



MONTÉRÉGIE WEST
COMMUNITY NETWORK
APRIL & MAY 2026

A word from Pauline



Dear Members,

The life behind the scenes of our success. People!

You will agree, it has been a long winter and maybe it will continue to spring up and not let Spring take hold. However, despite all that MWCN is barreling through and behind the scenes, spending is needed in each office and is necessary to complete the year.

Reporting, spending, budgets balancing the financials of many projects is happening in the background while we continue to offer activities.

Supporting Staff in their roles, hiring for expansion of new projects.

All is not what you see. Despite all of that our very capable staff have focused on what is happening now and that was International Women's Day. Offering a first class event with funding from our wonderful supporters in the community. These will be highlighted in another article with much thanks for their support. Are we just a bit exhausted? Yes!!

We have jobs to balance with life events. Children, partners, Caregiving and grief, are all part of our lives behind the doors of the homestead.

We love our jobs. We are passionate about community and the importance of being together, supporting each other, celebrating events together and sharing our skills with community members and our staff family.

Nevertheless, we get tired, and still find it necessary to do more because more is needed all around us.

We have many demands, pulled this way and that way. We meet the needs and shine and smile despite what goes on in the background.

What we ask from each other and everyone we meet is RESPECT.

“When you practice gratefulness, there is a sense of respect toward others” Dalai Lama

May Spring show its face soon as we look for daffodils, crocuses to show their face and buds on the trees. A good sign is that the syrup is flowing and the Cabanne 'a Sucre's are ready for us.

HAPPY Spring!!!

Pauline Wiedow - Executive Director



ACTIVITIES AT THE PINCOURT OFFICE

On March 2nd we hosted our first trivia activity of the year. We had a gathering of 20 people, aged 30-65+, with 5 teams of 4. 5 rounds of 10 questions were done with a fun competitive spirit flowing through the room. There were laughs and a couple of questions that stumped some people but they all had a wonderful time getting to challenge their brains with a variety of categories. Multiple people expressed their desire for more trivia so we will definitely work to make them happen more often.

Trivia is just one of the activities that we do in our office to bring together our community. We love to host weekly card games, informative presentations, seasonal crafts and much more in order to ensure everyone in our community has a chance to get out of their house and meet those around them.

One of the best parts of these activities is seeing people from all different walks of life come together and interact in our community space. It creates a fun atmosphere and allows the chance to get to know each other and share our common experiences through a fun activity.

Since starting at the MWCN, I've begun to look forward to the days we do these types of activities because it allows me to interact with our members and get to know them on a more personal level.

I look forward to continuing to meet people and creating a fun, lively community space for our members.



Kitiara Arsenault - Office Assistant, Pincourt

THE LITTLE CLOSET THAT MAKES A BIG DIFFERENCE

Living in a rural community like Hemmingford comes with its own unique charm, quiet landscapes, close-knit neighbors, and a slower pace of life. However, it also brings challenges that are often overlooked, especially when it comes to accessing everyday necessities. For many residents, even buying clothes or household items requires planning, time, and transportation. With the nearest stores often 40 kilometers away, basic errands can become a significant undertaking.

When I began working at Montérégie West Community Network (MWCN), I quickly saw how this reality was affecting local families and seniors. It wasn't just an inconvenience, it was a barrier. For those without reliable transportation, limited mobility, or tight budgets, traveling such distances regularly is not always feasible. The absence of a general store in town only adds to the difficulty, leaving some residents struggling to meet essential needs.

That's where our Hemmingford office's community closet comes in, a small space with a big purpose. Filled with donated clothing for all ages and essential household items, it provides support to those who need it most while preserving dignity and care.

Thanks to the generosity of local citizens, the closet has grown into a meaningful resource. Donations of gently used items have transformed it into a welcoming space full of possibility. More importantly, it has become a place of connection, where visitors not only find what they need but also feel seen and supported. Expressions of gratitude, often simple but sincere, remind us of the deeper impact this initiative has on people's lives.

In today's challenging economic climate, many individuals and families are feeling increased pressure. Initiatives like the community closet show that support is within reach and that no one has to face these challenges alone. Though modest in size, its impact is significant, reflecting the compassion and resilience of the Hemmingford community.

Tina Calvarese
Outreach Coordinator - Hemmingford



MARCH BREAK FUN WEEK

March Break was full of fun, excitement, and great participation from local families. Over the week, we offered five different activities, with 10 to 15 kids joining each one. It was wonderful to see so many familiar faces and meet some new ones. Many kids came with their parents, making the activities even more enjoyable.

The week included a science experiments day where kids had a blast making slime, a bingo day full of laughs and friendly competition, a fuse beads activity that let everyone get creative, and a session where children made small felt teddy bears while learning basic sewing skills. On Wednesday, we had to move from our usual space. A big thank you to the United Church in Huntingdon for generously letting us use their space on short notice.

The week ended with a visit to the Huntingdon fire station. Around 18 kids explored the station, learned about fire safety, and asked lots of questions. A special thanks to the volunteer firefighter who showed us around and made the visit memorable.

It was a fantastic week full of learning, creativity, and community spirit. We are grateful to everyone who helped make it possible.



Nadya Kovacs - *Outreach and Project Coordinator - Huntingdon*

MY STORY OF THE UNTOLD STORIES

When I started working at MWCN, Pauline Wiedow asked me to take on the project of collecting stories about Chateauguay to turn into a book.

Having lived in Chateauguay for less than two years, I did not know where to begin. For one thing, I knew very little about working for a community organization and didn't know many people.

With suggestions and encouragement from Pauline and my colleagues, I slowly put one foot in front of the other and began knocking on doors. I met many new people who were willing to share their personal stories, struggles, pride in starting a new business, and love for Chateauguay.

This experience as well as working for MWCN has enriched my life in many ways and helped me get to know my new city. I discovered the city's rich culture and beautiful landscape, as well as its kind-hearted people who help one another.

Join us for the launch of The Untold Stories of Châteauguay, a powerful collection of voices from citizens and entrepreneurs who share their personal journeys of growing up, falling in love, and serving the community. Through stories, poems, and personal accounts, this book captures the heart and soul of Châteauguay. This is an event not to miss!

April 30th at the OLPH from 10am to 12pm. RSVP necessary.

Françoise Goulet - Office Assistant



EMPOWERING EMPLOYABILITY FOR ENGLISH SPEAKERS IN THE MONTÉRÉGIE WEST

Finding meaningful employment can sometimes feel challenging for English speakers navigating Quebec's predominantly French-speaking job market. However, English speakers bring valuable skills, diverse perspectives, and strong communication abilities that are in demand across many sectors. With the right resources and support, building a successful career in Quebec is well within reach.

MWCN is proud to launch *English as an Asset: Boosting Employability*, a regional initiative delivering locally accessible and inclusive English-language employment services across Montérégie West and the Laurentians. Open to all job seekers, including youth, newcomers, Indigenous peoples, mature workers, women, visible minorities, 2SLGBTQI+ individuals, and persons with disabilities, the initiative aims to strengthen workforce readiness, enhance bilingual capacity, and support local economic growth.

One key advantage job seekers can develop is bilingualism. Even a basic level of French can significantly expand job opportunities, improve workplace integration, and build confidence in professional settings. Many employers value candidates who can communicate with both English- and French-speaking clients, making language learning an important asset. Community programs, online tools, and workplace training can support gradual improvement.

Networking also plays an important role in employability. In Quebec, many opportunities are discovered through personal and professional connections. Attending job fairs, workshops, and community events can help job seekers build relationships and access guidance on resumes, interviews, and career planning.

This new initiative will directly support English-speaking job seekers through employability workshops, individualized employment counselling, job fairs, and a "Future-Ready Careers" event focused on AI and emerging skills, while also building partnerships with employers and training providers. This project brings opportunities directly into local communities. It will equip residents with the skills and confidence they need to succeed locally while strengthening the local workforce.

MWCN's new funding is dedicated to supporting English-speaking job seekers with the tools, guidance, and opportunities needed to move forward with confidence and achieve meaningful employment. If you or someone you know is looking for employability assistance, please reach out.

Book your appointment with Joanne today and take the first exciting step toward building your career path! joanne@mwcnc.ca

Joanne Basilières -*Employability Program Coordinator*

COMMUNITY NETWORK BURSARY APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN!

Dialogue McGill



Health
Canada

Santé
Canada

The Community Network Bursary Program provides financial support to students enrolled in health and social services programs in Quebec, helping them cover tuition, books, and living expenses. The program also connects students with local placements, supporting regional and community priorities to improve access to health and social services in English across Quebec.

We've partnered with Dialogue McGill to offer bursaries ranging from \$2,500 to \$10,000, depending on the student's location and level of study. The program is open to CEGEP, university, and vocational students at any stage of their studies, including newly admitted students.

Check out our website to see full details!
www.mwcn.ca/dialoguemcgill

We are looking for members within our communities to join our

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Join our organization to become part of a dynamic and inclusive English-speaking community. We're committed to fostering strong connections with our Francophone and Indigenous communities, and we'd love to have you with us as we build a vibrant and diverse network.

COME JOIN US!!

PLEASE SEND US A COVER LETTER AND YOUR C.V BEFORE MAY 15TH. AT INFO@MWCN.CA

MONTÉRÉGIE WEST COMMUNITY NETWORK

Our Offices in Five Regional County Municipalities

Roussillon - 253 Blvd. d'Anjou, Chateauguay QC J6J 2R4 / 450-691-1444

Beauharnois - 380 Boul de Melocheville, Melocheville, QC J0S 1J0 / 450-691-1444

Vaudreuil-Soulanges 95 5e Avenue, Suite 100, Pincourt, QC J7V 5K8 / 514-425-0399

Haut-Saint-Laurent/Chateauguay Valley - 72 Dalhousie, Suite 201 Huntingdon, QC J0S 1H0 / 450-264-3596

Jardins-de-Napierville - 476 Rue Frontière, Hemmingford, QC J0L 1H0 / 514-249-5539