

# Y'S WORDS

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## PROVIDING BETTER HEALTH FOR KENYAN WOMEN

If you had a six-month paid holiday coming up, would you spend it working? Probably not! But that's just what Yellowknife doctors Andrew Kotaska and Christine Scott are doing.

The two decided that instead of touring around with their two sons, they would work at a large public hospital in Nairobi, Kenya. They visited last year and saw it would be a "perfect fit," Andrew says.

"There's an incredible need. As the middle class gets established, resources are fleeing from the public system, which is used by the poor. Both

training and the hospital is deteriorating. As a surgeon and obstetrician, how can I not do this?" he asks.

The Kenyatta hospital has 1500 beds and seven to eight thousand babies are born there each year (ten times the number born at Stanton Territorial Hospital where Kotaska usually works). "I could have an impact, and vice versa," he says. Christine is a family physician who will work in other areas such as cervical cancer screening and prevention.

In order to improve the care he can offer, Andrew has been fundraising among

friends, colleagues and family for a portable ultrasound machine and related equipment. He's now within \$2500 of covering all his costs.

"We were blown away by all the support," he says. The equipment will remain in Kenya when the family returns to Yellowknife at the end of the summer.

"Of course we wanted to help Andrew with this," says Julie Green, YWCA Yellowknife's Director of Community Relations. "We are an organization that serves women and there are YWCAs all around the world. It was a no-brainer."

## ENERGY-SAVING IMPROVEMENTS SAVING YWCA THOUSANDS AT ROCKHILL

An investment of about \$35,000 last winter in energy conservation improvements is already saving YWCA Yellowknife money on utilities at Rockhill. The apartment building is home to 30 families in the emergency and transitional housing program.

The GNWT's Energy Conservation Program and De Beers Canada helped pay for the changes.

We compared water, electricity and fuel costs for 2010 to 2011. This comparison isn't exact as the all the energy-saving changes

were not in place until the end of March

Low flush toilets, taps and shower heads, along with front-loading washing machines allowed the YWCA to save a whopping 13 per cent on its water bill.

Compact fluorescent light bulbs in the apartments, motion sensor lights in common areas, reducing dryer running times and programmable outlets in the parking lot reduced electricity costs by four per cent.

Programmable thermo-

stats contributed to burning less oil in 2011 to the tune of 11,030 litres.



All this good news has inspired us to begin another round of improvements including installing more energy-efficient fluorescent light bulbs and more programmable thermostats. De Beers Canada has already pledged \$10,000 to this year's improvements.



YWCA Yellowknife  
Executive Director  
Lyda Fuller

“It is not good enough to have shelters for women fleeing violence. We need to impact the causes of violence against others.”

## A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

On December 19, 2011, the community of Tuktoyaktuk learned that 33 year old Jenny Pingo had been fatally shot by her 38 year old partner, who then killed himself. There was a long history of violence by this man against his partner. Some of the episodes resulted in convictions, while others resulted in charges being withdrawn. Convictions led to jail time of fewer than four months.

This young woman had been threatened with a knife, and also held at gunpoint. She lived in fear of being seriously hurt or killed by her partner. Jenny Pingo is not alone; other women in our territory also live in fear of

such harm.

It is not good enough to have shelters for women fleeing violence. We need to impact the causes of violence against others.

Attitudes and beliefs about abuse must change. In 2007, the GNWT conducted a *Family Violence Survey*, which showed that outside the larger centers, respondents were more likely to agree that physical violence is a private matter. Keeping silent about abuse is not an option if we want safe communities.

Over 90 per cent of respondents also identified the need for better treatment for offenders, and

such a program has been developed. We urge the GNWT to move forward with implementation of this program for men who use abuse.

Along with the other members of the Coalition against Family Violence, the YWCA Yellowknife is urging the coroner to conduct a death review, as happens in other jurisdictions. We need to learn what occurred and how the community and others responded.

As a society, we all need to commit to making whatever changes in our attitudes, beliefs, and responses that will help bring violence to end in our lifetime.

## SHARON PEARCE HELPS FAMILIES AT THP

A chance visit to Alison McAteer House (AMH) family violence shelter put Sharon Pearce on a career path at YWCA Yellowknife. For the last five years she has been a family support worker at the emergency and transitional housing program.

Sharon started working for YWCA Yellowknife 15 years ago. She went to visit the one and only person she knew in Yellowknife, a woman who worked at AMH. The supervisor asked Sharon if she'd like to work

an overnight shift that night.

“I was scared to death to answer the phone, the crisis line. I had no idea. All I had was common sense,” Sharon remembers now. Before long Sharon started working full time. Five years ago, looking for a change, Sharon moved into her current position at Rockhill

“I so enjoy working with families. The shelter is one-sided. Here you get everyone and I get to see people all the time, rather than only when they're in

crisis.”

“I learned early on that we're not there to solve problems, but to listen,” she says.

Sharon says the hard part is seeing residents at Rockhill struggle with money. “They are doing the best they can, working hard every day and they just can't make ends meet,” she says.

“I enjoy going to work. You never know what's going to happen and it's always something different,” she says.



Sharon Pearce is a family support work at the emergency and transitional housing program (Rockhill).

## COMMUNITY SUPPORT SPREADS CHRISTMAS CHEER

Troy Arden and his family got such a big Christmas hamper there's still some left. "It really helped us through Christmas and beyond. We've got lots of canned soup left," he said in mid-January.

As well as food, the massive hamper from Norland Insurance included crayons, beading kits, small toys and clothes for his four children, ages two to 12.

"We are well looked after here," says Troy, who has been living in the transitional housing program since July.



Above: Shanelle and Troy Arden; Left: Shasha You from Arctic Sunwest Charters with gifts for Rockhill and staff at BMO with gifts for Alison McAteer House.

Other Rockhill families also received generous food hampers from staff groups and individuals. And for the third year in a row the staff at Arctic Sunwest Charters provided a toy for each and every one of the 50 children who live at Rockhill. The Military Family Resource Centre supplemented stockpile of toys; the RMCP provided diapers; and the Hampton Ontario United Church ladies knitting group ensured everyone had something warm to wear.

Families at Alison McAteer House benefited from the generosity of the Bank of Montreal staff group who provided a mountain of toys and MacKay accountants who provided a sock full of treats for all the moms.

And that's not all. Other staff associations and individuals bought gifts for men and women with disabilities who receive in home support from the YWCA. Many people, businesses and service groups bought gifts that benefit our programs from our Wish List catalogue, bought increments of heat for Rockhill or made undesignated cash donations. Our clients appreciate your support.



Thank you to every donor who helped a family or individual in need this Christmas with gifts and donations to YWCA Yellowknife.



### DONORS WHO MAKE A DIFFERENCE: SHELAGH MONTGOMERY



Shelagh Montgomery has Turned Up the Heat on Homelessness, helped send girls to summer camp, supported the purchase of medical equipment for Kenyan women (see page 1) and contributed to the agency's overall operating expenses.

**"The YWCA fills a huge need in the lives of people in Yellowknife. I have great confidence in the staff at the YWCA and that my contributions are going right to the clients. The YWCA accomplishes what it sets out to do."**

### DO YOU GIVE TO YWCA YELLOWKNIFE BY BUYING A COUPON AT THE TILL AT THE CO-OP GROCERY STORE?

If you donated \$20 or more in 2011, you are eligible for a tax receipt. The Co-op needs your permission to release information to us. Please contact the manager, Ben Walker, to ask him to forward your name and the amount you donated. He is at [b.walker@ykcoop.com](mailto:b.walker@ykcoop.com)

**Thank you for using this program to donate to our housing clients.**

## REGISTER FOR GIRLSPACE MARCH BREAK

YWCA Yellowknife's popular GirlSpace program is offering a special March break day camp both weeks students are out of school.

Registration is open to girls ages 8 to 13 and there's no cost.

The GirlSpace Day Camp will combine strong girl empowerment fundamentals such

as building leadership skills, learning about healthy relationships and discussing social activism.

There will also be lots of crafts, field trips, games, baking and a pj and movie day—not to mention fun and giggling! The program will be based at Northern United Place auditorium.

The GirlSpace March break day camp is made possible with funds from the United Way.

Space is limited to 15 participants so be sure to register your daughter by Feb. 22. Contact GirlSpace co-ordinator Ashley MacDonald at 920-2777 x 311.



GirlSpace at the Snow King's Castle March 2011



Save the expense and the environmental cost—get your newsletter via e-mail. Send your e-mail address to [julie@ywcanwt.ca](mailto:julie@ywcanwt.ca)

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In the North since 1966



Yes! I will support the YWCA and strengthen our community.

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

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

City/Territory or Province: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like my gift to support:

Family Violence Prevention  services for girls

Transitional housing  the area of greatest need

Enclosed is my single gift or monthly donation of (circle one)

\$25    \$40    \$75    \$150    \$1000    Other \$

Method of payment (check one):

cash

cheque (Payable to YWCA Yellowknife)

credit card

**THIRD PARTY EVENTS MAKE A DIFFERENCE!**



Recent third party events: St. Patrick High School Interact presents \$1500 they raised to Ashley MacDonald of YWCA GirlSpace. Below: a mountain of toys from Arctic Sunwest and BMO await sorting before Christ-



Host a party and make a difference in the lives of girls and women.

Rally your friends together and have a fundraiser. Then donate the proceeds to YWCA Yellowknife. Receipts are issued for \$20 or more when donor information is provided.

Organize a special YWCA Yellowknife support day at your office, host a dinner party at your house, or ask for donations rather than gifts for a wedding, birthday or on other special occasions.

For more ideas about how you can make a difference, contact Julie Green at [julie@ywcanwt.ca](mailto:julie@ywcanwt.ca) or at 920-2777 x 303.



RCMP "G" Division delivered 42,000 diapers throughout the north including to YWCA transitional housing and Alison McAteer House. Thanks to MLAs Glen Abernethy, Bob Bromley, and Bob McLeod for helping to pay for the food at the THP Christmas party.

