

**ELIZABETH FRY SOCIETY OF NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO
2018 ANNUAL REPORT**

**Prepared for the
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Held on

**June 24, 2019
At Kinna-Aweya Legal Clinic
86 S. Cumberland St., Thunder Bay, Ontario**

**ELIZABETH FRY SOCIETY
of Northwestern Ontario**



The Elizabeth Fry Society of Northwestern Ontario
Annual General Meeting
June 24, 2019

Agenda

1. Welcome and call to order
2. Establish quorum
3. Key Note Speaker – Carlina Marchese, Elizabeth Fry Speaker’s School Facilitator
4. Approve Agenda
5. Approve Minutes from AGM of June 20, 2018
6. Receive Reports
 - Caycie Soke President’s Report
 - Mary Kozorys, Coordinator’s Report
 - Committee Reports (Mary Veltri-Fundraising; Kate Brindley-Advocacy; Mary Veltri -Research; Caycie Soke -Human Resources; Lori Gilbert-Governance)
 - Treasurer’s Report and Independent Financial Review
7. Appointment of Independent Reviewer for 2019
8. Election of Directors
9. Other business
10. Adjournment

Elizabeth Fry Society NWO
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Kinna-aweya Legal Clinic, Thunder Bay ON
June 20, 2018

Present: Mary Veltri, Tracey MacKinnon, Lori Gilbert, Alicia Dallos, Ed Prinselaar., Sara Williams, Mary Kozorys, Erin Bellevance, Cheyanne DeGagne, Jamie McGinnis, Tara Hum, Manee Chacabee

Regrets: Caycie Soke (proxy provided), Kate Brindley (proxy provided)

1. Welcome and call to order

2. Establish quorum – we have 17 members and 9 present so quorum met

3. Key note speaker:

- How does art affect our brains
 - Oxytocin in just 20 minutes of engaging in art
 - Access certain areas of brain and create new neuropathways – key to build resilience
 - Positive neuro pathways
 - Project began in Aug 2017 – May 2018
 - 2 large murals – one on wall and the other in a hallway
 - Throughout mural project an obvious change was seen in their behaviour, more positive
 - However the start was filled with chatter but transitioned to a quiet and calmer environment
- How does it affect our lives
 - Learned through her experience with a more experienced artist the power of creativity and confidence
 - Pay it forward
 - Metaphor for something that is much larger and important
 - Discovering who we are, what we are capable, fighting our demons, helps us to see ourselves in new ways through images we create
 - It was evident that women developed confidence and found value in themselves
 - Source of community building, wisdom
 - Positive shift in the guards
 - Created a shift in the environment of the institution
- How does it affect the world
- This project was a profound experience for Angie Gollat
- A booklet is coming out with pictures of the murals

4. Approve agenda: motion to accept, mover Lori, seconder Erin, accepted

5. Approve minutes of AGM June 12, 2017: add to point #8 accountant/independent reviewer; amended Degagne to be amended to DeGagne; mover Lori, seconder Mary K, approved

6. Reports

a) Mary Veltri, President's Report:

- Look to president's message print out provided in annual report

b) Mary Kozorys, Coordinator's Report

- Look to coordinator's report print out provided in annual report

- With help of ministry we, are able to provide the one-to-one with the women

c) Committee Reports

- i. Mary Veltri – Fundraising: funding for speakers’ school; art workshops; we have financially stabilized; E Fry week raised a lot of public education opportunities; look to report print out provided in annual report
- ii. Kate Brindley – Advocacy: look to report print out provided in annual report
- iii. Mary Veltri – Research: look to report print out provided in annual report, primary goal is to develop housing for women
- iv. Caycie Soke – Human Resources: look to report print out provided in annual report
- v. Lori Gilbert – Governance: look to report print out provided in annual report

Motion to approve reports: mover Erin, seconder Cheyanna, approved

d) Treasurer’s Report and Independent Financial Review (Brad Mace):

- look to report print out provided
- new format for reports
- concluded that financials are good, we are solvent, 3-4 months of surplus even if we didn’t have funding coming in
- good financial shape and we are growing
- more than doubled our donations
- primary increased expenses – Mary K’s salary, program costs for art program
- Note #1 important to look to – states our purpose
- Note #6 – we don’t have core funding so we thank our funders
- Send updates to bylaws to ministry?

Motion to accept financial statements: mover Lori, seconder Jamie, accepted

7. Appointment of Independent Reviewer for 2018

- Brad to be reappointed
- Motion to appoint: mover Jamie, seconder Cheyanne, appointed

8. Amendment of Bylaw to increase terms of office for directors and officers

- look to bylaw printed in annual report
- motion to amend bylaw 6.3: mover Erin, seconder Lori, amended
- motion to amend bylaw 7.9: mover Jamie, seconder Cheyanne, amended

9. Election of Directors

- All nominees have accepted their nominations
- No other nominees
- Motion to accept slate as presented: mover Cheyanne, seconder Lori, accepted

10. Other Business: no other business arising

11. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn: mover Mary K., seconder Erin, meeting adjourned

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE
Mary Veltri (January –September 2018)

After serving as president for approximately three years, I decided to step down in September 2018, knowing that Caycie Soke our vice president was willing and very able to step into the position. I have continued on the executive as vice-president and have assisted our new president in an advisory capacity. With two sources of operational funding and project funding from the Law Foundation as well as increased revenues from fundraising, our financial situation has become more secure. With the additional funds we were able to hire a part-time bookkeeper, which has significantly lightened the load for our treasurer.

In early 2018 we negotiated our second contract with the Correctional Centre and added some new programming. In collaboration with the New Directions Speakers School, we hired a part time facilitator to run a series of classes on public speaking. We also secured funding to hire artists to lead arts and crafts projects for women in the Correctional Centre. Rather than asking artists to provide their services for free as volunteers, we are now able to offer them reasonable compensation for their services.

We increased our public profile in a number of ways this past year. We continued to post highlights and photos of E Fry events and relevant articles on our Facebook page. I also wrote an article for the Chronicle Journal on Prisoner Justice Day, focusing on the need to end the inhumane practice of segregation. We were able to secure a table at the Country Market for 4 days in October and December of 2018 and another 2 days in May of this year. This opportunity gives us great exposure and allows us to provide information about our work, sell memberships and other items for fundraising purposes. I also gave a talk at the Lakehead Unitarian Fellowship (LUF) on the work of E Fry and gave a workshop on restorative justice to the LUF Social Justice Committee.

I have been honoured to serve as president for this dynamic organization and remain very committed to the Elizabeth Fry Society as we continue to grow and implement some of our long-term goals.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE
Caycie Soke (September-December 2018)

I had the honour of taking over from Mary Veltri, our prolific, compassionate and energetic past President in September 2019. They are big shoes to fill but I have had a supportive team of board members and employees to help me on my way. This past year our organization continued to prioritize providing incarcerated women with culturally safe and gender sensitive programming to help them cope with the stresses of incarceration, connect them with community partners upon release and assist them in their release planning and transition back into the community. We have continue to develop a working relationship with the management of the Correctional Centre to be allowed access to the facility and receive approval for our unique programs. However, as an abolitionist organization we must continue to advocate for incarcerated peoples both individually and systemically within and without the system. This is a delicate balance, however, we continue to move forward in strengthening our profile in the community as advocates for change. We must continue to question the systems

within which we operate and seek knowledge and competency in topics such as LGBTQ and Indigenous inclusivity and decolonial best practices.

Our ongoing challenge is securing the necessary funding to provide advocacy and support for women as they make their way through the criminal justice and penal systems, in particular a dedicated court worker, more fulsome administrative support and supportive housing. We have recently been the recipient of a three year Status of Women Grant, for a Coordinator of Fundraising, Grant Writing and Communication. This is a crucial step towards our ability to expand and sustain ourselves as an organization. We have been able to secure an exceptional applicant for this role and she will begin her contract in July 2019. Moving forward our focus will be on sustainable growth and strengthening our governance and fundraising structures. Big things are coming!

We thank the United Way of Thunder Bay, Ministry of Corrections and Community Safety and the Law Foundation of Ontario. In addition, we are grateful for our generous donors including those who organized fundraisers for us.

COORDINATOR'S REPORT

Mary Kozorys

Central to the core of the organization and its activities during 2018 is the theme of growth. I would like to briefly highlight some of those programs and services, which continue to move the work of the organization forward. Through the support, talent and dedication of our program volunteers, board members, donors and our funding partners, the United Way of Thunder Bay, as well as the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services, we continue to provide a broad spectrum of programs at the Thunder Bay Correctional Centre during the week. These programs include yoga, arts and crafts, life skills, as well as mindfulness and meditation. After a brief hiatus, our Sunday book club has returned, thanks to the energies of several new volunteers. These group programs provide opportunities for the inmates to interact as well as to share and develop new skills for healthy living. More importantly, for our volunteers and for the organization, the ability to deliver programming provides insight into the operations of the institution and an opportunity to highlight and address inmate concerns.

Through the funding support of the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services, we continue to enhance the weekly programming with individual visits. The goal of the weekly visitation program has been to assist women with a range of individual questions and concerns, as well as with the process of release planning. The Ministry has also contributed to the cost of providing items for a 'discharge' bag offered to inmates upon release. The bags contain essential hygiene items as well transit tickets to enable women to attend necessary appointments such as probation upon release.

Another highlight of the Ministry's financial contribution has resulted in our ability to partner with the New Directions Speakers School to offer a unique Speakers School at the Thunder Bay Correctional Centre. The program has been modified to reflect the women's

interest in developing positive communications skills. Two such programs were offered in 2018, with another two scheduled for early 2019.

A major highlight of 2018 was the commencement of our collaborative research project on the criminalization of homeless and housing-insecure women. Through the funding support of the Law Foundation of Ontario, our partnership with Lakehead University researchers realized the development of a research plan, as well as a variety of tools to engage women with lived experience, service providers, as well as personnel involved in the delivery of legal services. Individual interviews began in 2018, with focus groups, interviews and questionnaires planned for 2019. This important research will help to lay the foundation for adequate housing to be built for women being released from custody into the community, a need long recognized by many sectors.

Our collaboration with Lakehead University is reflective of our active participation in a number of community entities and strategies including the Crime Prevention Council, the Housing and Homelessness Coalition, SWAN, as well as the United Way-Quality of Life Committee. Through our participation we are not only able to share and discuss issues of common concern, but to work collectively to support individuals whose voices are not always heard. It is also a reminder that successful reintegration into the community is dependent on a number of social determinants that can only be addressed through community collaboration.

Going forward, it is my hope that we can build our relationship with our national organization, the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies, by contributing to the organization's positions on corrections policy initiatives.

This has been another remarkable year for the Elizabeth Fry Society of Northwestern Ontario as we continue to build capacity. Thank you to our Presidents, current and past, for your guidance, as well as to all of the Board members for your selfless caring and commitment to our work. There is incredible energy when we focus our collective energy!

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Fundraising Committee Report - Mary Veltri, Chair

The fundraising committee consists of Caycie, Cheyanne, Tara, Bev, and Mary. We assist the Board in the planning of all fundraising activities in support of the organization's programs, projects and activities. This committee is active throughout the year. In 2018 we received operational funding from the United Way of Thunder Bay and the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services. In early 2019 we submitted a funding proposal to the Ministry of the Status of Women and we were granted funding for a three- year capacity building project, which has enabled us to hire a Coordinator of Grant Writing, Fund Raising and Communications. We also received a project grant from Port Arthur Rotary to allow us to purchase bus tickets for women who are being discharged from prison, Mullen Law Firm to purchase E Fry Bags and from Copperfinn Credit Union who sponsored our Film Night and Silent Auction.

Our fundraising activities during the past year consisted of:

- Mail out of donation request letter
- Paint night with art facilitator, Teri Hofer coordinated by one of our board members, Cheyanne DeGagne
- Fudge sale also coordinated by Cheyanne
- 4 Market days featuring an information table and sale of memberships, cards, zines, potted plants, earrings and cotton shopping bags
- Film Night and Silent Auction during E Fry week
- United Way Billboard Rescue Campaign
- In June and July we will have donation boxes in all the LCBO outlets in Thunder Bay

At this year's Elizabeth Fry Film Night and Silent Auction we screened Michelle Derosier's award winning movie, Angelique's Isle followed by dialogue with the director. We received many generous donations of pottery, art, services and other items for our silent auction. The evening was a huge success both in terms of money raised and audience appreciation.

Last year we also received a onetime substantial donation from an anonymous donor, which has been designated for housing for women. Homelessness is a significant factor in the criminalization and incarceration of women and the biggest challenge in planning bail and discharge for women is finding suitable housing for them. We hope to move forward in our plans to establish transition housing for women in the coming year.

The role of the fundraising committee will be changing to more of an advisory and supportive function, now that we have a paid staff person responsible for grant writing and fundraising. We welcome Jennifer to the organization and look forward to working with her as we strengthen our base of financial support and hopefully expand our services.

B. Advocacy Committee Report – Kate Brindley, Chair

This year the advocacy committee supported two students providing services for Elizabeth Fry. In the summer of 2018, a LU law student was funded by the Law Foundation for a summer position. Her position was primarily supervised by the Advocacy Committee. She worked on research including on the 2018 Correctional Services Transformation Act and the affect that this new legislation may have on incarcerated women. She also assisted the research committee by participating in a bail Court Watch exercise collected data on the relationship between accessing reasonable bail and homelessness and housing insecurity.

In the fall of 2018, the advocacy committee supervised an LU Law student who volunteered through the Pro Bono Students of Canada. She created a helpful memo summarizing resources for criminalized women in custody and in the community.

The advocacy committee is anticipating applying for another volunteer position for the 2019/2020 school year.

C. Human Resources Committee Report– Caycie Soke, Chair

The Human Resources Committee consists of Caycie and Mary Veltri. We have had a busy year as a board and as a committee. Between our funding from the United Way, the Correctional Center and the Law Foundation of Ontario, we have been able to maintain Mary's hours at 34 per week. Mary's funding from the Law Foundation of Ontario will end in September 2019, and her hours will return to 29 hours per week.

We are continuing to facilitate a Speaker's School at the Correctional Center with the assistance of Carlina Marchese. We hired a part-time bookkeeper, Nicole Etreni, in early 2018 and continue to benefit from her expertise on a weekly basis.

The Committee put out a call for applications for Fundraising, Grant Writing and Communications Coordinator in June 2019 and has hired a successful candidate. We are in the process of getting our office ready for the new staff member to begin on July 8, 2019. We hope to continue to support her in any way we can.

D. Research Committee Report – Mary Veltri, Chair

The research committee assists the Board in the planning, coordination and implementation of all research activities in support of the programs, projects and activities of the organization. The committee has been working closely with LU Professor, Dr. Rebecca Schiff and her colleague, Dr. Helle Moeller. The committee's main focus was to get funding to carry out research on the impact of housing insecurity and homelessness on criminal justice system involvement among women, with particular consideration of Indigenous women. Through the funding support of the Law Foundation of Ontario, our partnership with Lakehead University researchers realized the development of a research plan, as well as a variety of tools to engage women with lived experience, service providers, as well as personnel involved in the delivery of legal services. Individual interviews began in 2018, with focus groups, interviews and questionnaires planned for 2019. Our pro bono law student will also be attending criminal court to make observations and document how homelessness factors into the decision to grant or deny bail. This important research will help to lay the

foundation for adequate housing to be built for women being released from custody into the community, a need long recognized by many sectors.

E. Governance Committee Report – Lori Gilbert, Chair

Current committee members are Erin Bellavance, Kate Brindley, and Lori Gilbert. The Governance Committee provides the Board with recommendations relating to its legal and policy obligations, including reviewing the By-laws, Policies and Governance provisions on an ongoing basis.

The Governance Committee organized a Strategic Planning session in early 2017 as a follow-up to the fall 2016 session, in order to focus in on some areas of the plan. This year there has not been a great deal of activity of the Governance Committee. However, we are planning another Strategic Planning session for early 2020 to continue to expand upon our goals and growth.

The objectives/vision statement of the by-law needs to be updated, and this will require board input. We also want to continue to collect all the existing policy documents in a format that will allow all board members to access them, and create new policies to fill gaps (such as AODA and social media/communications policies).