



INSIGHTS

Volume 15 • Number 2 • Fall 2007



An inside look at the programs and services of Knowles Centre Inc.

Camp devastated by storm; summer still fun for kids



Despite a storm that forced Knowles Centre to cancel summer camping programs in the Whiteshell, the boys and girls still had fun thanks to the support of caring individuals and local businesses. (Photos 2 & 3 courtesy of SPAR Games and Winnipeg Goldeyes.)

Knowles Centre camp in the Whiteshell Provincial Park was devastated by a storm packing 150 km/h winds that hit the area overnight June 23 to 24.

Fallen trees and downed power lines blocked the road to our camp for weeks. Upon access, it was clear that necessary clean up and repairs would take much longer.

Thankfully, all the children in our care are safe and our Winnipeg group homes were untouched. However, the boys and girls were affected in another way: All camping activities had to be cancelled for the summer.

Insurance and assistance from the Provincial Disaster Assistance Fund will cover most of the expenses, but the heartbreak for our kids has been harder to overcome.

Camp has long been an important part of the recreation program at Knowles Centre. For many children in our care,

it is the first time they will paddle a canoe, swim in a lake, catch a fish, or spend the night outside the city. More importantly, it helps to raise their spirits and remind them that there is so much to look forward to in life.

Individuals and businesses alike donated cash and free passes for local amusements. Special thanks to SPAR Games video centre, the Winnipeg Goldeyes Baseball Club, Rainbow Stage, McDonalds and the Safeway We Care Fair at Tinkertown for providing complimentary passes for Knowles' clients.

As well, the kids enjoyed trips to the beach, waterslides, horse riding stables, go-cart track, movies, parks and an overnight tenting adventure with support from our donors.

Nothing quite replaced an extended camp experience for the kids this year, but with help from donors, Knowles Centre kids still had a chance to enjoy being kids this summer.

Important Notice to Donors

Let us thank you again...

Donors are important to Knowles Centre. Your support means that the boys and girls receiving services here also receive other important childhood experiences like sports activities, arts and craft time, outings in the community, and more.

We want to include your name in our next newsletter as a way to say thank you. If you have given in the past year your name will be included in this list with other friends of Knowles Centre.

The amount of your gift will not be included in this list. Nor will we share or sell your information to other agencies or companies. We know that some people would still rather not be recognized in this way. If you would prefer to remain an anonymous donor, please call us at 339-1951 before Nov. 1.

A Message from our Chief Executive Officer

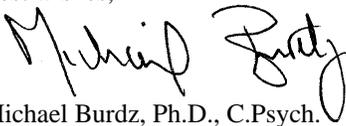


There have been many positive developments at Knowles Centre since my last column in the newsletter. I would like to take this opportunity to share them with you:

- 1) The Group Care Treatment program remained full during the summer because of various steps taken by Knowles Centre.
- 2) Our Sexual Abuse Treatment program is again being used to its full capacity.
- 3) The Treatment Foster Care program has made significant progress toward its first goal of 12 licensed foster care beds before the end of this year. The program will soon pursue its next increment of 12 additional licensed beds. Moreover, both licensed and potential foster parents will start a 10-week training program at Knowles Centre in September.
- 4) Senior management has started the consultation process on additional program expansion.
- 5) John G. Stewart School has started its school year.
- 6) Senior Management will now start the re-accreditation process with the Council on Accreditation. The COA is an international accreditation body emphasizing two key principles: quality service and best-practice standards.
- 7) Knowles Centre successfully completed all the goals set out in our 2005 - 2007 plan. We will now start working on developing a new three-year plan.

In closing, I encourage you to attend our various remaining centennial events, including the mural unveiling and Aboriginal Feast in honour of Wilfred Knowles in September and our gala dinner in October.

Best wishes,



Michael Burdz, Ph.D., C.Psych.
Chief Executive Officer

Knowles Centre celebrates National Aboriginal Day with a traditional feast and sweat lodge ceremony

Knowles Centre celebrated National Aboriginal Day on June 21 with a traditional summer solstice feast.

The summer solstice is observed throughout the northern hemisphere by many cultures as the longest day of sunlight. Aboriginal peoples have traditionally used the day to celebrate the season when the earth becomes warm again, trees and flowers awoken with new foliage, some plants can be harvested, and many months of warm weather remain before winter returns.

In his opening prayer, Anishinabe Elder Dave Courchene Jr. reminded all of the power of the Sun and Earth as a source of life and the importance of respecting and appreciating all they give. He also spoke of the wisdom of following a spiritual way of life guided by love, respect and sharing. "You will always be taken care of if you live by these values," he counseled. "The staff are here to support and guide you," he reminded the youth, "value the direction they offer you."

After the feast, three clients took part in a sweat lodge ceremony, where they continued to reflect upon the importance of giving in order to receive.

A sweat lodge ceremony is used for purification of the spirit, emotions, body and mind, as well as to seek guidance and direction for the Creator. Entering the sweat lodge symbolizes the return to the womb of Mother Earth, the giver and sustainer of all life.



Anishinabe Elder Dave Courchene Jr. offered opening prayers to the National Aboriginal Day events at Knowles Centre.

Former Supt. Charles Hawkins remembered for service to Knowles School for Boys

Knowles Centre was honoured to be a part of a memorial service honoring former superintendent Charles Hawkins held at Elmwood Cemetery on May 24 organized by former Knowles School for Boys' students Bill Polonuk and Harry Collins, residents in the early 1940s.

Mr. Hawkins served as superintendent of the Knowles School from 1931 until his death in 1951. He had worked for nine years previously as the school's gardener and grew award-winning gladiola flowers that he traded for services needed by the school.

Mr. Hawkins was remembered as a "spit and polish" superintendent known for his disciplined, military-like style, but also for the respectful, fair and often gentle way he managed the school and the 60 or more boys in care.



Former students Harry Collins, Bill Polonuk and Terry Morris pay respects to the memory of Charles Hawkins.



Dr. Michael Burdz, current CEO, noted, "The 100th anniversary of Knowles Centre would not be complete without honoring Mr. Hawkins. Knowles Centre truly owes its success in great part to his work. During an era where there was much change in our society, he helped to define and develop a respected social service agency. He not only sustained a home for boys in need of care and direction, but instilled the skills and the determination many would use to succeed outside of Knowles Centre."

Visit us on-line!

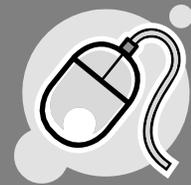
www.knowlescentre.ca

Check out our new website for information about Knowles Centre programs and activities taking place on our campus and in our community-based facilities.

You will also find updates on new initiatives as well as our history and current headlines.

Learn more about opportunities for donors and friends in the community to help make a difference in the lives of children and youth receiving services.

Special thanks to E. H. Price for a generous donation to help with the cost of developing this site.



Centennial Picnic puts smiles on everyone's face

Smiles were everywhere at Knowles Centre's picnic on May 30. Current and past clients and their families, staff, and other social services professionals enjoyed an afternoon of good food, music and fun hosted by Knowles Centre staff volunteers.

Debbie McDonald, representing Joy Smith, MP for Kildonan-St. Paul, and Jeff Browaty, City Counselor for North Kildonan, brought official greetings and anniversary congratulations.

The temporary tattoo booth could easily be found by following the long line of kids (and adults!) eager to sport a dragon, flower or other image on their arms and even faces!

Brian Glow, "Master of Illusion," delighted and amazed all with a one-hour magic show. Many young members of the audience were eager to go on stage to assist with tricks.

Some of the greatest magic of all happened after the show. A nine-year-old boy, who attended with his new foster mom, was so captivated that he visited the library the next day to find books so he could learn his own tricks!

Special thanks to the donors who help make the picnic a success including:

Arctic Glacier Inc., Canada Plus Signs, Canada Safeway, Dairy Chef Inc., Jolly Canuck Catering, Pratt's Wholesale



Group home supervisor Marshall Gardner and group care assistant Tiffany Waite served up tasty hotdogs and hamburgers for all.

Ltd., Toledo Foodservice, Westons Bakeries Ltd., and World of Water.

'Slurpee Therapy' helps keep kids safe

Anyone who has ever enjoyed a Slurpee on a hot summer day knows the power of the icy drink to provide relief. At Knowles Centre, a Slurpee sometimes can do even more. Outreach worker Brad Esslinger (*pictured, right*) says a Slurpee is often enough to keep a troubled youth from running to the streets and into the reach of those who would exploit them.

"When I see the telltale signs a youth is thinking about running away, I'll often invite him or her to walk with me to 7-Eleven for a Slurpee," says Brad. "This gives the kids a chance to talk about the immediate issues that are bothering them and to reconsider their next move," he says. "We call it Slurpee Therapy."

Still, some clients do flee and Brad must seek them out and return them to Knowles Centre where they can continue to receive counseling and care. "If I see any of our missing kids on the street, I may invite them to join me for a drive to 7-Eleven. I promise if they still want to be on the run after they finish a Slurpee, I'll drop them off again," he explains. "Without exception to date, a Slurpee and the chance to talk has been enough to cool overheated emotions and all the kids have agreed to return to Knowles Centre."

Knowles Centre is grateful to 7-Eleven Canada Inc. for its donation of Slurpee coupons. With their support, we are able to help children and youth find their path.



*Every gift can make a difference
to the children and youth at Knowles Centre.
Please consider making your donation today.*

Staff News

Raul Dimaculugan, MSW, joined Knowles Centre in May as therapist in the Group Care Treatment Program. Raul comes to us from MATC.

Heather Chandler, BSW, joined Knowles Centre in August as the Sexual Abuse Treatment Program therapist for a one-year term.

Dr. Alana Grayston left Knowles Centre in May for a new position with the provincial government. Alana served as the Director of Clinical Services for 2-1/2 years. She will be fondly missed by co-workers, clients, and colleagues from outside agencies.

Long-serving staff members were recognized for their anniversary milestones at the Annual General Meeting on June 21.

Stewart Halper	25 years
Day Treatment & Group Care Clinician	
Norm Vawryk	25 years
Youth Care Worker (Cottage 2)	
Marilyn Penner	15 years
Youth Care Worker (Cottage 1)	
Felice Pingitore	15 years
Maintenance Coordinator	
Dr. Michael Burdz	10 years
Chief Executive Officer	
Rob Toner	10 years
Grounds Person	



Insights in published by:

Knowles Centre Inc.
2065 Henderson Highway
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada
R2G 1P7

Telephone: (204) 339-1951
Fax: (204) 334-4173
Email: info@knowlescentre.ca
Web: www.knowlescentre.ca

Board of Directors

Wayne Benson
President

Gerri Wiebe
1st Vice President

Jennifer Dundas
2nd Vice President

Terry Lazark
Treasurer

Gerri Zacharias
Secretary

Mark Lubosch
Past President

Brian Born

Brett Carter

Bruce Gammon

Todd Pennell

Richard Petri

Bev Wiebe

Dr. Michael Burdz, C. Psych.
Chief Executive Officer

Maureen Britton
Editor, *Insights*

*Comments, suggestions and
inquiries are welcome.*

