

Message from the Program Coordinator

The summer has come and gone in the blink of an eye and we are readying ourselves for the changing colors of fall. With the arrival of fall comes the inevitable return to school and with all these other students, I too will be going back to the books. I will be spending less time at work in the coming months, returning to a 20 hour per week schedule, as I have started a Master's program at Concordia University.

Over the summer I was able to put order into our my own AHF reporting system as well as our new volunteers' database and filing system. This reorganization has allowed me to spend more time on other things like the Urban Aboriginal Community Strategy, the UACS Health

Subcommittee, as well as the Sweat Lodge Committee at the Botanical Gardens. My involvement in each of these committees has been a great experience and, although my commitment to each has been reduced, I will continue to take part in all of them.

I am pleased to say that renovations are coming to a close and we now have a beautiful home into which we can welcome again a full house of clients. We continue to offer ongoing workshops, outings and activities, as well as physical therapies, psychotherapy, psychology and spiritual healing.

Volunteer applications continue to stream in and thanks to all these kind souls we are able to offer arts and crafts,

budgeting, Reiki massage, Relexology, Ireca, Yoga, Reading Circles and countless other services to our clients free of charge. Not only do volunteers offer workshops they also offer childcare services, organization of our clothing depot and toy room, as well as occasional office work, kitchen help, and maintenance.

We have held four sweat lodge retreats this summer and are looking forward to another one in October. Clients and staff alike are thankful for the opportunity to reconnect with culture and learn the benefits of traditional healing.

Looking forward to a beautiful fall and working together toward healing.

Kerry Tannahill

Grandmother Moon - Fall 2009

Achieving balance through empowered healing.

Native Women's Shelter of Montreal

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We're on the web!
www.nwsm.info

Grandmother Moon

Native Women's Shelter of Montreal

Fall 2009



A Word from the Interim Executive Director

As we approach the time of harvest, it is an opportunity to reflect back on the adventures of this past summer. The shelter clients and staff took part in several successful sweat lodges; attended Powwows in Kanasatake, Akwesasne and Kahnawake as well as other cultural activities in the Greater Montreal area. As well the clients took part in many family oriented fun activities the water park,

The Shelter has been under construction for repairs over the summer which meant lots of shifting around rooms, furniture, and challenging times. Through it all the staff and clients have been able to deal with the daily changes. As a result of the repairs the Native Women's shelter is a much healthier and safer environment.

The Urban Aboriginal Community Strategy held its 5th meeting on Tuesday, September 29, 2009 at Batshaw. The four sub-committees (Health, Social Services, Arts, Culture and Heritage, Education, Employment and training) have had meetings and working on their individual responsibilities. Staff members from the

Shelter are representative on the sub-committees.

A temporary Steering committee will act in the capacity of including the development of a steering committee, hiring of a coordinator,

The next meeting will be held in mid September, 2009.

The Sweat Lodge at the Botanical gardens continues to be worked on and with the opening of the Sweat Lodge to take place in Spring 2010. The Building of the sweat lodge site it some snags in terms of the building location, fire codes and other safety codes which has put the construction of the lodge behind.

We would like to thank the community for their continued support in terms of donations and request for volunteering. It is very much appreciated.

We are looking forward to a bountiful harvest season as well at the shelter.

In peace and healing,

Lou Ann Stacey

Announcements

External Office

The external office is now in full operation, sessions are being held Tuesdays with Art Therapist Pascale Annual.

Logo

We will be revising the NWSM logo and are still looking for submissions from the community. The design must represent our vision and mission and be consistent with the shelter's goals and objectives. Please submit your designs to Kerry Tannahill at kerrytannahill@gmail.com

Survivors

If you or a family member is a survivor of residential school and you would like to share your story, please contact us.

Volunteers

Thanks to our many volunteers the Native Women's shelter of Montreal is able to offer a multitude of services to our clientele. If you are interested in volunteering for the NWSM please visit our website, www.nwsm.info, or contact us

For more information, please contact
Kerry Tannahill at 514-933-4688,
kerrytannahill@gmail.com

Greetings all!

Summer has been interesting and exciting this year. Never a dull moment, as activities have kept everyone busy. I've seen challenging situations being cooperatively resolved as renovations have filled our hallways with dust. Bravo all...I have eagerly, and with great enthusiasm continued the quest to have as many feet walking as possible as I encouraged clients and workers to stay upbeat, even on the cloudy days. The walking team, "Spirit Walkers" welcomes new participants each week and has rewarded quite a few members with their very own Team

t-shirt. Getting around the city of Montreal has new meaning for out-of-towners these days, as new friendships and support systems develop through a simple walk around the block. As a sexual assault counsellor, I am more than pleased to see the ladies take charge and face each step with courage.

A recent trip to Toronto in early August for the 5th *Critical Multicultural and Diversity Counselling and Psychotherapy Conference* was a rewarding opportunity to hear presenters from as far as Africa, New Zealand and India speak of their experiences. I've been able to bring

back a renewed enthusiasm and appreciation for the diverse healing traditions of all. As well, I will be attending the retreat that takes place August 31-September 2, 2009 as I intend to enjoy my fourth *Sweat*. Spending time away from the city in a relaxing environment, such that sweat lodge retreat location provides, has allowed me to share in heart warming conversations and enlightening experiences with Native culture.

And the Universe shall provide,
Terri Normandin

The Harm Reduction Project has seen yet another productive quarter. Many thanks go out to Sugandhi Wickremarachchi of the Canadian AIDS Treatment Information Centre (CATIE) who graciously accepted my invitation to offer the Shelter employees and other community frontline workers free training on HIV. This workshop, aptly called "Beyond the Banana" is "designed for front-line HIV/AIDS workers to provide accessible information about recent research, in order to better inform counselling and educational messages about the biology of HIV transmission. Topics of the workshop included: HAART as an aid to prevention; the immune system and HIV transmission; STIs and increased risk of HIV transmission; the female genital tract; and circumcision as a prevention method".

Another exciting workshop that I organized took place at the Native Friendship

Centre's Inter-Tribal Youth Centre and was called "Reclaiming Indigenous Feminism through Reproductive Justice". We were fortunate to have Jessica Yee, founder and Director of the Native Youth Sexual Health Network, present this workshop to our youth. Her presentation was "rights-focused and strongly encouraged the self-determination of Indigenous youth over their rights on their health, bodies, and well-being. It historically demonstrated reproductive justice that existed in Native communities and discussed the need of this awareness to face the present-day epidemics of youth pregnancy, STI transmission, and domestic violence and lastly it addressed confidence building for Indigenous youth through power of culture and tradition to strengthen and foster healthy relationships". All of us wish to thank Jessica for her powerful presentation.

Exclusively for the NWSM staff, I arranged for on-site training given by the RCMP on drug issues including how to identify signs that someone is under the influence, street names of drugs, household items that can be used as drug paraphernalia, effects of various drugs, etc. This was well received by all who participated.

I have also been busy with my regular activities of facilitating workshops, street patrol, accompaniments for testing and follow up and social activities for clients (including a picnic in the park in August). I also continue to upgrade my skills through various training sessions including the 2-day conference "5th Multicultural and Diversity Counselling and Psychotherapy Conference" in Toronto in August. And last but not least my involvement on a number of committees continues.

Carrie Martin

Introducing the Native Women's Shelter of Montreal's Outreach Worker

Hello,

My name is Charlotte Pien and I am a member of the Naskapi nation of Kawawachikamach. I also would like to add that I can speak five languages, Naskapi, Cree, Innu, English, and French. I have three years experience as a Frontline worker at the Native Women's Shelter of Montreal. For the last 18 months I have occupied the position of Outreach worker for the shelter. My clients' population includes former residents of the shelter. Some of my services include:

- Providing follow up services to the former residents
- Providing lifestyle management and parenting classes in our monthly group

sessions

- Providing clients with an opportunity to meet with an Elder
- Responding to emergency situations and crisis interventions
- Providing home visits and active listening
- Accompanying clients to Social and Health Services to help bridge the cultural and linguistic gaps
- Provide encouragement, support, problem solving and advocacy
- Prevent eviction from existing housing by acting as the clients' advocate or to assist them in relocating
- To assist clients with applications

- Providing resources and referrals

- Planning and organizing activities and outings

I am also involved in the Urban Aboriginal Community strategy Health committee and I have had multiple meetings with the Batshaw/Shelter Committee.

Since becoming the Outreach worker here at the shelter I have also assisted mothers in DYP meetings and court cases as well as meetings with doctors and social workers.

Stay tuned for upcoming events and activities provided by the Outreach project.

Charlotte Pien

Clinical Supervisor's Update

Tansi, Hello, Bonjour,

Seasons are a changing and so is everything around us!!! We are finally seeing the results of all the renovations that the shelter has underwent. It looks fantastic and it gives us so much more to be thankful for. Both staff and clients are very appreciative and thankful for all the hard work that has gone into beautifying the shelter and making it into a more comfortable home.

As we move into the fall, it means a return to school and studying. We are fortunate to have students who will be

doing their internship with us. I would like to welcome Ashley Norton who is in her second year Social Services at Dawson College. Ashley comes in one day per week. Our second stagiaire is Annie Bergeron who is also in her second year at Universite de Quebec a Montreal. Annie is studying Sexology and will be here for two days per week. The McGill Law students will also be starting again later this month.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend a huge thank you to Deborah Lee, Valerie Jacobs, Christina Holland, staff

members who have left and have gone on to different things, we wish them well in their future endeavors. At the same time to welcome a new staff Agnes Mushquash who has joined us as a Relief/On Call worker.

Apart from this the house is busier than ever, always filled with workshops/activities and/or outings. It has been a great summer and hoping for a beautiful fall.

In the spirit of friendship

Brenda Crane Martin