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Team Kincardine

Press Release

Irene Mosley Brings Message of Community Building Through Partnerships

Team Kincardine Hosts International Speaker

Irene Mosley spoke to a Kincardine audience at the Holiday Inn Express the evening of September 24. The presentation was hosted by Team Kincardine and included a presentation and demonstration by the KineticKnights Team 781. In opening the evening on behalf of Team Kincardine, Ron Coristine pointed out that the Kinetic Knights were one of our important partnerships that show what can be accomplished when business and students collaborate. Team Kincardine, consisting of the downtown Business Improvement Association, the Chamber of Commerce and the Penetangore Regional Economic Development Corporation, is another of our partnerships that allow us to do more with what we have.

Irene's talk focused on community development and how we can achieve more for our community through partnership and a focus on the main thing. Irene Mosley described a number of initiatives she had helped to organize in her native New Zealand. A bit of organization and a lot of public participation were key ingredients in the many stories she told.

The community that lost its downtown due to earthquakes fought back with a temporary downtown square constructed of pallets donated by a local industry. Musicians would play from the temporary square. An old refrigerator was placed in the square and became a temporary library. When orange cones were placed around fallen buildings and debris, townspeople were encouraged to place flowers in the top of each cone. The result, a beautiful display of colour to remind everyone that they were rebuilding their own town.

In another story, the community was faced with losing their specialized medical facility that provided neurosurgery services due to government cutbacks. The town rallied and thousands of people poured out into the streets to march for their neurosurgery unit. Months of fund-raising followed with community groups, individuals and businesses raising money through a variety of events and sales.

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The university and the hospital stepped up to help and offered to support a half time neurosurgeon who also filled a half time position as the chair of neurosurgery for the university. It was a win all around as the community and community institutions pulled together.

Following her talk, Irene was asked about dealing with naysayers who complain while others work to solve problems. Irene reminded the audience that the main thing is to remember that the main thing is the main thing. Jacqueline Faubert thanked Irene for her words and pointed out that they were much needed and appreciated as a positive counterpoint to the negativity of the local election campaign. Irene pointed out that the naysayers are recognizable from one community to the next but they are not the main thing.

Jackie Pawlikowski, of the Chamber of Commerce thanked Irene at the close of her talk and reminded people to visit with the Kinetic Knights. Team 781 is sponsored by Bruce Power and the Lake Huron Learning Centre.

The audience spent time visiting with the students who were on hand to explain what they do, what they are learning and how Team 781 has been such a tremendous help.