

# New Cowan Group Initiative to Assist Local Charities

Over the past seven years, the Child Witness Centre has conducted a survey of local charities on a wide range of issues--salaries, benefits, hours of work, vacation, inclusivity, mileage allowance, governance, inclusivity, outcome measurement, etc. It was done every two years; 20-25 agencies participated; each receiving a summary of the results.

"When I joined the Child Witness Centre," said Executive Director Jack Reynolds, "I wanted the kind of information that businesses commonly use to assist in setting salaries, benefits and human resource policies...benchmarking data. I was new to the charitable sector, and interested in knowing what the practices were, but that information wasn't available. Like most charities, we weren't interested in paying a consultant to gather data and produce such a report. So I initiated my own survey, got good participation, did it free of charge, and have been doing it since 2003. I think all of the participating charities have



found it useful when reviewing their own salaries and agency policies and practices."

Earlier this year, Lynn Short, Vice President at Cowan Insurance Group, offered to take over the survey as a community outreach initiative. "We thought this was a great idea," said Jack Reynolds. "I ran the idea by other Executive Directors at K-W and Cambridge United Way agency meetings, and there was full agreement to go ahead."

Having the survey done by Cowan will result in a number of advantages:

- it will be done annually in October (vs. the previous bi-annual schedule) . . . still at no cost to participants

- it will be done on-line (using an online survey tool)--hence easier to complete, more professionally designed, and greater confidentiality of participant data

- participation may be opened up to a broader range of not-for-profits...not just United Way funded agencies

- as well as producing a report for participants, Cowan plans to run an annual workshop in November to analyze and discuss the results

- the survey won't rely on the resources of the Child Witness Centre . . . hence ensuring its longer term viability.

This is just one more example of the tremendously positive impact that the Cowan Insurance Group has in our region . . . a very successful firm which continuously gives back generously to the community. We're very grateful for their initiative on this.

Cowan is one of the largest privately-owned insurance brokerage operations in Canada, specializing in business and personal insurance (including home, auto and boat insurance).

## Calendar of Events

Mark the following dates in your calendar

### Pancake Luncheon –

Tuesday March 8, 2011 at Delta Kitchener. For \$11, enjoy a buffet lunch of pancakes, bacon, sausage, ham, fruit and drinks.

### Youth Symposium –

Dates are Wednesday April 13th for Wellington County students and Thursday April 14th for Waterloo Region students.

### Evening of

Entertainment – Friday June 10th, 2011...stay tuned for more exciting details.

## Thanks to the Kitchener and Waterloo Community Foundation — help received from the Community Fund and The Jim and Sue Hallman Flow-Through Fund

...as a result of their generous donations, the Child Witness Centre will be getting a new and much-needed client database system!

Software has been purchased and work is now underway to customize it to meet our growing needs. Our current system was installed in

1991, but is now inadequate because of the vast increase in the number of children served, and the need for improved speed and user friendliness to store and retrieve data. The database is the most essential tool we use to organize and deliver our services, to measure our outcomes, and to report results to

our stakeholders. The new system should be up and running for January 1st.

We are truly grateful for the foundations for supporting this important project, which allows us to better assist more than 600 children each year.

## Vickers' Brothers Have Outdone Themselves Again

What started out as a day for two brothers to get together with friends and play some golf has ballooned into a major yearly event that greatly benefits the Child Witness Centre in Kitchener, and Victims Services in Toronto. This year, we are ecstatic to announce that the Vickers' brothers have outdone themselves, yet again. The total for the 11th annual event on Friday June 18th was \$14,500, which handsomely surpassed their previous high of \$13,000 raised in 2008. This despite the fact that providing G20 security prevented many

police officers from participating.

Cheques for \$7,250 were presented to the Child Witness Centre and Victims Services Toronto.

We are immensely thankful for this wonderful event...it has raised over \$25,000 for the Child Witness Centre since 2005.



Brian Vickers

# Caseworker's Notebook

## A Day in the Life of a Caseworker . . .

Child Witness Centre staff provide support for child victims and witnesses in a wide variety of circumstances, and it's not always predictable how they will react to their experience with the justice system. Here is a recent case which took a different turn.

A man was charged with assaulting his wife. Their 6-year-old son witnessed the entire assault and was interviewed by police. As the trial date neared, the little boy met with his Child Witness Centre Caseworker in order to get ready to testify in court. Through play he learned the role of the Judge, the Crown Attorney and the Defence lawyer. Through a colouring book and discussions with the caseworker, he learned about his job in court and the importance of telling the truth. He came into an empty courtroom and played in the Judge's chair. All the while, he expressed his love of his dad and his mom and said he understood what was about to happen. He was a delightfully happy little boy. He was articulate when he and the Caseworker met with the Crown Prosecutor and everyone was of the same mind--he could testify.

On the day of court, the little boy came to the designated waiting area, Game Boy in hand, ready to tell his story. He seemed a bit nervous, but eager to get this over with. His father decided at the last minute to plead guilty, thereby saving his son the ordeal of testifying in open court. The Crown and Defence worked out an appropriate sentencing and the man was put on probation. The adults in the case breathed a sigh of relief. The little boy was

spared the courtroom and could go home. End of story, right? Wrong.

In fact, the true story was just unfolding. As the caseworker began to tell the little boy that he did not have to testify, the boy became inconsolable. He slid under the table and cried; great big tears streaming down his face. He simply refused to come out from under the table and his cries grew louder and louder. The caseworker sat on the floor with him and started to ask him questions. It became apparent that this little boy wanted to tell the Judge his story. He wanted the Judge to tell his parents to stop being mean to each other. He wanted his day in court. But, with his father's guilty plea, he was never afforded the opportunity he so desperately wanted...to talk to the Judge.

The caseworker called the Trial Co-ordinator and explained that this little boy just wanted to meet the Judge. Justice Hearn agreed to meet him. The caseworker asked that the Judge be robed so that the little boy would know that Justice Hearn was a "real" Judge. As these arrangements were being made, the Caseworker told the little boy that he was about to meet the Judge. He came out from under the table. The Caseworker helped him catch

his breath, took him by the hand and went to the Judge's Chambers. The little boy met Justice Hearn and the Caseworker waited outside the office.

After it was all said and done, the Judge called for the caseworker. She asked the Judge how the meeting went. He said that the little boy had told him that the Child Witness Centre needed a more up-to-date Game Boy and, most importantly, he wanted his parents to stop fighting and love each other.

So here was a case where a little boy needed an advocate to have his voice heard after the case was over; and the Caseworker did just that. It was clear that in order for this little boy to leave, he needed to exercise what he thought was his right...to speak to the Judge. Children who are exposed to violence in the home are denied their right to have a voice in creating a safe and stable home environment. Many are suffering silently, and with little support. Children who are exposed to violence in the home need trusted adults to turn to for help and comfort, and services that will help them to cope with their experiences. The Child Witness Centre provided some of the support, safety and opportunity this little boy needed.

## Hats Off to West Cambridge Optimists

Since 1994, the West Cambridge Optimists have graciously paid for all the rent at our Cambridge Office located across from the Cambridge Courthouse, duly named the "Optimist Room". When the room was established, the Optimists also supplied all the furnishings to create this "child friendly" area. The location of the room was ideal for our case-workers to provide court preparation services late in the day or in the evenings (to avoid taking kids out of school), and for providing a waiting place for kids on the day(s) they are testifying in court.

This arrangement has come to a close. With the Waterloo Region courthouses being consolidated in a

new courthouse now being built in Kitchener, we and the Optimists decided to close the Child Witness Centre facility in Cambridge. In the interim, our case workers will use space in the Cambridge Victim/Witness Assistance Program office and at Lang's Farm Village.

This new arrangement works well for everyone. We wish to give sincere thanks to all the members, past and present, of the West Cambridge Optimists who provided support via this child-friendly room and helped many Cambridge area child victims over the years. We look forward to working with the Optimists in some other way to help child victims in Cambridge.

## BREAKING NEWS



A Better Place For You®

We are thrilled to announce that The Co-operators is now a major sponsor for the 2011 Wellington County Youth Symposium, and shares our vision of providing an enriching, interactive experience for youth. The Co-operators is a 100 per cent Canadian-owned co-operative providing insurance and financial security products. It is well known for its community involvement and support for youth.

For more information visit: [www.cooperators.ca](http://www.cooperators.ca).

Since 2006, the Sertoma/LaSertoma Foundation has funded our Waterloo Region symposium and with the additional support from The Co-operators we can continue to host a Wellington County Youth Symposium in Guelph. We aim to attract 2,000+ Grade 8 students (similar to our Kitchener symposium) at the Wellington County Youth Symposium next year.

# Thank you



Child  
Witness  
Centre

# THE Centre News FALL 2010



Child  
Witness  
Centre

Serving Waterloo Region, Wellington County and Brant County

Every donation helps us provide child victims and witnesses with the support they need through the difficult challenge of testifying in court.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: hm: \_\_\_\_\_ wk: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Payment Options:

Cheque enclosed (made payable to Child Witness Centre)

VISA  
 MasterCard

Expiry Date: □□ □□ Card Number: □□□□ □□□□ □□□□ □□□□

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Donations can also be accepted online at [www.childwitness.com/help.html](http://www.childwitness.com/help.html)

Mail Code: FALL2010

## Child Witness Centre

100 Lancaster Street East  
Kitchener, Ontario  
N2H 1M8

Phone: (519) 744-0904  
Toll free: 1-888-544-0904  
Fax: (519) 744-5379  
E-mail: [admin@childwitness.com](mailto:admin@childwitness.com)  
[www.childwitness.com](http://www.childwitness.com)

\*On average it costs \$350 per child to provide court support services

Donation amount:  \$35  \$250  
 \$50  \$350  
 \$100  \$500  
 I prefer to give: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Tax receipt issued for donations over \$10

Charitable Tax  
Registration Number  
10097 7180 RR0001

Please use my donation for Child Witness Program operating expenses

Please direct my donation to the Child Witness Centre Endowment Fund

Please keep my donation anonymous

## We're Moving!!

If you've driven by the Child Witness Centre at 100 Lancaster Street recently, you were probably surprised to see a "For Sale" sign on the lawn. Here is what's happening:

- Our landlord sold our building, along with 222 Frederick Street (with whom we share a parking lot).
- Our lease expires in July 2011.
- A new courthouse is being built on Duke/Frederick/Weber/Scott, to replace existing courthouses in Kitchener and Cambridge. It will be completed in March 2013. Our services for child victims require that we be close to the courthouse.

We've been working over the past year to find a good solution. A capital campaign is now underway. Although we've been building a facility fund over the past six years, to be ready for the consolidation of courthouses, we're still in need of further funding to finance the purchase, and moving and renovation costs. Grants and donations are welcomed!!!

Special thanks to Mike Armstrong, who satisfied his WLU MBA community service requirement by doing information gathering and analysis on our relocation issue. Mike is a Mechanical Engineer with Maple Leaf Foods. His methodology and third party perspective was very helpful. Thanks Mike for a job well done, and thanks to the WLU business school—this is the third time the Child Witness Centre has been assisted with important projects by MBA students fulfilling the program's community service requirement.

## An Act of Kindness

It's not often you get a knock on your door from a complete stranger who wants to give you money? Well ... that's exactly what happened at the Child Witness Centre.

Marianne Garbotz is a remarkably kind lady. She spends a lot of her free time outside the Zehrs location at Stanley Park Mall. As customers leave, Marianne asks them if they would like to give their receipt to her. If they ask, she'll explain that she collects the receipts and gives them to the Child Witness Centre, a very worthy agency.

The day Marianne came



Marianne Garbotz with all her Zehrs tapes.

knocking on our door, she counted and rolled. Through presented us with \$450,000 worth of Zehrs tapes, all the Zehrs Save-A-Tape program, this amounted to

\$1,000 for the Child Witness Centre. Every couple of months we can expect Marianne on our doorstep with more tapes and to date, she is up to \$700,000 worth of tapes...WOW!

Marianne is a widow with one son who lives in the area. Her philosophy has always been to help others and give back to the community she lives in and that is exactly what she is doing. There are various ways people can give back... and this is just another and very unique example of the kindness in people. The Child Witness Centre is extremely grateful for her support and thoughtfulness.

## Thanking a Volunteer

Carl Thiel has been a volunteer with the Child Witness Centre for the past eight years, and his help takes many forms. Carl volunteers annually to assist at our two Youth Symposiums, which bring together 3,000 grade 8 students in Kitchener and Guelph for a day of motivational and educational presentations. He and his brother Doug painted our Cambridge facility and have done Spring yard work. He spearheaded efforts to expand the collection of Zehrs and Sobeys tapes to increase our revenue from those sources...and he shares in preparing the tapes for submission to the stores. He has helped prepare for banking the coins from the Conestoga Mall fountain which are regularly donated to the Child Witness Centre. He assists in other projects as needed, arriving always with a smile on his face, and often a supply of Tim Horton's for the staff. As if donating his

time wasn't enough, Carl also donates financially to help ensure that child victims receive the vital assistance they need.

Carl is a life-long Waterloo resident, and a Mutual Life retiree. He is a former Canadian lawnbowling champion and continues to umpire at lawnbowling events. He also skipped curling teams to victory on many occasions and, in a volunteer capacity for more than 30 years, helped to organize and run the annual Mutual Life Bonspiel for more than 100 curlers in the region. He served as drawmaster for 17 years for the annual Chamber of Commerce Bonspiel. He has forever been a regular at blood donor clinics, having donated 163 times. He is an avid bridge player and bowler.

Carl is someone who loves his community and gives back to the community.

He's been recognized by the City of Waterloo for his volunteer work, and it was only a few years ago that Carl received a special achievement award from the Province of Ontario for distinguished contribution to the field of fitness and amateur sport. We're very grateful to Carl for his generous, valued support for the Child Witness Centre.



Carl Thiel

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Rod Miller PRESIDENT  
Alexandra Hardy PAST PRESIDENT  
Ranjini Jha TREASURER  
Maedith Radlein SECRETARY

### DIRECTORS

Robin Decker  
Rob Dippell  
Patti McKague  
Nicola Melchers  
Craig Sullivan  
Corrie Thompson  
Cate Welsh  
Terry Wichman

### STAFF

Jack Reynolds EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
Jo-Anne Hughes CWP CO-ORDINATOR  
Laura Cook CWP CASEWORKER  
Susan Dubé CWP CASEWORKER  
Sherry Stockton ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT  
Linda Mark RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT CO-ORDINATOR  
CWP - Child Witness Program

