

Talk On The Walk. Let's Do This

By Lynne Brown -

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An inaugural exercise in community building, Talk On The Walk, took a strong attendance of Sault citizens around Essar Centre's indoor 'track' on Thursday evening, August 18, 2016.

With five 'stations' set up along the Essar Centre Concourse, a series of discussions were undertaken by folks of all ages in a bid to "brainstorm ideas on making our community a better place to live." shared Sonny Spina, Norpro Security and Investigation's Director of Public Relations. Sonny Spina and Brad Gregorini were heading up discussions at The Community Safety Station.

"We are here to share and listen to ideas that pertain to community safety. To find ways that we can build on those ideas; Potentially ways in which they can be implemented, executed into meaningful action for a stronger community." said Spina.



'Talk on The Walk encourages the community to provide solution-focused ideas, opinions and feedback that will be used to implement good works which promote the Centre's vision of "We envision an inclusive, welcoming community in which people are inspired, empowered and supported to work together to transform society for the greater good through works of service and social justice." (www.ssm-dssab.ca).



Each of the five stations, were supported by volunteers and community activators.

Entrepreneurship: Jason Naccarato, President Northstar Consulting Inc. and Norm Jaehrling, President Possibilities Group.

Community Mobilization: Donna Hillsinger, Community Champion and Ross Romano, Ward 6 Municipal Councillor and Lawyer.

Employment: Rory Ring, Executive Director, Sault Ste. Marie Chamber of Commerce and Johnathan Coulman, Executive Director, Algoma Workforce Investment Committee.



Community Safety: Sonny Spina, Director of Public Relations, and Brad Gregorini, owner, NorPro Security & Investigations.



Youth: Josh Ingram, General Manager Queenstown BIA and Paul Bichler, Constituency Manager, MP, Terry Sheehan.

Folks transitioned from one station to the next, beginning at 6:30 pm., until closing remarks wrapped things up around 8:30 pm.

Some of the individuals taking part on Thursday evening were mother, daughter and granddaughter trio, Janet Rivet, Melissa and Aleshia Cerra.

Young people Alexis Cats, Maria Filice, Kelsey Watson and Daniel Sarlo participated.



Frank Sarlo, Chair, Board of Directors was very pleased with the turn-out. "We have to start somewhere." he said. "It's a beautiful evening out there, so it's wonderful to see that people have come out here tonight."

Jessica Emms, Community Development Intern at the Centre, counted her grandmother among the attendees to the 1st Annual Talk On The Walk.



“Tonight we’re looking to our community to share ideas that create positive change. Solution focused ideas that stay positive and promote happiness.” shared Christina Coutu, Executive Director, Centre for Social Justice and Good Works.

Adrian DeVuono, Public Relations Officer, Sault Career Centre took the opportunity to fill out an ‘idea postcard’. The Centre for Social Justice and Good Works placed collection boxes around the perimeter of the concourse. Folks were encouraged to jot down some ideas on the postcards and deposit them into the box for future consideration.



A.R.C.H. Volunteers Donna and Rod Barrill, and Marketing & Events Associate Katherine Williamson were set up with an information table.

With the goal of creating positive change together, one step at a time, Talk On The Walk's inaugural exercise proved to be an opportunity that many Sault citizens wanted to undertake. Walk this Way.