



# Message from the Board of Directors

It has been another busy year for Multiple Births Canada as we published many new educational resources, held a large and very successful national conference, and completed the application to become a registered charity. We have broadened our connections with multiple-birth families through active social networking and a new email program to reach all of our members and stakeholders. It's good that as parents of multiples, our Directors and national volunteers have lots of experience with multi-tasking!

We have continued to work with our member organizations (local Chapters in many regions of Canada), professional contacts including educators, doctors and other health care professionals, and international multiple-birth groups and researchers, to learn and share more about the needs of multiple-birth families and the best ways of providing information and support.

MBC continues to accomplish a lot with limited financial resources. As you will see on page 4, our finances are tight, and we have a very small budget for paid staff, publications, operating our website, and developing new resources. The Board believes that our best opportunity for sustainability and growth in the future is in applying to become a registered charity in Canada. The Board and Acting Executive Director have spent many long hours over recent months and years, consulting with lawyers, reviewing every aspect of MBC's operations and corporate documents, describing MBC's goals and activities, and completing the application with many supporting documents.

If successful, our long-term plan is to generate more income from corporate and government grants, donations and advertising, and to become less dependent on membership fees and publication sales.



As always, we owe a huge debt of gratitude to all our national volunteers, including our Support Network chairs, webmasters, Health and Education committee, Multiple Moments editor and contributors, Advisory Board, membership coordinator, Board of Directors, Acting Executive Director, and the volunteers in every local community who liaise with MBC and attend our national conferences. None of our work would be possible without you, and we can't thank you enough for your time and caring for the needs of multiple-birth families. We are very proud of all MBC has accomplished this year, with all your help.

*Sheila M. Catto*

Sheila Catto, Board Chair.

## Board of Directors

**Sheila Catto** - Chair, Director of Support services, Saskatoon, SK

**Shirley Combden** - Treasurer, Director of Finance, Edmonton, AB

**Erin Little** - Director of Communications  
Haileybury, ON (from Oct. 2011)

**Gail Moore** - Past Chair, Advocacy and Awareness  
Coordinator, New Liskeard, ON

**Todd Ohman** - Director,  
Nepean, ON (to Sept. 2011)

**Lori Oldfield** - Director,  
Morrison, ON

**Lynn Stadler** - Secretary,  
Director, Rockwood, ON

**Sean Wilde** - Director,  
Kitchener, ON (from July 2011)



# Top 10 Achievements

1. Submitted MBC's **application to become a Registered Charity** to the Canada Revenue Agency on March 30<sup>th</sup> 2012, with pro-bono support from lawyers at Wildeboer Dellelce LLP.
2. **Published 9 new Fact Sheets** in 2011, in partnership with Assisted Human Reproduction Canada, available for free public download to expecting and new families with multiples.
3. Celebrated **National Multiple Births Awareness Day** in May 2011, with the theme *"Prenatal education and professional support must reflect the unique needs of Canada's multiple-birth community."* Conducted a survey and shared findings with prenatal instructors across Canada.
4. Competed in the **Aviva funding contest online**, which raised public awareness of the needs of multiple-birth families and resulted in a volunteer offering to design a new MBC website.
5. Published four electronic issues of **Multiple Moments magazine**, reaching every member of MBC for the first time. Themes included Family fitness, Finances for multiple-birth families, Finding balance in our busy lives, and Relationships and influences beyond the multiple unit.
6. Initiated the **Constant Contact email program** through a private donation, using email outreach to share news with our full database of contacts which included over 4800 people.
7. Launched **two new Support Networks** in 2011: The LGBTQ network reaches out to lesbian gay bisexual trans and queer parents and multiple-birth individuals. The Chapter Support Network connects local Affiliate Chapter organizations with one another to share resources and best practices in supporting multiple-birth families.
8. Worked with Windsor POMBA to hold the **2011 National Conference: Families Multiplied, Friendships Amplified**, attended by 85 delegates from 15 Chapters, and a large group of educators and health-care professionals. In addition to hosting the Annual General Meeting and *Making a Difference Award* presentations, MBC led Chapter Exchange sessions and Support Network workshops.
9. Continued to **network with other multiple-birth organizations** through membership in the International Council of Multiple Birth Organizations (ICOMBO). MBC's Kim Weatherall chaired ICOMBO and held a Board position on the International Society for Twin Studies (ISTS).
10. Two national volunteers, Lynda Haddon and Gail Moore, were invited to give **presentations about MBC's work** at an international conference in the Czech Republic. Lynda spoke about MBC's Loss Support Network and Gail spoke about how MBC volunteers led the first International Multiple Births Awareness Week.



# Financial Statements

## 2012 Financial Report (April 1, 2011 to March 31, 2012)

Financial results for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2012 netted a small loss of \$703. Multiple Births Canada (MBC) has worked diligently to stick to its budget this past year. The Trillium Grant that was applied for by Windsor/Essex POMBA to host the 2011 National Conference and AGM was a success and this money once received by MBC was returned to Windsor/Essex POMBA. With the exception of this grant, MBC was short on their estimated revenue by \$3,207 which was mainly in the fundraising/commission income. MBC was also under budget in spending by \$2,504 which is great news as planning of the 2012 retreat was already underway. The main source of funding is membership fees which helps cover the costs of operating the Business Office. Special thanks to the Acting Executive Director and the Board of Directors for running such a successful organization on a very tight budget.

**2011 National Conference and Annual General Meeting-**MBC would like to thank Windsor/Essex POMBA for successfully hosting a conference with surplus funds in the end. As per the 2011 Conference Grant Agreement, one third of this surplus was forwarded to MBC.

Year Ended March 31, 2012 (unaudited)	2012		2011
	Actual	Budget	Actual
<b>Revenues</b>			
Memberships	\$ 18,399	\$ 17,000	\$ 21,327
Multiple Moments Subscriptions	228	100	5,925
Conference Income	21,225	4,500	6,951
Sponsorships	2,000	2,000	3,500
Publications/Resources	1,832	2,250	2,455
Donations/Fundraising	8,716	5,000	4,453
Advertising	1,440	3,000	1,000
Commission/Affiliate income	1,703	3,700	2,425
	<b>\$ 55,543</b>	<b>\$ 37,550</b>	<b>\$ 48,035</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
Board of Directors Expenses	\$ 3,727	\$ 5,200	\$ 140
Business office	19,315	20,410	19,285
Conference/Interim Meetings	26,531	4,000	14,248
Insurance	1,126	1,100	1,122
Miscellaneous	3,501	3,540	1,134
Multiple Moments	625	1,000	6,556
Publications	1,421	2,300	2,357
	<b>\$ 56,246</b>	<b>\$ 37,550</b>	<b>\$ 44,842</b>
<b>Excess of revenues over expenses</b>			
(expenses over revenue)	\$ (703)		\$ 3,193
Surplus, beginning of year	4,337		1,144
<b>Surplus, end of year</b>	<b>\$ 3,634</b>		<b>\$ 4,337</b>

### Donors, Sponsors & Sustaining Members

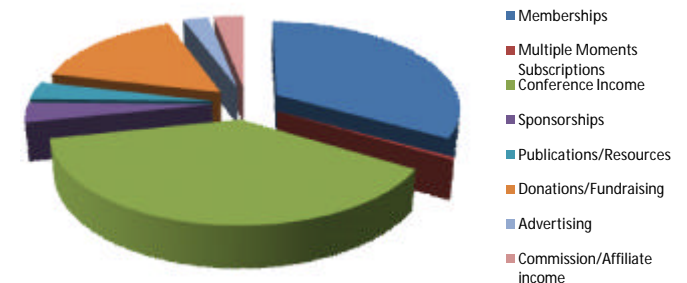
Sheila Catto	Vicki Riley
Shirley Combden	Darrell & Theresa
Kevin Fritz	Sanders
Nicholas Gray	Bonnie & Jim Schultz
Lynda P. Haddon	Lynn Stadler
Donna Launslager	Bonnie Stone -
Erin Little	Pozniak
Gail Moore	Triplets, Quads &
Diane Myers	Quints (TQQ)
Darlene Nagy	Kimberley Weatherall
Lori Oldfield	

### Donations & Sponsorships in 2011-2012

Multiple Births Canada received numerous donations and sponsorships, including in-kind donations, from our national volunteers and other generous people, groups and companies. Thank you to everyone who helped MBC through fiscal 2012.

**With special mention** to EMD Serono Canada Inc. for its monetary donation to assist with funding MBC core operations, Assisted Human Reproduction Canada for their donation and distribution of brochures, and to Bonnie Schultz for her donation towards the purchase of Constant Contact Email Service.

### Revenues for the year ended March 31, 2012



### Expenses for the year ended March 31, 2012



# Partnerships

## Assisted Human Reproduction Canada (AHRC)

MBC's partnership with Assisted Human Reproduction Canada was mutually beneficial this past year. Not only did it enhance MBC's reputation as the national advocate for multiple-birth families, AHRC was a beneficiary as MBC provided expert guidance to produce resource materials for sharing with Canadian families dealing with fertility issues. These materials gave important information (updated MBC Fact Sheets listed on page 7 of this report) about the risks of multiple pregnancies. MBC's involvement with AHRC also allowed us to develop a stronger relationship with other organizations, including the Canadian Fertility and Andrology Society (CFAS), the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (SOGC) and family doctors.

We also had a representative on the following AHRC committees - Patient Committee, Editorial Committee and the Healthy Singleton Birth Committee. Regretfully, in March 2012 the Government of Canada alerted AHRC that they would be winding up operations in the coming year and shifting some of its mandate back to Health Canada. MBC will continue the work started with AHRC by pursuing an ongoing relationship with this federal agency.



## International Society for Twin Studies (ISTS)

The International Society for Twin Studies (ISTS) is an international, nonpolitical, nonprofit, multidisciplinary scientific organization. Its purpose is to further research and public education in all fields related to twins and twin studies, for the mutual benefit of twins, their families and scientific research. MBC continues to be an active member of this organization thanks to the involvement of MBC volunteer Kimberley Weatherall and MBC Advisory Board members Dr. Jon Barrett and Jane Denton. As Board members on the ISTS, this year they reviewed abstracts and prepared the programme for the Joint 2nd World Congress on Twin Pregnancy and The 14th Congress of the International Society Twin Studies (ISTS) taking place in June of 2012.



## International Council of Multiple Birth Organizations (ICOMBO)

The mission of the International Council of Multiple Birth Organisations (ICOMBO) is to raise awareness of the unique needs of multiple-birth infants, children, adults and their families promoting their health, education and welfare. ICOMBO enables individuals and multiple-birth organizations to share and develop resources.

MBC national volunteer Kimberley Weatherall continued to serve as Chair of the ICOMBO this past year. In addition to preparing for the 14th ISTS Congress, Kim and the ICOMBO Board of Directors focused their efforts on preparing and distributing Newsletters, producing an international survey, launching an ICOMBO logo, and developing a new website.



# National Multiple Births Awareness Day



**The theme for 2011 was:**

*"Prenatal education and professional support must reflect the unique needs of Canada's multiple-birth community."*

The communication plan included an outreach to professionals delivering prenatal education courses in Canada.

A survey was administered to assess if multiple-birth specific information was being provided during these courses. The survey findings were released at the National Conference. Both documents are posted on the MBC Website.

**In choosing this theme, the goal was to help multiple-birth parents:**

- Increase chances of delivering healthy multiples at or close to full term;
- Recognize signs that a possible problem with the pregnancy may be developing and seek help early;
- Make essential plans for welcoming two or more babies into their lives;
- Gain the confidence and knowledge needed to take on the unrelenting demands of parenting twins, triplets or more; and
- Be an informed participant with health professionals in making decisions ensuring the best possible outcomes for mother, babies and the family.

To support the Awareness Day activities, MBC provided the following:

## **Local Outreach:**

- Local Action Plan
- Media Release
- Supporting Documents

## **National Outreach:**

- Survey to determine scope/availability of multiple birth prenatal classes
- Distribution of the survey nationally to health units
- Assessment of the results and documented findings
- Media release announcing results and posted on the website

Key survey findings were: many Canadian families manage their multiple birth pregnancy with no direct support from a pre-natal multiple birth course. There are many courses that do not address multiple pregnancy issues and/or where courses are available they are not promoted adequately.

Many of our member Chapters and other multiple-birth organizations across Canada celebrated with their families in a variety of ways:

- Brant Multiples 'N' More celebrated at Kidtastick Indoor Play Centre in Brantford
- Chatham-Kent Multiple Births Association held a family event at the Chatham Ontario Early Years Centre Kitchener-Waterloo POMBA went to the Waterloo Park for a fun gathering
- Durham Parents of Multiples went to Whitby Heydenshore Park for a picnic
- Saskatoon Parents of Twins and Triplets Organization celebrated with cake and balloons at their spring sale
- Temiskaming Multiple Births held a BBQ at the New Liskeard Waterfront
- The Simcoe County Parents of Multiples celebrated with a picnic at Couchiching Park in Orillia



# Multiple Births Canada Resources

## OFFICE

Acting Executive Director, Kimberley Weatherall, is MBC's sole half-time staff member, and runs an extremely busy MBC Office from her home in the Ottawa area.

The MBC office receives weekly inquiries from:

- New and expectant parents of multiples looking for MBC Chapters (calls from areas where no Chapters exist are referred to non-member groups);
- Parents wanting information on clothing sales;
- Those interested in studying or contacting multiple-birth children or parents;
- Professionals seeking more information from MBC to help in their support of multiple-birth families in their communities;
- Media needing multiple-birth information;
- MBC members and Chapters needing support;
- Parents wishing to form a new Chapter.

This year, Kim devoted many hours to working with our lawyers and the Board to prepare the application to become a charity; coordinating the 2012 Volunteer Retreat; and supporting MBC's work with Assisted Human Reproduction Canada.

She also performed administrative tasks; contacted potential advertisers and funders; coordinated our affiliate and discount program; liaised with National Conference hosts; and worked closely with the MBC Board of Directors.



## PUBLICATIONS

MBC published **9 new Fact Sheets in 2011**: seven sponsored through the Assisted Human Reproduction Canada (AHRC) project, as well as the Multiple-Births Facts and Figures and Memorial Ideas completed by the H&E committee.

The new or updated Fact Sheets have now been posted online. AHRC paid MBC to produce the first seven titles, and in 2012 will pay to have them translated into French.

All of these titles are available for free public download so that anyone in Canada can read them and learn more about multiple births.

Multiple Births: the Possible Risks:

- Part 1: Risks for the Mother
- Part 2: Risks to the Children
- Part 3: Reducing the Risks
- Monochorionic Multiple Pregnancy and Twin to Twin Transfusion Syndrome
- Biology of Multiples
- Challenges of Parenting Multiples:
  - Part 1: Couple Relationships
  - Part 2: Twins & Higher Order Multiples
  - Multiple Birth Facts & Figures
  - Memorial Ideas

A list of all of the MBC Fact Sheets can be found under Publications on the MBC website.

# Multiple Births Canada Resources

## Website

**Lori Oldfield and her husband D'Arcy** continue to volunteer as MBC's webmasters. Lori works tirelessly to update our web pages with new reports, advertisements, notices and documents, to manage MBC's emails and maintain the whole system on a weekly, even daily basis. We would like to give a special thank you to **Jennifer Schultz** for taking the time to do a full audit of our current site making recommendations for changes, updates and removals.

## New Website Design

In an effort to improve our accessibility to new, expectant or current families with multiples, professionals caring for multiples and all other stakeholders with an interest in multiple-birth issues, MBC has been looking at ways to improve, update and upgrade our website.

In 2012, Board members, our Acting Executive Director and a generous volunteer, Stephen Van Esch, analysed the current website (designed in 2003/launched in 2004) to move towards developing an upgraded and more user-friendly website. Stephen, a member of Multiple Births Guelph-Wellington, offered his expertise and services as a web designer/programmer to create the new MBC website on a pro-bono basis. The plan is a new website to be launched in the Fall of 2012.

We thank **Stephen Van Esch**, owner of [www.messagerocket.com](http://www.messagerocket.com), for all of his assistance in making this very important goal for MBC become a reality.

## Aviva Community Fund Competition

Hats off to the wonderful MBC Supporters who voted daily for MBC's idea in the Aviva Community Fund Contest in November and December 2011.

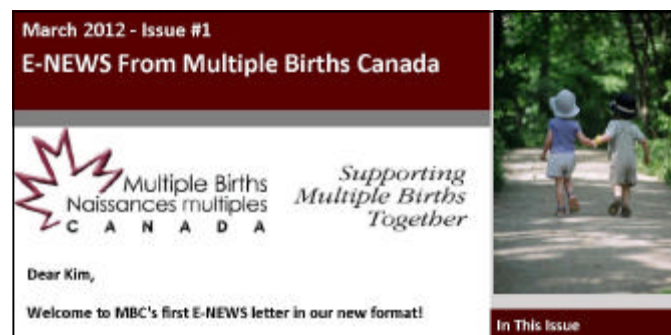
We are most grateful to all those who took the time to show their support to all multiple-birth families. While MBC did not win funding for our website, this was a great opportunity to raise awareness of the needs of multiple-birth children and families. We created two new promotional

videos (posted on YouTube) about the risks of preterm birth for multiples, and the ways that MBC provides education and support.

- The first video called "MBC" is about twins, triplets and more born prematurely or with a low birth weight.
- The second video called "Aviva 2" has more facts and statistics on multiple births, and why families need information and support.

Thank you **Erin Little** and **Lori Oldfield** for creating the videos very quickly, and to everyone who contributed their beautiful family photos.

## Constant Contact Communication Tool



In March 2011, MBC launched a new communication tool to create a more efficient and visually appealing update from our organization E-NEWS. MBC thanks **Bonnie Schultz**, Past Chair and former Business Services Manager for her very generous sponsorship of the program Constant Contact for one year.

## Social Media

MBC's private Facebook group for members continues to be a valuable forum for members to connect, and to receive news and information. In the past year MBC has developed additional Facebook groups for conference delegates and members of some of the Support Networks. MBC also has a "fan page" and Twitter account for sharing news with the public.



# Support Networks

The nine **National Support Networks** connect multiple-birth families with circumstances in common across Canada.

In the summer of 2011, MBC welcomed Tania Zulkoskey as the chair of the new **LGBTQ Network** for multiple-birth families, including parents or children who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer. The network offers support through one-to-one discussions, online forums, facilitating community connections, and regular articles in Multiple Moments magazine.

In the fall of 2011 MBC gave our affiliate Chapter organizations a continuing connection through the **Chapter Support Network**, chaired by Heather McAuley of POMBA Windsor. Through workshops at the national conference, emails, stories in Multiple Moments and networking on Facebook, as well, the local organizations share questions, advice and best practices in supporting multiple-birth families.

The **Higher Order Multiples Network** sends out free information to parents expecting triplets, quadruplets or more. MBC offers several publications including the newly updated Fact Sheet on *the Challenges of Parenting Twins and Higher Order Multiples*, and helps to connect families through email, social networking and magazine articles.

Sadly, our former Chair Vanessa Luce passed away from cancer in January 2012. She is dearly missed by her many MBC friends and all the families she connected with over the past 5 years. Sheila Catto became acting network Chair in December 2011.

The **Breastfeeding Network** connects members through a monthly

e-newsletter, *The Milky Way*, sharing stories and answering questions about breastfeeding twins or more at one time. A series of 11 Fact Sheets on all aspects of breastfeeding and regular magazine articles keep all MBC members informed.

The **Special Needs Network** publishes a monthly e-newsletter, *All Children are Special*, discussing topics of concern to parents with one or more multiple-birth children diagnosed with special needs. Personal referrals to resources, several Fact Sheets and magazine articles help families find support from others who understand their situation.

The **Lone Parent Network** welcomed a new Chair, Debbie Zen, in the fall of 2011. This network offers publications, information and email support to single parents, whether due to divorce, death, military posting, or single by choice.

The **Loss Network** offers a monthly e-newsletter, *Forever Angels*, for bereaved families after miscarriage or loss of one or more multiple-birth infants or children. A series of Fact Sheets on loss and grief and regular articles in Multiple Moments offer support to those who are mourning.

The **Father Support Network** offers an opportunity for dads of twins, triplets or more to connect with other fathers and share parenting tips, stories and experiences.

The **Francophone Network** connects multiple-birth families who speak French, with a regular column in Multiple Moments magazine and a series of publications en français. MBC is working on translating 8 new Fact Sheets into French to add to our library of resources online.



# Health and Education Committee Report



In October 2011, Donna Launslager stepped down from her long-standing position as Chair of the Health and Education Committee. MBC Research Coordinator, Jenna Kelland agreed to take on the position of Chair. We would like to thank Donna for her years of service and involvement in developing resources to support multiple-birth families.

MBC welcomed one new Health and Education Committee member: Rose Czarnuch. Rose and Kim Krueger have been involved in reviewing resources and responding to email requests for advice and resources.

Jenna Kelland in her role as Chair and MBC Research Coordinator has updated fact sheets, responded to email requests for research assistance, and communicated with external researchers planning or conducting research with multiples. She also presented about the challenges of supporting families with multiples at the Motherhood Initiative for Research and Community Involvement conference in Toronto in October 2011.

Donna Launslager continued to work with Assisted Human Reproduction Canada, serving on their Editorial Committee, and completing seven new MBC Fact Sheets to be used as background for their new Multiple Births Patient Education Project and updated website. Donna was the lead writer and editor for the Fact Sheet project and consulted with a number of MBC's Advisory Board members and national volunteers for input and review.

Lynda Haddon helped with reviewing AHRC project submissions and updating fact sheets. She also attended the Ottawa Valley Lactation Consultants' Annual Conference (April 2011) where she hosted a table with MBC support literature. In October 2011 she travelled to Prague to attend the first Czech Multiple Birth Conference and gave a paper on the effect of losing one, more or all multiple-birth infants or toddlers and the implications for surviving co-multiples. In March 2012, she was interviewed by the Ottawa Citizen regarding loss in multiple-birth in conjunction with MBFA's 50th Anniversary.

As a committee, we updated and reviewed 9 fact sheets that were launched at the October 2011 MBC Conference:

- Possible Risks: Part 1 Risk to the Mother \*
- Possible Risks: Part 2 Risk to the Children \*
- Possible Risks: Part 3 Reducing the Risks \*
- Monochorionic Multiple Pregnancy and Twin to Twin Transfusion Syndrome \* (revised)
- Biology of Multiples (revised) \*
- Challenges of Parenting Multiples: Part 1 Couple Relationships \*
- Challenges of Parenting Multiples: Part 2 Twins and Higher Order Multiples \*
- Memorial Ideas... (revised)
- Multiple Births Facts and Figures (revised) \*

*\* The AHRC will pay for these Fact Sheets to be translated into French in 2012.*

The committee has continued to identify fact sheets that need updating and revising during the next year.

# Volunteers Supporting Multiple Births Canada

## HEALTH AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE

**Rose Czarnuch**, Whitby, ON

**Lynda P. Haddon**, Perth, ON

**Jenna Kelland**, Edmonton, AB

**Kim Krueger**, Edmonton, AB

**Donna Launslager**, Waterloo, ON

**Diane Myers**, Moffat, ON

**Vera Teschow**, Toronto, ON

## SUPPORT NETWORK CHAIRS

**Murielle Dietrich**, Kirkland Lake, ON  
Francophone Support Network

**Lynda P. Haddon**, Perth, ON  
Breastfeeding Support Network and  
Loss Support Network

**Vanessa Luce**, Oakville, ON (to Dec. 2011)  
Higher Order Multiples Support Network

**Sheila Catto** - Saskatoon, SK (from Jan. 2012)  
Higher Order Multiples Support Network

**Eric Novak**, Ajax, ON  
Father Support Network

**Theresa Sanders**, Lefroy, ON  
Special Needs Support Network

**Melissa Wray**, Sarnia, ON  
Lone Parents Support Network (to Oct. 2011)

**Debbie Zen**, Guelph, ON  
Lone Parents Support Network (to Oct. 2011)

**Heather McAuley**, Windsor, ON  
Chapter Support Network (from Oct. 2011)

**Tania Zulkoskey**, Vancouver, BC  
LGBTQ Support Network (from July 2011)

## STAFF

**Kimberley Weatherall** - Acting Executive  
Director, Orleans, ON

## OTHER VALUABLE VOLUNTEERS

**Theresa Sanders**, Membership Coordinator &  
Making a Difference Awards Chair (from Oct.  
2011)

**Jennifer Schultz**, Multiple Moments Editor

**Lori and D'Arcy Oldfield**, Webmasters

**Alison Pilz**, Multiple Moments Layout

**Kim Skublics**, Multiple Moments Book Reviewer

**Vicki Riley**, Publications Coordinator

**Lynn Stadler**, Making a Difference Awards Chair  
(to Oct. 2011)

**Gerlinde Rup**, Volunteer Coordinator (from Nov.  
2011)

**Nicole Fisher**, Multiple Moments Website  
Reviewer and Facebook Moderator

**Murielle and Pascal Dietrich**, French Translation



## ADVISORY BOARD

**Dr. Fiona Bamforth**, MSc, FRCPC, University of  
Alberta Hospital, Edmonton

**Dr. Cathy Barr**, PhD., Imagine Canada, Guelph

**Dr. Jon Barrett**, MBBCh, M.D., MRCOG, FRCS(C),  
Sunnybrook & Women's College Health Sciences  
Centre, Toronto

**Dr. Alan Bocking**, M.D., FRCSC, Professor &  
Chairman, Dept. of Obstetrics & Gynaecology,  
University of Toronto

**Laura Crouse**, R.N., BScN, IBCLC, RNm Mount Sinai  
Hospital, Toronto

**Jane Denton**, Director Multiple Births Foundation,  
Herford, UK

**Dr. Audrey Huberman**, Ed.D., Curriculum,  
Teaching & Learning, Private Practice, Toronto

**Dr. K.L. Jang**, Ph.D. Assistant Professor,  
Department of Psychiatry, University of BC,  
Vancouver

**Dr. Louis Keith**, M.D., Northwestern University  
Medical School, Center for the Study of Multiple  
Birth, Chicago, IL

**Jean Kollantai**, Founder, Center for Loss in Multiple  
Birth (CLIMB) Inc., Anchorage, AK

**Linda G. Leonard**, M.S.N., R.N., Twin/Triplet  
Specialist, University of BC, Vancouver

**Patricia Malmstrom**, M.A., Twin Services  
Consulting, Berkeley, CA

**Pat Preedy**, PhD., Education Specialist, West  
Midlands, UK

**Cheryl Wadasinghe**, Government Advisor, Nepean.



# Volunteers Making a Difference 2011 - 2012

The **Making a Difference Awards** were presented on Saturday October 15th, 2011 at the annual MBC Conference and AGM in Windsor, Ontario. These awards are given to honour and acknowledge some of our many volunteers within the MBC network that have made an impact on our communities, country and the world. This year, awards were presented in the following categories:



## Corporate Category

The first recipient of the "**NEW**" **Corporate Award** is **Kevin Fritz and Nick Grey of the law firm Wildeboer Dellelce LLP, of Toronto.**

Since Wildeboer Dellelce LLP made the decision to offer its legal services pro bono to MBC to assist our application to become a registered charity, Kevin Fritz and his articling student Nick Grey spent many hours reviewing MBC's past application, our existing articles of incorporation and by-laws, and making recommendations on how Multiple Births Canada could position itself for a successful new application to become a registered Charity. Kevin was there for MBC every step of the way in helping us prepare our Charitable Status application. Kevin went above and beyond in gaining an extensive understanding of MBC's work, its staff and volunteers and its support of Canada's multiple-birth community. If successful, the impact of MBC becoming a registered charity will last for many years!

## Dionne Adult Award

This year the **Dionne Adult Award** was presented to an adult twin who truly does make a difference in her community - **Barb Cunningham.**

Barb has been volunteering with the Temiskaming Chapter for the last 5 years. Although she is in her 70's, she likes to come out to gatherings and pitch in wherever help is needed. Whether it is offering up bake sale goodies, selling Boo-Boo kits, working bingos, or getting out for the Mom's Nights and sharing stories, Barb is always there to help out whenever she hears of a family in need.



## Media Category

The 2011 **Media award** was presented to **Jill Mahoney of the Globe and Mail.** In 2009, as the Globe's social trends reporter, Jill started covering the EI benefits story of Multiples parents Christian Martin and Paula Critchley. She produced many articles on the topic of EI and multiple-birth family issues in an objective and fair manner. Her most recent article in January 2011 explored the position of the "Government arguing that Child Development was not linked to length of parental leave"...and again in this article she made

reference to the Martin Case. Jill is an award winning journalist whose stories are published nationally and internationally thus ensuring additional awareness of this important issue.



## International Category

This year's recipient of the **International MADA Award** is **Gail Moore.** Along with Gail's volunteer commitments with MBC as a Board Member from 2004-2011, Gail served as Vice Chair on the Board of the International Council of Multiple Births (ICOMBO) from 2007 to 2010. In this role, Gail represented Multiple Births Canada with her participation as an ICOMBO Board Member and by attending both the 2007 and 2010 Congresses in Belgium and South Korea. In 2007 Gail gave a presentation at the International Society of Twin Studies Congress in Belgium about

Canada's successful experience creating a National Multiple Births Awareness Day (led by Gail in 2005) and the resulting increase in media and public attention for the needs of multiple-birth families. This presentation helped other national multiple-birth organizations to celebrate their own Awareness Days, Weeks and even Months, worldwide.

Gail's example and leadership encouraged the Board of ICOMBO to launch the first International Multiple Births Awareness Week and to complete a very

# Volunteers Making a Difference 2011 - 2012

significant update and launch of the **International Declaration of Rights and Statement of Needs of Twins and Higher Order Multiples**. Gail designed a media package and communications plan for ICOMBO to assist multiple-birth organizations internationally to celebrate the Awareness Week, hold events and promote the Declaration document. None of this would have happened without Gail's leadership, careful planning, long hours of work, and encouragement to many national organization leaders. This is a legacy that we hope will continue within ICOMBO and other multiple-birth organizations in countries around the world, and we can be proud that Multiple Births Canada had a role in making that happen through the hard work and dedication of one of our very own volunteers.

## National Category



The **National MADA Award** was presented to multiple birth parents **Christian Martin and Paula Critchley**, for taking the need for fairness in EI benefits for multiple birth families to its highest level of visibility in our national media and in our courts.

Their journey started in 2008 when they were told they were expecting twins. As both parents were working and both were qualified to receive parental leave benefits, they both applied

for parental leave with each parent claiming for one child. Originally turned down by EI, they appealed the decision and with the help of their attorney Stephen Moreau, they took their case to a Board of Referees. In a ground breaking the decision, the federal board of three referees granted them the right to receive EI benefits for two full parental leaves.

Unfortunately the Government appealed this decision and the case was sent to an EI Umpire. In February 2011, Christian, Paula and Stephen argued their case but the Umpire unfortunately sided with the government and the original decision to deny the benefits for both.

Regardless of the fact that the Umpire sided with the government, their work continues. Their girls are already a few years old but the couple have plans to appeal the Umpire's decision and take this to the Federal Court of Appeal! Throughout this process, Christian has been available for interviews and has

written articles about their plight. To quote an article interviewing Christian.... *"At this point, I'm doing this to try to make a difference," said Mr. Martin, a 35-year-old researcher. "I really see this as being a problem that affects a lot of people and if this can get resolved at some point in the future ... it'll make a difference to a lot of people's lives."*

## Local Category



The MADA award in the **Local Category** was presented to **Heather McAuley**. It has been said that a leader is one who can help their fellow citizen by leveraging their ideas and talents through the work of others. Heather McAuley has been a leading example of someone who takes charge and gets things done. Over the years Heather has held many positions within her chapter of Windsor/Essex POMBA. A list of Heather's accomplishments and activities would be

very long, and would show her boundless energy and enthusiasm. But the recurring theme throughout her nominations was that Heather has the ability to make everyone feel welcome, and to inspire others to help make her visions a reality. It was Heather who had a vision for developing a multiples focused prenatal class in Windsor. It is now called "Greater Expectations" and has run many successful sessions so far.

When the Windsor Chapter started thinking about hosting the 2011 Conference, it was Heather who stepped up and got the 'ball' rolling. As Chair of the 2011 Conference committee, she has been the driving force behind her team of 19 that made the 2011 Conference and AGM a great success! In the words of one nominator *"Heather has a way of not only rolling with the punches but helping others roll with their punches as well!"*

**Volunteer Service Recognition** - In October 2011, MBC celebrated the following volunteers who were awarded for their long-term dedication and services as volunteers with MBC. Congratulations to Pat Harber and Kim Skublics for 10 years; and Heather Scher and Vanessa Luce for 5 years of service to MBC.

***Congratulations to all the recipients of the 2011 Volunteer Awards!***

# 2011 AGM and Conference



## **Families Multiplied....Friendships Amplified**

**(October 13-16, 2011)**

Hosted by Windsor/Essex POMBA at the  
Hilton in Downtown Windsor

Delegates representing 15 chapters from across the county arrived in Windsor ready for learning, laughter and fun. Windsor/Essex-POMBA wanted everyone to learn something about their chapter, something about their multiples and something about themselves. We are thrilled to report that this goal was accomplished.

Our three Keynote Speakers were Dr. Barbara Luke, Matt Bubala and Alyson Schafer. Each presentation was a unique view on having, raising and flourishing with multiple families. We learned that ice cream is a good snack, to remember the empty swing and to challenge the labels our children are given.

In addition, our featured speakers Win Harwood and Dr. Audrey Huberman gave us insight into discipline techniques and family dynamics with multiples.

The weekend had two types of workshops. Friday's sessions for parents included: finding balance in your life, bra fitting and breast health, stress relief, multiples in school, multiples and their peers, feeding a picky eater and prenatal class ideas.

On Saturday the workshops were short sessions providing meeting ideas that Chapters could hold back home. Everything from CPR, self defence, laughing yoga, fitness, pampering, vacation idea, de-cluttering ideas, cooking, cake decorating, card making and clothing sale computer ideas. There were also support networks sessions for Dads, lone parenting, higher order multiples and breastfeeding.

Even meals got in on the fun aspect of the weekend. On Friday delegates hit the streets of downtown Windsor, visiting popular restaurants for a meal of their choice. Friday evening delegates were surprised with an evening of mystery, with a murder mystery dinner. Saturday we travelled by bus, with guided tours, to Place Concorde for our formal dinner and awards ceremony.

Windsor/Essex POMBA was fortunate to secure funding from a variety of sources. The Ontario Trillium Foundation approved our grant application and we also receive large donations from Bell Media AM800, CAW local 444, Place Concorde and Windsor Regional Hospital. In addition many local Windsor businesses donated prizes and gave us discounts.

Thanks to everyone who attended the MBC Conference 2011. Your participation was crucial to a successful weekend. Thanks also to everyone who volunteered their time to make this a great weekend.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Heather McAuley'.

Heather McAuley  
Co-Chair, 2011 AGM and Conference  
Windsor/Essex POMBA





# 2011 AGM and Conference



# *Supporting Multiple Births Together...*



*Multiple Births Canada gratefully acknowledges the work of the many individuals who volunteer and make a difference in the lives of multiple-birth families across Canada. While we are unable to mention everyone within the Annual Report each year, MBC feels strongly about the support we receive from the hundreds of volunteers who work daily to support multiple-birth families in their communities and nationally. We also recognize, and thank, all the families of these volunteers for supporting the work they do in an effort to improve the lives of multiple-birth individuals and their families.*

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**[www.multiplebirthscanada.org](http://www.multiplebirthscanada.org)**