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## Message from the Board

Summer 2010 was sure one to remember with near record setting days of hot temperatures, minimal rainfall and long days of glorious sunshine. It was one worth waiting for!

During this same summer, West Island Mission set a "record" for weekly food deliveries, maxing out at 24 family food baskets per Saturday, a limit set by the WIM board of directors based on storage capacity, logistics and volunteer base.

But we could not be serving these families during the summer season without our volunteers. Despite vacation and general summer slow

downs, we were still able to make all our weekly deliveries without fail. I want to thank each and every volunteer who helped make this happen.

In this issue of our newsletter, you will find out about other events that transpired since our last newsletter. For example, WIM's received acceptance and recognition with Imagine Canada Ethical code, a designation that elevates WIM's status as a charitable organization. As well, summer 2010 marked the return of our Back to School distribution, a successful event that took place August 14. Read more about how families were given

backpacks stocked with school supplies along with fresh meat, produce and groceries.

As autumn approaches, WIM enters its busiest time of year with emphasis on fundraising and preparation for our annual Christmas basket distribution. It is at this time when we count on the support of corporations, churches, individuals and volunteers. If you can help in anyway, please visit our website and thank you very much.

Donald Harris,  
President and Chair,  
West Island Mission

## Having Fun While Raising Funds

When you think about today's economy, with job losses and company's cutting back everywhere you look, it is not hard to imagine the challenge of finding money to help folks in need. While it is good to see hints that things might be on the upswing, recent set-backs in the global and Canadian economy are more causes for concern.

That said, we at WIM are constantly amazed at the generosity of organizations on the West Island who have found ways to support our efforts. Sometimes it's the simple activities that can make a big difference.

One company organized a food collection at one of their outlets, and posted

some flyers about WIM. Another held a raffle among their employees, and donated the proceeds to WIM. Yet another provided their services to WIM at little or no cost to us, enabling us to serve the needs of our recipients. To each and every organization who opened their corporate purse-strings to help out, we are grateful.

But what about non-profit or community groups? Creative fundraising is par for the course for many of these groups, and they always seem to find a way to have fun while fundraising.

West Island Cake Club ([www.westislandcakeclub.com](http://www.westislandcakeclub.com)) had a blast at one fundraiser, where their members baked over 3000 individually

decorated cupcakes, and then sold them at the DDO Civic Centre Craft Sale in December. The enjoyment on the faces of the WICC volunteers was only matched by the faces on those who were enjoying the cupcakes! The enjoyment of all involved was topped off by a substantial donation that made a big difference in the lives of many West Island families over Christmas. Early in the new year, Darren Sleep attended a thank-you meeting with WICC members to thank everyone for their hard work and helped the organizers hand out prizes.

Creativity in fundraising is a challenge, but fun and generosity make great bedfellows. We look forward to sharing more creative stories in the future!

## Volunteer Spotlight



Many hands make light work. In the case of WIM, many volunteers make our operations happen; whether it is coordinating food pick-ups, assembling baskets, writing letters, delivering baskets, translating documents, communicating with corporate and individual sponsors... the list goes on and on.

There are so many volunteers who make it possible for WIM to do what we do that it is almost impossible to single out any one person who makes a difference.

But that won't stop us from

trying! As you read through our newsletter, it quickly becomes clear that many, many people help us do what we do. One person who has made a great contribution to our work has been Danielle Levesque.

For almost 2 years, Danielle has served as the "voice of WIM". When a call is placed to the WIM line, be it a donor or a recipient, they are asked by a pre-recorded voice to leave a message. Shortly thereafter it is Danielle who calls them back and arranges for a Saturday delivery. If the call is for someone at the WIM

board, she puts them in touch with the right person.

During Danielle's time working with WIM, she has come to know many of our recipients, and looks forward to hearing from them.

Although she may never claim credit, Danielle has made a huge impact, not only on the lives of our recipients, but on all those of use who have worked with her at WIM. It is this sort of "behind the scenes" work that makes it possible for WIM to continue to serve our recipients and the community at large.

Thank you Danielle, and keep up the great work!

*"We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give."*

*- Sir Winston Churchill,  
British Prime Minister  
(1874-1965)*

## Linking WIM Aid to local Social Services

One question that new volunteers or supporters often ask is, "How do you identify recipient families, and how do you know they are in need?" Knowing who needs WIM's help in our communities and who would be better served by others is always a challenge.

In order to target those most in need, WIM operates on a designated referral system.

Essentially, we rely on the good work done by social service, community aid, and faith-community organizations to help us evaluate who we can help.

For example, there are a number of social service organizations who use WIM as a resource when they encounter someone needing assistance. Local CLSC social workers and community organizations like Community Perspectives in Mental Health (CPMH) are able to contact us and refer clients. Further, local clergy may have parishioners or know of community members who may need assistance.

Irrespective of the referral source, WIM provides assistance as soon as possible. Once initial help has been provided, WIM volunteers get to know the recipient's financial situation

in more detail, and recipients are required to provide documentation before a second food delivery can be made.

Finally, WIM partners annually with the local CLSC in the fall to register recipients for our Christmas distribution. At registration, recipients also qualify to receive support for the following year, until the next registration.

It is our hope that these measures help us provide compassionate and immediate help to those most in need, while at the same time distribute our limited resources wisely - and help make a difference.

### ***About West Island Mission...***

West Island Mission was founded in February 2005.

Our purpose is to help alleviate poverty on the

West Island of Montreal through the provision of food and other aid to those in need.

WIM is a non-for-profit, non-denominational charitable organization.



### Back-to-School Distribution – August 14, 2010



After a one-year hiatus, WIM once again kicked off the school year with our annual Back-to-School distribution. Anyone who has school-aged children knows that in addition to it being a very busy time, it is also a time of added expenses, where growing kids need clothes and school supplies to gear up for the fall school term.



WIM feels very strongly that this represents a great opportunity to not only provide assistance, but to help break the cycle of poverty, by helping families emphasize the importance of education in their children’s lives.

On this particular occasion,

WIM volunteers rallied at Westview Bible Church, where registered recipients arrived to pick up food and school supplies. Local schools were invited to participate by indicating how many families in their schools might need assistance, and invitations were sent home with those children whose parents then called WIM.

In total, 145 families arrived to pick up from the distribution. Within these families, 238 adults were provided with food, and 335 backpacks loaded with schools supplies were made available.

Many local churches and community organizations helped by donating funds, which were used to sponsor backpacks. In addition, a number of local corporations donated funds or provided in-kind support, which was greatly appreciated.

It is our hope at WIM that distributions like this one reach beyond the immediate need, and help support families in the long-term.

To all our volunteers and supporters, thank you very much for your wonderful heart for the community. See you all next year!



**Contributing to WIM**

Cash Donations

Cheque Donations (please make cheques payable to West Island Mission)

Pre-authorized Debit Donations (form available online at [www.wimmoi.com](http://www.wimmoi.com))

Online Secure Credit Card Donations (available online at [www.canadahelps.org](http://www.canadahelps.org))

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**WIM Achieves Imagine Canada Ethical Certification**

With word of corporate and financial scandals constantly in the news, maintaining an open and trustworthy relationship with current and future sponsors and supporters is always a challenge. Irrespective of flashy websites and good intentions, how many times have you looked at a charitable organization and wondered, "How do I know my contribution is being wisely spent, and how much of my contribution is directly helping people?"

To help answer these questions, WIM holds to a fully open door policy, such that our activities and decisions are transparent to our sponsors and supporters. Our financial statements are available to anyone upon request and any of our Board of Directors are available for discussions on WIM's activities and decisions.

Recently, WIM took steps to further develop a positive

and trusting relationship with our existing and future supporters through application to Imagine Canada's Ethical Code certification program ([www.imaginecanada.ca](http://www.imaginecanada.ca)).

This program allows charitable organizations to apply to Imagine Canada to be evaluated to ethical standards on a number of categories, including governance, financing, and complaints. WIM's compliance with the Ethical Code standards tells donors that our organization values their contribution and will steward their donations to ensure that they have the greatest possible impact.

WIM was pleased to have obtained this certification, and any correspondence from

WIM in the future will bear Imagine Canada's Ethical Code trustmark (below).

This certification goes beyond WIM's immediate mission. By participating with other charitable organizations in the program, we demonstrate to the donor community and the public that participating organizations value their trust and are committed to effectively managing their contributions.

Imagine Canada's ethical code program was recently featured in a *Maclean's Magazine* supplement, where WIM was listed along with other program participants.

For a copy of IC's ethical code, email us at [wimmoi@hotmail.com](mailto:wimmoi@hotmail.com).



**WEST ISLAND MISSION**

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