



connections

ANNUAL REPORT

2024-2025

MISSION

Connexions Resource Centre promotes the health, social wellbeing, and vitality of the English-speaking community through empowerment, participation and collaboration within the Outaouais.

VISION

A strong, inclusive, healthy English-speaking community; recognized, interconnected, and contributing to the vitality of the Outaouais.

VALUES

Compassion: We serve with kindness and care.

Integrity: We hold ourselves and each other to high ethical standards

Accountability: We are responsible to each other, our community, and those who support us.

Collaboration: We work with our community and partners to fulfill our mission.

Resourcefulness: We adapt, innovate, and strive for excellence.

Inclusion: We create spaces of belonging where everyone is treated with respect and dignity.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Vice-President

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Director

CURRENT STAFF

Danielle Lanyi
Executive Director

Diane Wheatley
Regional Seniors' Coordinator

Angela Mugisha
Special Project Coordinator

Krishnan Sundaram
Community Health & Wellness Facilitator

Cassandra Hope Sydor
Regional Coordinator - Early Childhood, Youth and Families

Marquis Bureau
Coordinator for Caregivers of Seniors

Shelley Heaphy
Community Engagement & Outreach Coordinator – MRC Pontiac

Michelle Smulders
Outreach Worker for Seniors





MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

As President of Connexions Resource Centre, I am proud to witness the ongoing impact of our work in strengthening the health and well-being of the English-speaking community in the Outaouais. Through collaboration, dedication, and community engagement, we continue to grow stronger together. Thank you to our partners, staff, volunteers, and community members for your trust and commitment.

Together, we are making a difference.

Ruth Williams

President

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



It is with great pride that I reflect on another year of growth, resilience, and meaningful impact. Over the past year, our dedicated team and committed partners have continued to work together to advance our mission and respond to the evolving needs of our community.

Together, we've strengthened programs, deepened engagement, and built new connections that reflect our shared values of inclusion, collaboration, and empowerment. As always, I am grateful for the trust placed in us by the community we serve, and I look forward to the year ahead with renewed energy and purpose.

Danielle Lanyi

Executive Director

Connexions worked closely with the following funders and partners to develop and enhance its programs and outreach activities to meet the diverse needs of English-speakers in the region.

FUNDERS

Secrétariat aux relations
avec les Québécois
d'expression anglaise



Santé
et Services sociaux



Dialogue McGill



L'APPU POUR LES PROCHES AIDANTS D'AINÉS



Centre intégré
de santé
et de services sociaux
de l'Outaouais



PARTNERS



OFFICE D'HABITATION
DU PONTIAC



Partenaires
du Secteur Aylmer



BRANCH 33
AYLMER



Wakefield
Golden
Age Club



L'Espace DEP Sylvestre



CISSO “ALLÔ, DO YOU SPEAK ENGLISH?” INITIATIVE

This program enables English-speaking patients in the Outaouais region to easily identify staff who can assist them in English. Healthcare professionals and volunteers wear bright yellow badges reading “ALLO, do you speak English?” to signal their language capability. Launched in mid-2024, the initiative has grown to include over 1,800 participants across **CISSO facilities**, supported by signage and communication in collaboration with Connexions. The program enhances access and comfort for English-speaking users navigating health and social services.

REPRESENTATION

Connexions plays an active role on various local and regional committees to ensure the needs and priorities of the English-speaking community are heard and considered. These committees focus on a wide range of topics, including youth and families, seniors, caregiver support, and healthy lifestyles, to name a few. Through this representation, we advocate for equitable access to health and social services, education, and other essential programs, helping to strengthen community partnerships and influence decision-making across the region.

CISSS DE L’OUTAOUAIS

- Table régionale contre la maltraitance envers les personnes âgées
- Comités Aire Ouverte
- Comité territorial du RLS des Collines
- Comité territorial du RLS du Pontiac
- Comité régional en prévention des dépendances
- Comité régional langue anglaise
- Concertation des saines habitudes de vie-petite enfance

Comité d’implantation provincial pour contrer la maltraitance envers les aînés des communautés culturelles

Comité Hull en Santé

Concertation pour le développement social de l’Outaouais - Chantier 0-5

Partenaires du secteur Aylmer

Table de développement social des Collines

Table de développement social du Pontiac

Table Éducation Outaouais

Table Soutien aux personnes âgées de Gatineau

Commission du vivre ensemble - Ville de Gatineau



250+

Representation
Meetings Attended

COMMUNITY CONNEXIONS



WHERE TO TURN: LOCAL SUPPORTS

Building on our name's spirit, Community Connexions deepens the bond between English-speaking residents and vital services in the Pontiac. In collaboration with CISSSO, we launched the “**Roadmap to Services**” event on February 8 at Pontiac High School—bringing together over 30 local and regional service providers, including CISSSO professionals, to guide families through health, social, legal, financial, caregiver, and youth resources. The event welcomed **over 100 attendees**, highlighting the strong community interest in accessing services and support.

Many valuable partnerships were formed or strengthened through this initiative, including with the **MRC Pontiac** and other local organizations. Attendees expressed appreciation for discovering services they didn't know existed, and the presentation on the **811 health information and referral service** was particularly well received. Through these intentional connections, we empower residents to navigate services confidently and strengthen community resilience.

ACTIVE IN THE COMMUNITY

Connexions has been very active throughout the region, both hosting and participating in a wide range of events to stay connected with the English-speaking community. From information sessions and outreach activities to health fairs and school transitions, our team has been present and engaged.

Over the past year, Connexions participated in **more than 75 events**, providing support and kiosks to share information, connect with residents, and promote access to services. Our kiosks bring valuable information **directly to the community**, helping individuals and families learn about local resources and programs in an accessible and engaging way.

Notably, we were involved in the **Foire sur la transition scolaire in the Secteur Plateau of Gatineau**, the **Autism Walk at Pierre Elliott Trudeau Elementary School**, **Family Week festivities in Kazabazua**, **a literacy and math night at Dr. S.E. McDowell Elementary School**, **a Welcome Café for immigrant families in Gatineau**, and the **Mental Health Care Kiosk at CEGEP Heritage College**.

We also participated in the organization of the **Anti-Homophobia and Transphobia BBQ**, sponsored by **Jeunesse Idem**, and **hosted kiosks at the Carrefour Emploi des Collines Community Fair** and the **Poltimore Fair**. In addition, Connexions attended **K4/K5 open houses for parents organized by the Western Québec School Board (WQSB)** to help families navigate early childhood services and school readiness. These events provide meaningful opportunities to build relationships, share resources, and support individuals and families across all ages and backgrounds.

CONNECTING AND BETTER UNDERSTANDING THE NEEDS OF OUR COMMUNITY

A profile of the Pontiac was completed by Connexions Resource Centre, with financial support from the Secrétariat aux relations avec les Québécois d'expression anglaise's Enhancing Regional Community Capacity (ERCC) initiative.

This profile focuses on the **Pontiac Regional County Municipality (RCM)** and provides an overview of the region's unique characteristics, along with an assessment of the vitality of its English-speaking community. It was developed as part of a series of profiles across the Outaouais region and contributes to a broader understanding of the English-speaking population in the area.

This profile of the Pontiac will assist Connexions Resource Centre and its partners in planning and supporting future initiatives that respond to the needs and priorities of the local English-speaking community.

2021 CENSUS FIGURES

Compared to 2016 census

OVERALL PROPORTION OF ENGLISH SPEAKERS	61.3%	↑
0 – 14 YEARS OLD	16.4%	↑
15 – 64 YEARS OLD	57.2%	↓
65+ YEARS OLD	26.3%	↑
UNEMPLOYED	9.5%	↓
LIVING ALONE	16.5%	↑

“We are thankful for our health institutions, the Shawville Hospital and our CLSC's.”



“Recreational associations, volunteer groups and non-profit organizations are a major strength in the region.”



SUPPORTING FUTURE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES PROFESSIONALS

Through funding provided by **Dialogue McGill**, Connexions proudly administers the **McGill Bursary Program** in the Outaouais region. This annual program supports bilingual **students pursuing studies in health and social services fields** who are committed to working in a public health & social services institution in the region upon graduation. By reducing financial barriers and encouraging local retention, the bursary program helps strengthen the future workforce and improve access to care for our region's English-speaking population.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2024 BURSARY RECIPIENTS!



Audrey Hampel,
Nursing student at Cégep
Heritage College



Zeinab Fahysa Ilboudo,
Medical student at McGill
University Campus Outaouais



This year, Connexions awarded **\$12,500** through the **Health and Social Services Community Bursary Program** to support students in completing their studies in the field of health and social services.

PROGRAMS OF STUDY HAVE INCLUDED



Pharmacotherapy, Speech-Language Pathology, Nursing, Immunology & Microbiology, Community Health, Audiology, Social Work, Doctor of Medicine.

INSPIRING THE NEXT GENERATION

Connexions actively promotes careers in health and social services by sponsoring kiosks at high school career fairs across the region. These events give students the opportunity to explore rewarding career paths while learning about the importance of serving the local English-speaking community. We also hosted a kiosk at McGill University's Gatineau Campus Journée JOPE, connecting directly with medical students and reinforcing the value of practicing in bilingual and rural settings.



Since 2011



38

Scholarships



37

Students



\$253,750

Total
Investment

“**Receiving the McGill bursary through Connexions has made a huge difference in my academic journey. It not only eased the financial burden but also motivated me to continue my studies in health care and give back to the English-speaking community in the Outaouais. I'm truly grateful for this support.**”

SUPPORTING PARENTS AND THEIR CHILDREN

Connexions is committed to supporting the physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing of English-speaking families and their children. Through collaborative partnerships and evidence-based programming, we empower families to thrive.

ITSY BITSY TOTS PLAYGROUP

Sponsored by Connexions in collaboration with **CEGEP Heritage College** and funded by **CHSSN**, the *Itsy Bitsy Tots Playgroup* offers a welcoming space for parents and their young children to connect, play, and grow together. The program features a variety of **interactive play-based activities** that promote early childhood development, creativity, and social skills. At the same time, **parents benefit from informal learning opportunities**, peer support, and access to helpful resources on parenting, child development, and community services. This free program fosters a supportive environment where English-speaking families can build relationships and confidence while their children learn through play.



NOBODY'S PERFECT PROGRAM

Offered by Connexions and sponsored by **CISSO**, the *Nobody's Perfect* program provides a supportive space for parents of young children to share experiences, build parenting skills, and gain confidence. Through guided discussions and interactive activities, parents learn practical strategies for everyday challenges while connecting with others in a welcoming, non-judgmental environment.

SUPPORTING EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Connexions is committed to fostering strong starts for children aged 0–5 through a series of **parent-child dyad workshops** and **speech and language webinars** designed to support early development. These interactive sessions help parents better understand and support their child's growth in communication, learning, and social-emotional skills. This initiative was made possible through the **generous support of the Lucie and André Chagnon Foundation** and the **CHSSN**.

UNDERSTANDING THE NEEDS OF FAMILIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

Connexions commissioned a report focused on children aged **0–5 years** to better understand the needs, challenges, and priorities of families in the English-speaking community. The report showed vulnerabilities in at least one area of development, particularly in physical health and well-being, as well as communication skills and general knowledge than the rest of Quebec. The findings provide valuable insights that help shape early childhood programming, guide partnerships, and inform advocacy efforts to support young children and their caregivers across the region.

READY, SET, LEARN!

SUPPORTING THE TRANSITION TO SCHOOL

To help children feel prepared and confident as they **transition from home or daycare** to school, Connexions distributed **school transition kits** to families across the region. These kits were delivered to **13 elementary schools** in collaboration with the **Western Québec School Board (WQSB)** and funded by **Centraide Outaouais**. Each kit includes helpful tools and resources to support early learning, ease anxiety, and make the transition to kindergarten a positive experience for both children and parents.



800+

Kits & Back-to-School Bags

“
The transition kit was so helpful! It made my child excited to start kindergarten and gave us great tools to prepare at home.

BACK-TO-SCHOOL BAGS

Once again, Connexions distributed **back-to-school bags** to **deserving students in need** across the region, helping ensure they start the school year with the supplies and confidence they need to succeed. This ongoing initiative supports families facing financial challenges and promotes equal access to education for English-speaking students throughout the community.

“
This backpack made such a difference for my child—starting school with everything they needed helped ease a lot of stress for us.

MINIBIBLIOPUS: BRINGING BOOKS TO FAMILIES

Thanks to the support of the **Fraser Hickson Institute**, Connexions hosts a **Minibiblioplus library** to promote early literacy and a love of reading among young children and their families. This free, self-serve mini-library offers a rotating selection of books in English and French, making reading more accessible and enjoyable for families in our community.

“
We love picking up new books from the mini-library—it's a great way to encourage reading at home and discover new stories together.”



ENGAGING YOUTH, STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY

SUPPORTING YOUTH THROUGH PEER CONNECTION

Connexions' **peer support groups** at several local high schools have been a great success, providing a safe and welcoming space for students to share experiences, build resilience, and support one another. **Offered in collaboration with the Western Québec School Board (WQSB)**, the program engaged **over 150 participants**, helping to strengthen emotional well-being, reduce isolation, and foster a sense of community among English-speaking youth.



MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID FOR YOUTH

Connexions delivered **Mental Health First Aid Training for Youth**, equipping participants with the skills and confidence to recognize and respond to signs of mental health challenges in peers. This evidence-based program empowers youth to offer support, reduce stigma, and promote early intervention within their schools and communities.



HEALTHY LUNCHBOX WORKSHOP IN QUYON

Connexions hosted a **Lunchbox Workshop** for students and parents at **Onslow Elementary School** in Quyon, promoting healthy eating habits and simple, nutritious lunch ideas. The interactive session encouraged families to explore practical tips for balanced meals while supporting student well-being and engagement in the classroom.



PROMOTING WELLNESS AND EDUCATION AT HAEC

In partnership with the **Western Québec School Board (WQSB)**, the **Hull Adult Education Centre (HAEC)** hosted a dynamic event focused on promoting student wellness and access to community resources. The event featured **15 community kiosks** and **6 workshops**, with **over 200 students** participating throughout the day.

Connexions played a key role in planning and organizing the event—collaborating on workshop topics, identifying facilitators, and reaching out to community partners to invite their participation. The goal was to provide students with valuable resources and information related to **mental and physical health**, as well as local services and supports available after HAEC.

In addition to our role in coordination, **Connexions hosted a kiosk**, where we shared information and resources to support student well-being. The event also fostered stronger collaboration among participating organizations, enhancing community connections.

EMPOWERING SENIORS AND SUPPORTING CAREGIVERS

Our Seniors Wellness Program is dedicated to understanding and addressing the unique needs of seniors. We connect them with essential public and community services and provide activities designed to reduce social isolation, promote healthy living, and enhance mental well-being.

COFFEE CHATS WITH SENIORS

Connexions hosted a **Coffee Chat series** with seniors in **Campbell's Bay** and **Bryson**, offering a warm and welcoming space for conversation, connection, and the sharing of local resources. These informal gatherings helped reduce isolation and build community among English-speaking seniors. The initiative was **made possible through the support of L'Appui pour les proches aidants**.



LISTENING CIRCLES IN THE MRC PONTIAC



Connexions held a series of **listening circles** in the **MRC Pontiac**, in collaboration with local **Golden Age Clubs** and the **Office d'habitation du Pontiac**, to hear directly from seniors about their needs, concerns, and priorities. These gatherings created a welcoming space for open conversation, fostering community connection while helping inform future programming and support for English-speaking older adults in the region. **Funding was provided by the CISSSO through Mesure 38**, which supports initiatives that respond to the needs of family caregivers and seniors.

SENIORS WELLNESS INITIATIVES

Connexions' **Seniors Wellness Initiatives** promote healthy aging and social connection through a variety of activities tailored to the needs of English-speaking older adults. **Some 120+ sessions** were offered this past year, supporting seniors in staying active, informed, and engaged in their communities.

Seniors **enjoyed the sessions and felt well-informed**, with popular activities including **yoga classes, a gardening workshop, funeral planning information sessions, Christmas card-making, foot care clinics, and a diabetes management workshop**. These initiatives foster overall well-being while reducing isolation and encouraging community connection.

This programming was made possible through **funding from the Community Health and Social Services Network (CHSSN)**.



ONSITE SUPPORT AND CRISIS INTERVENTION

Following the devastating fire at **Aylmer Arms** on June 29, 2024, Connexions provided critical onsite support to **108 affected seniors**. This included emotional reassurance, navigation of emergency services, access to temporary and assisted living, and coordination of essential items. The personalized, compassionate approach helped restore a sense of safety and dignity during a time of crisis.

REACHING VULNERABLE SENIORS IN AYLMER

Connexions carried out targeted **outreach to vulnerable seniors** in the **Aylmer sector of Gatineau**, helping to reduce isolation and connect individuals with essential services and supports. This initiative, **sponsored by ITMAV (Initiative de travail de milieu auprès des aînés vulnérables)**, focused on building trust, promoting well-being, and ensuring seniors feel seen, supported, and included in their community.



LEGAL AND FINANCIAL LITERACY WORKSHOPS

Connexions, in partnership with **Éducaloi**, once again offered a series of **legal and financial literacy workshops** across the region to support the English-speaking community. These workshops were made possible through collaboration with the **Centre de justice de proximité de l'Outaouais (CJPO)**, **Revenu Québec**, the **Canada Revenue Agency**, and the **Curateur public du Québec**. Together, these partners provided clear, accessible information on important topics such as wills, powers of attorney, taxes, and public protection, helping participants make informed decisions and better navigate available services.

CONNECTING MINDS, SUPPORTING LIVES

Connexions is dedicated to fostering a supportive and inclusive environment for our community. We focus on providing programs and initiatives that promote mental health and wellbeing through connection, understanding, and support. Our efforts aim to meet the unique needs of diverse groups and ensure everyone has access to resources that can make a positive difference.

MENTAL HEALTH CHECK-INS: A SAFE SPACE TO TALK

This year, we continued to offer our Mental Health & Wellness Check-In service. These free and confidential 30-minute calls provided individuals with a safe space to share their thoughts and feelings, and discuss their concerns without judgment, receiving a compassionate ear.

For those feeling overwhelmed, isolated or in need of additional support, Connexions referred them to available health and social services and community resources.

Creating an environment of support and understanding helped our callers take the first step towards better mental health and wellbeing.



MAN TALK: A SPACE FOR CONVERSATION AND CONNECTION

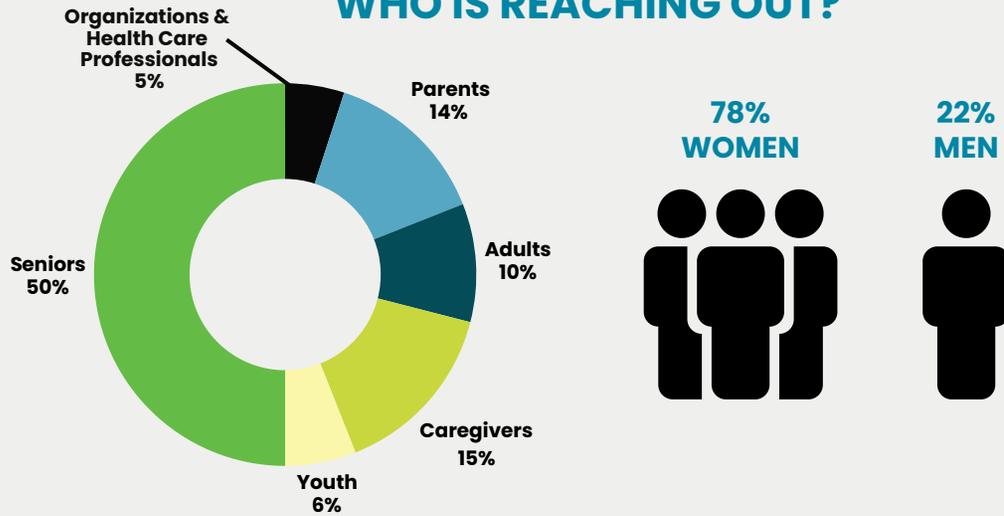
Our Man Talk support group, complemented by a full-day storytelling writing workshop, offered a safe space for men to connect and share their experiences.

LIVING WITHOUT VIOLENCE

Living Without Violence is a **27-week program** designed to support men in developing healthier ways to navigate emotions and relationships. In **weekly online sessions**, a small group of 4–5 participants explores topics such as **effective communication, managing emotional reactions**, and understanding the **root causes of anger**. Delivered in **partnership with Donne-toi Une Chance**, the program is co-facilitated to ensure a supportive, respectful, and growth-focused environment.

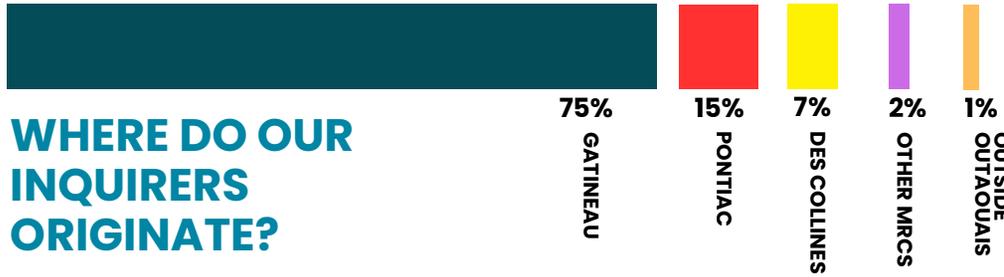
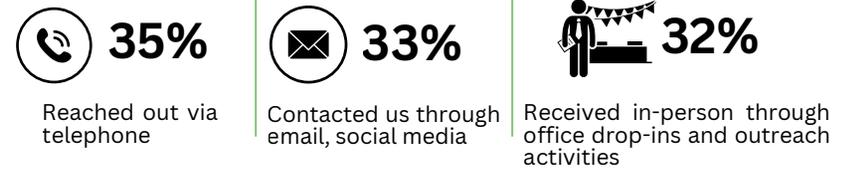
CONNECTING PEOPLE TO HELP, WHEN IT MATTERS MOST

WHO IS REACHING OUT?

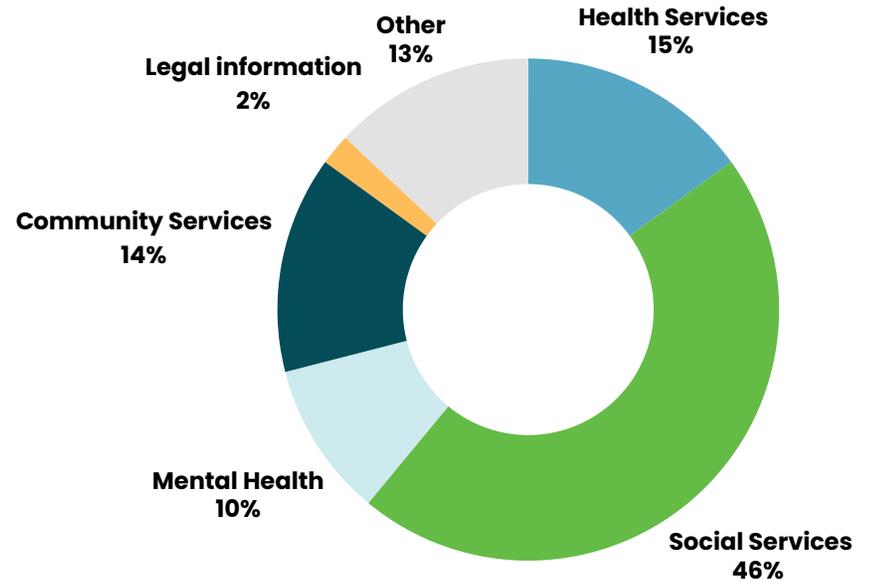


WE RECEIVED
1,000+
INQUIRIES OVER THE PAST YEAR

HOW & WHY ARE PEOPLE REACHING OUT?



WHERE DO OUR INQUIRERS ORIGINATE?



COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITIES

NEWSLETTERS

Connexions distributes an email newsletter to our members.



46%

Open Rate



2,000

Subscribers



16.4%

Web traffic originates from email

SOCIAL MEDIA

Regular posts keep our followers informed of news and events.



3,200+

Facebook Followers



59,000+

Facebook Engagements



80,000+

Facebook Reach



17%

Web traffic originates from social media

WEBSITE

Our website is the best way to register for events, as well a link to our partners and important information.



738

Monthly Average Visitors



2,265

Monthly Average Page Views



34%

Traffic originates from search

ADVERTISING

We continue our commitment to supporting print media and our local media outlets.



100+

Advertisements



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