

AUGUST 15, 2008

Delivered to 46,035 homes

Your Community Newspaper

Caravan Vanier keeps on trucking

BY DESMOND DEVROY
 ddevroy@thenebc.ca

The Caravan Vanier may be making its way to a street corner near you this summer.

Since the end of June, a team of workers from the Vanier Community Service Centre (VCSC) at 290 Dupuis Street have gone out into the residential streets of the former city to touch base with local residents, let them know of the services that the centre offers, hear their problems, and let them know that they are not alone.

"Every Thursday, we go out on a corner of a street in Vanier to take some information," said Barra Thiom, sitting with Catherine Audet on the intersection of Lafontaine and Levis Avenues on the afternoon of Thursday, July 31st. "Today, we had some people com-

plain about the problems on Mona Avenue. We gave them some information on people who are involved," in the Neighbourhood Watch program on Emmond Street.

"We can give them some resources to help them. That's the way we are working," he said, pointing to the table in front of them, lined with brochures and information from the VCSC and the City of Ottawa, on issues ranging from dealing with the police to the anti-graffiti program. This is the first time that this program has gone out into the community street-by-street, and the sessions are usually held from 2 to 6 p.m.

"We also give them some opportunities to know our services," at the VCSC Thiom said. In particular, Thiom and Audet particularly

wanted to highlight the free activities it has available for children, and that it is also home to a free computer centre, open for use by the community.

Visitors who drop by the desk also have a chance to pick up the new Together for Vanier survey for 2008, a follow-up on the one sent out last year to find out what was on the minds of Vanier residents, and what they felt were the most pressing issues in the community.

"People complain all about the crime," said Thiom, who keeps asking people who he engages with "Do you think your street is safe? They will say, no, no, no. It's good to know." But this knowledge is not necessarily a bad thing. "I see there are a lot of residents who tell us the



DESMOND DEVROY

— Please see **CARAVAN** on page 6

Barra Thiom, of the Vanier Community Service Centre, right, talks with a Vanier resident at a Caravan Vanier stop at Lafontaine and Levis Avenues last month.