

IODE Continues Community Service into Second Century

By

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The Greater Saint John Community Foundation

IODE is a Canadian women's charitable organization, serving Canada since 1900. Over 4,500 members across our country live up to their slogan, "women dedicated to a better Canada". The first Chapter was formed in Fredericton New Brunswick in 1900, growing to a national organization, which has become synonymous with community service. Initially the Chapters' main focus was on supporting Canadian troops involved in wars overseas, at one point raising enough money to purchase a Bollingbrook bomber, in six weeks. Following the Second World War, the primary focus of IODE became the support of children and young people, while continuing their support of Canadian troops. They adopted the mission statement: IODE Canada is a national women's charitable organization dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for individuals, through education support, community service and citizenship programs.

Among the many national projects of IODE, five War Memorial Scholarships of fifteen thousand dollars to Canadian PhD. students are offered, as well as a large research grant to a charitable organization to be used in researching ways to reduce child abuse. This financial support is raised from all of the dedicated IODE Chapters across the country.

They also collaborate for province-specific endeavors. New Brunswick's four hundred members in twenty-one chapters are proud of their home-grown provincial literacy program, "Born to Read". It was created by St. Stephen native, Shirley Downey in 1995, and provides mothers with books for their newborns. During the initial phases of the program, members of IODE would hand make bags and purchase the books to fill them. With the help of Lieutenant Governor, Marilyn Trenholm-Counsel, long term funding was established for the program and it has grown to a fully bilingual provincial project.

As a part of the centennial celebrations for IODE in New Brunswick, a conference for mental health professionals was organized and a children's mental health fund was established. Two school districts received a ten thousand dollar grant to train volunteers to deliver the Roots of Empathy program, as well as training and teaching material and equipment purchased for the child psychiatric unit in Moncton. IODE contributes well over two-hundred thousand dollars in services and work to the province of New Brunswick, in addition to ten thousand dollars in the education field each year.

In Greater Saint John, IODE deserves credit for the leadership they have taken in healthcare and literacy. Each of the Saint John area's four IODE Chapters has been instrumental in the establishment and preservation of school libraries across our community and continues to support education, childhood development and equal opportunities for children through the active support of their schools. The local chapters contributed more than \$100,000 to the cardiac unit at the Saint John Regional Hospital and to fund the PET scanner, along with donations to other units there. One recent gift from the Dr. William MacIntosh Chapter was a television and VCR to the Dialysis unit for teaching purposes.

More than fifteen hundred dollars is given to local food banks every year as well as supporting many non-profit organizations such as First Steps, Hestia House and Hospice. The Chapter also awards entrance and other scholarships valued at more than \$1200 annually. Friends and families of schoolchildren have come to look forward to the IODE's regular appearances at school closings. In six elementary and middle schools the McIntosh Chapter awards prizes, purchases books and

equipment requested by teachers, as well as helping with breakfast programs. With experienced and committed members like Past Provincial Presidents Doreen Hamilton and Gladys Moore, and chapter president and retired Principal Jane Cushing, it's no surprise that the Chapter has established a summer workshop at UNBSJ to better equip the teachers of learning disabled children.

In order to raise money to support these activities Dr. William MacIntosh Chapter IODE is hosting a concert, "There is Music in the Air", an evening of Broadway hits, at The Church of St. Andrew and St. David on Sunday, September 20, 2009 at 7:00pm. Thanks to Elizabeth Cormier, Christopher Lane, Victor Kindred, Terry-Lynn Russell, and Marilyn Williams, who are donating their talent and time, it should be an entertaining evening with local artists while supporting the work of IODE. Tickets/information: Gladys Moore (652-4214); Shirley Johnson (633-4117); Freida Needle(659-9853) and Lancaster Florists or purchase at the door. The IODE is actively encouraging new members interested in community service and can contact the above for information.



Photo; The Dr. William MacIntosh Chapter IODE is hosting a musical evening of Broadway hits, at The Church of St. Andrew and St. David, Sunday, 7pm, September 20. Grace Kern, Bessie Pickrell, Marilyn Williams and Gladys Moore are helping plan the fundraiser which supports their charitable work in healthcare, education, childhood development and equal opportunities for children.

Community Profile is a weekly column highlighting community causes and work done by non-profit organizations in the Greater Saint John area. It is contributed by Jane Barry, executive director of The Greater Saint John Community Foundation. Contact the foundation at 506-672-8880. To view other Community Profiles go to www.saint-john-foundation.nb.ca

