



FIVE-O-SEVEN NEWS

Centre 507 • Serving Ottawa's disadvantaged since 1983
507 Bank St., Ottawa K2P 1Z5 • Housed in McLeod Stewarton United Church • (613) 233-5626

"WE ARE LUCKY TO COME TO A PLACE LIKE CENTRE 507"



Participant Roger Babin volunteers to help clean Centre 507.

To get a better idea of who uses Centre 507 and why, Carleton University placement student Chantelle Carrier surveyed 112 participants last October. The survey was optional and anonymous, and based on a City of Ottawa model.

"The power of simple conversation should not be overlooked," Chantelle wrote in her final report.

"We often forget how some people don't have others to share in their joys and sorrows and how vital this is to the human spirit. Just for someone to hear that someone is proud of them for getting a job or for taking the next step to go to detox, or having someone to listen...when they are feeling down is a very important thing." ∞

Top ranked services

(number of mentions as most useful or enjoyable)

- snacks/coffee (85)
- toiletries (48)
- clothing (45)
- movies (44)
- information (43)
- Christmas food hampers (42)
- safe place (42)
- socializing/having fun (40)
- phone/messages (36)
- computers (35)

Other services participants would most like to see

(ranked by category)

- Activities: crafts, board games, sports, YMCA, etc.
- Employment: on-site, support, job bank, etc.
- Counselling: substance abuse, anger management, self-esteem, etc.

Other highlights

- 9% have income other than social assistance
- 49% have been visiting the Centre for more than two years
- lengthiest relationships with Centre 507 were 12, 15 and 17 years
- 58% visit 2-3 times per week or more

In their own words

Of the 32 survey comments, there were 20 compliments, 12 suggestions and no criticisms. Here's a sample:

Compliments

- "differs from other drop-ins and food kitchens in its human touch... a great boon to self esteem when we are treated as human, not a statistic."
- "...does not seem as rough as the others... less swearing, rudeness, intimidation..."
- "We are lucky to be able to come to a place like 507."

Suggestions

- "Hours should be a little longer."
- "Air conditioning would be a big help."
- "I would like to see meals in the future, not just snacks."
- "Less corn and peas in the soups. I hate corn!"

SURVEY SNAPSHOT

Who we serve

- 90% male
- 27% between 39 and 45 years old (age bracket with the most participants)
- 82% between 25 and 59 years old

Where participants live

- 37% in rooming houses
- 70% in rooming houses, subsidized housing, shelters, outdoors, shared accommodation or YMCA
- 65% in Centretown



STAFF PROFILE

DAN LALONDE



Centre 507 staffer Daniel Lalonde.

As a support worker, Daniel Lalonde has worked with people of all ages, in schools and in group homes. But his work at Centre 507 has been some of the most gratifying of his career.

“I really enjoy working with these people,” Daniel says. “You hear so many different stories and meet so many interesting people.”

Daniel has been a support worker at Centre 507 for three years. That means he does everything from acting as an advocate for people who need help with jobs or welfare, to handing out toiletries or donated clothes, to crisis intervention, and supportive listening. Aside from his regular duties, he has overseen participants in the snack and cleaning program and fills in as acting manager when Tracy Davidson is away.

Before coming to Centre 507, Daniel worked at the front desk at a downtown shelter.

“When I first started there, it was intimidating. Some people were very rough,” Daniel says. “But I’ve learned a lot about myself and how to deal with different people and situations.”

Daniel likes the mix of day and evening shifts he works, as well as the variety of work in every shift. Along with one or two other staff people, he serves up to 165 people who drop by the Centre per day.

“Half my day is giving people razors and soap, or helping them on the computer, say, to set up an e-mail account,” Daniel says. Another good chunk of the day is spent helping participants deal with a whole range of challenges.

“Sometimes even trying to get a health card can be a hassle. It’s tough if you don’t have the skills to figure it all out,” he says. He also helps with crisis intervention, which can involve helping people find immediate medical care or a place to stay.

FROM CRISIS MANAGEMENT TO CONVERSATION

But sometimes the most important thing he can do for some people is to sit down with them, listen to them, and try to offer some guidance. Still, it can be hard to fit in that valuable one-on-one time. It’s also a challenge to gauge the result of his work.

“You set something up for someone, and then you never see them again, so you never know if things worked out,” he says. “You have to live for the moment, knowing that you have helped someone, even just for five minutes, get what they need.” ∞

DONATIONS NEEDED TO OFFSET CUTS

Giving some participants an hourly wage to help clean Centre 507 and prepare snacks has provided them with much-needed income and valuable work experience over the years.

But now, due to funding shortfalls, the cleaning program has been cut, and the snack program is in danger.

“These programs have given clients the opportunity to give back to the Centre and to work and sharpen their skills,” says Dan Lalonde, the Centre 507 support worker who has been running the snack and cleaning programs. “The cleaning program gave people some important, practical skills, like experience working with different chemicals.”

Demand for Centre 507 services, like this work experience opportunity,

increases steadily. But expenses are rising, while revenue is either remaining stable or declining. The Centre has run a deficit over the last few years, covered by a dwindling reserve. All expenses have been scrutinized and shaved to the bone. Unless the Centre can bring in more revenue, there will be more cuts to services.

The Centre’s volunteer board of directors has made fundraising a priority. Board members and staff are producing this newsletter, making more presentations to churches, making personal appeals to individuals, and researching

foundations and special events. Because donors are more likely to give to a charity they’ve heard of, the board is also looking for ways to increase the profile of the Centre, from better signage to public service ads in newspapers.

There have been some gains. In 2003, donations were up. But participants are no longer paid to clean, and it’s not clear how this will effect staff and volunteers. Staff, board members, volunteers and participants are all concerned about what may be next.

Now more than ever, we need donors to help us bridge the gap. Please consider a contribution to Centre 507, whether it’s money, time in the Centre or fundraising help. For more information, contact Centre 507 at 233-5626 or centre507@ncf.ca. Or use the form on the back page to make a donation. ∞

EVERY THURSDAY AFTERNOON, VOLUNTEER PAT RENAUD BRINGS HER SEWING MACHINE TO CENTRE 507 TO MEND CLOTHES



A stitch in time... sews good deeds...

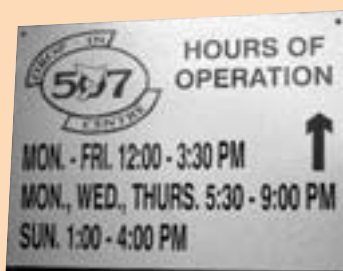
Centre 507 is a drop-in centre that is open to all who seek a safe, friendly and supportive environment. Centre 507 participants are members of our community who may be disadvantaged either economically or socially. Homelessness, mental illness, addictions, health concerns, poverty, unstable housing, unemployment or loneliness are examples of issues faced by our participants.

Free services offered at Centre 507:

Supportive listening/counselling • Advocacy & referrals • Crisis intervention • Information on community resources • Community outreach workers from other agencies • Supported employment program • In-Centre chaplain • Hot food, snacks, coffee • Clothing & toiletries • Access to telephones, computers, fax & Internet • Needle exchange • Foot care clinic, barber, sewing/clothing repair • Recreational events and special outings • Thanksgiving & Christmas luncheons

507 Bank Street (at Argyle)
Ottawa, Ontario K2P 1Z5
Tel: (613) 233-5626
Fax: (613) 233-5088
Email: centre507@ncf.ca

Housed in:
McLeod-Stewarton United Church



CENTRE 507'S WISH LIST

In addition to financial contributions, Centre 507's wish list includes the following items:

- Hygiene supplies (disposable razors, shampoo, toothbrushes, toothpaste, deodorant, etc.)
- Meal replacement/supplements (such as Ensure or Boost)
- Bulk coffee, sugar or coffee whitener
- Men's clothing - all sizes

THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS AND DONORS...

Centre 507 gratefully receives ongoing funding from the City of Ottawa, United Church of Canada, the Ottawa Presbytery and Provincial Homelessness Initiatives Funding.

Centre 507 would also like to thank the numerous individuals who have made financial contributions. Without these donations, much of the work of Centre 507 would not be possible. Out of respect for privacy, we have not listed names of individual donors - but please know that individual donations are very much appreciated and needed.

In addition, we would like to acknowledge and thank the following groups, organizations and congregations for their generous donations and contributions to the work of Centre 507 since our last newsletter in August 2003:

Ashton (Munster) United Church
Barrhaven United Church
Bells Corners United Church
Beta Sigma Phi - Laureate Beta Chapter
Canadian Red Cross
CBC Radio
Centretown Emergency Food Centre
Church of St. John the Evangelist
Church of the Ascension
City View United Church
Cool Yule 2

Debbie Danbrook Shakuhachi Flute Concert
Elmdale Public School Bookfest
Emmanuel United Church
Fallowfield United Church
First United Church
Glebe-St. James United Church & Youth Group
Good Morning Preschool
Hartman's Your Independent Grocer
Harvest Loaf (Wellington St. and Richmond Rd.)
Hawthorne UCW
Herb & Spice
Loblaws Isabella
Loeb Glebe
McLeod-Stewarton United Church
Montgomery Legion 351
Orleans Bakery
Orleans United Church
Queenswood United Church
Rebecca Chapter #14 OES
Rideau Park United Church
Riverside United Church
Rothwell UCW
Southminster United Church
St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church
St. George's Anglican Church
St. Paul's United Church (Richmond)
TD Canada Trust
The Ottawa Food Bank
Trinity UCW
Trinity United Church (Kars)
United Way - "I'm Going Too!"
U.S. Embassy Staff
Westminster Presbyterian Church
YMCA CITs

...and to countless others, who slip in with donations of toiletry items, baked goods clothing or other household items. To anyone we may have missed - a heartfelt thank you! ∞

HOW TO SUPPORT CENTRE 507

Volunteer:

From our Board of Directors to individuals who volunteer to serve holiday luncheons, Centre 507 relies on volunteer time and energy to offer many of our services.

Donate practical items:

Centre 507 accepts donations of practical items including men's clothing and hygiene supplies.

Make a financial contribution:

Any contributions are gratefully accepted. Cheques should be made payable to Centre 507. Income tax receipts are provided for donations over \$10.

This newsletter is written, edited and designed by volunteers. Grateful acknowledgement is offered to Chisholm Communications for layout and design work and to Konica Minolta for printing. For more information, contact Centre 507. ∞



YES!

I would like to contribute to the work of Centre 507.
Please find enclosed my donation of :

\$25 \$50 \$100 Other amount: \$ _____

Income tax receipts are provided for donations over \$10. Please fill out the following to receive a tax receipt:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/town: _____ Postal Code: _____

Telephone number: _____

(This information will not be sold or shared in any way.)

Please make your cheque payable to Centre 507.

Mailing address: Centre 507, 507 Bank Street, Ottawa, Ontario K2P 1Z5

Tel: (613) 233-5626 Fax: (613) 233-5088 Email: centre507@ncf.ca

Registered charitable business number: 118848472RR0001

CENTRE 507 STAFF AT MARCH 1, 2004

Steve Chenier, Support Worker
Tracy Davidson, Centre Manager
Kate Drouin, Support Worker
Daniel Lalonde, Support Worker
Jonathan Lorch, Street Outreach Worker
Sonja Prakash, Street Outreach Worker
Dennis Wiginton, Chaplain

Many dedicated relief staff and enthusiastic placement students

Centre 507 Board of Directors 2004

Anu Bose, Chair
Bill Giggie, Vice Chair
Allan Porter, Treasurer
George Teather, Secretary

Roger Babin, Matthew Bonsall, Malcolm Brooks, Tracy Davidson (ex officio), Grant Dillenbeck (ex officio), Adam Fendley, Betty Gross, Jean Lee, Ken Love, Roy Maddocks, Joe McKendy, Phil Normand, John O'Brien, Ted Pert, Ron Scharfe and Richard Slocombe ∞