

Mission Possible



BY LINDA LOU HACHEY

After a grueling period of Covid-19 restrictions, with freezing winter line-ups outside the Mission for hot take-out meals, groceries and other needed supplies, our dreams of warmer weather, loosened regulations and an end to curfews brought a whole new vision of a spring and summer wrapped in hope and TLC.

Witnessing the re-opening of restaurants and terraces everywhere and the joy this brought, we thought, "YES! Let's create an expanded outdoor terrace for our members so that they too can gather together, terrace-café style, to enjoy the sights and sounds of the neighborhood in the company of friends." So, in came the new bistro sets with umbrellas and folding benches, which made the Mission look more like a café than a soup kitchen. We laughed to ourselves as passers-by often looked quizzically as if to say, "I didn't know there was a café here."

We also set up an outdoor speaker so we could listen to Trevor's fabulous playlist of music that he's been putting together since he started working with us eight years ago. As Carlene, Missy, Eddy and Eleni balanced their days coordinating all activities related to food, they kept a watchful eye on our members' needs for cold water and popsicles during the intense summer heat. Together with our other Leadership Team members, Micheline, Helen and Michel, regular lunch and food bank services were provided at the door.

With the expansion of this terrace which wrapped around the corner of Bernard and St. Urbain streets and could accommodate 30 people, our summer staff started each morning by setting up the Mission café, preparing a huge vat of coffee and then serving our members refreshments and snacks throughout the day as though they

Food Stats 2021

5000+  grocery and pharmacy **gift cards** distributed

900  **foodbank deliveries** made to our most vulnerable members

150  **individuals and families** rely on our free meal program



One of our members, Victor, enjoying 'Terrace Connie' while he eats a full lunch of sausage, a veggie omelette, and salad.

were customers at any neighborhood café-terrace.

Additional activities we were able to do in this terrace setting included a tea party, weekly art sessions, BBQ lunches, and 'choose your toppings' ice-cream events. Doris even had a couple of outdoor bazaars, which everyone sorely missed during lockdown.

Throughout the summer, the terrace also served as the meeting point for getting together to shoot hoops at a neighborhood basketball court, visit the Botanical Gardens, watch the skateboarders at a local skate park, etc. Keeping watch on the heat and humidity levels, we also purchased new water-mist stations so that everyone could stay cool on the hottest of summer days.

The positive energy and atmosphere that has been engendered by simply re-thinking and re-designing our approach to summer set-up has truly helped increase both personal and community dignity at the Mission. It also ties in so nicely with the sentiment of one of our Mission friends, James, who often refers to the Mission as 'the Club'. For both our homeless and our housed friends alike, there is no doubt that sitting comfortably in a bistro chair being served tea and biscuits is much more appealing and comforting

than standing, for all to see, in a Mission food line. Unfortunately, because we have over 100 people coming for our weekly food bank, this particular line-up continues to stretch further down the street, past the laneway, almost around the block. We will nurture an open mind for inspiration regarding this dilemma and hope to have a creative flash soon.

At the writing of this article, the sun is still shining strongly and the sights and sounds of summer still abound. With great hope for continued positive Covid-19 outcomes, we wonder how we'll continue to re-think and re-design our approach to poverty, to community, to life.

There is no doubt that sitting comfortably in a bistro chair being served tea and biscuits is much more appealing and comforting than standing, for all to see, in a Mission food line.



MILE END MISSION'S
13TH ANNUAL

Thanksgiving Benefit Dinner & 30th Anniversary Celebration

WILL BE HELD ON
OCTOBER 26 AT 6PM

Location: **Petros Laurier**
(takeout available - pickup / delivery)

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
(514) 274-3401

FUNDRAISING@MILEENDMISSION.ORG
MILEENDMISSION.ORG

FROZEN MEAT PROGRAM

BY CHIGGY

When the pandemic hit, the Mission searched fervently for ways to increase the food resources we provide to our members through the weekly food bank. Our longtime partner Moisson Montreal suggested that they could provide us with packages of frozen meat, but that health and safety regulations required the meat remain frozen throughout the distribution process. Thankfully, we found funding that allowed us to purchase over 100 thermal bags and ice packs, allowing each of the Mission's members to transport their food home safely. Now our members get to enjoy well-rounded and protein-filled meals.



One of many summer Food Bank days, where people wait patiently for bags of vegetables, dry pantry items and, most recently, frozen meats.



Lynda joins Joanne and summer students Ceth, Chiggy, and Laura in a morning of art, coffee, and conversation.

A member shoots hoops with summer students Chiggy and Laura and crushes them in a game of 21.



Rena, her husband, and their granddaughter joined summer students Ceth, Chiggy, and Laura at the Botanical Gardens.



getting our members' personal information so that I could book appointments for them. As everyone knows, it was quite challenging to get vaccination time slots as they sometimes weren't available anymore by the time you came to the end of the registration process. It was also difficult trying to book appointments that were close enough for our members so that they didn't have to travel too far. I watched the calendar daily for upcoming age groups who were eligible to book appointments and went on the vaccination website multiple times a day. It's a lot of juggling when you're trying to book about 40+ appointments across all different age groups! After each appointment was booked, they all had to be confirmed individually by email and followed up by printing out and distributing everyone's appointment reminders. Since we don't see all of our members on a regular basis, I was constantly on the lookout for them to make

sure they got the information, knew where and when to go and what to bring with them. Once members got their first shot, I printed out their proof of vaccination and confirmed their second vaccination appointments. As news came that second vaccination shots were being scheduled sooner, I put up new notices on our doors letting members know that they could go to local walk-in clinics without appointments and back to the computer I went to juggle and re-book members' appointments. So as you can see, given all the stumbling blocks involved in what seems to be a simple process, most of our members would not have received their COVID-19 vaccinations without many layers of help. It was certainly a long process, but I'm happy to say that to date, about 80% of our vulnerable members have been vaccinated! And as an incentive, the government promoted a lottery for all citizens who had at least 1 shot, so I entered our members for the lottery. Hopefully, one of them will win!

GETTING VACCINES FOR OUR MEMBERS

BY LORI OLSON

As of February 25, 2021, the general public aged 85+ were able to book appointments for the Covid-19 vaccine and finally have some protection against this virus that has caused such a whirlwind in our world. However, for many of our members who don't have internet service or telephones, it wasn't easy for them to 'simply register' for a vaccine. So I busied myself

OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEERS

BY LINDA LOU HACHEY

On August 12th, 2021, Rachel Bendayan, Liberal Member of Parliament for the Outremont riding, honoured three of our wonderful Mission volunteers from the local community with *Outstanding Volunteer of 2021* certificates and medals. With truly heartfelt words, Ms. Bendayan thanked longtime friends of the Mile End Mission: Doris Roberts (head of our Friperie 'Joyce'), Nancy Greene-Gregoire (Vice President of the Mission's Board of Directors), and members of the late Connie Olson's family (one of the original founding members of the Mission). Mrs. Sophia Lazarek, who was not present to receive her certificate and medal on that day, will receive it shortly with much appreciation for the years of support she provided members of the Mission who lived in her rooming house.



**THE MILE END LEGAL CLINIC
OFFERS FREE LEGAL
CONSULTATIONS!**
(HOUSING, WORK, FAMILY, IMMIGRATION, ...)

BOOK AN APPOINTMENT
☎ 514-507-3054
✉ info@melc.ca



**"GONE FROM OUR
SIGHT, BUT NEVER
OUR HEARTS"**
IN LOVING MEMORY OF
**JAN MICHALIK
{YANNICK}**

THANK YOU
for your help.

This mission would not be able to run day to day, were it not for the fierce leadership team, staff, the board of directors, and the general community.

Thank you for your contributions to what we do and thank you for being you.

MILE END MISSION
**BAZ
AAR**
*Affordable Clothes,
Household Items, & Toys*

Find us at 99 Bernard O.,
on the corner of St. Urbain.
All proceeds will help
run our programs.

OPEN TO EVERYONE!

*For info on upcoming Bazaars at
Friperie Joyce, please look for
posters on the Mission's windows or
posts on our Facebook page.*

**MISSION
MILE-END**

FREE TAKE-OUT
LUNCHES
TUESDAYS,
WEDNESDAYS, &
FRIDAYS
@ 12 PM
FOOD BANK
THURSDAYS @
1:30 PM

**PLEASE CALL US
FOR MORE INFO**

Office: 514-274-3401
Lunch Room: 514-274-3510
Address: 99 Rue Bernard Ouest,
on the corner of St. Urbain.
Metro: Beaubien
Buses: 160, 80, 55