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The future rests in our helping hands

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Volunteer MBC Recognizes National Seniors Day

October 1, 2010 – Mississauga, ON – National Seniors Day is being recognized all across Canada today and Volunteer MBC, the local volunteer centre, extends their appreciation and gratitude to the hundreds of senior volunteers who make a resounding impact on the Peel Region community.

“Today we would like to encourage everyone to celebrate the efforts and achievements of all of the seniors in our community,” said Carine Strong, Executive Director of Volunteer MBC. “Volunteers play an important role in the delivery of a number of community programs and services. Many of these volunteers are seniors and without their on-going dedication and contributions many of these programs and services would just not be available.”

On June 16, 2010, the Government of Canada introduced legislation in the House of Commons to create a national day of recognition for seniors. Bill C-40, titled “Celebrating Canada’s Seniors Act” supports the creation of a National Seniors Day to recognize the significant and continuing contributions seniors make to their families, communities, workplaces and society. The Bill was unanimously passed. October 1 of every year has been designated as Canada’s National Seniors Day and is also declared by the United Nations as the International Day of Older Persons. October 1 is an opportunity for all Canadians to recognize the many contributions of our seniors and the ways in which they continue to shape our lives.

The Canada Survey of Giving Volunteering and Participating indicates that the top volunteers in Canada are most likely seniors who contribute more than 78% of the total volunteer hours. Adriane Beaudry, Program Manager of Volunteer MBC, said, “We recognize the role that seniors play in our community and it is one of our centre’s goals to provide retired individuals with opportunities to become socially engaged and contribute to the wellbeing of our community through volunteering.” She further noted, “We have an exciting program that we are launching shortly as we realize that there is a growing population of older adults and seniors in our community. This program will provide a direct link for seniors who want to volunteer with our agency members who require specific skills and experience to fill their volunteer roles.”

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Volunteer MBC is a volunteer centre serving the cities of Mississauga and Brampton, and the Town of Caledon. The centre offers a referral service for volunteer placement within the community for all ages to include youth, seniors, newcomers and groups. They also serve the corporate community with various programming services that engage team volunteering. Additionally, the centre provides education and support for volunteers and community service agencies and organizations through topic and issue related workshops, comprehensive and informative programs, and community outreach.

The centre is currently located at 2601 Matheson Blvd. E., Unit #43 in Mississauga, with satellite locations planned for Brampton and Caledon in the near future. For more information about Volunteer MBC, and to access their on-line volunteer opportunities database, visit www.volunteermbc.org.

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**Volunteer MBC Agency Members
National Seniors Day – October 1, 2010
Recognizing Senior Volunteers**

“Ruth Hands is a bubbly, gracious lady who has gone through many changes over the past years, but her dedication to all those many clients she has delivered meals to has seen her always pulling through adversities and returning to her volunteer role. Even when obstacles come her way; she finds a way to get around them such as using her walker to deliver meals around to clients in the Peel Seniors Building where she lives. Ruth is always willing to drive an extra delivery route or fill in for another volunteer when we run short of help and her agreeable manner certainly makes it a pleasure to work with. Over the past 25 years Ruth has delivered over 5,000 meals!

Carol Kidd, Executive Director, Caledon Meals on Wheels

Note: To honour Ruth’s dedication and contribution to Caledon Meals on Wheels, she was recently presented with the Hector & Rita Sonier Award, the organization’s highest award that is presented to a volunteer.

“Distress Centre Peel relies on 185 volunteers to answer over 32,000 calls a year from the lonely, distressed and suicidal on its crisis lines and Peel Elder Abuse Support Program line. A high number of our volunteers are seniors. They commit hundreds of volunteer hours to keep our 24/7 crisis lines open so someone is always there for others. We appreciate their time and dedication.”

Linda Gerger, Executive Director, Distress Centre Peel

“I believe seniors enhance our capacity to serve the community, which contributes to positive outcomes.”

Manjeet Badyal, Settlement Counsellor for South Asian Seniors, Catholic Crosscultural Services

“At Spectra Community Support Services, our senior volunteers bring selflessness, abundant care and their wonderful talents to enrich our client’s, staff and volunteers’ lives.”

Vanita Varma, Executive Director, Spectra Community Support Services

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“Seniors form the backbone of the leadership of many of our most effective community group partners; we would have no hope of accomplishing our goals of protecting the health of the watershed without their tireless efforts.”

Annabel Krupp, Assistant Program Coordinator – Volunteers, Credit Valley Conservation

“The seniors who volunteer with The Salvation Army Erin Mills bring with them a wealth of wisdom, skills, patience and compassion. We are blessed to have an energetic and vibrant group of senior volunteers who contribute to many different areas such as driving, cooking, working in the food bank, data entry and the list goes on. We would not be able to assist with the needs of the low income families in the Erin Mills area if we did not have the generous and caring senior volunteers that we have on our volunteer team.”

*Lynne Marshall-Best, Family Services Co-ordinator,
Salvation Army – Erin Mills Community and Family Services*

“Our senior adult volunteers at Peel Children’s Aid, not only give their time and expertise to provide a service like driving or tutoring a child - they give their hearts filled with love, compassion and the wisdom that life brings. We salute our devoted senior volunteers and all seniors in Peel Region, who contribute to making our community a gentler, caring place to live in.”

Anna Olsen, Manager, Volunteer Programs, Peel Children's Aid

“Our senior volunteers, including a 93 year-old gardening volunteer, provide the necessary qualities of life experience, enthusiasm and willingness to work hard, making them excellent role models and mentors for all our other volunteers and staff. We could not be successful without them!”

Robin Haley-Gillin, Volunteer Coordinator, The Riverwood Conservancy

“I have met many seniors since starting ‘Seniors Helping Seniors’ (SHS) two years ago, who have taught me so much along the way. What I have learned from these wonderful groups has not only moved me in my professional life, but has enriched my personal relationships as well. Every day I get to share time in their warmth, wisdom and friendship is a treasure to me.”

Brigitte Malo, Program Lead, Volunteer & Community Relations, Caledon Community Services

