



# Art Me Up - According to Aaron

by RN Wagner

Where do I start—maybe first by mentioning that my mind is blown. I started working at ‘Start Me Up Niagara’ in November 2015, and before my first day, I had an art show to organize that would eventually take place at the artist-run gallery called Niagara Artist Centre (NAC). The NAC was founded by artists in 1969, and they have a ‘knack’ for helping the emerging and professional artists take their ‘art game’ to the next level. What I’m about to share with you next is nothing short of amazing. It’s the story of ‘Art Me Up - An Exhibition’, and how it’s changed my perception on Community Building, Community Events and the Community as a whole. Communities ought to always be spelled with a capital C, but not necessarily all caps/Caps Lock. C where am I going with this? It’s ok if you don’t. Ok, enough of being Cilly, here comes the Cerious.

So on my first day at SMUN, Tony sat down with me in his super huge office that includes a hospital bed and letters from people thanking him or the centre for this and that. I had a weekly arts program-



*“Dinosaur Grabber Award” presented to SMUN by Cathy Sisler*

ming schedule created, and I was ready to art my face off...but Tony said I gotta chill out, take a step back, and just get to know everyone first. I did everything in my power to not put a paint brush to his walls, a video camera to his mouth, a journal to his thoughts... and start

expressing/capturing such nonsense coming from the Tiger. But once I experienced my first Monday on the muffin crumbed floor, and noticed all the characters I’d be getting to know, hopefully making art with them, I knew I had my work cut out for me. I was used to working/volunteering primarily with ages 29 years and younger out east in St. John’s, Newfoundland which is where I am from originally (that explains everything they say).

I have stayed in a shelter a dozen times before getting it together, lost my parents before I could vote for a better world, saved a few lives before I realized mine is important, had precious sentimentals and hard earned cash stolen before I woke up to notice, forgave those who hurt myself, friends or my family before their next beer or drug of choice, and organized/hosted/performed originals at a hundred ‘Pay what you can’ events or so where sometimes the stage is the only thing that will listen. There are all kinds of things/people that get in the way of someone being happy, and usually it’s yourself. *continues on page 13*

# EVENTS

**Expressions Art Collective**  
continue on Thursdays: 2 - 4 pm  
15 Gale Crescent  
Everyone Welcome

**OPEN ART Workshops**  
Mon - Fri - 10am - 2 pm  
at SMUN Drop In Centre  
17 Gale Crescent  
Everyone Welcome

**In The Soil Arts Festival**  
downtown St. Catharines  
April 29 - May 1

**CITY HALL Art Show**  
May 25, 2016

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## CONTENTS

Art Me Up by Aaron.....	1, 13, 14
What the World Needs is Love.....	3
Time For Relational Welfare.....	4
Employment Service Success.....	5
Poetry.....	6-7
Our Health Care System Works Well.....	8
Selling OESP.....	10
Healthy Kitchen.....	10
The Deacons' Bench.....	11
Vineland Vegetable Garden.....	11
Coldest Night of the Year.....	12
Today I Saw a Man.....	13
Employment / Housing Services .....	14
Emergency Resources.....	15
SMUN Businesses/Sponsors.....	16

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## Street News

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Published Quarterly ©

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# “What the World Needs is Love”

by Tara Hindle

ADDICTIONS. WE ALL HAVE THEM. Mine is caffeine, I have coffee every day. Yours might be alcohol, shopping, crack, gambling, cocaine, cigarettes, food, meth, pills. For whatever reason society accepts your addiction if it's alcohol, caffeine, etc., but as soon as it's the hard stuff unfortunately you're defined as a crack head, a junkie, a waste. Smoking is the norm so no one looks at that person and disrespects them because they smoke. That is the depressing thing about what we've become. I don't get called names because I'm addicted to coffee. People who have addictions struggle every day and every minute. I heard someone say to me once “oh he's just a crack head.” My response was No, he's not “just” that, then I thought who are you to judge? Wouldn't it be wonderful if we did not judge, for in the same way you judge others, you will be judged?” (Matthew 7:1-2) That's what I wish for.

What is needed is an understanding of addiction, know that it is not a choice. The world needs to know that. Addiction is a coping mechanism, to cover pain, abuse, failure, loss, loneliness and not feeling loved. Some of the people I see never really had a chance. The parents didn't fill their needs that were necessary in a child's development or they have experienced pain right from the get go. That void doesn't just go away so drugs end up filling it and the feeling it provides is something they've been searching for up until then. People don't choose to live their life sole-

*Most want to change but there's so many barriers put into place like waitlists...*

ly around a substance. Having an addiction is not fun. People become homeless, divorced, lose their kids, jobs, families because the only thing that matters to them to get through the day is whatever the substance is they're addicted to. Their brain eats them alive until they get that drink, that hit, that bowl.

Most want to change but there's so many barriers put into place like waitlists or not allowing smoking in detox facilities. Sometimes the only detox bed that is available is jail, some people go down that path because it's easier for them, and well we know that's not rehabilitating for anyone.

I've thought so many times why can't people just go from jail to treatment? Or why isn't there a treatment program in jail? I guess that would make sense. “Drug crime rate has risen about 42% since the early 90's.” Drug related incidents account for nearly one in ten court cases, but there is no plan on fixing the problem in the first place. People get clean in jail, they can actually think clear, they have a plan to stay clean but without any support that plan gets tossed away like a coffee cup because they're released into the same environment



Illustrations by Cathy Siler

with more barriers against them.

Yes. I consider myself lucky that I have never walked a mile in the shoes of someone with addiction. None of us who judge them have. So instead of looking at addicts for what their addiction is, society should think “there's a reason they got there that wasn't their choice.” Try some compassion, it goes a long way in a world filled with barriers upon barriers. All I offer are ears to listen to them, and accept them for who they are. That is the compassion that is necessary. Sometimes all I have to do is look into their eyes and I can feel the pain, I smile because I want them to know they matter, they're still human. It doesn't matter if they slip during recovery, that is part of recovery. It's just important to never give up on them, because patience, and kindness can be contagious and does pay off in a lot of cases. The world is tough enough out there but we can make it easier if we just “be all one mind, having compassion for one another, love as Bretheren, be pitiful, be courteous.” (Peter 3:8)

*Tara Hindle is a Housing Support Worker with Start Me Up Niagara.*

# TIME FOR RELATIONAL WELFARE

by Julia Blushak

RELATIONAL

How many of us still view society as comprised of individuals who are in and those on the take—that some are able, or capable, and those without are in ever greater need for support of some kind? Perhaps a few think and explore beyond these boxes.

Hilary Cottam, the British social thinker and doer, questions our welfare service practices and dares to design new social models for appropriate community-based programs and ‘relational welfare.’ Cottam values the innate capacity of one to one relationships, group affiliations and local community relevant activities to enhance human flourishing. Although creative and prevention initiatives are vitally human, she observes that these opportunities are less likely to be nurtured through our monetized social support systems.

Cottam views these changing economic and digitally connected times as ripe for greater participation by each of us to offer time, money or knowledge in order to offset largely subsidized government services. The localized ‘relational welfare’ model allows more people to engage, to access and to experience quality of life. For example, Cottam explains that healthcare costs, like those for social services, will continue to outpace resources due to the increasing demands of chronic disease, age-related and mental health conditions. Her solution to address twenty-first century problems is a social innovation company called *Participle* ([www.participle.net/](http://www.participle.net/)).



Through team effort a cost effective, participant strong, social service for senior residents was researched and developed in order to address loneliness, the leading health/lifestyle risk factor for mortality among the elderly.

The success of this first model in London, called Circle, is already evident in providing emotional, social and practical supports while offsetting public service costs. Devised to be a mission driven organization, the members pay a very small fee in order to have access to a free 0800 help line and practical services from within the membership community. Each Circle is co-designed by the members and run as a local, independent social enterprise, incorporated as a Community Interest Company employing around 5 people, and

led by a full time director. The ongoing outcomes are measurable by strength of the membership as it grows, as well as the thriving and independence of each member who shares and works within the Circle community

Anyone interested in a new view to our changing times with a preference for active community investment should give Cottam’s award-winning ideas and efforts a serious look.

(TED talk - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mr8nvXvl-y8>)

## SPRING Celebrations

SPRING is a time to celebrate new beginnings, new growth, more sunlight and CRAFT SHOWS!! This is the time of year when many of the small businesses who are part of Start Me Up Niagara’s Employment Services take part in a variety of craft fairs, church bazaars, and pop-up shops.

This year they’ll be kicking off their crafting season at the 8th annual In The Soil Arts Festival, running April 29 - May 1 in downtown St. Catharines. The three day Vendor Bender will showcase a variety of crafts by our self-employment folks including hand-made jewellery, soaps and cards, original art, photography and a variety of hand painted objects. For more information on SMUN small businesses and upcoming craft shows, check out our SMUN Employment Group on facebook for regular posts and updates.



# Employment Services SUCCESS!!

by Casey Wach

Darren Rees has been a participant with Start Me Up Niagara since 2002. Looking back to that first day Darren mentioned he was unsure of what SMUN was. His initial thought was that with the amount of people standing outside, that it was a soup kitchen. Darren later discovered Start Me Up was more than just a soup kitchen and has been coming several times a week to socialize with the friends he has made since then.

Two years later, Jennifer Wills had been going through some difficulties in her relationship with her boyfriend. These problems caused her to leave, and look for some services that would help her to move past this difficult time in her life. Jen found Start Me Up Niagara which provided her with some services to help leave this bad relationship, learn about healthy relationships and find some new friends that she could count on to help her through the tough times. One of

these new friends ended up being Darren Rees. The first interaction between Darren and Jen was quite unique and you are free to ask the two of them about how they met as the story sounds much better when they tell it. After this meeting, Start Me Up helped Jen with her living arrangements and she moved in with her new roommate—Darren.

After moving in together, Jen and Darren were there for each other through all the good times and the bad times that life chose to throw at them. One of the goals early on were for the two of them to start their own business together. However, this was difficult to do while being on Ontario Works. This is where SMUN staff put their skills to work and helped Jen and Darren get on ODSP. Once all the paper work was complete, they were able to start working on their plans to get their business up and running.

## **D & J Packing and Moving**

started in December of 2015 and has been full steam ahead ever since. Jen and Darren stated that having their own business gives them the freedom to work their own hours, and also boosts their self-esteem. One goal for **D & J Packing and Moving** is to eventually get some of their own moving supplies to make their moves much easier for both of them and their customers. Jen and Darren state that they enjoy coming into Start Me Up Niagara because of the mutual respect between the participants and the staff. Jen shares that she feels like she is part of something and SMUN gives her a sense of accomplishment. Susan Venditti shares that Jen and Darren are completely different people today—Jen and Darren are loyal individuals who are always willing to do more and help with anything they can including volunteering on Stat Holidays. This August will be Jen and Darren's 12th Anniversary together!

**D & J Packing and Moving** is only one of many business start ups through Employment Supports at SMUN. Other businesses include: **Mark Aleo Landscaping**, **Greenough Property Maintenance**, **Dove's Gardening**, **Sinead's Nanny Service**, **William's Renovation**, and **Step into Healing** to name a few.



Thank you to Jonathan Belgrave from Niagara Inflatables & Games, Inc. for sharing his knowledge and experience of incorporating social media in the marketing plans for our [#SMUNsmallbiz](#) group. It is the people (like Jonathan) who are willing and eager to share, inspire, and think of creative solutions that is making the Niagara region a great place to be. *Working together..moving forward!*

If you're looking for any services, or want to know more about small businesses created through Start Me Up Niagara Employment Supports, please contact our Employment Team at: 905-984-5310.

# POETRY

## I Don't Like Lasagna!!!

By Bob MacDonald

Weird or what? I just don't like lasagna!  
I like Kentucky Fried Chicken, sweet and sour pineapple chicken and honey garlic wings. Corn beef and cabbage bacon and eggs and home made bread.  
But I don't like lasagna!  
I like Elvis, George Jones, Willie Nelson, Taylor Swift, Burton Cummings K.D.Lang, Shania Twain, Barbra Streisand and Anne Murray. I like Broadway Musicals, especially the music from Oklahoma, The King and I, Cabaret and Show Boat. I like classical music, the blues and jazz.  
But I don't like lasagna!  
I like Newfoundland and the Maritimes, Quebec and Ontario, especially the Niagara Peninsula. I like the West. I like Scotland England and Ireland  
But I don't like lasagna!  
I like my friends, especially all my girls from March of Dimes  
I like the Queen, Hilary Clinton, David Cameron and the late Jean Beliveau. I like  
The Montreal Canadians (65 years now!)  
The Toronto Blue Jays and the Hamilton Tiger Cats.  
But I don't like lasagna!

## Everyday I run

Everyday I run, run to the school of SMUN  
Where I have so much FUN  
Meeting people who don't judge me  
When I have many days  
Where I feel quite dumb  
Or days when I feel emotional, numb  
Instead of sucking my thumb  
I say I gotta go to SMUN  
Where I meet people WHO  
Smiled say KAT  
I dropped your Hat  
And they always want my autograph  
When I come in the door  
They smile and greet me and right away I feel LOVED  
Some say why u must be SPUN  
I like SMUN 2 Much 2 Much  
Where else can we laugh and be silly  
And meet friends who care to share and  
Dare to share their pain and suffering.  
That on the first place brought us all to SMUN  
Humour gets us through the DAY  
So we don't need to feel DISMAYED  
And each day we could all get stronger and wiser  
We might not all live long and prosper  
So it's important to be of  
Good natures, grateful to those who teach us to love  
each other

# THE SEVEN COMMANDMENTS

By Rainbow

- 1.** Break your boundries; journey far; but remember as you roam – wherever you are, I AM, and where I AM, you are already Home.
- 2.** Another's shoes will never fit on the Road that was made to last; so wear your own shoes and take my hand – and we'll get there twice as fast.
- 3.** Courage to seek your Sacred Gift is how your Dreams gain power – the courage of Seed to seek the Light and thus become the Flower.
- 4.** As much as it is within your power, do your best to Harmonize – your choices are your ripples though, so never compromise.
- 5.** You don't have the right to hide your Gift, or to put It on the shelf – Honour your Talents, for you are the Gift that Great Mystery gave Itself.
- 6.** Facts and figures are useful, but the Truth will always come due; honour your Intuition, for that is what works best for you.

## Time is a Virtue When You're Poor

*By Paul Shtogryn*

Time is a factor day in and day out  
What bill comes in, what is it about  
There's never enough no matter what the day  
Because at the end, it's the bills you have to pay,  
Do make room for the rent, the food, the heat  
But you know in the end and the bills must be paid  
and not have you beat  
The fridge is full, the heat the water for another month is done,  
You know in the end the battle must be won,  
But the holidays are coming goodwill towards man to cheer,  
And hope in the end you survive another year.

Fighting your demons day to day,  
Some have psychosis, some are depressed  
It lives with us constantly it seems our way,  
Making chores easy is always a challenge and not child's play  
Just getting up in the morning is great  
Surviving and struggling to stay alive one more day  
Yes fighting our demons is not a sin,  
But living with it constantly is our only win,  
Some say it's horrible and we suffer enough  
But it only makes us braver, determined, stronger and tough

**7.** In times of Darkness, pain and doubt, when you're feeling all alone, remember the Sacred Covenant that was made in Commandment One.

## Holographic Principle

*By Rainbow*

We live in a Holographic Universe  
Where each and every portion  
Of each and every Detail  
Literally contains-  
And is contained within-  
The Blueprint of the Whole  
-SO-  
GOD IS IN THE BIG PICTURE  
-AND-  
GOD IS IN THE DETAILS  
-THUS-  
THE DEVIL IS IN THE SCALE  
Nor need we fear Either, merely  
Keep the BIG PICTURE in your memory  
And the necessary DETAILS  
Will make themselves known  
Then attend to the DETAILS  
And the BIG PICTURE will emerge  
You are who you've been waiting for  
The Co-Creator of the Art  
of BEING You





# When Our Health Care System Works Well – It Saves Lives

*by Angela Browne*



Illustration by Julia Blushak © PaperFang

Walking with Start Me Up Niagara for the Coldest Night of the Year was a great experience. I walked the full ten kilometers and would do it again, as this is a great cause. Having a busy law office and a great interest in public affairs keeps me up most of the time, sometimes to the extent that my health goes ... and this time it did!

A couple weeks after the walk, I started to become exhausted much of the time, to the point where I was unable to walk even a block. At the same time, I suffered other issues, which led me to believe another cold or flu, but it was not ...

Gradually, the hot sweats came out, the breathing became laboured and my heart worked at a record pace keeping up with my lungs that were fast becoming a time bomb. While I worked, I was forced to taxi in and out of court each day, until I decided to attend my family doctor's clinic – one of the hardest working family doctors I know on this planet, keeping a clinic open for people like me who

are busy during regular hours.

My son came with me—God bless his soul—Kevin, who is taking medical sciences at Brock knew I was going and did not want me to go alone. Of course, I love his presence, as he is the intellectual embodiment of me when I was his age. My blood pressure was through the roof. The Doctor asked if I had been taking my medications. I have and always would, as blood pressure you don't fool around with. First why is the blood pressure so high, and then she tapped my pulse and said my heart was racing madly – 160 – 180 bpm. But the main thing was, I couldn't breathe. I spoke like I had run the marathon and stopped to talk ...

My doctor told me, "Listen I want you to go to the hospital to get observed to find out what is happening". She asked if I had anything like this ... of course not! I just had lab work that seemed to show I was not having major issues, so of course I wondered what was going on! She contacted the emergency

ward at the St. Catharines Hospital to give them notice I was coming, with a full report of her findings and recent medical charts. A friend accidentally took the wrong direction to the hospital until we found an ambulance headed there... so we followed that ambulance!

At emergency, I could barely walk to the admit/sign in desk, hand over my health card and answer questions, so my son and my friend helped me answer the necessary elements. I was shortly called over to the triage unit and got an EKG, which showed what we all knew was happening ... my heart racing! I then later went to ER admission, where a woman basically asked the same questions, scanned my health card ... and then swoop, into the emergency I go! I did not wait five or six hours to be seen! They found me a bed on the emergency wing, allowed my friend and son, as well as my husband who had come in later.

Then the real adventures begin. The emergency staff had no



idea what was going on, but they were determined to find out ... this is the kind of thing that makes our health care work. And you know what? They took all the blinders off, not caring what my previous history was ... I was not the woman with uncontrolled diabetes, the obese woman or the woman with other mental health history. I don't know if any of you ever watch Real Stories from the ER (on TLC) but it was like that, sort of ... I was nervous because I didn't know what was going on with me. I lay beside a heart and respirator monitor and it showed the numbers going up and up then down, and after being put on oxygen some of that slowed down.

Despite my unwell state, I was able to see very hard workers at work, using the best technology that the new hospital has ... testing me for everything, lots of different blood scans, a chest x-ray, a CT scan, ultrasound of my legs and then an echocardiogram of my heart. Being moved through the system like this was amazing, as I had been to emergency before and this new thing they have is very modern and highly efficient, etc. compared to when I was there before ... I had the opportunity for the health system to use its equipment on me.

The men and women of the ER finally came up with my diagnosis, finally after just about every other test showed normal/healthy results. It turned out both of my lungs are filled to the brim with blood clots. This required a special blood test and a CT scan to confirm. In the past, this was something that could kill you. The pulmonary and respiratory systems work together ... and a clot in your lung could quickly get to the heart. I was then infused with a drug that thins out my

blood, stops the clotting, etc. It is so hard to deal with, as it took a couple days for me to even have the energy to get up to use a portable latrine next to me in emergency. I couldn't stand during my weighing (to measure drug dose) and my chest xrays, as my breathing soon became laboured but the staff were so helpful in finding ways for me to get these tests done. The uniqueness there is the porter system. Patients travel on their beds, taken to tests, x-rays and tested in the beds if possible, so nobody has to walk the expanse of the Niagara Health System.

This morning they finally moved me to a private room! Yes, most patients at the hospital get a private room ... There is reasonable internet/wi-fi access, cell phones are welcome, there is a tablet screen one can hook into for phone calls, and so forth ... and your porta machines like your oxygen tanks, and your IVs and so forth follow you to your eventual room where you are admitted. Your readings while in emergency also follow you and are relayed to staff at the front desk.

It is two days past the crisis,

but I am now here for a few more days to get my heart rate down and clots dissolved and will likely have to work with my lung doctor for several months to ensure no new clots begin.

People can say whatever they want about the Niagara Health System, but for emergency medicine, they are good! If you start to suffer from something unusual, such as shortness of breath, chest pains, unusual bleeding or anything else, do not hesitate to seek help. I was scared, but the people here that work for the health service do work well with you, to make sure you are released well, and with a good follow-up plan. Now we just have to do the same thing with mental health!

*Angela Browne, is a para-legal and court agent in Niagara that focuses her practice on human rights, employment, disability and administrative law. She will soon be back to work and able to see people at (905) 688-5598, ceo@legaladvocacy.ca.*

## **WORDS**

*By Inspired Spirit*

*The kindest of words have strength,  
The strongest of words are real,  
The reality of words have knowledge,  
The powerful words of Love are euphoric,  
Words are all encompassing of  
expressing feelings, thoughts and ideas,  
Words are more than just words.  
If you catch the meaning of words...  
Endlessly you will find more words,  
As all words are infinite,  
This infinity of words is WORDS!*

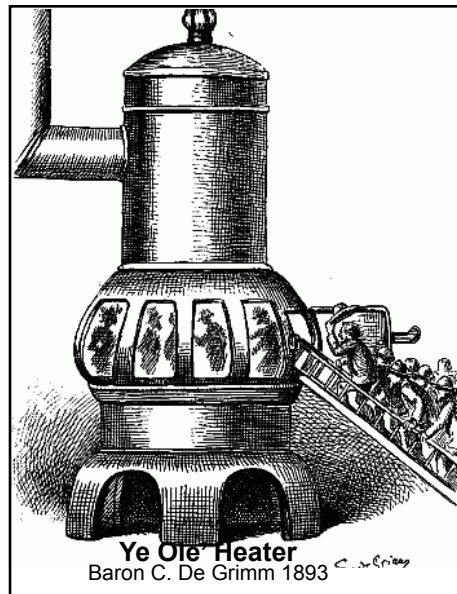
## Selling Ontario and OESP

By Paul Shtogryn

As you know the Wynne government has its sights on selling Ontario Hydro Why? They are covering for their blunders like E-Health, ORNGE, and the Gas Plant Scandals'. It has cost Ontario taxpayers billions so the government has to find the financial resources to make up for what they have already squandered.

So that leaves the Ontario consumer. While the provincial governments gets millions in its coffers the poor and low income suffer by paying enormous prices on their hydro bill to make up for the provincial Liberals' blunders. The hydro bills have jumped as of January. The Wynne government tried to appease the low income poor by having an Ontario Electricity Support Program. That is another nightmare that I experienced the past 3 months. I originally applied on October 30th at the local library because I needed a printer to send materials that gave the government permission to see my application and my income tax materials as proof of income. At the end of November I got a message saying my application is ON HOLD. The operator told me the hydro companies are stick-

lers to recognize my hydro address. What exactly is that? Main Street South should be Main Street S. On December 31st I got another notice that it again was ON HOLD. They didn't tell me why. In January on the 5th I called Cindy Forsters office who contacted the Ontario Ministry of Energy. Finally my application was ON HOLD and I changed it to Main St. S. That is exactly as it is stated on my hydro bill. Finally five days later I got an email saying that my application was approved. Now the OESP is stating that there is a telemarketing scam that claims to represent OESP and want to visit your home. They don't do this and you should be aware that they are after other things and are a scam. I thought all along this whole thing was a run around and they were trying to make things difficult for low income people and seniors. I never had a January like this one.



***"We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us; it's in all of us. And when we let our light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others."*** ~ Nelson Mandela

## Healthy Kitchen

by Duaa

My experience at Start Me Up Niagara (SMUN) could be best described using the quote "Give a man a fish, and you feed him for a day. Teach a man how to fish, you feed him for a lifetime". Working in the Kitchen under Chef Susan's supervision has given me the opportunity to learn and develop important skills. The knowledge which I have received from her will allow me to feed myself for a lifetime and help me grow. As an introvert I always feel uncomfortable with transitioning into a new environment, however with the amazing staff here I was immediately welcomed with open arms. I was embraced into a team that works together on helping its participants move forward. I would say the first 3 months here have been fantastic and I am looking forward to the rest of my internship at SMUN. It has been a pleasure knowing that I am joining a place that serves and supports all the participants there.

### BASIC FOOD PREPARATION & LIFE SKILLS

by Ada Storin & Susan Stevenson

SMUN is introducing a brand new program. We are excited to announce this opportunity for any motivated Ontario Works recipient looking for a career in the food service industry.

**The three month program includes WHMIS training, two food prep service certificates, life skills training and job readiness skills.** Interviews will be conducted as soon as possible as space is limited to ten participants per term.

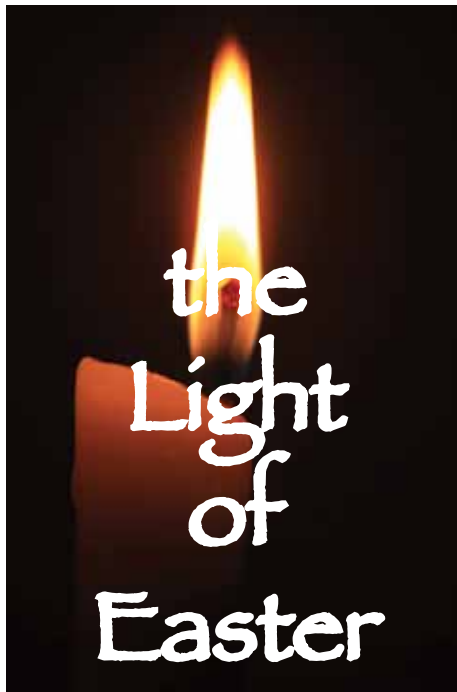
## The Deacon's Bench



by Deacon Maurice OFS

In a dramatic ceremony that is an ancient tradition in the Church, the Vigil on the night before Easter begins outside the church building, in the total darkness of the night. A fire is lit and blessed—a new fire; for us the light is Jesus, the light of the World. A single candle is lit from the new fire and then carried inside into the darkness of the building in which all of the lights have been turned off. The single candle has a surprising effect on the darkness inside - driving back the darkness.

This is the same effect that you can have... that your light has (whatever that light is, whatever you value as light) if you carry your light into the darkness confidently and clearly. Your light will begin to drive back the darkness around you: (your darkness, whatever that is,



however you experience the darkness of this world.)

But what happens next in the Easter Vigil ceremony is very important. Not all at once, but in stages (one person at a time) the single light of the one candle is passed on to all of the other people in the procession as they enter the church. Each person receives the light from one

other person, and passes it on to one other person at a time. And then the darkness is completely overwhelmed by light shared and carried, and given, and received.

Your individual light is important by itself, but you are not alone. Your light becomes powerful when you share it—when you love the light enough to give it away. And divided and given away does not become less...but more. The sharing of the light, and the reflection of the shared light back to you by other people—by family and community—makes the light even warmer, brighter and more inspiring.

Make this Easter season (which continues to the fiftieth day) a season of light and lightening and life, not for yourself alone, but also for (and with) those you will discover when you let 'your light' light up the darkness.

*peace and all good  
deacon maurice ofs*



# COME

## Grow with Us

Start Me Up Niagara  
Vineland Vegetable Garden  
**VOLUNTEER MEETING**

All Welcome!

**Thurs. April 21, 2016**

**~ 3 pm at SMUN ~**

**17 Gale Crescent**

**St. Catharines**



**Expressions Art  
Collective members  
enjoy the sun and  
garden in Vineland,  
hosted by SMUN  
garden staff.**

# Thanks

Thanks to Debbie Sexsmith for her years of service and farming expertise at the SMUN garden in Vineland (acreage donated by the Vineland Research and Innovation Centre). Debbie has returned to her farm in Ridgeway and we wish her all the best.



Plants are good for our psychological development. *Jane Goodall*



# coldest \*night OF THE YEAR

## ...well, not exactly

This year marked our 4th year as the Coldest Night of the Year's host charity. While the weather was a balmy 9 degrees (as compared to last year's record lows), all sorts of folks came to the Market Sq. bringing their families, pets and enthusiasm!

**Nationwide-** thousands of participants took part in the WALK in 100 cities across Canada. By walking together in the chill of the night, participants better understand the experience of being on the streets during a cold Canadian winter, while raising funds to aid the work of Start Me Up Niagara in providing much-needed support to members of our community.

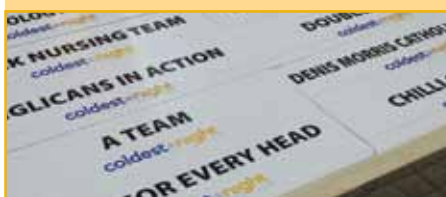


**GOAL** This year's goal is \$80,000 and to-date we are at 79,416.25, well on our way to meeting and most likely, surpassing our goal!

**LAST YEAR'S** monies were used to purchase our own home and this year's will be used towards building improvements, making the building more comfortable for all.

**THANK YOU** to Bob Tanouye and Patty Brack, Event co-ordinators, the CNOY team: Carol/Karen/Kim/Bob H/ Aaron, Maria Donato/ Bryon Johnston, Michael F. plus help and support of our participants, sponsors & volunteers from all around the city. We were very excited to add General Motors St. Catharines as our Lead Sponsor this year, and Winners as Gold and FirstOntario Credit Union (returning) as Silver sponsor.

*Stay tuned for the final tally!*  
*Susan Venditti- Executive Director*



Final tally...  
**We did it!**  
**\$90,494.70**



**STATS:**  
**SMUN #5**  
nationwide

**Teams:**  
Tony's Tigers #3,  
Westminster Wings #14

**Walkers:**  
Tony #9, Bruce #12



## Art Me Up *continued from pg. 1*

My perception of a successful art show has now changed— getting just one ‘finished’ piece of art off of someone became the biggest challenge. We had the supplies, the paint, the brushes, the paper, the canvas and the time and space. I also thought that if I was lucky, and kept dreaming big, that I would have 12-15 artists participating in the exhibition. It was always a battle, on the main floor of SMUN, to convince someone that their art and skills were creative enough to deserve wall space, let alone in a real art gallery verses a cafe or doctor’s office etc.

*continues on pg. 14*



### ART ME UP

**next stop: City Hall May 25, 2016**

## *Today I saw a man...* by Sarah Schapoks

Today I saw a man. He got on the bus and sat down like everyone else. Only he wasn't like everyone else. He had numbers and names and drawings all over his arms, written in black marker. Everyone hurried to find another seat, one that was far from him.

But he kept his head high, despite the obvious reactions of the people around him. At first I, too, was uncomfortable...but after a while I realized, I was really just sad. I felt sad for him. And as he stared ahead and did his best to blend in, his clothes dirty, shoes falling apart, I couldn't help but stare and wonder what made his life turn out like this? I watched as he ate a crumb off a seat in front of him on the bus. Desperate for nourishment. So I looked in my purse for something to give him...all I found were two sticks of gum, and a small bottle of Purell. When we got off the bus at the terminal, I stopped him and gave them to him. He looked at me and said, "How did you know?" I said, "I just...did. Have a wonderful day." He smiled and watched me walk away. As I was waiting for my next bus, I bought myself a muffin. I then walked outside and saw him again. He was picking up old cans of pop, and drinking in the small



drops that were left over from teenagers getting off school. I walked up to him again, and handed him the muffin. He smiled, and said, "Thank you, I am poor. I have no home, and I sleep on the streets and I am so hungry." I said "It's no problem, just take care of yourself." As I turned to walk away, he said "You are an amazing woman, thank you, you are so kind and I love you." As I smiled and continued to walk away...it took everything in me to stop myself from crying. Moments like this, make me happy to be who I am, and a lot more thankful for what I do have.

You see, I knew when my next meal was. I knew that if I didn't eat this muffin, I would still be okay. I had a home, and food in my cupboards, and money in my pocket. What I would like people to

take from this story is that you have more than you think. If you're ever walking somewhere and you see someone struggling, and you have something to give, give it. To you a muffin could be a snack, but to someone else that could be the most they will have eaten in days. You could also offer food to someone who happens to be diabetic, which wouldn't just fill their stomach, but would also potentially save their life. This also could extend to giving someone your time. Take the time to listen to people. You might be the only person in weeks that is listening, and that can also save a life. Mental health issues can be alienating. You can save a life simply by giving someone kind words and 10 minutes of your time. You don't always have to give something tangible. In today's world we do so much taking.

So I challenge anyone reading this to give more, without expecting anything in return. And by doing this, you will be putting money in what I call "The Karma Bank". What goes around, comes around. Anything can happen, so who knows, maybe one day you'll receive something you needed from a stranger who cared. So today, be that stranger for someone else.

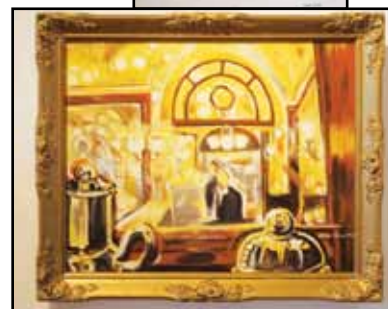


## Art Me Up *continued from pg. 13*

As the art started to come in, we needed to come up with a name for the show. Some folks said we should have a theme, but I thought that might intimidate or distract an artist from what they really want to create. I figured that SMUN'ers didn't need any more labels. Up went a piece of chart paper, to collect potential names for the show. It got passed around like a hot potato, and we ended up with 50 names to consider. My personal favorite/brainchild was 'I've been framed', but I got beat by some dude named Don with tattoos. He came up with 'Art Me Up', and when I read aloud the top 50 names, Susan, the Tiger and the rest of the SMUN staff gang heard ARTMEUP...it was all over, nobody had a chance and Hallmark/Disney/Pixar is probably jealous to the nines that they never came up with that name themselves.

So then I started counting, collecting the artwork/submissions through just word of mouth, and we ended up with 81 pieces of art to hang, 44 visual artists, 10 musicians and special guest appearances (including a middle aged beat-boxer/ninja named Bruce, who backed me up on the second microphone). We also ended up with a few more things. Another was the news that the NAC had never seen that many people come to an art show in their house. Mayor Walter Sendzik then says he wants the show to be moved to his City Hall house. Parents/friends who had never seen their kids in years let alone their art... made their way out to the exhibition. A close art/community friend of mine, who passed away in Newfoundland, had snuck his art into the show somehow.

Not least of amazing things



that happened, was that we made art, on our own terms, and it was "a sight for more eyes." Now I'm thinking maybe Parliament in Ottawa? Maybe bring the art to Newfoundland... only time, only art, only space will tell.

And now for the award show? ~*RN Wagner, Art Me Up*

**SPECIAL THANKS** to all contributors:  
The Willow Community, Expressions Art Collective, volunteers, and the Niagara Artists Centre (nac).

**HOUSING SUPPORT** contact: 905-984-5310

**Kyle - cell 289-686-0639 ext. 507**

**Tara - cell 289-241-4248 ext. 511** *I'm moving!*

**Caleb - cell 905-394-2241 ext. 512**

**Scott - 1-905-512-8245**



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Call today to find out more: **905-984-5310**

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*SMUN is an ODSP Employment Service Provider*



# EMERGENCY - Call 211 for resources | Contact Drop In Centres

EMERGENCY SHELTERS	PHONE	ADDRESS	BEDS	HOURS	RESTRICTIONS (Age, sex, addiction, etc.)
Hope House	905-788-0744	570 King St. Welland L3B 3L2	5	24hrs	Welland, Port Colborne & area residents
Nightlight Youth Shelter	905-358-367	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;
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	905-357-9191	6135 Culp Street Niagara Falls, ON L2G 2B6	20	24hrs	females and females with children; no alcohol or drugs
<b>Sincere THANKS</b>	<b>to All</b>	<b>Volunteers</b>	<b>this</b>	<b>year</b>	<b>with Out of the Cold, 2015/16</b>
CMHA Safe Beds	905-641-5222, ext. 254	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; no alcohol, drugs or smoking
Women's Detox	905-687-9721	6 Adams Street St. Catharines, ON L2R 2V8	12	24 hrs	women only; no alcohol, drugs or smoking

## Start Me Up Niagara

**T : 905-984-5310 17 Gale Crescent St. Catharines L2R 3K8**

**CENTRE (upper) Mon, Tues, Wed, Th, Fri: 9 am - 4 pm Sat, Sun: 11:15 am - 1 pm**

**(Wed & Statutory Holidays: 9 am - 2 pm)**

**OFFICE (lower): Mon-Fri: 9 am - 4:00 pm 12 - 1 pm Lunch: Closed Stat Holidays: Closed**

## MEALS

St. George's Breakfast Program	83 Church Street	Daily 7:30am-8:30am	no cost
RAFT (ages 16-24)	17 Centre Street	Daily 6:30pm-8:00pm	no cost
Southridge	201 Glenridge Avenue	Daily 6:00pm	\$2.00
Ozanam Centre	235 Church Street	Monday to Friday 11:30 - 1pm	\$1.00
Start Me Up Niagara	17 Gale Crescent	Saturday, Sunday 11:15am-1:00pm	no cost

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Craig's Making Pictures  
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Dove's Gardening  
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Greenough Property Maintenance  
Home Help and Personal Care by Faye  
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MS Society of Canada  
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Subway - Welland Ave.  
Wildfire Grill House and Lounge - Ontario St.  
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**St. Catharines, ON L2R 3K8 (905) 984-5310**

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