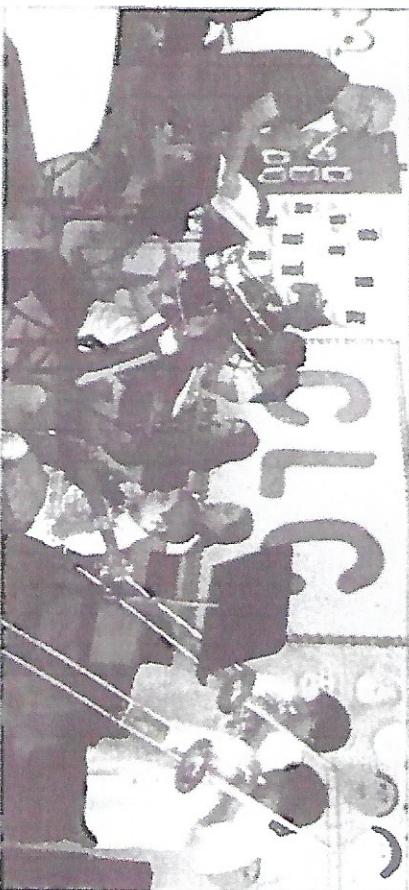


# Western sector CLC off to a good start

By Matthew McCully

Monday was the official launch of the Bedford and Farnham Community Learning Centre. Accord-

ing to coordinator Holly Bailey, the launch was well-attended, with around 60 community members and potential partners interested in learning about the new initiative.



COURTESY

Close to 60 people attended the official launch of the new Western sector Community Learning Centre, which will operate out of Butler and Farnham Elementary Schools. Monday's launch was held in Bedford, according to CLC coordinator Holly Bailey, a second launch is planned to introduce the new initiative in Farnham.

Bailey has been getting the CLC up and running since April 4, but said it will likely take a good year to lay the foundation for the centre.

"It will take shape based on what the community's needs are," she said.

Bailey plans to host a 'community conversation' in the fall, to find out what courses and programs people would like to see at the CLC.

While there are other CLCs in the Townships, this is the first for the Western sector.

"The sky's the limit," Bailey said, excited to move forward and carve a place for the new learning hub in the community.

Bailey said the CLC's first community partner is Pleins Rayons (Freewheeling), a non-profit organization based in Cowansville with a mission to help at-risk teens and adults with special needs learn bike mechanic and social integration skills in order to have a viable future.

Board members Michael Herman and Anne Stairs attended the CLC launch and presented a bicycle as a symbol of what the future holds for the partnership. Bailey said eventually the CLC hopes to have a fleet of bikes available so that entire classrooms can take group trail rides.

"Seeing as each community is unique, our CLC will tailor the services offered to reflect the individual community's values and needs. It will be an ongoing process of adaptation as we grow together and decide on what changes we'd like to see. Our focus is to engage students in and outside of the classroom and bring the community back into our schools, all the while helping to ensure the vitality of our English speaking communities," Bailey commented.

Since the new CLC will operate out of Bedford and Farnham Elementary Schools, a second launch will be held in Farnham on June 22, according to Bailey.

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