



# Esprit Newsletter

Fall/Winter Edition 2007

*Ottawa-Carleton Association for Persons  
with Developmental Disabilities (OCAPDD)*

*Association d'Ottawa-Carleton pour personnes  
ayant une déficience intellectuelle (AOCPI)*

## What's been happening in our Programs



### Extreme Makeover

Since January 2007 the landscape at 3501 Richmond Road, Silver Spring Farm, has changed dramatically with the “Extreme Makeover” of Charette House and Campbell House. In 2006, OCAPDD committed to providing residential services to sixteen people from the Rideau Regional Center (RRC). We had also received rebuilding grants from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation to demolish

Campbell and Charette homes down to the bare structure and to rebuild so that the homes could accommodate fourteen people, seven individuals in each home. After some creative discussion and planning with an architect and residential supervisors, a very innovative, practical floor plan and interior design were created. Demolition occurred in January and the reconstruction finally began in the Spring. The homes are on schedule to be completed by December 15.



Both homes have identical floor plans and include seven bedrooms, a bathing room with a specialized tub, ceiling and floors lifts. The kitchen and dining room area is open and spacious. There is a shower room on the second floor as well as a regular bathroom with tub. The living room is located on the second floor, complete with a kitchenette. There are two full laundry rooms, one on the second floor one in the basement. Each home is equipped with an elevator for easy and safe access between the first and second floor.

The exterior of the homes are finished in a coffee coloured stucco siding with a chocolate trim. The original windows have been replaced with large picture windows. The landscaping will include a stone patio to be shared between the two homes with a decorative fence surrounding the area. Sloping stone walkways with rails, to the front door of each home, will provide easy access for wheelchairs.

OCAPDD submitted a proposal to Hope Beach Volleyball for funding for a Snoezelen Room for Silver Spring Farm. We have received the good news that our proposal was accepted, and we can now look forward to a Snoezelen Room on the second floor in Campbell House.

In late March OCAPDD began visiting with the families of individuals from RRC who wanted to come to live in Ottawa and the area. These families had an opportunity to meet with several similar agencies before making a decision for their family member. Many families quickly made up their minds and chose OCAPDD. Fourteen people have now been identified to move into the two homes, with the first two people moving into Campbell House on or about January 14. The moves will be “staggered”, from a few days to a couple of weeks apart. All individuals are scheduled to move in before the end of February.

OCAPDD staff have started to travel back and forth to the RRC, planning the moves of the individuals, visiting with each person so that they can start to build relationships and learn about likes, dislikes and routines. Individuals will also have an opportunity to visit their new home a few days before moving in, to enjoy a cup of tea or a light lunch.

The families are excited and look forward to having their sons, daughters and siblings move back to the community and closer to their homes.

OCAPDD looks forward to welcoming each person to their new home and to developing long and happy relationships with them and their families.

By Ann-Marie Engelberts-Cousineau

## **OCAPDD'S CHRISTMAS ORNAMENTS**

These items have been crafted in part from the original copper, which covered the roofs of Canada's Parliament Buildings, from 1918 to 1996. These mementos of Canada's proud heritage were made with the participation of people with developmental disabilities.

Proceeds from the sale of these special products directly benefit the developmentally disabled. There are 2 ornaments to choose from and they can be viewed on our web-site at: [www.ocapdd.on.ca](http://www.ocapdd.on.ca).

Only a limited quantity is available, so get yours today! Only \$15.00 each

# Family Homeshare Program

The Family Homeshare Program would like to acknowledge the many acts of kindness extended to our Program in 2007.



Below: Julie and Justin.



We would especially like to thank the Ottawa Citizen for running many Family Homeshare recruitment advertisements throughout the year free of charge. The ads helped increase our profile in the community resulting in new enquiries about our program. We have successfully approved several Family Homeshare Providers who are currently offering some well deserved respite.

We also want to thank the Carleton Place Home Depot, Trent Timber, Paulin Limited and Decor Precast for their donation of materials required to build a wheelchair ramp for one of our providers. Many thanks to Roxanne Sparks, who got this project rolling. Shannon Guyea, Allan Foubert and Alex gave us a day of labour to help with the construction.

The ramp is over sixty feet in length and was completed recently. Julie and Bob Wistaff, and Justin Mantha are very happy with the results. Julie reports that getting Justin in and out of the house is a “breeze”.

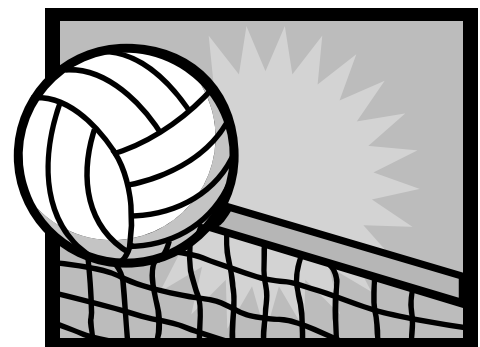
OCAPDD, the Wistaffs and Justin wish to thank all those that gave their time and materials to complete this worthwhile project.

## 2008 HOPE VOLLEYBALL SUMMER FEST

For the 2<sup>nd</sup> time, OCAPDD has been chosen as one of the charities to benefit from the HOPE Volleyball Tournament happening in July 2008. The proceeds from the tournament will be used for a new Snoezelen Room at the Silver Spring Farm.

We will need the help of volunteers during the tournament. More info to come in the Spring publication.

Get a team together and join the fun!



## **CSS WALKING CLUB Participates in the CANADA DAY HBC 3KM WALK 2007**

Throughout the year, the members of the CSS walking club have worked very hard, completing 1 to 10 laps around a track at the YMCA for the first few months, and then gradually building up to almost 26 laps (which equaled 2.5 km) towards the end of the season. Since all participants were doing so well we decided to put everyone up to the challenge by entering the CSS walking club in the 2007 HBC Run for Canada 3km walk.

The anticipation towards the event was incredible. The day before the actual race, the participants prepared all their clothing, had their bus schedules ready and prepared a healthy meal for supper. The following morning the participants had to have a healthy breakfast and have their race kits ready to meet at the starting line (Jacques Cartier Park in Hull). Everyone wore their red T-Shirts with pride and walked 3 km through the park. As they crossed the finish line, all participants received a medal. The smiles on their faces were priceless to know that they accomplished something so big.

The HBC Run for Canada is an annual event that helps to support Canada's athletes. It includes a 10k run, a 3k walk and a 1k children's run.



Top row left to right:

Barry Villeneuve, Gisele Thibodeau, Robert Riddell, Valerie Turchan, Wayne Walker, Geraldine McGarrity, Linda Manley and Carol Scott.

Bottom row Left to Right:

Frances Bloom, Jennifer Rouselle, Michelle LeMay and Sharon Skerritt.

## Aktion Club Update

Thanks to the guiding hand of Harold Moore the Aktion Club has grown to 100+ members from the community. Since it's inception in 1999 with 20 members the club has been split into two groups with each meeting bi-weekly. The club is supported by a dedicated group of volunteers who come weekly to serve meals, take attendance, provide entertainment and help where required.

Early in 2006 Harold Moore applied for a spot at Bingoland and beginning in September 2006 the Aktion Club started having weekly bingos at Bingoland South Hall. This combined with the many fundraisers held over the past year has made both clubs completely self-sufficient, requiring no funds from the sponsors. At the end of October a Halloween party was held for each club. The members thoroughly enjoyed bobbing for apples, pin the tail, etc. Prizes were handed out for the best and scariest costumes. Both clubs have attended many 67's games in the box provided by the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation and the Ottawa 67's club.

Being a part of the community and helping the community has always been one of the mandates of the club. In the last year the Club has donated \$300 to Sleeping Children Around the World which was used to purchase five bed kits for a third world country. Tom Belton from Sleeping Children came and spoke to both groups, displaying and explaining the bed kits.



The Pettapiece family with Darren Hannah from the Aktion Club, Heidi Liu and Isabelle Cyr from United Way.

In January 2007 a donation of \$2,500 was given to the Habitat for Humanity for a house that was being built in Stittsville by the Women in Law group. In November 2007 the recipients of that home the, Pettapiece family, came to the Aktion Club and thanked the group for their generous donation.

Many local individuals have donated their time to the Aktion Club providing entertainment or their time to speak. Guests have included Little Ray's Reptile Zoo, Ottawa Police Dogs, a visit from John Baird and most recently Corporal Landry came and spoke to both groups on her mission to Afghanistan.

Elections were held with a new President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and Sgt-At-Arms for both groups being duly installed. The President and Secretary of each club attended the Aktion Club International Conference in Toronto in May where many fundraising ideas were discussed. Individuals enjoyed a lunch served by the Famous People Players and afterwards were treated to a private showing.

Many thanks to the regular volunteers who attend weekly: Mike St. Louis, Dennis St. Louis, Dylan Moore, Maggie Julian, Dave Trigger and Marie Frances. Along with Harold you are the group's foundation.

## VOLUNTEERING WITH OCAPDD AT CTC

My four legged friend, Bro, and I volunteer every Wednesday morning at CTC (Centre de transition communautaire) on Industrial Avenue. We have been working with Ottawa Therapy dogs for a year and previously with the Ottawa Humane Society visiting long term care and palliative care facilities. I certainly welcomed the change and I'm pretty certain that Bro did too!

We enjoy working with a younger, healthy group of people and our time at CTC is never dull. The hour flies by.

I began my teaching career at Clifford Bowey School working with children with developmental disabilities so the transition was a natural for me.

From the first day we were welcomed with open arms by the friendly staff and we felt right at home. We had a tough act to follow in the paw prints of the previous OTD team, Martina and Joker - a very clever and handsome standard poodle. At CTC everyone speaks French. I do not. I am challenged to speak in French and everyone has been so kind and patient. No one has laughed at me yet!

At the Center we circulate among the group when they are on break and take individuals who are interested to a quiet area. The individuals do a few basic commands with Bro and then they brush or walk him on a leash. I hope to go outside more with the good weather and work on new commands with Bro and the individuals. The relationship that has built up between Bro and his new friends over the time we have been visiting is remarkable. They greet Bro enthusiastically and he is openly pleased to have their attention. At first Bro was a little intimidated by the noise and the activity in the room. The clients were a bit intimidated by Bro's sheer size. With time, the most timid and non-verbal adults are patting Bro and obviously enjoying his gentle, loving company. It is wonderful to see the relaxed friendship and trusting relationship develop with each visit. Bro's big tail never stops wagging.

Working at the CTC with my best canine friend has been a rewarding experience that we hope to continue for a long time. The support and friendship OCAPDD has given to Bro and I, is fabulous. It has made us feel useful, valued and part of the CTC "team".

Kate Miller  
Bro- Ottawa Therapy Dog



Kate Miller, Jean-Marc Carruthers and Bro.

## OCAPDD's Garlic Operation

Finally there was Garlic in spite of many challenges! For several months we were not sure...would Silver Spring Farm's garlic be available in 2007?

First of all, when planting time came around in October 2006, it rained and it rained and it rained ☹. Our chosen date (the Saturday after Thanksgiving) came and went. The field was so wet that we were unable to make our raised beds and rows and it was too wet to plant. Again, the same situation for the following two weeks. Furthermore, the ground was getting frozen. Finally, at the end of October early November, we began planting on some weekdays whenever the field was a bit workable and whenever hardy volunteers were able to dig and plant. Because the field was still very wet after planting, we were concerned that the garlic cloves would rot before they were able to develop roots. And some did rot.

December arrived but without the usual protection of winter snow and this condition was not good for growing garlic. Finally the snow came and in the Spring we had too much rain during some weeks. In July, when garlic needs much sun and very little rain, we had many days with rain.

However, our many dedicated volunteers persevered, and we all rejoiced when our garlic was finally harvested. We are grateful that again it was delicious, juicy and nutritious, even if it was not as plentiful as in the previous year.

We thank all of our volunteers for their faithful efforts.  
Jack Fraser and Ed Haines

## Ontario Telemedicine Network (OTN)

You may have noticed the new televisions in Boardroom B at head office. As of October 15<sup>th</sup> 2007, OCAPDD has been added to the Ontario Telemedicine Network (OTN). The Network was created in 2006 through the merger of three existing and successful provincially-funded networks: *CareConnect* (East and South East), *NORTH Network* (Central and North), and *VideoCare* (Southwest).



OTN uses videoconferencing and advanced information communication technologies to deliver clinical, educational and administrative services to more than 360 health care sites province-wide. Here at OCAPDD, we will have the opportunity to attend web based educational sessions and possibly attend meetings without travelling. Over time, this technology could provide access to specialists in other areas of the province for clinical consultations. See [www.otn.ca](http://www.otn.ca) for further details.

We would like to thank Jacques Pelletier, coordinator for the Community Network for Specialized Care – Eastern Region for his assistance in making this possible. More information about the CNSC can be found at [www.community-networks.ca](http://www.community-networks.ca)

For further information please do not hesitate to contact Martin Hollinger, Natalie Deschamps or Louis Renaud.

## Volunteer Tidbits...

2007 has been an exciting year for the Volunteer Program. Our numbers have grown to 194 registered volunteers who are involved in just about everything. Volunteers have assisted with the CSS Riding Program, Annual Picnic, CSS Drop-In, Loeb Dances, Residential Christmas Party, Whist Tournaments, cooked dinners and provided one on one friendship to many. They have mended clothes, tended to gardens, raked leaves, cleaned windows and painted. We are so fortunate, that so many give generously of their time.

In the past year we have worked closely with the students at the University of Ottawa and currently have 35 students helping out throughout the agency. Volunteers are currently running art, exercise, yoga, cooking, grooming and drama classes at the Loeb, Quinlan, Rosenthal and CTC centres as well as at Ahearn and will be starting an exercise/yoga class at the Crosswinds in January.



Margaret Grove, Rick Nickerson, Brigitte Hamelin and Larry Griffiths the Loeb Centre.



Hannah Irving, Tracy Millette, Mitchell Kutney, Tony Chudiak and Jocelyne Beaudin at the Quinlan Centre.

Best Buddies is about creating friendships between people who may not otherwise have had the chance to meet. Best Buddies facilitates friendships by pairing individuals in one-to-one relationships and by organizing group activities.

Five years ago OCAPDD became The Host Site Coordinator for Best Buddies - University of Ottawa chapter. This exciting new adventure provided us with six one-on-one partnerships in 2002 and now in 2007 we have grown to twenty five matches. They have pizza dinners, bake sales, games afternoons and of course the annual spaghetti dinner, where over 300 plates of pasta are served to raise funds.

On November 17, 2007 Best Buddies paired up with Harold Moore and the Aktion Club to bring the Alan Shain Comedy Show to the group. For more info on Alan, feel free to check out his website: <http://www.magma.ca/~rickcurrie/shain/>



Alyssa Schwartzenruber, Alan Shain and Shelley deRooy.



In 2002 OCAPDD had the good fortune to begin working with a wonderful lady named Marilyn Benoit, Founder of Ottawa Therapy Dogs, Chapter 156, Therapy Dogs International. In the past five years there has been seven Therapy Dog teams working for us and we are fortunate enough to have four teams currently working with us at Byron, Rosenthal, Loeb and CTC.

It is with sadness that we announce the passing of Marilyn Benoit, Founder of Therapy Dogs International Ottawa on October 19, 2007 as a result of a tragic accident. Marilyn's eleven years of therapy dog work are well known to OTD members. She was the driving force behind and an original founder of OTD. In recognition of her work, Marilyn was honoured by the City of Ottawa with a Certificate of Appreciation in the spring of 2006, and in the fall of 2006, she was honoured to be selected by the United Way for a Community Builder Award.

Without the inspiration and dedication of Marilyn, OTD would neither have been created, nor would it have continued to grow into the volunteer organization that it has become today. Marilyn was a strong believer in the role of volunteers and treated her volunteer work with the same dedication and commitment as full-time waged work. She believed passionately in OTD and the ability of therapy dogs to change people's lives for the better. She inspired others to follow that dream. As a mentor and a friend, Marilyn will be missed by all.

OCAPDD was the recipient of 12 matches and 86 volunteers who provided us with 528 hours of time on October 5, 2007 for the United Way's Day of Caring. **Wow!** Hats off to Nortel Networks, Borden Ladner Gervais, Research in Motion, RCMP, CRA, Treasury Board, Scotia Bank and Alcatel. A big thank you also needs to go out to all staff that participated in the day for all their hard work in making the day a success.

Several Corporations are once again this year spreading Christmas cheer. OCAPDD will receive seven Christmas Hampers containing Christmas dinner and gifts from MBNA, Borden Ladner Gervais and City of Ottawa Employees.

In his book Giving (Knoff 2007), Bill Clinton states "While we don't all have the same amount of money, we do have access to the same twenty-four hours in every day. Though some people have much less free time than others, nearly everyone can carve out some opportunity for giving. The gift of time can sometimes be more satisfying and more valuable than money..."

To all OCAPDD volunteers thank you for your generous gift of over 10,000+ hours of time in 2007. Our world is a much brighter place. Happy Holidays!

## **We have 2 locations to serve you!**

Come out and let us give you a hand with those Christmas gifts!

As in previous years, OCAPDD is wrapping gifts at the community booth at the Carlingwood Mall and St-Laurent Shopping Center. More than 400 volunteer elves are preparing and working the Gift wrap booths from December 1<sup>st</sup> through December 24<sup>th</sup>. Kudos to MBNA and the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints for providing us with over 200 volunteers throughout the month and to all the volunteers who come out each year to help out. We raised over \$18,000 last year and this year we are aiming for \$19,000.

Thank you/Merci!

We couldn't do it without you.



# **In Memoriam**

## **Denis Cadieux (14 avril 1967 – 21 mai 2007)**

Denis Cadieux est décédé subitement, entouré de sa famille, lundi le 21 mai 2007 à l'âge de 40ans. Il était le fils adoré de Roger Cadieux et de Gisèle Clément et le cher frère de Suzanne. Il était un ami très cherrant du Centre Quinlan. Il a enrichi notre vie depuis Aout 1990. Nous allons tous manquer sa présence, son courage, son espoir, son amitié, sa patience, son toucher. Nous allons surtout manquer son amour et son sourire qui nous a offert à tous les jours. Merci Denis et au revoir.

## **Robert Brown (September 15, 1958 – July 30, 2007)**

Robert Brown was affectionately known by friends and family as “Bobby”. Bobby was one of the original individuals to attend the Quinlan Center in 1982. Bobby helped shape and evolve the Quinlan Center as we know it today. On July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2007 at home surrounded by loved ones, Bobby peacefully lost his fight with cancer.

Bobby will be fondly remembered for his infectious laugh, his strong family ties, his love for cake and his sentimental side that would cause all staff to cry along with him.

While the Quinlan family misses our friend Bobby. His spirit, strength and kindness will always remain in our hearts.

## **Shawn Murphy (May 27, 1968 – October 28, 2007)**

If more people lived life as Shawn Murphy did, the world would be a better place.

A kind, compassionate person, Shawn was always thinking of others. Always upbeat and finding silver linings, Shawn lived life with a positive outlook and attitude. Never afraid to try new experiences, he underwent change courageously and without complaint. Shawn was appreciative of the love and care provided by his family, group home and day program and would always politely sign ‘thank you’ or blow a kiss your way. He had a wonderful sense of humor and his laugh will remain with all of us who were fortunate enough to be a part of his life. Shawn is loved very much and will be missed by his many friends.

## **André Vincent (October 31, 1955 - November 29, 2007)**

The sadness of seeing André slowly succumb to cancer over the last six months needs to be balanced with recognition that he lived a life with many accomplishments and highlights...a summer trip to Nova Scotia when he lived at Fairlawn Residence, living independently with Community Support Services, assisting his visually impaired girlfriend in the community, helping two elderly women attend BINGO at a local church, cheering on the Montreal Canadiens and the Toronto Blue Jays, working at the Loeb Centre for several years, working in community jobs, saying hello to everyone at his bank during weekly visits. His smile and willingness to help others will be missed.

# President and Executive Director Reports

## President's Report - Board Update

I would like to welcome to the Board Tom Duxbury and Tamara Jeanne Petraznyk. Tom has an engineering degree and an MBA. His career has been involved with the high tech sector. Tamara is an investment advisor and financial planner with BMO Nesbitt Burns. Both new members have learned skills from the volunteer sector that will be valuable to the Board.

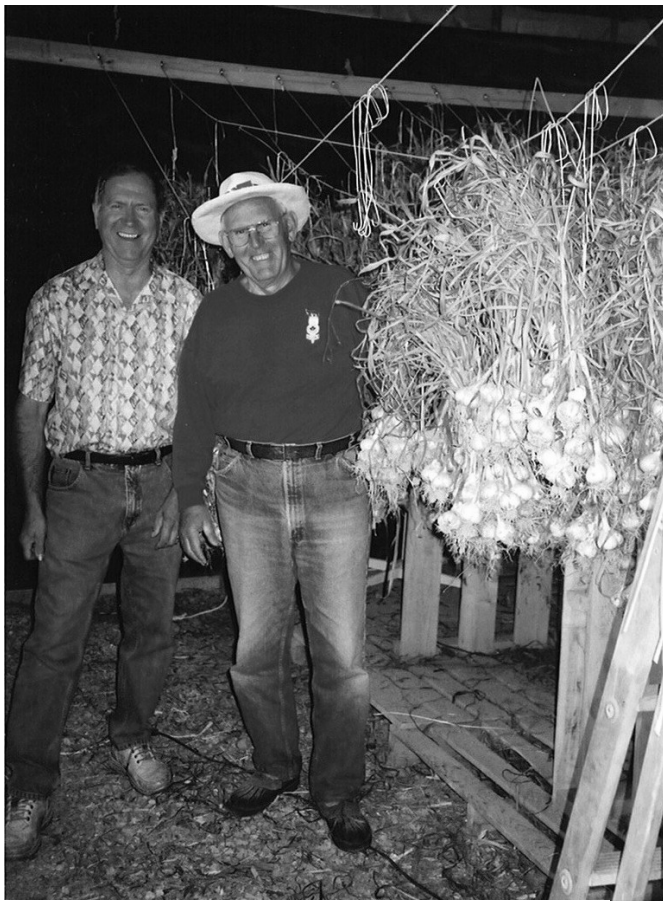
With that bit of good news I would also advise our readers that there are still two vacant positions to bring us up to full strength. Terms are for two years. If you have volunteer experience, be it with our clients or others and an educational background or work experience that can advance the cause of the Board then we would like to hear from you. Contact Natalie Deschamps at the agency and she will put you in contact with the correct people.

At the AGM in September the Board rolled out our new Mission and Vision statements. The impetus for this was through the work of Board member Bonnie Dinning who lead us through some strategic planning evenings. This was undertaken with the Board, senior management team and a few representatives from the membership who have attended the Board meetings. Once drafted, we conducted a focus group comprised of a random sample of our members, who endorsed the drafts along with suggesting a few small adjustments. These two new statements will help clarify what the agency/Board and management team focus on in the future (see page 16).

Again at the AGM (just prior to the fire alarm going off) the Board made a special presentation to Jack Fraser, Ed Haines and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints for their 12 years of leadership in growing and selling garlic. This has raised more than \$115K for our clients. In recognition of this outstanding service, the Board a Silver Spring Farm Award. This Award will consist of two \$1,000 awards given to support youth in their efforts to pursue a career in developmental services.

From what seems to have been a very early winter this year I would like to wish all our readers a happy holiday season and the best for the New Year.

Michael Elliott



Jack Fraser and Ed Haines.

## **Executive Director's Report**

The past 12 months have seen several significant events and / or developments within OCAPDD and the developmental services sector. These include: Conservatory Program; Silver Spring Farm renovations; Passports funding; Silver Spring Farm Award; Open Hands; Rideau Regional Initiative; and, new funding.

The Ministry's Transformation Initiative has continued although the majority of that work has been at Queen's Park and not released to the sector. It is understood that revised legislation for the sector is being developed, and there have been indications of what it will likely include. The most visible component has been the creation of the Passports Program. In case you are not aware, this is funding from MCSS that is allocated to families directly, and allows them to purchase day services directly from service providers. While many families have been hoping and lobbying for this development for many years, it has not been without criticism since its announcement. The first concern was that not all families qualified for the funding, and secondly that there was not enough money to distribute to all the families that did qualify. Families are purchasing services from many organizations in the community, including for profit organizations. The impact of this individualized funding will likely take many years to determine, but it will be significant. As noted before, the Ministry's information bulletins are being posted on OCAPDD's website, or are available on the Ministry's website.

Not as widely known in the public, has been the turnover of senior Ministry officials. Within the past year, the Deputy Minister, both Assistant Deputy Ministers and the Director of Developmental Services – Policy have all changed. Representatives of the sector have been meeting with these individuals to brief them on issues of concern and importance as these are key positions with respect to the ongoing Transformation Initiative.

OCAPDD's expansion plan previously noted is nearing completion. The Campbell and Charette buildings are due to be completely renovated and refurbished by the middle of December. This is later than originally planned due to construction issues. However the final product will be well worth the wait. We will be hosting an opening ceremony in the spring, and will communicate the details at a later date. This capital project has been in excess of \$2 million, and has been funded by both the Provincial and Federal Governments. OCAPDD is expecting to welcome 16 individuals from Rideau Regional beginning in January. I would like to thank Chris Allen for managing the capital project, and Ann-Marie Engelberts-Cousineau for being our lead with respect to the planning with Rideau and the Ministry.

The detailed funding from the provincial budget this past spring was announced and generally received with disappointment from the sector as far as the allocation for each of 4 years was concerned. However, events arising from strikes at 7 agencies during the summer appear to have shifted the Government into increasing funding for wages for all agencies. The process to determine this amount continues at this time, but will result in increased wages for the sector soon.

As we announced at our Annual General Meeting in September, the Board of Directors created the Silver Spring Farm Award in recognition of the effort and contributions of all the volunteers who have been involved with the Agricultural Project over many years. This Award will provide two \$1,000 awards to support individuals to pursue a career in developmental services. We anticipate announcing the first award early in the New Year.

As reported on in the Annual Report, in January the Ministry issued an invitation to organizations to consider a possible amalgamation of a developmental service organization based in Cornwall – Open Hands. After a due diligence process, the development of a business plan and then a review / selection process conducted by the Ministry and a representative of the Board of Directors of Open Hands, OCAPDD was selected to develop an implementation plan to achieve this. OCAPDD entered into a management agreement with Open Hands in August, and Cheryl Lapointe has taken on the responsibility for this activity. OCAPDD's Board of Directors endorsed this transitional process, and final approval will not be considered until January 2008.

On a lighter note, I would like to wish you and your loved ones a safe and joyous holiday season, and look forward to further communication with you in the New Year.

Happy Holidays! Joyeuses Fêtes!

David A. Ferguson

## ***OCAPDD's New Mission & Vision Statements***

### ***Mission***

The Ottawa-Carleton Association for Persons with Developmental Disabilities (OCAPDD) supports people with developmental disabilities through a holistic approach including:

- Individualized service planning;
- Providing a continuum of innovative community participation and residential options;
- Recruiting and developing an educated and experienced workforce;
- Advocacy for individuals with developmental disabilities, their families and support networks;
- Linking with the community, developmental and funding sectors.

L'Association d'Ottawa-Carleton pour personnes ayant une déficience intellectuelle (AOCPI) appuie les personnes atteintes d'une déficience intellectuelle par le biais d'une approche holistique qui comprend :

- Une planification des services personnalisée;
- Un continuum d'engagement communautaire innovatif et d'options résidentielles;
- Le recrutement et le développement d'un groupe de travailleurs doté d'expérience et d'une formation;
- La défense des intérêts des personnes ayant une déficience intellectuelle, de leur famille et de leur réseau de soutien;
- La création de liens avec la communauté, avec le secteur des services aux personnes ayant une déficience intellectuelle et avec les sources de financement.

### ***Vision***

Individuals with a developmental disability live healthy, safe and secure lives as participating members of society, through equitable access to the broadest range of societal supports and opportunities.

En tant que membres à part entière de la société, les personnes ayant une déficience intellectuelle vivent en santé et en pleine sécurité. Ils s'épanouissent avec dignité, profitant d'un accès équitable à un éventail de services sociaux des plus vastes.

## Information on RDSP

Earlier this year Gerry Sutton, OASIS President sent a letter to Federal Finance Minister Jim Flaherty thanking him for his efforts in creating the new Registered Disability Support Plan. (below you will find both Mr. Sutton's letter and Minister Flaherty's response letter)

**Minister Flaherty** recently addressed a gathering at the End Exclusion event in Ottawa, and he spoke about Bill C28. He **asked that people send letters to their MPs encouraging them to support this Bill** when it comes forward for a vote in the House.

OASIS views this as a very positive initiative and we encourage you to contact your local MP and have them support this Bill.

*Addresses for MP's can be found at the following link:  
[http://canada.gc.ca/directories/direct\\_e.html#mp](http://canada.gc.ca/directories/direct_e.html#mp)*

### Letter sent to Minister Flaherty from OASIS President

**March 23, 2007**

Dear Minister,

I am writing as President of OASIS (Ontario Agencies Supporting Individuals With Special Needs) to express our appreciation for the announcement in your budget speech of the intention to create a program whereby families can accumulate a fund of up to \$200,000 with tax deductible contributions and some matching Government funds that can be used for the benefit of their handicapped children.

This is a bold step- perhaps too late for most aging parents but of great benefit to younger families who can plan for the future in the knowledge that in the event of their demise their handicapped children can be looked after.

OASIS does not support developmentally handicapped people directly. Our 130 member agencies do that. They help some 37,000 of them throughout Ontario with a staff of over 26,000 and a collective budget of close to \$800 million. OASIS was created ten years ago to share ideas, resources, systems and information and liaise with the provincial government in order to assist our members in providing cost effective, quality support to people with special needs. We have no office and no permanent staff; our work is performed on a volunteer basis using that wonderful invention-the internet-to transmit information and ideas.

I look forward to receiving more specific information on how the proposed funds are to be structured and once this is available we shall distribute it to our member agencies so that they in turn can pass it on to their family members.

Parents who were into their eighties used to outlive their handicapped dependants. Now, thanks to the improved quality of health care and stimulative programs, this is no longer so, and they are worried.

As a parent yourself you understand this concern. I am a parent too and I would like to thank you personally for establishing this imaginative program.

Sincerely,



Gerald Sutton,  
President, OASIS

## Response letter from Minister Flaherty to OASIS President

August 17, 2007

Mr. Gerald Sutton, President, Ontario Agencies Supporting Individuals with Special Needs

Dear Mr. Sutton:

Thank you for your correspondence of March 23, 2007 regarding the announcement of the new Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP). Please excuse the delay in replying.

Canada's New Government recognizes the special challenges faced by parents caring for a child with a severe disability. An important consideration for these families is how best to ensure that child's financial security when they are no longer able to provide support. Budget 2006 announced that we would establish a small group of experts to examine the issue and provide their advice. In July 2006, I appointed the Expert Panel on Financial Security for Children with Severe Disabilities. The Panel submitted its report, *A New Beginning*, in December 2006.

In Budget 2007, we acted on the recommendations of the Panel by announcing the introduction of the new RDSP.

RDSPs will be available commencing in 2008 and will be based generally on the existing Registered Education Savings Plan design. An individual eligible for the Disability Tax Credit (DTC), "his or her" parent or other legal representative will be allowed to establish a RDSP. The DTC-eligible individual will be the plan beneficiary. The RDSP will consist of three main elements:

- Parents, beneficiaries and others wishing to save will be able to contribute to a RDSP. Contributions to a RDSP for a beneficiary will be limited to a lifetime maximum of \$200,000. Contributions will be permitted up until the end of the year in which a beneficiary attains 59 years of age.
- Annual RDSP contributions will attract Canada Disability Savings Grants (CDSGs) at matching rates that depend on family income and the amount contributed, up to a maximum lifetime CDSG limit of \$70,000. Where family net income does not exceed \$74,357, the matching rate on the first \$500 of contributions will be 300 percent, and the matching rate on the next \$1,000 of contributions will be 200 percent. Where family net income exceeds \$74,357, the matching rate on the first \$1,000 of contributions will be 100 percent. These income thresholds are for the 2007 taxation year and will be indexed to inflation for 2008, when RDSPs become operational, and for subsequent taxation years. A RDSP will be eligible to receive CDSGs up until the end of the year in which the plan beneficiary attains 49 years of age.
- Canada Disability Savings Bonds (CDSBs) of up to \$1,000 per year will be provided to RDSPs established by low- and modest-income families, up to a maximum lifetime CDSB limit of \$20,000, and will not be contingent on contributions. The maximum annual \$1,000 CDSB will be paid to a RDSP where family net income does not exceed \$20,883. The CDSB will be phased out gradually for those with family net income between \$20,883 and \$37,178. These income thresholds are for the 2007 taxation year and will be indexed to inflation for 2008, when RDSPs become operational, and for subsequent taxation years. A RDSP will be eligible to receive CDSBs up until the end of the year in which the plan beneficiary attains 49 years of age.

Contributions to a RDSP will not be deductible and will not be included in income when paid out of a RDSP. The investment income earned in the RDSP will accumulate tax-free. CDSGs, CDSBs and investment income earned in the RDSP will be included in the beneficiary's income for tax purposes when paid out of a RDSP. Only the RDSP beneficiary, or the beneficiary's legal representative, will be permitted to receive payments from a RDSP. Payments from a RDSP will be required to commence by the end of the year in which the beneficiary attains 60 years of age.

To ensure that RDSP payments do not reduce federal income-tested benefits, amounts paid out of a RDSP will not be taken into account for the purpose of calculating income-tested benefits delivered through the income tax system, such as the Canada Child Tax Benefit and the Goods and Services Tax Credit. In addition, amounts paid out of a RDSP will not reduce Old Age Security or Employment Insurance benefits.

The provinces and territories provide income support for persons with disabilities through means-tested programs. The Expert Panel noted that, for the RDSP program to be effective, RDSP assets should not disqualify a plan beneficiary from receiving provincial or territorial income support provided to persons with disabilities. The Expert Panel also noted that payments from the plan should supplement – not reduce – income support provided under these programs at least until the level of income support plus RDSP payments exceeds the Low Income Cut Off for the province or territory.

RDSPs will help provide a brighter future for children with severe disabilities and give parents greater peace of mind in planning for that future.

The Minister of Human Resources and Social Development and I will work with the provinces and territories to ensure that the RDSP is an effective savings vehicle to improve the financial security and well-being of children with severe disabilities. Thank you for communicating the views of your organization.

Sincerely,

James M. Flaherty

# Annual Christmas Party

Our annual Christmas Party was a great success with over 400 clients, staff and parents attending our great yearly Gala! Once again the agency subsidized the cost for all of OCAPDD's individuals which increased the participation level. The tastefully decorated hall, sit-down dinner, dancing and many door prizes set the ambiance for the festive season.

A special 'thank you' to Claudette Clost, Daniel Moore, Sylvie Moore, Nicole Houle, Jo-Anne Harvey, Christine Connelly, Kate deLanux, Jean Marc deLanux, Corinne Leader, Angela Jones, and Tanya Leclair members of the committee for making this event possible.

We would also like to thank CUPE Local1521 for their generous financial contribution, from which we were able to purchase many door prizes for our clients. As well, a big thank you to all the businesses whose generosity was very much appreciated. We would also like to recognize and thank our Management Team for supporting this special event.



The St. Elias Centre was the place to be on November 30, 2007 and we hope that you will join us next year at the same location on November 28, 2008. A poster with all the details will be available in the Fall for all programs. For more information or to purchase tickets please contact Sylvie Moore at (613) 569-8993, extension 251 or Claudette Clost at (613) 569-8893, extension 236.