



INSIGHTS

Volume 15 • Number 1 • Spring 2007



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

Knowles Centre celebrates 100 years!

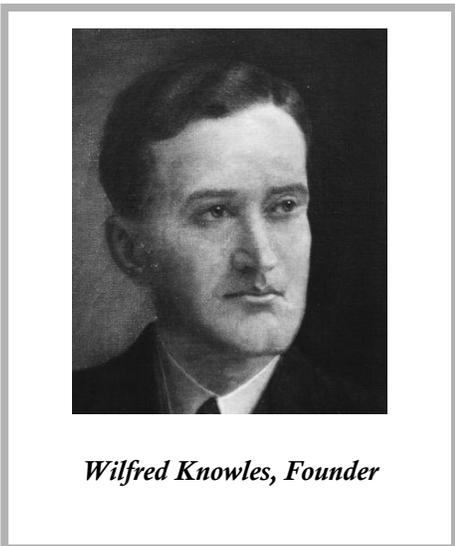
The Knowles Centre story began in the early spring of 1907 – one hundred years ago! Wilfred Knowles, a clerk with the CPR, met a boy named Joe shivering on the street corner. Learning that Joe was a homeless orphan, Knowles invited Joe to stay at his boarding house on Hargrave Street in Winnipeg.

Word of Knowles' generosity spread. Soon more boys showed up on his doorstep until the small apartment was bursting at the seams.

In November 1907, Knowles resigned from the railway to open the Knowles Home for Boys on Broadway. The orphanage incorporated in 1910 and purchased acreage in North Kildonan a year later. The new board of directors raised \$50,000 and secured a \$20,000 mortgage to build a new dormitory that would accommodate up to 70 boys at times. The building would stand for 47 years until destroyed by fire in 1959.

Over the years, the Knowles Home

continued to take in other homeless boys, those displaced by the Depression and the World Wars, as well as those whose need for care exceeded their families' abilities.



Wilfred Knowles, Founder

Today, Knowles Centre serves both boys and girls with behavioral and emotional difficulties from Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario. It operates on-site and community treatment homes, a day treatment program, a sexual abuse treatment program, and

is beginning a treatment foster care program. An Aboriginal cultural program, recreation programs, and an outdoor camp support client treatment.

Knowles Centre has planned a number of activities to commemorate 100 years of helping youth find their path. Throughout the year we are inviting current and former clients and their families, staff, board members, social service professionals, and our supporters from the community to join our celebration.

Planned events include:

- A picnic will be held on grounds at Knowles Centre in May so that past and current clients and their families can celebrate their own successes along with the Centre.
- A mural illustrating our past, present and future is being painted on the gable of Cottage 1 and will be unveiled at the picnic.
- A traditional native feast will be held in honor of founder Wilfred Knowles this fall.
- A gala dinner and dance will be held at the Inn at the Forks on October 12. All members of the Knowles Centre family and supporters are welcome to attend.
- Knowles Centre will inter a time capsule to be opened years in the future by those that follow in our footsteps.

Do you have a story or experience about Knowles Centre that you would like to share? Or would you like more information on joining the celebration? Contact us at 339-1951 or info@knowlescentre.ca.

A Message from our Chief Executive Officer



In this special "Message from the CEO" I would like to highlight a few major points. First, a reminder that Knowles Centre is celebrating its 100th anniversary in 2007. Knowles Centre began as an orphanage for boys, and has become a co-ed treatment centre for children and adolescents with significant emotional and behavioural problems, as well as a support to their families.

Until recently, Knowles Centre provided Group Care Treatment (32 beds), Day Treatment (12 spaces), and Sexual Abuse Treatment (15 spaces). During the past six months, Knowles Centre has developed and implemented a Treatment Foster Care Program (first phase is 12 beds). Projecting ahead, Knowles Centre

will explore establishing an independent living program, as well. Our goal is to provide the full continuum of care at Knowles Centre and to have a seamless model; that is, clients could move from one program to another, when appropriate. For example, a client could move from Day Treatment to Group Care and from Group Care to Treatment Foster Care.

Many of our clients have long-standing problems (at times multigenerational), which require intensive, multi-disciplinary treatment that is costly. Consequently, Knowles Centre finds itself at a crossroads in its centennial year. The path we have selected going forward is to expand our treatment services and client population in order to diversify our revenue stream. To this end, Knowles Centre is consulting with different provincial departments on partnership opportunities to address unmet needs facing children, adolescents, and their families. As Knowles Centre pursues expansion opportunities, we will remain ever mindful of our guiding prin-

ciples: effectiveness, efficiency, and best practice standards.

During this transition phase, I have been impressed with staff throughout our organization: the youth care workers, support staff, maintenance staff, supervisors and therapists for their hard work and dedication; the senior managers for their creativity, decision-making, and support; and the Board of Directors for its insight and advice. I also want to thank the staff at John G. Stewart School for being great partners in our joint efforts.

In closing, I encourage everyone to attend various centennial events (picnic, summer solstice, feast, gala dinner) as they roll-out this year.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Burdz". The signature is fluid and cursive.

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

Knowles Centre introduces Treatment Foster Care

Knowles Centre began its Treatment Foster Care program in November 2006 as part of its mandate to help troubled children and youth and their families overcome difficulties.

The new program offers another option in the continuum of care offered by Knowles Centre. Depending on need, clients may be referred directly to the Treatment Foster Care program or move to a foster family after a stay at one of Knowles' on-site or community group homes. The ultimate goal of the program is to help clients develop their full potential and to return home or live independently in the community.

Andrea McKenzie, Program Coordinator, explains the Treatment Foster Care program provides a higher level of support, consultation, respite, training, and supervision for the families who open their homes and lives to the youth in need. "Professional staff are available to support each foster family around the clock and meet with them at least twice each month," says Andrea. "Greater

support for the foster families means improved care for the kids. It also reduces the risk of breakdown in the foster arrangement and allows us to intervene sooner if problems arise."



"Every foster family has something special about them," says Andrea McKenzie, Program Coordinator.

The program is currently recruiting foster families. "Our goal is to place 12

youth this year, and eventually support 50 youth in the program," says Andrea.

Foster families initially take part in 30 hours of intensive training that covers the role of foster parents, effective parenting strategies, working within the social service system, attachment, grief and loss, and issues facing youth in care. Subsequent monthly sessions continue to address important and timely issues as well as provide opportunities for the families to connect and develop informal support groups.

"Every foster family has something special about them," Andrea says. "While some foster parents have formal experience working with youth, all are committed to making a difference in the life of a young person and have a lot to share."

For more information on the Treatment Foster Care program at Knowles Centre, contact Andrea McKenzie, Program Coordinator, at 339-1951 (Ext. 116) or amckenzie@knowlescentre.ca.

Staff Profile

Shannon Shell a star player on Knowles Centre team

You can't help but to notice Shannon Shell when he enters a room. At 6' 7", he is head and shoulders above everyone else, but his easy-going confidence and warm smile create a noticeable magnetic draw.

Shannon joined Knowles Centre in October 2000. Although he was already a seasoned youth care worker, his reputation as a good guy on the professional basketball court caught the attention of the kids at Knowles Centre.

He first came to Winnipeg as a star player for the Winnipeg Cyclone Basketball Club in 1995. Somewhere between countless practices and games, Shannon found time to work with kids from the inner city as a member of the city's Parks and Recreation department and later for New Directions, a social service agency. This active involvement earned him recognition by the Winnipeg Free Press sport staff for his contribution to the community in 1997.

Community service is not new to Shannon. Guided by his family's strong values, he began volunteering with troubled youth in his Brooklyn, New York neighbourhood while still a teenager himself. Playing basketball together, he found, was one of the best ways to connect with the kids—and to further his own talents on the court. Shannon went on to earn sports scholarships to Chipola Community College and Long Island University where he earned a teaching degree, majoring in English. Following graduation, he was drafted by the Bettembourg Stars in Luxemburg with whom he played professionally around the world before coming to Winnipeg.

With the close of the World Basketball League, Shannon settled in Win-

nipeg where he had met his future wife. A position on the Knowles Centre team was the next step in Shannon's career. His sports, music and inner city experiences gained him credibility with the kids, and his relaxed style soon helped to win their trust.

Outside of Knowles Centre, Shannon keeps busy raising two children with his wife and is active in the rap music scene as a performer and concert promoter.

This year, Shannon is asking friends of Knowles Centre for help to make a difference in the lives of the kids in care by making a donation to Knowles Centre's annual mail appeal.



COME AND ENJOY THE FUN!

Everyone is welcome to attend the

Knowles Centre Centennial Picnic

Wednesday, May 30, 2007

11:30 a.m. — 3:30 p.m.

Knowles Centre Inc.

2065 Henderson Highway, Winnipeg

Enjoy an afternoon of good food, fun, and sunshine as we celebrate 100 years of helping children and youth at Knowles Centre.

Call (204) 339-1951 for more information or email us at info@knowlescentre.ca

Youth learn from mighty polar bear

With the generous support of the **Graham C. Lount Family Foundation**, three clients and a youth care worker from Knowles Centre journeyed to Churchill, Manitoba in October 2006. The life-changing trek was led by the First Nations Cultural Coordinator Troy Fontaine as part of Knowles Centre's Biimautaziwin Aboriginal cultural program.

Almost 70 percent of clients at Knowles Centre are Aboriginal. Many have come from communities where levels of poverty equal third-world countries, faced racism and lived with abuse, and witnessed the impact of the highest suicide rates in Canada.

Before departing from Winnipeg, the group shared in a small feast and sweat lodge ceremony where they made offerings for a safe journey and asked for spiritual help from the polar bear.



In Churchill, the group observed polar bears – a highly adaptable animal of great strength, patience, and intelligence. “Even in the harsh environment of the tundra, the polar bear continues to live in harmony with its surroundings,” explained Troy. “The mighty animal always moves forward in search of life and calls on its great courage to overcome the challenges it faces.”

“Like the polar bear, the clients learned that they too can thrive despite the harsh environment around them. They returned from their journey with a renewed sense of hope for their own futures and an increased ability to face their own challenges in life,” added Troy.

On the Road Again

Special thanks to **Variety Manitoba**, **The Winnipeg Foundation** and the **Kiwanis Club of Winnipeg Foundation**. Together, the community groups funded a new van for the children and youth living in Knowles Centre's Cottage 1. The van is used to transport the clients to appointments, recreation outings and other trips within the community.



Arnaud Church delivers Easter for kids in care

The boys and girls living in Knowles Centre's on-site and community group homes enjoyed a happy Easter thanks to the **Arnaud Mennonite Church** in Arnaud, Manitoba. Each year, the church's congregation generously assembles and donates 32 Easter baskets full of tasty treats, cuddly toys and even a disposable camera to brighten the holiday for the kids in care.

Knowles kids' Dreams Take Flight at Disneyworld

Two children from Knowles Centre enjoyed a trip of a lifetime to Disneyworld on April 18. Each child was accompanied by a parent on this one-day whirlwind adventure. The day was made possible by **Dreams Take Flight Winnipeg**, a volunteer group of Air Canada employees whose goal is to provide a memorable day for physically, mentally or socially challenged children. Air Canada donates the aircraft, Shell fuels the flight to Orlando, and other businesses donate their services and products. Air Canada employees and members of the community donate their time year round to raise the funds to cover other expenses.



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

Board of Directors

Wayne Benson
President

Brett Carter
Acting 1st Vice President

Gerri Wiebe
2nd Vice President

Terry Lazark
Treasurer

Jennifer Dundas
Acting Secretary

Brian Born

Bruce Gammon

Mark Lubosch

Todd Pennell

Richard Petri

Bev Wiebe

Gerri Zacharias

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

Maureen Britton
Editor, *Insights*

Comments, suggestions and inquiries are welcome.

