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2007 Annual Report

April 1, 2006 to March 31, 2007



The Ohman Triplets ~ Photo courtesy of Robin Andrew of UNPOSED Portrait Photography ~ www.unposed.com

Supporting Multiple Births Together

Celebrating 30 Years in 2008

Message From The Board

Enthusiasm, teamwork and action!

Putting together the Annual Report is a time of reflection; it provides the MBC Board of Directors the opportunity to review the accomplishments of the past year and plan activities to make the next year even better. As we reflect on the people who were recognized with the MBC Making a Difference Awards, the groups and corporations that provided financial support to drive MBC initiatives forward, and the activities that have defined the recent successes of our national organization, we also consider what has led us to these successes.

Beyond the dedication and strong work ethic that continues to drive the efforts of national and local volunteers, there is an internal culture at MBC that is defined by three words: enthusiasm, teamwork and action!

In the words of Norman Vincent Peale:

"If you have zest and enthusiasm, you attract zest and enthusiasm. Life gives back in kind."

In the words of Andrew Carnegie:

"Teamwork is the ability to work together toward a common vision; the ability to direct individual accomplishments toward organizational objectives. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results."

And, in the words of Vincent Lombardi:

"It is time for us to stand and cheer for the doer, the achiever—the one who recognizes the challenge and does something about it."

MBC is a success not because of the dozens of qualified volunteers who provide support and services for our multiple-birth community, but because these volunteers are keen individuals who care. They see what needs to be done and they make it happen, thanks to the many like-minded volunteers who quickly roll up their sleeves to share in the work.

Proof of this statement was provided to us by Imagine Canada. They reviewed the volunteer activity of MBC national volunteers, assigning an hourly average wage rate to each activity as it relates to job type. The total number of volunteer hours in 2006 was calculated at 5,427 hours. Board members were assigned the hourly wage of managers. Committee members and Chairs were recognized as policy and program researchers. And so on, until all 34 national volunteers were assigned an average hourly wage rate representative of their positions. What was the outcome of this analysis? In 2006, national volunteers contributed the equivalent of \$142,940.67 in salaries to MBC—amazing, yet not very surprising to those who have experienced the internal culture of MBC volunteers.



Back row: Nicole Fisher (Director of Chapter Development), Vicki Riley (Business Services Manager), Kimberley Weatherall (Chair/Director of Volunteer Management). Front: Gail Moore (Vice-Chair/Director of Communications). Absent: Jennifer Dawson (Director of Finance) and Cheryl Wadasinghe (Director at Large)

If Chapter volunteers also assessed the value of their volunteer activities—the stakeholders of MBC and multiple-birth individuals and their families—would recognize that enthusiasm, teamwork and action are the keys to our success. Keep this thought in mind as you review this year's

Annual Report. It will allow you to see these pages as we, the MBC Board of Directors, see them—an amazing record of another excellent year for MBC and Canada's multiple-birth community.

Kimberley Weatherall, Chair
Director of Volunteer Management
On behalf of the Board of Directors and the Business Services Manager

Financial Report

MBC had a good financial year ending March 31, 2007

Overall, MBC had a loss for this past financial year ending March 31, 2007 of \$1,016, but the loss includes an accounting correction from past years for Higher-Order Multiples network costs of \$2,000. Accordingly, excluding this accounting adjustment, there was actually an operating profit for MBC again this year of \$984.

Most of the favourable result comes from revenues earned being greater than budget primarily as a result of profit-sharing with the Chatham-Kent Chapter from the 2006 conference (\$2,348), a donation from Duchesnay Inc. and other favourable donation amounts. Membership revenue and subscription revenue were generally in-line with budgets although publication sales were disappointing compared to our more aggressive budget.

Costs are generally in-line with budget and where they were higher, they were supported by increases in revenue over budget. MBC purchased a laptop computer for the Business Office as well as a new printer, mostly with the share of profits from the Chatham-Kent 2006 conference being allocated to these capital assets. The cost has been capitalized, and the financial results include an allocation over the life of these assets as depreciation expense.

The outlook for 2008 indicates a challenging financial year for MBC. Costs must continue to be kept in-line with revenues which, in many areas, are reasonably uncertain.

Statement of Revenue and Expenses and Surplus (Summary)

Year ended March 31, 2007

Revenues

| | | |
|--|-----------|---------------|
| Memberships | \$ | 16,565 |
| Subscriptions | | 7,517 |
| Sponsorships | | 3,000 |
| Publications and Resources | | 4,540 |
| Donations/Inkind Donations | | 3,929 |
| Advertising and Fundraising | | 1,006 |
| Profit allocation from CH-K Conference | | 2,348 |
| | \$ | 38,905 |

Expenses

| | | |
|--|-----------|---------------|
| Business Office | \$ | 19,933 |
| Conference Grant | | 1,000 |
| Conference/Interim meetings | | 885 |
| Depreciation Expense | | 922 |
| Insurance | | 1,088 |
| Miscellaneous | | 2,073 |
| Multiple Moments | | 6,499 |
| Higher-order Multiples Network-accounting adj. | | 2,000 |
| Publications and Resources | | 5,521 |
| | \$ | 39,921 |

**Excess of revenues over expenses/
(expenses over revenues)**

\$ (1,016)



(NEW Bilingual PR Pamphlet)



MBC Resources

Website & Discussion Forums

The MBC website and discussion forums are vital to the multiple-birth community, including MBC's volunteers. The Volunteer Orientation & Training sections and the Chapter Executive section assist our Chapters and volunteers to realize their roles and potential. Further enhancements to the MBC website are in the works pending financing. Thanks to a gracious offer by Duchesnay Inc. in Montréal, the MBC website is currently being translated into French through the generous in-kind contributions of members of their staff.

Publications

Over the last year, many fact sheets have been revised and two new fact sheets have been added to MBC's impressive (65+) fact sheet series. Steps have also been taken to have all MBC publications translated into French. A new Editor for Multiple Moments came forward in late 2006 and has approached the Board with ideas to enhance the publication through increased advertisers, readership and with unique opportunities to engage readers in the creation of the magazine's content. The Board of Directors is currently reviewing options that will offer all members the opportunity to receive Multiple Moments as part of their memberships.

Also thanks to the generosity of Duchesnay Inc., MBC was able to create a new bilingual, full-colour public relations pamphlet (shown on page 2). These pamphlets are available for free upon request along with a bilingual poster created in 2005.

Business Office

The Business Office is the core of MBC, acting as a central information resource of the multiple-birth community and providing much-needed services. The Business Office is run by one part-time Business Services Manager (BSM) with occasional volunteer assistance. Along with directly providing service to many families and individuals who lack the benefit of support in their area, the BSM refers additional inquiries to Chapters, other multiple-birth groups, volunteers, the Board of Directors, and health organizations. On average, the Business Services Manager works between 35 and 45 hours a week—about twice her contractual hours. During the past year, a new laptop and all-in-one printer were purchased to make the office more efficient and allow for additional use of the computer and its resources at off-site events.

Support Networks

The MBC support networks continue to be an important resource to our members, although not all support networks are being utilized as much as they could be. The Breastfeeding Network and the Higher-Order Multiples Network continue to be the most active. We hope to see increased interest in the Francophone Network as more resources, including the MBC website, are made available in French. MBC's Loss Support Network has been providing support for grieving families for almost 15 years, and this year also reached out to bereaved grandparents and surviving co-multiples.

MBC Volunteers

Volunteers are the driving force of our organization. Nationally, nearly three dozen devoted volunteers provide expertise to produce new fact sheets, develop relationships with media outlets and government agencies, mentor volunteers at the Chapter level, represent MBC internationally with the Council of Multiple Birth Organizations (COMBO), oversee online forum discussions, and produce a quarterly national magazine. The defining characteristic of a national volunteer goes beyond skill set; it is the desire to "Make a Difference", to offer a hand to ensure that the resources and support needed by future families are readily available to those who need them.

Making A Difference Awards

The Making A Difference Awards were founded in 1999 in memory of Sheryl McInnes (founder of the former POMBA Canada). The awards were established to acknowledge outstanding contributions and achievements within the multiple-birth community, and to celebrate those who have demonstrated excellence or exceptional dedication.

Two new awards were added this year:

Media Award—to recognize outstanding support by a journalist and/or media outlet

Dionne Award—to acknowledge the positive contribution of adult multiple-birth individual(s) in relation to supporting Canada's multiple-birth community

Congratulations to the following deserving winners—you have made a difference!

Winners at the 2006 Conference in Chatham, ON:

Local Category ~ Shelly Blizzard-Jones

Durham Region POMBA, ON

National Category ~ Kimberley Weatherall

MBC Chairperson, Director of Volunteer Management

International Category ~ Dr. Nancy Segal

Professor, Author and Director of the Twin Studies Center at California State University

Media Award ~ CBC Radio and Kathy Stackleburg

for the coverage of 2005 NMBAD

Dionne Award (Adult Multiples)

~ Dr. Louis Keith and Donald Keith

Founders of The Center for the Study of Multiple Birth, Chicago, IL

Visit the MBC website for past winners and more information at:

www.multiplebirthscanada.org

Health & Education

While continuing to work towards its goals of increasing awareness of multiple-birth issues and encouraging governments and professionals to advance standards in the care of multiple-birth families, the Health & Education Committee made progress in the following areas:

- Created two new Fact Sheets—Multiples and Co-Bedding and Cerebral Palsy—and revised more than half a dozen others.
- Contributed to the following Best Start Resource Centre resources intended for health professionals: Delayed Pregnancy: Care Strategies for Ontario Health Care Providers and Prenatal Education in Ontario - Better Practices.
- Continued involvement with a variety of national and international organizations and projects (these are just a few examples): Ottawa Coalition for the Prevention of Low Birth Weight, Council of Multiple Birth Organizations (COMBO), Infertility Awareness Association of Canada, Multiple Births DVD Project with Mt. Sinai Hospital, Multiple Births Guelph-Wellington Parent Support Program and Health Canada.
- Assisted the 2007 MBC Conference Planning Committee in forming a partnership with the Waterloo Region Public Health Unit and organizing two professional workshops and two delegate workshops promoting the 2006 Early Human Development Best Practice Guidelines: Helping Families to Prepare for Multiple Birth Children and Breastfeeding Multiples Guidelines - Best Practices for Hospital and Community, recently published for the BC Reproductive Care Program.

The Board would like to make special recognition of Lynda P. Haddon, Health & Education Committee member. Lynda, a longtime member, Past President, volunteer and supporter of MBC, is the recipient of a 2006 Community Builder's Award from United Way in Ottawa for her ongoing work in the Canadian multiple-birth community and as a member of the Low Birth Weight Prevention Committee representing multiples and low birth weight prevention.



Lynda P. Haddon

Donations & Sponsorships in 2006-2007

MBC received numerous donations and sponsorships, including in-kind donations from our many national volunteers. Thank you to all of MBC's friends who assisted in so many ways.

Special mentions...

- Duchesnay Inc. (www.duchesnay.com) for their 3rd annual donation to MBC. This generous donation of unrestricted funds will go towards a mutually satisfactory national project currently under discussion. In the past, Duchesnay has sponsored the publishing of MBC's PR pamphlet and has specifically assisted MBC with the Multiple Moments magazine budget. Duchesnay has also volunteered the time of some of their staff to assist MBC with the translation to French of the national website. Duchesnay's vision closely relates to MBC's vision—to improve the quality of life of women during pregnancy.
- EMD Serono Canada Inc. for their donations to assist with funding MBC core operations.
- MBC's Affiliate Chapter, Temiskaming Multiple Births, for their sponsorship to send an MBC Board member to the June 2007 ICTS Symposium in Ghent, Belgium.

2006 Annual General Meeting and Conference

Chatham-Kent Multiple Births Association, 2006 National Conference hosts, (May 25-28, 2006) followed through on their promise to provide delegates with excellent learning opportunities. Their program, entitled "Plowing Thru Parenthood", featured workshops on a wide range of topics including presentations by two MBC Advisory Board members. The theme reflected the farming heritage of the host community, and like the agricultural cycle, the program planted seeds of knowledge relating to parenting and multiple-birth issues. Some highlights from 2006:

- Ann Douglas, Ontario author of over a dozen Baby books and mother of four, advised attendees of the need to set some organizational rules in the early days following the birth of a baby(ies).
- Audrey Huberman, an adult monozygotic twin and MBC Advisory Board member, delivered the message that the multiple-birth relationship is not about how the eggs were split or fertilized, but about the social relationship of experiencing and living the same milestones together.
- Bruce Cowan, a counsellor and therapist in family, individual and marital relationships, provided a message of hope, inviting participants to cherish special moments, appreciate the love within the home and understand that attitude is altitude.
- Dr. Louis Keith, MBC Advisory Board member and monozygotic twin who co-founded the Centre for the Study of Multiple Birth with his twin brother Donald, addressed the controversies in diagnosis of zygoty in multiples. Dr. Keith explained that "identical" only describes monozygotic twins at the moment the cell splits. From that point onward they are individuals and, as such, develop as a response to their individual environments.

A review of the 2006 National Conference would not be complete without special mention of the venue and off-site event. The Wheels Inn in Chatham won the heart of delegates as an excellent family holiday location. A farm tour, line dance lessons and a wholesome country meal at a Chatham-area farm resulted in many enjoyable moments and excellent Kodak moments.

Strategic Plan Update — Year 1 of 3-Year Plan

At the completion of the 2003-2006 Transitional Plan, the MBC Board of Directors developed a new three-year strategy to guide the work of the national organization and its volunteers. The following summary outlines the activities planned and completed as part of the first year of the **2006-2009 Strategic Plan—Building the Future**. The Strategic Plan encompasses five Strategic Priorities: *Ensuring Financial Stability; Ensuring Membership Growth and Support; Strengthening Human and Organizational Resources; Increasing Awareness of MBC and Multiple-birth Issues; and Developing and Strengthening Partnerships*. While MBC was not successful in completing all activities designated for the first year, it has made great strides, continues to move forward, and is proud of the work that was completed with the limited resources at its disposal.

Ensuring Financial Stability

- Contacted the three top Canadian fertility treatment drug companies to request additional funding.
- Received \$2500 from EMD Serono.
- Negotiated donation from Duchesnay Inc. to provide their staff time as translators and webmasters to update the French portion of the website and to translate the rest of the site to French.
- Researched funding from Heritage Canada for the website translation; however no longer needed as a result of the Duchesnay donation.
- Surveyed Chapters and non-member groups for feedback on options new Chapter membership fee structure.
- Pursued fundraising opportunities resulting in new fundraisers—QSP online magazine program, Discovery Toys and Stuck On You Labels were initiated in 2006-2007.
- Investigated other fundraising opportunities which could not be pursued due to a lack of volunteers.
- Consulted with pro-bono lawyer regarding submitting a successful Charitable Status application; the lawyer advised that the same reasons why CS was rejected in the past would still apply.
- Reviewed pricing of some of the MBC Resource Materials and implemented a new pricing structure in the Fall of 2006.
- It was decided that a one-year calendar was not a good investment of time and resources. Discussions are ongoing about another commemorative item.

Ensuring Membership Growth and Support

- Assisted 10 Chapters with their 2006 NMBAD celebrations including Chatham-Kent POMBA, hosts of the lead event. The theme was Raising awareness of the unique risks of multiple-birth pregnancies and the post-natal issues faced by parents and multiples.
- Formed the Chapter Outreach Committee which provided input for the new Chapter membership structure survey. The Committee members also provided their Chapter or non-member group responses to the survey.
- Attempted to increase Francophone membership through the Website Translation Project, increased translation of many key communication tools and resources; and a new volunteer took on the role of Francophone Network Support Chair.
- Distributed the MBC Public Service Announcement (PSA) across Canada to college and university radio stations as they have free filler air time.
- Investigated software opportunities for e-newsletter distribution – ongoing.
- Arranged a small number of national discounts; however, without a dedicated National Discounts Coordinator, it was difficult to enhance discounts.
- Improved Chapter Development support and resources by modifying the roles of national volunteers (i.e., focused Board Member position as Director of Chapter Development and added Chapter Recruitment Coordinator Volunteer).
- Continued distributing Bi-Monthly Board Activity Reports.
- Continued distributing Information Circulars with an expanded distribution list.
- Expanded NMBAD 2007 resources and support materials and provided them free to Canada's multiple-birth community via the MBC website.

Strengthening Human and Organizational Resources

- Increased the number of volunteers using the online training site as a result of Chapter promotion of the Chapter challenge to train their volunteers.
- Advertised for new national volunteers via Information Circulars and the MBC website.
- Secured limited additional revenues to enhance BSM honorarium (EMD Serono donation).
- Asked the Advisory Board (AB) to support MBC through membership; asked AB to submit bios and articles for Multiple Moments to enhance their roles as Advisory Board members.
- Created a Chapter Outreach Committee to find solutions to encourage non-member groups to join MBC.
- Developed a fee structure that would assist in attracting new MBC Chapter members, as a result of Chapter Outreach Committee discussions.
- Reviewed publication fees and increased the price for some materials.
- Reviewed MBC resources, documents and support materials and revised some fact sheets.

Increasing Awareness of MBC and Multiple-birth Issues

- Welcomed a volunteer with a Public Relations (PR) background to assist in the development of new Advisory Board biographies, a generic media kit and an official communications plan.
- Submitted abstract to present "Canada's NMBAD" to COMBO delegates at the 2007 ICTS Conference.
- Submitted an article to the COMBO newsletter.
- Researched opportunities for Canadian representation on COMBO committees.
- Developed a priority action plan that resulted in the Health and Education committee producing two new fact sheets and revising others.
- Developed a benchmarking survey to assess the Best Practices of Awareness Days in Canada which resulted in key indicators of success – referencing key indicators of success, developed a strategy to involve the Governor General of Canada in future NMBAD celebrations.
- Participated in four Canadian radio talk shows to discuss multiple-birth issues and gave interviews to dozens of print journalists.
- Issued a "Letter to the Editor" to the Toronto Globe and Mail in response to renewed interest in EI dialogue.
- Interacted with other international multiple-birth groups, COMBO and ISTS Members.
- Exhibited/displayed MBC resource materials at the Ottawa Valley Lactation Consultants Annual Conference.
- Participated in the Spring Forward! Early Years National Conference.
- Initiated discussions with Invest in Kids, Parenting Partnership regarding the unique needs of multiple-birth families.

Strategic Plan Update (continued)

Developing and Strengthening Partnerships

- Established a working relationship with the current COMBO Board.
- Supported the attendance of two MBC Board members at the 2007 ICTS Conference.
- Discussed opportunities for MBC national volunteers to hold positions on COMBO Board and committees.
- Continued to strengthen existing partnerships.
- Continued to develop relationships with existing MBC Chapters, creating a partnership-based relationship in which Chapter support of the national organization aided MBC. Temiskaming Multiple Births provided human and financial resources for French translation of pamphlets and media releases, and assisted financially by fully funding an MBC Board member's expenses to ICTS.
- Contacted 16 non-member groups to introduce MBC and encourage dialogue regarding membership affiliation with MBC.
- Continued to collaborate with the Infertility Awareness Association of Canada (IAAC).
- Assisted the 2007 Conference Planning Committee in forming a partnership with the Waterloo Region Public Health Unit, and organizing two professional workshops and two delegate workshops.
- Responded to Health Canada's public consultation process regarding Assisted Reproduction Technologies Counselling Services under the federal government's Assisted Human Reproduction Act.
- Continued to be involved with the Multiple Births DVD Project with Mt. Sinai Hospital.
- Supported the development and assisted with the training component of the Multiple Births Guelph-Wellington Parent Support Program.

National Multiple Births Awareness Day...

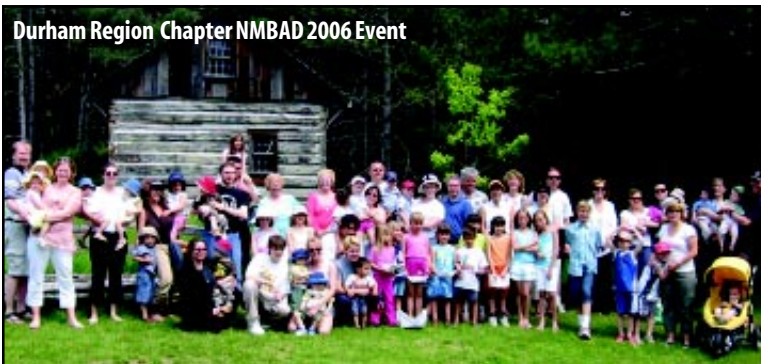
First celebrated in 2005, National Multiple Births Awareness Day unites Canada's multiple-birth families by providing a common vision of community, and allows us to experience the power of this multiple-birth community when we draw attention to the annual theme. Using the birth date of the Dionne Quintuplets, May 28th, has resulted in strong public interest and positive media support; because the last two National Conferences encompassed this date, the MBC Board of Directors was able to hold lead events.



2006 – The lead event was celebrated at the Wheels Inn in Chatham. The theme *“Raising awareness of the unique risks of multiple-birth pregnancies and the post-natal issues faced by parents and multiples”* was addressed by two members of Chatham-Kent Multiple Births Association. A mother of twins born at 33½ weeks and a father of quadruplets born at 32 weeks shared their personal and emotional multiple-birth stories. Volunteering to share their experiences spotlighted the risks and issues, while reinforcing the need we have as a community to reach out and support each other.

2007 – The 2007 event has been designed without the benefit of a lead event. The theme *“Raising awareness of the need to recognize and encourage the individuality of multiple-birth individuals, while respecting the uniqueness of their multiple-birth relationship”* was first addressed through the media. A “Letter to the Editor” campaign was launched in February and was sent to hundreds of print and online news outlets. The letter invited multiple-birth individuals of all ages to write a letter explaining how it feels to be a multiple-birth individual while simultaneously being a twin, triplet, quadruplet or quintuplet.

National Multiple Births Awareness Day provides a venue to unite, educate and celebrate our personal journeys as parents, grandparents, siblings, friends, spouses, day-care and service providers, educators, and health care professionals supporting Canada's multiple-birth community. The event is national in stature, but will be



“I would like to thank those who actively support National Multiple Births Awareness Day. Producing the program and the communication elements is the first step. Volunteering to deliver the messages at the local level is what truly defines the success of this event.”

Gail Moore, National Multiple Births Awareness Day Chair



spotlighted internationally in June 2007. MBC submitted an abstract to the International Symposium of Twin Studies Conference 2007 and has been granted an opportunity to share the National Multiple Births Awareness Day success story with COMBO (Council of Multiple Births Organization) delegates at the Belgium conference.



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Loss Support Network

Vanessa Luce, Richmond Hill, ON
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Dr. Louis Keith, M.D., Northwestern University
Medical School, Centre for the Study of Multiple
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for Twins Studies (UK), Chicago, IL

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work of Multiple Births Canada
and we gratefully acknowledge
their generous support.*