

# GOOD WORK NEWS

The Working Centre, 58 Queen St. S. Kitchener, ON N2G 1V6

Issue 99

December 2009

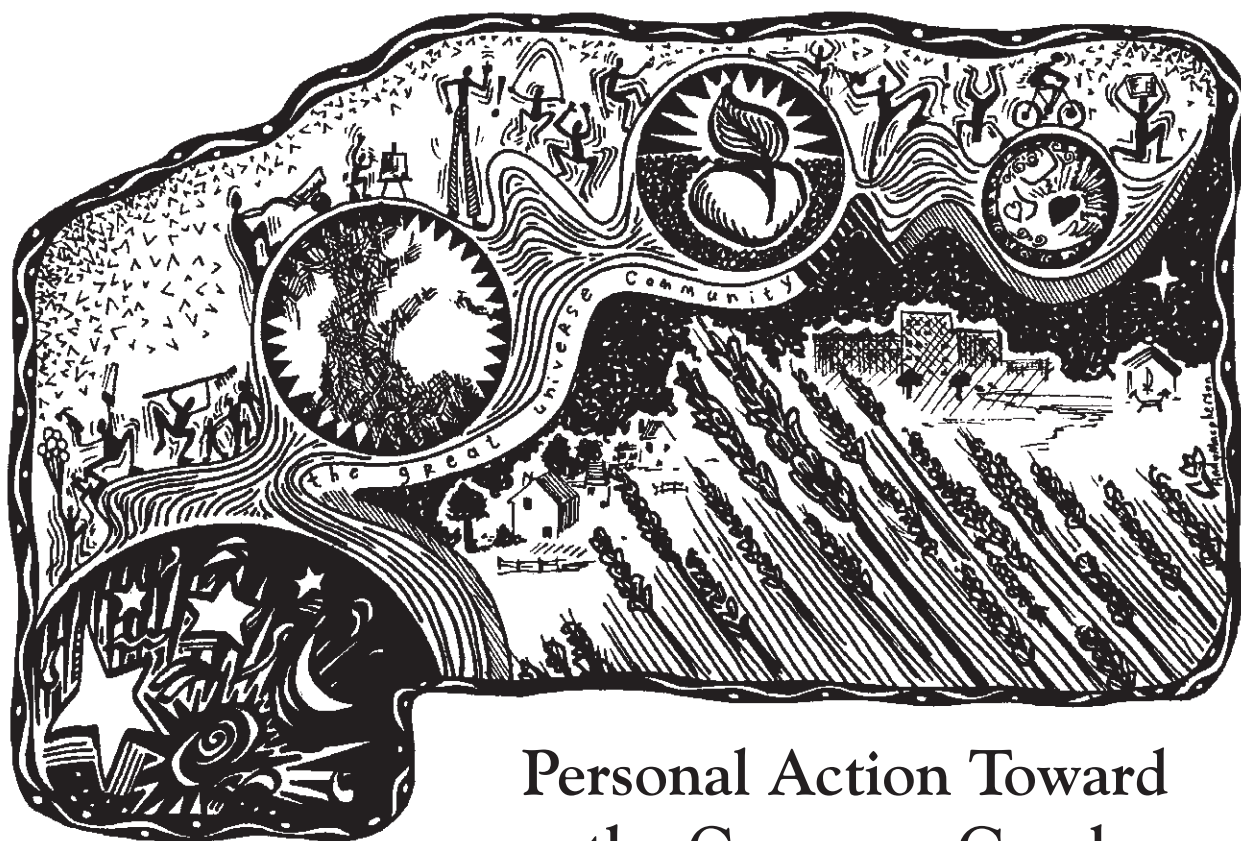
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## Last Chance for Earth

By Andrew Nikiforuk

A review of *Now or Never: Why we Must Act Now to End Climate Change and Create a Sustainable Future* by Tim Flannery.

Nations that export fossil fuels often find it grossly inconvenient to believe in man-made climate change, and understandably so. Who really wants a responsible carbon budget that respects the finite nature of the atmosphere and the oceans when you can make a killing by exporting dirty oil? Real innovation might even result in a loss of hydrocarbon jobs and easy revenue for lazy governments, and that's bad.

Therefore, climate change driven by fossil fuels must be a hoax; a scientific fraud or another attempt by elitists at the United Nations to impose one world government on us all. So, long live the carbon liberation movement and Exxon Mobile.

Whenever I get e-mails from these happy carbon makers, I kindly invite them to open a profitable business on lifeless Mars, where CO<sub>2</sub> has become the dominant gas. I also recommend that they try fishing on an ocean of carbolic acid.

Tim Flannery's important and elegant essay, *Now or Never*, probably won't sway many members of the oil-exporting crowd or bridge the solitude. But it might help to broaden a grassroots political movement that forces our political leaders out of the camp of libertarian carbon makers and into the common-sense realm of caring about our children. Flannery, a world-renowned paleontologist and specialist in the evolu-

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## Personal Action Toward the Common Good

By Stephanie & Joe Mancini

The Working Centre is a community of hope. We are a place where people come when they face hardship – the loss of a job, homelessness, an inability to pay the bills, the challenges of living on a limited income, struggles with mental health, the challenges of learning about Canadian culture and finding work for someone has come from another country, people who are sick and unable to care for themselves. We see daily, in the lives of people that we come to know, the price many people pay when they are left out of the economic system that seems to rule our lives.

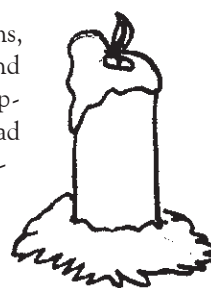
Our culture can lead many to despair, leaving one to ask "where do you find hope?" Throughout The Working Centre, we are committed to the principle of "never saying no". How do we respond to each person we meet in a way that looks for a positive way forward? You will notice that I did not say "that looks for a solution", because we face complex personal and systemic issues that cannot be solved with one answer.

First, we listen closely, we understand the complexity of the situation, and we search together for one positive step. This means that we think

outside of systems, programs, and cultural assumptions, and instead look for a positive response, and ways to bridge each person to a community of support in the long term. Often we will simply walk with someone when there is no obvious step forward. We take each person seriously as they stand before us, and respect and respond to their unique situation. But we do not pretend that we can provide a service or an answer, we can only begin the journey of helping each person to feel stronger as they are reinforced within a community of support, so that as a wider group of people we can receive and support one another.

The ethic of respect, supporting individuals in a way that makes possible the dignity they deserve, takes many approaches. The approach is not to make excuses for individuals, rather to find ways through our dense systems so that people have

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## The Wayfinders

### Why Ancient Wisdom Matters in the Modern World

The CBC Massey Lecture Series invited best-selling author and award-winning anthropologist Wade Davis to speak about the accelerating loss of indigenous cultures around the world. He argues that the loss of unique world-views and wisdom of these vanishing peoples are a great danger to humankind. See page 3 for book details.

"In a rugged knot of mountains in the remote reaches of northern British Columbia lies a stunningly beautiful valley known to the First Nations as the Sacred Headwaters. There, on the southern edge of the Spatsizi Wilderness, the Serengeti of Canada, are born in remarkably close proximity three of Canada's most important salmon rivers, the Stikine, the Skeena, and the Nass. In a long day, perhaps two, it is possible to walk through open meadows, following the tracks of grizzly, caribou,

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Twenty-Fifth Year

Issue 99

December 2009

Good Work News

Good Work News was first produced in September 1984. It is published four times a year by The Working Centre and St. John's Kitchen as a forum of opinions and ideas on work and unemployment. There is a circulation of 11,000 copies. Subscription: a donation towards our work.

**Editors:** Joe Mancini, Stephanie Mancini, Jennifer Mains, John R. Smith

**Contributors:** Joe Johnson, Andy Macpherson, Doug MacLellan, Rebecca Mancini, Andrew Nikiforuk, Hulene Montgomery, and Wade Davis.

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The Working Centre is pleased to announce that

**Lynda Silvester**

will be the Guest of Honour for the  
 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Mayors' Dinner

Saturday April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2010

The Mayors' Dinner is an evening that celebrates individuals who have made outstanding contributions to our community

We are delighted to announce that Lynda Silvester has been chosen to be the Guest of Honour for The Working Centre's 2010 Mayors' Dinner for her exceptional work in promoting child literacy and working with the community to launch innovative educational programs in Waterloo Region and beyond. Lynda's community development approach has focused on building coalitions and community-wide approaches to create a community for our children to gain the skills, qualities and values to help them grow into healthy, productive members of our community.

Lynda retired after a career as an elementary school principal and special education consultant with the Waterloo Region District School Board in 2000. This was just when Lyle S. Hallman was looking for a way to partner with the community to help young children "catch the spark" of reading and learning. Lynda immediately took up the challenge by researching, designing, and co-founding the innovative Strong Start program as a community-based volunteer-run children's literacy program. The program which began with a handful of volunteers in two local schools today involves over 1800 volunteers providing fun, effective literacy training to over 1900 children in 148 locations. The program is now expanding to other parts of Ontario. Lynda's vision, leadership, and hard work have helped the local community to launch other children's literacy programs including Get Ready for School and a Baby Literacy Project.

Known by many people as the "go-to" person for fresh educational ideas and team building, Lynda served as a valuable volunteer Chairperson for the first community planning table for the Ontario Government's Early Years Initiative, which led to the creation of the Ontario Early Years Centres locally. She also has served for many years on the Alliance for Children and Youth of Waterloo Region to establish and advance its goals.

Lynda is widely recognized for her unique talent of applying her deep knowledge of how children learn with her passion for engaging others to build capacity and community.

We invite you to become involved by buying tickets, purchasing a community table for your group, company or church, purchasing sponsorships, or contributing an item for the auction.

For more details, please call Kara at (519)743-1151 x119.

Personal Action

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a chance. At the same time, The Working Centre offers unending opportunities to contribute back. This happens on two levels. The first, more formally through our array of community tools projects that give individuals concrete ways to serve others (see the list on page 5). The second happens informally through the 1000 people who travel through The Working Centre each day. Our open services encourage individuals to find informal ways to rebuild their own ethic of respect through friendships and support of each other.

Each of us involved in this exchange is strengthened and the bending, giving, and receiving are part of the reciprocal dance of give and take. In the midst of homelessness, mental health and addictions, unemployment, and rampant consumerism we find a growing community that allows for the surprises that we as individuals cannot dream on our own.

This issue of Good Work News contains some challenging concepts – Last Chance for Earth describing the enormity of climate change; Tar Sands which enunciates our utter disrespect for the earth based on a hunger for fossil fuels; David Ehrenfeld describing how our "economic and social edifice built begins to crumble" ... all really important messages for us to hear and reflect on, but nearly impossible for us to read and not feel overwhelmed and helpless.

It is easy to live in a "Culture of Pretend" that can destroy our capacity for right, personal action. Learned helplessness allows us to think that new technologies or solutions allow us to be assured that living without limits has no repercussions. David Ehrenfeld, in **Becoming Good Ancestors** explains three recent dangerous kinds of pretending, "genetic engineering in medicine and agriculture; the use of scientific methods to predict future events, and the 'Star Wars' research to develop ways of shooting down incoming enemy bal-

istic missiles. ... In each case, there have been enough successes or partial successes to give some credence to our hopes. And in each it is finally a few of the experts themselves who say, 'Enough! Our pretending is causing real damage, and it's time to stop.' (p. 4)

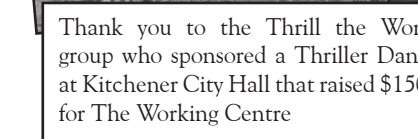
In the midst of these large overwhelming issues are individuals who have learned helplessness from the mundane day to day reality they face. Job loss, benefits revoked, training clawed back, the onslaught of addictions, are just the tip of the iceberg. Learned helplessness is a reinforcement of the perception that many have little control over the outcome of most situations. Research shows that the more an individual is trapped by controls and circumstances where they have little control, passivity and depression is sure to result. We end up with a Culture of Pretend.

The books and readings in this edition of Good Work News give us some ways forward. How do we as individuals make choices that look to the Common Good, which reverence the earth, and contribute to the building of community? Almost all speak to the importance of small personal action that builds a commitment to the common good, full of surprises and hopefulness, despite immense challenges.

At The Working Centre we have learned that small actions make a difference, when practiced in community. The Commons Market, Recycle Cycles, St. John's Kitchen, Worth A Second Look, Computer Recycling are examples of practical expressions of community building that give citizens practical ways of responding to these immense issues. These support the kinds of personal actions that we increasingly search for – driving less, growing more local food, recognizing the importance of good work, seeking meaningful conversations with families and friends. These actions not only impact on the world around us, but also change us as we engage in creative work together – one small step at a time.



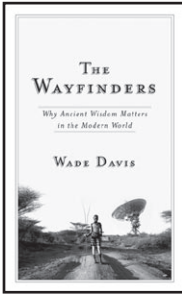
Thank you to the Toyota Gardeners who grew vegetables on company land and donated the produce to St. John's Kitchen



Thank you to the Thrill the World group who sponsored a Thriller Dance at Kitchener City Hall that raised \$1500 for The Working Centre



Thank you to the Waterloo Chamber Players for performed a concert at St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church in support of St. John's Kitchen



## The Wayfinders

### Why Ancient Wisdom Matters in the Modern World

Wade Davis

262 pages, \$19.95

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and wolf, and drink from the very sources of the three rivers that inspired so many of the great cultures of the Pacific Northwest, the Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en, the Carrier and Sekani, the Tsimshian, Nisga'a, Tahltan, Haisla, and Tlingit. Keep on for another three days and you'll reach the origins of the Finlay, headwaters of the Mackenzie, Canada's greatest river of all.

The only other place I know where such a wonder of geography occurs is in Tibet, where from the



base of Mount Kailash arise three of the great rivers of Asia, the Indus, Ganges, and Brahmaputra, vital arteries that bring life to more than a billion people downstream. Revered by Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain, Kailash is considered so sacred that no one is allowed to walk upon its slopes, let alone climb to its summit. The thought of violating its flanks with industrial development would represent for all peoples of Asia an act of desecration beyond all imaginings. Anyone who would even dare propose such a deed would face the most severe sanctions, in both this world and the next.

In Canada, we treat the land quite differently. Against the wishes of all First Nations, the government of British Columbia has opened the Sacred Headwaters to industrial development. These are not trivial initiatives. Imperial Metals Corporation proposes an open-pit copper and

gold mine processing 30,000 tons of ore a day...

The largest project is a proposal by Royal Dutch Shell to extract coal-bed methane (CBM) gas from the same anthracite deposit, across an enormous tract of more than 4,000 square kilometres. Should this development go ahead it would imply a network of several thousand wells,

## Hospitality House Offers New Community Supports

The Working Centre's Hospitality House at 91 Victoria St. N. offers six beds of supportive housing for those who are experiencing debilitating health problems and who are homeless or are at risk of homelessness. These serious chronic health problems include cancer, liver failure, hepatitis C, diabetes and their complications and palliative issues often emphasized by substance use and mental health challenges. Those who are homeless tend to age at a much faster rate and face serious illness at a much earlier age. In the past two years at St. John's Kitchen we have marked the death of over 40 community members.

The Hospitality House developed as a way to help provide stable, supported housing during this time of illness. Our supports are non-medical, and we assist with access to regular medical supports that would not otherwise be available. We were pleased that the Local Health Integration Network (Ministry of Health) supported this project as a means of improving access and reducing emergency medical service costs.

Residents in the Hospitality House also include people who re-

quire a brief period of stabilization to improve their health, and for pre and post surgery. The need for this model of hospitality is high, with many potential residents waiting for a space or putting off surgery until they can get the supports they need.

Environmental concerns aside, think for a moment of what these proposals imply about our culture. We accept it as normal that people who have never been on the land, who have no history or connection to the country, may legally secure the right to come in and by the very nature of their enterprises leave in their wake a cultural and physical landscape utterly transformed and desecrated. What's more, in granting such mining concessions, often initially for trivial sums to speculators from distant cities, companies cobbled together with less history than my dog, we place no cultural or market value on the land itself...

quire a brief period of stabilization to improve their health, and for pre and post surgery. The need for this model of hospitality is high, with many potential residents waiting for a space or putting off surgery until they can get the supports they need.

We have found this work to be a true expression of our commitment to offer hospitality in our work. The work is intense, the relationships we develop are deep, the challenges of the inter-weaving relationships with and between the residents are complex, and we daily learn about their many health problems. There is a deep sense of right action in this work – we are truly walking with people, keeping them company as they deal with their challenges.

This work is highly relationship-based and works closely within the circle of outreach activities – Street Outreach, Psychiatric Outreach Project, At-Home Outreach, Housing Desk, Integrated Supportive Housing, Streets to Housing Stability, and St. John's Kitchen.

## Hospitality



## House

- Fair-trade coffee
- Fresh herbal teas
- Vegetarian Entrées

- Volunteer Opportunities
- Live Music
- Community Space

We use whole, vegetarian ingredients to serve a range of diverse foods including:

- lasagna and other pasta dishes
- a variety of salads
- pizzas
- soups of the day
- sandwiches and wraps
- cookies, squares, cakes, and pies
- baked goods and breads

The Café Gift Shop offers handmade items crafted in the Second Floor Arts Space

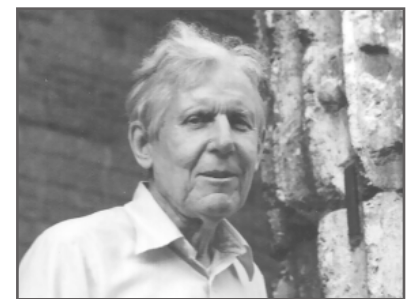
- gift baskets
- herbal soaps
- herbal products
- handmade paper
- cards
- recycled crafts

In this, the fourth of the Massey Lectures, I would like to reflect on this particular attitude of ours, this manner in which we have reduced our planet to a commodity, a raw resource to be consumed at our whim. In doing so, I will suggest rather hopefully that, as the anthropological lens reveals, there are in fact many other options, any number of different ways of orienting ourselves in place and landscape. The multiple ways in which people all over the world settle themselves in geographical and ecological space reflect, as Father Thomas Berry has so beautifully written, the infinite and the impossible, the innocent and the profane, the sacred and the sordid, all of which represent unique dreams of the earth."

## Thomas Berry

### 1914-2009

On June 1st 2009, Passionist priest and acclaimed cultural historian Thomas Berry died in Greensboro N.C. He was 94. Berry was one of the 20th-century's most probing thinkers on the human relationship with the natural world and its implications for religion. On our website at <http://www.theworkingcentre.org/wscd/ideas/ideas.html> Thomas Berry is recognized as one of the 10 individuals whose ideas have strongly influenced The Working Centre.



"Berry taught many about the importance of evolving our conscience and ecology to recognize that God's creation will be incapable of supporting life unless we develop a higher sense of the sacred. 'There must be a mystique of rain...the same is true about soil, the trees, forests and other natural phenomena.' Berry calls for a new religious sensitivity or else we are in danger of plundering the very foundations of life itself.

Thomas Berry is a historian of cultures and a writer with special concern for the foundation of cultures in their relations with the natural world. He comes from the hill country of North Carolina and entered a monastery in 1934, earning a doctoral degree in intellectual history. Through his writings, Berry conveys the message that all life exists both individually, and as part of a universal whole in which all things are intrinsically linked. He sees humanity gaining ever-tighter control over the environment, upsetting the natural balance. In creating tightly controlled environments, the result is decreased creative capacity and increased workload needed to maintain society. Berry reminds us that there are many lessons to be learned from history that must not be forgotten."



43 Queen Street South  
Downtown Kitchener  
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**Monday - Friday:**  
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**Saturday:**  
10:00am - 4:00pm

# Last Chance for Earth

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tion of mammals, argues that we will probably fail to achieve sustainability unless we observe an ancient commandment: "Thou shalt not steal – even from future generations."

So this essay doesn't beat about the bush. The author of the best-selling **The Weather Makers** and Australia's proud version of David Suzuki, Flannery makes a convincing case that we are about to provoke a dangerous biological meltdown driven by climate warming and our addiction to fossil fuels. "Humanity is now between a tipping point and a point of no return," he writes, "and only the most strenuous efforts on our part are capable of returning us to safe ground."

Given that the atmosphere is the smallest of the world's vital organs, it is also the most vulnerable to carbon pollution. Flannery soberly notes that the oceans are 500 times larger than the great aerial sea, and they are already acidifying. The last time the polar ice caps melted, 250 million years ago, the ocean became green with algae and belched hydrogen sulfide. The fishing was really bad.

Here's the climate problem as the best science sees it. The consumption of fossil fuels has taken CO<sub>2</sub> to astonishing levels of 385 parts per million in the atmosphere. The evidence suggests that we are about to surge to 450 ppm. The latest science warns that we can't avoid a Martian-style carbon economy (and not much business takes place there) unless we stabilize emissions at 350 ppm. That requires some restraint, which is not our most polished virtue as a spe-

cies. Moreover, international climate scientists have "underestimated the scale of the task by two-thirds," Flannery adds.

The solutions, Flannery admits, are not elegant. A carbon-trading scheme as proposed by the centrist Obama administration really won't start a green revolution by itself. Burying carbon from coal, the source of about 40 per cent of the problem, remains a wild science experiment that irrationally requires the burning of more coal. Electric cars equipped with batteries that boast a high storage capacity could solve the intermittent nature of wind and sun. Reclaiming tropical rain forests is a no-brainer. Eating less meat and eating locally should be part of every North American menu. Protecting grasslands from soil erosion with holistic management techniques is proven and low-cost. But in the absence of leadership, we are not doing much at all except calling burning of fossil fuels "sustainable." That's how thieves behave.

Flannery wants to believe that the civilization that abolished slavery – and slave exporters thought that was a really damn inconvenient crusade – can do the same with oil and its carbon legacy. But given the appalling performance of countries such as Canada in relation to the problem, he doesn't think there's a yes-or-no answer about avoiding disaster.

Flannery's provocative essay ends with a number of short responses to his passionate call to action. Journalist Bill McKibben encourages readers to visit 350.org and do something to protect biological investments such as your children's future. The great

entrepreneur Richard Branson advises the business community to really step it up by "creating ways of giving financial value to eco-services provided by rain forests." Gwynne Dwyer, who has written a terrifying book on climate change, suspects that we will hit runaway global warming without Zeus-like geo-engineering of the atmosphere. Peter Singer, the animal-rights activist, chastises Flannery for not advocating for radical reductions in ruminant livestock population, a source of nearly one-fifth of the world's emissions. And Canada's Alanna Mitchell, who has chronicled the rapid destruction of life in the oceans, champions the power of hope.

Years ago, the great Catholic thinker Ivan Illich wrote that high-energy-consuming societies

ultimately degrade what is truly human with their speed, pollution and unhappiness. In other words, energy grows at the expense of equity. He thought it would be impossible to solve the energy/carbon crisis by consuming more energy. But what Illich called the "the rain dance of time-consuming acceleration" is about to end. In many ways, Flannery's wonderful essay is a moral appeal to restore equity, and in so doing to become human again. Or let the chaos begin. See page 6 for book details

*Andrew Nikiforuk is the author of **Tar Sands: Dirty Oil and the Future of the Continent**. It won the City of Calgary W.O. Mitchell Book Award and the Rachel Carson Environment Book Award, and was a 2009 finalist for the Grantham Prize.*

## The Commons Market

By Rebecca Mancini

The Commons Market arose from a group of local farmers who gathered at the initiative of Canadian Organic Growers to look at how they could connect with markets in Kitchener. Many of these farmers were already involved with The Working Centre through our Community Shared Agriculture and we were excited about creating The Commons Market together. Through The Commons Market, members can preorder locally grown vegetables ranging from strawberries to lettuce to potatoes. This inaugural year of The Commons Market has been humbling and exciting given the immensity of the challenge involved in bringing together farmers and our downtown community.

I often talk to the 15-20 small scale farmers a couple of times a week and as our relationship has deepened, I have begun to understand the joys and the challenges of their livelihood. They approach the food they grow as a gift that they are happy to share with others from their community. It is a gift because there is a distinct possibility that their plants will not produce despite plenty of nurturing. So much depends on the weather - weather we city folk often take for granted or consider an inconvenience.

This summer was very wet and while leafy greens and potatoes proliferated, strawberries and tomatoes really struggled. Seeing the produce that was available week to week highlighted the consequences of changes in the weather, consequences that were much more significant than deciding whether to carry an umbrella.

Knowing each of the growers and the effort they put into growing the best produce, I felt compelled to

invite as many people as possible to join The Commons Market – both as a celebration of the foods grown, and also to share the delicious produce. Enjoying this produce also meant direct income for the farmers we were supporting.



In general we are used to grocery stores where all produce is available all the time, but I found that there is something deeply rooted about walking beside the farmers of our community and eating what they were able to produce. This raises challenges to many of our common ways of eating or planning meals – and invites us to make changes to these patterns. These changes can create a delightful awareness of where our food has come from and who has grown it.

As we enter the winter season, our range of vegetables shifts towards storage vegetables and the few greens the growers are able to produce with their hoops and greenhouses. The Commons Market will be continuing into the winter months with deliveries every second week and we invite new and old members to join us as we exchange recipes and ideas for eating what our growers have been able to produce this season. We also have a wide range of other suppliers who have joined The Commons Market to fill out the products available during the winter months – dried goods, bread, meats and cheeses. Join us as we support the work of local growers, and eat food that has not travelled thousands of kilometers before arriving on our table.

### Wednesday Market Days

Orders are picked up every second Wednesday through the winter months at Queen Street Commons Café (43 Queen St. S.)

Call 519-743-1151 ext. 130, e-mail [market@theworkingcentre.org](mailto:market@theworkingcentre.org), or visit [market.theworkingcentre.org](http://market.theworkingcentre.org).

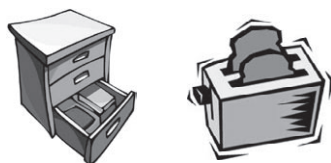


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#### Hours

**Monday-Friday: 9am - 5pm**

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**Our huge inventory of highly affordable, quality used goods offers something for everyone this holiday season!**

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- Sofas & Chairs
- Coffee & End Tables
- Kitchen Furniture
- Dishes & Utensils
- Art & Crafts
- Books & Magazines
- Small Appliances
- Music Cassettes & LPs
- Jewellery
- and Much More!



**For pick-up service, call  
519-569-7566**

# Access to Tools...

Over 1000 people travel through The Working Centre each day. Below are listed the hubs of purpose filled activities where people become connected, participate and volunteer. Deep community connections and relationships constantly grow within these activities. This is a community where people pitch in, where friendships develop, where people help each other during good times and in crisis.



## Job Search & Employment Tools

- Drop in area with daily newspapers and job leads
- Individual assistance with Employment Counsellors
- Phone/Mail/Fax Message Service
- Community Voice Mail
- Job Search Assistance at Elmira Community Information Centre
- On-site support for laid-off workers
- Assistance with WSIB and OW claims
- Resume, cover letter, interview, and job search workshops
- Job development and links to employers
- Volunteer opportunities to provide support in the Job Search Resource Area

### Helping New Canadians

- Speak English Café
- New Canadian Social Work Bridging Program
- Support for New Canadian professionals
- Workplace Language Coach
- Volunteer opportunities at Speak English Cafe



### Small Business Support

- Waterloo Region Assets+ Project (WRAP)
- 10 Week Home Business Training Workshop
- BarterWorks community currency project

## Waterloo School for Community Development

- Living with Less Money workshops and support
- Annual Mayors' Dinner honouring citizens making outstanding contributions to the community
- Diploma in Local Democracy course
- Good Work News with a circulation of 11,000 copies
- Alternative Work Catalogue

## St. John's Kitchen

- Monday to Friday daily hot lunch for up to 350 people
- 8:00am drop in: coffee, breads, jam & peanut butter
- Daily market and canned food distribution
- Public laundry and showers
- Volunteer opportunities at St. John's Kitchen

### Outreach Services & Medical Clinic

- Connects people to housing, health, income & other services
- Kitchener & Waterloo Downtown Outreach Workers
- Streets to Housing Stability Outreach Worker
- Hospitality Hotel and At-Home Outreach Worker
- KDCHC drop-in Medical Clinic each Tuesday morning
- Psychiatric Outreach Project
- Psychiatric Outreach Clinics on Thursdays and Fridays



### Job Café

- Part-time casual labour opportunities
- Job Café services to businesses, home owners
- Downtown Street Sweeping with Kitchener BIA
- Snow shovelling service
- Maintenance of 4 buildings and 4 houses

## Community Tools Projects

### Worth a Second Look Furniture and Housewares

- Kitchener's largest Furniture & Housewares Recycling Centre
- Pick up services by appointment
- Job Café base of operations
- Job Café construction crews
- Volunteer opportunities in cashier, sorting, pricing & stocking



### Maurita's Kitchen

- Whole food and baking training experience
- Celebration of Foods project for New Canadians
- Youth Skills Link Training Project



### Queen Street Commons Café

- Affordable, vegetarian, whole food menu with fair trade coffee
- Café designed to encourage large and small groups
- Café / retail training experience
- Alternative Work Catalogue books for sale
- Retail small crafts from Arts Space and local crafters
- Open Space gathering each Monday with Extend-a-Family
- Open Mike and live community music nights
- Volunteer opportunities at Queen Street Commons Café

### The Commons Market

- Fresh, local food market with local growers & producers
- Whole Foodbox CSA provides fresh produce delivered weekly
- Support local farmers & producers by ordering directly on-line
- Join the Wednesday Winter Market for local root vegetables
- Volunteer opportunities at The Commons Market



### Recycle Cycles

- Refurbished bikes for sale made ready by volunteers
- Public bike stands to fix your own bike
- Wide range of bike parts for sale
- Volunteer opportunities at Recycle Cycles

### Second Floor Arts Space

- Soap making, paper and card making, and rag rug weaving
- Sewing Space and lessons
- Volunteer opportunities in the Arts Space
- Volunteer opportunities to teach sewing



### Community Gardens Projects

- Community Bake Oven at Queen's Greens community garden
- Grow Herbal Community Garden
- Grow Herbal products made in Arts Space
- Volunteer opportunities growing and crafting Grow Herbal products

### Multicultural Cinema Club

- Filmmaking workshops
- Professional videography services
- Filmmaking equipment rentals
- Three Film Festivals per year
- Animation Camps for 12 - 16 year olds
- *Downside Up* film explores the causes and consequences of youth homelessness
- Volunteer opportunities at the Multicultural Cinema Club



## Access to Housing

- Housing Help Desk
- 35 Units of Transitional Integrative Supportive Housing
- Housing Support Workers
- Women's Integrated Supportive Transitional House
- The Working Centre's Community House

## Access to Technology

- Public Access Computers
- Self Directed Computer Training
- Introduction to Computers classes
- Volunteer opportunities supporting Public Access Computers and Self Directed Computer Training



### Computer Recycling Project

- Refurbished computers for sale
- Accepts donations of used computers
- Computer hardware, software and technical assistance
- Linux Users Group hub
- Assistance with Open Source software
- Volunteer opportunities at Computer Recycling



## Tar Sands

### Dirty Oil and the Future of a Continent

Andrew Nikiforuk

208 pages, \$20.00

By Joe Mancini

Political parties and the media are no match for the money and power that are behind the development of the oil sands. Canadians have been lulled into believing "that there are no real problems up there in the Tar Sands." Articles and speeches highlight environmental concerns, but these take a backseat to the rhetoric that the oil sands will soon make Canada a major oil exporter during a time of declining oil supplies.

Andrew Nikiforuk takes dead aim at this political sleep walking. In *Tar Sands: Dirty Oil and the Future of a Continent* he demonstrates how the political parties have been neutralized while this uncontrolled multi-billion dollar development expands.

This small book is packed with detailed analysis. If the oil sands are at the hub of this development, then the spokes are the unresolved environmental damage. Nikiforuk helps the reader by expertly dissecting each spoke to clarify the complete picture of oil sands development.

The Tar Sands became possible through a certain type of addiction to development. "Avarice fills the Calgary air and most people run like hamsters on a treadmill." This is how Nikiforuk describes his hometown. People in the midst of an energy boom behave like addicts, they are in denial, and they are often sleepless and morally careless. In short, such behaviour undermines good judgment.

Every barrel of bitumen con-

sumes a net average of three barrels of potable water. These numbers are based on better quality bitumen and will only worsen with dirtier bitumen deposits. This reality must be considered in light of the evidence Nikiforuk produces that shows that current water usage on the Athabasca River is "recklessly unsustainable". Alberta regulators have used a blind eye to analyze water resources in relation to the Tar Sands projects.

The toxic goo left behind after producing heavy oil from bitumen is corralled into massive tailings ponds. Formerly fresh water from the Athabasca River makes up these ponds that are so toxic that engineers are not allowed to canoe on them for inspection. What was once called sludge is now understood to hold startling cancer causing sediments including arsenic, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH) and naphthenic acids. Presently there are 23 square miles of this man made bog waiting at best to settle back into the ground over the next 200 years. In reality they are an overwhelming threat to the aboriginal communities that once made this area home. They are an obvious security threat to the whole Lake Athabasca region and they can only get bigger with each new government approved development.

Upgrader Alley has become the largest petrochemical complex in Canada producing levels of pollutants 3-4 times higher than Texas oil



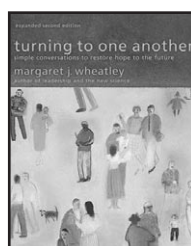
country. 300 tons of sulphur is deposited into the air everyday. Property rights of farmers are ignored. Meanwhile the Ontario Teachers Pension Fund is trying to get in on the money making action. Nikiforuk exposes the plan to pipe millions of barrels of raw bitumen out of the province. This is an example of ravenous development destroying the landscape whether it is upgraded in Alberta or shipped away.

Every barrel of bitumen produced from the Tar Sands creates three times more carbon dioxide emissions than a barrel of normal crude. Syncrudes operations discharge 14 megatons of carbon annually. Everyone acknowledges the problem and the new solution of Carbon Capture and Storage is almost nonsensical when the logic is understood. The

act of capturing and storing the carbon could easily expend up to a third of the actual energy produced in a barrel of Tar Sand heavy oil crude. This kind of arithmetic is common in the oil patch. Processing bitumen into heavy oil consumes almost as much energy as the oil end product. Carbon

Capture and Storage will wipe out any energy gain.

Nikiforuk asks the reader to question the core reasoning behind Tar Sands development. Altogether he catalogues out of control development, reckless water usage, the toxic tailings ponds, and the pollution spewing upgraders. The small amount of net energy produced puts this whole enterprise into question. Nikiforuk takes the reader to the heart of the question. His final chapter entitled "The First Law of Petropolitics" demonstrates the role of big money searching for profits, greasing many wheels and the reality that politics without an engaged civil society is helpless to stop it. He ends with a plea – consume less oil for the sake of democracy. Read the book to understand the details.



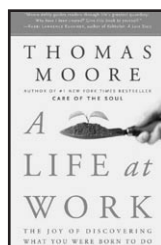
### Turning to One Another

#### Simple Conversations to Restore Hope to the Future

Margaret J. Wheatley

Wheatley proposes that people band together to create the solutions for real social change that are so badly needed through the ageless process of thinking together in conversation. "Turning to One Another" encourages this process. It explores the power of conversation and the conditions that support it. Helpful quotes and images encourage the reader to pause and reflect, and to prepare for convening truly meaningful conversations. She then offers twelve "conversation starters" - questions that in Wheatley's experience have led people to share their deepest beliefs, fears, and hopes.

256 pages \$25.95 softcover



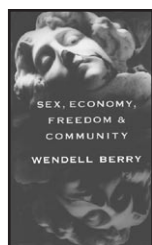
### A Life at Work

#### The Joy of Discovering What You Were Born to Do

Thomas Moore

A job is never just a job. It is always connected to a deep and invisible process of finding meaning in life through work. In "A Life at Work", Moore turns to an aspect of our lives that looms large in our self-regard, an aspect by which we may even define ourselves—our work. The workplace, Moore says, is a laboratory where matters of soul are worked out. This book is about finding the right job, but also about uncovering and becoming the person you were meant to be. Moore explores the often difficult process that we go through on our way to discovering our purpose, and reveals the joy that is our reward.

208 pages \$16.5 softcover

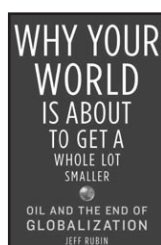


### Sex, Economy, Freedom, and Community

Wendell Berry

In this collection of essays, Wendell Berry continues his work as one of America's most relevant social commentators. In this book, Berry addresses some of the most significant challenges facing our society today, outlining how the modern process of community disintegration is at the heart of the social and economic problems we face. Berry argues that as people turn away from their communities, they conform to a "rootless and placeless monoculture of commercial expectations and products," buying into the very economic system that is destroying the Earth, our communities, and all they represent.

208 pages \$17.99 softcover



### Why Your World is About to Get a Whole Lot Smaller

#### Oil and the End of Globalization

Jeff Rubin

Rubin argues that the era of abundant cheap oil that has been driving all areas of the western economy is about to end. With world demand poised to outstrip supply, the rules that allowed for a constantly expanding consumer economy are changing. The ultimate result will likely be a much smaller world which deemphasizes global trade and focuses on small-scale local production and a far less energy-intensive way of life.

286 pages \$29.95 hardcover



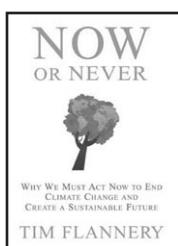
### In Defense of Food

#### An Eater's Manifesto

Michael Pollan

In Defense of Food describes how, despite the vast dietary options Americans confront in the modern supermarket, we can escape the Western diet and, by doing so, most of the chronic diseases that diet causes. We can relearn which foods are healthy, develop simple ways to moderate our appetites, and return eating to its proper context -- out of the car and back to the table.

256 pages \$18.50 softcover



### Now or Never

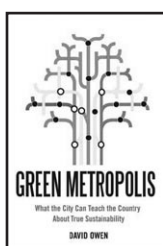
#### Why We Must Act Now to End Climate Change and Create a Sustainable Future

Tim Flannery

In Now or Never, Flannery explores the subject of climate change with a book that is at once a forceful call to action and a deeply pragmatic roadmap toward sustainability. Utilizing the most up-to-the-minute data available, he offers a guided tour of the environmental challenges we face and their potential solutions in both the big picture and in specific detail.

The book describes a wide range of potential strategies that would dramatically reduce greenhouse gas emissions from carbon storing to developing electric cars.

176 pages \$22.99 softcover



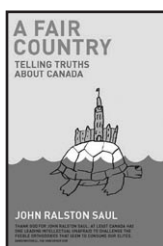
### Green Metropolis

#### What the City Can Teach the Country About True Sustainability

David Owen

In this remarkable challenge to conventional thinking about the environment, Owen argues that the greenest community in the US is New York City. Residents of compact urban centers, Owen shows, individually consume less oil, electricity, and water than other Americans. He contends that the environmental problem we face is not how to make teeming cities more like the pristine countryside. The problem is how to make other settled places more like Manhattan.

368 pages \$32.50 softcover



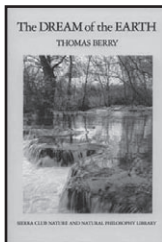
### A Fair Country

#### Telling Truths About Canada

John Ralston Saul

In this book, Saul unveils three myths surrounding Canada. He argues that the famous "peace, order, and good government" that supposedly defines Canada is a distortion of the country's true nature. He also argues that Canada is a Métis nation, heavily influenced and shaped by aboriginal ideas: egalitarianism, a proper balance between individual and group, and a penchant for negotiation over violence are all aboriginal values that Canada absorbed. Another obstacle to progress, Saul argues, is that Canada has an increasingly ineffective elite that doesn't believe in the country.

340 pages \$20.00 softcover

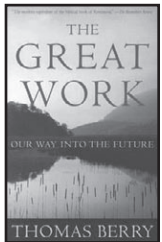


**The Dream of the Earth**

Thomas Berry

For too long we have been away somewhere, entranced with our industrial world of wires and wheels, concrete and steel, and our unending highways, where we can race back and forth in a continual frenzy. In this groundbreaking book, Berry uses historical context to address the subjects of culture, consciousness and ecology in a series of essays that describe the earth as dynamically fluid and interconnected.

247 pages \$15.20 softcover



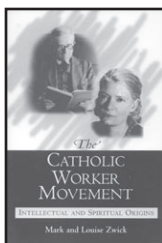
**The Great Work**

Our Way into the Future

Thomas Berry

Here, Berry presents the culmination of his ideas and urges us to move from being a disrupting force on the Earth to a benign presence. This transition is the Great Work -- the most necessary and most ennobling work we will ever undertake. Berry's message is not one of doom but of hope. He reminds society of its function, particularly the universities and other educational institutions whose role is to guide students into an appreciation rather than an exploitation of the world around them. Berry's profound ecological insights illuminate the path we need to take if both we and the planet are to survive.

241 pages \$18.95 softcover



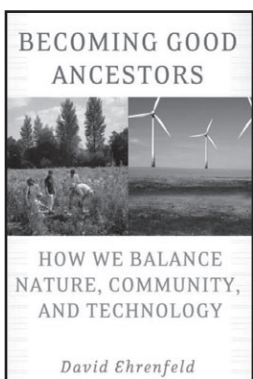
**The Catholic Worker Movement**

Intellectual and Spiritual Origins

Mark and Louise Zwick

This book is essential reading for understanding the legacy behind the Catholic Worker Movement. The authors' research into the Catholic Worker Movement reveals who influenced Peter Maurin and Dorothy Day and how the influence materialized into much more than good ideas. This fascinating and detailed work will be meaningful to readers interested in American history, social justice, religion and public life. It will also appeal to Catholics wishing to live the Gospel with lives of action, contemplation, and prayer.

368 pages \$36.95 softcover



**Becoming Good Ancestors**

How We Balance Nature, Community & Technology

David Ehrenfeld

320 pages, \$21.95

**By Joe Mancini**

David Ehrenfeld a Professor of Biology at Rutgers University has a knack for writing accessible books that help the reader understand the intertwining processes that link nature with human ecology. He continually asks the question, "How are humans treating the ecology from where their subsistence comes?" In his book, **The Arrogance of Humanism** the obvious answer was that humans no longer recognized their dependence on nature, nor do they have much gratitude for its gifts.

In **Becoming Good Ancestors**, Ehrenfeld includes authors whose articles and analysis have, over the years, appeared in **Good Work News**. It is not very often that a book draws deeply from authors that are estranged from the party of unending economic growth. Why is a biologist quoting Wendell Berry, John Raulston Saul, Thomas Berry, E.F. Schumacher, Leopold Kohr, J.H. Kunstler, and Neil Postman? In **Becoming Good Ancestors**, Ehrenfeld is trying to teach his readers what these authors take for granted, that we must take culture seriously, that we should honour the ground we walk on through knowing its ecology, that science and human action have limits, that bureaucratic wheel spinning is different from right action, and finally that right action is the duty of the individual.

If the underlying premise sounds rigorous and imposing, that is not

the tone of this book. Ehrenfeld uses story telling to ease the reader towards understanding his intention to search for new ways of building community. In **A Call for Fusion and Regeneration** he states the case this way,

"As the earth warms and the oceans rise and as supplies of oil and gas wane while the elaborate economic and social edifice built begins to crumble, we find ourselves mired in a world view that offers us stark choices. Clear and ominous portents warn us to change course and to use the wisdom accumulated. Our human and earth systems have reached the point where projection of present trends no longer suffices to predict the future. The hundred year span of the Age of Cheap Energy is drawing to an abrupt end and with it the possibility for us to continue our utter dependence on the technological-economic system that we have now. Our environment, food, shelter, clothing and livelihoods and any semblance of international stability are all at risk and we are unprepared...."

That new way is really an old way and it is captured in the title of his book – how can we Become Good Ancestors? Ehrenfeld leads the reader to consider the idea of competence. Wendell Berry considers the competence of a farmer that knows 'the nature of species and the breeds of animals'. The same competence can be grasped by a backyard gardener that distinctly knows what types

of seeds and plants do best in a particular part of a garden. This type of competence is about engaging in the natural ecology that surrounds us.

Another kind of competence is the innate knowledge of ancestors that aboriginal culture still holds dear. It is a knowledge of one's ancestors that determines right action through talking, asking, and debating with one's ancestors. At the Impact Festival held in downtown Kitchener in September, a production of the play by the Native Earth Performing Arts, Salt Baby highlighted this competence. The ancestor emerged from the audience and played a role helping the actor understand the forces for and against community. The acknowledgment of the role ancestors can play in determining right action is a conserving and conservative approach to all aspects of living. It means that social evolution is more intentional, that it moves more slowly. It is good community economics because when practiced as a discipline it can result in nature being preserved rather than exploited.

Another competence is thrift, a skill that tends to be widely discouraged. Ehrenfeld wisely reminds the reader that 'Thrift is a conservative value with no long-term downside except miserliness.' Relearning thrift is essential to all sustainable economies. The thrift of nature is a won-

der to behold. Just consider how the leaves from trees when composted provide essential natural ingredients for all kinds of plant growth. In Kitchener this fall, a minor scuffle broke out over the responsibility of the City to collect these leaves with giant trucks rumbling down every city street. In a society that understands thrift, it would be obvious that these leaves are a natural resource that can be thriftily converted, on-site, into fertilizer.

In Ehrenfeld's view, the grow and spend economy very likely has a short shelf life. How effective are its boom and bust cycles? After 10 years of significant economic growth, we seem to be right back to where we were in the 1990's – high consumer and national debt while middle class and working class jobs are either disappearing or under stress.

Ehrenfeld describes how 'rapid change breaks down communal relationships and the enduring human cooperation necessary for survival is threatened'. In contrast, he suggests that we must set our own limits, learn more inconvenient ways of doing things, and recognize the real work of community building. **Becoming Good Ancestors** could well become an essential text for developing a way of living that is less materialistic, more community oriented and respectful of the gifts of nature.

The Alternative Work Book Store at Queen Street Commons Café offers a wide selection of books on such



topics as the environment, education, poverty, social alternatives, the philosophy of work, job searching, simple living, and more!



You can place orders by fax (519-743-3840), phone (1-519-743-1151 x111), or mail (see order form below).

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## To the Readers of Good Work News

Dear Friends,

The Working Centre community is made up of practical projects that integrate on multiple levels to provide supports, direct service and opportunities to serve the community. Walk through the diverse settings of the job search resource centre, bike shop, craft space, commercial kitchen, cafe, thrift store and St. John's Kitchen at anytime of the day and you will find each a hub of purpose filled activity.

The community of St. John's Kitchen works to provide a hot lunch meal for up to 350 people a day. Projects like Psychiatric Outreach and Downtown Outreach assist people through many problems they face when at risk of homelessness. Our Hospitality Hotel and transitional supportive housing provide a means of immediate housing for those at risk. This year 5000 individuals have received assistance at the Job Search Resource Centre during this economic downturn.

We rely on your donations and contributions to make this work of serving meals, helping job searchers, providing direct supports, offering opportunities for integrating people from all walks of life and cultures, and sustaining this diverse community of social supports.

For your contribution to our work, you will receive our quarterly newspaper Good Work News reporting on community building in downtown Kitchener with articles about community tool projects, simple living, growing diversity, ecology and stories about mutual aid.

Sincerely,  
Joe Mancini, Director

## Yes I want to support this work in K-W!

Enclosed is my donation for:

- \$35       \$50       \$75  
 \$100     Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please direct my donation to:

- St. John's Kitchen  
 The Working Centre  
 Where it is needed most

Please make cheque payable to:  
 The Working Centre, 58 Queen St. S.,  
 Kitchener, Ontario, N2G 1V6

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

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

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

Visa     Mastercard

Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Card #: \_\_\_\_\_

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To donate by phone, please call 519-743-1151 ext. 111.



## An Alternative Christmas Gift Idea

Each year we are grateful for donations made in the name of family, friends or associates. If you use this order form, we will gladly send a Christmas card acknowledging your gift. Please fill out the form carefully. The cards that we send have been designed by Andy Macpherson.

Please direct my gift to:  St. John's Kitchen     The Working Centre

Please send a  
 Christmas card to:

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

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

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

Your name and address:

(So we can send you an Income Tax receipt). If more space is needed, please use a separate sheet.

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

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

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

## Help Support Others in Your Community this Holiday Season!

This year, The Working Centre is providing an opportunity for you to participate in our work by contributing to the activities and projects available at The Working Centre and St. John's Kitchen.

### Public Access Computers

Every week over 100 different people use our 25 public access computers to access internet, e-mail, word processing and printing. A \$50 donation will go towards costs such as paper, toner, computer licenses, and repairs.



### Lunch for 300 at St. John's Kitchen

300 people per day join us for a hot lunch-time meal at St. John's Kitchen. St. John's Kitchen is a place where people gather, work together to prepare and serve a meal, access a wide range of community services, and support one another. A \$65 donation will go towards costs to cover food not donated by the community.

### Lunch, Shower, Clean Shirt

Each day, 5 to 10 people do their laundry, take a shower, and access clean clothing if needed. This of-

fers much needed resources for those without stable housing, or those who live in rooms without access to showers and/or laundry. A donation of \$50 will go towards costs such as laundry detergent, soap, and toiletries for a month.

### Lunch at the Queen Street Commons Café for Someone In Need of a Meal

The Queen Street Commons Café provides an affordable café in the downtown, and is significantly supported by volunteers. The café is an integrated part of the downtown community and serves as a base for many of our Outreach activities. Often we share a cup of coffee or a meal with people in difficult circumstances. A donation



of \$10 will go towards the cost of a meal and a coffee to two people.

### A Free Bicycle for a Child

Recycle Cycles receives donations of used bicycles and refurbishes them with the help of volunteers.

This year we have been giving free bikes to children. We recycle bikes that would otherwise end up in the land-fill, volunteers learn skills and contribute to community good, and kids get a free bike to help them to get around. A donation of \$25 will go towards such costs as providing a free bike for a child.

### Bus Tickets

The Working Centre provides a number of ways to help people get around. We participate in the Transit Reduced Income Project (providing discounted bus passes for people living on a limited income), and often providing a needed bus ticket for an important appointment. A donation of \$25 will go towards covering costs such as 10 bus trips.

### Refurbished Computer

Computer Recycling receives donations of used computers and refurbishes them for people living on a limited income. These computers are often useful for families with children, or for someone who is building their computer skills for employment purposes. Your donation of \$80 will go towards costs such as providing a fully licensed refurbished computer for someone living on a very limited income.

### Transitional Housing for a Month

Our Transitional Housing helps many people facing addiction issues. Often the first of the month arrives and someone does not have enough money left for their rent because of their addictions. We often choose to let someone stay for the month, even though the rent money is gone. We work carefully to decide if this can help us to stay focused on the long-term goals. A donation of \$350 will go towards costs such as one month's rent in our Transitional Housing.



### Voice Mail Box for a Year

We provide a free voicemail service for over 200 people. These voicemail boxes are ideal for someone who cannot afford their own phone, are in a time of transition in their living situation, or if they are living in a place where they cannot receive reliable messages. A donation of \$120 will go towards costs such as the two monthly business phone lines needed for this service.