

Connecting MBC, Chapters, Volunteers and Members...

Report from National...

**Kim Weatherall, MBC CHAIR/
DIRECTOR OF VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT**
chair@multiplebirthscanada.org

As I get closer to the holidays and the end of the year, I start considering what the new year will mean for me, my family and, of course, Multiple Births Canada. All of a sudden, I get a passion for planning and getting organized. I find myself looking for a new agenda and new calendars, thinking about my choices for winter classes, coming up with ideas for next year's summer vacation and setting personal goals (resolutions) for the coming year. However, the last few years I have tried hard not to make traditional resolutions (I have made many of those over the years that never worked!); instead, I make personal goals in a number of different areas of my life.

What is the difference, you might ask? For me, resolutions are easier to come by and thus easier to break; they are often quick responses to someone at a New Year's Eve party and soon forgotten as we get back to our normal routine in January. With resolutions, one tends not to write them down or to create specific plans to achieve them, but when you are setting goals, you tend to think them through more and define the steps needed in order to achieve those goals. As with anything you do, writing it down and committing your goals to paper makes them more concrete, more defined and according to many, more likely to be achievable.

Everyone's goals for the upcoming year will be as different as we are to each other. Some will focus on removing negative aspects of their lives, while others will focus on areas that may simply need a bit of tweaking or improvement. As different as they may be, one can predict that many will, in fact, be the same:

As an individual—they will range from getting healthier and quitting a bad habit to working less and maybe relaxing more.

As a parent—many will set goals to be more patient, to yell less, to hug more, to listen to our children more often and to be more involved in their activities.

As a parent of multiples—many will set goals to spend more one-on-one time with our children, to compare them less, to learn to treat them more as individuals yet respect the special bond they have as multiple-birth siblings.

As a volunteer—to volunteer more (or less!), to help wherever needed, to be a better team player or to begin volunteering for the very first time.

The lists are endless!

What will your goals include? Will you make new ones in different areas of your life? Will you write them down and look at them often? Will you work hard to achieve them? My own personal goals for the upcoming year have not changed dramatically from last year, but I will take time to look at them to see how far I have progressed towards their achievement, adjusting where necessary and setting forth new goals for 2007. I challenge you to do the same! If it works for you, let me know.

As an organization, Multiple Births Canada recently completed its goal setting for the next three years. That written and defined strategic plan provides the national Board of Directors and Volunteers a tool to guide our work and outcomes to strive for. We will look at it often as we move forward into 2007 and subsequent years. We will have to make adjustments, on occasion, to meet the immediate needs of the organization and to adjust for the resources available; but overall the work laid out in this plan will help MBC move closer towards fulfilling its mission. To learn more about what MBC will be working towards please review the Strategic Plan, located on the MBC website under About MBC/Report From National.

I would like to wish you all the very best for this holiday season and for a very successful, happy and fulfilling year! May all your goals and dreams become a reality in 2007!



Kim Weatherall, CHAIR OF MBC

The Board came back from the Fall Interim Meeting in the Kawarthas recharged and rejuvenated, having spent three days addressing some of the most important issues currently facing Multiple Births Canada. In addition, it was an opportunity for Board Members to report and update others on areas in which they work, as well as spend some time together face-to-face, which is always important.

The following is a brief list of some of the accomplishments, updates and outcomes of the meeting (others will follow from the other Directors):

Approval of the "Building the Future 2006-2009 Strategic Plan": The Board reviewed the draft strategic plan discussed at the AGM, and in the absence of further feedback from the membership, passed a motion to accept it. The Board will review it semi-annually to ensure activities are in line with the strategic direction set out by this document.

Website Translation Committee Update: In lieu of providing funding for the translation of the website, Duchesnay Inc. has offered to translate the MBC website pages to French, which includes Webmaster services to replicate the website structure and post the French pages.

Final Review of the NEW bilingual MBC Pamphlet: The Board approved the new pamphlet. Funding for these pamphlets is the result of a donation from Duchesnay Inc., allowing them to be printed and supplied at no cost to chapters because of Duchesnay's donation. Update: they have since been printed and look awesome! Thank you Duchesnay!

National Conference 2007 Committee Update: Kitchener-Waterloo (K-W POMBA) reported they are well under way in their planning, and the registration form will soon be available to you. The delegate program will run Thursday through Sunday, May 31-June 3. The professional program will run Friday only.

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National Multiple Births Awareness Day 2007: As May 28th falls on a Monday, it was decided that the Board will not plan a national event in 2007 but will encourage all chapters to hold their individual events on the weekend prior to the 28th. A new media kit will be produced; it will be available online in early May. All chapters will also be mailed one free copy of the media kit. In this issue of Multiple Moments you will find an invitation to multiples to tell us their personal stories regarding their dual identities as individuals and parts of a multiple-birth relationship.

National AGM and Conference 2008: After considerable calls for a chapter to host the 2008 Conference and, more specifically, a western chapter to come forward, MBC at the national level will once again host the conference. The location is yet to be determined, but the Board feels it will most likely be in the Greater Toronto Area to allow for support from a number of chapters and volunteers. The Board discussed the current structure, content and pressures of hosting a conference for MBC and will be putting forth suggestions for a new format beginning in 2008.

30th Anniversary of MBC in 2008: The Board discussed opportunities for celebrations and for marking the occasion with an item to remember it by. A committee will be struck to carry these plans forward. If you have experience in event planning be sure to contact us to offer your support!

Health and Education Committee Update: The focus groups for the Mount Sinai DVD Project went well. Responses are still coming in via email and website questionnaires. The Committee has been assisting the hosts of Conference 2007 with their professional program.

Fundraising Update: The Board received an update on all current fundraisers and funding opportunities. There are a number of fundraisers currently on the go that are bringing in small amounts of funds while not increasing the workload of current volunteers. The three drug companies previously contacted were sent email requests to ask for more information with regards to their donation process. The volunteer lawyer has received the information regarding MBC's past Charitable Status application to determine any opportunities going forward. It was decided that MBC will apply for a Trillium Grant to enhance the support currently being given to chapters in the new year.

ISTS Conference 2007: It was noted that the 12th International Conference of Twin Studies hosted by the International Society for Twin Studies (ISTS) takes place every three years. The next one will be held in Gent, Belgium from June 7-10, 2007. At least three national volunteers are considering attending on behalf of MBC and have begun fundraising to offset some of the personal costs to the delegates.

Resignation of Multiple Moments Editor: It was with appreciation that the Board of Directors accepted the resignation of the Editor of Multiple Moments (MM). Vicki Riley became involved with MM in June 2000 as Co-Editor

and then took over as Editor in June 2001. This winter 2006 issue will be her last issue. We are excited to announce that a new Editor-In-Chief has been found. Meredith Fraser-Ohman has agreed to take on this role after three years as Co-Editor.

NEW Best Chapter Awards: The Board agreed that the Member/Chapter Support committee should consider developing a new set of awards to recognize best practices across the country.

NEW National Volunteers Needed: It was noted that there are a couple of Directors who will not be renewing their terms at the next AGM. This will affect succession planning. The Board noted that the best candidates for these openings are former Chapter Presidents and these recommendations need to come from MBC Chapters

2007 and 2008 are promising to be very busy years for MBC and the national volunteers. We will be looking to our membership, chapters and volunteers for support as we work hard to meet our many goals over the next few years. It is our hope that 2007 will be a pivotal year in our efforts to bring the Canadian multiple-birth community together as one strong family.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, from our families to yours... we wish you the very best this holiday season and for the upcoming year.



Board Members at Interim Meeting

MBC would like to thank its Sustaining Members for their added support:

Diane Nelson	Grande Prairie, AB	Cathy Barr	Guelph, ON
Bonnie Schultz	Gormley, ON	Donna Launslager	Waterloo, ON
Kimberley Weatherall	Orleans, ON	Diane Myers	Moffat, ON

Multiple Births Canada would also like to thank the following volunteers:

- **Kathy Rego** (friend of Kim Weatherall) for donation of clothes to Barrie Chapter to raise funds for MBC.
- **Dawson Family** for the use of their cottage for Director's Interim Meeting in October.
- **Linda Leonard, Dr. Barrett and Dr. Bocking** (Advisory Board Members) for their assistance with a mom expecting monoamniotic twins. (The twin boys and mom are happy and healthy.)
- **Vivian Hassam** (mother of Vicki Riley) for her assistance in the Business Office.

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Report from National...

Vicki Riley, MULTIPLE MOMENTS EDITOR

mmeditor@multiplebirthscanada.org

As I sit here—in yet another Ontario hockey arena—I realize that another chapter of my life is coming to a close. It is time for me to step down as Editor of this magazine and let someone with more passion and drive step up to the challenge. It is a very rewarding job that delivers something tangible in your hands at the end of each and every publication. You get to help MBC reach into people's lives and share the wisdom of others who have gone before, and you also get to work with a dedicated team of volunteers. Our multiple-birth community in Canada is a strong and special group of families and volunteers that have a lot of knowledge to share with current and future multiple-birth families and caregivers. It is important that this magazine and many other MBC resources continue to thrive so they can make a difference in our families' lives.

MBC is very pleased to announce that Meredith Fraser-Ohman, the current Co-Editor, has decided to step up to the challenge and take on the role of Multiple Moments Editor-In-Chief. This is fantastic news to the Multiple Moments team and readership. Meredith brings with her much experience and knowledge in the field of writing and editing. Meredith will introduce herself in the next issue - Welcome Meredith!

MBC is looking for writers that can contribute articles by researching topics specific to multiple-births. Are you an aspiring writer? Maybe this is for you. If you are a professional and have a paper that you think our readers would benefit from reading, please submit your article. If you are a mother or father of multiples and would like to share your experiences, please put your story in writing and submit it. If you are a multiple, we would love to hear what you have to tell us about being a twin or triplet, etc.

I joined my local chapter in Barrie when I first found out I was expecting twins back in 1994. Back then, MBC was called POMBA and Multiple Moments was called Double Feature. At that time, Double Feature was sent to the chapters in bulk and members had to sign for their copy. I couldn't wait and made sure that I attended those nights so I could pick up my copy. It usually fell on the same night that our local Multifacts newsletter was also being distributed (and signed for). Back then, if you didn't go to the meetings, you didn't get your copy unless a friend picked it up for you or someone dropped it off. For years, those were late nights for me after picking up my issues—but they were MY late nights. I'd stay up for hours and hours reading them from cover to cover. Who knew when I'd get another chance? The stories and information helped me understand that I wasn't alone ... there were others just like me ... mothers who rarely had a minute to themselves, mothers who could barely find time in the day to take a shower, and mothers who wouldn't have it any other way. We are part of a very special community and always will be, no matter if we are involved with our local chapter, at the national level or not at all. Something bonds us—we know what it's like. Let's share those "multiple moments" by keeping this magazine moving forward. Send in your stories, tell a friend to send in their story and purchase a subscription annually.

Thanks for listening over the past five-and-a-half years, and thank you to all of the Multiple Moments team, past and present, for all your hard work and dedication. This magazine would not happen without you!

Vicki

Vicki Riley, BUSINESS SERVICES MANAGER

office@multiplebirthscanada.org

The Business Office is moving into the 21st century! I am happy to announce that MBC has purchased a state-of-the-art laptop to replace the old, used computer that was donated back in 2001. Along with new software purchased at a special rate for non-profit organizations, a new multi-function printer has also been purchased and added to the office equipment asset list. It is amazing what a little extra RAM can do for efficiency!

Here is a quick review of some of the Business Office statistics from the last few months:

September referrals to local chapters and non-member groups: 4 referrals to member chapters (2 Newmarket, 1 London, 1 Edmonton) and 8 referrals to non-member groups (2 Ottawa, 2 Toronto, 2 Montreal, 1 Calgary, 1 Muskoka). October: 3 referrals to member chapters (1 Durham, 1 Sudbury, 1 Orangeville) and 11 referrals to non-member groups (5 Montreal, 3 Toronto, 1 Manitoba, 1 Burlington/Hamilton, 1 Mississauga).

On our toll-free line, the Business Office received 42 incoming calls in August and 36 in September.

From my family to yours – Merry Christmas and all the best for 2007!

Vicki

Congratulations Lynda!

Lynda P. Haddon (MBC Volunteer) of Ottawa

(and Perth) Ontario was recently recognized by Success by 6 and United Way as an "Everyday Hero" and Community Builder for her work in supporting Canadian multiple-birth families and the Ottawa Coalition for the Prevention of Low Birth Weight. In addition, they recognized Lynda's role as a Past President of both MBC and MBFA, they acknowledged the multiple-birth literature she has contributed to and created as literature that fills information gaps and its valued locally, nationally and internationally. The presentation to Lynda included praise for Multiple Births Canada as being the only national Canadian support for multiples and their families. In attendance were LBW Coalition Committee members, as were John and Denisa Withnall (Webmaster for MBC and the LBW Coalition) and about 50 United Way and Success by 6 personnel. Her plaque was presented by Michael O'Byrne (local television news anchor) from CTV. Recognition of this award will be placed at Ottawa City Hall on a "Wall of Community Builders". Congratulations Lynda on your well-deserved recognition!



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Gail Moore,
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS
communications@multiplebirthscanada.org

As I begin to write this column, my mind wanders. I start to think about all the work we've put into celebrating and promoting National Multiple Births Awareness Day over the past two years. On a personal level, after getting approval from the Dionne sisters to use their birth date for the event, I've had a busy time producing the last two media kits. Then, the work shifted to blitzing national media while MBC chapters took on the task of contacting their local broadcast and print outlets.

That's when I get reflective and realize with awe what we've been doing.

Collectively, bit by bit, we've started to educate Canadians about the challenges and issues faced by our multiple-birth community. I can't mention everyone because there are so many involved. But, when I see things like the great article last May in *West Coast Families*, or the television story showing Kelowna and District Multiple Births Association celebrating National Multiple Births Awareness Day, or the newspaper coverage in Chatham-Kent during the 2006 National Conference, I appreciate the efforts made by so many people. Yes, our key messages are being heard by others. But, just as importantly, MBC chapters across Canada are truly "Supporting Multiple-Births Together". Thank you.

Are you ready for National Multiple Births Awareness Day 2007?

It's going to be another amazing opportunity for us to educate others: "Raising awareness of the need to recognize and encourage the individuality of multiple-birth individuals, while respecting the uniqueness of their multiple-birth relationship."

Here's what's being done right now. MBC is inviting all multiple-birth children and adults to share their stories:

We want to hear what it's like to be you! Your personal story will help others to better understand and appreciate the complexity of your dual identity as an individual that shares a unique bond with your co-multiple(s).

These stories will be shared in future *Multiple Moments* magazines, on the MBC website, and some in the media kit for 2007 National Multiple Births Awareness Day. Deadline for submissions is April 15, 2007.

While we're on the topic of the media kit, this year all MBC chapters will receive a free package. They will be mailed to you at the start of May. The digital copy will also be available online by the middle of May. MBC wants you to use this material even if you are not planning to hold a National Multiple Births Awareness Day event. Getting this information into the hands of the media will help us to educate our friends and neighbours, our teachers and medical professionals, our daycare providers and agency personnel.

Appreciating the complexity of the dual identity of multiple-birth individuals will lead to more effective and healthier interactions with others. Establishing this understanding will also set the foundation for future National Multiple Births Awareness Day themes.

Again, I ask for your help. If you can spread the word that we need these personal stories from multiple-birth children and adults, your effort would be much appreciated. Only they can explain. Then, it'll be our job to share that information with others. Thank you once again for making a difference!!

Nicole Fisher,
DIRECTOR OF CHAPTER DEVELOPMENT
chapters@multiplebirthscanada.org

In mid-October, the MBC Board of Directors, along with the Business Services Manager, had a weekend of meetings. During one of these marathon sessions, we discussed an ongoing need to redefine some of the job responsibilities and descriptions for national volunteers involved in the area of member and chapter support. I have struggled with my title of Director of Membership for a long time, since I really have little to do with the actual act of keeping membership records. (Vicki does a fabulous job at keeping these files!) After some discussion, we decided on some new titles for jobs that are already being performed by national volunteers. Sheri Franklin, Shelly Blizzard-Jones and I have new titles and some new definitions of the duties that we will perform. We are hoping that this will improve the service we can provide to our multiple-birth family.

Director of Chapter Development: responsible for connecting existing chapters with each other and with MBC, and guiding them through their day-to-day operations.

New Chapter Mentor: responsible for mentoring new chapters from the time they first inquire at the Business Office until they've been established for three years. Under the direction of the Director of Chapter Development, this person will mentor chapters using a checklist for coordination. (Sheri Franklin)

Chapter Recruitment Coordinator: responsible for recruiting non-member groups to consider becoming MBC members. Under the direction of the Director of Chapter Development, this person will lead plans and coordinate membership drives of non-member groups. (Shelly Blizzard-Jones)

Also during our weekend of meetings, we discussed strategies to advance MBC's goal to expand membership and build strong MBC Chapters across Canada. We evaluated a survey completed by the Outreach committee and National MBC Volunteers, and have created a document with several membership options. In early November, MBC sent the document to each chapter for your input. Please contact your chapter's MBC Representative or President if you would like to know more about the Membership Options Under Consideration. The response deadline is December 31, 2006.

As I write, I am watching some early snowflakes flutter to the ground, reminding me that winter is not that far off! I am very much looking forward to some family time this Christmas, as some of the demands of travelling are lessened for us this year. Sometimes I need to be reminded that life is all about family, whether it be reading a book together, letting the kids help make dinner or going for a discovery walk in a local nature area. We all get too busy and our children grow up too fast (our three children have had recent birthdays, so I am realizing how quickly time is flying!) so take time to do something special with your family this week!