

An open letter to Mable Hastings

Celebrating 10 years as the Missisquoi North Volunteer Centre’s executive director



Mable Hastings

Hey Mable! Congratulations on maintaining more than four decades of dedication to the Missisquoi-North Volunteer Centre. In 1984, when we were Citizen Advocacy, we had three rooms in the Reilly House and employed three employees: you, Rupert Clark and me.

You were the Secretary. Rupert was the Coordinator of Volunteers. And I was the Executive Director, always trying to obtain funds to keep us alive.

In 1982, you began working for the organization—originally known as Citizen Advocacy, then, for five years in 1986, under the aegis of the Mountain Valley Outreach Mission (MVOM), and eventually under the Missisquoi-North Volunteer Centre (CABMN).

During this period, MVOM ran its community programs out of the historic Reilly House in Mansonville.

Over your long career with the organization, you moved up the ranks to serve as Administrative Assistant, then Youth Director, and were ultimately appointed Executive Director in 2016. And were you ever good!

In 1989, Juanita Willey/Whighton, Secretary of Mansonville Elementary School, even lauded you. You were also named an Outstanding Young Quebecer by Alliance Quebec.

As Youth Director, you worked with kids from both the French and English elementary schools, from age 5 to 12. It started as a Girls’ Discussion Group, but the boys kept coming to the door saying they were being discriminated against. So eventually the group was expanded to include them.

However, you had to find something for them when they graduated to high school. And voila! You started SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions), the first such group that didn’t start in a school.

In 2004, the older kids decided they wouldn’t leave just because they had graduated from high school. And had kids. So they created FYI (Former Youth Involvement), which supported SADD.

In 2012, FYI celebrated 1,444 hours of collective volunteer work, which continued until 2020.

Today, the organization operates in a rent-free head office over the CLSC, and owns two buildings - one for youth and handicapped, and the other for seniors, special events and other organizations. We also have a staff of 15, including two who are on contract. All work part-time. And prefer it that way. Except you, of course, who spends gazillions of hours working overtime.

During the pandemic, your efforts to inform the board, community partners and users were meticulous, thorough and creative. Your newsy emails were full of interesting and thoughtful information. Indeed, they were fantastic!

We understand that during the pandemic, you even sent people out to photograph people at home, ensuring their photos were published on the CAB’s website.

It seems that our CAB was the only one that never closed.

I send you my love and admiration,

Murielle

NEA Crossword Puzzle

- ACROSS**

1 “The X-Files” org.
4 Gaelic
8 Donkey’s cry
12 — Vegas
13 Conked out
14 Broccoli —
15 Reached a goal
17 Playing cards
18 Haunted house inhabitants
19 Bumpkin
21 Shoe part
22 Rainy
23 Throne
26 Even score
28 Filmmaker — Reiner
31 Disreputable paper
32 Gull relative
33 Era
34 Timetable abbr.
35 Ignoble
36 So-so grade
37 Spelling contest
- 38 Destiny
39 Los Angeles baller
41 Old French coin
43 Favorite —
44 Female horses
46 Walk unsteadily
50 Lipstick holder
51 Hero in Greek myth
53 “— Well That Ends Well”
54 Hold sway
55 Psychic’s gift
56 Root veggie
57 Adolescent
58 Bashful
- DOWN**

1 Banner
2 Shower alternative
3 Analogy words
4 Newspaper worker
5 Wash
- 6 Observe
7 Whirlpool
8 Slow down
9 Speedway
10 Victim of Cain
11 “Indeed!”
16 Wine city in Italy
20 “A Prayer for — Meany”
23 Grouch
24 Rabbit
25 Pleasant
26 School-room event
27 Wrath
29 Gothic arch
- 30 Stein contents
32 Chinese principle
35 Sad
39 Untie
40 Common conjunctions
42 Wave top
43 Fashion
44 Beast of burden
45 Kind
47 Poor grades
48 Green with vegetation
49 See
50 Bar bill
52 Payable

Crossword answer on page 36

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