

GOOD WORK NEWS

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

Issue 101

June 2010

Subscription: A Donation Towards our Work

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Journeys Through Unemployment

By Stephanie Mancini

The Working Centre began as a drop-in centre focusing on the issues of unemployment in the early 1980's. The pages of Good Work News, or a glance at our website, reflect many of the projects and activities that have grown from the responsive-listening model of community development that is a characteristic of The Working Centre. We start with each person, their particular situation, and an open engaged approach that looks for creative responses.

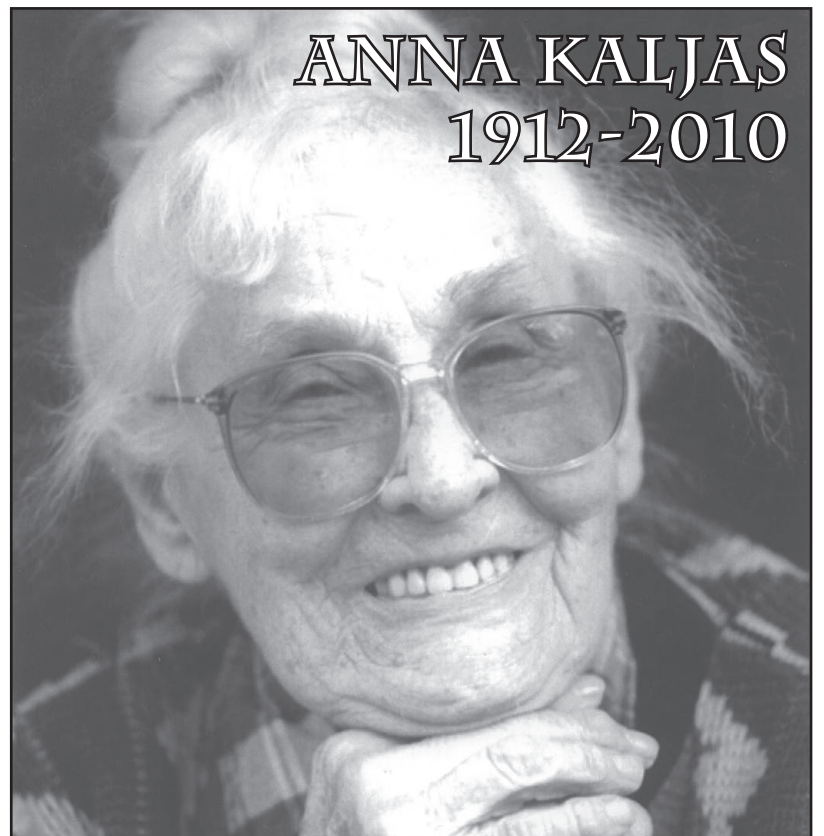
"How can we help you?" is still one of the first messages we share with each person we meet in our Job Search Resource Centre. The range of people we meet is quite diverse – someone recently unemployed and looking for a quick connection to their next job; a New Canadian struggling to enter their profession in Canada and needing assistance to navigate complex professional regulations; someone who is part of the casual labour force and is looking for their next job, an experience all too familiar to them in their attempts to support themselves; a worker who has spent 20 years in one occupation only to find their job is no longer there; a New Canadian with limited English skills looking for a survival job to support their family as they settle in Canada; a young person interested in work that supports their values; a young person who has faced far too many hardships and is trying to make their

way forwards. Each person's journey unfolds as we become allies in finding the next step.

Rather than presenting a list of services or activities that a person can get involved in, we first try to listen to the story or experience of each person we meet. This listening is quite important. We recently met someone and their situation was complex enough that we didn't see an easy way forward, but committed to exploring things together. He went away for a while, and then returned. During that time he had been to a number of other places seeking assistance. When asked why he came back, he said, "Because you listened to me." The answers are not usually simple, but things become more possible when we commit together to exploring the options.

Perhaps one concept that is true for everyone is that work is a significant part of our world. It defines what we do, how we support ourselves and our families and it often forms a significant part of our identity. The journey of looking for work is significant and unique for each person. We see our work together as the sharing of this journey – and we see our work together as a trust – whether the work is the sharing of information and job leads, crafting a resume that reflects the person, or tackling the other life issues that get in the way.

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ANNA KALJAS
1912-2010

Anna taught us that our lives are not entirely our own

She offered unconditional love of acceptance
She always sent you off with, 'I love you, God bless'
She had a great smile
Her laugh was contagious
She gave big hugs
Injustices always made her mad
She always kept abreast of what was going on in the world
She believed that Passion could elevate the soul to do great things
She accepted everyone unconditionally
She was loyal, charismatic, and compassionate

Anna loved her family

Eric was by her side for 40 years
Her family carries on her work
She is so proud of her big extended family
Maggie and Peter follow in her footsteps

Anna had the courage to keep trying

She never forgot her time in the refugee camp
What it was like to be unwanted
She was a leader in her refugee camp
The refugee camp and the experience of war made her do what she had to do
She was a spirit to be reckoned with
She was one of a kind, beautiful

and all embracing
She had an indomitable spirit, she could take on impossible tasks

Anna let you know it when you were out of line

She could be hard nosed
Once she grabbed her broom and kicked out a group of druggies who were menacing the neighbourhood
She loved to chastise politicians
She was a voice in the wilderness
She relentlessly watched for the poor and dispossessed

All were equal in Anna's eyes

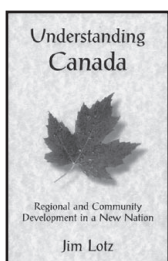
All had dignity and respect
She was always there for anyone who needed a bed
She was spiritual but not part of a church
She was graced by a true angel
She was sweet, kind and generous
She had a wonderful vision of love and mission to others

This poem reflects the expressions of love spoken at Anna's funeral by her friends Janice, Juanita, Jane and Rev. Jack for her life-long work of housing those whose options had run out.

Anna had a spirit many times bigger than those who didn't believe she could do what she said had to be done. We are proud that Anna was the 9th Mayors' Dinner Guest of Honour.

- Joe Mancini

Two great books exploring community development are now available online!



Understanding Canada: Regional and Community Development in a New Nation by Jim Lotz and *The Working Centre: Experiment in Social Change* by Ken Westhues can be downloaded from the address below.

These books are also available for sale at Queen Street Commons Café
43 Queen St. S., Kitchener



<http://www.theworkingcentre.org/wscd/pubs/pubs.html>

Twenty-Sixth Year

Issue 101

June 2010

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. Four issues of Good Work News constitutes our annual report. There is a circulation of 12,000 copies. Subscription: a donation towards our work.

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Computer Recycling, Refurbishing, and Training All in One

By Michael Bernhard

For over 15 years, Computer Recycling has been giving used computers, monitors and other equipment a second life. In this period, we have diverted several tons of electronic waste from landfills and put it to good use for individuals, families and organizations who cannot afford a new computer system.

The Ontario Electronic Stewardship estimates that in our province, 1.4 million new desktop computers, 1.5 million laptops and 2.5 million monitors enter the market every year while we discard 38,400 tons of monitors, 8,300 tons of desktop computers and 2,100 tons of laptops.

At the same time, many individuals have seen their budgets become tighter and may find it hard to buy a new computer for their job search and everyday use. In our busy computer shop in the basement of 66 Queen Street South, dozens of volunteers contribute their time and develop skills to make technology accessible to the community.

As a Microsoft Registered Refurbisher, we sell affordably-priced used PCs with legitimate copies of Microsoft Windows and MS Office to individuals and families living on a reduced income. For those interested in alternatives to Microsoft Windows we offer computers that come installed with Ubuntu Linux, Open Office, and internet programs at low cost. For those who find the idea of using Linux intimidating, we offer hands-on learning opportunities through our Computer Training programs.

Computer Recycling enables the



66 Queen St. S.
(entrance on Charles St.)

Tuesday-Friday: 10am-6pm
Saturday: 10am to 4pm

519-743-1151 x.225

Refurbished computer sales
Used parts and accessories
Computer repairs / upgrades
Volunteering / skill building
Donations accepted!

practical use of technology within The Working Centre by providing low-cost hardware to the ever-evolving projects. Over 300 job seekers use refurbished public access computers per week, more than 200 students complete Computer Training in our training lab and all of us throughout the organization use refurbished computers in our daily work.

Our facility allows us to refurbish over 1000 computers per year. Donors, such as Harry Vanderzand from inTown Internet & Computer Services help us connect individuals with technology and to reduce the amount of electronic waste that ends up in our landfills.

For more information about purchasing computers, donating used equipment or volunteering opportunities, please contact us at cr@theworkingcentre.org or 519-743-1151 ext. 225.

Please join us for the
21st Annual Golf Tournament

The Working Centre St. John's Kitchen

In support of The Working Centre and St. John's Kitchen

.....
Wednesday, August 18th, 2010
at Rockway Golf Course

\$115 per Golfer plus a \$15 Golf Bonus Package

To reserve your spot,

call Kara at (519) 743-1151 x119

Sponsored by:



Fresh, Local, Ecologically Grown Produce!



Receive 10 boxes over 20 weeks for \$250 or 20 boxes over 20 weeks for \$500

Boxes include lettuces, melons, tomatoes, eggplant, zucchini, broccoli, carrots, beans, peas, berries, leeks, and much more!

Support local Mennonite farmers whose families have worked their land organically for over 200 years

Strengthen our local economy
Enjoy food grown ecologically with a low carbon footprint

CSA boxes are picked up at Queen Street Commons Café (43 Queen St. S., Kitchener) on Wednesdays from 4pm - 7pm.

Want to share your produce?

Donate your extra food to St. John's Kitchen or Maurita's Kitchen, or share with family and friends!

To join the CSA or for more information, contact Rebecca: 519-743-1151 x130 market@theworkingcentre.org



Each year, Recycle Cycles repairs and recycles over 3000 bikes, including about 2400 bikes brought in for repairs, and 600 bikes sold. Volunteers contribute over 5000 hours of labour to Recycle Cycles each year.



43 Queen Street South (Second Floor)
Downtown Kitchener

For more information or to book a bicycle repair time, call 519-749-9177 ext. 222 or e-mail recyclecycles@theworkingcentre.org

Shop Hours:

Tuesday - Friday:

10am - 5pm

Saturday:

10am - 2pm

Journeys Through Unemployment

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Respect is an important part of this journeying together – building personal resiliency during times of change is a very personal experience. Our goal is to always respond respectfully through this time of change.

All of this of course means that there is not one easy answer. All the technique of job search, of writing a resume, of networking, of making connections with employers, of settling life stability issues, is only useful if the techniques are relevant to the person before us. We need practical and useful answers, and the answer can be as different as the people we meet. This requires some careful thinking together, and some active trying of different ideas, before each person finds the solutions that work best in their situation.

In our work, we also try to think broadly – about community resources, about the variety of projects and resources around The Working Centre. Sometimes talking about a problem is not the answer, but solutions are aided by getting involved in doing something creative at Recycle Cycles, or building computer skills through our Computer Basics course, or joining with others serving a meal at the Queen Street Commons Café. If we focus together on what makes a person strong in community, the answers can more easily unfold before us.



Social services often provide services. Our goal is instead to be of service. We walk with the person as they respond to their current situation, finding solutions where possible, but also just becoming part of the journey. It can be a brief, or a long-term engagement, but if we re-

main committed to each person as an individual, we respond to their needs, and not to our needs to feel useful or to achieve certain outcomes.

One reality we have seen is that the systems around us are getting more and more complex – income support systems, admissions and funding for education, housing issues, and immigration systems. Navigating each system, and how one system affects the other can require some complex navigation skills. While we don't profess to know all the rules, we join in the researching, unraveling and carefully navigating in order to sift and sort the various rules and procedures. Too often, our traditional networks of support don't overlap and people are lost between rules that don't align. When we follow the person, we find ourselves filling these gaps.

Uniting all of these principles, we strive to be hospitable and to develop real relationships. How can we make each person welcome, how can we position ourselves to be the most helpful, what are the pieces that each person offers to the exchange and common work we set out to do together?

The answers can be as practical as a private voicemail box for someone who doesn't have a telephone, or as complex as a two to five year journey helping a New Canadian professional to enter work in their profession. The list of projects and services listed as a complement to this article show the range and diversity of projects that have emerged from this work, but what remains with us is the stories of the people we meet, the liveliness of the resource centre, and the active engagement of the work we do together.

		Job Search Resource Centre Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Information and Community Connections ● Telephones, computers, photocopier, fax machine ● Supported public access computers ● Job leads, newspapers, local resources ● Reduced fare bus pass program ● Computer training ● On-line job posting service ● Assistance with resumes, cover letters, interviews, job search ● Workshops on Job Search, Interviews, Networking, Workplace Safety, etc. ● One-one-one assistance and problem-solving ● Sector panels – Engineering, Green Careers, Accounting, etc. ● Assistance with licensing & credentialing for New Canadians ● Links to education & training ● Access to Second Career ● WRAP Small Business Program ● Access to Ontario Self Employment Benefits ● Links to employers; supported on-the-job training experiences 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Exploring work / career options ● Specialized services for workers laid off in plant closings or large lay-offs ● Access to Immigrant Loan Program ● Assistance for those recently unemployed ● Assistance when unemployment has been longer term ● Specialized supports for older workers ● Assistance finding low-skilled, semi-skilled and high skilled work ● Housing Desk to problem-solve housing-related issues ● Access to Immigration drop-in service, housing legal services resource, WSIB issues, assistance with income tax preparation ● Links to Bridge Training Programs, Internship Program for New Canadians ● A diverse & lively resource centre 	



Above: The New Vibes Jazz Quartet played to a packed house at Queen Street Commons Café on April 23. This event included the serving of our specialty dinner plate, the Community Thali.

Below: The Urban Monks concert at Queen Street Commons Café featured Working Centre-affiliated musicians Nathan Stretch and Pete Oldridge.



Above: Freddy Torrealba, a world-renowned Charango Player from Chile, made a stop at Queen Street Commons Café on May 14. This event was organized by Neruda Productions.



Left: Mac Saulis gives a lecture on “Democracy as an Expression of Aboriginal Worldview.”

Below: Malkin Dare speaks on how democratic principles are needed to provide a quality education to children.



Above: Ken Westues discusses “The Ethic of Democracy: Challenging Hierarchy and Affirming Equality” at his Local Democracy lecture.



The Gift of Developing Potential in Others

Speech Given at the 23rd Annual Mayors' Dinner

By Hulene Montgomery

I want to begin by thanking The Working Centre - that wonderful community of people - who week after week - work with integrity, passion and perseverance helping people find jobs, housing, health care and a community in which they belong.

I want to thank them for organizing the Mayors' Dinner and providing us with an opportunity to say thank you to our community's sung and unsung heroes.

Since its inception 23 years ago, The Mayors' Dinner has honoured people's contributions in fields as diverse as Affordable Housing, The Environment, Sports and Recreation, Philanthropy, Multiculturalism, and Health Care.

Tonight we focus on the field of education & child development by shining a light on the contributions of Lynda Silvester, who in her volunteer and professional roles as educator, co-founder of the remarkable children's literacy program, Strong Start, and community volunteer has dedicated her life to building a community in which all of our children are supported and encouraged to reach their full potential.

Lynda Silvester understands the importance of investing in children and youth - on an individual basis, in families, in neighbourhoods and at the community level.

She understands from her lived experience as well as from her keen grasp of the research that if we want

"Lynda has been a tireless advocate for creating environments to support children in reaching their full potential. She understands that a learning environment starts long before, and reaches far beyond, the standard classroom, and that we all have a role to play in raising our children."

a healthy and prosperous community in the future, we need to make sure all children have the opportunity to develop intellectually, socially and emotionally.

Lynda has a gift of seeing people's potential and knowing how to work with them to reach it.

Lynda's children Karen and Kevin recall the years when Lynda taught special education: They said: "Mom had a knack of being able to identify the best way for each person to learn. And she would wear many hats - teacher, friend, counsellor, mediator and team player as she worked with them and their families to help them learn."

Gord Beckenhauer who worked with Lynda as a fellow educator told me:

"Lynda believed that all kids can succeed if they are provided with the right supports at the right time that capitalize on their individual learning styles."

For 35 years in a variety of roles from classroom teacher to principal

Lynda applied her attitude of focusing on the positive, her creativity, passion and her determination to help children, teachers, and whole schools develop their potential!

Mieke Schroeder and Inge Ford, retired educators now part of the Strong Start team, spoke of Lynda's role in strengthening the capacity of the school.

"Lynda has always had the skill and desire to promote community partnerships. She recognized the importance of school-community relationships and developed a school climate in which these partnerships were created and fostered."

When Lynda retired she took the knowledge, skills, and relationships she had developed as an edu-

cator and applied them to her new often full-time role as a community volunteer.

Christine Bird of the Alliance for Children and Youth and Barb Hill told me how Lynda developed a train the trainer program to promote a strength based approach for the community to support children and youth. They said she ended doing more training sessions than anyone! What an inspiration!

Lynda's community development approach moved from building partnerships to building broad-based coalitions and community-wide approaches to create a community for our children to gain the skills, quali-

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Building Community with Youth & Families

Speech Given at the 23rd Annual Mayors' Dinner

By Lynda Silvester

I always benefit so much from being in a room filled with people who care about the community and make an extra effort to contribute to it. There is such good positive energy in gatherings like this. This room is filled with people who make a significant contribution to strengthening our community. I feel tonight that I am just representing all of you. I am also very keenly aware that what I have been privileged to accomplish I did not do alone and the impact on the community of the efforts of any groups I've worked with have been positive because of many factors in the community - factors which you

have been instrumental in creating.

Why do we do what we do? We do it because we believe in community and because we're nourished by the stories we hear that illustrate the impacts of our work. I've been nourished by having students (or their parents) whom I worked with in the classroom 25 years ago, periodically contact me to say Hi or ask a question. I'm been nourished by staff members from the past who still reflect on the good work we did together to help a particular student or family or to improve the culture of a school. In the last 9 years working on the Strong Start project, the stories have been overwhelming in frequency and meaningfulness. I hear about parents of children in the program who decide to become volunteers in order to give back, because their own child benefitted so much from the program. Teachers tell me how excited they are that particular children in the program not only gained some reading skills, but gained confidence as a learner in all areas. I've heard numerous stories of positive impacts on the lives of volunteers.

One of many Strong Start stories came out of King Edward School. I'll call the mother Julie and the child Sam. Sam was not doing well in Kindergarten. His behaviour often resulted in being suspended from riding the school bus. This meant he missed a lot of school. He also was behind his peers in learning to read. As he entered grade one, our program was introduced at the school. Sam did very well in our Letters, Sounds and Words program and his behaviour improved -- partly because he felt more successful academically and partly because he wanted to be at school every day and not miss sessions with his volunteers. Julie, his mother and Sam's teachers were delighted.

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Almost 700 people attend the 23rd Annual Mayors' Dinner



Volunteers Needed!

Hospitality



House

In the early fall, we hope to have approval to build a 20'x20' structure between our two houses on Victoria St. This will be the welcoming and dining area for the Hospitality House which provides housing to 6-8 individuals experiencing debilitating health issues and housing difficulties.

Would you be interested in helping with this project?

We are looking for one or two volunteer construction supervisors who can help us manage the project. This person should be skilled in construction from concrete work and framing to drywall, trim and

finish carpentry. We are also looking for someone with a valid driver's licence who can gather supplies and materials for the project (having your own vehicle is helpful but not necessary).

Working Centre Construction Crews are made up of workers who may be volunteering, retraining, or getting back into the workforce.

If you can help, please call Don at 519-502-0454.



Developing Potential

continued from page 4

ties and values to help them grow into healthy, productive members of our society.

Andrea Reist is Director of Child and Family Health at the Region. Andrea, like Lynda and like so many of you here tonight is a champion for children and youth in our community. She says of Lynda:

"Lynda has been a tireless advocate for creating environments to support children in reaching their full potential. She understands that a learning environment starts long before, and reaches far beyond, the standard classroom, and that we all have a role to play in raising our children."

I remember Lynda's and her consistent message that we need to think beyond what currently exists to build a more comprehensive system for young children and their families.

She was talking integration, long before integration was a term that others were ready to entertain.

She challenged the status quo and encouraged people to look for ways to work together to address gaps and duplications in our local children's services system.

Of course, she has done much more than just encourage others to think outside the box and work across sectors. She has also been instrumental in making it happen on the ground.

Ken, Lynda's husband, best friend and constant supporter told me Lynda was thinking outside of the box long before this was a common concept.

He also told me that when Lynda responded to the challenge of developing a children's literacy program she never dreamed how far-reaching and long lasting its impact would be.

The program Lynda created, Strong Start, is a great children's literacy program which involves vol-

unteers working with 5 & 6 year old children to help them develop early literacy skills.

Since its beginnings in 2000 with a handful of volunteers working in two schools, Strong Start has grown to a dedicated group of over 1800 volunteers working with over 1900 children each year in 124 schools throughout Waterloo Region, Wellington County, Brant County and beyond. This innovative "made in Waterloo" program is now being expanded through-out the province!

In response to community and school requests, Strong Start adapted the children's literacy program for English as a Second Language students; it partnered with the Get Ready for School program to provide literacy skills for pre-school children.

And an exciting new program for newborns is about to be launched by a collaborative of agencies including Strong Start, KidsAbility, Project Read and 17 other agencies.

Our eight year old granddaughter, Imogen, is a happy, confident graduate of the Strong Start program. This is what she has to say of her experience.

"When I was six years old, I went to Strong Start. I went from the lowest reading level in my class to one of the highest.

I love reading! I just love it. If you know someone who can't read, I'd tell them to go to Strong Start."

Imogen is just one of over 10,000 children have been helped to learn to read and to gain self-confidence and joy.

So, how did one woman achieve so much?

Well she started with a vision-a vision of what could be

- Guided by values
- Taking care of the details
- Engaging people
- Building Partnerships
- And participating to build broad-based community solutions

Please join me in thanking Lynda Silvester for her lifetime commitment and contributions towards building a community in which all of our children can thrive and grow!

Open Spaces, Open Minds

By Don Morgenson

As I remember my early days, one of the pleasant features of suburban life was the absence of fences between properties, all along my street. On the average village block you could walk from one end of the street to the other, albeit carefully, through gardens, across lawns, around swimming pools and confront no larger obstacle than a beautiful silver maple tree, a thin line of shrubs or a carefully cultivated "victory garden."

Overnight, as if by magic, Canadian suburbia sprouted tall fences of wood, bricks, cinder blocks and wire ... some of it barbed, some of it razor.

Gated communities are currently de rigueur. When we were children we played our games in other peoples' back and front yards – often without permission and without incurring the wrath of householders. Such might rarely be done today. Maybe you remember John Cheever's short story **The Swimmer**



where a middle-aged man swims home from his business office, from backyard pool to backyard pool, on a nostalgia trip one hot afternoon. Each pool he swam in evoked past moments and past events. Wading through each pool he did confront the puzzled faces of his neighbours yet he never confronted a fence.

Novelist John Updike has said: "Openness and generosity expressed in the unfenced shape of our yards now threatens to turn defensive, protectionist, exclusionist, isolationist; the fences are going up in our minds and on our properties." Yes ... the universally useful backyard is disappearing and with it some of our Canadian generosity, kindness, and tolerance.

NIMBY now takes physical form, with most backyards today inaccessible. Clearly, some of this territoriality results from fear – of thieves, burglars and more, but the symbolic aspects of these changes may indicate not merely closing off properties but as Updike suggests, a closing of minds.

Great nations have become great partly because of accessibility: the central notion of preserving wide open spaces for all, but also they have sought the preservation of wide open minds. Very simply, such openness stimulates the imagina-

One of the pleasant features of suburban life used to be the absence of fences between properties.

tion, promotes new ideas, new approaches to old problems, and creates new communities, all of which ensure the growth and development of the country itself.

When visiting Sweden, I learned of Sweden's "Universal access legislation" which means that all land belongs, to a certain extent, to all the people. You may picnic on someone's lakefront property or quiet backyard as long as you clean up your picnic leavings before you depart.

Travelling around North America, Ben Macintyre of the Times of London found that a sense of who we are and want to be is dictated by who we are not. Our definition of self is determined through elimination – not gay, not African-Canadian, not Muslim, not liberal/conservative, not urbanite, not Asian, not feminist, not Catholic So the fences go up in our minds, fences between generations, the genders, the ambitious and the indolent, Conservative and Liberal. Eventually, we will have a severely limited social and cultural life, one that involves increasing isolation from and growing distrust of one another.

Yes, we have reason for concern – the violence on the streets, child abuse, crack houses, global warming, unemployment and the recession. In fact, we worry about the entire wretched zeitgeist of 2010.

A reclamation process must begin. We must reclaim our generosity, our openness, our accessibility as individuals. The solution to fenced-in minds is to bring the fences down, bringing us together, as this great nation's people.

To open our hearts is to tear down the fences that are thrown up everywhere. Whereas I do like his poetry, I am not sure I agree with Robert Frost that "Good fences make good neighbours." Rather, things dividing us must be dissolved, only then can we build a world where "Promises are kept." Here Frost was right.

Don Morgenson is professor emeritus of psychology at Wilfrid Laurier University. This article first appeared in the Globe and Mail in April 2010.



Building Community

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The teachers didn't stop at this success however. They also cared about the Mom. They asked her to become a Strong Start Volunteer Coach. The idea was at first totally radical and unbelievable for Julie. She had not had good experiences as a child at school. Her behaviour was a problem. After grade 7 she was transferred to a special education program at Grand River where she struggled through grade 9. By the beginning of grade 10 she was pregnant so that was the end of her



schooling. She wasn't comfortable being in a school and certainly didn't think she had anything to offer. But the teachers didn't give up. They got her to attend our training sessions and give it a try. Julie loved being a Volunteer Coach! She discovered she had some natural skills in relating to children, could handle the demands of the program and found the whole experience transforming. The change in her self perception and self confidence motivated her to set new goals for her life. She decided to go back to school to get her High School diploma and to pursue becoming an Educational Assistant.

I touched base with Julie a year later and she was still in school.

Did we change the course of history for this family? It's probably too soon to tell but we certainly made a major contribution to that end. Malcolm Gladwell in his book *The Outliers*, explores his thesis that no one really "pulls herself up by the bootstraps" and becomes a success all by herself. There are a series of events, the condition of timing and the entry of significant people into that person's life that make the difference. I know that the one year we made a powerful impact on the life of Julie and her family would not be enough in the long run if other significant occurrences and supports don't happen over time. I have a lot of faith however that the odds of this community somehow spawning these occurrences are very good and I believe that our moment in this family's life, helped prepare them to embrace other positive interventions. They have hope.

How do we do what we do?

I believe we are successful in strengthening community when we create the conditions that allow individuals and groups to flourish and we empower others to be the best they can be and to take charge. To do this we must value the impor-

Why do we do what we do? We do it because we believe in community and because we're nourished by the stories we hear that illustrate the impacts of our work.

tance and potential of each individual and we must understand how to create effective environments.

My career has caused me to reflect constantly on my leadership style. One of the most cherished compliments I received came from some staff members who were very unhappy with the situation in their large and complex school when I became their principal. They had told the superintendent they wanted someone who could come into a difficult situation and make dramatic changes. They must have wondered when they got me since at the time I was a rookie principal from a small school. I learned later that my more tenured colleagues were able to say 'no' when their transfer to this school was suggested.

As a team, with a lot of hard work, we did create the school they wanted. When a group of staff members were asked by the superintendent if Lynda made the changes they wanted, they answered, "She didn't come in and dictate a lot of changes; she empowered us to make the change." Building good infrastructure, creating supportive environments and empowering others



is how we strengthen community—whether it's a school community or a much larger community.

Our community is blessed with having many people with an entrepreneur spirit and many people willing to share their resources. We have a culture that allows for an individual to act on an idea and have others rally around it. The Strong Start story is a great example of what this community will do. It all started with Lyle Hallman making a phone call to the Education Centre of the Public Board to ask if there was a program, delivered by volunteers, to help young children at the first sign of their lagging behind in learning to read. He believed, quite correctly, that this was the time to intervene—to help the child keep pace with peers before the gap in

ability became wider and harder to address. He also knew that you can have a greater impact with far less financial investment when you choose to work on prevention and early intervention at young ages. Quite out of the blue, the opportunity to join Lyle dropped in my lap. I had not met Lyle before but his idea intrigued me. We believed that if we provided a good vehicle, this community would rally around its children—and we were right! Volunteers came forward, financial donors came forward and SS continues to be blessed with having the right people come into its life at the right time.

When Lyle was killed in a car accident, Steve Cameron, Stan Nahrgang and Jim Hallman came forward to serve as Trustees and establish Strong Start as a registered charity. Their incredible support has sustained Strong Start to this day. My thanks to you Steve, Jim and Stan for believing in the Strong Start mission and being so critical to its success.

Strong Start has been most fortunate to have the continued support of the Lyle S. Hallman Foundation as its major donor and to have so many other donors join our efforts. Hulene Montgomery has been a constant valued mentor and quickly became a good friend. This Foundation sets out to do more than just grant dollars. It makes strategic allocations to leverage systemic change. Hulene is a master at working with organizations to strengthen them and at connecting organizations and promoting initiatives aimed at making fundamental and wide spread changes in our community.

I am pleased tonight that The Working Centre is showcasing the importance of working with young children and their families. Over the last 20 years or so, we have learned through research that the very early years of life are even more critical to the child's future success than we had ever realized. Focusing on the very young children and their families addresses our quest to break the cycle of illiteracy and poverty. It

raises the chances of people becoming life-long learners who can adapt to changing conditions. I don't need to explain to you how this in turn strengthens our community and benefits all of us.

I am honoured to be representing you tonight as people who contribute to our community. My thanks to the Mayors Carl and Brenda for their support of this event. My thanks to the people who nominated me—Christine Bird, Barb Hill,



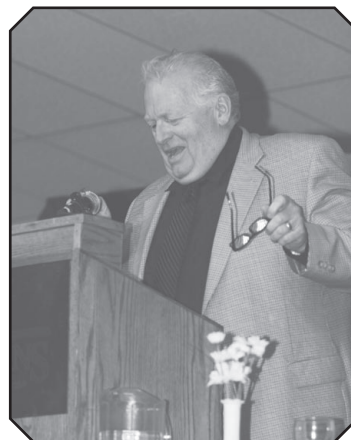
Strong Start Staff, 2009

Mieke Schroder and Hulene Montgomery. The realization that people that I admire and value so much would think to nominate me was at first overwhelming but then quite nourishing. My congratulations to The Working Centre for having this event each year to celebrate community.

In Waterloo Region we want to work together. We understand the value of collaboration. I am thrilled to hear the announcement by the Lyle S. Hallman Foundation of the creation of a fund to support collaborative efforts. Having my name associated with this fund is a precious honour that will be cherished by me and my family forever.

I hope in our community we never give up on achieving a collaborative approach where we combine ideas, resources and efforts and learn to work in both effective and efficient ways. Sometimes we are frustrated that the process can be slow, but the results are worth it. The whole will be greater than the sum of its parts. The synergy we can create can carry us to great heights.

This is what we do, why we do it and how we do it and I'm sure each of you has many stories that nourish you to keep doing it. My thanks to you for 'doing it'!



MC Neil Aitchison offers comic relief at the Mayors' Dinner, followed by tribute speeches in Lynda's honour.



Books for Sustainable Living



Books for Sustainable Living 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, simple living, and more!

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

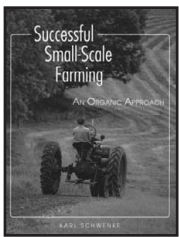


Gardening for the Faint of Heart

Robin Wheeler

This humorous yet practical gardening guide will help you get “down to earth”. With illustrations and useful suggestions, this book is ideal for the novice gardener. Learn about everything from planning a garden and getting started to pruning, managing pests, seeding and breeding, greenhouse and container gardening and more. This book never loses sight of the fact that gardening should be fun!

184 pages \$19.95 softcover

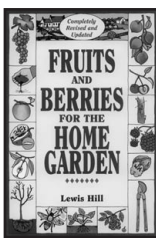


Successful Small-Scale Farming: An Organic Approach

Karl Schwenke

The author’s clear-eyed approach to the best farming methods covers a wide range of proven techniques and practical advice including: enriching the soil, machinery, the best crops to grow for profit, creating a market niche for your farm, and an overview of essential farmstead skills. Schwenke’s message is that small-scale farms can be cleaner, smarter and more efficient than corporate agribusiness.

144 pages \$22.95 softcover

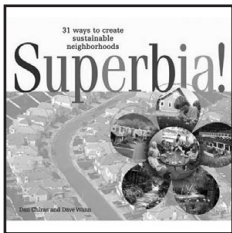


Fruits and Berries for the Home Garden

Lewis Hill

Hill brings his 45 years of experience growing fruits, nuts, and berries to this practical guide to home fruit growing. Well suited to both novice and experienced growers, the book offers information on environmentally sound ways to fertilize and control pests, the kinds of fruit that will grow in a given area, recommendations on improving soils and plant maintenance, as well as suggestions for harvesting, preserving and storing.

280 pages \$27.95 softcover



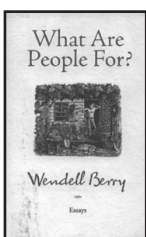
Superbia!

31 Ways to Create Sustainable Neighbourhoods

Dan Chiras and Dave Wann

Superbia! is a book of practical ideas for creating more socially, economically, and environmentally sustainable neighborhoods. The authors trace the history of the suburbs, showing how they fail to meet many peoples’ needs. They then describe how existing neighborhoods can be transformed, before guiding the reader through the transformation of a fictitious neighborhood that adopts the authors’ 31 steps.

229 pages \$24.95 softcover

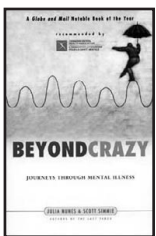


What Are People For?

Wendell Berry

Wendell Berry identifies himself as both “a farmer and an artist of sorts,” which he deftly illustrates in the scope of these 22 essays. Ranging from America’s insatiable consumerism and neglected household economies, to literary subjects and America’s attitude towards waste, Berry gracefully navigates from one topic to the next, discussing the ills plaguing America and the growing gap between people and the land. Despite the somber nature of these essays, Berry’s voice provides an underlying sense of faith and hope in the power of humanity, not only to fix its past mistakes, but to build on earth a sustainable future for all.

210 pages \$15.95 softcover



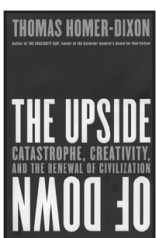
Beyond Crazy

Journeys Through Mental Illness

Scott Simmie and Julia Nune

Takes us beyond the barriers of fear and stigma to meet real Canadians from all walks of life who live with or have encountered mental illness. Frequently moving and sometimes shocking, the stories told here all contain a message of hope and encouragement. They reveal what it is like to journey to the edge of the abyss and back, to suffer psychosis or deep depression, a misdiagnosis, a life-threatening eating disorder, the suicide of a loved one. And they all tell of hope recovered, of finding the road back to wellness, of families made stronger than ever.

304 pages \$24.99 softcover



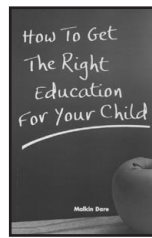
The Upside of Down

Catastrophe, Creativity, and the Renewal of Civilization

Thomas Homer-Dixon

In this essential book for our times, Thomas Homer-Dixon describes his understanding of the urgent problems that confront our world, and clarifies their scope and deep causes. *The Upside of Down* paints a vivid picture of the immense stresses that are simultaneously converging on our societies and threatening to break our very civilization apart. This vitally important book shows how, in the face of ecological and societal breakdown, we can renew our global civilization, and avoid catastrophe.

448 pages \$24.95 softcover

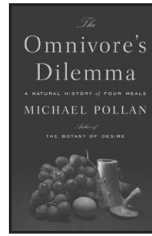


How To Get the Right Education for Your Child

Malkin Dare

Parents who are bewildered by the conflicting advice of education “experts” will appreciate the down-to-earth advice in this book. Here at last is the low-down on what goes on inside a school - along with tips on how to navigate your way through the corridors. This book offers step-by-step directions on how to teach your own child at home - or how to find a good tutor. It also explores some options you might not have already thought of - such as home-schooling. Dare contends that all children can learn, given the right teaching. And it shows parents how to get the teaching that they need. If you’re concerned about your child’s progress at school, you can’t afford to miss this book!

129 pages \$13.95 softcover



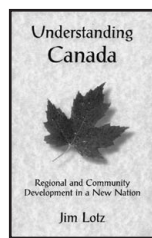
The Omnivore’s Dilemma

A Natural History of Four Meals

Michael Pollan

A national bestseller that has changed the way readers view the ecology of eating, this revolutionary book asks the seemingly simple question: What should we have for dinner? Tracing from source to table each of the food chains that sustain us— whether industrial or organic, alternative or processed—he develops a portrait of the American way of eating. The result is a sweeping, surprising exploration of the hungers that have shaped our evolution, and of the profound implications our food choices have for the health of our species and the future of our planet.

464 pages \$17.50 softcover



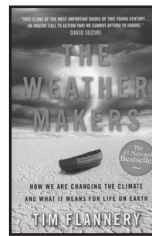
Understanding Canada

Regional and Community Development in a New Nation

Jim Lotz

Understanding Canada traces the concept of community development from its beginnings in colonial Africa to attempts at self help in Canada, and relates it to the ideas of individualism and liberalism. Focusing especially on the Atlantic Provinces, the author looks at efforts to “help” the poor from the top down and from the bottom up. He analyzes the successes of the approach of the Antigonish Movement which flourished in the Thirties. Jim Lotz’s suggested models, goals and roles in community development indicate that we can meet rapid change in a positive and creative way.

197 pages \$20.00 softcover



The Weather Makers

How Man Is Changing the Climate and What It Means for Life on Earth

Tim Flannery

In *The Weather Makers*, Flannery argues that human-caused pollution - in the form of ozone destroying chemicals and greenhouse gases - has altered not only global weather patterns but has increased the potential for extreme weather events. This book is both an urgent warning and a call to action, describing the history of climate change, how it will develop over the next century, and what we can do to prevent a global catastrophe. Flannery offers specific suggestions for action by individuals and lawmakers that can potentially reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 70%!

356 pages \$22.95 softcover

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WATERLOO SCHOOL FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

This spring the Diploma in Local Democracy Course offered three public lectures that explained different aspects of Local Democracy.



Mac Saulis - Democracy as an Expression of Aboriginal World View

How is democracy an expression of Aboriginal world view? Mac Saulis began his lecture by gathering everyone into a circle while explaining and offering a smudging ceremony. This offering to the Creator is fundamental to aboriginal tradition that has unfolded over the centuries. It is a reminder that the indigenous spiritual experience honours the Creator who is over and with all, on the dark side and on the light side. Everything in Creation is interrelated. Each individual is responsible for putting the community above themselves, the group is stronger when each looks after the other. Without community you are left to face the world by

yourself. Coexistence means seeking peace with others, walking in a good way, never just thinking of yourself. Aboriginal world view intertwines with the idea of local democracy because at its core, local democracy is an expression of building community, ensuring people are not left behind, practicing the skills of equality and peaceful coexistence. Mac illustrated his talk with examples of how European society ignored and tried to extinguish aboriginal worldview while over time, and how the aboriginal worldview has reasserted itself into Canadian culture. The Aboriginal MSW program is an example of aboriginal principals integrated into new ways of thinking about social work.



Malkin Dare - Society for Quality Education

Malkin Dare told the story of establishing the Society for Quality Education, a group dedicated to improving the education system and giving students a better chance at successful learning. Malkin brought copies of her book, *How to Get the Right Education for Your Child* which she distributed for free as a resource for parents who are worried that their child is not learning enough at school.

Malkin challenged the notion of government monopoly over social programs. Her main example is the school system. Her critique grew from the realization that her son, like many students, was not learning to read. Obstructionist school

board officials only reinforced the root of the problem. Malkin then presented a wide vision of schooling. She asks the question, "If we know so much about how children and adults learn and with all the money directed at education, why is our education system so aligned against small, independent, skill specific schools that should be popping up in people's houses, community centres, rural areas all dedicated to ensuring children get great education?" Malkin demonstrated the techniques of local democracy by presenting this challenging alternative interpretation of education while accepting questions throughout her presentation. This ensured a lively discussion on the role of education in society.



Ken Westhues - The Ethic of Democracy

Ken Westhues set out to describe not only the difference between the ethic of hierarchy and the ethic of democracy, but to emphasize the importance of serving democracy over hierarchy. He started with the two common circumstances that all humans share - that we are born and that we die. If we let this fact settle deeply into our psyche we come to see the importance of creating structures and actions that promote and affirm human equality. Ken shared a quote from Abraham Lincoln, "As I would not be a slave, so I would not be a master". This expresses Ken's idea of democracy. Ken used

biographical examples to illustrate how individuals can grow through democratic thinking. He gave examples from working on election campaigns, to an essay, written by his grandmother in the 1890's on why women and men should be treated equally, to professors who demanded that their authority in the classroom not be challenged, to the story of his ninety year old mother organizing fellow nursing home residents to be treated better while caring for the humanity of the manager. These examples emphasized democratic values, ways of treating all equally and not putting one group above the other. The ethic of democracy means challenging hierarchy and affirming equality.

Diploma in Local Democracy

A 14-week course from October 2010 to May 2011

The Working Centre is a fitting place to explore the ideals of local democracy. This growing field of study is an expression of community building through learning the skills to respectfully challenge hierarchy by affirming equality. The Working Centre for its part has spent the last 28 years learning the meaning of equality through creating dialogue, building reciprocal relationships, and practicing personalism. These are the skills that are at the heart of this learning experience.

- This course is intended for adults committed to serving local democracy in Waterloo Region.
- By exploring the ethic of democracy, one learns the skills of challenging hierarchy and affirming equality.
- It offers the opportunity for participants to reflect on their actual experience of democratic practice, positive or negative, in the workplace, public agencies, and civic initiatives.
- It will expand your knowledge of diverse forms of democracy.
- It explores how local democratic values are integral for a flourishing community.



Democracy is the dissemination of a common culture as widely as possible among a people audacious enough to imagine their own present and future. It is not to be confused with ease of access by trained technocrats to this or that managerial elite. At its core is an educational ideal based on the principle that learning is life long but never quantifiable, a process rather than a product, a humanistic challenge rather than a technical quantification.

- Declan Kiberd

Axioms, Aphorisms, & Anecdotes for Activists

By Jim Lotz



The chief cause of problems is solutions.

- Eric Sevaried, American journalist

He who is satisfied with pure experience and acts in accordance with it, has sufficient truth.

- Goethe

If the rich could hire people to die for them, the poor would make a good living.

- Yiddish proverb

The lower I am, the more proper my place seems; and the higher I am, the stronger my suspicion is that there has been some mistake.

- Vaclav Ravel, *The Art of the Impossible: Politics as Morality in Practice*

It is ideas, not vested interest, which are dangerous for good or evil.

- John Maynard Keynes

Energy is eternal delight.

- William Blake

The affairs of the young are the envies of the middle-aged.

- Hugh Garner

The whole aim of practical politics is to keep the populace alarmed - and hence clamorous to be led to safety -- by menacing it with endless series of hobgoblins, all of them imaginary.

- H.L. Mencken

Wisdom finds no place in a malicious mind, and knowledge without conscience is but the ruin of the soul.

- Unnamed French Renaissance writer

Great wisdom is generous; petty wisdom is contentious.

- Chu-ang-tzu, Taoist philosopher

Hands to work, hearts to God.

- Shaker axiom

If you like law and sausages, you should never watch either one being made.

- Bismarck