



*Supporting Multiple
Births Together...*



2011 ANNUAL REPORT

April 1, 2010 - March 31, 2011

www.multiplebirthscanada.org



Board of Directors

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

Shirley Combden - Treasurer, Director of Finance, Edmonton, AB (from September 2010)

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

Todd Ohman - Director, Nepean, ON

Lori Oldfield - Director, Morriston, ON (from September 2010)

Lynn Stadler - Secretary, Director, Rockwood, ON (from September 2010)

Kimberley Weatherall - Director of Volunteer Management, Orleans, ON (until September 2010)

Message from the Multiple Births Canada Board of Directors

It's been an exciting and busy year for the Directors. Our focus has been multiplied three-fold as we continue to support Canada's multiple-birth community while enhancing our educational mandate through partnerships and preparing to submit a charitable application for Multiple Births Canada (MBC). It's a lot like being a mother of triplets!

Seriously, it has been a hectic time for our organization, but the results will surely be worth the effort. The Board started our fiscal year by consulting with lawyers to assess MBC's potential to be successful should we apply to become a **registered charity**. That inquiry resulted in MBC holding a Special General Meeting in March 2011. That meeting and documents approved that day were valuable steps toward our charitable application, which is expected to be submitted in the fall of 2011.

Our partnership with **Assisted Human Reproduction Canada** gives MBC a voice to discuss the concerns of multiple-birth families with this regulatory agency, with health care professionals and with patient groups who may use assisted reproduction techniques, a leading cause of multiple births. MBC identified this need back in 2008 when our National Multiple Births Awareness Day theme was *"Multiple Births Canada encourages all health care professionals providing fertility advice and/or treatments to fully disclose all risks associated with a multiple pregnancy and birth, including all negative and positive outcomes, to enable patients to make informed decisions."* To be at this point now is an indicator that our call to awareness is being supported nationally by all involved stakeholders.

MBC continues to respond to the needs of our **multiple-birth community**, including the professionals who provide health, education and social services to them. With the help of many dedicated volunteers, MBC is the go-to specialist for educational resources with over 80 publications, and direct support with seven national Support Networks, website updates and social networking via Facebook and Twitter. We celebrated multiple births in Ottawa on National Multiple Births Awareness Day, and in Edmonton in September 2010 at the first National Conference in western Canada in over a decade. We also continue to liaise with international multiple-birth groups. Through ICOMBO and the *Declaration of Rights and Statement of Needs of Twins and Higher Order Multiples*, our volunteers have led the way in speaking for the rights and needs of multiple-birth children and adults around the world.

Yes, it has been a demanding twelve months, and we can thank our many volunteers and our Advisory Board for the countless hours they have put into advancing this important work. The Board is proud of the many achievements detailed in this Annual Report.

Sheila M. Catto

Sheila Catto, Board Chair

On behalf of the Multiple Births Canada Board of Directors

Top Ten Achievements in Canada

1. Appointed and began working with Toronto law firm Wildeboer Dellelce to prepare and submit an **application to become a registered charity** in Canada.
2. Hosted a **Special Member's Meeting** to amend MBC's corporate documents and bylaws for our charitable application. The meeting held in Toronto in March 2011 was followed by an update on the EI legal challenge, workshops and Chapter Exchanges.
3. Worked with Edmonton Twin and Triplet Club to host the **2010 National Conference - *Our Lives with Twins, Triplets and More...Where Friendship Begins*** in September 2010. In addition to hosting the Annual General Meeting and Making a Difference Awards presentation, MBC led the Chapter Exchange workshops providing handouts and follow up reports on eight topics: volunteer recruitment, retaining volunteers, publicity and outreach, program ideas, member retention, fundraising, member communications, and developing peer relationships.
4. Continued to hold key positions on the **Assisted Human Reproduction Canada (AHRC) Multiple Births Patient Education Committee** and the **Editorial Committee**, to provide MBC's expertise for the development of appropriate educational products, and represent the multiple-birth community.
5. Partnered with AHRC to create **new educational materials** outlining the risks of multiple births, with a particular focus on the psycho-social challenges, based on the content from seven new or updated MBC Fact Sheets.
6. Finalized the production of a new **MBC Poster and Brochure**, making them available to professionals and multiple-birth organizations across Canada. Copies were distributed to delegates at the MBC National Conference in Edmonton in September 2010.
7. The **MBC brochures were sent to 2500 members of the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (SOGC)** in October 2010 with the assistance of AHRC, and were sent to many health clinics, fertility specialists and physicians at their request.
8. Coordinated national celebrations and developed communication materials for the **2010 National Multiple Births Awareness Day**, highlighting the theme: "*Canada's EI Parental Leave must reflect the needs of multiple-birth infants*".
9. Created a **new Support Network for families of multiple births**: the *Father Support Network*, supporting fathers of multiples, with a quarterly column in *Multiple Moments* magazine.
10. Began distributing **Multiple Moments** magazine in electronic format free to all MBC members, as of January 2011.



Top 3 International Achievements

1. MBC national volunteer Donna Launslager led the 2010 update of the ***Declaration of Rights and Statement of Needs of Twins and Higher Order Multiples***, which was later presented by Gail Moore to international delegates at the International Congress on Twin Studies in Seoul, South Korea, in June 2010.
2. Continued representation internationally through MBC national volunteer Kimberley Weatherall, in her position as **Chair of the International Council of Multiple Birth Organizations (ICOMBO)**, and Board position on the International Society for Twin Studies (ISTS) for two year terms. MBC Volunteers Kimberley Weatherall and Gail Moore organized and led the bi-annual meeting and workshop sessions for ICOMBO in Seoul, South Korea, in June 2010.
3. Organized and led the communication efforts, through the work of MBC national volunteer Gail Moore, for the first **International Multiple Births Awareness Week** held November 1-7, 2010, promoting the newly updated *Declaration of Rights and Statement of Needs of Twins and Higher Order Multiples*.

Donations & Sponsorships in 2010 – 2011



2010-2011 Special Acknowledgements

A Perfect Party by Cody
Assisted Human
Reproduction Canada
Bonnie Schultz
Donna Launslager
Gail Moore
Kevin Fritz
Kim Weatherall
Lori Oldfield
Lynda Haddon
Lynn Stadler
Mabel's Labels
Nancy Lomax
Nicholas Gray
Primetime IFG/ING
Sabine Ehgoetz
Sheila Catto
Shirley Combden
Stephen Moreau
Stuck on You
Terracycle
Todd Ohman
Vicki Riley

2011 Financial Report

April 1, 2010 to March 31, 2011

Financial results for the fiscal 2010-2011 show a net income of \$3,193. This is a result of MBC recognizing revenue as it is received rather than accruing membership fees and Multiple Moments subscriptions. The membership fees received help cover the costs of operating the business office. The Acting Executive Director and the Board of Directors were diligent in their financial monitoring of expenses while successfully maintaining operations on such a minimal budget.

Donations & Sponsorships in 2010-2011

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 2011, with special mention to EMD Serono Canada Inc. for its monetary donation to assist with funding MBC core operations.

Our continued appreciation to law firms Wildeboer Dellelce LLP for their support with the application to be a registered charity and to Cavalluzzo Hayes Shilton McIntyre & Cornish LLP for supporting families with their quest for equal parental leave through EI benefits.

2010 National Conference & Annual General Meeting

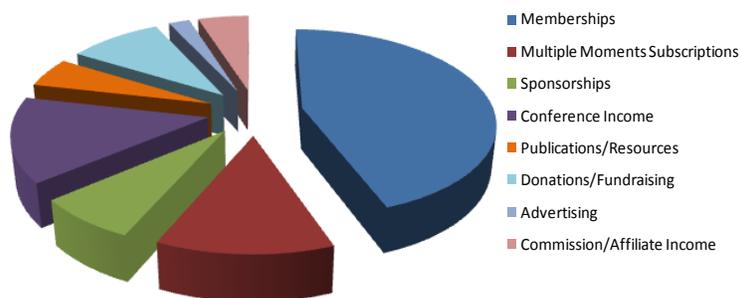
We thank the Edmonton Twin and Triplet Club for successfully hosting a conference resulting in a surplus. As per the 2010 Conference Grant Agreement, one third of this surplus was forwarded to MBC.

Sustaining Members

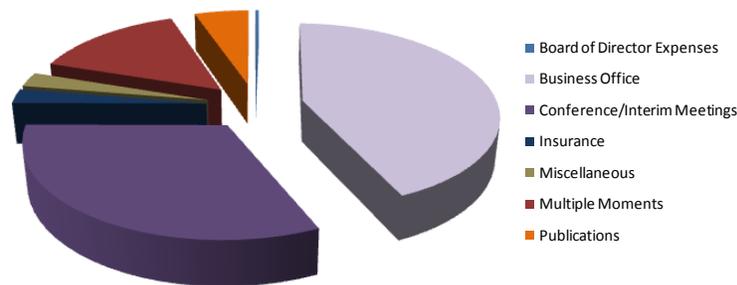
Debbie Jennings,
Belleville, ON
Donna Launslager,
Waterloo, ON
Diane Myers,
Moffat, ON
Bonnie Schultz,
Millarville, ON
Catherine Spreitzer,
Winnipeg, MB

Year ended March 31, 2011 (unaudited)	2010-2011		2009-10 Actual
	Actual	Budget	
Revenues			
Memberships	\$ 21,327	\$ 17,000	\$ 17,471
Multiple Moments Subscriptions	5,925	5,700	6,618
Sponsorships	3,500	500	3,500
Conference Income	6,950	1,000	18,028
Publications/Resources	2,455	2,700	2,722
Donations/Fundraising	4,453	4,500	4,521
Advertising	1,000	2,650	2,437
Commission/Affiliate Income	2,425	5,400	1,743
	\$ 48,035	\$ 39,450	\$ 57,040
Expenses			
Board of Director Expenses	\$ 140	\$ 200	\$ 80
Business Office	19,285	18,045	20,393
Conference/Interim Meetings	14,248	9,000	24,181
Insurance	1,122	1,100	1,090
Miscellaneous	1,134	1,555	3,617
Multiple Moments	6,556	7,250	7,165
Publications	2,357	2,300	2,302
	\$ 44,842	\$ 39,450	\$ 58,828
Excess of revenues over expenses (expenses over revenues)	\$ 3,193		\$ (1,788)
Surplus, beginning of year	1,144		2,932
Surplus, end of year	\$ 4,337		\$ 1,144

Revenues for the year ended March 31, 2011



Expenses for the year ended March 31, 2011



Volunteers Making a Difference 2010-2011

The **Making a Difference Awards** were presented at the MBC National Conference and AGM hosted by the Edmonton Twin and Triplet Club on September 25, 2010. The Making a Difference Awards were established in 1999 to acknowledge outstanding contributions and achievements in a number of different categories. This year there were three awards presented in the Media, National and Local categories.

The Local Award is presented to an individual who has displayed outstanding dedication or has been responsible for outstanding accomplishments of local significance in the field of multiple births in a local community in Canada. This year's award was presented to a 30 year "veteran" of the Edmonton Twin and Triplet Club - **Rose Danyliuk**. Rose has served in almost every capacity on the executive of the ETTC and still to this day helps out with events that her family have long outgrown. Rose was instrumental in piloting the ETTC Scholarship Fund, which continues to provide financial relief for many multiple-birth (and non-multiple-birth) families in and around the Edmonton area. Rose was part of the Conference Committee in Edmonton in 1997, and was still there to lend a hand at the 2010 conference. The list of her accomplishments is endless and she continues to be a force in the Edmonton area.

The National Award is presented to an individual who has displayed outstanding dedication or has been responsible for outstanding accomplishments of national significance in the field of multiple births in Canada. This year's award was presented to **Stephen Moreau** for his work in EI Parental Leave reform for Canadian multiple-birth families. Stephen (a father of twins) is a lawyer with the law firm - Cavalluzzo Hayes Shilton McIntyre & Cornish in Toronto. Not only did he successfully represent Christian Martin, who won his EI appeal in front of a Board of Referees in September 2009, Stephen continues to be a support for the many families who have followed that first case. Stephen has provided guidance, reassurance, and encouragement to those who believe that EI benefits do not address the needs of Canada's multiple-birth community, continuing to represent these families and the Martin case through its next appeal.

The Media Award is presented to an individual and/or newspaper, magazine, radio or television outlet that printed or aired a story in the previous year that created awareness of multiple birth issues, individual Chapters, or spotlighted MBC and/or Chapter initiatives. This year's award was presented to freelance writer **Diana Ballon**, and *Canadian Living Magazine*. Diana (a twin herself) produced an educational article, originally titled "Raising Twins (and Multiples)" for *Canadian Living Magazine's* April 2009 edition. It was well researched, written in a reader friendly style and acknowledged MBC throughout the article. The timing of the article also coincided with MBC's 2009 National Multiple Births Awareness Day theme on classroom placement. The article is still available on-line as a three part series titled *A guide to helping you raise twins*.

Volunteer Service Recognition In September 2010, MBC celebrated the following volunteers who were awarded for their long-term dedication and service as volunteers with Multiple Births Canada. Congratulations to **Diane Myers, Gail Moore and Vicki Riley** for their 10 years of service and to **Alison Pilz, Darlene Nagy, Lynn Stadler-Hawkins, Murielle Dietrich and Nancy Young** for their 5 years of service to MBC.

Congratulations to these very special individuals for all they have accomplished and for the difference they are making in Canada's multiple-birth community!



**Local Award
Rose Danyliuk**



**National Award
Stephen Moreau**



**Media Award
Diana Ballon**



2010 Theme:

"Canada's EI Parental Leave must reflect the needs of multiple-birth infants."

MBC chose this theme to encourage the Federal Government to review Canada's Employment Insurance Parental Leave Benefits for parents of multiple-birth infants, a call to dialogue which MBC initiated with its first National Multiple Births Awareness Day in 2005.

Theme chosen for 2011:

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

National Multiple Births Awareness Day

Key Messages:

The positive outcome of additional leave time for parents of multiples is:

- **Mothers have better support during pregnancy complications** - with a second parent at home, mothers have more time to rest and recover.
- **Parents can better focus on short or long term health problems of the infants** - with both parents home, or more weeks of leave, parents have more time to care for infants in hospital and at home, to attend many medical appointments or therapies, or to grieve the loss of one or more babies.
- **Primary caregiver is better equipped to handle physical and emotional stress** - with a second parent at home, or more weeks of leave, the parents can take shifts more easily and be less sleep deprived and less exhausted. They have more time to breastfeed, to bond with each baby individually, and to spend one-on-one time with each baby attending to their needs and promoting healthy development.
- **Parents can focus on their babies, not their financial challenges** - with longer paid parental leave, families will have less urgency to return to work, more financial resources to meet the increased costs of two or more babies, and more flexibility to work when it best meets their needs. Also there will be less need to seek daycare for the infants, which is difficult to find and extremely expensive for twins or more.
- **Babies will have better (quality and quantity) bonding time with parents** - parents will be provided with more opportunities to interact individually with their children, accomplishing the strong best start outcome desired from Canada's EI Parental Leave benefit.

Local Outreach - MBC provided supporters across Canada with:

- Local Action Plan
- Media Release
- Backgrounder
- Letter to the Editor - for local rally support
- Letter to Diane Finley - for letter writing campaign
- Letter to MPs - supporter letter for writing campaign
- How to Handle Comments

National Outreach – MBC contacted all federal MPs, held a supporter rally in Ottawa, and distributed the following:

- Speech delivered by Gail Moore, MBC Chair, on May 28th 2010 at Parliament Hill Rally in Ottawa, ON
- MBC's letter to Diane Finley
- Parental Leave Policies in other Countries

Multiple Births Canada's Resources

Office

In October 2010, Vicki Riley resigned as Business Services Manager, having taken a new full-time job. Vicki has chosen to continue volunteering as the Publications Coordinator. On behalf of all MBC members, the Board thanks Vicki for her past eight years of caring, dedication, hard work and passion for MBC.

The Board of Directors appointed an Acting Executive Director to take charge of some executive work previously handled by the Board of Directors, as well as most of the Business Services Manager duties, and additional tasks as assigned. The paid position of Acting Executive Director was offered and accepted by Kimberley Weatherall, Past Chair of MBC, effective October 2010. The Board will work towards securing funding to make this a permanent position in the next fiscal year. Kim is now running the MBC Business Office from Ottawa, ON.

The Office is the public and MBC members' primary point of contact with MBC, and is very busy responding to inquiries from new multiple-birth families, members, volunteers, affiliate Chapters, the Board of Directors, health organizations and the media.

Publications

MBC was contracted by the AHRC to update 7 *Fact Sheets* for fertility patients to learn about the risks of multiple births. The Board commissioned Donna Launslager to work on this project in spring 2011. Donna undertook a detailed review of MBC existing publications and a great deal of research to re-organize and update the information. The new Fact Sheets on the Risks of Multiple Births and the Challenges of Parenting Multiples will be completed and published in 2011-2012.

The Fact Sheet on Loss: *Multifetal Pregnancy Reduction* was updated in December 2010 by Lynda Haddon.

Multiple Moments magazine was published 4 times this year, edited by Sabine Ehgoetz. Each issue included feature articles on a theme: Multiples on the Go (Summer 2010), Bonding and Individuality (Fall 2010), MBC and You (Winter 2010), and Multiples for Life (Spring 2011). As of January 2011, the magazine is published in all-electronic format online, and is free to all MBC members.

Website and Social Media

The MBC website has been going through regular maintenance and updating throughout the year. We have worked hard to keep everyone up-to-date on current events, stories and programs available to all multiple-birth families in a timely fashion. In addition, the website has continued to offer easy access for families to obtain the information that they need on a variety of educational topics.

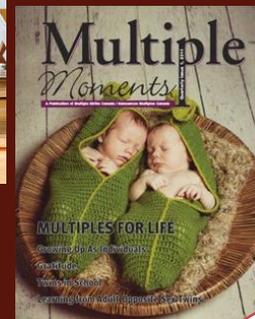
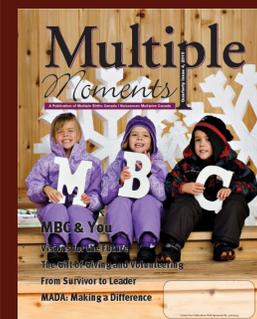
In the last year, our Facebook and Twitter accounts have continued to grow with the Twitter account growing to just over 170 followers, the MBC Facebook Group to well over 300 members and the Fan Page reaching 260 followers. All of these types of social networking have assisted MBC in getting help and support to families with multiples all across Canada and to other areas of the world. They have also gone a long way in marketing MBC and its resources to those we may not have reached through other forms of media.



Kimberley Weatherall
Acting Executive Director,
Ottawa, ON
(from October 2010)



Vicki Riley,
Business Services
Manager, Wasaga Beach, ON
(until September 2010)





***Thank you everyone
for putting together
an informative and
engaging day...***

Heather Scher

Special Member's Meeting and Educational Workshops

On March 12th, 2011 members of Multiple Births Canada gathered in Toronto for a Special Member's Meeting, followed by Educational Workshops. There were 35 members in attendance throughout the day, representing 10 MBC Chapters in addition to a few Direct Family Members. The day ended with a dinner at the hotel where more discussions and sharing took place.

Special Member's Meeting - Application to be a Registered Charity

A Special Member's meeting was called as part of MBC's application to become a registered charity. In order to do so, MBC would need to update its By-laws, Letters Patent and get the approval of membership to proceed with the application to register as a charity. Special guests for the meeting were Kevin Fritz and Nick Gray, lawyers from Toronto firm of Wildeboer Dellelce consulting with MBC's charitable status application process.

Kevin Fritz provided an overview of the process for Multiple Births Canada to apply to become a registered charity. As a Registered Charity, MBC would be able to provide tax receipts for donations, apply for additional grants, thus reducing its reliance on membership fees and making it possible to offer educational resources and support to all multiple-birth families at a lower cost. Kevin Fritz reviewed and made recommendations to MBC's corporate documents, to comply with federal regulations and make it more likely for MBC's charitable application to be successful.

Three resolutions were passed:

1. To update the MBC Letters Patent,
2. To replace By-law No. 1 with the new By-law No. 2,
3. Approval was given for the MBC Board to apply to the Canadian Revenue Agency for MBC to become a registered charity.

Educational Workshops

Once the official meetings were complete the focus changed to the Educational Workshops where the following topics were covered in sessions facilitated by volunteers with a background or experience in these areas. From these workshops additional resources were created to aid those who were not able to attend.

- Employment Insurance Legal Challenge - update from Stephen Moreau
- Using Technology and Social Media to Communicate with Members
- National Multiple Births Awareness Day Celebration Plans
- Plans for the 2011 AGM & Conference - Invitation to Windsor in October 2011
- Resources Created from the 2010 Conference: 8 Chapter Exchange Topics
- Chapter Exchange Covering: Outreach to families in financial need; Keeping families engaged from a distance; Community business discounts and partnerships; Membership registration and renewals; Keeping families with older children involved; Encouraging volunteers and making it fun; Social events for fathers.



Health and Education Committee Report

MBC welcomed two new Health and Education Committee members: Jenna Kelland (Oct 2010) and Kim Krueger (Jan 2011). Both contributed greatly to the MBC/Assisted Human Reproduction Canada Patient Education (AHRC) project and assisted with updating a number of MBC fact sheets. Jenna wrote a quarterly column on multiple birth research for *Multiple Moments* magazine.

Donna Launslager worked with AHRC on their new Multiple Births Patient Education Project. She made recommendations to AHRC regarding information needed for patient education about multiple pregnancy and birth. The AHRC contracted MBC to update a series of Fact Sheets to be used as background for a new patient information product, which will be distributed by fertility specialists to patients considering the use of assisted human reproduction technologies. The content will cover the risks associated with multiple-birth pregnancies and the long-term challenges they may face as a result of conceiving multiple-birth children, and will provide information on resources and support organizations for families with multiple births. Donna began the review of MBC's existing Fact Sheet titles and researched new information to update and reorganize the information. The Fact Sheets will be reviewed by a team of MBC volunteers and outside experts, and will be published in the fall of 2011. Donna also represented MBC as a member of the AHRC Editorial Committee.

Lynda Haddon reviewed many of MBC's fact sheet titles, responded to a series of media requests about multifetal pregnancy reduction, and updated the relevant MBC fact sheet in December 2010. Lynda also represented MBC with a presentation on breastfeeding to healthcare professionals at the PPEESO conference in June 2010, and shared information on breastfeeding multiples at the Ottawa Valley Lactation Consultants conference.

Vera Teschow represented MBC as a content expert on prenatal education for the Best Start Resource Centre. She also assisted in reviewing Fact Sheets for the AHRC project.

Support Networks

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

In the summer of 2010 MBC welcomed Eric Novak as the Chair of the new **Father Support Network**. Eric is a successful broadcaster, publisher and speaker on subjects like media, marketing, leadership and the environment. Eric is also a proud father of a nine year old son, dizygotic seven year old twin boys, and a two year old daughter. He writes a quarterly column in *Multiple Moments* magazine.

The **Higher Order Multiples Network** sends out free information packages for parents expecting triplets, quadruplets or quintuplets. MBC has several publications to meet their needs, and offers a way to connect through email with other families, as well as a column in *Multiple Moments*.

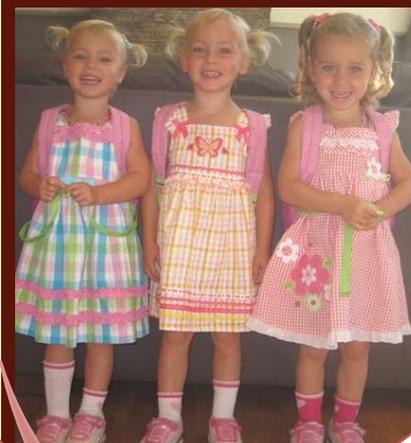
The **Breastfeeding Network** connects members through a monthly e-newsletter, *The MilkyWay*, answering questions and sharing stories about breastfeeding two or more at a time. This network has published a comprehensive series of Fact Sheets on all aspects of breastfeeding, and writes a column in *Multiple Moments*.

The **Special Needs Network** publishes a monthly e-newsletter, *All Children Are Special*, discussing topics of concern for families with children who have special needs, provides several Fact Sheets, and writes a column in *Multiple Moments*.

The **Lone Parent Network** offers publications, information and email support to single parents, whether due to divorce, death, military posting, financial demands or choice. MBC has a series of Fact Sheets for this network.

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, as well as a series of Fact Sheets on loss and grief.

The **Francophone Network** connects multiple-birth families who speak French, writes a quarterly column in *Multiple Moments* magazine, and offers a series of publications *en français*.



Partnerships

Assisted Human Reproduction Canada (AHRC)

MBC was invited to work in a new partnership with **Assisted Human Reproduction Canada**, giving MBC a voice to advocate for multiple-birth families with this regulatory body and with health care professionals, including fertility specialists Canadian Fertility and Andrology Society (CFAS), the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (SOGC) and family doctors. MBC became a member of the Patient Education Committee, participating with infertility associations and other patient groups who may use assisted reproduction techniques, a leading cause of multiple births. The goal is to better inform patients before they conceive multiples, and to advocate for the responsible use of Assisted Reproduction Technologies (ART).

Through a contract with the AHRC, MBC began to update publications and develop new educational resources to meet the needs of prospective fertility patients: raising awareness of the risks of multiple pregnancy, and of ways to manage those risks and cope with parenting two or more multiple-birth children.

An MBC volunteer was also invited to join the AHRC's Editorial Committee, providing feedback and reviewing the content of publications and website content.

International Society for Twin Studies (ISTS)

MBC volunteer Donna Launslager led the editorial team to publish an update to the International Declaration of Rights and Statement of Needs of Twins and Higher Order Multiples, adopted at the International Congress of Twin Studies in June 2010, and published with references in October 2010.

MBC's Acting Executive Director Kim Weatherall represents Canada and the other organizational members of ICOMBO with her seat on the Board of the International Society for Twin Studies and will do so until December 2012. Kim and Gail Moore attended the ISTS Congress in Seoul, South Korea in June 2010.

International Council of Multiple Birth Organizations (ICOMBO)

MBC national volunteer Kimberley Weatherall continued to serve as Chair of the **International Council of Multiple Birth Organizations (ICOMBO)**. Kim and Gail Moore organized and led the bi-annual meeting and workshop sessions for ICOMBO in Seoul, South Korea, in June 2010.

Gail Moore organized and led the communication efforts for the first **International Multiple Births Awareness Week** held November 1-7, 2010, promoting the newly updated *Declaration of Rights and Statement of Needs of Twins and Higher Order Multiples*.



“The mission of the International Council of Multiple Birth Organizations (ICOMBO) of the International Society for Twin Studies is to promote awareness of the unique needs of multiple-birth infants, children, and adults.”



International Society for
Twin Studies (ISTS)

Declaration of Rights and Statement of Needs of Twins and Higher Order Multiples

Introduction: The mission of the International Council of Multiple Birth Organizations (ICOMBO) of the International Society for Twin Studies is to promote awareness of the unique needs of multiple-birth infants, children, and adults. The multi-national membership of ICOMBO has developed the Declaration of Rights and Statement of Needs of Twins and Higher Order Multiples as benchmarks by which to evaluate and stimulate the development of resources to meet their unique needs.

Declaration of Rights

WHEREAS myths and speculations about the origins of multiples have resulted in the culturally sanctioned harassment and/or interference of multiples in some countries;

1. Multiples and their families, as any other individuals, have a right to full protection, under the law, and freedom from discrimination of any kind.

WHEREAS the conception and care of multiples increase the health and psychosocial risks of their families, and whereas genetic factors, fertility drugs, and in vitro fertilization techniques are known to promote multital pregnancy;

2. Individuals or couples planning their families and/or seeking infertility treatment have a right to be fully informed about:

1. factors which influence the conception of multiples;
2. the associated pregnancy risks and treatments;
3. the associated risks to one, more or all of the fetuses/infants;
4. facts regarding parenting multiples; and
5. the option of multital pregnancy reduction along with its associated risks and profound emotional consequences.

3. Infertility treatment should intend to prevent multiple pregnancies, in particular high order multiples.

4. Fertility services should disclose their number of multiple pregnancies, both intentional and unintentional.

WHEREAS the supports of same sex multiples cannot be reliably determined by their appearance, and whereas: 1) the heritability of dizygotic (two-egg) twinning increases the rate of conception of multiples; 2) the similar biology and inheritance of monozygotic (one-egg) multiples profoundly affect services in their development; 3) monozygotic multiples are blood, organ and physical blood gene siblings of choice for their co-multiples; and 4) the variability of the placenta and optimal conditions for determining sex are present at birth;

2010 Annual General Meeting and Conference

Theme: *Our Lives with Twins, Triplets or More...Where Friendship Begins*

Hosts: Edmonton Twin & Triplet Club (ETTC)

Location: Fantasyland Hotel at West Edmonton Mall

Dates: September 23-26, 2010

Delegates from across Canada gathered to learn from experts with a variety of "multiples" themes:

- The Honourable David Xiao, MLA – *Welcome Address*
- Dr. Karyn Gordon – *Bridging the Gap*
- Audrey Pihulyk – *Laugh for the Health of it!*
- Dr. Scott Wooding – *Parenting Crisis*
- Janet Matthews – *Heroes and Heart*
- VIP Keynote Shauna Paisley-Cooper – *ETTC member with an inspirational message reflecting on how a biking accident changed her life, leaving her a quadriplegic just before her twin daughters turned two years old*

In addition to the Keynote addresses, a number of workshops were offered for delegates:

- Fiona Bamforth, Zygoticity expert – *Twins and Twinning*
- Patricia Kehoe, Psychologist – *Don't be Afraid to Ask*
- Dr. Karyn Gordon, Counsellor – *Motivating Your Pre-Teen/Teen*
- Mardi Bernard, Registered Nurse – *Social and Emotional Support for Kids with Learning Differences*
- Patricia Kehoe, Psychologist – *Parenting Tweens and Teens*
- Dr. David Roseman, Paediatrician – *The differences and similarities of twins and the implications this has on life choices*
- MBC National Board – *Café style Chapter Exchange workshop*
- Volunteer Alberta – *How to Recruit and Retain Good Volunteers.*

ETTC was able to provide a rewarding conference with the aid of many fundraising initiatives including the creation of The ETTC Cookbook commemorating the Club's 40th Anniversary, sale of Boo Boo Kits and bottle drives. ETTC also received conference donations from MBC Chapters across Canada and many businesses within the City of Edmonton. ETTC was also awarded The City of Edmonton CIOG Grant, as well as the use of Alberta Gaming and Liquor Corporation Fundraising funds.

The delegates also found time to socialize and make friends during the Jubilations Dinner Theatre, the banquet dinner and awards night, and exploring the West Edmonton Mall.

Thank you once again to the ETTC for a wonderful time of learning, networking and fun.



Volunteers Supporting Multiple Births Canada

Advisory Board

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Supporting Multiple Births Together

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