct. 18, 2007 with a Diploma in Business from Georgian College.

Births

• Congratulations to **Debby Weppeler-Wardrop** on the birth of her second grandchild, Daemyn Edmonstone, 8 lbs., Nov. 16, 2007. • Congratulations to **Cathy Mitchell** on the birth of her first grandchild, Maya Mitchell, 7 lbs.10 oz., Nov. 8, 2007.

You're in our hearts

Nancy Downard had back surgery Dec. 14 at LHSC. She'll be off for 12 weeks, but would love to hear from friends at home (519-473-0767).