

Annual Report 2007

For the year

October 24, 2006 – October 23, 2007

as presented to

the OACAO Annual Meeting on

Sunday, October 21, 2007

Board of Directors 2006 – 2007

Executive

President	Ellen Hope
President Elect	Vince Mercuri
1 st Vice President	Debbie Wilson
2 nd Vice President	Ross McKee
Secretary	Debra Prescott
Treasurer	Marilyn Latham
Past President	Shirley Glauser
Executive Director	Lawrie Bloom

Regional Representatives

North West	Gerry Poling and Joan Clark
South West	Both positions vacant
North Central	Tina Pilon and Senior Rep. position vacant
Golden Horseshoe	Wendy Krever and Mary Lou Weir
Metro	Laura Latham and Greg Edwards
Grand River	Christine Barker and Allan Gray
Central	Debbie Wilson & Anne-Marie Yaraskavitch
Eastern	Betty Eadie and Denis Perreault

Committee Chairpersons

Advocacy	John Coffey
Awards	Mary Lou Weir
Business Partners	Vince Mercuri, Lawrie Bloom
Conference 2007	Nancy Beddoe
Conference 2008	Debbie Wilson
Marketing	Vince Mercuri/Laura Latham
Membership	Sue Hesjedahl
Newsletter	Colleen Zavrel
Nominations	Shirley Glauser
OASSIS Liaison	Alana Andrews/Bill Krever
Resource Development	Ross McKee
Web Page	Lawrie Bloom
Information Fairs	Lawrie Bloom/Mary Lou Weir

Message from the President

2006 – 2007 has been an exciting year for OACAO and it has been my pleasure to serve as your President during a year full of opportunity and positive change for OACAO and older adult centres in Ontario. There were many notable achievements this year, some of which I would like to highlight.

Early in the year, we received grant approval for the 3 year research project “Building Bridges to Tomorrow” from the Ontario Trillium Foundation. On behalf of OACAO, I want to express a heartfelt thank you to the dedicated members of the Resource Development Committee who prepared the successful proposal, and, since its approval have continued to work on the implementation. As Year 1 of the project comes to a close, many Centres across the province have already been engaged in the project and are on board to participate in upcoming activities. In the end, we will all benefit from the knowledge and information obtained as a result of this research, and will be better able to serve new, as well as current, generations of seniors.

Concurrently this year, we focused on developing a Strategic Plan for OACAO. Echoing the theme of the 2007 conference – these ARE “changing times,” and in order for OACAO to meet the challenge of supporting older adults centres in the future, we must have a plan – a strategic direction. Access to the list serve offered the opportunity for member centres across the province to participate in the SWOT analysis, the identification of priority areas based on the SWOT analysis, and consider the language of a revised mission statement, vision and values. On behalf of the Board, thank you for your participation and your thoughtful and constructive comments. As a result of your input, the Board was able to spend many productive hours on the Strategic Plan process as well, the results of which are being presented at the AGM.

The Information and Active Living Fairs funded through the Ontario Seniors’ Secretariat, were a huge success in their first year, so much so that their continuance was approved and funded. By now, thousands of seniors across the province have had access to pertinent information geared to health promotion and active living. Attending the North West Region Fair in April provided me with the opportunity to see first hand the challenges associated with the geographic size, but I also noted that no matter whether centres are in the far north or the southern most tip of Ontario, the challenges associated with volunteer recruitment and retention, and ongoing funding, are no different.

Speaking of funding, thanks to 15 years of continued advocacy on behalf of older adults centres, OACAO and the Advocacy Committee finally got the attention of the Ontario Seniors’ Secretariat and the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care and increased Elderly Persons Centres funding was approved for centres currently receiving EPC funding. But we have not stopped, and are now working with the Ontario Seniors’ Secretariat and the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care to identify centres that meet the criteria and have been awaiting EPC funding for years.

Through the efforts of Executive Director, Lawrie Bloom, OACAO member centres have access to educational and health promotion resources from partnerships with the Ontario Partnership on Aging and Developmental Disabilities (OPADD), the Older Persons Mental Health and Addictions Network (OPMHAN), Active Living Coalition for Older Adults (ALCOA) and the Ontario Seniors’ Secretariat.

In the past few years (“changing times”) – we have often heard the question about OACAO membership - “What’s in it for our Centre?” From the initiatives and results noted above, it should be clear to all centres – OACAO membership provides *a lot* for older adult centres and this will only get better in the years to come.

The support of member centres is crucial to the success of these initiatives, and for your support I thank you on behalf of the Board. I would especially like to thank the Board Members and Lawrie Bloom, our Executive Director, for dedication and commitment throughout the year which will only benefit older adult centres and seniors in Ontario, now, and in the future.

Yes - these are changing times, and yes - we are ready, willing and able to meet the challenge!

Ellen Hope
President, OACAO

OACAO Accomplishments 2006 -2007

The past twelve months have been extremely busy with many exciting things happening. The following is a listing of items that have directly benefited OACAO members.

- The OACAO Newsletter began publishing on a bi-monthly basis with the excellent work of Colleen Zavrel and her support team from the Oshawa Senior Citizens Centre.

- Over 100 individuals participated in the wonderful 2006 Annual Conference in Ottawa thanks to the coordination of the Eastern Region.
- Information and Active Living Fairs
 - With the support of the Ontario Seniors' Secretariat, the OACAO provided funding for 27 Information and Active Living Fairs from April 1, 2006 to March 31, 2007.
 - Additional funding approved for the year April 1, 2007 to March 31, 2008 will provide support for 17 new Fairs
- The OACAO has completed the 1st year of our 3 year grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation for our research project entitled "Building Bridges to Tomorrow".
- Centres that receive EPC (Elderly Persons Centres Funding) were notified by their local LHIN that for the third straight year, the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care would be providing a one time grant of 1.5% (this is a direct result of work by the OACAO Advocacy Committee).
- OACAO member centres received a Falls Prevention kit including a Facilitator's Kit, a Resource Kit and SAGES binder (more on this later in this newsletter).
- OACAO members received a CD from OPADD – the Ontario Partnership on Aging and Developmental Disabilities with input from various sources including the OACAO developed a CD called "Guide to Accessing Seniors Community Programs" with information to assist Self-Advocates, Caregivers and staff of Seniors Community Programs.
- OPMHAN, the Older Persons Mental Health and Addictions Network received a New Horizons Grant for a Pilot Project on the development of seminars on Aging and Depression to be held in various OACAO member centres across the province.
- The OACAO has 9 Business Partners that provide support services to the members of Older Adult Centres.
- As a direct result of the funding received, the OACAO has been able to purchase new computer equipment, a digital camera, a multi-media projector, 2 new table top display units and 2 new promotional posters for displays.
- Through the efforts of the Advocacy Committee, a meeting was held at the OACAO Annual Conference with Jim Watson, Minister of Health Promotion and a presentation by Minister Watson to the Conference delegates.
- The OACAO completed the 5th year of having our full time Executive Director, Lawrie Bloom, to respond to member needs.
- Phases 1 and 2 have been completed of the SWOT Analysis.
- The Conference 2008 committee has been established with the 2008 Conference to be held at Horseshoe Resort in Barrie from October 19-21.
- As a result of 15 years of continued Advocacy and recent meetings with representatives from the MOHLTC and the Ontario Seniors' Secretariat, an announcement was made in early September that all approved EPC's would receive additional funding under the Program Grant of the EPC Legislation. The funding is based on the existing funding formula with each centre receiving between \$5,000 and \$12,700. As well, the OACAO is working with the Ontario Seniors' Secretariat and the MOHLTC identifying centres that meet the criteria for EPC funding and the process for approval.

Advocacy Committee

Committee Members:

John Coffey – Chair
 Lawrie Bloom
 Ellen Hope
 Lynne Briggs
 Bill Krever
 Ray Applebaum
 Diane Luck

I would like to thank and congratulate the members of the Advocacy Committee for continuing to raise our profile with the Ministry of Health and Seniors' Secretariat. Our Executive Director, Lawrie Bloom is to be commended for his success in dealing with both these Ministries. As you know, we received two increases in

EPC Funding increase this past year and this is definitely an accomplishment. More will be said later regarding this. This feat is a result of the work this committee has completed over the past several years. The effort of Lawrie, Ray, Lynne and Bill and our Past President, Shirley has definitely been recognized and we have all benefited.

Over the past several months, I have participated in the monthly teleconference with the Seniors' Secretariat Office with regards to 2007 Senior's Month. These meetings were coordinated by Linda Sutton and Zuzsa Harsman. The theme for this year was **"Active Living: Share Your Experience."** Various promotional items were ordered and posters made available in seventeen languages. Material on the website was available to all Centres and I encouraged everyone to order early.

I feel that the OACAO has finally received more recognition with the Seniors Secretariat with regards to Seniors Month as we were asked to submit the names of four centres for the making of this year's poster. Members of the Square One Centre were selected and all of us saw this year's poster. I want to thank the centres that submitted their location but were not selected. In August, we were asked to provide Feedback on this year's events and I would like to thank everyone who replied to me. I forwarded your successful events and comments to the committee. I know of at least two locations who did not receive any of the promotional material and the committee will try to address this next year and make sure they have enough for everyone.

At last year's conference, we mentioned two items that our Centres wanted us to assist them with:

- (1) Lottery Licensing
- (2) Centre/Club Memberships – This was addressed by our membership committee.

The Lottery Licensing issue has been addressed and I feel the end result will benefit most of our Centres. To start with, we did a survey of our centres in which we asked 12 questions. The results we received were quite different; some working within the law and some doing something else. Some Municipalities refuse to issue a License for any event.

Municipalities have the responsibility to issue or refuse applications as outlined in Chapter 1 and 2 of the Lottery Licensing Policy Manual. This issue was also being addressed on a local level in Sudbury by Tina Pilon and her local MPP. As a result of this effort, in April 2007, the Alcohol and Gaming Commission issued an Important Notice to Senior Citizen Centres and Programs For Senior Citizens stating they may be eligible for lottery licenses. There are six conditions that must be met and the Lottery Licensing Office must determine if the use of the profits from the license are eligible.

I would like everyone here to help us advocate for more support by contacting your MPP and local municipal representatives. The way this was done in Sudbury is beneficial to all membership and I would like to thank Tina and her committee for the work they did.

Another issue we have to pursue is building our OACAO membership. Many centres in the province have benefited from the funding increase this year, thanks to our work and are not members of the OACAO. If you know of any centres that do not belong to our organization, please advise our Membership Committee

Thank you for your support and if the Advocacy Committee can be of any assistance, please feel free to ask.

John Coffey, Chair

“Building Bridges to Tomorrow” Trillium Grant Project

Older Adult Centres’ Association of Ontario is embarking on a three year research project, *Building Bridges to Tomorrow* sponsored by the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

The goal of the *Building Bridges to Tomorrow Project* is to identify the issues Older Adult Centres in Ontario face today and to explore the future trends that will impact Older Adult Centres. All of the data collected will help OACAO to develop strategies that organizations may use to cope with the various issues including the dramatic increase in the senior population with the aging of the “Baby Boomer” generation.

The project consists of the following components;

- 1) Information Sessions with OACAO regions and centres
- 2) Key Information Interviews
- 3) Profile of Older Adult Centres in Ontario
- 4) Focus Groups
- 5) Centres of Interest Survey

Information Sessions

Information sessions were developed by the Project team to create awareness of the Project and identify the training opportunities at the Centre and Community level for seniors. The sessions outlined the major research activities, components, and the importance of the study to seniors across the Province.

Three Information sessions were held at the Centre level, and the team has made a number of informal presentations in other venues to encourage involvement in the Project. The formal sessions were presented at:

- OACAO North Western Region Thunder Bay
- Cambridge 55+ Central Advisory Council
- Whitby Seniors Centre for OACAO Central Region representatives.

The attendance at the Information sessions varied from approximately 40 people in Thunder Bay to 13 in Whitby. In Cambridge, attendance was limited to fifteen people from the Cambridge Advisory Council and selected Centre staff.

Attendees to the Information sessions provided valuable feedback to the Project team regarding regional and local issues, and the need to pass research data to the Centres as soon as possible to enable them to develop appropriate strategic plans. They also emphasized the need to create a climate that would encourage ‘the Boomers’ to become active in their local Centres. Significantly, many of the Centres involved in the Regional and Centre presentations volunteered to be ‘Centres of Interest’ in the Project research component..

Key Information Interviews

Over the summer months, we conducted 38 key information interviews throughout the province. The purpose of these interviews was to gather feedback on the future of senior centres in Ontario and the role of OACAO. We visited the following communities:

- | | | |
|---------------|------------|-------------|
| • Kingston | Ottawa | Thunder Bay |
| • Sudbury | Oshawa | Whitby |
| • Clarington | Cambridge | London |
| • Windsor | Toronto | Ancaster |
| • Hamilton | Guelph | Oakville |
| • Mississauga | Burlington | St. Mary’s |

A full report of our findings will be available in February, 2008.

Profile of Older Adult Centres in Ontario

The profile of older adult centres is a thorough analysis of older adult centres including all aspects of the operation such as, budget, membership characteristics, volunteers, major issues, types of programs and services and diversity. The profile will be helpful to OACAO to promote the value of older adult centres and will also help centres with strategic planning and decision making.

The profile will be available in February, 2008.

Focus Groups

Building Bridges to Tomorrow will also be conducting a number of focus groups over the next two years. The focus groups will help provide us with valuable information on issues such as; senior leaders, municipal centres, not-for-profit centres, executive directors, non members, regions, northern Ontario and French members.

Centres of Interest

As one of the main components of the project, we will be conducting interviews with more than 5,000 seniors including 500 seniors who do not belong to a senior centre. This research is being conducted at 29 centres who have volunteered with the project. Each centre will also receive a detailed report of the results for their own Centre. The questionnaires will gather data about each participant including programming, user satisfaction, motivation and the use of other health services.

Training for Seniors

Training is a major component in the Project. The Training program targets seniors at the Centre level and consists of specific training in two areas:

- Survey Interview Techniques
- Focus Group Design and Leadership

Survey Training materials have been developed and training is underway. Training has been conducted at both urban and rural locations across the Province and the Project trainers have traveled from Ear Falls in the Northwestern Ontario to Oakville and Mississauga in Southwestern Ontario. By 1 November 2007, the team will have added Centres in Windsor and Tillsonburg to the list receiving Survey Training. Training materials remain with the seniors and extra copies are provided to the Centres for future use within the Centre and their respective communities. Typically, one Centre staff member from each host Centre attended the training session. The remainder of those attending were seniors training to carry out the Survey Interview role for the Project. A copy of the Survey Training slide package is included in the attached documents.

Focus Group training began in October. The first session was conducted in Schreiber in Northwestern Ontario, and the second at the 2007 OACAO Conference held in Oakville. Approximately 30 seniors from the Northwest attended the training sessions in Schreiber and then participated in actual focus groups examining issues related to seniors and Centres in Northwestern Ontario. Forty OACAO members enrolled in Focus Group training at the Conference, and eight attendees engaged in 'Train the Trainer' training as Group Leaders and Recorders. A large percentage of those attending the Oakville training sessions were seniors.

Project Management

The Building Bridges to Tomorrow Project reports to the Resources Committee of OACAO and is being managed by Lawrie Bloom, Executive Director. Lawrie is responsible for the overall project management and funding reports. Al Gordon from the Ancaster Senior Achievement Centre is leading the Training component of the project and Bill Krever, Don Mills Foundation for Seniors, is conducting the Research portion of the project.

Please visit our website for more details (www.oacao.org) and thank you for supporting Building Bridges to Tomorrow.

Business Partners

The OACAO has been very successful in retaining current Business Partners as well as adding four new Partners. To date, the OACAO has a total of 9 Business Partners as listed below with the year of their Initial membership.

OASSIS - 1990

The Care Guide - 2004

Holiday Retirement Residences - 2006

Retirement Residences Group - 2006

Tippet-Richardson Moving and Storage – Seniors Division - 2006

In 2007 the OACAO was fortunate to strike four new Business Partners. The OACAO would like to welcome our newest Business Partners.

Senior Tours Canada

Bayshore Home Health

Hill Island Lodge

Hardiman Mount & Associates Insurance Brokers

The OACAO has a long history of developing effective partnerships. Each Partner benefits from shared expertise and the ability to offer a broad range of programs, services, products and linkages.

As the seniors market continues to grow and change, the need to explore new partnerships is required. The Committee will continue to explore traditional and non traditional partners.

Please remember to support our Business Partners.

Vince Mercuri,
Chair

2006 Conference

It is my pleasure to present the final report for the **2006 OACAO Conference, Capital Ideas, Idée Capitale** held in Ottawa, October 22-24, 2006. Our group worked long and hard to produce a good conference with a focus on Canada's Capital. We took a chance on taking folks out of the conference setting and showcasing the Canadian War Museum and The Good Companions seniors' centre. From the reviews we received this was a good decision. On the whole workshops were well received. As always what one person loves the next one dislikes. One problem seemed to be speakers that got off their set presentation due to audience input. Here again that can be good and bad. I think some people had the expectation that they would be told exactly what to do to get the boomers into their centres. If only all centres were alike and all seniors wanted the same thing! We attempted to offer a variety in entertainment. Seniors love to win prizes and we had lots of prizes that were given out throughout the conference. Each centre on the planning committee donated pails of prizes to be raffled or given away, this saved us both time and money. We set our budget based on 80 full conference attendees and our ability to fundraise \$5,000. We are proudly turning over a \$12,580.34 profit.

Sponsorship was a challenge. Toronto based companies are not eager to incur the expense to travel to Ottawa. We approached over 75 companies both local and provincial for sponsorship and trade show opportunities. We sent packages and did countless follow-up. The seniors residences were ultimately the most interested. We shall include our list of contacts, several of whom indicated their interest in the **2007 Conference**. Business partners were another challenge. Originally we understood that the Executive Director would deal with them.

Ultimately, we also had to become very involved to get their commitments. Some we were still dealing with mere days before the conference. This area needs to be clarified for *2007 Conference*. The Trade Show participants were slow to confirm and to pay their fees. They were also not always forthcoming in whom or how many would attend which makes meal counts difficult. We felt that we had to offer a meal to them and in hindsight probably should have charged them more. When we last hosted a conference, the Quebec Casino was a large sponsor, however this time their sponsorship was the cost of a coach. We had the most luck with \$500 sponsors and coffee break sponsors.

The conference logo was designed by my daughter and used in many different areas. The conference brochure posed a problem to our small group. It was a lot of work and the program group of (4) felt they could not commit. So in the end, they submitted write ups and Diane, Betty and my summer student, typed, edited and worked with our printer. Seven proofs and several weeks later, we had a brochure. Not a recommended method but you do what you have to do to get the job done. The registration form was put together once again by my summer student and André Gascon (my board president and conference registrar). Our Centre does not have a Class system or other registration package so André did a great job keeping everything organized. The other obstacle was that our Centre does not have credit card capability. We did not hear many complaints, but payments were very slow in arriving.

The loot bags I was promised from Collette Vacations turned into 300 umbrellas. Our thanks to Comfort Life for bailing us out of that dilemma. Veterans Affairs sent us thousands of brochures that I hope people subsequently ordered for their Centres. We collected lots of other freebies from various sources and spent hours packing up the bags.

The hotel was very good to work with. We chose it for location in a bid to showcase the Parliament buildings, war memorial, etc. For downtown Ottawa, it was also very reasonable and that was due to my husband's connections with the owner.

Our conference committee was small to start with and throughout our year plus of planning it was hit with several crises. Everyone was great and just kept picking up the pieces and soldiering on. My small staff and Board of Directors were also very supportive and always willing to lend a hand.

My sincere thanks to all the committee members, their families, and conference volunteers for their dedication and hard work. Capital Ideal/Idée capital was a great experience for us all. We wish the *2007 Committee* all the best in the year ahead.

Debbie Trickey,
Chair

Information Fairs

Thanks to funding from the Ontario Seniors' Secretariat, financial support was provided to OACAO members across the province to coordinate and operate a series of Information and Active Living Fairs that would allow centres to provide information about the various services for seniors available with their community. At the Fairs, many active living demonstrations, programs and activities were presented to members and the community at large.

From April 1st through December 31st, 2006, a total of 14 Fairs were held. From January 1st to March 31st, 2007, a total of 13 Fairs were held. From April 1st through December 2007, 14 Fairs are to be held and from January 1, to March 31, 08, there will be 9 Fairs.

The OACAO originally contracted to operate 12 Fairs per year, but will have in fact, operated 50 events to the end of March 2008.

This has been an extremely successful project for our association and we wish to thank all of the OACAO members who have taken the time to coordinate the operation of a Fair in their community. We thank the Seniors' Secretariat for their financial support to date and look forward to a long and continuing relationship.

Thanks to Mary Lou Weir, who assumed the duties as Coordinator in April of 2007.

Lawrie Bloom,
Executive Director

Marketing Committee

At the Spring Board meeting, the responsibility of the Marketing Committee changed hands from Vince Mercuri to me. The first project undertaken was to get a professional photographer to take pictures for the OACAO table top display that is taken to all of the Information Fairs. A previous project was to update all of our documents and insert the new OACAO address. Two (2) popup banners were purchased with the "Smiles" artwork. They have drawn a great deal of attention and positive comments at the various Information Fair displays and others events.

The OACAO ad can be seen in the back of "The Care Guide" and will be seen in the 2008 edition of, "A Comprehensive Guide to Retirement Living in Ontario". Updates are continually made to the OACAO website and new information is added as appropriate. Over 230 individuals take advantage of the vast amount of information that is shared on the OACAO List Serve.

At the Annual Meeting, the membership will be voting on a new Mission Statement. Following this, a new tag line for our logo will be created.

The Marketing Committee is meeting to look at all of the marketing done by the association and to create a new look.

Laura Latham,
Chair

Membership Committee

Thank you for your support to the Older Adult Centres' Association of Ontario over the past year. We were pleased to offer no membership fee increase for 2007 - 2008. We have exceeded our budget goal for membership revenue.

Welcome to our new members who have joined us this year. We have 11 new members, many who have joined due to the Information and Active Living Fairs held throughout the province. All Centres benefit by the many great accomplishments that the OACAO achieves each year. We continue to enhance the lives of many seniors in Ontario who attend and volunteer at our Centres.

At the time of this membership report we have 112 members, including 80 Full Member Centres, and 32 other members (Associate Agencies, Service Providers, Individuals and Life Members). We also have 9 Business Partners.

The membership structure investigation was tabled by the Board pending the results of the Building Bridges to Tomorrow project and the current SWOT analysis process.

Thank you to Lawrie Bloom, our Executive Director, Ellen Hope, our President and all of our Regional Reps, for your hard work in ensuring that our membership numbers grow and the Association remains strong.

Sue Hesjedahl,
Chair

OASSIS REPORT

The last year has been a good one for OASSIS. The plan continues to grow – we have seen a 25% increase in enrolment over the last two years! As well, we are continually diversifying as employers/employees are looking for greater flexibility and choice in benefit plans.

Our last customer service survey showed a 95% satisfaction rate for customer service, which tells us that our Administration Office is doing an excellent job at serving our clients.

The Board continues to keep current with emerging issues in the insurance sector and specifically, the voluntary sector. Many of our Trustees appointed by our 3 Sponsoring Associations, OACAO, OCSA and In Kind Canada, undertook training programs this year to ensure they have the appropriate knowledge and skills to be accountable for the responsibilities they have been assigned.

We look forward to another great year working with our community-based organizations as we provide a valuable service to agencies of all sizes!

Karen Bentham,
Executive Director

Grand River Region

It has been a rather quiet year for OACAO in our region.

A LHIN'S information fair took place at the David Durward Centre in Cambridge Nov.1, 2006.

A regional executive meeting was held in Waterloo Nov.23, 2006 to discuss plans for 2007.

Our regional AGM was held Feb.21, 2007 at the Rockway Centre in Kitchener with 23 attendees. At this meeting a discussion was held on membership rates and how they are established. Some questioned whether they were getting value for their \$\$\$\$. It was also stated that OACAO supports health and social services over leisure and recreation. A motion was passed that "The Grand River Region proposes that the OACAO Provincial Board review possible new membership and fee structures for the 2008/09 term." Lawrie Bloom was requested to present this motion to the Presidents Forum October 21st 2007 at the Annual Conference in Oakville.

Peter Van de Water of the Cambridge 50+ Recreation Centres asked for OACAO support in their efforts to promote "One City, One Centre" to replace the three existing facilities.

Restructuring OACAO regions to closer conform to LHIN's units was also a topic at the meeting, as well as the SWOT strategic plan and the different staff and seniors needs in centre's operations.

There was a further motion "That the Provincial Board of the OACAO agree to review the Regional Member model and consider changes to the current structure. Based on an agreement to review, Grand River Region will develop and submit a draft option for future Regional involvement with the OACAO."

Grand River Region reps attended Provincial Board meetings at the Travelodge Airport Hotel in Toronto March 4/5 and at the Franklin/Horner Centre May 14.

Three successful Active Living Fairs were held in the region in March at Waterloo, Brantford and Cambridge. A total of 594 persons attended the events. We would like to hold similar fairs in the future.

A Regional meeting is planned to take place following the Annual Provincial Conference.

Allan Gray,
Regional Representative

Northwest Region (Western Portion)

With a grant from The Ontario Senior Secretariat, we held an Information Fair in Thunder Bay at the Victoria Inn April 11-12 with over 60 representatives attending from 16 Senior Clubs as well as OACAO President, Ellen Hope and Executive Director, Lawrie Bloom, who were well taken care of by incoming NW Regional Rep, Keith Nymark and my co-representative Joan Clark of Terrace Bay.

Unfortunately my ticker decided to give me trouble and landed me in hospital just three days before the information fair was to be held. I thank Joan Clark for stepping into the breach and seeing all organized plans were put into action. My operation in Hamilton was quite successful I might add.

The feedback received on the fair was positive to say the least, and many clubs from NW region were interested in following up with speakers from the fair, at their own meetings.

Since I committed to serving only one year as a director, I can say in all honesty that it was indeed an interesting experience, although at times extremely stressful.

I want to pay particular tribute to Vern Silver and the Atikokan Pioneers, who came through with an initial \$500 donation to OACAO NW Region, to get me started on touring clubs. I hoped to have had completed at least one visit to each, but unfortunately ill health and other circumstances prevented a fulfillment of my plan.

I was pleased to have had the opportunity to speak at Atikokan and personally thank them at a dinner and dance, where I spoke briefly about OACAO and the need for more inter-club activities. I also spoke at a special Valentine dinner at Dryden, which was an outstanding function.

I confess I did not fulfill my promise to visit each club at least once, but I did manage to cover Atikokan, Sioux Lookout, Dryden, Ear Falls, Kakabeka Falls, Ignace, Upsala and my own Thunder Bay 55+ as well as touching base with Rainy River, Fort Frances, Stratton, and the Herb Carroll 55+ Centre.

I did succeed in contacting all however by getting a bulletin out to all clubs during my term and hopefully Joan passed along copies of these to the various clubs in her sector.

NW Region is such a large area. I recommend that the Board of Directors of OACAO seriously consider splitting the region in two.

I suggest Keith Nymark would have from this side of Nipigon (including Red Rock) through to the Manitoba Border, which would become known as NW Region Sector A; and Joan would have from Nipigon to Wawa east and north to Greenstone taking in Longlac, Nakina and Geraldton Beardmore areas, to be known as NW Region Sector B.

Each should have an allotted budget of \$1,000 each to begin the year. I started with a nil budget because of holdups in transferring Jim Tooke's left over money (some \$965 and change) of which OACAO took \$500 for the regional membership fee.

So for the first six months Joan and I operated on the \$500 plus a \$60 donation from Ignace Silver Tops Club, for the first five months.

Once the information fair had been completed we were given a portion of the final \$5,000 grant, although some \$1,100 was kept by OACAO headquarters.

I suggest NW Region should have free membership for two years in lieu of not having been given the full \$15,000 grant for the fair. We do have around \$1,900 and change at the writing of this report, thanks to participant speakers in the fair and the hotel who donated \$1300 back to OACAO NW Region. I had expected to receive the full \$15,000 as NW Region had applied for, but this was not to be. So I ask NW Region to be given free membership for the next two years, in lieu of the \$1,100 shortfall of grant money.

NW Region (Western Sector) welcomed two new clubs as members of OACAO; Kakabeka Falls 60 Plus Centre and the Current River Seniors' Cribbage Club.

I would be remiss in not thanking OACAO and the Ontario Seniors' Secretariat for the assistance given to make the Thunder Bay Information Fair possible. It was a lot of hard organizational work by both Joan and myself. Some participants will be toting their belongings around in the tote bags made by Joan. (I didn't get one darn it.)

This being my final report to the Board of Directors, submitted via Joan Clark and Keith Nymark, I would like to take the opportunity of thanking you for the appointment to the directorate for the past year. I must say it was a real eye-opening experience for me, especially when I expected to step into the shoes of Jim Tooke, with a cushioned sole of financial help.

However, you can understand my surprise when I found myself bare foot (but not pregnant thank goodness) and faced with an ongoing fight for financial support for Northwest Region, and get us some recognition as being part of your organization, other than being a name on the rolls.

At the writing of this report, I am pleased to say we have **\$1,991.02** in the NW Region bank account, although there are still some expenses to be paid out.

I wish to thank every club in my section of NW Region, for the experience we have had together, and the wonderful times we spent. I gained a lot of knowledge of the workings of OACAO, (some of which which I strongly disagreed and made known to the Board) and your clubs. I found for the most part "all clubs are alive and well and working like hell" to improve the senior lifestyles in their community. Keep up the good work.

To the Directors of OACAO from Southern Ontario, you are all invited to visit the North which we look upon as "God's Country" and we will welcome you, but please allot time enough to travel from Thunder Bay west to Kenora and Thunder Bay east to Wawa and take the alternate route back via Hwy.11 north to Nakina/Longlac. Take the long drive around Lake Superior and see why we choose to live in the North.

I know I was somewhat of a rebel and if I offended anyone, my apologies, but the squeaking wheel gets the most grease and I guess I squawked loud enough to drive Lawrie up a wall. Sorry Lawrie, but I fight for what I believe in.

Gerry Poling, Senior Representative
Northwest Region

Northwestern Region (Eastern Portion)

I have found the past year to be challenging on one hand, while very productive on the other. Gerry Poling and I have served as co-regional reps for Northwestern Ontario, and have been educated on the workings and purpose of the OACAO organization

This has been accomplished by the two Information fairs that have been held in 2007. As a matter of fact at this writing which is deadline for this report. I am in the middle of the second fair. Although due to emergency situations (funerals and sickness) the count at the workshops was down, a very productive day was accomplished for the 22 participants that attended the workshops today. The information fair was a raving success with 43 exhibitors and attendance by residences of two communities. (Numbers to follow on fair report). Great information was presented, and was enjoyed by all.

The workshop morning session saw a session which challenged “What do our clubs need to Grow?” In the afternoon, we were honored to have Al Gordon and Bill Krever present a Focus Group Training Session as part of the “Building Bridges to Tomorrow” project. Great feedback, and a chance to learn a little more about the challenges facing Senior Centers, as well as good information about OACAO. They were also the keynote speakers at the pot luck supper we had tonight.

Our region was honored to have Lawrie Bloom and Ellen Hope visit our area on April 11 – 12. 2007 for a large information fair in Thunder Bay, combining both regions of Northwestern Ontario. Good sessions were enjoyed by 16 of the 22 Clubs/Centers in our region.

Two visits have been made to all 11 Clubs in the region, We still have some work to do with some of the clubs, in order for them to realize the benefits, of becoming a member, but I am certain that will happen in the coming year especially with the good news that has recently been announced.

Distance and travel expense is one of the main reasons that the clubs are hesitant to work as an operating regional force. Economic downsizing factors in all of the communities are affecting the financial concerns of all clubs in my region. With senior Clubs not able to raise money via the lottery/license system, in a lot of the communities, there is little left for educational workshop money.

We are excited about the good work done by the OACAO committee that worked with government for the announcement on the new increases for EPC grants, Hopefully our region will be able to gain a few more centers for new funding, and the existing EPC locations are very grateful for the increase.

I cannot say enough about what the fairs are doing to raise interest as well as educate the Clubs/Centers as to the workings of OACAO, as well as providing educational opportunities for growth. In my opinion, this is the way to go in the future to communicate, and provide growth opportunities to the seniors.

I am looking forward to another term, and the growth that can be accomplished.

Joan Clark,
Northwest Senior Representative

Golden Horseshoe Region

The Golden Horseshoe Region held their 2006 Annual General Meeting and Christmas Luncheon on November 30. The following Executive Members were elected:

Chairperson: Wendy Krever
Secretary: Judy Lily
Treasurer: Jean Patterson
Senior Board Representative: Mary Lou Weir
Staff Board Representative: Tammy Townsend

The Region has been extremely busy this year with hosting the 2007 OACAO conference in Oakville. Many of the Region's members have been involved on the conference committee under the outstanding leadership of the conference chairperson, Nancy Beddoe. We all look forward to an exciting, informative and entertaining conference !

On September 14, we held our Annual Golden Horseshoe Region Golf Tournament at Oak Gables Golf Course in Ancaster. Fifty – eight golfers took part with tremendous support from the Ancaster Senior Achievement Centre. We had a beautiful day with a great lunch and everyone went home with a prize! Thanks to Wilma Groen and Shirley Glauser for putting it all together.

Our 2007 Annual General Meeting and Christmas Luncheon will be on November 27 at the Sir John Colborne Recreation Centre for Seniors in Oakville.

Congratulations to all seniors and staff of the Golden Horseshoe Region for another year of working and playing hard together!

Wendy Krever,
Region Chairperson

Eastern Region

The members of the OACAO Eastern region have been working together for the last year on various projects. A meeting was held to discuss and to summarize the Conference, held in our region in October of last year. This summer due to unforeseen circumstances, the Annual Eastern Region Golf Tournament had to be cancelled. The Annual Dart Tournament was a great success due to the efforts of the team from the Gloucester Senior Adult Centre. In November, the region will have a **Games Day** that will be held at Le Centre Pauline Charron in Vanier. Members will compete in sands bags, whist, 500 and carpet bowling. The members continue to cooperate at many levels so that we can all benefit for each other's expertise. I would like to thank all the Board members for their kindness and hard work.

Denis Perrault
Regional Representative

Metro Region

Over the past year, a number of centres in the Metro region have held successful Information and Active Living Fairs. In November, there is a Falls Prevention Seminar being planned, that will be held at the Franklin Horner

Community Centre. Greg Edwards has completed his term and Don Cameron will be taking over as the Senior Regional Representative.

Laura Latham,
Regional Representative

Central Region

The Central Region is hosting the 2008 Conference which will be held at the lovely Horseshoe Valley Resort October 19, 20 and 21st, 2008. The theme is “Live Life to the Fullest: - “Live Well Love Lots, Laugh Often” and the committee is enthusiastically starting on their journey towards a hugely successful conference. Mark your calendars now!

The Central Region of the Older Centres Association of Ontario meets three to four times a year to discuss issues, trends, opportunities and to keep informed of the Board’s activities. The meetings are fun, informative, and a great deal of comradeship is felt amongst the members.

Common issues within the region are membership, volunteerism, multiculturalism and participation levels. Some have seen increases in membership and participation levels, while others are seeing declines. The results of the “Building Bridges to Tomorrow” research project, funded by the Trillium Grant, is anticipated to be rich and useful information for all older adult centres. Eight (8) centres within the Central region have been chosen as Centres of Interest and are in the process of training volunteers to deliver questionnaires.

Huntsville hosted a Slo Pitch Tournament over the summer and all participants had a great time.

The Central region has a new Senior Representative from the Whitby Seniors, Shirley Scott. She is amazed at the work everyone does and is busy learning the roles and responsibilities of a senior representative.

The Central region is appreciative of the work the OACAO Board has been doing over the past year with the education initiatives from the Ontario Seniors’ Secretariat (Active Living and Information Fairs and the Falls Prevention Program). Another initiative is the first substantial increase in the provincial Elderly Person Centres Funding that was announced by the McGuinty government in September, giving seniors greater access to programs and services. It is encouraging to see the government recognize the health benefits older adult centres give to a community.

The Central region looks forward to the next year and will continue to support the efforts of the Older Adult Centres Association of Ontario and hope to bring new centres/members aboard.

Debbie Wilson,
Regional Representative

Message from the Executive Director

It has been another exciting year for me as your Executive Director – the Ontario Trillium Foundation Grant has allowed us to begin work on the “Building Bridges to Tomorrow” project and the funding from the Ontario Seniors’ Secretariat has allowed our association to offer another 23 Information and Active Living Fairs for a total of 50 events by the end of March 2008. I have had the opportunity to meet many wonderful seniors and staff as I visited so many centres during the first year of the Fairs. You have all done a wonderful job and are to be congratulated on organizing such wonderful events for your communities.

The announcement of increased EPC funding has been a special highlight for me as my work on this actually goes back to when I was President of the OACAO back in 1982 and 1983. All of the hard and tireless work of

the many Advocacy Committee Chairs has finally paid off. My congratulations to all who have been involved in making this a reality.

Thanks to a wonderful Board of Directors and to all of the dedicated OACAO Committee Chairs who are doing a terrific job for our Association!

I look forward to another amazing year!!!

Lawrie Bloom

Nominating Committee Report

As Past President, one of my duties is to put forth a Slate of Officers for your consideration at the Annual General Meeting On Sunday, October 21, 2007.

I would like to recommend the following:

President	Ellen Hope
1 st Vice-President	Debbie Wilson
2 nd Vice-President	Ross McKee
President Elect	Vince Mercuri
Secretary	Debra Prescott
Treasurer	Marilyn Latham

Shirley Glauser, Past President

BUSINESS PARTNERS

BAYSHORE HOME HEALTH

Bayshore Home Health has been enhancing the quality of life, dignity and independence of Canadians in their homes since 1966. Canadian owned and operated, the company is the country's largest provider of home and community health care services, with more than 40 locations in eight provinces and 6,000 employees. Its core services are in-home nursing, personal care and home support, which are offered directly to consumers and also available through government care programs, personal and group insurance plans, and workplace safety insurance. Its other businesses lines are nurse and caregiver staffing, pharmaceutical support services, health education programs, infusion clinics and dialysis centres. Bayshore Home Health is a winner of Canada's 50 Best Managed Companies program for 2006. www.bayshore.ca

HARDIMAN MOUNT & ASSOCIATES INSURANCE BROKERS – 50+ HOME & AUTO INSURANCE

Members of OACAO Centres now have the opportunity to save on their home and automobile insurance through an exclusive new program administered by HMA Insurance Brokers.

As a member of the program, you will enjoy the highest level of personal care along with a number of value-added products and services including:

- No-charge Monthly Payment Plan
- Optional Driving Record Protector to Protect your Good Driving Record

- Instant Savings When Combining your Home and Auto Policies
- Superior Claims Service that Comes with a Guarantee
- Free Identity Theft Coverage

HMA has been offering programs to the 50+ community for over 20 years and as an Independent Insurance Broker, they are able to compare rates with more than one insurance company and then choose a policy that's right for you.

Call Kelly Somerville today at 1-800-361-6996 for your FREE no-obligation quotation and see how much you can save! Visit our website at www.hmainsurance.com

HILL ISLAND LODGE

Hill Island Lodge, the only hotel in Canada on one of the famous Thousand Islands. The tranquil setting of our family owned and operated hotel provides guests with the opportunity to relax and appreciate our natural setting, or take advantage of our numerous activities. Hill Island Lodge is situated on 10 acres of forested parkland providing guests plenty of opportunity to observe the local wildlife (deer, wild turkey, mink and coyote) in their natural habitat as you stroll along our nature trails or just relax at the pool or on our licensed patio. Our facility is wheelchair accessible and the lounge and dining room can be accessed from the hotel through our enclosed "Hall of Fame", no need to worry about inclement weather. www.hillislandlodge.com

HOLIDAY RETIREMENT RESIDENCES

Holiday Retirement Residences are uniquely designed for active retirement living that meets the diverse and changing needs of today's seniors. Our independent lifestyle provides a wide range of service and amenities that are all included in an affordable monthly rent. We provide seniors with the opportunity to enjoy life to its fullest. www.holidaytouch.com

OASSIS

OASSIS has been providing Employee Benefit Plans across Canada since 1990, with an exceptional history with all its members.

OASSIS is a not-for-profit organization and therefore keeps its premiums set only to cover claims and administrative costs. Any surplus at the end of the year is used to reduce future premiums.

OASSIS has been focusing on the needs of Community-Based Organizations and has designed its Benefit Plans to cover the high proportion of part-time workers and those with variable working hours.

OASSIS benefits its member agencies by creating a secure work environment. This helps you attract and retain qualified employees without the risk of losing them to other sectors. www.oassisplan.com

RETIREMENT RESIDENCES GROUP

"Enhancing Care Options for Seniors"

The Retirement Residences Group is dedicated to providing seniors with high quality retirement living at over 85 locations across Canada. Including Central Park Lodges, Meadowcroft Place and Lifestyle Communities, we offer different levels of care from independent living to fully assisted care. Our Rapid Response Program is

available 7 days/week, 24 hours/day for immediate placement into one of our residences.

www.retirementresidences.com

SENIOR TOURS CANADA

Senior Tours Canada is the largest Canadian tour operator specializing in fully escorted worldwide group tours for the mature traveller age 50+. With over 100 destinations and cruises to choose from, our tours offer the traveller choice, interesting itineraries, flexible pacing, good value and quality. Our special prices include airfare, accommodation, excursions, most meals, health and cancellation insurance, all tipping, all taxes, portorage and home pickup from most Canadian cities.

Your holiday literally begins and ends at your front door! www.seniortours.ca

THE CARE GUIDE

TheCareGuide.com and **The Care Guide** are Canada's most comprehensive guides to seniors' housing and care services including retirement residences, long-term care centres, in-home care, community support services, independent/supportive living and hospice care.

Backed by an experienced, caring and committed team that understands the sense of urgency and needs of our visitors, TheCareGuide.com helps caregivers, seniors, families and their advisors access the full spectrum of seniors' housing and care solutions through trustworthy, accurate and easy-to-use information, support and community, and offers industry stakeholders an effective, results-based channel to reach a highly targeted audience at a key decision-making time.

We are a proud part of the Care Planning Partners Inc. family of companies and have been providing Canadian consumers with free information about this sector since 1996. www.thecareguide.com

TIPPET-RICHARDSON MOVING AND STORAGE –SENIORS DIVISION

Tippet-Richardson Seniors Division was established after consultation with a number of retirement residences, seniors groups and individuals to assist seniors when moving to a retirement environment. Tippet-Richardson will plan and organize the relocation to effect a smooth and seamless adaptation to a new lifestyle with a single point of contact. Our experienced staff will assist in all matters pertaining to your relocation.

Phone Ron Smith at 1-800-265-6401 or visit www.tippet-richardson.com

STRATEGIC ALLIANCES

OCSA – THE ONTARIO COMMUNITY SUPPORT ASSOCIATION

The Ontario Community Support Association (OCSA) is a provincial association, located in Toronto, that supports, promotes and represents the common goals of its members, which are providers of community-based not-for-profit health and social services, so that they are better able to support people to live at home in their own communities.

Community support services can help if you, or someone you care about, can't function independently because of a disability, illness or limitation due to aging. You can live at home in your own community, assisted by caring, friendly, professional staff and well-trained volunteers.

OCSA represents more than 360 community agencies, 13,000 staff and 60,000 volunteers across Ontario. Last year these volunteers donated over 2.5 million hours of service. We work with our members to ensure that issues which affect community services are heard and addressed by government policy makers, other health organizations, the media and the general public. www.ocsa.ca

OPADD – THE ONTARIO PARTNERSHIP ON AGING AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

A ground-breaking informal partnership of service providers in long term care and developmental disabilities, provincial associations, planning bodies, educational institutions and local initiatives.

Dedicated to ensuring that older adults with developmental disabilities enjoy the same rights and opportunities to service and support as every senior in Ontario

Active in the areas of applied research, education of caregivers, innovation in service delivery and policy development. www.opadd.on.ca

OPMHAN – THE OLDER PERSONS MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS NETWORK

OPMHAN is a collaborative of more than 50 provincial and regional organizations committed to improving the system of care for older adults living in the community who are at risk of, or coping with, mental illness and/or addictions . . . and those who care for and about them.

OPMHAN

- Raises public awareness of older persons' mental health & addiction issues
- Supports the establishment of a provincial forum for older adult service users, informal caregivers and those concerned with their well-being
- Foster the development of regional and local networks concerned about older persons' mental health and addictions issues
- Encourages and facilitates networking, training, and education opportunities
- Promotes and utilizes relevant research
- Gives voice to key messages in support of OPMHAN's mission

Contact Randi Fine at 416-325-7643 or via e-mail at opmhan@sympatico.ca