

# Street News

## Let's hear it for Poetry month

**Start Me Up's Street Poetry Project: A United Way funded project.**

April is Poetry Month...and we've got the Poets. Our Spring edition is celebrating our Street News Poets and their poetry. It's a timely focus for this issue, with the Street Poetry Project starting soon.

Societies have long revered their poets, whose creative visions bring down the walls of ignorance, opening hearts and minds to the experience of humankind.

Stephen Remus, Director of Niagara's Artist Centre and a strong supporter of Start Me Up Niagara's Street Poetry initiative says "To live on the streets is to disappear in the eyes of our society. People on the street are invisible, without a voice, considered less than citizens. Poetry, nothing more than a literary form to express ideas, will be used to educate people and give them a voice."

Poetry Month. A Poetry Project. The Street News. There is unlimited opportunity to find your voice—and for others to listen. Gilles, a musician, song writer and frequent visitor to our centre at 95 Church St., refers to Music as the instrument of the soul. It follows that Poetry is it's voice. ■



### Inspiration

...It is said  
Eagle moves between us and Spirit.  
He renews dreams  
Brings clarity of vision  
Eagle lifts our spirits.  
Watch and listen.  
Inspiration hits us  
At the strangest times.



### Men Without A Voice

"Same shit different day." That line was spoken more than once during the premiere performance of "Men Without A Voice" Reality Theater, held on February 25, 2008, at First United Church, before a packed and raptly attentive audience. The play packed an emotional punch that belied its mere 9 minutes.

STORY CONTINUES ON PAGE 8

# SMUN

Start Me Up Niagara is grateful to its program funders, partners, donors who provide the monetary and in kind resources that make its work possible.

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Community Supporters: Starbucks at Chapters, Costco, Sobeys, Congustos, Avondale, Roberto's Pizza, private donors and supporters.

SMUN celebrated a new business partnership with the Peanut Mill that provides ongoing revenue through the sale of purified water was this past year. SMUN is pleased to work with the Peanut Mill as we both build healthy communities.

SMUN is looking forward to all the new that its ninth year will bring. ■

**He who would  
become  
a leader  
let him first  
become  
a bridge...  
William  
O"Goggan**



## Street News

A VOICE FOR THE VOICELESS

Published quarterly by

### Start Me Up Niagara

Working Together...Moving Forward  
Since 1999

Working with individuals whose lives have been affected by mental illness, addictions, unemployment, and homelessness to develop self sufficiency by providing opportunities to earn income, improve health, and integrate into the community.



To donate or contribute to Street News please contact us at:

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# Leadership Workshop

StartMeUpNiagara is Music and drumming helped to lead the way through this Team Building workshop for SMUN volunteers, most of whom volunteer at the drop-in at 95 Church St. The circle of 17, focused on team building through three interactive sessions. Communication=Listening, Customer Service=Welcoming: Privacy and Confidentiality=Respecting Information and recognizing the damage of Gossip. All areas addressed in the team building topic had their base in mutual respect. It was an eventful day full of positive energy as one of our Smun volunteers, Paul Sage, offered songs that encouraged our themes and our drumming. At the end of the day we had a lot of fun and the beginnings of a song that spoke to the attitude of the workshop at Start Me Up Niagara

## Start Me Up Niagara Boogie

by Paul Sage

Brick by brick, little by little,  
There's a trick that we get to trade in  
Bit by bit we'll meet in the middle  
Then a new direction will start to begin  
You and me and a new bunch of friends

If you have a joke then go ahead and tell  
it

If you have a song then go ahead and yell  
it

And with a whole lot of love and real  
sincerity

We learn the meaning of integrity.

You and me and a new bunch of friends

Chorus:

It's the Start Me Up, Thee Start Me Up  
Boogie

Go ahead it's time to jump in

Start Me Up, The Start Me Up Boogie

Revvng our engines

It's time to begin

Shooby Dooby Doo Wa



## IRISH MARY

### *A tribute to Irish Mary by Elena*

Born in Ireland 21st November of 1873

Educated in a convent, by the Sisters

Immigrated to St. Catharines 1901 was the year

A cook by profession at the Ellis House

Then local families hired her

During the thirties traded "cook"

For "colourful character"

Her choice? No one knows why

Clothes a little shabby and dusty

Hot-tempered with a famous foul mouth

Cats for company, money scarce

Her home was a cottage on Summer Street.

No visible means of support

What today we would call a bag lady

Her notoriety and presence downtown

Informal charity of the time

Mary was "of the block" so the block looked after her

Joyously Irish, her laughter filled rooms

When visiting homes to discuss goings-on

Politics her love, the Liberals to win

If they did not, her head she would shave

They didn't. She did. What can I say?

Belonging only to herself a conformist she was not.

It's been 50 years since she walked St. Paul Street

With Irish heritage in her heart, clad in her gloriously gaudy green

In her Irish brogue, extolled virtues of Ireland's patron saint.

People feared her for she did her will

This was the one-day of the year she was kind to all.

Her home burned down the summer of 1949

Firefighters rescued her lucky to be alive

Hotel Dieu for fumigation and clean up

Heavy protests, she was quite the fight

Carmelite House her residence for months

A committee of four, funds were collected

Her little house rebuilt with volunteer labour.

A few years later unable to care for herself

Linhaven became her home I imagine with much scorn

St. Patrick's Day 1960 confined to a wheelchair

Well-wishers sent cards by the hundreds

Her passing 14th of May in 1960



*Victoria Lawn Cemetery her final place of rest. St Catharines loss of their Colorful*

*Character. Mary A. Caufield 1873-1960*

*Note: Buried by Winter @ Winter, Interment NC Sec R Row 2 Grave 42. Many thanks to Jeann Beattie, Doug Herod and C.K Bradley for their articles on which I based my poem.*

# DON'T 'DIS'

*by Rainbow*

When I first wrote “Child’s Play”, I hated it. Encouraged by my writing teacher and my family, I came to like it, and now, it is my signature poem. Writing helps me to connect with other people.

I remember Grade 9. I was two marks away from being top of the “smart” English class. At the same time, I was at the very bottom of the “dumb” math class. I loved the learning aspect of school--for the most part--but socially, I just did not fit in at all.

I remember playing at my cousin’s house. Her two visiting friends refused to play with me. As they were leaving, one turned and said, “You have a weird cousin.” My cousin did not stand up for me. To this day, I have no idea what I did wrong.

I have dyscalculia (a math disability). I cannot balance a cheque book. I am a klutz, who’s visual/spatial skills leave much to be desired. I have absolutely no sense of time or direction (left? right? what’s that?), and I get lost with alarming frequency. I’ve been known to get lost just by stepping off my porch! My memory is a steel trap--with a sieve on the bottom.

Facial expressions and some social mores that many take for granted give me grief, as I do not understand them. I find it difficult to deal with crowds, noise, pressure, or sudden change. I can’t cook, but my favourite restaurants know me by now. Since I always order the same thing, they start cooking it the moment I walk in the door. I am hopeless at housework. I have a temper that scares even me,

which I do battle with regularly. I rarely sleep well. I get distracted easily, unless I am reading, writing, or doing artwork--in which case I can concentrate intensely for many hours.

And I’ve barely scratched the surface.

Two years ago, I got some news that might have devastated me if I had heard it in Grade 9. Or, it might have helped. Hearing it at 44, I welcomed it.

The dreaded news? The word ‘AUTISM’.

Hear that word, and you’ll probably think of the Dustin Hoffman movie “Rain Man”. This exceptional movie was actually based on a true story, but that is only one person’s story of the day to day struggle of being autistic.

Autism is actually much more varied in its symptoms than was realized until fairly recently.

Not every autistic person has a gift like “Rain man”--and not every gifted person is necessarily autistic.

For one thing, it is now known that this disability is not a single disorder, but, rather, a spectrum of related disorders. These are now known collectively as “Autistic Spectrum Disorders.”

The particular form of autism that I was born with is called Asperger’s Syndrome, named for Hans Asperger, the Austrian doctor who first described it in 1944. Asperger’s is at the so called “high end” of the spectrum, intellectually and socially, but don’t let that fool you. My symptoms are only less severe relatively speaking.

Every day is a struggle to understand the world according to “Neurotypicals” (what “Aspies” like myself call those who have no mental/physical health issues that arise from the brain, such as mental disability or illness, epilepsy, stroke, ABI, etc.)

Asperger’s was not actually added to the standard texts that psychologists use to diagnose disabilities until thirteen years ago. Fourteen years ago, after a lifetime of struggling horribly with many issues, I was diagnosed with “multiple learning disabilities.” Since I believe that everything happens for a reason, I think that it is as much a blessing as it is a curse that I was diagnosed so late. At 33 or younger, I might have given in to the periodic depression that I am prone to and stopped trying. Having gained a great deal of life experience--and trauma with it--I’ve accumulated enough wisdom to see it as an explanation, rather than an excuse. Having said that, it would have been nice to grow up not being referred to as ‘stupid’, ‘idiot’, ‘weird’, ‘slow’, ‘brain damaged’, ‘retard’, etc. These labels haunted me and damaged my self image for decades. No more.

There is no cure for any form of autism. Although certain symptoms may change over the life span, and coping skills be learned, one is basically born with it and dies with it. However, great strides have been taken in care, research, diagnosis and understanding of autism.

While the causes are yet poorly understood, there seems to be both genetic (140 genes and counting), and environ-

# MY ABILITY!

mental links. Heavy metal toxicity from our maltreatment of the environment is coming back to haunt us in the form of many physical and mental disorders, including autism--which has experienced an explosion in the past several years, not all of which is due to better diagnostic tools.

Allergies to gluten and aspirin, for instance, are among the things recently linked to autism. So are broken "mirror" neurons, substance abuse by pregnant women, enzyme and serotonin dysfunctions, and some vaccinations.

Although three out of four diagnoses are boys, this is beginning to change. More people, both adults and children, are being diagnosed, and a surprisingly high number are girls. Since girls tend to cope better with certain social aspects, they tend to be missed. They also tend to be more accepting of help from others and to have ADD or ADHD less often. Thus, girls fall between the "cracks" more than boys do.

"Aspies" and other "Auties" are starting to band together now, the way the Deaf have. We would rather advocate for ourselves than leave our destiny in the hands of Neurotypicals (not all of whom are well meaning) who automatically assume that everyone should think like them. Ritalin and other toxic drugs are not for us. (Did you know that if you are on Ritalin for only a year and later decide to serve your country, neither the Canadian nor American Military will even look at you? What are they not

telling us about Ritalin?)

We refuse to be defined by our disorder. Neither will we be ashamed of it. The way we think, and the gifts that it gives to some of us is worth the struggle to comprehend

the world--just enough that we can give it our own unique twist. Judging from the number of famous people who are thought to have had Asperger's, (including Nicola Tesla, Albert Einstein, Emily Dickenson



## Child's Play

*by Melissa Leigh Fowler*

I play with words, they are my stage  
my key to door of gilded cage  
no toys or dolls could soothe the tears  
of being "different" in those years  
of childhood, pain, and quiet rage  
only my books could hurt assuage  
but passing Time, a wiser sage  
gave me the tools to face my fears

I play with words  
my pen my weapon, war I wage  
my soldiers dance across the page  
I've turned my back to bigot's jeers  
to lies and labels closed my ears  
and, happier child of middle age

I play with words

Glen Gould, Bill Gates, Dan Ackroyd etc...), we can make great contributions to society without the need to “fit in” to it in every detail. “Normal” is for those who have an underactive imagination!

This is how we think. This is who we are. I am not an “autistic person.” I am a person--who just happens to be autistic.

My intellectual scores are so extreme--both high and low--that I can't even get an IQ number. The difference is like a cross between Einstein and Daffy Duck. I don't care. I'm not a number, anyway.

My friends are few, but they are also loyal and nonjudgemental. I may be a little late, or a little lost, but I get there. I am also an artist, a writer, and a published poet.

My life is full of trials--and of triumphs. As is yours. The job of being me--or you--is taken, and no one else need apply.

Never “dis” someone else's ability.

The unique way that they think just may create an invention, a piece of art, or even a paradigm shift without which the world would be a much poorer place.

## Diagnostic Tool

Even if you have Asperger's, not all of these will necessarily apply to you.

✓ I have obsessive or repetitive routines and rituals. I do certain things in an inflexible, repetitive way.

✓ I find it hard to figure out what others are thinking or feeling. I have difficulty understanding facial expressions, humor, or knowing what is socially appropriate.

✓ My motor skills are delayed. I am clumsy and uncoordinated.

✓ I tend to take things very literally.

✓ I have a strong sense of humour, but no one else seems to understand it.

✓ I am ultra sensitive to sensory information, such as light, sound, texture, and taste.

✓ I suffer from chronic sleep disturbances.

✓ I have trouble communicating. People often say I am rude, even though I do not mean to be.

✓ I have always found it hard to make friends.

✓ I do not do “small talk” or eye contact well.

✓ I have unusually strong, narrow interests.

✓ I find it hard to imagine things in alternative ways, but I am good at picking up details and facts.

✓ I can focus on certain things for very long periods. ■



## Famous Celebrities who Passed Through St. Catharines

*By Paul Shtogryn*

What do a black slave, an American First Lady, a hockey player and an actor have in common? At one time, they all lived in St. Catharines.

Before the American Civil war, Araminta “Minty” Ross was a slave. Eventually, she grew up, married a Free Black named John Tubman, and took the name of her favourite aunt, Harriet. When John cheated on Harriet and stole the money she'd been saving for years to buy her freedom--she left him and walked all the way from Virginia to Geneva Street.

William Hamilton Merritt, an abolitionist who built the Welland Canals donated land for a “free Black quarter,” which ended at the corner of Church and Geneva. Harriet worshipped at the BME church but spent most of her time conducting slaves to freedom on the Underground Railroad. Shortly after the war ended in 1865, a famous person came to stay at the Resort

and Health Spa that once operated in the former Welland House on Ontario and King Street. This place now houses Brock students, but at that time wealthy people came from all over, even the Southern States.

Mary Todd Lincoln suffered from both manic depression (now known as bipolar disorder) and severe migraines. Between the brutality of the war, her husband Abraham's assassination (Lincoln himself suffered from depression), and the impeachment proceedings of Andrew Johnson, Mary suffered a nervous breakdown and stayed at the Resort and Health Spa to soothe her nerves.

Bruce Gamble was an NHL Goalie who played with the New York Rangers, the Boston Bruins, The Toronto Maple Leafs (where he was most noted), and in 1971-72, the Philadelphia Flyers. At this time, Bruce had a heart attack on the

ice, which ended his pro career. Bruce was a quirky, odd character. Going into a deep depression, he became a recluse. He worked as a truck driver for Vachon Bakery in St. Catharines. On December 29th, 1982, at the age of 44, Bruce collapsed during a pick up game in Niagara Falls and died.

There are rumours that some of the older people at Community Lunch, still remember Jim Carey. In the late 70's, Jim's father lost his job as an accountant. Jim dropped out of school, alternately living in his mother's car and on the streets near the railway tracks by Thorold South Fire Station. He also worked briefly as a janitor. Today, Jim is an American citizen and is one of the leading comic actors in Hollywood making \$20 million a movie. Jim wrote a 1 million dollar cheque to his father for “services rendered”. That should provide some comfort to our friends at RAFT- it isn't how you start, but how you finish that counts.

All four of these famous people spent time in our city, their experiences and challenges woven into the fabric of St Catharine's history. ■

# Spring into skin care

*By Janet Elgie*



What contains 13 cold receptors, 78 heat receptors, (and nerves) 60 blood vessels, 65 hairs and hair muscles, 165 nerves for touch, 1300 nerves for pain, 650 sweat glands, 19,500,000 cells, and 20 million microscopic organisms?

One square inch of skin!!

Our largest sense organ holds us together. It's nearly waterproof. It detects temperature, texture, pressure and pain. Skin is with us 24/7-yet renews itself entirely every 28 days.!

Healthy skin is a strong self image booster and it only makes sense to care for it. It isn't hard to do either.

Here are some tips for skin care as we approach the warm weather.

1. Use mild soap. Be gentle.
2. Wear a hat and sunscreen. Check the expiry date on the bottle and apply the sunscreen liberally, 30 minutes before going out.
3. As summer approaches, keep in mind that the sun is strongest between 10 AM and 3PM
4. If you burn easily, wear long sleeves.
5. Don't tan. It's not safe. Use a covering or an umbrella. Walk on the shady side of the street. (sometimes.)
7. Do your homework before you get a tattoo.
8. Milk and yogurt are natural, gentle cleansers. Use skim milk for oily skin and cream for dry skin. Yogurt, like Aloe Vera gel, soothes sunburns.

9. Use Witch Hazel (sparingly) to tone oily or blemished skin.

10. Simmer basil leaves to add to your bath or dip a cloth in it to relieve headaches.

11. Baking soda and Epsom salts are cheap and rid the body of toxins and muscle aches.

12. Aloe Vera has the same PH as skin and is the best burn remedy ever. Squeeze the gel right from a cut leaf on to the burn.

13. Drink lots of water!

14. Enjoy the warmer weather-you and your skin. ■

## Turning over a new leaf

*By Rainbow*

Let's face it: Spring-cleaning is a pain in the backside, especially when you don't have much. But it doesn't have to be a pain in the pocket. Sure, some people can afford stuff by Nature Clean, Ecover or 7th Generation—all good stuff, but a little pricey for those on OW or ODSP.

But conventional cleaners are far pricier in the long run. They're made from petroleum (non renewable and a pollutant), and the chemicals in them have been scientifically linked to asthma, liver and lung damage, brain damage, cancer, hormone disruptions, mercury poisoning, and resistant bacteria, among other things.

Don't worry. Saving the Earth, your health, and your pennies at the same time can be done. These alternatives are green, clean, and dirt (busting!) cheap.

### All Purpose and Glass Cleaners

Mix water and vinegar ½ and ½ . Or, substitute 1 Tblspn lemon juice for the vinegar.

For glass, just add ¼ cup vinegar to 2 cups water.

Remember that old T-shirts make the best (and cheapest) cloths. Paper towels are bleached with chlorine, which is

poisonous.

### Oven and countertops

Add hot water to baking soda and leave it in oven overnight.

Dampen a cloth with vinegar and use a sprinkle of baking powder or salt.

### Bathrooms

Mix ¼ cup vinegar with 1 cup borax. Let sit for a few hours, then scrub toilet.

To clean tubs/showers, use sprinkled baking powder or dampened cloth with heated vinegar. Rinse after 5 minutes. A paste of borax and water kills mold and mildew. If you towel your tub dry every time you use it, you only need to clean it once a month!

### Wood polish

Add a good squirt of lemon juice to 1 cup olive oil.

### Laundry

Wash in cold water! It's cheaper, and heat can set stains.

Mix 1 cup soap flakes, ½ cup washing (not baking) soda, and ½ cup borax.

Don't believe "dry clean only" tags. Just hand wash these items with castile soap.

Dilute hydrogen peroxide with water to whiten. Better yet, hang clothes to dry if you can, as sunlight, which is free, is the best stain remover ever.

If you can't hang clothes inside or outside, then dry on low. Adding a vinegar dampened cloth to the load eliminates both static cling and the need for non recyclable (and poisonous) fabric softener.

### Bugs

Outdoor bugs hate thyme. Indoor bugs hate borax. Sprinkle it where they are seen.

Also, roaches and other bugs can be killed within a few weeks by mixing sugar ½ and ½ with baking soda. ■



# Men without

*By Melissa Leigh Fowler*

First you get kicked out of the bus station for loitering even though it's below freezing outside and you're just trying to stay warm. Then the security guard from hell interrupts an important call to your worker, hanging you up and kicking you out of the MTO building-even though you have a legal right to use the public phone. To add insult to injury, some geek at the library declares you persona non-grata just because your library card is several

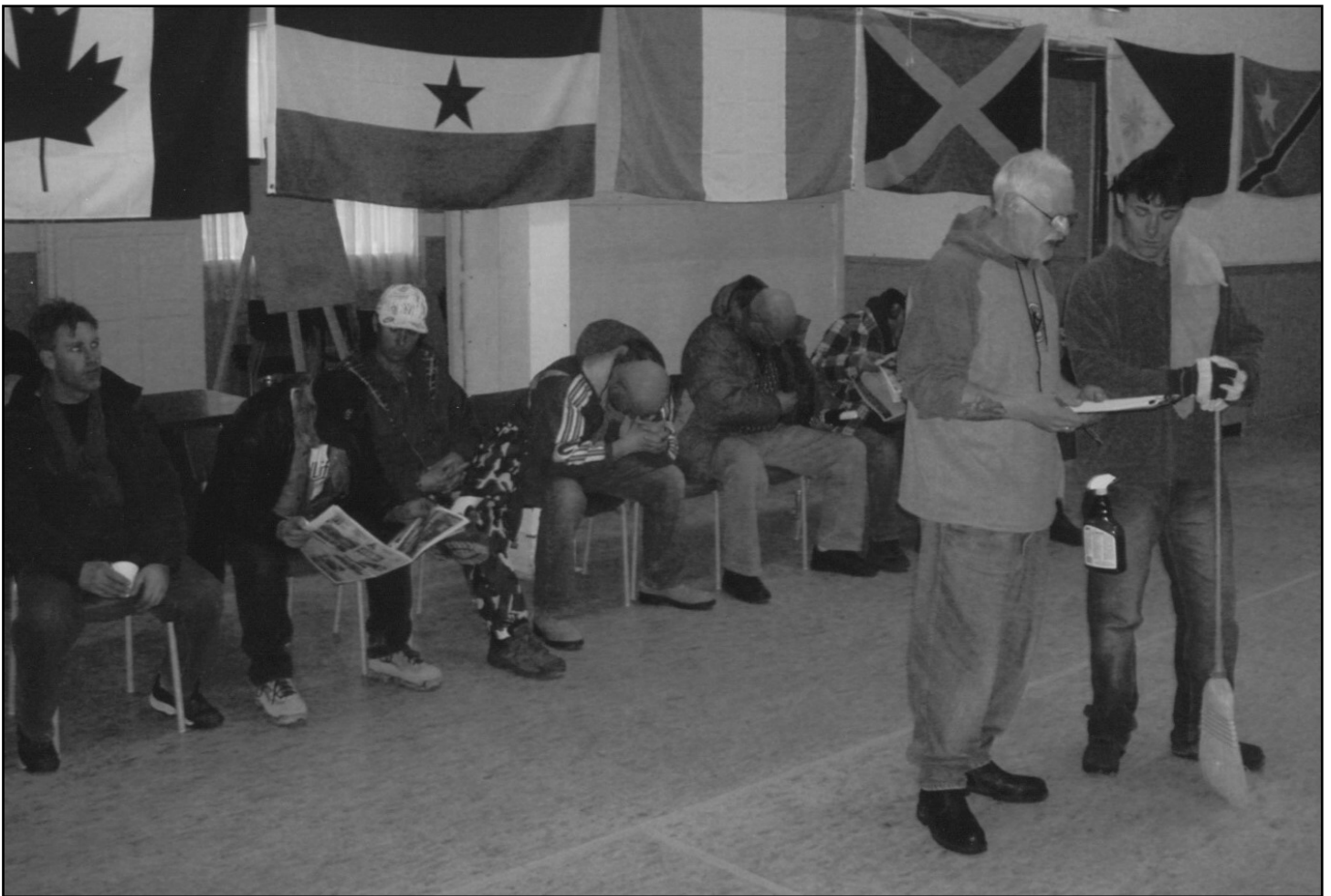
years' old "It's good for life one actor quipped but that doesn't prevent you from being booted yet again.

What's a poor homeless guy to do?

That's a question that the 20 members of "Men without a voice struggle with daily. It all started a decade ago when therapist Jane Bradley was hired on a three month contract with Housing Help Centre, that turned into 5 years of permanent employment, where the men Jane met

told story after story of trauma and loss. Jane knew these stories were important, and eventually she and Margaret Burke, a retired drama professor, had an idea for a project. They approached Start Me Up Niagara to help secure funding and after a few false starts the project was underway.

Recruitment involved free pizza. Some came for the pizza, but a core group of 20 stayed on for many weeks after discovering that the "do-gooders" valued



# a voice

## Homeless Days *by Bill*

When I am cold  
Where am I supposed to go ?  
The library is closed  
Where do I go  
I try the bus terminal  
Leave! No Loitering!  
Just reading a book  
Tried the MTO building  
Just reading a book  
Tell me  
Where am I suppose to go

---



to raise their voice, and other's awareness. This is exactly what "Street News" stands for. Kudos to the men of the reality theatre. May your voices be heard.

As for the rest of us: when you see shit, don't just stand there. Grab a shovel! ■

them not as projects but as people. As one man stated "I am not used to someone asking my opinion".

The men chose to express their experiences through a live performance that they created, staged and presented.

After the performance Margaret came up to me with tears in her eyes and declared, "I'm so proud of them I could bust."

A question and answer session was held immediately after. Shen asked what they needed the responses were for starters: a permanent shelter and drop in centre, something similar to the Work Action Centre, where people can learn self reliance, build confidence, be taught skills including arts and crafts that could be sold and get some long term one on one "mentor" type counseling. We need a Damp-shelter where the not quite sober are allowed as long as no alcohol comes with them, which means trained workers and volunteers who can deal with safety issues. Such training is also useful for

those whose mental health issues don't fit the somewhat inadequate hospital definition of "acute" but who can be an unintentional danger to themselves or others. Though Mental Health agencies offer a huge number of services, there are still some gaps. At a recent forum, service providers participated with the audience in searching for real time solutions.

According to Sheldon Reddy, there are builders already willing to help buy and renovate abandoned houses. It's a simple equation. A permanent address makes job finding easier, which promotes inclusion over exclusion. An included person is more likely to get well. What is so hard about this? And why is no money forthcoming for it? With over 65,000 people in the Niagara Region at risk due to economic change and closures, you'd think bells would be ringing somewhere.

Men without a Voice were not targeting specific groups or people. They were sharing through life experiences, seeking

Judith Zarubiak, Director of Abbey House





# Poetry Corner

## Shining Wings

*by Rainbow*

Can  
You see  
Them shimmer  
In the starlight,  
Gilded by the sun?  
Delicate, translucent,  
Opalescent as the moon?  
Can't wait to try them out!  
Watch them unfurling  
Can you see them,  
my brand new  
Shining  
Wings?

## Come to me

*by Eugene Price*

Come to me with sweet dreams of  
love and offer of yourself,  
Come to me when times are bad  
And things just won't go right,  
Come to me in morn,  
Come to me at night  
Come to me when things are right  
And then are hearts will take flight.

## Wild Trees

*by Rosanne Brown*

Wild trees then there were three  
Wild trees have their own personality  
Waves in the wind to our heart and souls  
Flowing through rivers and hitting the seas  
Stands mighty tall  
Buds bursting,  
Spring's call

## Junkies

*by Erykha Phillip*

Just turn your life over to me, I'll take good care of  
you you'll see  
(The addiction speaking)

You were the best friend that I had  
But you left me empty, scared and sad  
I gave up everything for you  
My life, my pride, my family too  
I loved you more than you'll ever know  
But now it's time to let you go

I'm trying hard to just forget  
The pain, the guilt, the mass regret  
You took everything I had away  
Left me alone, too scared to pray  
I'll never be the same inside  
It's like a part of me has died

Because of all the mistakes we have to endure  
No one is perfect, no one is pure  
Because the addiction is always here to lure  
You to darkness, you to sin  
It's in all of us, it dwells within

It will use temptation; it calls out your name  
It's hard to beat it in this game  
It will use the junkie, the crack cocaine  
It will find your soul when you become weak  
When it gets a hold of you, it will hold a grasp  
It will keep on holding until your time has passed.

---

## Potential's Seed

*by Rainbow*

The dandelion reaches to the sun  
Through concrete's cracks Potential's seed will blast  
And \*Terra Viriditas comes at last  
Contrasting voices all become as One  
Ring out; the sentinel before the mast  
The dandelion reaches to the sun  
Through concrete's cracks Potential's seed will blast  
Herself returned, our carelessness undone  
The time of greed and cynicism passed  
No longer by pollution's vapors gassed  
The dandelion reaches to the sun  
Through concrete's cracks Potential's seed will blast  
And Terra Viriditas comes at last

\*Vital force, i.e. "Soul" of the Earth.  
Viriditas pervades all levels of reality.  
Always associated with the colour  
Green by 12th century mystic, Hildegard von Bingen

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# Hard Pills

*by Nicole Webster*

The self help books are ruminating in my head  
I am trying to remember what the pharmacist said  
I take antidepressants to help get me out of bed  
amphetamines to help me concentrate  
mood stabilizers so I never feel too great  
I have wandered to the worst conclusion  
my melting pills are causing confusion  
What is it Doctor that you would have me feel?  
my life has been shattered  
my guts have been splattered  
should we increase the dose  
to heal what's bleeding most  
chemical smiles  
but tears that are real  
What is it Doctor that you would have me say?  
to write me a perscription for my favorite pills today  
I am high, low, I am all over  
my Doctor says I am bipolar  
pills to keep me up  
pills to keep me down  
side effects can be good or bad  
I have no idea how many I've had  
I take pills to help to make me sit  
and I smile just a little bit  
thinking I should politely cry  
at last a Doctor that's keeping me high  
now what do I do about this drug addiction?  
it seems to be worse than my original affliction  
unto a more wholesome day I'm moving slow  
for on this day there's not a hard pill to swallow.

## Real Angels

*by Half-Pint*

Some people are angels  
They spread joy around  
And do wonderful things  
If an angel is someone  
Who constantly shares  
A life that is filled  
With the joy of love  
If they're someone  
Who touches your life with a heart  
Someone who is both joyful and wise  
Then even without a halo or wings  
You are an angel.

## Curtains

*Experienced by Tony  
Venditti  
Written by Susan  
Venditti*

Its early morning  
He approaches  
"I have a plan  
I need curtains  
Can you give me a ride?"  
We meet at ten  
We go to the store  
His face is alight  
He finds the curtains  
He covets a wolf blanket  
He buys the curtains  
Back to the place  
Up 3 flights  
No hooks  
We go for hooks  
Back to the place  
Up 3 flights  
No screw driver  
No hammer  
I go home for tools  
Back to the place  
Up 3 flights  
We stretch, cannot reach  
No chair  
No ladder  
The bed is pulled over  
The curtains hung  
I go to the store  
The wolf blanket is gone  
The place fades  
I go home for supper.



## Homeless

*by Allen R.*

Look at the homeless  
The ones on the street  
They look like they're dead  
Walking around on their feet

People look at them with pity  
Some think they are scum  
Do they know the heart  
Of the one they call bum?

How do they know  
What that person has been through  
If they walked in his shoes  
Would they be alive too?

Don't judge that person  
Until you have walked their mile  
You should open your heart  
And give them a smile

## The Great Divide

*by MIDC*

What we need to conceive is the genesis of a  
renascent middle class epoch hence  
Extirpate pandemic indigence.

The need for all levels of government to realize  
this objective is now.

At the crux of the matter is our nihilistic ideal  
of an utopian society.

As long as capitalism rules the day that dream  
can never be realized.

Some argue that to realize true bliss you need  
to experience despair.

But a true and free society does not guarantee  
utopia for it can never exist.

But a fair and just society can, if the will  
I am, is there are you. Can we evolve in a  
compassionate and caring society or am I just a  
dreamer not the only one.

## For Laura

*My first day as a volunteer receptionist at Start Me Up Niagara was the first day I met Laura. She was to teach me reception duties. I fell in love with her wide smile and her open willingness*

*Laura, you will be missed by everyone who came in contact with you.*

*From your friend Chris*



## A Tribute to Laura

*by Andrea Toth*

Laura was my friend,  
A helping hand she would always lend.  
Laura & I worked together at the W.A.C.,  
Taking care of the storefront, she had the nack.  
She was open to learning how to make different crafts,  
Doing beadwork together, we had many laughs.  
Together we two learned many things,  
In a way I believe the W.A.C. gave us wings.  
I know the friendship we had was rare,  
I'm glad we two got to be a pair.  
Laura we miss you, but find comfort in knowing  
you're in God's care,  
And that one day we'll all be together  
in heaven there.

Laura Simpson was one of the founding members of Start me Up Niagara. She served on the Board of Directors for many years, and volunteered regularly at the Work Action Centre and in the main office. She was co owner of the former Office Mail Out business. Laura was known for her cheerful smile and her 150% effort. She is missed



## The Graduates

Computer Training graduates: Faron Goguen and Shelley Hackney receive their diplomas for the First Step Basic Computer training program from SMUN Executive Director, Susan Venditti and instructors Steve Kurtic-Letinelli and Dave Peskett.

This popular First Step program, run under the direction of Dave Peskett, with assistance from Steve Letinelli and Liz Lawson, will enter its third year in July. Participants learn basic skills for using computers and e-mails. With the Internet no one needs to be without an address. One to one instruction is delivered every Tuesday and Thursday by community volunteers. This is an ongoing program whose main goal is to address the needs of those with no computer training. It operates Tuesdays and Thursdays at SMUN where we have labs for 4 students. For information please call 905-984-5310.



"You only  
get what  
you give"  
... The  
New  
Radicals

# The adult ABC's: Attitude, Behaviour, Consequences... S. Michaud

## Spring with eggs and herbs



A box without hinges, key or lid  
Yet golden treasure inside is hid  
*J.R.R. Tolken*



Eggs were, and still are, especially enjoyed during the Spring Equinox. They represent reproduction, fertility, abundance, birth, resurrection and are included in ritual feasts during Spring all over the world.

Spring is the season of hope. It arrives here for us in the north when the sun crosses the equator, and the days and nights are almost the same length. One way to celebrate Spring is to plant an herb garden of your own in the window. A southern facing window is an ideal location, but many will grow in any good light. Using clay pots would be best, the clay will absorb any excess water, but plastic is fine, as long as you use sand and pebbles at the bottom of the pot for drainage.

When growing from seed, tamp soil down gently to 1/2 inch from the top of the pot, gently shake seeds over the soil, and lightly cover with more soil. Never cover too deeply.

A few of the best herbs to grow for flavor and suitability in window boxes are Anise, Sweet Basil, Caraway, Chives, Dill, Garlic, Parsley, Rosemary, Sages, Shallots, Tarragon and Thyme.

Another way to celebrate Spring, or just lunch, is to try this simple and delicious recipe at home.

### Herbed egg salad

#### Ingredients

- 4 hard-boiled large eggs, peeled and chopped
- 4 tablespoons mayonnaise
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh herbs such as parsley, chives, and/or tarragon
- 1 green onion or 1/4 red onion, minced
- 2 teaspoons lemon juice (optional)
- 1 teaspoon Dijon or regular mustard
- salt and pepper to taste

Stir all ingredient together in a bowl and serve on your favorite bread. Enjoy

## Closing the door

### THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS

*Out of the Cold came to a close for another year. Another season of good food and shelter with miscellaneous items for those in need. To all the churches and volunteers involved...*

*Many thanks are given from all*

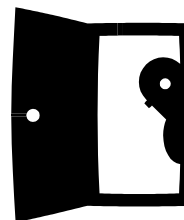
*---Elena Ray*

### No More Sleeping Inside

The full Out of the Cold program closed its doors March 31st. Heartfelt thanks to the many volunteers who serve a hot meal every night to more than 100 diners and provide a safe warm bed to as many as 30 sleepers nightly.

Thanks also to the host churches who each open one night per week from November 1 to March 31st.

A surprise extension kept the sleepers inside at St. Paul St. United Church for an additional 15 days. It was made possible through funding from the Out of the Cold Inter committee, and by the work of a small group of dedicated volunteers.



### DROP IN EXTENSION

Thanks to the City for the emergency fund of \$5,000.00 to help keep people who are homeless out of the cold during the day. This money helped the Start Me Up drop in centre at 95 Church to extend its services beyond its normal Friday to Monday operation, allowing it to be open for 5 hours each day until mid April. There are not a lot of places where those without money are welcome. Since Start Me Up had to close its homeless drop-in centre on St. Paul Street, in August of 2006, because of lack of funding, there's been a gap in service. The extreme cold weather



prompted a plea for more funding which came in the way of temporary assistance with the \$5,000.00 grant from the city.

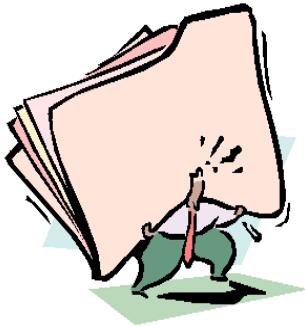
While grateful, more needs to be done.<sup>13</sup>

## SUBMIT

Do you have  
a story to tell?  
Do you want  
to contribute to  
your community  
paper

?

Contact  
Start Me Up Niagara  
for more details  
288 St. Paul Street,  
3rd Floor  
905-984-5310



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Have you thought about working, but quickly  
dismissed it, because you are on  
ODSP?

Was it due to fear?

Fear of losing your ODSP support  
and benefits? If so, would you like to have facts, not fiction on  
**WORK, YOU and ODSP?**



Contact your ODSP worker, or Faye Nickerson, at Start Me Up Niagara,  
either by dropping by at, 288 St. Paul Street 3rd floor or phoning (905) 984 – 5310.

# Emergency Resources

## Shelters

EMERGENCY SHELTERS	PHONE	ADDRESS	BEDS	HOURS	RESTRICTIONS (Age, sex, addiction, etc.)
Abbey House	905-684-9736	115 Dufferin Street St. Catharines, ON L2R 2A2	8	24hrs	Females and females with children; 8 weeks clean
HOPE House	905-734-8492 905-734-8302	116 Division Street Welland, ON L3B 3Z9	21	24hrs	accommodate men, women & families; no alcohol or drugs
Nightlight Youth Shelter	905-358-3678	5207 Victoria Avenue, Niagara Falls, ON L2E 4E4	10	24hrs	males and females, ages 16 - 30; no alcohol or drugs
The RAFT	905-984-4365	17 Centre Street St. Catharines, ON L2R 3A6	16	24hrs	males and females, ages 16 - 24; no alcohol or drugs
Salvation Army Booth Centre	905-684-7813 905-684-7990	184 Church Street St. Catharines, ON L2R 3E7	22	24hrs	males only, ages 19 and older; no alcohol or drugs
Southridge	905-682-2477	201 Glenridge Avenue St. Catharines, ON L2R 3G8	35	24hrs	males and females; no alcohol or drugs
YWCA St. Catharines	905-988-3528	183 King Street St. Catharines, ON L2R 3G8	28	24hrs	females and females with children; no alcohol or drugs
YWCA Niagara Falls	904-357-9191	6135 Culp Street Niagara Falls, ON L2G 2B6	20	24hrs	females and females with children; no alcohol or drugs
SPECIALIZED SHELTERS	PHONE	ADDRESS	BEDS	HOURS	RESTRICTIONS (Age, sex, addiction, etc.)
CMHA Safe Beds	905-684-7271, ext. 43230	15 Wellington Street St. Catharines, ON L2R 5P7	7	24 hrs	must be referred from hospital's community crisis care or mental health agency; 3 to 5 day stay; ages 16 and up; no alcohol or drugs
Men's Detox	905-682-7211	10 Adams Street St. Catharines, ON L2R 2V8	18	24 hrs	men only
Women's Detox	905-687-9721	6 Adams Street St. Catharines, ON L2R 2V8	12	24 hrs	women only
Women's Place (St. Catharines & District)	905-684-8331	P.O. Box 1387, St. Catharines, ON L2R 7J8	24	24 hrs	females and females with children; no alcohol or drugs

## Meals

<b>Salvation Army Booth Centre</b>	184 Church Street	Daily 8:00am, 12:30pm, 5:15pm	\$2.50-\$3.00
<b>St. George's Breakfast Program</b>	83 Church Street	Daily 7:30am-8:30am	no cost
<b>RAFT (ages 16-24)</b>	172 Church Street	Daily 6:30pm-8:00pm	no cost
<b>Ozanam Centre</b>	235 Church Street	Monday-Friday 11:30am-1pm	\$1.00
<b>Start Me Up Niagara</b>	95 Church Street	Saturday, Sunday 11:30am-1:30pm	no cost
<b>Knox Barbeque</b>	53 Church Street	Every second Friday 6pm	no cost

## CLASSIFIEDS

Peanut Mill: 191 Welland St.  
905-685-8848

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## The Springtime Puzzle

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R	C	B	T	L	T	I	K	F	U	U	P	S
E	A	I	U	A	R	C	I	R	N	N	U	U
E	R	K	L	W	E	E	T	E	S	N	P	N
N	W	E	I	N	E	C	T	S	H	I	P	S
L	A	R	P	S	B	R	E	H	I	E	I	H
E	S	I	O	C	U	E	S	A	N	S	E	O
A	H	D	A	Z	D	A	G	I	E	D	S	W
V	B	E	E	S	S	M	J	R	M	U	D	E
E	A	S	T	E	R	E	G	G	S	N	U	R
S	P	R	I	N	G	J	A	C	K	E	T	S

BEES/BIKE RIDES/ BUG/ BUNNIES/ CAR WASH/  
EASTER EGGS/ FRESH AIR/ GREEN GRASS/ GREEN  
LEAVES/ ICE CREAM/ KITTENS/ LAWNS/ MUD/ PUP-  
PIES/ RUN/ SPRING JACKET/ SUNSHINE/ SHOW-  
ERS/ TREE BUDS/ TULIPS



**Yes, I want to support Start Me Up Niagara**

Enclosed is my donation for:

☐ \$ 25   ☐ \$ 50   ☐ \$ 75   ☐ \$ 100   ☐ other \$ \_\_\_\_

Please direct my donation to : ☐ Street News

☐ The Centre, 95 Church St.   ☐ Where it is needed most

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make cheques payable to:

Start Me Up Niagara, 288 St. Paul Street, 3rd Floor  
St. Catharines, ON L2R 3M9

