



WELCOME BACK!!



to STREET NEWS 2021 the pandemic MAD edition

So we're all still in touch, and still trying to touch, though it's been kind of tough;
With all the social distancing, and the masks and the gloves – we want to be close
But is it too dangerous to love?

NO!!! SMUN is still doing it, along with many others:
The community has rallied like good sisters and brothers;
And although we can't touch, we find ways to be together,
Even if it's just by texts and emails, we communicate whatever...

We've lost out dear Liz, and Susan has retired,
And we've lost many others who just got too tired, or wired, or mired,
Or felt undesired, or uninspired...not to mention the Covid-expired,
Until eventually the whole thing back-fired.

But Hey!!! We're still here, we're still strong, we still thrive
So enjoy our new issue:
Keep healthy, safe, and ALIVE!!!!



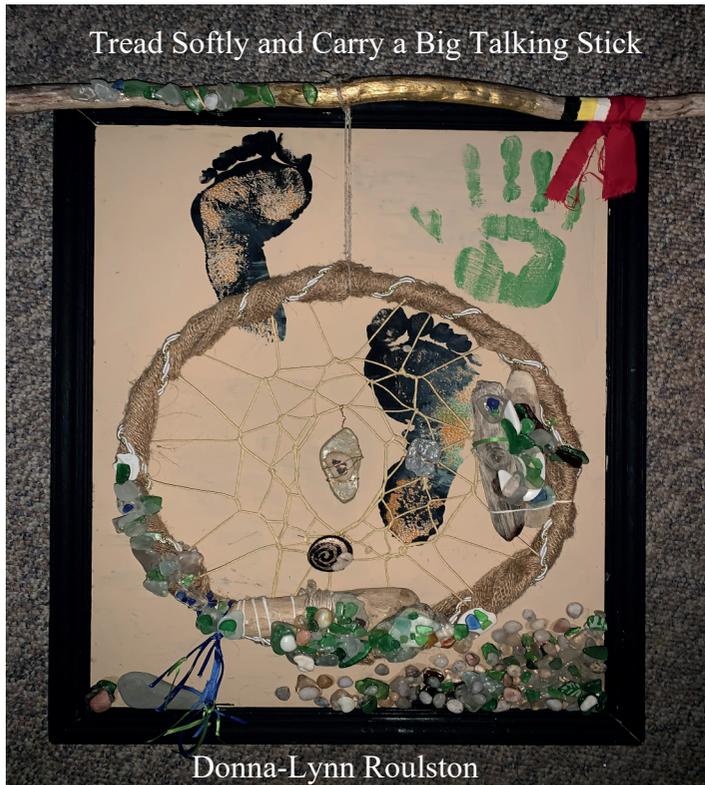


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Street News

Voices from our Streets
Published quarterly
Start Me Up Niagara
Working Together
Moving Forward
Since 1999

START ME UP NIAGARA

Working Together ... Moving Forward

To donate or contribute to Street News
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The Opinions expressed in Street News do not necessarily represent the views and opinions of Start Me Up Niagara.

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“Covid the Beginning” by Kathy Black





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Emergency resources:

SMUN Drop-in Centre

Monday - Friday: 9am - 11:15am

& 1:15pm - 3:15pm

Weekends & Holidays - 11:15am - 1:00pm

Westview Centre 4 Women Drop-in

Tuesday - Thursday: 10am - 12:30pm

& 1pm - 4pm

Ozanam Centre

Lunch - Monday - Friday: 11am - 12:45pm

Silver Spire United Church

Bagged breakfast - Monday - Friday: 9am - 10am

Shower Services - Monday, Wednesday, Friday: 9am - 12pm

St.Georges Anglican Church

Breakfast program - Monday - Sunday:

7:30am - 8:30am



Photos by Jesse Matthews

Hey, let's build a Wall!!!

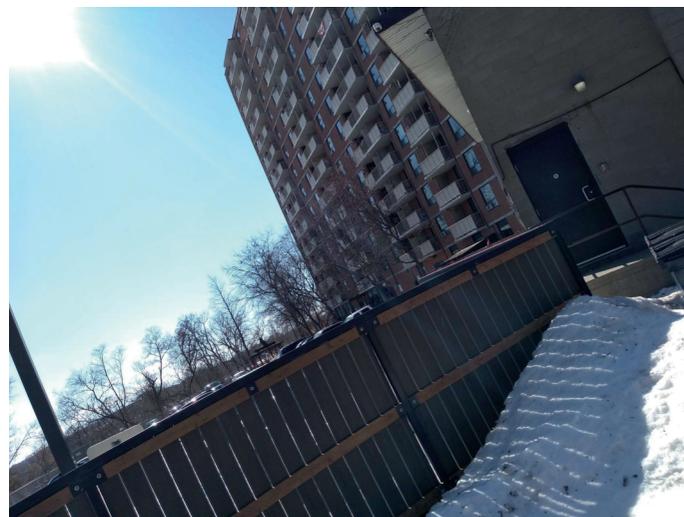
**The Berlin Wall, the Spanish/Moroccan Wall,
The U.S./Mexico Border Wall,
The horrible Warsaw Ghetto Walls,
The Israel /West Bank Palestinian wall:**

**When Leaders are in trouble, and they can't think at all:
They say: LET'S BUILD A WALL!!!
LET'S BUILD A WALL!!!**

**There's the Northern Ireland graffiti Peace Wall
And the Wall between India and Bangladesh
And in the Suburbs, when neighbours get too stressed
They say: JUST BUILD A FENCE
JUST BUILD A FENCE
...It doesn't make sense, but hey, what the Hell,
Let's just build a fence.**

**When Leaders are in trouble, and they can't think at all:
They say: LET'S BUILD A WALL!!!
JUST BUILD A WALL!!!**

Text compilation by C.J. Sisler





Notice Posted for Tenants at nearby building.

“Dear Tenants and Staff: As the weather gets colder, more *vagrants* are trespassing on the grounds...Since people are now masked (and unrecognizable), do not assume the person lives in our building... If you do see a *vagrant* inside our lobbies or building, DO NOT confront the person or speak to them. Go to a safe place to call 9-1-1. Advise Police that a *vagrant* is inside the building.”

Dictionary Definition of Va-grant *noun*

a person without a settled home or regular work who wanders from place to place and lives by begging: Tramp, drifter, down-and-out, derelict, beggar, itinerant, wanderer, nomad, wayfarer, traveler, gypsy, rover, vagabond, transient, migrant, homeless person, beachcomber, rolling stone, hobo, bagman, bag lady, knockabout, overlander, sundowner, whaler, bum... adjective: migratory, rootless, of no fixed address,

What is a meaning of vagrant?

A : wandering about from place to place usually with no means of support. B: of an animal : wandering outside its normal geographic range especially, of a bird : found outside its normal geographic range or migration route. C: having a fleeting, wayward, or a *vagrant* impulse.

Is vagrant a bad word?

In general, TRANSIENT and VAGRANT are terms that are more pejorative when compared with HOMELESS PERSON. In fact, one of the signs that a person or group has a negative point of view towards the homeless is when they refer to ALL homeless people as TRANSIENTS, or VAGRANTS.

Vagrant | Definition of Vagrant

1. an idle person without visible means of support, as a tramp or beggar. a person who wanders from place to place; wanderer; rover. wandering idly without a permanent home or employment;

Homeless persons do not wander “idly”... they wander with purpose, searching for food, warmth, people who will speak kindly to them. There is nothing “idle” about their wandering.

Wall are not just physical structures:

AODA: Accessibility for Ontarions with Disabilities Act

This was a program that SMUN staff were required to complete. Looking over my notes, I noticed that there were a lot of comparisons to ideas about **WALLS**: Walls are not only physical structures: they can be mental, social and attitudinal barriers that block accessibility and acceptance. What is a barrier? A barrier is an obstacle: for example: stairs or even a curb for someone in a wheelchair, poor lighting or small print for someone with a vision impairment, or movies without captions for someone with a hearing impairment. But there are also **Attitudinal** barriers, such as:

- Ignorance
- Fear
- Stereotyping

Also there are **Systemic** barriers: enshrined or instituted into organizations, workplaces and societal policies and processes.

The 4 principles of AODA are:

1. Dignity
2. Independence
3. Equal Opportunity
4. Integration

I was not always disabled. My disability occurred late in my life. But now, I get it...I prefer to do everything on my own, I don't want to need someone to help me. Nor to look down on me.

When we think about what has been happening regarding a growing awareness of long-standing racism and police-brutality against Black, Brown and Asian peoples, the walls we are facing seem insurmountable. But they are not. (By CJ Sisler)

**Love recognizes no barriers.
It jumps hurdles; leaps fences,
Penetrates walls
To arrive at its destination
Full of hope.
Maya Angelou**



Giants, Kikito and the Border Patrol, Tecate, Mexico
By artist JR, 2018





CNOY

**\$172,186
WE DID IT**

2021

Our goal for CNOY 2021 was \$150,000.

We have surpassed our goal on so many levels!

\$22,000+ over goal is unbelievable, but what's so amazing is that we collectively did this in the middle of a Global Pandemic, with more Teams than ever before!

CONGRATULATIONS NIAGARA: WE DID THIS!

Congratulations on a successful campaign! Go to <https://cnoy.org/location/stcatharines>

For all the details! The difference that was made in CNOY 2021 is tremendous and we cannot be more grateful to all of our supporters: walkers, donors, and sponsors.

Thank you for your support. Thank you for your generosity.

Our community's most vulnerable people are homeless and hungry.

The funds raised allow Start Me Up Niagara to provide even more resources than before.

We can't wait to see you next year – hopefully in person!

For more info on all funds raised by ALL teams, go to

<https://cnoy.org/location/stcatharines>

OUT OF THE COLD: St. Catharines

Sun: Knights of Columbus Hall, 235 Church St

Mon: Silver Spire United Church, 366 St Paul St

Tue: Cathedral of St Catherine, 3 Lyman St

Wed: St George's Anglican Church, 83 Church St

Thu: St Alfred Roman Catholic Church, 272 Vine St

Fri: Knox Presbyterian Church, 53 Church St

Sat: Queen St Baptist Church, 57 Queen St

For more information about Out of the Cold in St. Catharines, please go to:

<https://www.startmeupniagara.ca/site/out-of-the-cold-shelter-program>

THANK YOU FOR THE GREAT WORK YOU HAVE DONE!!!!





Remembering Liz Roulston



By Colleen Smith



Liz was more than a friend, she was a kindred spirit. From the first time I met Liz at a Women's Retreat 5 years ago., I knew that there was something special about her. She had a zest for life, an amazing sense of humour and many other attributes that I admired. Liz was multi-talented. These talents included being an avid drummer and pianist, a nature and animal lover, a story-teller, a Reiki master, a poet, a dancer, and an advocate for the poor.

Here was a woman who brought out the best in me. She was supportive, generous and loving. When I broke my right arm last December, Liz became my faithful companion and chauffeur. Nothing seemed to be too much for her, whether it be staying with me in the emergency room as I waited for the doctor, driving me to appointments with my doctor or physiotherapist, taking me to morning prayer, or bringing me gifts of flowers, fresh fruit or a newly released book.

Several months before Liz died she and I participated in a "Care for the Soul" meeting, where we were invited to reflect on what song we are singing. Liz used that reflection time to write a poem, and I share that now as a way of concluding my cherished memories.

Life on the Land by Liz Roulston

I am living my life
Dancing my song,
Sustained by the Earth Star
From Near and Afar.

I sing with the animals, wild ones too,
Who sing us the message of just being you.
The whispering pines
Are my breath and my strength –
The Ancient Ones calling for love and respect,
The gifts that I share are gifts to myself,
If given in love, return a thousand fold.
I listen for magic in every bird song:
No greater, no lesser, connected to all.
I'm living my life,
Dancing my song.

Mims

She faced into the storm:

**Blue Water
Blue Peaks
HerAnimals**

**Herself danced
with a spirited soul
of her very own.**

**Drumming in:
InHer strength
InHer fears
InHer wisdom
InHer golden circle of friends,
InHer love.**

–Donna-Lynn–

On Dec. 29th
of this year (2020),
Liz would have celebrated
her 80th birthday.
I will light a candle
on that day
In memory of
my dear friend
and kindred spirit:
Liz Roulston





More poems from the Street

Photo by Ryan Logtenberg

I have a confession to make
After many years of working and doing ok
Passing grades in most areas
I retired and I am failing.
All the advice that everyone gave me forgotten
My best intentions sit waiting for me to get started
Adult children throwing up their hands in mock surprise
Tony wisely saying very little
Cause I decided to go the semi retirement way
Ease out - not one big jump
Procrastinate a little longer
Part time of course
Back to where I started
Out of the Cold til season ends
Not sure if I am right or wrong
Just have a bit more to add to my song.

Susan Venditti



What's going wrong?
If I sang it in a song would you
understand it and make you stronger
Everyone seems to be taking the long
Way to get where to say
They spend most of the day on their cellphones
Asking it directions
This Co-Vid virus got gold on their minds these days!
It's a new world order the mark of the Beast says it all!
Buy or sell with ... mask and gloves of some kind too
It's getting mandatory all over the world!
Boy oh boy Satan pulls the wool over just about
everyone's eyes to say:
Really, don't you really think...

a mask can replace a face?

By Sonny

(Editor's note: Sonny's poem was submitted on photocopied pages, the final line wasn't readable, so I added a final line (in italics) that I thought might fit. I tried to reach Sonny to get his actual line, but we did not connect in time for the final printing. I invite Sonny to contact me or Ada, to let us know his final line, so that we may make the necessary correction. I apologize if my last line is not what you would have wanted and will make corrections ASAP; but thank you for submitting your poem!')



Always the day always the chance
No I'm not talking about a Saturday night dance
But rather waiting for positive changes to take place
Time in time out frustration keeps its pace
We are promised a better world a better tomorrow
But on the news you can see turmoil, violence and sorrow
Time to check how much truly I can spend
Regardless of keeping up with today's fashionable trend
Yes I'm still waiting for change to take place
It doesn't seem to matter living in a truly rats race

Paul Shtogryn

Random writing:

What is a safe space? A safe space is where there is a lot of distance. A place that is drama free, where people respect one another. This space gives me security and I am comfortable being free from unsafe people. A safe space is where I am away from any triggers and I feel at home. Sometimes being alone feels safe, but being with friends can be even safer. A safe space would be located in a church where I trust the people to take care of me and nobody steals anything. If we want to be safe we need to follow all the rules that will keep us safe.

Anonymous





New Migrations into Start Me Up Niagara

Laura Dumas, Executive Director

Laura Dumas comes to Start Me Up Niagara with over 30 years' experience in the not for profit world. She has had the privilege to work with volunteers and marginalized individuals in many organizations within and outside of Niagara.

She spent 14 years with the Elizabeth Fry Society of Peel and worked primarily with individuals on probation and in court assisting those awaiting bail hearings.

After moving back to Niagara, Laura worked at Ontario March of Dimes for 5 years in fundraising initiatives and volunteer services: where she learned the most about communicating effectively with individuals living with disabilities, both seen and unseen.



"I would like to start by thanking everyone: participants, volunteers, staff and board members for your kind words and welcoming attitude.

"I know that I have huge shoes to fill with Susan's retirement but together, I am sure we will all get there. My intention is to keep Susan's vision alive and ensure that we all work together to make the world a better place. If you see me, make sure to stop me and say 'Hi!' If you have questions, ask. If you need something, tell me. Open communication is the best way to solve issues as they come up and I welcome everyone's input. I look forward to meeting all of you, working together and moving forward!" **Laura Dumas**

Charmaine Frado

Development Director at Start Me Up Niagara



Born and raised in St. Catharines, Charmaine left in 1986, to complete an Honours Bachelor of Fine Arts/ Visual Arts at York University. Big city life kept her intrigued for about 30 years and then she got homesick and returned in 2016 and now calls Niagara "home" once again.

While away, she spent 25+ years working in community-based, mental health drop-in's and economic development initiatives as a community business development coordinator, project manager, volunteer coordinator, professional grant-writer and fundraiser.

She was also the Executive Director of the Toronto School of Art, just before she opened her own restaurant in Toronto and then transferred it to Niagara. She's since closed the shop, but still makes her award-winning Jerk Chicken by special request!

Charmaine joined SMUN January 2nd, 2020 as Executive Assistant, but very quickly transformed her role back where she is most comfortable and right where SMUN needs her – fundraising and grant-writing. She's currently in the final stages of preparatory work for international certification in her field and will soon write the "CFRE" or Certified Fund Raising Executive certificate exam. Please do not disturb when studying...it's been many years since she had to study for and pass an exam!

Charmaine has a very large family in Niagara and is married, with family in Jamaica – so she comes by the Jerk seasoning honestly. Her own family roots are half Italian and half German Mennonites from Siberia and she spent some time in the '90's living in Cuba! And she speaks enough Spanish to get into trouble!

Charmaine worked at an organization in Toronto that is bigger, but very much like SMUN. It's a special place. When she closed her restaurant and was looking for work, she waited until there was an opening here because she chose us as her new community and knew she wouldn't be as comfortable working anywhere else in Niagara.





SOME NEW MIGRATIONS INTO SMUN

Art Me Up Welcomes Jesse F. Matthews: Art Me Up Facilitator

Jesse is a talented and experienced artist, installation expert, and musician, who was born in St. Catharines and went to Sir Winston high school. Sadly, tragedy hit his family early. At 15, Jesse lost his dad in a car accident. His sister was also injured and spent months in rehab. After high school, Jesse moved to Vancouver where he began touring with a band. But tragedy struck again when his mom passed of a brain aneurism. Jesse has had his share of tough times. But then, in 2007, his best friend talked him into going to Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (NSCAD) to study art in an open media program.

In 2007, Jesse moved to Toronto where he worked at the Art Gallery of Ontario, helping with the installations of artists such as Thrush Holmes and Josh Nagel. In between he worked as a bike courier, bar security, all while still touring with his band Rat-Tail. By 2011 the band was offered a contract to record and tour internationally. But eventually, fatigue and mental health issues took their toll. Nonetheless, In 2014 he landed an incredible job at a not-for profit in Halifax called reachAbility (similar to SMUN but more focused on disabilities) where he was teaching creative music lessons to the participants. For Jesse it was such an eye opening and amazing experience, that it lead to other similar opportunities with all kinds of different folks from all walks of life. From this, he eventually landed more formal teaching roles. He was teaching music and art in Niagara-on-the-Lake as well as working at NAC (Niagara Artists Centre) and Rodman Hall, and he reconnected with long-time friend Carol Graham. Together they decided to go to Thailand to teach ESL, but the pandemic had broken out before they got off the plane. Upon return, Jesse started working at the SMUN farm, where he met Tony, and then Susan. Through them he heard about the opening for a new Art Me Up Facilitator: and the rest is now becoming the new story of Art Me Up!

A Testimonial from Glenys McQueen-Fuentes

ART ME UP is a testimonial to the human spirit--and to the very principle behind START ME UP NIAGARA. Nowhere have I seen resilience, hope, trust, determination, faith, drive and voice more in evidence than in the continued outpouring of art that Cathy Sisler and all the many artists who make up ART ME UP are producing. (Ryan Logtenberg, Jessica Martinelli, Marvin Dale, Jesse Matthews, Kathy Black, Doug Luke, Darryl Burr, Joshua D'Cunha, Donna Roulston, Liz Roulston, Waqar Baig, Jimbobway, RN Wagner, Nancy Edmonstone, Tina Tetu, CJ Sisler, Adeola Bakenne, Kenedee _____, Aaron Cooper, and many others who have come by and graced us with their creativity.)

For the ART ME UP participants to have navigated a full year of COVID-19, with its lock downs, fears, losses and soul-bending isolation without falling sick to the virus—and more importantly, without allowing these to stop their

communicating through their art with each other, with the community and with anyone willing to stop and take note, is astonishing. Or is it?

Art isn't just an activity, or a service, or a way to pass the time. It is the path to finding and embracing health, wellness and voice. Art is the way to nourish and experience the very life force of those who make it and those who allow themselves to witness it and accept it. We all need to celebrate ART ME UP and support it in every way we can. ART ME UP needs time, space, a place to grow and be encouraged. ART ME UP and its' artists are the most vital, vibrant and clearest proof that the aims of START ME UP NIAGARA are life-sustaining and transformational.”

Respectfully submitted: Glenys McQueen-Fuentes, Co-Director: DramaSound Projects, www.dramasound.com; Associate Professor (Retired), Department of Dramatic Arts, MIWSFPA, Brock University.



Having a Space is Like Having a Home

Having a space, physical or virtual, for like-minded people to gather, share and create is a very empowering experience. In the context of art, expressing ideas and working alongside one another isn't just a simple social circle, it threads communities together as a practice for healing. Making masterpieces and gallery exhibitions are great, but in the real world the exercise of making art is often just about the process and the people who are around you. Generating a positive atmosphere and a safe space to be creative, is the most glorious and liberating feeling. There is something magical about an art studio and the people who use it. It needs to be cherished. (By Jesse Matthews)





Other Testimonials from Art Me Up Artists

“Structure and routine for our mental health Mine anyways – I’m going crazy not doing anything! It’s not healthy for me nor for me to work at the moment, so I need something positive before I get myself in trouble: going insane!” Jessica Martinelli

“Space for someone with no space at home for me!” Kathy Black

A Message from Mayor Walter Sendzik

“As we prepare to mark one year since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the City of St. Catharines has experienced many challenges, but we haven’t stopped making a difference for our community...

We are deeply aware of the homeless and addiction issues in our parks, on our trails, downtown and throughout the city, and we’re trying to address the social issues individuals, as well as neighbours in the community, are seeing. We know these challenges continue to increase, and by taking the lead as a lower-tier municipality, and collecting data as part of the response, we hope to not only make a difference at the City level, but also make a case that regional, provincial and federal governments should provide additional funding to the city to address the epidemic we are facing.

During the first seven months of the pilot, the City-funded program saw more than 400 interactions, with many referrals made to services related to housing, health – including mental health, justice, community services and financial assistance. We’ve forged a strong collaborative effort with the City, NASO, Niagara regional Police and other key stakeholders such as Positive Living and Start Me Up Niagara....

These efforts are just one piece of a much larger support network that has been building momentum in Niagara. Efforts as part of the Built for Zero project to end chronic homelessness reached a milestone last November with the Quality By-Name List. As one of only 22 communities in Canada to earn the designation, Niagara is clearly focused on addressing homelessness in our communities.

We still have much work to do, but we are on the right path. If we build on our momentum and evolve with a continuum of care for those living in the rough, and use the data to provide individual supports, we can create a system that helps break the homelessness cycle.



Start Me Up Welcomes New Executive Director

The Board of Directors of Start Me Up Niagara is pleased to announce that Laura Dumas has been named as the organization’s new Executive Director. Laura will succeed Susan Venditti who is retiring on November 30, 2020. Laura brings over thirty years of not-for-profit experience with the Elizabeth Fry Society, March of Dimes and most recently Community Support Services of Niagara where she served as Program Manager. Laura has big shoes to fill. Susan Venditti founded Start Me Up Niagara twenty-one years ago and has been its only Executive Director. She has built it into one of Niagara’s major providers of services and support with individuals facing significant life challenges such as addiction, mental health issues, poverty, homelessness and unemployment. In Susan’s letter to the Board, she had this to say, “It’s been an amazing twenty-one years helping build a team who believe that welcoming, respectful relationships are key to providing effective human services and changing lives. I am thankful for the gifts I have received. The blessings are beyond measure.” Susan will be staying on for a brief period during the transition. She will be sorely missed. The Board is delighted to welcome Laura to Start Me Up Niagara. We are confident that she has the skills and experience to build on Susan’s legacy and to lead our organization into the future.

(Rev.) Dr. Paul Miller
Chair, Board of Directors
Start Me Up Niagara





Sweet and Savoury: News Bites from the Kitchen



The last year has been a very challenging one, one of the most difficult since I began working for Start Me Up Niagara in 2016. I wanted to describe some of my observations over the last 12 months, not to whine and complain about things, but to shine some light on the resiliency and perseverance of the people I work with and work for.

I am proud to say that our organization has remained open and functional, despite location changes and staff rearrangements, for the entirety of this demanding year. I am also proud to say that the people we serve have handled these drastic changes with patience, understanding, and a stiff upper lip. The expectations that were put on the people we serve were nothing short of

Masks, lines, waiting, physical distancing, locked doors, altered hours, sanitizing, uncertainty, closures. These are just a handful of the new obstacles that people already struggling through day to day challenges, had to find a way to navigate and deal with. However, they did. Every time a new restriction or limitation was put in place, our community found a way to adjust to it, and move forward. I am very impressed by this ability of people to adapt to these new unprecedented changes.

The social isolation of people, as well as the unforgiving stress of uncertainty, has had an immeasurable negative impact on many people in our community. However, many people were willing to step up and provide when things seemed to be desperate and hopeless. The ability of our centre to remain open and provide support to people who need it was only possible with the backing of SMUN staff, community partners, and volunteers. There are too many to name but they know who they are. The local donations to our centre must be an all-time high. During the most testing and unsympathetic time, we were shocked by the outpouring of support by local donors of boots, coats, gloves, food, meals, sleeping bags, blankets, and hygiene products to name a few. My observation is that people care. I've never seen more support from the community as I have over the last 12 months, and we deeply appreciate it.

This past year has been hectic and stressful for the staff, students and volunteers who made it possible to remain open during this pandemic. Many people have sacrificed their ability to visit with family and friends in order to remain available to come to work and help people in need. Our team fearlessly showed up to work day after day to be there for our participants when they needed us the most. I am so grateful to be a part of such a selfless team and organization. I encourage everyone to hang in there, try to be optimistic, and help out others when you can.

Jarad Goba

This covid-19 pandemic has abruptly changed our lives and the way the food program provide services. It has redefined many aspects of the program and how we conduct operations. In order for the kitchen to remain open and cater to the needs of our participants with safety as a priority, we had to turn to takeout services. Our goal was to ensure that each takeout meal was a healthy and a well- balanced meal. This wouldn't have been possible without the support of our community. SMUN was fortunate enough to have our community partners and other donors shower us with generous food donations. All the donations provided were used in making lunch meals on the weekends and also food bags for housed participants. It was truly a blessing! I'd like to give a big Shout out to our volunteers and staff that continued to work and support the kitchen during those unprecedented times. Lastly, I would to say thank you to our participants for being part of the solution. We miss each one of you and hope to see you all soon!

Duaa Hussein

See next page for Duaa's amazing recipe for
Hearty winter Butternut Squash Soup





Hearty winter Butternut Squash Soup From Duua Hussein

Ingredients

- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 5-8 lbs. butternut squash (peeled, seeded and cut into cubes)
- 3 stalks of celery (chopped)
- 1 large onion (diced)
- 1 large potato (diced into bit size)
- 1 can of navy beans (rinsed and drained)
- 1 tsp curry
- 1 tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- ½ tsp ground ginger
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 cups chicken broth
- 2 cups water
- 2 cups of half & half cream
- 2 cups of Kale (roughly chopped)
- Pumpkin Seeds and croutons for garnish (optional)

Instructions

- In a stockpot, add oil then sauté onion and celery over medium heat 8-10 minutes until onions are tender. Add minced garlic, ground ginger and curry powder to the pot; cook 1 minute longer
- Add squash, water and chicken base to the same pan; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, covered, 15-20 minutes or until squash is tender.
- Remove soup from heat; cool slightly. Process in batches in a blender until smooth. Return to pot. Add beans, Kale, potato, half and half cream, salt and pepper; heat through.
- Freeze option: Freeze cooled soup in freezer containers. To use, partially thaw in the refrigerator overnight. Heat through in a saucepan, stirring occasionally and adding a little water if necessary.



Garden by Maddie :

This past spring, like many people, I was out of a job and in need of work that would busy my hands and allow me to think about something other than the global pandemic. In early May, I started working at SMUN's Community Garden, where Tony, Erin and crew were already nurturing tiny tomato, eggplant, and pepper plants. By the end of my first month at "the farm" I had helped plant corn, squash, pumpkins, sunflowers, kale, cauliflower, cucumbers, sweet potatoes, and about a million different varieties of bean. The more we gave to the farm in those early days of planting, the more the gardens gave back to us in lush greenery. I left each day exhausted, but I felt incredibly lucky to be spending my days there.

.Over the course of the season, I often wandered through the labyrinth garden, made up of perennial flowers, herbs, and wildflowers. When standing in the center of the labyrinth, where the bees and butterflies fly from flower to flower, it is easy to see that this place allows for the growth of so many, and that it has been built by many hands. Working at the farm has reminded me to take comfort in the lessons that are learned in nature. I enjoyed these lessons so much, I even signed up for online courses in sustainable agriculture, to keep learning more!

Now, in the chill of the winter, I am reminding myself that the growing season is just a few months away. The gardens will reopen in the spring, the sun will warm us all, and people will be needed to plant the seeds that will feed our community. I look forward to going back and hope to see new and familiar faces in the gardens for the 2021 season.





Bike Me up by William Goba

The excitement of my retirement brought about itself a whole new set of challenges in my life. A healthy lifestyle, proper diet. Many studies have shown that regular exercise doesn't just help you stay physically fit, but it can help you maintain your cognitive and psychological health. Bicycling directly affects your aerobic system. It is known that your aerobic system is linked to combat the effects of depression. My sleep has never been better, true after a good ride you feel tired and perhaps a bit sore, but all of my body welcomes the adrenalin rush. My self esteem has never been better. I have suffered from arthritis, staying sedentary makes arthritis take hold. Starting cycling at a slow and regular pace keeps the hips, knees, and ankles mobile and flexible. I can attest to that. I had a spinal fracture and a bone graft, which I have dealt with all my life. Your cardiovascular system becomes incredibly efficient and your respiratory system works much more efficiently. I've had to use a puffer at times to control some breathing issues. I'll tell you, since I've taken up cycling my breathing has been up to the task. In Port Dalhousie where I live, there are many trails for the experienced and the beginner.

Choosing a bike to ride is effortless. St.Catharines has many fine bike shops and the experienced operators can help you find a bicycle in any price range or experience.

Look forward to an increased appetite, great sleep, more energy, a better outlook on your life.



Hey, I still watch my football games, hockey, baseball etc, but I find time to cycle four times a week. Don't take it all from me, give it a try. Start slow, you'll be amazed at how your body enjoys it, and you too!

William Goba- 62 years young.



Art Me Up... by members of Art Me Up

There are some strong very strong reasons why a program such as Art Me Up should be considered an essential service. First, here are some reasons from Dan Molek, an amazing artist, whom we are proud to say is a member of Art Me Up:

“I want to work! Free work is better than no work and I if I win some contests then I'll get money for work. It's called a job.... I also did this drawing of the Community Care Food Bank in February; which is a good reason to consider Art Me Up an essential service because I can document coping with covid for the city hall contest and use Art Me Up as the home base to draw scenes from around the city. Applying for art contests is work!... I've been with the Work Action Centre since it opened and it's always operated as a temporary work agency. Posting these art competitions and contests is like posting job applications for artists.”

But we need a community and a place to work, share supplies and ideas, and exchange information. Otherwise, many of us can fall back into isolation, addiction, depression and other serious health issues. And although Covid is now #1 killer, it does not change the positive effects on health that artistic activities can have, as mentioned below: (cont'd next page)



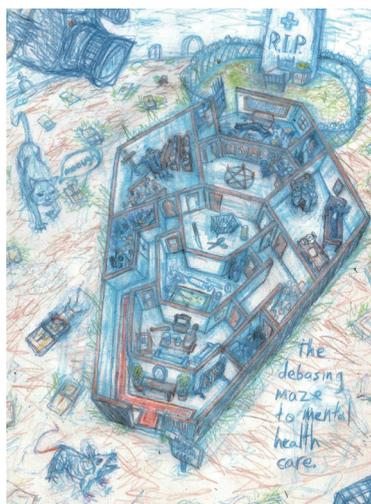


Art Me Up: Frivolous Social Circle or Essential Service?

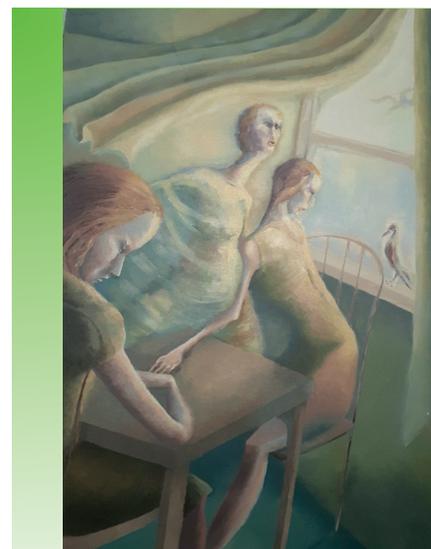
From the World Health Organization: "...there is evidence that engagement with artistic activities, either as an observer of the creative efforts of others or as an initiator of one's own creative efforts, can enhance one's moods, emotions, and other psychological states as well as have a salient impact on important physiological parameters. ...Chronic diseases are a nationwide burden, with cardiovascular disease being the leading cause of death during the past century and the incidence of diabetes continuing to increase, now affecting more than 20 million America. These diseases are associated with psychosocial difficulties such as depression and chronic stress, contributing to negative cardiovascular outcomes. Engagement with creative activities has the potential to contribute toward reducing stress and depression and can serve as a vehicle for alleviating the burden of chronic disease....



Nancy Edmonstone



Dan Molek



CJ Sisler

Over the past decade, health psychologists have cautiously begun looking at how the arts might be used in a variety of ways to heal emotional injuries, increase understanding of oneself and others, develop a capacity for self-reflection, reduce symptoms, and alter behaviours and thinking patterns. Given the ubiquity of creative expression, as well as the relative ease of engagement, the extent to which psychological and physiological effects are sustainably health enhancing is an important area for public health investigation.

...Guillemin, one of the first to use drawings in an effort to understand experiences of health and illness, examined how 32 middle-aged women with heart disease understood their condition. After an individual interview, each participant was asked to "draw" her heart disease. The drawings were grouped into 3 themes: the heart at the centre, the heart in the lived body, and heart disease as a social illness. Use of colour, spatial organization, and composition were explored. The drawings were considered as both visual products of the women's knowledge about heart disease and processes of embodied knowledge production. It was concluded that having individuals draw how they visualized their condition was an insightful method with which to explore understandings of illness.

Art can be a refuge from the intense emotions associated with illness. There are no limits to the imagination in finding creative ways of expressing grief. In particular, moulding clay can be a powerful way to help people express these feelings through tactile involvement at a somatic level, as well as to facilitate verbal communication and cathartic release and reveal unconscious materials and symbols that cannot be expressed through words.

Women taking part in a qualitative study focusing on cancer described ongoing cancer-related difficulties such as fear for the future, pain, sleeplessness, role loss, activity restriction, reduced self-confidence, and altered social relationships. Engaging in different types of visual art (textiles, card making, collage, pottery, watercolor, acrylics) helped these women in 4 major ways. First, it helped them focus on positive life experiences, relieving their ongoing preoccupation with cancer. Second, it enhanced their self-worth and identity by providing them with opportunities to demonstrate continuity, challenge, and achievement. Third, it enabled them to maintain a social identity that resisted being defined by cancer. Finally, it allowed them to express their feelings in a symbolic manner, especially during chemotherapy.

**From: The Connection Between Art, Healing, and Public Health: A Review of Current Literature
Heather L. Stuckey, DEDcorresponding author and Jeremy Nobel, MD, MPH**



**ART ME UP
NIAGARA**
FOLD-IN



A>

FOLD 'B' OVER TO MEET 'A'

<B

Working Together ...

Moving Forward

Designed by Jesse Matthews
Text by C.J Sisler





In Memoriam 2020 & 2021 ;

- Glen 'Wild Willy' Fuller**
- Dean Hudson**
- Liz Roulston**
- Marina Morden**
- Semso Ligata**
- Silvia Tutti**
- William Bridgeman**
- Nyisha Shine**
- Michael Weekes**
- Bryan Davies**

Editor's Note:

**During the Pandemic, and the recent staff changes at Start Me Up Niagara, we may not have all the names of our friends who have passed in 2020 and until now in 2021. We certainly wish for fewer, rather than more names be added to this list, but we DO want to honour everyone of our friends whom we have lost. If you know of someone who has passed in 2020-2021, firstly we offer our condolences, and secondly, if you would like to add their names to the Street News In Memoriam, please send me their names: to CJ. Sisler, cjsomg@gmail.com
Thank you, our thoughts and prayers are with you.**



NIAGARA
Prosperity Initiative



Government of Canada
Gouvernement du Canada

Canada

Niagara Region



Ontario

Ministry of Children,
Community and Social Services

Ontario
Trillium Foundation



Fondation Trillium
de l'Ontario

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OUT OF THE GOLD



United Way
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