



citizen advocacy
parrainage civique

rapporT

Spring 2010

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EVERYDAY CHAMPIONS
ÉTOILES DU QUOTIDIEN



CHANCE FOR CHOICE
L'OCCASION DE CHOISIR



REAL PLANS FOR REAL LIFE
VOTRE PLAN, VOTRE VIE

Citizen Advocacy matches volunteers from the community with people who are isolated and vulnerable because of a disability. Established in 1974, Citizen Advocacy is supported by United Way/Centraide.

Parrainage civique associe bénévoles et personnes ayant une incapacité qui sont isolées et vulnérables à cause de leur handicap. Établi en 1974, Parrainage civique est soutenu par Centraide/United Way.

The Lobsters are Coming!

Join us on Thursday, May 27th for the 16th annual Evening in the Maritimes!

Come enjoy our signature 5-course lobster dinner with all the fixings (alternate land-lubber beef and vegetarian meals available upon request) and live entertainment by Newfoundland's Celtic rock group Rawlins Cross! Tickets are \$150 each and include a tax receipt for \$65.

Don't miss your chance to bid on a fantastic array of silent auction items, including a dinner for twelve at the Thai ambassador's residence, beautiful jewelry, a night at the Fairmont Mont-Tremblant, and so much more! There are also great prizes to be won in our balloon raffle, including a hot air balloon ride, round-trip transportation for two and a two-night hotel stay in Halifax, as well as \$1,000 cash!

We'd love for you to join us for great food and outstanding entertainment. If you can't join us or would like to help out in other ways here's how you can get involved:

- Donate an item or service to the silent auction
- Sell tickets to family and friends
- Volunteer at the event

Call us at 613-761-9522 or send an email to

events@citizenadvocacy.org to buy tickets, volunteer, or contribute a silent auction item. You can also buy your tickets online at LOBSTERSareCOMING.com!

This year, why not make a night of it? A special room rate is available to guests - visit LOBSTERSareCOMING.com for more information.

Thank you to our sponsors: Bell, Global Public Affairs, TOFCON Construction Inc., Hilton Lac-Leamy, /A\ Ottawa, BOB FM, Spicers, and The Ottawa Citizen.

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Rapport is a newsletter published every 4 months by Citizen Advocacy of Ottawa. Citizen Advocacy assists people living with a disability in enhancing their quality of life by overcoming barriers to personal choice and community participation. A volunteer based, non-profit organization, Citizen Advocacy relies on the support of foundations, grants, memberships, and personal donations to augment funding from the United Way, Province of Ontario, City of Ottawa and the Trillium Foundation.

Suggestions and submissions for publication, as well as questions and comments of general interest, are invited and should be sent to the attention of the Editor - Rapport. Submissions may be edited for length and content at the discretion of the organization.

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Dates to Remember

May 5: Annual General Meeting
May 18: Social Activities Club meeting
May 24: Victoria Day (office closed)
May 27: Evening in the Maritimes
May 29 & 30: Run for Everyday Champions
July 1: Canada Day (office closed)
August 2: Civic Holiday (office closed)
August 28: Annual Picnic
September 6: Labour Day (office closed)
September 25: Bowl-a-Thon for Everyday Champions
October 11: Thanksgiving (office closed)
November 1: CAC Volunteer Award nomination deadline
November 11: Remembrance Day (office closed)
December 2: Celebration of People
December 12: Holiday Dinner and Dance

Go Green!

Joining our e-newsletter list will help save trees and reduce the use of paper and envelopes. E-newsletter members receive e-mail notification that the latest issue is on our web site: www.citizenadvocacy.org.

To let us know that you are joining our Green Team and prefer to receive an email notice about the publication of the latest newsletter and other events and happenings at Citizen Advocacy, send an email to info@citizenadvocacy.org or call the office at 613-761-9522.

BINGO!

If you enjoy playing bingo, please support Citizen Advocacy by playing at Bingoland South at 9 Slack Road. Citizen Advocacy hosts the bingo game on Tuesday evenings at 7 p.m.

Support Citizen Advocacy as we run (and walk!) for Everyday Champions

Citizen Advocacy has once again formed a team of participants who will take part in the Ottawa Race Weekend to raise funds for Citizen Advocacy. The races take place over the weekend of May 29 & 30. Here are a list of runners/walkers participating on behalf of Citizen Advocacy:

Half-Marathon Event

Robert Adolfson, Social Worker, Everyday Champions
Isabelle Des Chênes, former Board Member

Sheila Robertson, Social Worker, Chance for Choice
René Vézina, Volunteer Advocate

10km Event

Shelley Ann Morris, Volunteer Advocate
Peter Roorda, Volunteer Advocate and Board Member
Sophie Leclair-Roberge, Social Worker, Everyday Champions

Brian Tardif, Executive Director
Rocky Whitmore, Protégé

5km Event

Todd Sams, Protégé

2km Event:

Daniel Anderson, Protégé
Veronica Anderson, Protégé and Consumers
Advisory Committee (CAC) member
Anna Bilsky, Volunteer Advocate

Daniel Boyer, Protégé and CAC member
Margie Cunningham, Protégé and CAC member
Bill Dolan, Volunteer Advocate
Joanne Vézina, Volunteer Advocate

Please support us by either running/walking for Everyday Champions OR by pledging a Citizen Advocacy race participant! To make a donation/pledge to a participant:
(donations of \$10 + will receive a charitable tax receipt)

- 1) Call 613-761-9522 and specify who you would like your pledge directed toward **OR**
- 2) Donate online through the secure website CanadaHelps.org. Indicate your donation is for "Run for Everyday Champions". If you wish for your pledge to be directed to a specific participant, please indicate their name in the "Message/Instructions" section **OR**
- 3) Give by regular mail. Send your cheque to: Citizen Advocacy, 312 Parkdale Avenue, Ottawa, ON, K1Y 4X5. If you wish for your pledge to be directed to a specific participant, please indicate their name.

For information on how to become a race participant, please call Lesley at 613-761-9522 x240.

Consumers Advisory Committee Volunteer Award Nominations

Do you know a Citizen Advocacy volunteer who is respectful, compassionate, patient, a good listener, and has been involved in a range of activities at Citizen Advocacy? If so, why not nominate them for the Consumers Advisory Committee Volunteer Award! This award honours all people who perform a volunteer service here: the person you nominate might be a volunteer advocate, but could also be a protégé who gives their time helping out at Citizen Advocacy with events, office work, or putting together the mail-outs. They could also be a board or committee member, or any other Citizen Advocacy volunteer.

Those who are nominated should represent the spirit of a Citizen Advocacy volunteer! Nominations can be submitted at any time during the year and must be received by November 1st. For more details call Robert Adolfson at 613-761-9522, ext. 227 or email radolfson@citizenadvocacy.org.

Everyday Champions

In each newsletter Citizen Advocacy introduces you to a member of the Board of Directors and a volunteer. In this issue we are pleased to introduce **Joe Diamond**, board member and volunteer advocate! Joe has been a volunteer advocate for eight years and has served on Citizen Advocacy's board of directors for two years.

Joe enjoys seeing his protégé on a regular basis and together they go shopping, to the movies and visit attractions such as the Aviation Museum and Science and Technology Museum. They also enjoy attending Citizen Advocacy events such as Evening in the Maritimes and the Annual Holiday Dinner and Dance.

After volunteering as an advocate for six years, Joe was looking for other ways to help Citizen Advocacy and was delighted to have the opportunity to join the Board of Directors. In Joe's words, "I consider my board involvement as a wonderful learning experience. At each meeting, I learn more about the full scope of what CA does by listening to staff presentations on CA programs designed to improve the lives of people with disabilities. I enjoy working with the great group of people serving on the board and I appreciate participating in board discussions on topics related to administrative, human resource, finance and fundraising matters."

Joe has an M.A. in economics and retired from the public service after 31 years of service working with the Department of Manpower and Immigration, the Canadian Transport Commission/National Transportation Agency, and Health Canada.

In addition to his volunteer work with Citizen Advocacy, Joe serves on the board of Families Matter Co-operative Inc., an organization which assists adults with developmental disabilities in the areas of job training, housing, employment and social integration.

Joe describes himself as a news junkie, particularly with respect to current events and politics. He also enjoys reading about politics and history as well as biographies. Joe is very proud of his children: his daughter is finishing a doctorate in counselling psychology and his son teaches ancient philosophy at Dalhousie University in Halifax. Joe is a happy grandfather to Harlow, his 3 year old grandson.

Consumers Advisory Committee: Call for New Members

The Consumers Advisory Committee (CAC) of Citizen Advocacy is looking for new members. This committee was developed by our Board of Directors to address the concerns of people with disabilities and to inform the Board of these concerns. The purposes of the Committee as outlined in the Membership Handbook are:

To provide training to protégés about what it is like to sit on a committee and be part of a group that has goals; to provide input to the CA Board of Directors about matters that affect people with disabilities generally, and protégés in particular; to raise awareness of protégés and what they have to offer CA; and to increase the self-esteem of all members as productive members of CA.

To become a member of the CAC you need only be a matched protégé or have been matched at some point and be waiting to be rematched. If you are interested in finding out more about the CAC, contact Robert Adolfson at 613-761-9522, ext. 227 or e-mail radolfson@citizenadvocacy.org

Newest Matches

Everyday Champions

DECEMBER

Milena Gibson & Liette T.
Anna Bilsky & Veronica A.
Eric Young & Mohammed P.

JANUARY

Lesley Williams & Tania M.
Shukri Hilowle & Mona Z.
Ima Vieira & Rebecca D.
Preet Brar & Jacquie P.

FEBRUARY

Sarah Nekesa & Betty G.
Mary Rae & Katryna D.

MARCH

Julie Lévesque & Elaine M.
Michael Riley Phillips & Daniel W.
Mike Murphy & Darryl T.
Brad Campeau & Steven B.
Kenneth Gilfooy & Anthony D.
Carlos Nunes & Roger T.
Michael Gendron & Todd S.
Cheri-Ann Olsen & Gerda M.

Chance for Choice

DECEMBER

Asmae El Bouhali & Betty-Jean B.

MARCH

Cathy Webb & Norma S.
Deborah Slonowsky & Rolland M.
Elizabeth Komar & Kathleen S.
Ernest Blais & Thomas C.
Maggie Nicholls & Ruth B.

Group Advocacy Project

FEBRUARY

Mac Hiltz & TELCI Rosslund

MARCH

Anthony Connors-Vachon & Christian Horizons
Nathan Crt

Goodbye and Farewell

By Annie-Pier Miron, Social Worker

For the good part of a year I had the chance to work with a wonderful group of people at Citizen Advocacy: protégés, advocates, and staff. Many good memories and friendships were made. Thanks to all of you for the warm welcome and support.

Merci de votre accueil et de votre générosité. Mon cheminement sera marquée pas de bons souvenirs et de belles rencontres. Vous me manquerez tous.

Au plaisir,
Annie-Pier

The Ottawa Hospital Rehabilitation Centre: Looking for Consumer Advisors

The Ottawa Hospital Rehabilitation Centre (TOHRC) specializes in physical rehabilitation through inpatient and outpatient services for the assessment and treatment of adults with a wide range of physical impairments. TOHRC is focused on providing innovative client-centred care that focuses on the physical, psychological, social and spiritual needs of patients.

TOHRC is guided by a volunteer Consumer Advisory Committee. They are currently seeking new members for the committee, particularly people with a physical disability, and preferably those who have used the services of TOHRC.

If you are interested in joining the Committee, please contact Helen Zipes at 613-737-8899 x 75415 or hzipes@ottawahospital.on.ca.

Join us for Citizen Advocacy's AGM

An organization's annual general meeting (AGM) is the most important of the year, with the Board of Directors, Executive, and general membership all in attendance. At the meeting, the Board details agency performance and outlook, and all members vote on key issues relating to the agency (e.g. election of Board members, changes to the Constitution, etc). Board, staff, advocates and matched protégés are members as well as any donors who gave \$10 or more in 2009.

When: Wednesday, May 5, 2010

Where: Citizen Advocacy of Ottawa
312 Parkdale Ave., Rooms 2 & 3

Time: 5:30 pm – Citizen Advocacy AGM
6:30 pm – A Conversation with "Ricki"

Following the AGM, please stay for **A Conversation with "Ricki"** (Kathy Banville). Written by an occupational therapist who was ahead of her time the book *Coffee on Sundays* portrays the story of Ricki who was confined against her will to an institution for people with developmental disabilities despite her disabilities being physical. The story illustrates the author's role in recognizing Ricki's abilities and advocating for Ricki's release from the institution. Kathy Banville, a long-time protégé with Citizen Advocacy, will discuss with you her perspective as "Ricki". Please bring your questions. There will be some copies of the book available for purchase.

Please RSVP by April 28, 2010, by calling the office at 613-761-9522 (dial ext 100 if you reach voice mail), or by email to info@citizenadvocacy.org.

Thank You!

Ticket donors provide opportunities for matches to attend events in the community. Thanks to United Way Ottawa, Friends in Sportfishing, Savoy Society, and Cynthia Throop.

Strike! Get Ready to Bowl for Everyday Champions!

This year, Citizen Advocacy is introducing a brand new fundraiser: The Bowl-a-Thon for Everyday Champions! The bowl-a-thon will take place on Saturday, September 25th at the RA Centre, a fully accessible venue. The purpose of the bowl-a-thon is to bring together Citizen Advocacy supporters, to raise funds for the Everyday Champions program, and most of all, to have fun!

Put together a team of four, come up with a great team name, and get ready to bowl! Spots will also be available for individual bowlers. Collect pledges from your friends, family, co-workers, and neighbours. Each bowler needs to raise a minimum of \$40 to participate, which includes an hour and fifteen minutes of bowling, shoe rental, and treats. There will be prizes for the most money raised, as well as for the most team spirit – so feel free to wear costumes and act a little silly!

More information will be available soon, so start your planning today!

Social Activities Club: Come and Join Us!

Are you interested in building new friendships and exploring this beautiful city? The Social Activities Club is an opportunity for matches to meet one another and have fun together! There have been numerous successful match events including a Halloween party, Greekfest, boat cruise and many others. We would like to plan more events this year and are looking for your ideas as well as help in the organizing of these events. **Matches are invited to attend a brainstorming session on May 18th at 5:30pm.** Pizza and beverages will be served. Please register with Sophie Leclair-Roberge at 613-761-9522 ext. 245 by May 7th.

News from the Real Plans for Real Life team

By Roxanne Vermette

On March 26, 2010 the Real Plans for Real Life team had the opportunity to participate in one of five symposiums about Person-Directed Planning hosted by the Community and Developmental Services Branch of the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS). The audience consisted of about 100 participants including parents, adults with developmental disabilities, service providers and others who had a vested interest in sharing information about core values, principles and functions of Person-Directed Planning and to promote a deepened and common understanding across the province.

MCSS shared with us their policy work in the area of Person-Directed Planning policy including its research in the form of consultations, discussions and surveys to determine what agencies are doing across Ontario in this area. Their research is collected from people with developmental disabilities, families and service providers and will be used to determine how Person-Directed Planning can make a positive difference in people's lives. In addition, it was noted that Person-Directed Planning is not only taking place in Ontario, but in other parts of the country and there is an identified need to improve the quality and capacity of this planning. MCSS will develop instructions and guidelines that organizations can follow in the Person-Directed Planning work that they do.

In addition to the policy discussion, participants had the pleasure of listening to keynote speakers Jack Pearpoint and Lynda Kahn who shared their knowledge and expertise on Person-Directed Planning. Another important part of the day consisted of four personal stories from families and individuals who have experienced Person-Directed Planning. They shared their challenges and successes and most importantly how independent planning brought the most desirable and favourable outcomes for their family.

See you in a year!

By Andrea Podruski, Facilitator

Déjà vu? No, just good news and more good news. Over a year ago I gave birth to a beautiful baby boy and I returned to work in August. I've fallen in love with our new family member and my new role as mommy. It was clear that we had more love in our hearts so we decided to give Matéo a little brother or sister. And good news – I got pregnant! In order to prepare for the arrival of our second baby I will be leaving my position with Real Plans for Real Life on April 16th. I will be coming back in about a year and look forward to reconnecting with everyone. While I love being a mommy, I also really love the people and programs of Citizen Advocacy. Good luck to all of you!

Hello!

By Brent Barlow, Facilitator

My name is Brent Barlow and I'm the new Facilitator in the Real Plans for Real Life program replacing Andrea while she is on maternity leave. I have over seven years of experience in the social services field, most of which is with Ottawa Carleton Life Skills, a transfer payment agency. I look forward to the opportunity to work with Citizen Advocacy and all of the participants and staff of the program.

Some of my interests include sports and relaxing with my family in Oxford Mills. If you are around the office please stop by and introduce yourself as my door is always open.

Match Anniversaries

Everyday Champions

JANUARY 2010

25	Arne Haaland & Norman P.
21	Jonathan Wouk & Glen K.
19	Allan Dolenko & Maurice G.
14	Richard Kastler & Greg R.
7	Anatole Kornachuck & John D.
4	Drahomira Stehlikova & Lynn L.
3	David Murrell-Wright & Garry H.
3	Pamela D. & Tracy T.-D.
3	Carol Ballinger & Jasbeer K.
2	Paul Sonnichsen & Jim S.
2	Peter Roorda & John L.
1	Peter Chirico & Robert C.
1	Erin Freeman & Shelly B.
1	Marlene Lavoie & Dalila B.
1	Jennifer Forbes Walker & Nancy N.
1	Diane McGuire & Jenny G.
1	Dru Lavigne & Lorraine F.

FEBRUARY 2010

6	Nan Wang & Suzanne B.
4	Gerald Lalonde & Dan M.
4	Brian Joynt & Jeffrey B.
1	Cindy Salib & Jennifer C.
1	Peter Whelan & Dylan S.
1	Ellen Dettman & Mary G.
1	Aruna Kalutanthri & Fred V.
1	Chris Judge & Michael B.

MARCH 2010

15	Linda Griffiths & Ruby Ann N.
10	Georgia Pavlou & Linda G.
9	Blaine Chessie & Gareth P.
9	Veronica Petro & Stefania I.
8	Lorraine Yorke & Anne M.
7	Josephine E. Perras & Jennifer H.
7	BJ Porter & Sharon R.
7	Maya Santoro & Trisha L.
7	Jake Volt & Lyle M.
6	Charles Poirier & Remi R.
6	Viji Sundaram & Rachel W.
6	Sam Hawas & Jack T.
5	Glen Russell & Brent C.

5	Chris Petersen & Luc P.
5	Kerry Cavlovic & Lisa R.
4	Hiren Prabhakar & Gerry L.
4	Alan Acton & Benoit D.
4	Michelle Lauzon & Marguarita S.
4	Jenna Elizabeth Swan & Katie P.
2	Edward Irving & Darren C.
1	Robert Rhodes & Mike C.
1	Chris Andrews & David R.
1	Heather Astle & Jean F.
1	Esther Armstrong & Lisa G.
1	Annis Carnegie & Suzanne B.
1	Beatriz Banos Matos & Maria A. C.
1	Joanne Cayer & Catherine B.

APRIL 2010

15	Eric Plunkett & Lesley M.-T.
14	Janet Roper & Suzanne M.
11	Cynthia Throop & Nancy D.
9	Lori Streefkerk & Jane M.
9	Philip Hogarth & David F.
7	Pierre Emond & Michael M.
4	Chrisy Groves & Ildiko F.
3	Adrian Davila & Damon L.
2	David Lee & John B.
2	Shawna Walker & Dana L.
2	David Lajoie & John N.
2	Bill Clelland & Kishor S.
1	Florian Leuprecht & Sylvain N.
1	Mark Sutherland & Randy D.
1	June Carter & Kris C.
1	James Kane & Steven S.
1	Emma Bryans & Angela L.
1	Wanzhen Zeng & Elizabeth C.
1	Jennifer Beckman & Dayna P.

Chance for Choice

JANUARY 2010

4	Steve Hick & William C.
2	Fahad Sami & Stanley T.
1	Kate Wilder & Georgette L.

FEBRUARY 2010

- 1 Christina Leibbrandt & Daphne P.
- 1 Christina Leibbrandt & Dawn P.
- 1 Elizabeth Styffe & Joan H.

APRIL 2010

- 1 Helen Wong & Frances H.

Group Advocacy Project

FEBRUARY 2010

- 1 Alaine Taylor & Christian Horizons Nathan Court

APRIL 2010

- 9 Evelyn Mallet & Christian Horizons Kimball Court

MCSS Working Group for Adults with Developmental Disabilities

By Joe Donegan and Robert Adolfson

A working group was created by the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) in an effort to consult with Ontarians who have developmental disabilities with regards to direct funding. Direct funding refers to money that is dispersed by the MCSS directly to individuals with developmental disabilities to cover the costs of their personal care. The alternative is money dispersed by the MCSS to “transfer agencies” which then supply the care needed by the individual. Direct funding is a new idea being initiated by the MCSS that should have the effect of increasing the independence of Ontarians with disabilities.

The working group met four times in total, twice in Toronto and twice in Ottawa. The meetings and were attended by people with developmental disabilities who came from across south-eastern Ontario. Among those attending all four meetings was Joe Donegan, a board member, protégé, and co-chair of the Consumers Advisory Committee of Citizen Advocacy of Ottawa. The following is a summary of these meetings written by Joe:

I and Robert Adolfson, my support person from Citizen Advocacy, attended four working group meetings starting in Toronto on September 16th and 17th and ending in Ottawa on March 24th and 25th. There were eleven consumers from across Ontario (four from the Ottawa area) who attended along with their support persons. All consumer participants at these meetings were very vocal and expressed the needs of the disability community with much passion. Topics discussed included how to find and hire our own support workers and how to let them go if necessary. It is likely that other consultations will be held in the months ahead. Overall, this has been a very worthwhile and interesting experience for me.

Celebration of People: Call for Nominations

Do you know a person with a disability with impressive accomplishments, or an organization in our community who is making a difference for people with disabilities? Nominate them for a Celebration of People award! The 13 Celebration of People awards recognize a diversity of achievements from sports, to artistic excellence, to hospitality, to career. Nominations for this year’s awards will begin soon. Keep checking the event website www.celebrationofpeople.com for updates and more information.

Join us at the annual awards dinner on Thursday, December 2nd as we recognize the achievements of people with disabilities in our community and the organizations that help to promote their inclusion!

For more information visit www.celebrationofpeople.com or call 613-761-9796.

KAY ... PROTÉGÉ & FRIEND

By Patricia Parker

Eight years ago, after volunteering for several years at Citizen Advocacy as a board member and event committee volunteer, I was approached about becoming an advocate. A long-time protégé, a senior citizen by the name of Kay, had just lost her current advocate. Those at Citizen Advocacy who knew us both thought that we would make a good match.

Accompanied by a Citizen Advocacy social worker, Kay and I met for the first time at an ice cream parlor. We knew right away that our match was official so we set out on a journey that quickly evolved into a wonderful friendship.

To describe Kay as a resilient woman would be an understatement. Life for Kay, with her several mental and psychological challenges, had not been easy and as the years progressed, it wasn't getting any easier. She had few people in her life and fewer to fall back on for support. Her only sibling, her beloved sister, lives in British Columbia and she missed her and their late brother terribly. Nonetheless, Kay exuded an indomitable spirit which never failed to amaze me. My respect for this spirit and for this gutsy lady grew steadily over the years.

Until her last 10 months of life, Kay lived independently, facing the adversities of loneliness, ill health, injuries and depression. One of Kay's greatest attributes was her intelligence. Between her intelligence and an inner sense of self-preservation, she sought the assistance of the support systems in her community. A prime example of this resourcefulness was turning to Citizen Advocacy for a "friend". Kay loved Citizen Advocacy and was motivated to work on the Consumers Advisory Committee (CAC) for many years and to participate in Citizen Advocacy events. Kay always wanted to give something back to this organization which meant so much to her.

Kay seldom sat still so, in turn, we seldom sat still. Together we attended cat and dog shows, musical concerts, plays, art exhibits and the Experimental Farm. We shopped in fabric shops and the Bulk Barn and I think we were in and out of every dollar store in the Ottawa area. Kay didn't miss a thing and she didn't hesitate to tell you her opinion of it, either!

On her own and almost daily, Kay visited various branches of Ottawa's library system where she read the newspapers and periodicals. She thought nothing of riding a bus to the far reaches of Gatineau to purchase her favourite loaf of bread or journeying to Rockland to find fabric. However, her mobility was threatened by the 2008-2009 OC Transpo strike. By this time she was using a walker and the lack of public transportation during an Ottawa winter prevented Kay's daily outings. So, my Christmas gift to Kay during the last bus strike was a subscription to The Ottawa Citizen – she was thrilled to be able to read what was going on in her city, her country and the world and to follow up all of this by completing the crossword puzzle, without leaving her apartment.

Early in our relationship the words "protégé", "advocate", and "match" quickly disappeared. Kay was a part of my life and I believe I was a part of hers. She was a friend I admired and respected.

Due to increased health problems and ageing, it became necessary for Kay to move into assisted

living during the last year of her life. Although she complained loudly and at length about the loss of her apartment and the life she had known for over 30 years, it became obvious that Kay had become the centre of activity at her new residence. She brought energy to her new home and shared her contagious smile with everyone. Although she was only there a few months, it was obvious that she had a profound effect on her fellow residents. The trauma of her move was softened tremendously by a rekindling of her family life, through the involvement of a beloved nephew and his wonderful wife. Kay's life was on a more even keel; she was supported by family and friends, and was surrounded by people who cared about her.

Kay passed away very unexpectedly in early December in her sleep. I was truly thankful that she didn't suffer and she did not have a lingering ailment. As was her only wish, we held a mass in her name at her residence and another was said in her honour at St. Patrick's Cathedral. Knowing Kay as I did, she would have definitely felt doubly blessed. Sweet dreams, Kay – you deserve every one!

Advocacy in Action

By Nan Wang, Volunteer Advocate

I met Suzanne six years ago through Citizen Advocacy. She has opened my eyes to some of the challenges that other people face and has taught me that everything in life is a gift and that we should not take life for granted. Suzanne loves life and knows how to enjoy the small pleasures that life brings.

I have learned from Suzanne that the ability to love has nothing to do with our physical limitations and that real joy and happiness have nothing to do with what we have or don't have materially. Even though Suzanne doesn't have much money, and most of the time she does not allow me to pay her bill, a favourite activity of ours is to eat out from time to time at Swiss Chalet, KFC and McDonald's.

Although Suzanne's eyesight is limited and she cannot distinguish colours, she has a good sense for clothes and knows what she likes. Like many women, she loves jewellery and perfume.

Suzanne has a great sense of humour and it is amazing that she does not lose touch of it when life can be difficult and lonely. We both lost our dear moms and there are times we just talk about our moms and share our grief together. Other times we don't talk at all, and simply sit out in the sun together to enjoy the sunshine and keep each other company.

Through my relationship with Suzanne I have learned that friendship is not affected by our differences. We learn from each other, share our lives together, help each other, forgive each other, and love each other.

Recently Suzanne moved across town and while we don't see each other as often because of the distance, we do talk over the phone, share jokes, and get together from time to time. Even though we live further apart I am still her advocate and, most importantly, we will always be friends.

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