



PRAIRIE REGION UPDATE

The Prairie Region Update is intended to keep grandmothers groups across the Prairies connected to each other and informed about the SLF Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign.

May 2015

NEWS FROM THE STEPHEN LEWIS FOUNDATION

Welcome Back Tammy!

Tammy is now back from her maternity leave to support the Prairie Region again. Like we did with the other Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign staff, we would like to let you know more about Tammy, our Prairie link to the G2G Campaign.

Tammy Ebuem came to the Stephen Lewis Foundation in 2011 and has been a part of the Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign ever since. During this time, she has worked with passionate and committed grandmothers groups all across the country and since returning from maternity leave in March, she is thrilled to be working with groups in the Prairies once again.

Tammy's experience in the non-profit sector started prior to joining the Foundation, when she worked at a community health centre in downtown Toronto for four years. Between her years there and the experience she's gained while at the Foundation, coupled with completing a Master's degree from OISE at the University of Toronto in Adult Education and Community Development, Tammy's understanding of the intersection between gender inequality and the social determinants of health, has deepened tenfold.



Tammy continues to be awestruck by the unwavering commitment Canadian grandmothers have for African grandmothers, and feels incredibly lucky to be part of such a phenomenal and inspiring movement of women.

~ Tammy Ebuem, Grandmothers Campaign Officer

A Visit to the Continent



Yes, there will be another opportunity to see the SLF's work first hand. Canadian grandmothers will travel to Uganda in October for the African Grandmothers Gathering. Watch the next Granny Bulletin for details and how to apply! The timeline is **very** tight, so you'll need to act fast if you want a chance to participate.

Annual GRL meeting

In April, GRLs from across Canada descended on the Toronto offices of the SLF much to the delight of all of us to put a name to a voice from our monthly calls. Unlike other years, this year all GRLs self-funded their way to the national meetings to encourage the use of Aeroplan miles to support the work of the G2G campaign.



Here are two highlights from our discussions:

Kelly James, Director of Finance, responded to our questions...

For groups that are concerned about the mismanagement of funds, it was affirmed that grandmothers groups are legally independent and act as a Third party from the Foundation. As such, it is up to each group to make its own decisions about financial accountability and to manage the funds that are entrusted to them from their members and fundraising activities.

That being said, Kelly shared some best practices from a financial point of view:

- ✓ It is a good governance practice to engage in a financial review annually
- ✓ It is recommended to do a bank reconciliation each month
- ✓ It is a good idea to have financial controls in place such as:
 - always have 2 signers on the cheques
 - do not sign pre-sign cheques ahead of issuing them

Are Police Record Checks worth the effort?

- Likely not, however a community-based reference check is likely better to reassure the integrity of members taking on financial responsibilities

Margaret Wright, Director of Operations, responded to our questions...

Do our groups need insurance?

- Insurance may not be practical for each event that we host
- If you are using or renting another location, ask if the location's insurance could be extended for the event that we are hosting at their locale

Why can we not extend the Foundation's insurance for STRIDE for other events?

- The Foundation engages in providing separate insurance for STRIDE as part of oversight/management for the national event as it is a Foundation focused event and it is also a time sensitive/short period of time so the Foundation is able to support the insurance needs for STRIDE.

Stride to Turn the Tide

Why Are We Walking?

African grandmothers walk with a purpose. They walk to far-away clinics and markets. They walk to collect water and to deliver their grandchildren safely to school. They walk to provide urgent home-based care and to protest violations of their human rights. African grandmothers are changing the course of the pandemic – they stride and the tide is turning in their communities.



This year, the main weekend for Stride to Turn the Tide is June 13-14, 2015. Walks may also be held June 6-7 or June 20-21, 2015. For more information, please contact stride@stephenlewisfoundation.org.

Stride is covered under the SLF's insurance provider on the first three weekends in June. In order to be covered under this insurance, grandmothers groups must send us the Walk Registration Form (one per Walk) at least one week prior to the event. If you're using a public park in your community, you need to list that on the form. For more information and to access the Walk Registration Form, go to www.grandmotherscampaign.org/stride.

Try a 'virtual' walk instead

The 'virtual' Stride is a great alternative to a traditional walk, even for groups who are taking on Stride for the first time. It's an idea inspired by two Grandmothers groups in Ontario. Here's how it works for them:

Grandmothers register, buy pedometers, get pledges, and walk over a designated period of time to reach their 'destination'. Many aspects of the virtual walk work the same as a traditional walk. You can still register team members, sign up for online fundraising pages, and collect pledges. The difference is that instead of planning one day for a walk, team members walk over several weeks and use pedometers to record their steps or distance. That means you can walk wherever you want and whenever you want. For example, why not challenge yourself or your group to 'walk' to one (or more!) of the community-based organizations the SLF partners with in Africa? For more information, please go to <http://www.grandmotherscampaign.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/Stride-2015-Virtual-Walk-Information2.pdf>

2016: Ten Years of the Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign



At the GRL meeting in April, the group did some 'blue sky' planning. We brainstormed a long list of ideas – too long to include here. But be sure to watch this space in upcoming issues for information and ideas.

Fun Facts about the Grandmothers Campaign

Fact #1:

How much has the Campaign raised to date?

A: \$22 million!!

Fact #2

Of the \$22 million, how much do you think was raised in fiscal year 2014?

A: \$2.38 million...the Campaign's best year yet!

NEWS FROM OUR PRAIRIE REGION

Grands 'n' More Winnipeg

Annual General Gathering

Thursday, May 28, 2015

7 p.m. at the Riverview Community Centre

Dr. Ashira Meyers and doctoral candidate Lindsay Aboud are HIV/AIDS researchers who will tell us about their professional and personal activities which are devoted to intervening and eradicating this pandemic.

Stride to Turn the Tide

Grands 'n' More Winnipeg members are preparing for Stride to Turn the Tide, June 13th. Our event will be held again this year in cooperation with Grant Park Shopping Mall. One of its stores, McNally Robinson Booksellers, will feature books on sub-Saharan Africa. Various stations are set for activities prior to the start. The "Striders" will walk indoors for sure and if weather permits, also on an outdoor circuit. Once again we are asking people to donate "walking shoes" in good condition for Canadian Footwear's "Fit Feet on the Street".



Art from the Attic

Following Regina's lead and tips, members are handling the promotion and spadework for "Art from the Attic"- set for Sunday, September 20. The Art from the Attic committee, and all of Grands 'n' More Winnipeg, thanks G4G Regina for sharing the ideas!

Grandmothers & Others for Change in Swift Current, SK.

Grandmothers & Others for Change celebrated eight years as a grandmothers group with a public event. Guest speaker was Sheila Fahlman, co-Liaison for the Prairie Region. Click here to read the press coverage:

<http://www.prairiepost.com/news/swift-current/item/7737-swift-current-grandmothers-continue-their-support-for-africa-s-grandmothers.html>

Interestingly, the reporter is from South Africa, and knows first-hand of the situation there. His previous posting was in Nipawin, SK, where he covered events about their Grandmothers group. The newspaper circulates in south-eastern Alberta, too, so let's hope the article has inspired new members and new groups in the vicinity.

Grandmothers 4 Grandmothers Prince Albert

We are very pleased with our fundraising events over the last year. The funds raised have been the most to date for a single year. With four new members and some new ideas we are looking forward to another successful year. Sheila Fahlman will be our guest speaker for the May meeting, and everyone is looking forward to her presentation.

Stride to Turn the Tide

We are also doing the National Stride to Turn the Tide Walk on June 13th, an event which has always been an excellent fundraiser for us- and an opportunity to get out and enjoy the fresh air in a beautiful setting.

Saskatoon Farmers' Market

On June 27th we will be at the Farmers' Market with a display and a few crafts for sale. This is always a fun-filled day and an opportunity to tell others about our work and the work of the Stephen Lewis Foundation.

From your GRLs –

Q & A: Questions you find difficult to answer ... you asked and we discovered ...

You may recall that in April, we, as your GRLs, asked you for questions that you have wanted to ask the SLF, so we would bring them up at our national April meeting in Toronto. Well, we have good news and other news that requires you to continue to be patient. Sheila and Deb would like to thank the groups for their quick response to our late request for questions. In an effort to have a consistent message across the country, we are awaiting answers/responses from the SLF. So please stay tuned to this section for more news!



From time to time, we receive questions at events. Sheila made an Africa trip presentation recently, and was asked the following questions. Here they are, along with the answers:

Q: Why are there no matching government funds provided to the SLF? – They were referring to the opportunities some charities have to donate now and the government will match...

A: *There are a couple of reasons why government agencies don't match funds raised by the Foundation. In the first place, the Canadian government typically offers the matching of Canadian donations in direct response to major natural disasters and crises and often for a limited period of time. AIDS is not a natural disaster and although it is a crisis, it has been going on for more than 30 years, and so, does not fall under the government's traditional criteria. The second reason is that the Foundation does not seek government funding. The reporting requirements are just too onerous and time-consuming for the grassroots organizations with whom we partner.*

Q: Are the Grandmothers still supported after the children they have cared for have grown up?

A: *Yes. They still need secure housing and food and income-generating activities and grief counselling and clean water and the support of their peers – and, of course, assistance in their older years when they become more frail.*

Regional Survey

Your GRLs would like to conduct our first Regional Survey. A while ago you should have received an email requesting your participation. Thank you to the groups that have already sent in their group's information. It will be very helpful to us to be better able to continue to support you as you share how your group works and how we can assist you as leaders in your groups. . If you did not receive your survey, please email Deb at dradi@mymts.net and she will send it your way. We look forward to receiving your survey responses by the end of May.

FROM OTHER PARTS OF THE COUNTRY

From Trail, B.C. comes this idea that would work well in large or small communities anywhere:

Our strawberry tea will be held at Trail United Church on Saturday, May 30, 2015. Tickets are being sold for \$4.00. Servings are ample with real whipped cream. Tea and coffee will be poured from silver tea services and fine china cups will be used. For more information, please contact Joan at joanpmck@shaw.ca. Come on out and have some fun at this spectacular event!



Please let us know of any events your group is holding, or has held recently, and we'll post it here.
Disclaimer: we try to get the information accurate – but please be sure to check with the local group before you venture out to an event in case there are any errors or changes.

If you would like more information on any of this material, please do let us know. We are here to support you and your groups with information sharing and connections, so please don't hesitate to reach out to us.

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