Many thanks to everyone who participated in writing this report, and to the volunteer translators: Xavier, Pascal, Kamal, Cédric, Sara, Anne-Sophie, Sofia, Anita and Danielle for all their quick, hard work. Thanks to all the members. You are the Mission, and make the Mission a wonderful, challenging, and interesting place to be.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT FOR 2010 – Roslyn Macgregor

The theme of Mile End Community Mission continues to be "Nourishing our Community since 1991." We nourish in many different ways – meeting primary needs of food and clothing, as well as providing a place for nourishment of the whole person. 2010 was a year of much nourishment. We were able to provide more nourishing meals than in the past – quantity and quality. In addition to the lunches three times per week, we now offer breakfast twice weekly. A grant from the *Ville de Montréal* plus donations from many generous individuals have enabled us to provide more proteins, vegetables and fruit. One, a friend who heard of us on CTV, whom Connie calls Santa, brings fresh salmon and meats.

Selling clothing at minimal prices allows people the respect of buying clothes for themselves and their families and at the same time contributes towards our outings, food, and general operating needs. We have found an organization that picks up excess clothing in good condition. Unfortunately, much of what we receive is not clean or in good condition, and we have not found an ecologically sound way to dispose of it. We are limited by the inability to wash or repair, and by a lack of transportation to take it elsewhere. We have, however, thanks to Jen, one of our summer students, begun to compost. Our second summer student, Sarah, put together our Mission Possible newsletter, giving voice to some often voice-less people at the mission.

Our board has been a most committed group of individuals, and has begun to attract new members. It is our policy for half of the board to be mission members who help us know and focus on the needs of our community. Half of the board is people from outside the mission who bring specific talents and abilities to us. We make a wonderful team. Thank you to all of you.

Stephanie Palmer left for a new job in her field of study, but continued to volunteer for our Open House, the Fund-raising Dinner, and the Rialto Theatre project. Corrie Peters, a long-time volunteer joined the staff as volunteer co-ordinator. Corrie also, thanks to the food grant, provides the breakfasts with a steadfast team of volunteers. We have more volunteers as well for our different programs, activities, and events. We are becoming more and more effective in reaching out to work with, and for, people who are often marginalized in society. We build on what has worked in the past and are open to new ways of reaching out. Elves from several churches and staff from St. Mary's Hospital Emergency Room provided gifts for our children at Christmas. Other elves provided food for our huge dinner and for the 127 Christmas baskets. Donations allowed us to give food coupons with our Christmas baskets – choices based on personal desires and cultural backgrounds.

Funding from the diocese continues to be stable. Hockey for a Cause was held again at the Bell Centre thanks to our hockey angels. We held an immensely successful fund-raising dinner at Le Saint-Gabriel in Vieux Montréal. Doubly successful thanks to anonymous donors who offered to match all funds we raised.

Special donations of funds, furniture and other came to help us support and encourage three families who arrived in Montreal after losing everything in the earthquake in Haiti. These families have been a godsend to us, touching us with their courage and determination. One of these women worked with another to help her through government papers and red tape. A local day care, Les Jolis petits minois, provided Christmas baskets and gifts for each of these three families. Team work!

Our annual Open House in June was a joyful event with bar-b-q, face-painting, a special fashion show, circus act, and more. Many volunteers supported us including staff from Ubisoft.

Computers with internet access are well used as is the extra telephone. Of interest, some of the mission members who use computers are teaching others to the art of computer and internet access.

Thanks to a donation from *Fondation Marcelle et Jean Coutu*, we were able to send individuals to Camp Kinkora for a week. Most never get out of the city, and all enjoyed the fresh air, woods and lake, the peace, and sharing in the fun and activities. The same grant enabled us to go to Granby Zoo again. Sugaring-off was at a different spot. Our annual apple-picking at Rougemont was as marvellous as ever. All of these activities build our sense of community – loving, sharing, and laughing together. The Rialto Theatre raised funds for us through a play based on Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol." So many good things happening; so many supporting the wonderful work we do.

In the past few weeks, I have met two men who used to attend the mission for meals and friendship. Both are now working, and both expressed their delight in what we do at the Mission. One said, "I was so alone all the time. It was depressing. It was wonderful to be able to go to the Mission and be with people. You do good work."

My heartfelt thanks to our team of staff, volunteers, and board members, and to every individual and organization that supports our work. You help make Mile End Mission the success it is. Or, to use the title of our annual newsletter, you make our "Mission Possible" and help us to continue to nourish our community.

Regular Activities

COMMUNITY ART & ART THERAPY

Friday morning Art Therapy groups are intended to allow people to explore their own ideas and relax through art making. As the Art Therapist, I work alongside Joanne Racette, the volunteer Arts Coordinator, in creating a comfortable, supportive, and open space for those who wish to express themselves visually and verbally in a respectful environment. Each week we offer suggestions for themes, activities, or media exploration. Each participant chooses to follow his or her own ideas and to let feelings, thoughts, and insights guide the creative process.

Courtney Lester, Certified Art Therapist

Participant Commentary

Pierre Arbour:
« This workshop is indispensable for anyone seeking self-fulfillment: it is open to all, it builds self-esteem, and develops the key concept of continuity in our quest for quality of life. I learned to draw in in the presence of others! It's a great discovery! And I take the first 15-20 minutes of the workshop home, making a drawing about how I feel and another drawing to heal everyday……the coordinator really does an impeccable job. »
Lynda Shinder:
« We now have access to better quality materials, which makes me even more comfortable with the creation process, helping me finish up my projects on a more positive note. I really enjoyed working on the masks and the Japanese Zen art , and being able to contribute to the exhibition "Image de Femmes" , from October 15th -16th, 2010. »
Margo:
« I took part in the photo workshops, and some other open workshops, and I really appreciated the great warmth and openness I found. I was also involved in preparations for the exhibition, and there was such a wonderful energy from the various contributors. There is great variety and very rich content, I enjoy all ways that the workshop coordinator intervenes to create a feeling of belonging and community in the art group activities. »

Photography Workshops

Joanne Racette commissioned Christopher McMullen to design and lead a series of workshops on photography as part of her art and art therapy initiative at the mission. A few dedicated students along with several rotating students – with some staff and volunteers joining the clients – participated in an experiential workshop on taking better photographs. During the weekly two-hour sessions participants worked with a variety of digital cameras practicing ways to improve their composition. Some students were already very talented, having practiced other visual arts or participated in the other art workshops. During the series students made significant progress and improved their picture-taking ability. Even those who could only participate in one or two programs found value and showed improvement at the conclusion of the day.

C.A. McMullen

FOOD PROGRAMMES

Food Bank Report

The Mile End Food Bank ahs been running fairly well this year. We serve between 80 and 100 individuals or families weekly. The food has been pretty good and most times we have ample quantity.
Our longtime volunteers, Andrée Lenard, has left us due to personal reasons, but wish her all the best.
Thank you to all our food bank staff for all your hard work
We are still trying to find a way to not use plastic bags for food bank. Any suggestions appreciated.

Connie Olson, Food Bank Director

Breakfasts

Eggs Benedict, home-baked beans, roasted potatoes and/or sausage and a choice of whole wheat bagels or bread are always a welcome treat. Our recently instituted Thursday morning and Friday morning breakfasts are a welcome service.
Corrie and Annalie are two dedicated Mile-Ender chefs who make everyone who make everyone welcome and well-accepted.
So far, this has been a very positive community experience worth repeating more than two mornings a week.

Jean-Guy Langlois

Mission Lunches

Thanks to the grant we got through « Emploi et solidarité Québec » with the City of Montreal from their budget « la lutte contre la pauvreté et l'exclusion sociale ». our lunches have gotten more nutritious. We have lots of people lining up for seconds. I would like to take this time to thank all my kitchen volunteers. Without you, it would not be possible.

Carleen Taylor, Kitchen Manager

My Kitchen Course

In August Corrie and I too a course required by the Quebec government on kitchen safety and hygiene. Some of the things I learned:

- ✓ How to store food safely
- ✓ Hair nets are mandatory
- ✓ Temperature of the fridge and freezer
- ✓ Dishes need to air dry
- ✓ And many more helpful things…

We are currently using these methods at our mission. So far it's been going well.

Carleen Taylor, Kitchen Manager

YOGA

Si vous n'avez jamain fait de yoga auparavant le hatha yoga est l'idéal et est sans doute le plus connu. C'est l'union des opposés. Vivre des sensations intireures et extérieures. Chaque lundi soir à 19 :30 c'est une rencontre avec moi-même. Une belle union entre le corps et l'esprit.
C'est un regard intérieur pour une mise au repos du mental. Générateur de bien-être qui permet d'être à l'écoute, être calme cela permet de mieux maitrisir ses émotions, ses angoisses. Véritable art de vivre….Voice les noms de quelque-une des poses : le chien tête en bas, demi-torsion vertélrale, l'enfant heureux, le cobra, l'aigle, le cadaire, la montagne, la chaise, l'arbre et plus encore!

COMPUTERS

As far as being able to use a computer is concerned, I was happy to be able to, rather quickly in fact, (after a short initiation phase of course) know how to use a variety of tools– often with photo illustrations, videos, or commentary – which would have been hard, perhaps even impossible, for me to get from a conventional method. And all this is thanks to the great structure put in place by the Mile-End Mission, its care and commitment to the community, among other duties, that each and every one of us greatly appreciates.
I would like to extend a warm thank-you for the lovely comforting comments that touch the hearts of the management, staff and the dedicated volunteers.
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Yves Buron

WELFARE RIGHTS

In 2010, I got at least 40 calls asking for help with welfare applications. These questions relate to entitlement and how much they would receive, what papers they would need if they were not able to work, where to get an application, what they would need in order to apply, and how long it takes to get an answer, plus questions about medication, etc.
A single person normally receives $562 per month. Rent is seldom less that $400 (even if you share a dwelling). You might be able to get a room in a rooming house for $250-$300. Both of the above low rental arrangements are likely to include roaches, bedbugs, and/or mice. Sometimes people wonder why people on welfare don't just get jobs. If only life were so simple. In order to support yourself, or your family, you need to earn enough to pay for medication and dental expenses – as low-paying jobs seldom include benefits. You also have to have the qualifications. Social assistance is the last resort for most people and is often a humiliating experience.

Lori Olson and Roslyn Macgregor

Special and seasonal events

ROUGEMONT – APPLE-PICKING

Every year the Mile-End Mission heads to the Standish apple orchards (Rougemont). We take 2 school buses up to Standish apple orchards. For the first 20 minutes we walk around and then we go in for a service. Ros does the service. After the service, we eat hot dogs, cips, vegetables, ice cream and delicious apple pie. After that we left and went to another part of the fram. We went for a hay ride. As we were riding we stopped and picked some apples. After that we looked around and then piled back on the buses and headed back to the mission. Over all if was a day full of fun and excitement for every one!

Kathryn Olson

GRANBY ZOO

For our annual big trip of the year what a great place to go – Granby Zoo where young and old can enjoy sunshine, look at the animals, go for a ride on a ferris wheel, have a picnic in the grass and to cool off you can ride the lazy river or brave it our and fight the waves in the enormous wave pool. What a fund day for everyone.

Lori Olson

SINGING VALENTINES

On February 14th, 2010, we had our annual singing valentines. We had a lot of singers and musicians with different instruments. Everyone had a great time singing. The purpose of the singing valentines is to let people know that they are not forgotten, that someone cares. Many people are touched by this and shed a few tears of happiness.

Carleen Taylor

"GUIGNOLÉES"

Guignolée - Christmas

Every year the Mile End Mission does *guignolée*-ing. If you don't know what that is it's when we get staff and volunteers to go outside and raise money for the mission. This year we had people dress up as Santa (Lori Olson) and Brandon Olson dressed up and had a fun time playing a role as Santa. We had staff members in the kitchen making hot chocolate and soup, sandwiches, for lunch. We *guignolée*-ed for 2 days which was fun. I personally can say I was there both days and I have a lot of fun doing this. At the end of the 2 hard days of fun we ended up making $1,134.42, which I think is very good and I can't wait to do this next year. In the end of 2 days of fun I think we can say everyone did a great job!

Kathryn Olson

Guignolée – Open House

Open House *guignolée* was a lot of fun. We had many volunteers including people from Ubisoft and the entertaining Raging Grannies. The Mission staff regular volunteers also helped raise over $1,000 which helps keep our Mission programs running. Thanks, Everyone!

Lori Olson

COMMUNITY ART: EXHIBITION OPENING

In a magical moment at 6pm on October the 15th, 2010, as night fell, and rain fell, and wind blew us all aghast; as waters flowed along the pavement; at the entrance to the Mission, white balloons danced in all directions as they hung from a red sign announcing an exhibition, "Les Images pour le dire" (Pictures Say It All). And as one enters, hundreds of artworks fill the heart, and the surroundings become enveloped in art; intense warmth, soft lighting, Béatrice tinkling Eric Satie and Chopin on the piano, the wafting smell of a hot meal fresh from Lise's kitchen; I suddenly feel like I've been transported to a charming little country home, with views of nature before us, all warming ourselves around the fire. This is our MISSION.

This wonderful moment was thanks to the collaboration of several volunteers who invested

their time, creativity, healthfulness and over 2,500 hours of their time; the contribution of space and resources from the Mission, and a grant, for the second year in a row, from the Fondation du Grand Montréal in the amount of $9700 This grant procures us some of Courtney's time as our art therapist on Fridays, as she continues to work on a project begun by one of our interns, Ninat, that being to help a Haïtian family through private therapy and to continue breaking down the barriers of isolation among members, providing a creative, safe and inclusive space with independent or guided workshops. Art provides so many benefits for our members as warming food for the soul.
Joanne Racette

CAMP
À la mi-juillet, j'ai passé une semaine à St-Adolphe d'Howard dans les Laurentides pr`s de Ste-Agathe des Monts au camp KinKora dans une nature luxuriante. J'ai en souvenir un ciel plein d'étoiles à l'enfini. Un plan d'eau réfléchissant pour y practiquer canot, chaloupe, kayak, pédalo, pêche, randonneés, pédestres, escalade, feu de camp, danse, jeux sportifs, ateliers d'art, films…. Oups! Orange fracassant!!! Flatter deux magnifiques chiens WOW! Se recuiller à la vieille chapelle… J'y ai fais de nouvelles rencontres en plus de mieux apprendre à connaître ceux que je connaissais déjà. Un endroit plein d'amour! L'amour des parents pour leurs enfants et l'amour des enfants pour leurs parents… moments inoubliables.
Lise Jutras

FUNDRAISING DINNER
Following on the heels of the art exhibit all the pieces from the Mission Art Exhibit were moved to the Old Port for viewing during the fundraising dinner. Paintings, drawings, and photographs were spread throughout the space and were sold during the event. Patrons were impressed with the caliber of work produced, and as a result a few thousand dollars extra were raised for the mission. During the evening I worked as a photographer, photographing attendees and guests during the formal and informal portions of the event.

The dinner was heavily attended, with 110 patrons of the mission joined by staff and several clients at a charming bistro in Old Montreal. A reception was held featuring live music performed by Brazilian Lounge Project, a fantastic local trio playing a mix of jazz and Latin music. Attendees mingled and unwound after their day before being ushered into the dinner. The formal dinner featured a special guest speaker Sue Montgomery of *The Montreal Gazette,* who has visited and written about the situation in Haiti for many years. In addition a raffle was held for many wonderful prizes, including white gold earrings, travel for two on VIA in the Quebec-Windsor corridor, and two signed Montreal Canadiens jerseys. A generous surprise at the end of the meal was offered by an anonymous couple, who offered to match dollar-for-dollar as a donation all monies raised that evening.

Stephanie Palmer, Lori Olson, and Joanne Racette put together an amazing program. As with the art exhibit, a selection of the photographs were burned onto CD and given to the mission as a permanent record of the event.
C.A. McMullen

CHRISTMAS
Christmas Dinner
This massive undertaking of the greater community to come together for a Sunday afternoon Christmas dinner that smoothly welcomes and celebrates Christmas and the Mission community past and present is a marvel to watch. The donations of food, time, space, gifts and many little details resulted in a delicious and plentiful turkey dinner, personalized gifts for all the children and lot of fun and warmth as we watched the snowflakes fall outside. I was happy to enjoy the atmosphere and food with the other 150 people in attendance at the YMCA this year.

Christmas Baskets
This year we gave out 127 Christmas baskets. We had Provigo gift cards for everyone thanks to our many donors.
We were lucky to have one of our regular volunteers with a van who delivered Christmas baskets to shut-ins and people who were unable to pick up their own. The confirmation class and their parents from St. Cuthbert, St. Hilda, St. Luke put together all of the boxes and sorted many boxes of food.

Families with young children were able to pick out two to three gifts per child as well as warm mittens, scarves, and hats. Thank you to everyone who helped to make this a warm and wonderful Christmas.

Connie Olson, Food Bank Director

Staff Reports

SUMMER STUDENT REPORT 2010

As one of the two summer students this past year, I worked on the newsletter, a small band fundraiser at the Yellow Door Cafe, a beach trip and picnic outing. I also helped with office duties, weekly events (such as the breakfast program that Jen started up), and other activities for example Open House (where I volunteered for a fashion show of the Mission's donated clothing, unaware I'd be modelling a bird's-nest-like wig) and a trip to see the Miles Davis exhibit at Musée des Beaux-Arts. I was astounded, while working on the newsletter especially, to learn the extent of needed services the Mission provides to the community. Best of all, the summer was filled with good conversation. How was my summer experience? In short: I loved being part of the team in the inspiring community centre that is the Mission.

Sarah Lougheed

OFFICE ADMINISTRATION

This year has been quite a busy year for our little office. From our regular fund-raising events t our amazing benefit dinner which was a huge success. And our hearts reached out to helping three Haitian families. I have had a little extra work processing the generous donations made for our Haiti fund to help us help these families.

All in all, it is with pleasure that I work in the small, very hot at times, postage stamp office. A lot of work is produced in this small space.

The regular day-to-day schedule of answering e-mails, checking and answering messages, counting and depositing money, paying bills, filing things away – and of course, what I least like doing is also part of the office job, and that is rolling money and shredding paper!

Lori Olson

VOLUNTEER CO-ORDINATOR

When one starts to add up the volunteer hours put in here at the Mission it doesn't seem quite possible for such a tiny place. And where do all these volunteers come from… In my role as volunteer coordinator since August I am continually surprised at how much of my week can involve meeting with people interested in volunteering. People are contacting us on an average of three per week to find out how they can help out here. And that is just the people outside of the community that already exists. This community is full of members who volunteer in small and large ways, some which don't even get measured in pie charts. I love watching how all the volunteers come together and form this sense of shared space and learn from each other within it.

Corrie Peters

REPORT ON MENNONITE VOLUNTARY WORK

This past summer, a team of Mennonite volunteers came to the Mission as part of a program called Learning Through Service. Their help was invaluable to the Mission, since they did tasks which the regular staff/volunteers were too busy to do – cleaning the basement, painting, fixing up the (sad looking) garden. The regular volunteers – Lori, Mark and Connie for instance, heartily embraced the volunteers into the Mission family. I remember seeing the volunteers painting outside the office – cheerfully, tirelessly despite some heat. A boy who was with them was fed lots of freezies. Spending time in the close presence of the people they were helping gave the volunteers a sense of how important their work was. At least this was the sense I got when I had a conversation with them over lunch at one point; the Mennonite volunteers came to the Mission with a genuine desire to serve, this exchange was rewarding for both us and them.

Sarah Lougheed