

Spotlight on local programs for seniors

BETHANN G. MERKLE

Since 1990, the United Nations has marked October 1 as International Day of Older Persons, and in 2010, the Canadian government introduced legislation naming it National Seniors Day. Both designations aim to increase awareness of the critical role seniors play in social success and well-being. Of equal concern is a global commitment to protecting the security and essential rights of our elders.

Statistics Canada estimates nearly 5 million Canadians (14.8%) are in the 65+ demographic. The 2011 census further indicates 1,770,515 Quebec residents are over age 60, with 129,865 living in Quebec City. The UN estimates that by 2050, there will be more people over 60 than there will be children in the world.

Local programs for seniors

Local organizations offer programs which both celebrate the opportunities and strive to address the challenges of aging. The QCT recently met with Heather McRae, of Voice of English-speaking Quebec, to learn more about these programs.

McRae emphasized that while a lot of information is available online, this can be a barrier for the people who need the information most. "Unless you are computer savvy, it can be really hard to find the info you need. You have to know where to go to get it." She added, "Even if you participate in one program, you may not know about all the others. And, you may not realize that one program coordinator can provide information about the others."

In order to address this concern, McRae said, "If seniors have a question, whether it is about health care or about a person to come wash your windows, feel free to call me at VEQ, or call Jeffery Hale. We're here to put you in touch with the right people." McRae continued, "VEQ, Jeffery Hale Community Services (JHCS), and the Quebec City Reading Council (QCRC) are three organizations that consistently have programming designed to enhance quality of life for local seniors." These core programs, many of which are free, are listed below:

JHCS services offered in English
www.jefferyhale.org, 418-684-5333 x 1580 or 1-888-984-5333



Gail Quinn (JHCS) shares painting tips with Lifelong Learning Program participants during a summer 2012 art and literature series.

(toll-free)

- Caregiver support
- CLSC-type services (housing advice, homecare services, senior wellness, and nutrition advice)
- Day Centre (weekly activities and transportation to and from the Day Centre)
- Long-term residential care (St. Brigid's Home is the city's only English-language public long-term care facility)
- Specialized consultations for seniors facing loss of independence due to physical or psychological issues
- Palliative care
- Physical rehabilitation
- Volunteer opportunities

QCRC (all services in English)
www.qcrc.org, 418-681-1258, info@qcrc.org

- One-on-one tutoring (reading, writing, math and computer skills)
 - Lifelong Learning Program (run in partnership with VEQ, Eastern Quebec Learning Centre, and others; offers peer-led, informal learning opportunities)
 - Volunteer opportunities
- VEQ (all services in English)**
www.veq.ca, 418-683-2366 x 224, heather.mcrae@veq.ca
- Volunteer opportunities
 - Bridging communities and generations through local heritage and history (involves local youth interviewing local elders; aims to develop anthology of narratives chronicling cultural and social heritage)
 - Respecting Seniors of Our Community (volunteers available to help with daily tasks; community outreach to explain available senior

services; awareness campaign to counter elder abuse)

- Seniors at the Heart of Our Community (aims to increase seniors' awareness of services and activities available for them in English, to reduce social isolation, to promote the respect and dignity of our aging community, and to increase their involvement in our community)
- Seniors' Day - November 10, 2012, at CEGEP St-Lawrence (English-language organizations and institutions will present their services which cater to the aging population.)
- Seniors, Out & About (a weekly transportation service enables seniors to keep their autonomy and actively participate in community activities)

McRae raised one final point of concern - elder abuse. She said, "People don't realize how many different ways there are to take advantage of someone. It's not always physical - there's emotional, financial, etc." She continued, "You are less likely to be abused or taken advantage of if you have a support system." Readers who suspect they or someone they know are experiencing elder abuse are encouraged to call the free, confidential Elder Abuse Helpline (1-888-489-2287).

McRae concluded, "We all want to get the information out about these programs. They are so important, we want to reach every single person. We've found the most effective outlet is person-to-person. Telling your friends, family, neighbors and colleagues what you know could make the difference. It is all about awareness and access."

CQSB Cross Country Run

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ranging from 1 to 2 kilometres. For the Administrators Cup, there are six age sub-categories. Parents and caregivers are also eligible to take part in this event by competing in the Open Division race. This race can be run by anyone over the age of 10, with the exception of current CQSB students.

In 2011, the CQSB Country Run attracted over 400 participants.

This year there were 537 individuals who crossed the finishing line, including an unnamed racer who gained 29th place in the Mosquito Boys race.

Congratulations to all prize winners and competitors.

For a complete list of all of the race results from this year's run, visit the Holland School website at: www.cqsb.qc.ca/hes

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Quebec High School Students walk for Jakob Drolet



Sheldon Brown and Vincent Gauvin hold up a colourful sign during the QHS Terry Fox Run on the Plains of Abraham.

SUBMITTED BY GINA FARNELL

QHS had a very successful Terry Fox run last Thursday, September 27. Over 90% of the students participated on a voluntary basis. Mr. Drolet and Ms. Najda, Jakob Drolet's parents, joined his classmates for the walk.

There was a certain serenity during the walk. QHS staff members were impressed by the students' enthusiasm during the entire activity. Some students had brought guitars and played as they walked. Many students had posters, banners, spray-painted T-shirts stating why

they were walking or running. Others had tags naming for whom they were walking.

Everyone returned to school with rosy cheeks, a smile, and sense of accomplishment. It was a beautiful morning.

The entire QHS community is holding its breath waiting for the final tally of funds raised. Expectations are high since the established goal was \$8500. Some heads will most likely be shaved and a certain teacher will have to come to school unusually dressed . . . as promised, if the goal is reached.

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS



ORDRE NATIONAL DU QUÉBEC

HONNEUR AU PEUPLE DU QUÉBEC

NOMINATION

To submit a nomination to the Ordre national du Québec, upload the presentation form from the Ordre website at www.ordre-national.gouv.qc.ca.

The form must be sent to the Secrétariat de l'Ordre national, by e-mail and by mail, **no later than November 9, 2012**, to the addresses indicated below.

Every nomination must be sponsored by two persons.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Any person born or residing in Québec, with the exception of Members of the National Assembly, is eligible.

SELECTION OF NOMINATIONS

The nominations will be analyzed by the Conseil de l'Ordre, tasked to give its opinion to the Premier. The names of the honourees will be announced in a communiqué in the spring of 2013.

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