

GOOD WORK NEWS

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

Issue 116

March 2014

Subscription: A Donation Towards our Work

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Join our Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) project this spring and enjoy fresh, local, organically grown vegetables from June to October.

Add to your vegetable share...

- ♦ freshly picked flower bouquets
- ♦ freshly baked cookies and pies
- ♦ Ready to Enjoy dinners from Maurita's Kitchen
- ♦ fresh and locally roasted coffee from the Queen St. Commons Café



The Working Centre's Hacienda Sarria Market Garden is a vibrant urban garden that grows healthy, fresh produce using organic methods, 3 km from downtown Kitchener. It is a community-based project that demonstrates sustainable urban food production.

To buy a CSA share on-line visit catalogue.theworkingcentre.org

For more information you will find our CSA sign up sheet on our website at: www.theworkingcentre.org/CSA

Email: hacienda@theworkingcentre.org • Phone: 519-743-1151, ext. 113



Behind the Scenes with Alex Mustakas

Guest of Honour at the 2014 Mayors' Dinner

By Steven Karcher

Alex Mustakas is a theatre impresario with a passion for shining a spotlight on Waterloo Region. His hectic schedule is a balancing act, requiring him to assume the role of director when helming productions that tour across North America; shrewd negotiator when securing rights to the hottest shows on Broadway; and talent scout when scouring the country for the best talent to appear on Drayton Entertainment's seven stages throughout Ontario.

Alex's balancing act extends beyond the confines of the stage. On a daily basis he is tasked with balancing family and work ... art and commerce ... and delighting us all by balancing the improbable.

The sum of his professional accomplishments culminated last fall when he was awarded the prestigious Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year award for Media & Entertainment, in recognition of his creativity, innovation and singular vision.

But for Alex, the true fruits of his labour were recognized at a second EY gold carpet event several weeks later, when he was called to the stage to receive a national citation for outstanding community partnerships.

The achievement marked widespread recognition of Alex as a social entrepreneur who contributes to both the economy and community, thereby setting new standards for business excellence.

"We are very fortunate to have tremendous community support for our theatre organization," says Alex.

The success of Drayton Entertainment is unparalleled on the Canadian theatre scene. Despite no federal or provincial arts council funding for annual operations, it maintains an enviable reputation for annual surpluses, consistently sold out performances, and creative marketing initiatives.

"Hence, we recognize the importance of paying it forward and continually giving back. It has been a privilege to work with so many great charities over the years and shine a spotlight on many worthy causes."

In addition to donating resources from his charitable arts organization to support the individual fundraising efforts of over 750 charities throughout Ontario, Alex has personally raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for local initiatives by spearheading successful collaborations with the Waterloo Regional Police Service, United Way of Kitchener-Waterloo, United Way of Perth-Huron, Salvation Army, Rotary, and many others.

Alex's affinity for The Working Centre runs deep. His father, Christianos Mustakas, rented Joe and Stephanie Mancini one of their first buildings for Working Centre projects in downtown Kitchener. In 2002, Alex aided St. John's Kitchen (which serves 120 families daily) with a dramatic reading of Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol, which raised over \$15,000 in two sold-out

The Spiritual Teachings of a Compost Heap

Editors Note

Over the last two years, many people came to know of Jim Profit's struggle with cancer through his blog **All Creation is Groaning**. Jim passed away on Saturday January 11th. He was known for his practical work for environmental protection. He established and was the main proponent for The Ecology Project at Ignatious Jesuit Centre in Guelph. In March 2002, Jim submitted this article to **Good Work News** to teach the connection between spirituality and ecology, which we re-publish in his honour.

By James Profit SJ

I love the compost heap! It could be just that I love getting something so valuable without paying a cent for it. As a gardener, I know the value of compost, also known as black gold. It is so good for the soil, for the structure of the soil and its fertility. A basic tenet of organic farming and gardening is that if you want healthy food, it is essential to have healthy soil. Compost is essential to good health! Yet, it is not only my frugality that makes me appreciate compost. When I hold in my hand

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Twenty-Ninth Year

Issue 116

March 2014

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 10,000 copies. Subscription: a donation towards our work.

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Mayor Carl Zehr and Mayor Brenda Halloran
Invite you to celebrate...

The 27th Annual Mayors' Dinner

in honour of
~ Alex Mustakas ~

for his lifelong commitment to building
a social model of compassionate senior care

Saturday April 5, 2014

Held at Marshall Hall, Bingemans, Kitchener

Cocktails and Auction Preview: 5:30 pm
Dinner: 6:45 pm

The Mayors' Dinner is an evening that celebrates outstanding contributions to our community, and serves as an important fundraising event for The Working Centre and St. John's Kitchen.

To purchase tickets and for more details

call (519) 743-1511x119

You can purchase tickets online at
www.theworkingcentre.org/dinner

- Individual Ticket:** \$100 (includes one tax receipt for \$55)



- Contributor Sponsorship Package:**
\$250 (includes 2 tickets, recognition in dinner program, and one tax receipt for \$160)

- Community Group Package:** \$750 (includes 8 tickets and one tax receipt for \$390)



Alex Mustakas has developed Drayton Entertainment into one of Canada's largest regional theatre companies

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performances.

Alex has generously supported numerous community arts groups by providing his business acumen, benefiting Kitchener-Waterloo Musical Productions, the Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Waterloo Region, and Twin City Harmonizers. He has also served on Advisory Boards to Conestoga College and Wilfrid Laurier University, the latter of which awarded him an Honorary Doctor of Letters in recognition of his lasting impact on Canada's artistic and cultural landscape.

Alex's lifelong commitment to improving the fabric of Waterloo Region extends back to his childhood. He emigrated from Cyprus at the age of six, the middle of three children.

"I saw firsthand how my parents struggled in those first years as immigrants in a strange new land," he says. "We were fortunate to connect with the Greek-Cypriot community, and through that vital association the values of helping and giving back were cemented."

As a teenager, one of Alex's first jobs was working for his parents, serving coffee at the Bus Terminal Coffee Shop in downtown Galt. He attended Eastwood Collegiate where he was a soccer and basketball star, but as a natural performer at heart,

As a teenager, one of Alex's first jobs was working for his parents, serving coffee at the Bus Terminal Coffee Shop in downtown Galt. He attended Eastwood Collegiate where he was a soccer and basketball star, but as a natural performer at heart, he was always drawn to the stage.

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"I did all the shows," he says. For proof, look no further than the photos that live on as Alex dressed up as the Pharaoh in Andrew Lloyd Webber's popular musical, Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat.

His teachers encouraged him to go to the National Theatre School, but that was a non-starter in the Mustakas family.

"One of the reasons the family moved to this country was for a better future for the children," he says.

The family was adamant: Alex would go to university and study business. Alex started in business at Laurier and ended up graduating with a degree in economics. Together with his buddy David Chilton (who later won fame and fortune as author of The Wealthy Barber, and more recently, landed a stint on CBC's popular television

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Walter Harvey Memorial Collection Day

The K-W Navy Club in partnership with The Working Centre will be accepting electronic equipment and gently used clothing and footwear.

K-W Naval Association

315 Weber St. N. Waterloo

Saturday, April 26th

8:00 am - 3:00 pm

Electronic Items Accepted: Computers, Laptops, Monitors, Printers, Scanners, Keyboards, Mice, TVs, VCRs, DVDs, Cell Phones, Radios, Small Appliances

Clothing Items Accepted: Pants, Dresses, Shirts, Sweaters, Coats, Shoes, Handbags, Belts

Also Linens, Blankets, Towels, Sheets, Tablecloths, and other household items

Recycle, Reuse, Repurpose



The Mayor's Dinner

Alex Mustakas

continued from page 2

series Dragons' Den), Alex became a partner in Davalex Investments, acting as agents for about 60 trust companies.

He continued to keep his feet planted in artistic soil, however, by taking music courses and studying voice privately with Laurier legend Victor Martens. He also continued to perform with Kitchener-Waterloo Musical Productions, and it was there that he met the legendary Alan Lund, Artistic Director of the famed Charlottetown Festival.

Alex was gainfully employed in the corporate sector at the time, but seemed unable to shake his artistic desires. What followed is like a scene out of a play. In a bold theatrical stroke, Alex handed his degree to his father and said, "This was for you. Now I want to do something for me. I'd like to become a professional actor."

In his thick Greek accent, his father responded, "So. You're going to be a gypsy."

Mustakas smiles as he tells the story. "He understood. It's a gypsy life. My uncle, Sotiris Moustakas (who had a prominent role in the film *Zorba The Greek*), was probably the biggest star in Greece."

So with his family's reluctant blessing, Alex set off for uncharted territory. After a few years on the stage, including appearances at the Charlottetown Festival, Alex became interested in theatre administration and pursued a Masters Degree in Arts Administration at City University in London. While in England, Alex worked on a project for Gresham College where he was responsible for evaluating data concerning An Historical Examination of Industrial Support for the Arts in the United Kingdom. There his dream of a small theatre of his own where he could positively impact the lives of artists, the community, and society as a whole began to take shape.

Alex returned to Canada, and the rest is the stuff of showbiz leg-

end. Out of a tiny, virtually unused theatre in a crossroads community of Drayton he built a theatrical empire comprised of seven theatres in five locations in Ontario: the original Drayton Festival Theatre (1991), St. Jacobs Schoolhouse Theatre (1997), King' Wharf Theatre in Penetanguishene (1999), Huron Country Playhouse and Playhouse II in Grand Bend (2001 merger), St. Jacobs Country Playhouse (2005), and most recently, the Dunfield Theatre Cambridge (2013).

As Artistic Director & CEO of Drayton Entertainment, Alex is responsible for managing all facets of the company's \$8.3 million budget – including the artistic product, administration and technical departments. Under his astute leadership, Drayton Entertainment has become one of the largest regional theatre companies in Canada and employers of professional actors in the country.

As it turns out, the business degree came in handy – Alex's father was proven right in the final analysis. The success of Drayton Entertainment is unparalleled on the Canadian theatre scene. Despite no federal or provincial arts council funding for annual operations, it maintains an enviable reputation for annual surpluses, consistently sold out performances, creative marketing initiatives and exceptional private-sector support, making Alex Mustakas one of the central figures in Canadian theatre today.

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Drayton Entertainment has had an enormous economic and artistic impact on all the communities in which it is involved. "I really like to think that each theatre is indigenous to its community," Alex says, and his dedication to those communities has been exemplary.

He is a champion of community arts organizations (a collaboration with the Cambridge Symphony Orchestra in 2013 netted \$10,000 for the local group), and extends his generosity into other sectors, spearheading a successful multi-



year Christmas Choirs & Carols CD to support local healthcare initiatives. In 2011, he rallied the artistic community in a benefit concert for social services to aid victims of the Goderich tornado, raising \$100,000 in a single afternoon.

Alex also believes in supporting programs and services for youth. He collaborated with senior brass to develop two productions showcasing the Waterloo Regional Police Service, raising \$125,000 for community youth programs and women's shelters. Alex also engages young people in the arts, subsidizing performances exclusively for local schools. Moreover, his student usher program gives young people their first employment opportunities and exposure to the arts, with over 160 participants annually.

Alex is a true visionary, who strives to enhance the cultural life of our communities while simultaneously benefiting local economies. As Alex himself says, "The second part of show business is business."

Alex Mustakas embodies the spirit of entrepreneurship, creativity, and genuine passion that makes Kitchener-Waterloo such a desirable place to live, work, and of course, play. He has played a leading role in the development of Waterloo Region for several decades.

And, he's not done yet. We'll just have to wait and see what he does as an encore.

Steven Karcher is Executive Director of Drayton Entertainment. His responsibilities include overseeing marketing, fundraising, communications, event planning, grant writing, and new program coordination. Most recently, Steven managed fundraising for the \$4 million renovation to the Huron Country Playhouse.

We are grateful for the generous support that individuals, businesses, churches, groups, and schools offer to The Working Centre and St. John's Kitchen

The Working Centre is able to provide creative community services and projects because of wide support. 50% of our income comes through donations and revenue from our social enterprise projects. Here are some examples of support we received this past Fall and Christmas.

Manulife Financial has supported the Manulife employee Christmas Dinner for almost 20 years, annually raising over \$8,000 towards St. John's Kitchen.

Many individuals make significant and generous yearly donations. Many donors prefer to be anonymous. We are deeply grateful for their generous support.

Each year, Grand River Rotary Club holds one of their December meetings at St. John's Kitchen, bringing breakfast for the Kitchen's patrons, helping prepare the Christmas turkey stuffing and this year individual members and the club donated \$5,000 towards the daily

operation of St. John's Kitchen.

Members of the Waterloo Chapter of the Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) have been committed for over 8 years to offer ongoing support for the Waterloo Region ASSETS project helping individuals develop home enterprises.

For the second year, Matthew Kieswetter and St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church organized a Christmas Carol fundraising event for St. John's Kitchen.

This year 500 Working Centre volunteers received Christmas cards thanking them for their contributions of work and service.

This past Fall, we were the recipients of Memorial donations from the families of Orville Thacker, Madeline Cullen, and Leo Burns.

We are grateful to a growing list of friends who contribute monthly donations to The Working Centre or St. John's Kitchen.

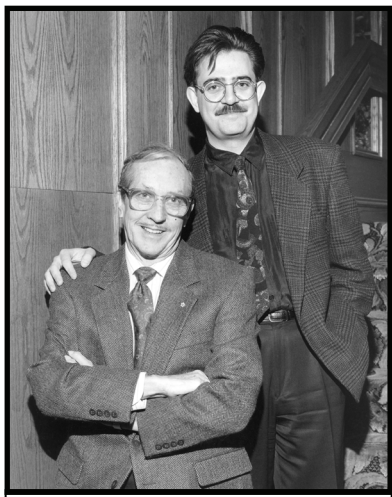
Many groups and individuals

contributed to St. John's Kitchen Christmas Dinner including Pat Maske, Roberts On-Site, St. Nicholas Catholic School, Don and Brenda Reist of Hilltop Acres Poultry Products, Dianne Jones and St. Michael's Catholic Church.

A number of churches and schools took coin cans and supported our Christmas Gifts Tree including First Mennonite Church, Trinity United, WK Mennonite, Olivet United, and St. Bernadette Catholic School.

Waterloo Mennonite Brethren Church sponsored for the third year An Indie Acoustic Christmas. It was a family Christmas concert that was well attended despite the ice storm on Dec 21st.

Many religious organizations made substantial donations including the Congregation of the Resurrection, Emmanuel United Church, Sisters of St. Joseph, School Sisters of Notre Dame, and Blessed Sacrament Catholic Parish.



Alex Mustakas with mentor Alan Lund, circa 1991

Recycle Cycles

By Jesse Robertson

On February 27, Recycle Cycles volunteers and friends gathered to celebrate two years in the Community Bicycle Shop's new space at 37 Market Lane in Kitchener, and 21 years of service to the local cycling community. The last few years have seen quite a few changes to the shop's infrastructure and operations, but throughout this process, volunteers have worked to ensure that it remains a welcoming and supportive environment for the public to access bicycle repair resources.

As a Community Bicycle Shop, Recycle Cycles focuses on promoting cycling by making bicycle purchase, maintenance and repair as accessible and affordable as possible. Individuals can reserve space in the shop to work on their bicycles with the assistance of a volunteer, and to use the many bicycle-specific tools available. Assistance and use of the shop space and tools is completely free of charge. Volunteers have the opportunity to gain experience working on different types of bicycles and components with the assistance of more experienced volunteers. Recycle Cycles also offers inexpensive reconditioned bicycles, and a large supply of used, refurbished and new parts for sale.



As a Community Bicycle Shop, Recycle Cycles focuses on promoting cycling by making bicycle purchase, maintenance and repair as accessible and affordable as possible.

Since its founding in 1993 by university students working with the Waterloo Public Interest Research Group, Recycle Cycles has occupied a wide variety of spaces throughout Kitchener and Waterloo. These locations have ranged from sheds and garages to low basements with dirt floors. In 1999 Recycle Cycles was adopted as a Community Tools Project by The Working Centre, and for many years was located on the second floor in the 43 Queen Street building. For a number of years it was clear that the project was outgrowing its space, and in 2012, when a larger and more accessible building

became available, it seemed to be the right time to make the move.

In its present location Recycle Cycles has continued to grow and evolve to better meet the needs of those using the space by extending open hours, increasing the number of volunteers, and expanding the selection of bicycle components and tools available. Use of the space has increased steadily for several years. In 2013, Recycle Cycles volunteers contributed over 5,400 hours to the project, and worked on 4,892 bicycles. This was in addition to the 600 donated bicycles that were rebuilt and distributed free, or for affordable prices, that same year.

Recycle Cycles owes its existence to a long list of current and past volunteers who have invested their time and resource. The shop space has also enjoyed exceptional community support from those using the services, as well as from individuals who make the effort to donate good used bicycles, components, tools, and other equipment to the project. Donations of all bicycles and related equipment are always welcome, but those in usable condition are especially appreciated since they require fewer volunteer hours to rebuild and get back on the road, in the hands of a new rider.

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Donations can be dropped off at 37 Market Lane in Kitchener anytime during the shops open hours, which are currently Tuesday – Friday 10-6 and Saturdays 10-4.

To learn more or to get involved contact us at (519) 804-2466 or recyclecycles@theworkingcentre.org, or visit <http://www.theworkingcentre.org/recycle-cycles/153>.



Plans for the Hacienda Sarria Market Garden as Spring Fast Approaches

By Kim Knowles and Adam Kramer

We are often asked in these cold months, "So what are you doing now that the garden is under a foot of snow?" This time of year the pace is slower than in the summer, but there is a lot to keep us busy as we make our way through the off-season tasks of planning what to grow in the coming season, ordering seeds, signing on interns, planning workshops, launching our CSA, and continuing to grow in the greenhouse. The work this January and February feels predictable and comfortable as we seem to have gained a level of confidence that comes with having a few seasons under our belts.

Crop planning

With last year's harvest totals in mind, a good deal of January was spent planning what to grow this season. The garden is divided into uniform beds, each 2 feet wide by 25 feet long. This model allows us to estimate the yield of each bed and also the number of seeds per bed. We then pour over the seed catalogues to determine which varieties are most suitable to our soil, climate, and market needs. Over the course of this season we will plant 37 beds of kale, 27 beds of carrots, 22 beds of lettuce, and 6 beds of tomatoes, just to name a few. In total we have space for around 315 beds in our

garden - some of which will be sown in cover crops for the season in an effort to feed our earth and keep it fertile for years to come.

Last season we harvested over 13,000 units of vegetables and flowers. Wow! That is almost a three-fold increase over the previous season. This year we will continue to improve our soil fertility and therefore our yields on the existing areas under cultivation. We will also be growing more vegetable varieties to provide our CSA members more diversity in their weekly vegetable shares.

Winter at Grow

In these final few months of winter we've been growing more than ever in the greenhouse at Grow Gardens. One hopes for sun and the prospect of arriving at the greenhouse to come in from the cold and find a lush green space amidst the piles of snow. Currently, microgreen and living green production is near capacity, with weekly harvests finding their way onto tables throughout the community. Volunteers have not only been doing the hard work of growing, but have also been getting prepared for the onrush of seedlings as spring approaches. Soon enough the greenhouse will be full of tens of thousands of seedlings, which will find their way into the ground at the Hacienda Garden. With an op-

Last season we harvested over 13,000 units of vegetables and flowers. Wow! That is almost a three-fold increase over the previous season.

portunity to see the full progression of the gardening seasons, now is a great time to get involved! March, April, and May will be busy months at the greenhouse, as we transition to Hacienda gardens.

The Hacienda as a Teaching Place

As we look towards spring and meet keen potential interns and volunteers, we are struck by the desire that so many people possess to contribute to the urban gardening projects. We are hearing from a great number of people who want

to learn how to grow food sustainably and to do it in a community setting, working alongside and learning from each other. Our yearly internships provide an intensive space to learn about the many aspects of sustainable urban agriculture over the course of a 4 month work period. Beyond internships, we have lots of creative ways for people to join in the work and learn about growing food through workshops and volunteering. Whether experts or beginners, volunteers can join us in the many tasks at hand – weeding, planting, harvesting, preparing produce for market, watering, flower arranging, record keeping, and marketing. Volunteers are essential to the garden, providing much needed helping hands and contributing to our growing community. If you are interested in getting involved at the greenhouse or garden, please send us an email or give us a call.

Contact: Kim or Adam, hacienda@theworkingcentre.org or 519-743-1151, ext. 113.



Belonging

New Story Group

By John Lord

We all want to belong, to feel accepted and included. This universal human experience applies across all cultures and relates to our connections with family, friends, neighbourhoods, and workplaces. We know there are negative consequences when people do not belong, when they are excluded or isolated from community life.

The New Story Group of Waterloo Region is a grass roots group that is committed to belonging within the context of community and social inclusion. In the fall of 2013, the New Story Group sponsored two days of conversations about Building a Community of Belonging. This important community work is being supported by the K-W Community Foundation in collaboration with a number of community partners.

What is belonging and what are some of the ways it can be nurtured?

Here is a definition that the New Story Group has been exploring: Belonging is about full inclusion, where you are seen, known, welcomed, accepted, included, respected, connected, and valued. What is interesting about this definition is that it has several attributes that all impact each other. Think about how essential it is for each of us to be seen and known. Too many people are invisible and lonely. Think also about the power of acceptance and inclusion. When we feel included, our confidence grows and a sense of belonging becomes possible. All the words in this definition can encourage us to think more deeply about belonging.

What was exciting about the

The New Story Group of Waterloo Region is a grass roots group that is committed to belonging within the context of community and social inclusion.

Belonging Conversations in our community was that participants were taking the time to think seriously about the idea of creating a community of belonging. As part of the conversation, participants were asked to imagine neighbourhoods where everyone feels a sense of belonging, where inclusion trumps fear; to imagine workplaces where people belong, and where respect and collaboration trump power and politics; and to imagine schools where belonging trumps bullying and streaming.

The New Story Group's experience and research on belonging suggests that belonging is the heart of community and social inclusion. As we come to understand the elements of belonging, we gain insights into how we can build a more inclusive community.

Elements of Belonging

Presence: You cannot be included if you are not present. The Supreme Court of Canada and several provincial human rights commissions have mandated the power of presence. All children must now attend school, a battle that was fought for two generations by both First Nations and disability leaders. Although the legal precedents for

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Stories on Belonging

The New Story Group of Waterloo Region is a grass-roots group that includes a wide range of community members representing people with disabilities, citizens who are elderly, immigrants and New Canadians, families, neighbourhoods, and health and social services.

The New Story Group builds its work on conversation, stories, and mindful action. "We believe in a new story, where everyone belongs and no one is left behind. Stories present us with possibilities and can inspire us to think and act in new ways," says John Lord, chair of the group.

During the fall Belonging Conversations, the New Story Group started gathering stories of Belonging. Here are some of the stories. More belonging stories from the New Story Group can be found on the Tamarack Institute website (<http://seekingcommunity.ca/blogs/new-story-group/exploring-belonging>)

Valued and dignified

We heard this from someone living with dementia who partnered with a non-profit organization to do work around educating about dementia. This partnership was rewarding and made her feel like she belonged because she felt listened to and validated. Through this experience her confidence grew, she found her voice, and was able to fight for the rights of persons with dementia.

Calling a new place home

We heard this from someone new to Canada who appreciated the support she received from an organization to help her settle into her new community. As a way of giving back the support she received, she began to volunteer with this organization and use her language skills to be a translator and interpreter for other newcomers. Feeling good about helping others and building relationships with employees and other volunteers and newcomers made her feel like she found a new home.

Creating welcoming and hospitable spaces

We heard this from someone who moved to a new community and was instantly invited out to neighbours' homes for suppers and evening visits. Often someone would get out the guitar and there would be a sing along or people would share stories about local lore. She reflects on this experience when trying to be more intentional about creating social networks in her neighbourhood. Today she sees belonging being intentionally fostered through Porch Parties, neighbourhood walking groups, moms' groups, and other such associations.

Showing appreciation

We heard this from someone with a developmental disability who feels welcomed when he arrives at work each day. He cherishes how co-workers take an interest in him and ask him about his life. He also feels regularly appreciated for the work he does which makes him love his work even more. Each time people show him that they are happy to see him it increases his sense of belonging.

Life After High School

Multicultural Cinema Club

A snapshot of a day in the life of Russell, a young man with Down syndrome who is in his first year after high school. It is meant to inspire others that with a little planning and support you don't have to fear the larger world after school finishes. Russell uses the services of Facile Waterloo Region and his facilitator Lori Maloney-Young. <http://www.theworkingcentre.org/good-work-productions/608>



Pathways to Inclusion

Building a New Story with People and Communities

John Lord, Peggy Hutchinson

Pathways to Inclusion addresses the organizational strategies that have been used in the past and highlights areas for change. This book includes a discussion of discriminatory social policy and outlines characteristics of pathways to inclusion, detailing the need for social innovation to support vulnerable citizens from exclusion to social inclusion.

270 pages \$29.50 softcover



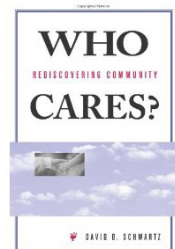
Friends and Inclusion

Five Approaches in Building Relationships

Peggy Hutchison and John Lord with Karen Lord

Peggy, John & Karen describe their personal search and exploration of five approaches to building the good life that Karen enjoys. Their frank assessment is instructive and will assist individuals, families and organizations to be more responsive in the most important assignment of a lifetime - building a network of relationships.

106 pages \$20.00 softcover



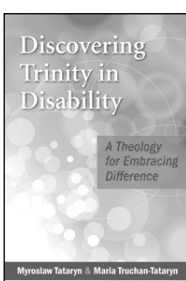
Who Cares?

Rediscovering Community

David B. Schwartz

Who Cares? emphasizes humane ways of integrating developmentally and physically disabled individuals, with responses that are community driven rather than solely reliant on social service organizations.

192 pages \$43.25 softcover



Discovering Trinity in Disability

Myroslaw Tataryn, Maria Truchan-Tataryn

As parents of three daughters, two of whom are labeled disabled, the authors explore the Scriptures and writings of early Christian thinkers to challenge conventional attitudes - and fears - toward those who are different. The authors - husband and wife, father and mother - endeavor to respond to the question of suffering in a Church where we believe that God answers the prayers of his followers.

128 pages \$18.95 softcover

The Spiritual Teachings of a Compost Heap

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humus, the end product of the compost heap, I feel I am touching into the miraculous. I am touching into something of the beauty and mystery of God. Working with compost is a spiritual activity for me!

A compost heap is a microcosm of the Earth. It teaches us many lessons, such as the beauty of biodiversity, for example. The best compost is made from many materials. Animal manure (itself a mixture of many things) mixed with food scraps, sea weed, weeds and other plant material makes excellent compost. The final product is possible only because many different organisms and microorganisms are working away. Beneath the surface of the heap, there is a whole community of life including the powerhouse of the community, the bacteria, but also fungi, nematodes, mites, spiders, insects and of course, the earthworm. Each has its own task to perform. Each type of material gives its own unique contribution. This may be micro nutrients supplied by the seaweed. Or it could be the essential bacteria supplied to the soil by the manure, bacteria which would otherwise be rare in the soil but rich in the intestines of cattle. There is a variety of gifts, as St. Paul would say, all contributing to the one body (1 Cor. 12).

Diverse community is essential, but too much of any one thing is not good. Balance is the key. Too many leaves will take too long to compost because they are decomposed mainly by the fungi. Too many food scraps or too much grass clippings makes for a sappy compost. A packed compost heap, or one with too much water, is depleted of oxygen essential for aerobic decomposition (and the pile will give you an odour that the neighbours do not appreciate). The



earthworm cannot say to the bacteria, "I have no need of you," nor again the food scraps to the manure, "I have no need of you." Yes, it is as Paul says, "On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable God has so arranged the body giving the greater honour to the inferior member. ... If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honoured, all rejoice with it." (1 Cor. 12:21-26).

The working compost pile can

teach us much about the cycles of life. Nitrogen in the soil is taken up by plant roots (and also can be fixed for use by the plant, possible only by the collaboration of the roots of legume plants and bacteria), used for plant growth by the plant, and released back to the soil upon the decay of the plant. The same happens for other minerals, each with its own unique cycle.

We in the west, are so used to thinking linearly, and this linear thinking has had disastrous consequences for the environment. We have stepped outside of the cycles of life. We have become accustomed to seeing all bacteria as harmful, perhaps even a mistake of God! So, we use our anti-bacterial soap on a daily basis. But we find out that our bodies, so accustomed to a sanitized environment, have built up little resistance to disease. We fail to fully appreciate the value of some plants because they interfere with our monocrop Kentucky bluegrass lawns. We blast the life out of them with our "weed" killers. Our economic system ignores the fact that the Earth is one organism consisting of various cycles of life in balance with each other, and that it cannot limitlessly provide endless economic growth based on "resource" extraction. The use of the fossil fuel, the Earth's carbon reserves deep in the ground, is contributing to climate change by releasing too much carbon into the atmosphere. We live under a mound of our garbage because we refuse to allow it to be "re-cycled" (such as our kitchen scraps), or because its composition is such that it is incapable of being reintroduced into the cycles of the earth. The compost heap invites me to give up my attempt to control nature, control life and live a more balanced life by living within the

earth, within the cycles of life. To give up control requires humility. Hmm "humus," "humans" and "humility" have the same root word which means "ground." The compost heap is inviting me to remember that I am not a controlling god, but that

I am ground, that I am earth!

"In the soft warm bosom of a decaying compost heap, a transformation from life to death and back again is taking place." These words of J. I. Rodale, the pioneer of the organic farming and gardening movement, express perhaps the greatest lesson of the compost heap. The most beautiful cycle of all, is the cycle from life to death and back again! This cycle includes death. Our culture does not like death, either. We run from it. We hate

A compost heap teaches me much about death. Within the heap many life cycles of varying lengths of time occur at once. The life cycle of a bacterium is much shorter than that of the centipede, yet both give their lives for the sake of life.

wakes and funerals. We are encouraged to prolong life to any extent, including now it seems, the cloning of humans.

A compost heap teaches me much about death. Within the heap many life cycles of varying lengths of time occur at once. The life cycle of a bacterium is much shorter than that of the centipede, yet both give their lives for the sake of life. The dead body of the insect decomposes too, and becomes an ingredient of the humus. Just as within all creation, death is the reality of life. By allowing ourselves to experience this reality, we learn that death is not something to be feared. I learn



In Memory

The Jesuits paid honour to Jim Profit by describing his work and vocation in this way.

He saw his Christian faith as a loving response to the gifts and responsibility of and to the earth, drawing on the work of Rev. Thomas Berry, CP. He worked very much in the soil, and the flower gardens that beautify the settings of both Loyola House and the Red House. His vegetable garden that nourished the Jesuit community is a testimony to his care and cooperation with the earth. He grouped with local farmers and their families as well as with the social activist community of the area. With others, he became a leader in a new consciousness that would articulate a fundamental responsibility of all persons and nations to respect and protect the earth. Among many who came to work with him and learn from him, he expanded the concerns of Ecology to the daily concerns of life and as matter of our innermost spirit. He would take groups for a walk on the farm, and lead a deep meditation on its life significance. He travelled to many parts of Canada and the world to lead Ignatian retreats with an Ecological focus, doing ground breaking work in the greening of the Spiritual Exercises.

that to live life, I must also die. I also learn that my physical death is not the end of the story.

"... unless a grain of wheat falls into the Earth and dies, it remains just a single grain but if it dies it bears much fruit." John 12: 24. The life to death to life of Jesus is a concrete example of the incarnation of God in Creation. Because Jesus was born of this Earth, walked on the Earth, ate of the earth, and is still very much physically present with us, albeit perhaps in another form! The same chemicals that once were a part of Jesus' body have been recycled for over 2000 years now! Yet, of course, the Jesus story also tells us that his physical death was not the end of the story either. Ah yes, but is not the lesson of Jesus' death the lesson of the Earth itself, and in particular the compost heap? Could not a compost heap also be, in reality, the incarnation of God?

We are a culture that runs from death, yet, as Pope John Paul reminds us we are also a "culture of death." Our actions are eliminating 27,000 species of life per year! Not all death leads to life. Jesus went to the cross because of the actions of death by various and several people. When imbalance occurs within a compost heap, the compost is very poor. Life had not been given the best opportunity to exist. Evil and sin and death can be cyclical too, causing crises, not life. Will our war in Afghanistan really eliminate terrorism, or simple perpetuate it? Can our pollution of the Earth be reversed so that we may truly have life again? Can our production of greenhouse gases be reduced so as to prevent some of the effects of climate change?

These disturbing questions can lead me to be pessimistic at times. Yet, because I have been taught by the compost heap, I remain hopeful, in spite of the pessimism. By feeling the compost, I touch into the regenerative power of the Earth. The earth is capable of so much healing. As a naturopathic doctor friend of mine reminded me, the Earth is the incarnation of Christ, because she constantly shows her human community how to turn the other

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Belonging

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“being present” are strong, there are still too many examples of exclusion, either because diversity is not valued or accommodations are not being made to enhance presence. As Woody Allen has said, “Ninety per cent of success is showing up.” Presence becomes an important pillar in any conversation about belonging.

The Belonging Conversations reflected on how communities are changing and how this reflects the idea of presence. For the older generation, presence is often about ‘place,’ being rooted in a neighbourhood or community. We can think of this as a geographical definition of community and presence. For the younger generation, presence is often about ‘being connected’ in some way with others who share a common interest or experience. We can think of this as a network approach to community, which is influenced to a huge degree by technology. Some argue that technology, such as the internet, tends to lower the barriers to engagement and presence.

Participation: While presence makes participation possible, it is in participation where we deepen our sense of belonging. Much research now points to the power of participation. Robert Putman’s work shows clearly that participation in community associations of common interest enhances well-being and contentment. The recent UN Report on Happiness shows that participation is essential to health and happiness. An important part of the Belonging Conversation was the idea of nurturing and supporting participation.



Illustration by Axel Scheffler

Many participants noted that they want to feel a stronger sense of community and belonging, but the challenge is to find the time and the space to make it happen.

For many organizations, this means building a more diverse workforce and board members, so that all citizens can see themselves reflected in the make-up of the organization.

Participants talked about how participation often builds a sense of group identity or cohesion. It is true that people more likely continue their participation, and feel like they belong, if they experience a strong sense of identity with the group. On the other hand, groups can also become ‘exclusive’ if that sense of identity is too strong and shuts out newcomers. This is a tricky community process or paradox for nurturing inclusion and belonging.

Relationships: People have a strong need for affiliation and relatedness, and relationships are often seen as the core of belonging. It is in relationship that people feel a sense of social connection. Research shows clearly that people with strong social networks are more likely to be healthy and feel a sense of belonging. Relationships built on common interest (presence and participation) often hold the glue that enables people to be motivated to get involved and stay involved. Participants in the Belonging Conversation also noted that it is the little things we do that make a difference in relationships that enhance belonging – being patient, having compassion, and having the capacity to forgive.

Relationships take time to nurture and develop. Many participants noted that they want to feel a stronger sense of community and belonging, but the challenge is to find the time and the space to make it happen. Some of the conversations about ‘pathways to belonging’ give us hints into possibilities for moving ahead.

Pathways to Belonging

Recognizing gifts: In many



Bonnie Acker

ways, we can think of genuine belonging as an exchange of gifts – I recognize and appreciate what strengths and gifts you bring to community and you recognize and appreciate what strengths and gifts I bring. You can never build an inclusive community on people’s deficits.

Offering invitation: When I am invited to visit a neighbour or to contribute to a community committee I feel valued. In our culture, that there is often hesitation to invite others to participate because we think it interferes with people’s personal autonomy. The experience of the New Story Group is that people often feel honoured to be asked, especially if they are being invited to participate in meaningful ways.

Providing hospitality: The word ‘hospitality’ means to host and to welcome strangers. When we experience hospitality, we feel included and it eases any discomfort we may have had. Unfortunately, the idea of hospitality has often been replaced by formal systems that seldom have hospitality at their core. Hospitality gives community true meaning, as people share of themselves and what they have to offer.

Being intentional about facilitating belonging: Belonging and inclusion will not happen unless we are intentional about our desire to create change. This is why Belonging Conversations are so valuable – they sharpen our minds, increase awareness, and help us be much more intentional about using a Belonging Lens to create more inclusive neighbourhoods and workplaces. Belonging can also be a guide for organizations that want to insure that their policies reflect inclusion and diversity principles.

tensive agriculture and biotechnology as the new solutions to old problems. Yet, in spite of great pressure on farmers, the spirit of the farmers, like the quack grass on their farms, just keeps bouncing back. Farm activism is being reborn. The cost-price squeeze has not killed the ingenuity of the farmers, expressing itself in new organic low input farms sprouting up across Canada. Farmers, too, know all about the regenerative power of the Earth!

As I experience this new life from humans, as I touch again into the mystery of the compost heap, my pessimism is reborn into optimism. Death into life. I can only respond with a deeper commitment to die to myself, and seek to participate in the regenerative power of the Earth, being humus for the Earth!

Developing bridging to enhance belonging: Communities can benefit from connecting and bridging approaches that enable people to experience genuine participation. Especially for people who are vulnerable or lonely, a facilitator can be immensely helpful in connecting that person with welcoming people and places. Facile and Step-Home, relatively new initiatives in Waterloo Region, are good examples of projects developed to facilitate connecting.

How do we Deepen our Understanding of Belonging and its Possibilities?

The New Story Group believes that conversation, stories, and mindful action are required to move the Belonging agenda ahead. Conversations are enabling us to learn from each other and to build a deeper understanding of what belonging means and why it is vital for our health and well-being. Many people and organizations are committed to a community of belonging and we can build on the good work that has already been started. Sharing stories enables us to explore possibilities – our personal stories can inspire others and they in turn can become our collective stories. So many positive stories already exist in our community and we want to build on those as we move forward. Participants in the Belonging Conversations identified actions they want to take to move belonging ahead in our community. Some actions are personal, others are grounded in neighbourhoods, others speak to the way we design our cities and communities, and still others are actions to change the way local organizations work with people.

Participants in the Belonging Conversations agreed that nurturing belonging begins with each of us. People embraced this idea of ‘inside-out’ learning. As Gandhi said, “Be the change you wish to see in the world.” This is the hope of the New Story Group, that we all contribute to building a community of belonging, in our own personal and family lives, as well as in our neighbourhoods, and in the organizations in which we work.

John Lord is currently Chair of the New Story Group of Waterloo Region. As a community researcher and author, he has written several books on social inclusion, including *Pathways to Inclusion: Building a New Story with People and Communities*. John is the founder of the Centre for Community Based Research in Kitchener.

The Spiritual Teachings of the Compost

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cheek! And yes, the story of new life that came out of the death of Jesus is the story of the compost heap, and of the Earth herself. The story of Jesus did not end with his body lying in the tomb. Jesus’ death was a time of crisis for the disciples, like the falling of a meteor to the earth, millions of years ago, became a time of crisis for the earth, resulting in the elimination of many species of life (including the dinosaur) the like of which was not known again until the present day. Yet, this crisis was an opportunity for the evolution of new forms of life, and in particular mammalian life.

The compost heap tells me that, even in these crises, life is possible.

The compost heap speaks to me of the regenerative power of the Earth, and of humans who are a part. The compost heap reminds me of the regenerative power of one human who died long ago, but still lives. These are difficult times. Yet, because I experience the life of Jesus, because I experience the life of the compost heap, I know that these times are also times for so much new possibilities of life.

The life within the compost heap inspires me to look for the regenerative power all around me! The crisis in farming today, is not the complete story either. Proponents of corporate industrial agriculture proclaim that the family farm is dead as they continue to promote free trade, in-

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Hacienda Sarrria Market Garden CSA

Join our Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program this spring and enjoy fresh, locally grown vegetables and flowers from June into October from the Hacienda Market Garden. By joining the CSA, you are supporting a local, volunteer-driven, community-based project. Pick up is at Queen Street Commons Café or The Tannery.

CSA members play a vital role supporting the Hacienda garden. In addition to vegetables, Maurita's Kitchen is offering cookies, desserts, and an exciting new main course dinner option -- the Ready-to-Enjoy dinner. Plus old favourites -- flowers and coffee.

If you are interested in buying a CSA share visit our online catalogue at catalogue.theworkingcentre.org. If you would like to sign up over the phone, please call us at 519-743-1151, x113 or email hacienda@theworkingcentre.org.



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CAB | COMMUNITY ACCESS BIKESHARE

Help Build Bike Culture!

Community Access Bikeshare

Community Access Bikeshare 2014 Season memberships can now be purchased through our online catalogue. Purchasing a membership for yourself or a friend will help us work towards making cycling more accessible in our community. Visit catalogue.theworkingcentre.org.

Community Access Bikeshare (CAB) is Waterloo Region's newest start-up bikesharing project. CAB members pay a one-time membership fee to access easy-to-ride bikes located at convenient stations in downtown Kitchener and Uptown Waterloo. The season runs from mid-April to mid-November.

Bikeshares help to reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality and motivate people to use cycling as a great transportation alternative.

Last season, CAB had five bright orange bike racks at Kitchener City Hall, the Kitchener Market, the Charles St. Bus Terminal, the Region of Waterloo building at 150 Frederick St. and Sunlife Financial in Waterloo. This season, the 150 Frederick St. station will be moved to the Main KPL on Queen St. N when it re-opens. We're also adding 5 more stations in the Kitchener downtown core!

Our Crowd Funding Plan

To grow our bikeshare, we have been investigating the idea of



crowdfunding. Crowd funding is the practice of funding a project by raising small amounts of money from a large number of people.

Although crowdfunding campaigns typically aim to raise money, our bikeshare team will be launching what we're calling a 'crowd-raising' campaign. Our goal will be to:

- * Attract bikeshare members,
- * Connect with new advertisers, sponsors and future bikeshare station hosts,
- * Recruit volunteers,
- * Build community awareness for CAB.

Working with a team of WLU MBA students, the crowd-raising campaign will take place in May. To stay in the loop, join our 'CAB friends email list' by sending an email to bikeshare@theworkingcentre.org.

Join us and support local bike culture. For more information and to see our new video, go to: www.theworkingcentre.org/cab.

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- * Doi Chaang (Thailand) ~ Dark Roast
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