

# MCISC NEWS No. 6

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## A Volunteer's Perspective

I recently asked one of our newer volunteers if he would write something about his experience of being a volunteer at the Centre. This is what he wrote:

“Well, life never stops giving you surprises, and my most recent one was walking into MCISC one morning to ask if they needed volunteers. Since then I have been truly astounded at the work that goes on at the “information” centre. The dozens and dozens of amazing volunteers and staff I have been privileged to meet, who give their time, energy and best efforts to helping others, and making a real difference to the world.

After retirement, I've felt a certain disengagement from the world of “work” and “real life”, and so I keep up through news and the media. It turns out this is a pretty jaundiced view of the world. It's not actually wrong, but it's only a particular perspective which serves a particular agenda, and from that perspective the world can appear to be a mean, dysfunctional and frankly quite depressing place.

Volunteering at MCISC has revealed to me a whole different side of life and people. Not just people who need help at some point in their lives for one reason or another, but also people of good will, generosity, caring and tolerance for each other, and not only volunteers, but the many individuals and community groups who so generously support the Centre. People in short who actually make the world a better place, by being in it. And first of all to know that such people exist, and then to be a small part of that is a great privilege.

We all want to live meaningfully, feeling that our life makes a difference, that we are making a contribution, that it matters not only to one's close family and friends, but to the community, the world itself. Since retirement I have worked in a few different volunteer roles, and they were all good and worthwhile, but at MCISC, the role of the volunteers itself is of a different quality. There is absolutely no doubt the work is important and it has to be done, and it makes a real difference in the real world. The sense of purpose and dignity that comes from being part of that can hardly be put into words.

Finally, noble hopes and nice words go a long way, but in the end things have to actually work. And for that you need more than high hopes, you need a well functioning, strong organization with good people working together well, and with energy, will, and a clear sense of purpose. It is my strongly held belief that every practical outcome at the end of the chain, every little interaction between an organization and the final recipients in the end reflects the ethos, the ethics and the integrity of those driving and powering its existence. I know the staff of the MCISC of course, but not so much the Board, the various key administrative people, the supporters behind the Centre in community organizations, government and benefactors. I do know however that MCISC works and makes a difference, not only to the lives of the many people it serves, but to a volunteer like me as well, so whatever is happening behind the scenes, thank you and please keep doing it.”

It has been a pleasure working with you too Walter.

**Stuart Davis-Meehan, Manager, January 2019**

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