

GOOD WORK NEWS

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

Issue 114

September 2013

Subscription: A Donation Towards our Work

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The Story of the First Rohingya Language School

By Christa Van Daele

Sometimes small groups working together, both in and around The Working Centre, burst beyond the borders of The Working Centre's beehive buzz into places of teaching and learning all over town. Special moments in such small groups remind us exactly what structures of aliveness can feel like. I call these "inside out" structures, where atmosphere and feeling precedes a clear plan.

The term was first introduced to me by long time community builder, Peter Block, who studied the architectural ideas of Christopher Alexander to consider the meaning and form of intelligent design for a living local commons. Recent experiences have reminded us that these tend to be times when, without a brilliant strategic plan of any kind, yet with qualities of a sustained spontaneous faith, new

The idea is that structures of aliveness can emerge from latent understandings, from community friendships, when a common purpose is genuinely embraced.

community forms take interesting, sometimes roughhewn shapes, where none had previously existed. How does this dynamic actually work, in practice?

The idea is that structures of aliveness can emerge from latent understandings, from community friendships, when a common purpose is genuinely embraced. In hindsight, emerging forms are clearly visible in a project now called the First Rohingya Language School, operating in 2013 out of the St Louis Centres for Adult Learning and Continu-

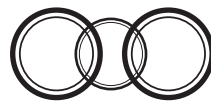
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Communal Tables

By Leslie Morgenson

In 1985, I went to New York City for the first time. I was 26 years old. And though we ventured to many of the typical tourist sites, the place that stands out the most for me that first trip was eating at the Carnegie Deli. Carnegie Deli was my first experience with communal tables. I can't remember if we purposely went there or if we simply stumbled upon it, but in the tale I tell we came upon it accidentally because that's the beauty of New York City: something exciting is waiting around every corner.

The restaurant was loud and a man, maybe the owner, was yelling directions to us, telling us where to sit, and where he wanted us to sit was beside strangers. I clearly remember standing in one spot for a moment longer than usual deciding if I really was up to sitting with strangers. But I did.



It was close and there was no avoiding touching the person on my left. This was the family dinner table in all its glory, elbow to elbow, staking out your territory and sharing space all in the same breath. In the middle of the table sat a bowl of pickles for everyone to dig into. There was no being shy at this table.

In Europe sharing a table is commonplace given that space is at a premium, something we rarely consider here in Canada. On a trip to Russia in 1991 on the cusp of the collapse of the Soviet Union we visited the Hermitage, an art gallery housed in the Tsar's Winter Palace. In the cellar we found a small cafe with a constant line waiting for seating and therefore people treated each table as a communal table to be shared. However, despite the fact that the queue persisted and we waved a welcome for strangers

I clearly remember standing in one spot for a moment longer than usual deciding if I really was up to sitting with strangers.

to share our table communally, no one would sit with the two Westerners. The power of conversing over the communal table was clear in a country where suspicion still had a stronghold regardless of a change of guard.

Making the decision to sit at a communal table requires some psychological self-negotiation. The stranger next to you is not only touching your elbow but has entered your personal space and is potentially rubbing up against your intimate space, that first circle around your being reserved for pets, lovers and family. In 1966, anthropologist Edward T. Hall developed the idea of proximity zones that we establish around ourselves. Strangers would typically be kept within the zone of 'social distance' or even further away in 'public space'. Having someone enter that close space can be uncomfortable. It's a risk but I know I don't want a risk free life. However what I'm willing to risk can change by the day.

In a recent letter in the Metropolitan Diary of the New York Times Matthew Cline wrote about squeezing between two people into a seat on a subway and how he likes to feel the warmth of human contact, the 'body heat' of others, the collective energy of a city full of people; he observes and envies lovers who sway with the train in their tangle; humanity on a subway and the endless possibility of connecting in ways spoken and unspoken.

Over time I have periodically danced that dance with myself as I think about sharing space at a communal table or decide who I'm going to sit beside on the bus. I have

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Twenty-Ninth Year

Issue 114

September 2013

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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By Dave Thomas

It was a bit windy, but otherwise a great day on the links at The Working Centre / St. John's Kitchen 24th Annual Golf Tournament on Aug 14 at Rockway in Kitchener.

All together, we raised over \$19,000 to support our work, with 128 golfers and 28 sponsors participating. CAW (now part of Unifor) and Lear Corporation returned as the main event sponsors, as well as MTD Products as Patron.

Golfers received something different at the prize table: a bottle of wine (bottled by TWC staff) and a bag of coffee, freshly roasted at the Queen Streets Common Café. Thank you to our prize sponsors, Brinks Canada and Strassburger Windows and Doors, and to Wine Kitz for donating the bottles.

Out on the course, players competed in contests for longest drive (men's and women's) closest to the keg and closest to the pin, as well as a chance to win \$10,000 for a hole-in-one at one of three designated holes. (There were some close shots, but no one won the big prize.)

This year's top foursome consisted of Bob Orr, Doug Orr, Hans Scholton and Mike Michaud. The women's team of Lorraine Turenne, Jill Strassburger, Kim and Cheryl Medeiros received trophies, as did

Golfers received something different at the prize table: a bottle of wine (bottled by TWC staff) and a bag of coffee, freshly roasted at the Queen Streets Common Café... We are grateful to the CAW, Lear Corporation, and MTD Products as main sponsors. Thank you to Strassburger Windows and Brink Canada for sponsoring the prizes...

the mixed group of Tim Mitchell, Mike Camblin, Dayle Stedman and Jim Robinson.

We are grateful for the support and leadership of our organizing committee: Chris Riehl (UA 527 Plumbers and Steamfitters), Frank Curnew (Labour Program of Waterloo Region), Fred Walker, and, from CAW: Jim Woods, Tim Mitchell and Brian Little. It was Brian's first year on the committee, but not his first tournament. "It's always a really fun event," he said. "I'm already looking forward to next year."

Join us next August for the 25th outing of the tournament! Keep watching The Working Centre's website in the spring for details.

The Story of the First Rohingya Language School

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ing Education. Informal ideas for the support of children's learning in their own language were hatched in embryonic form in 2012 around improvised downtown public café meeting spaces and homes. The outcome of something called a "Saturday morning school" that grew from a "homework club" arose, as many projects do, from sustained conversation among friends.

Good Work News readers may be aware of the distressing CBC and newspaper reports about the suffering of the Muslim Rohingya people, who have fled their native homeland of Burma in waves to land in Bangladesh, Malaysia, and other countries in response to ongoing genocide -- issues which are only drastically escalating this year, in 2013, despite regime changes in Burma. Like many other refugee groups, Rohingya people often live in refugee camps close to two decades before successfully filing applications to enter Canada. Defined as stateless by the Burmese

government, the Rohingya people no longer have a home of their own, bereft of citizenship and, to date, lacking a written language of their own.

"It is true that Rohingya people have sometimes been in camps in Bangladesh for close to 20 years before finding a way to get to Canada," says Anwar, a Rohingya leader who has progressively attracted Working Centre supporters and many dedicated friends in local church groups to the issues since that time. "In the camps," Anwar adds, "normal human behaviour is gone. There is only survival to think about. Survival behaviour. The Rohingya know they are not wanted in Bangladesh; cruelties and deep corruption are often present in the camps, on top of the original trauma in Burma, where civil liberties were systematically stripped away over generations. When Rohingya people come to Canada, they have lost all sense of themselves, of how

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Reflections: Gifts, Lynne Woolstencroft and Carl Kaufman

By Joe Mancini

This Spring The Working Centre was offered many special donations. Suzanne Doyle, Diredre Nally and Dan Vanderbelt each celebrated significant birthdays by creating unique fundraising events that together directed over \$8,000 towards Working Centre projects.

For over ten years, Paul Bulla has been putting together a summer party at his house that he calls Bullafest. Each year, Paul and his friends make over \$1,000 in donations to St. John's Kitchen.

We also had a number of memorial donations from supporters who passed away. The families of Madeline Cullen, Leo Burns, Frank McDermott and Cameron Bolt all directed memorial donations towards The Working Centre or St. John's Kitchen. It is heart warming to witness friends and family providing respect by contributing to the good work of community building.

In May, The Working Centre was included in the memorial contributions of Lynne Woolstencroft, former Mayor of the City of Waterloo and a mentor to all who believed in public and community service. Lynne was a politician who helped individuals and groups develop their ability to shape their community.

For 30 years, Lynne supported The

Working Centre's grassroot projects because she believed in our model of mixing community and government resources to deliver services. In our early years we used to compare notes on the importance of going the extra mile to support people in their job search.

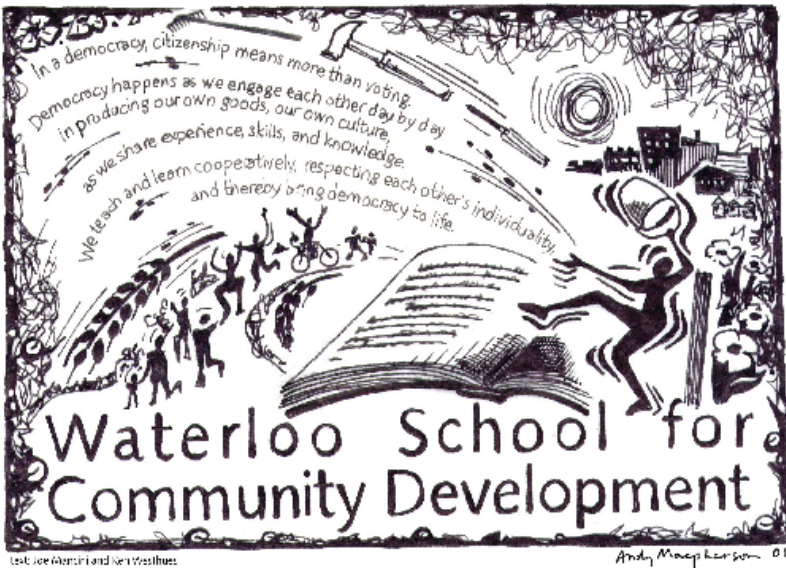
In 1987, Lynne eloquently explained to the Regional Community Services Committee the importance of supporting grassroots employment services in contrast to government organized programs. Her interventions were important for us to develop a base in KW.

During the years we operated Tri-Tech Recycling, Lynne worked with the Waterloo Environmental Committee to establish the original Waterloo Drop Off Recycling Depot beside Seagrams. It became the most popular recycling depot in the Region. It was Lynne's ability to cut through bureaucracy that made that project possible.

In 2002, as Mayor, Lynne brought the City of Waterloo into the Mayors' Dinner. She wanted to support The Mayors' Dinner as a project organized by The Working Centre that combined civic building with fundraising.

We are grateful for Lynne's friendship and her commitment to community-based work.

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Diploma in Local Democracy

Next Class Starting Wednesday January 8th 2014 7:00pm

The sixth Diploma in Local Democracy class will start on the second Wednesday of January. It will run for 13 weeks. We welcome interested individuals who want to expand their democratic knowledge by engaging this learning forum. The project is about

LOCAL DEMOCRACY

By Isaiah Boronka

*Community is a wonderful thing,
It is about relationships
between all kinds of people
in the places where they live*

*Community is built when people
converse together,
work together,
eat together
and look after one another*

*Community-as-response
is when the community
looks at all the troubles of the
world,*

*it looks at, and thinks about,
the poverty, unemployment and
lack of good work,
the degradation of the earth, and
lack of good food*

*but in thinking it does not
think that we can't act
and that the only ones
who can act
are the big institutions
with the money and the experts*

*it thinks
we can do something,
we can respond!*

*So when a community (as relation-
ship)
Thinks "we can do something!"
and acts in accordance
Then it becomes community (as
response)*

*And when community-as-relationship
Becomes community-as-response
The fruit is Local Democracy
And that fruit
is the root
Of Democracy*

teaching how democratic relations in everyday life form the roots of a democratic society.

Local Democracy is an expression of building community, of ensuring people are not left behind, of practicing the skills of equality and peaceful coexistence and challenging hierarchy by affirming equal relationships. All these skills can be practiced in workplaces, public agencies, community groups, schools and at home.

Last year's class was highly successful for developing a dialogue among the participants, each defining Local Democracy in their own terms. Here are some of their comments:

"We have grown to know each other through hearing each other's stories and this is powerful, it is more than a superficial connection. How do I create space for people to feel safe, where they can offer their gifts? This experience has been about developing relationships through people's stories."

"These two hours a week have been meditative, therapeutic in the sense of growth. The notion that a small community can have a voice, can dream out loud, being able to share ideas that I would not have had the opportunity to share otherwise. It makes me want to take this model elsewhere."

"I have enjoyed being part of a community, a group that has become closely connected to each other, in a unique way. I have enjoyed the sense of equality. As a New Canadian this has made me feel like a human being. This is what happens at the grassroots and emphasizes the meaning of community, where we are neither above nor below each other but rather developing connections between each other."

To learn more, call Kara at 519-743-1151 x119 or see our website at <http://www.theworkingcentre.org/diploma-local-democracy/188>

"By community, I mean the commonwealth and common interests, commonly understood, of people living together in a place and wishing to continue to do so. To put it another way, community is a locally understood interdependence of local people, local culture, local economy and local nature."
Wendell Berry

Graduation of the 5th Local Democracy Class

Andy Macpherson
will give the
Commencement
Address to the
Graduating Class



We are pleased that Andy Macpherson will give the commencement address for the Diploma in Local Democracy graduation.

Andy Macpherson has many talents to share. During the day, Andy is the Program Head of the Mathematics Department at St. Mary's High School where he has been a popular mathematics teacher for over 20 years.

Andy is also a musician and for three decades has played in many large and small ensemble settings, spanning Latin, classical, rock, and jazz. He has co-founded three bands – NVJQ (New Vibes Jazz Quartet), Big Band Theory and Farmington State where he specializes in vibes and percussion.

NVJQ has played many Friday evenings to packed crowds at the Queen Street Commons Café. Andy is married to Suzie Fowler and they have three children.

Since the early 1990's, Andy has been assisting The Working Centre with graphic designs. He started when his mother, Arleen Macpherson was coordinator of St. John's Kitchen. He began with creative thank you cards and by 1994 he was producing front page graphics that came to symbolize the spirit and

Wednesday November 20th
7:00 pm
Queen Street
Commons Café

vibe of The Working Centre. We have sprinkled a sampling of Andy's work throughout this issue

In a 2005 Good Work News article entitled **The Music Between the Words**, Christa Van Daele described Andy's work as illuminated text.

"Andy has gone down many roads to offer up a body of pioneering humanist images that increasingly, in 2005, outline a "story in stages" about The Working Centre. He has rendered for our collective benefit the vibrant pieces of a redemptive narrative, offering us a coherent shaped world that many of us are delighted to absorb - and perhaps recast some day in a form of our own."

Join us to learn about the Local Democracy project, Andy's creative engagement in community art and to hear the Local Democracy stories of our graduates.



In May, Fr. Toby Collins CR, a crew of volunteers and Job Café workers laid the final 3,000 square feet of pathways at the Hacienda Sarria Market Garden with interlocking brick. It is now possible to walk along the whole two-three acre site. Thanks to Fr. Toby for offering his energy and expertise to make this possible.

Strategies for Sustainable Livelihood

Components of the Localism Initiative: The Local Exchange, Localism Help Desk, Marketplaces, BarterWorks and WRAP

By Nathan Stretch & Eli Winterfeld

In response to current economic development—where the labour market does not accommodate those willing and able to work with full-time permanent positions—we are engaging with people around livelihood and strategies for building a sustainable way of life that includes multiple income streams.

In this way, we are expanding on a familiar conversation at The Working Centre – how to engage and maintain meaningful, community involvement – by linking the principals of producerism, living simply, building community and serving others back to income as it supports livelihood. By hosting these conversations on livelihood in K-W, a community-based response that is emergent and practical can take shape.

We are encouraging people to think creatively about combining income earning activities in a way that is sustainable and responsive to the local labour market. By practicing skills, gathering sector specific knowledge and training, or acting on a passion, people can imagine contributing a service or product within the frame of a challenging local economy. Strategies for sustainable livelihoods can combine small business or home-based projects that compliment part-time or contract work, and a commitment to frugal living and artful innovation. Purchasers are able to ‘buy-local’ and support the creative livelihood decisions of their neighbours, strengthening a community of trade.

The Working Centre is supporting sustainable livelihoods through developing neighbour to neighbour exchange. Localism—as we have been calling it—values, supports and promotes relationship between local producers and purchasers and recognizes its contribution to the socio-economic resilience of our community. The thread of Localism connects emergent and established projects and practices at The Working Centre.

The Local Exchange is an online tool that catalogues the products and services of its users, and helps buyers and sellers to contact one another by maintaining a dynamic, hosted and secure website. **Barterworks**, the local currency trading group is now part of **The Local Exchange**. This website can facilitate buying and selling using Barter Dollars or Canadian currency. The **Localism Help Desk** assists people to use the new website and help build marketplace opportunities for producers and purchasers.

WRAP small business supports hosted at The Working Centre encourage the development of small business, with a focus on local enterprise. **The Local Exchange** website and Localism supports are open to individuals considering or testing ideas for small business, encourages the development of small business, and welcomes established local businesses.

The Working Centre’s **Job Search Resource Centre** is a place where counselors can help you look for a job that complements livelihood goals. A comprehensive Job Search Road Map is hosted on our website and can be navigated with a counselor, in small groups, or individually. An Employment Counselor can support decision-making processes as people consider information about career counseling, labour market research, training and education, apprenticeships, and government funding. Our job postings site is active and up-to-date.

Understanding the earning potential of specific work, combined with the projected income from a skill or product offered locally can contribute to a frame for living frugally. **Money Matters** and **Localism Help Desk** are available to guide and encourage frugal innovation and living simply with practical ideas and concepts for financial planning, transportation, food, clothing, gift and household items, technology, child care, and entertainment.

People are welcome in our Community Tools Projects to build hands on skills. These projects provide opportunity to participate in social enterprises that are responsive, innovative, and thoughtfully frugal.



By Greg Roberts

BarterWorks is a project of the The Working Centre that fosters skill development and community building through the practice of sharing goods and services with others. As barter implies, you might think you offer your skills and products in exchange for other’s goods or skills rather than money.

This is true to a point, but in reality one offers, in good faith, their skills and goods in exchange for a form of credit. This credit is issued as a virtual local currency that is



Can we dedicate a portion of our purchasing to those in our community who are working to support their own livelihoods? Can we support the entrepreneurial efforts of individuals who are exploring the ideas of livelihood and production?

Supporting Livelihood through Local Exchange

By Stephanie Mancini

How often do we think about wider implications when we purchase a cup of coffee, groceries, clothing, a book? These transactions are increasingly electronic – separated from the provider of the good or service. How often do we know the person, company or country where goods are made?

Is it possible to recapture purchases made between people we know who live nearby? We can make intentional choices about the “who” and “where” of purchasing goods and services. This seems like an oddly idealistic concept.

Can we dedicate a portion of our purchasing to those in our community who are working to support their own livelihoods? Can we support the entrepreneurial efforts of individuals who are exploring the ideas of livelihood and production?

It can be inconvenient shopping from multiple individuals and locations. It is can be harder to buy from someone we know – what if the product doesn’t meet the quality that we have come to expect from the standardized shopping culture? Locally produced goods are unique and they can lack the consistency and efficiency of larger producers.

It takes an intentional spirit to change convenient shopping patterns to support a wider community good. We expect little from cheaply

produced consumer goods that quickly become outdated, but we hesitate to invest those same dollars in someone’s locally developed product or service.

At The Working Centre we have seen the ingenuity of people working on creative livelihoods – one woman has become a local farmer, a couple turned their home into a homesteading bed and breakfast, people turning computer skills into building accessible technology, people supplementing social incomes with sewing, cleaning, baking, and people starting creative and artistic home based businesses. This is the work of building local community.

It requires intentional choice to support and sustain local enterprise. If we see the importance of small purchasing decisions and support local individuals and organizations, then we move closer to relationship-based exchanges with our neighbours.

Livelihood can be about living with less money, but it is not necessarily about living with less. The practice of sustainable livelihoods, lived in a local way, strengthens community in sharp contrast to dislocation, isolation, and exclusion. By reclaiming local connectedness, by embedding economic exchange in relationships with people who live near us, we can reclaim our capacity to be part of a thriving community.

localexchange.theworkingcentre.org

used to purchase goods and services from others.

Barter only works when you have a match between what you offer and what you need from another. Because this match is hard to make, BarterDollars are used as tools of credit, that afford you the opportunity to get what you need now, with your skills and products as guarantee that you will provide similar value in the future.

By choosing to accept BarterDollars (in whole or in part) for the things we make we also choose to redeem these dollars from others for the things they make and do. An obvious difference between our national currencies and local currencies is that local means the money

is bound to this community and can get used over and over again.

National currencies tend to drift to larger economic centres. Another distinction of a local currency is that no interest is earned or charged on account balances. This means there is no incentive to hoard BarterDollars in order to gain interest. Also spenders will not be penalized for using the money.

These points combine to keep the money in circulation, precisely what we want to happen in our economy. People selling the things they make and do, meeting real needs and building skills.

Because BarterDollars are circulated among a similarly motivated

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Waterloo Region ASSETS Project

By Greg Roberts

In 2004 members of the Waterloo chapter of MEDA (Mennonite Economic Development Association) met with The Working Centre to identify a way to help people develop the skills needed for starting their own business. A feasibility study identified the need for training for people who may not fit the criteria of government sponsored initiatives. In particular the study noted the importance of training for middle-aged workers, women and New Canadians. It also noticed that there was a gap in training opportunities for those with modest business aspirations despite the fact that Micro-Enterprises are the largest group of employers in the country.

At The Working Centre we continue to learn of the challenges facing these individuals. The need for training and supports to these groups has only increased as job opportunities decrease. For many a decade of experience working for others becomes a liability; over qualified, perceived salary expectations, and too much experience. Self-employment offers these individuals the opportunity to exploit their own talents.

To answer this need, in 2005 together with the Waterloo Chapter of MEDA, we started the Waterloo Region Assets Project (WRAP). Since then we have been captivated by the hope and enthusiasm individuals have demonstrated in their pursuit of their self-employment dreams. It has been a great privilege to be a part of this myself for the past 5 years. Each group of students in the WRAP program reflects the variety of lived experiences of those in our communities. Whether they are new to Canada, to business or even computer technology the students continue to meet these challenges with the very conscious support of their classmates. This repeated sense of cooperation is a refreshing alternative to the false impression that business is greedy and individualistic.

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community, new relationships are formed; trust and skills are built with every transaction.

People may enter this community with a skill or service they want to share, only to discover that when they consider the needs of others, they find themselves developing new skills to meet these needs.

We are all of many things. Our consumer culture and big box habits have obscured and dulled this sense of our abilities. Doing things for others and cultivating our abilities are important parts of the gift economy that emerge in the practice of local currency projects like Barter-Works or other LETSystems (Local



The ASSETS program is focused on helping individuals answer the questions about the direction their business will take. What costs will they have, what price will they charge, who is their best customer and how will they reach them are all dealt with in the course of the 10 weeks.

Indeed the experience of participating in these classes has led me to believe that given the opportunity people will look for ways to collaborate and practice mutual support. In the process of exploring their business ideas these entrepreneurs come to trust one another's motivation and ability to deliver their goods and services with fair pricing and reliable service. The relationships developed in class are precisely the relationships needed between consumers and producers in the market place, for surely a business will fail if it is unable to gather the trust of its customer.

The ASSETS program is focused on helping individuals answer the questions about the direction their business will take. What costs will they have, what price will they charge, who is their best customer and how will they reach them are all dealt with in the course of the 10 weeks. Upon Graduation the aspiring entrepreneur is now one of many fish in the pond. Starting a dialogue with potential customers is a critical step for new businesses. Finding enough of these customers is the next challenge. At The Working Centre we are building a platform to encourage this conversation between producer and consumer. Through the Local Exchange and the Localism desk we hope to help new businesses present themselves to an audience that understands the integrity and passion WRAP graduates bring to the marketplace.

exchange trading systems).

Building community through economic transactions might seem a little too idealistic, but perhaps these little steps of providing for one another, might just grow into communities of abundance. We invite you to help us try.

Older Workers Forum

Wednesday, November 13, 2013

4-6 p.m.

St. John's Kitchen
97 Victoria N., Kitchener

A forum to hear the stories and challenges faced by older workers

For the past three years, The Working Centre has hosted the Targeted Initiatives for Older Workers (TIOW) program. TIOW, working with people aged 50 to 64, has worked to develop training options, assist with employment and help workers remain active in the labour market. TIOW is slated to end March 31, 2014.

In October, 2013 CBC's Sunday Morning will air a piece created by CBC National journalist Maureen Brosnan, detailing some of the stories from the older workers who have been participating in The Working Centre's TIOW program.

All past and present TIOW participants and community members are invited to join in the conversation. Elected Waterloo Region politicians will participate in round-table discussions.

For more information call Kara at 519-743-1151 x119

Rohingya Language School

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to work, how to help one another." Anwar concludes that the helplessness and negative behaviours learned in the camps have hugely depleted a store of ordinary belief in the value of their own lives, making life for the Rohingya in an Ontario community extremely difficult.

What are some ways that Anwar and his spouse Zainab have moved forward to support the children and Rohingya parents in our local community? Initially assisted by the strong support of Bonnie Adams, a longtime refugee advocate, Anwar and Zainab opened a Homework Club to help Rohingya kids function better in math skills. "The missing piece was the Rohingya language," shared Zainab, a former math teacher in Burma. "We wanted to instruct the kids in their own language, as they were missing so many concepts that are taught in English in the schools."

The simple hospitality of a basement room offered by a Rohingya parent gradually extended into friendly potlucks, then connecting with Working Centre friends to help strengthen the overall effort. Lutfiye Tutak, an employment counsellor with organizing experience in the Turkish community, and Bonnie Adams and myself, a longtime Working Centre person, started to meet regularly with Anwar and Zainab to review steps. Explosions of genocide news from Burma directly penetrated Anwar and Zainab's thoughts throughout our meetings of the last four months, adding sorrow and weight to our meetings. Discussions moved on to explore opportunities of in kind communi-

ty help. Could we find a more spacious, permanent classroom? Could we find money for snacks and for texts and workbooks?

Outreach attempts in 2012 worked. Mosaic Family Counselling offered an air conditioned boardroom in the hot summer of 2012, and repeated the offer this summer. United Way and the Kitchener-Waterloo Community Foundation donated a start-up fund for supplies and bus tickets. A teaching stipend for Zainab, the key teacher, allowed the launch of a Rohingya language-teaching initiative with support from Lilianna Sosnowski and the Waterloo Catholic District School Board. St. Francis School off Queen's Boulevard offered a new home. The Working Centre rounded out practical supports with financial administration.

The First Rohingya Language School is thus named because, in fact, it is the first Rohingya language school in the world. To our great surprise, our celebratory K-W project launch created an unexpected ripple through Facebook. Rohingya individuals around the world connect with the page weekly. We are delighted that a second Rohingya language school opened in the summer of 2013.

Through the liaison work of Anwar, an educator in the Malaysian Rohingya refugee community, inquired about the logistics of our Kitchener-based start-up. It has been radically instructive for our Kitchener group to realize that photographic images of our school's activities, and a Kevin Nunn's lively logo, has stimulated a dialogue with potential Rohingya community builders in other parts

Reflections: Carl Kaufman

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We were also grateful that Eleanor Kaufman requested that donations in memory of Carl Kaufman be made to The Working Centre. Carl died suddenly while doing some work in his 91st year.

While we were in the long reception line to pass on our condolences to Eleanor, Bill Carter smiled at me and said, "It makes perfect sense why Carl liked The Working Centre, Carl would always say, 'there is no free lunch.'"

Bill, like Carl, understands that the free lunch we serve at St. John's Kitchen is in a different category. Carl went himself many times to learn about how that meal is prepared and served.

He saw that the people who come for a meal are the workforce producing the meal. He saw the cooperative effort to carry the food up to the kitchen, prepare the meal, and serve it, followed by the huge effort to scrape and wash dishes, clean tables, and mop the floors.

Carl had clear ideas about meaningful work. He had little patience for charity; he believed people should be part of some kind of daily work. He saw in St. John's Kitchen a community effort to involve peo-

Carl was a unique citizen. He came from a tradition that was critical of public or private sector bureaucrats...Carl loved to ask hard questions. He wanted to enliven work with purpose, in the tradition of his family.

ple, rather than exclude them, from the work that they are called to do.

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Software Freedom Day

By Paul Nijjar

Have you ever done a Google search? Looked something up on Wikipedia? Used a Macintosh computer or an Android phone? Updated your status on Facebook? If you have done any of these things, then you have -- directly or indirectly -- benefited from the existence of "Free Software".

Free software (also known as open source, software libre, or FLOSS) are computer programs that anybody is legally permitted to use, study, improve, and share.

On Software Freedom Day, we celebrate and reflect upon how free software has shaped our world. We also get together for presentations, interesting conversations, snacks, software and free culture giveaways, and installation support. The Working Centre has helped host Software Freedom Day events since 2008. Over these five short years the way we use computers has changed dramatically. Our computing is moving away from desktop and laptop computers and onto tablets and smartphones. Our software and data is moving off of our hard drives and onto "the cloud" -- hosted services on other people's servers. Giving away CDs of software seems quaint -- many modern PCs don't even come with CD-ROMs. What role do the ideas of software freedom play in this new world?

September 28, 2013

10 am to 5 pm

Kwartzlab

33 Kent Ave, Kitchener

For details see <http://www.theworkingcentre.org/sfd>

For one thing, much of this new world is built upon free software. All of the services and products at the top of this article were built upon free software tools. Google powers its search engines on GNU/Linux servers, and administers them using the Python programming language. It built its Android phone operating system on top of the Linux kernel. Wikipedia runs on top of software called MediaWiki.

Apple built MacOS on top of FreeBSD. Much of Facebook is programmed in the PHP language. Some people in the free software community are (justifiably) wary of these organizations -- the power they hold and the way they lock in our data. But free software means that even organizations you dislike are allowed to use your software for their needs, and many of these companies have used (and continue to use) free software to build their fortunes.

Quaint or not, there is a plethora

tions. He wanted to enliven work with purpose, in the tradition of his family.

Carl was impressed by the renovations to 97 Victoria North. He watched as we turned an old building into the new St. John's Kitchen and Worth A Second Look thrift store. But most importantly he saw that the people from St. John's Kitchen were involved in this project.

When we renovated 66 Queen in 2004, I toured Carl and Eleanor through the second floor apartments we were building. Carl's grandfather, Jacob Kaufman, did the same work when he converted the old wood frame Zion Evangelical Church, built around 1877, into apartments.

The Kaufmans purchased the Zion Church building and property around 1910. Jacob also built the present day Schlichter's building on this Queen Street South property.

I read in a Zion history pamphlet that one of Carl's most memorable childhood experiences was collecting rent from the tenants of those Queen Street apartments.

Carl's older brother Edmund also died this past October at the age of 96. He managed the Schlichter's business and also worked right up to his last days.

We are grateful for the deep support and connections that people old and young continue to offer The Working Centre.

We can use free software tools to make animations, compose music, write manifestos, communicate with our friends, and investigate how computers work.

of free software tools available for our desktops and laptops. We can use free software tools to make animations, compose music, write manifestos, communicate with our friends, and investigate how computers work.

In that light, many of this year's presentations focus on multimedia: how to create it, organize it, and host it. You may not want to create your own version of Flickr or YouTube, but the fact that free software exists to allow you to do so means you are less locked into these services when they do things you don't like.

This year also marks the 30th anniversary of the GNU project. You may never have heard of this project, but it has made much of the free software world (and therefore much of the modern Internet) possible.

We will commemorate this anniversary with a talk about the history and importance of GNU.

Technology may seem like magic, but it's not. Free software gives us tools to understand and challenge how technology works and where it is headed. On September 28, join us, pick up some of these tools, and learn how you can use them to help empower yourself in this new technological age.

Rohingya Language School

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of the world.

Our official launch on May 11, 2012, was a time of joy. Warm spoken messages of congratulation were shared by Stephen Woodsworth MP, and Carl Zehr, Mayor of Kitchener, among other guests. The children of the Rohingya School dramatized their flight from Bangladesh in a dramatic presentation, reciting poetry and song that shared their dreams, interspersed by live music from Rohingya musicians and a powerful personal statement by Anwar.

Friends from Reception House, Mosaic Family Counselling, Muslim Social Services, The Working Centre, and the Muslim Women's Coalition, and representatives of the Turkish community stood by the founding group to celebrate together. Amazing deserts were contributed by Turkish friends of the project.

What have we learned? We are still digesting it all, while studying the next steps. Collective moments of human change and growth reach stability and structure, while also striving to retain a fluid, playful, and nimble atmosphere. We have aimed for the spirit of servant leadership, following rather than leading. We have learned the value of starting small, working hard, accepting and including the gifts of others at each step. We continue to reflect.

It is my observation that relationships, strengthened by organic and socially productive forms, overflow into friendship, silently weaving through all intentions, creating an interesting "holy something" from "nothing". "The imagination is part of our lives," said Dorothy Day to psychiatrist Robert Coles in a taped interview. "Part of reality. The responsibility is to hope, to dream." In this spirit, the imaginative efforts of Anwar and Zainab Arkani are huge, as they connect online with disenfranchised Rohingya persons in Burma, Bangladesh, and Malaysia. Our group dreams of further local/global links.

The work does entail gritty effort. There is no dream, just the everyday reality of personal stamina. Most of our human efforts, in fact, can seem unclear, as they are being lived out, in the everyday. In the dream begins the responsibility, as Dorothy Day suggests to Robert Coles. Whatever the local Rohingya community effort is, and has been, this past year, the fingertip feeling of improvised structures is one of essence and aliveness, something we may sometimes dare to say that our lives are wonderfully about.

Christa Van Daele is an educator and freelance writer who has been active at The Working Centre for 10 years.

Active Hope

How to Face the Mess We're in Without Going Crazy

By Joanna Macy & Chris Johnstone

Book Review

By Patrice Thorn

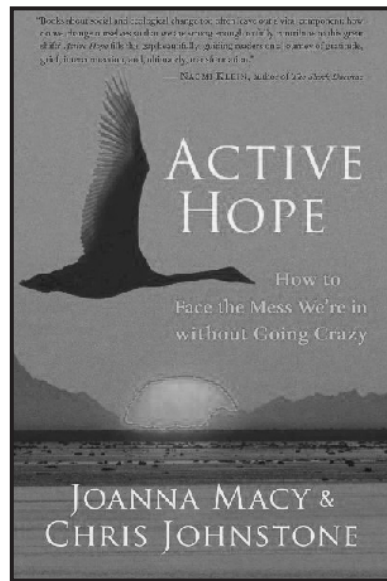
Joanna Macy is a scholar of Buddhism, general systems theory and deep ecology. She has taught at several universities in the United States and has traveled the world, offering trainings to enliven and empower our responses to planetary crisis. In her early eighties, she has been an activist for more than five decades; is a respected voice in the movements for peace, justice and ecology; and has either written or co-written a dozen books.

Chris Johnstone is a medical doctor who has specialized in the psychology of behaviour change, resilience and recovery from addiction. Living in the United Kingdom, he works as a coach, trains health professionals in behavioural medicine and has pioneered the role of resilience training in promoting positive mental health. An activist since his teenage years and now in his late forties, he has taught and written about the psychology of sustainability for more than twenty years.

The planetary environmental challenges we face can be difficult even to think about. Climate change, the depletion of oil, economic upheaval and mass extinction together create a planetary emergency of overwhelming proportions. Drawing on decades of teaching an empowerment approach known as the Work That Reconnects, the authors guide us through a transformational process informed by mythic journeys, modern psychology, spirituality, and holistic science. This process equips us with tools to face the mess we're in and play our role in the collective transition, or Great Turning, to a life-sustaining society.

"Passive hope is about waiting for external agencies to bring about what we desire. Active Hope is about becoming active participants in bringing about what we hope for. Active Hope is a practice. Like tai chi or gardening, it is something we do rather than have. It is a process we can apply to any situation, and it involves three key steps. First, we take a clear view of reality; second, we identify what we hope for in terms of the directions we'd like things to move in or the values we'd like to see expressed; and third, we take steps to move ourselves or our situation in that direction." (p. 3)

Part One of the book talks in de-



tail about what the authors mean by The Great Turning. They begin by describing three stories, or versions of reality, occurring in our world at the present time. The first is Business as Usual, which assumes that there is little need to change the way we live. Continuous economic growth is regarded as essential for prosperity, and the central plot is about getting ahead. The second



Communal Tables

continued from page 1

I'm going to sit beside on the bus. I have been amenable to communal tables and other encounters of proximity with strangers but I am not consistently open to dialogue with strangers and would not always be receptive to a communal table given the situation or my mood. In fact I am someone who also enjoys eating alone. But I am aware that by avoiding the opportunity to speak to a stranger I am potentially missing out on something. Riding a bus, walking, or sitting at a communal table offer the possibility of something which can't even be named here because we don't know what it might be until it happens. There are now websites devoted to communal table etiquette which hold that it is probably not the best choice for a romantic first date, but I wonder if in fact it might not be the perfect date restaurant. Instead of looking rapidly into each other's

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story, The Great Unraveling, draws attention to the disasters that Business as Usual is taking us toward. It is an overwhelming, despairing account of the problems facing the planet. The third story is called The Great Turning and is about the transition from an industrial society committed to economic growth to a life-sustaining society committed to the healing and recovery of our world. The Great Turning involves a shift in consciousness, developing new life-sustaining systems and practices and holding campaigns in defence of life on Earth.

We are asked to think of the Great Turning as an adventure story that we can all participate in. Part of the adventure of the Great Turning involves seeking the company, allies, sources of support, tools and insights that help us on our quest.

The Work That Reconnects uses a spiral that maps out an empowerment process that journeys through four successive movements – Coming from Gratitude, Honouring Our Pain for the World, Seeing with New Eyes, and Going Forth.

The Honouring Our Pain for the World chapter of the book was especially powerful. In the deep ecology workshops led by Joanna, feeling deep pain for the world is acknowledged as normal, healthy and widespread. Outrage, alarm, grief, guilt, dread and despair are all normal, healthy responses to a world in trauma.

In Buddhism, open alertness that allows our heart to be stirred by the suffering of others is appreciated as a strength. Compassion is an essential and noble capacity. The ability to suffer with is evidence of our interconnectedness with all life. In this chapter there are some exercises and personal practices to help us feel our pain for the world. A process called Breathing Through, adapted from an ancient Buddhist meditation for developing compassion, is especially helpful.

Part Two talks about seeing with new eyes, experiencing a wider sense of self that is connected to the web of all life. A collaborative model of power is described and Nelson Mandela is used as an example of one person who embraced this model effectively.

We are encouraged to embrace a richer sense of community which includes not only groups that we feel at home in, but also the wider community around us, the global community of all humanity and the Earth community of all life. A larger view of time is also presented. We are asked to regard our ancestors as allies in this great adventure and to think long term into the future to the seventh generation.

Part Three is about going forth and gives many suggestions for building support around you, maintaining energy and enthusiasm and allowing uncertainty to add mystery and adventure to the journey.

Active Hope is about taking action for the good of the planet. Some of the virtues discussed in Active Hope align with the virtues of The Working Centre: Living Simply in Harmony with all Life; Building Community; Serving Others; Rejecting Status.

Active Hope also helps us develop the additional virtues of compassion, resilience in the face of change and allowing the uncertainty of our future to wake us up and engage our full attention in the present.

Patrice Thorn wrote this book review for the Local Democracy class. Patrice was an original Working Centre Board member.

eyes and engaging in narcissistic, uninspiring monologues, maybe it would be better to witness how your date interacts with strangers, how they respond to shared space and maybe because of the proximity to others, the dialogue might be more interesting, more focused on ideas instead of egos.

At St. John's Kitchen and the Queen Street Commons Café people have always created their own communal tables asking if they can sit with someone. It happens daily which seems appropriate for a community kitchen. Some are just looking for a place to eat; others make it their habit to visit all of the tables, wandering through the dining room alighting at each table to greet.

It seems to be an idea that is catching on, certainly in cafés, but also it is a growing trend in restaurants. And maybe communal tables will become so common that someday we might just call them tables.

Hacienda Sarria Market Garden Update

By Adam Kramer

With each brisk misty morning we can feel that fall is fast approaching. Yet, the pace of work at The Working Centre gardens is as brisk as ever. Until the snow is flying, staff and volunteers at the Hacienda Market Garden and Grow Gardens will be busy harvesting vegetables, planting and storing winter crops, and preparing for next year. A gardener's work is never done!

September is a busy time as the garden's bounty is at its fullest. Warm weather crops such as lettuce, tomatoes, and peppers are still around, while our cool weather crops such as leeks are already beginning to produce. Not to mention all the other lovely things that are growing - kale, carrots, beets, herbs, onions, and plenty more.

As you wander the garden paths, it is difficult to believe that the Hacienda Market Garden is only in its second season. With the help of countless volunteers and four wonderful interns, the gardens have moved forward by leaps and bounds this year. Hard work has gone into keeping our vegetables free of weeds, while also working to build the overall health of the soil with composting and cover crops. With larger yields of fresh local vegetables, we have been able to supply 48 CSA food box shares, in addition to a weekly share to St. John's Kitchen and sales to local stores and restaurants.

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Some of those who made this productive season possible will be moving on to new endeavours this fall. The interns this summer, Meg Herod, Amy Bumbucco, Carolyn Mann, Michelle Donaldson and David Penny have demonstrated how our garden can teach sustainable urban agriculture. Learning market garden practices from soil preparation, seeding, planting, weeding, and harvesting is an excellent summer job. Their hard work and dedication to the gardens has certainly been appreciated by all those whose paths they crossed.

In late May, Fr. Toby and a crew of volunteers and Job Café workers laid the final 3,000 square feet of pathways and gathering areas with interlocking brick. The work ties the three planting areas together and it is now possible to walk along the



whole two-three acre site. Thanks to Fr. Toby for offering his energy and expertise to make this possible.

Indeed, many have passed through the garden this season - taking the time to learn about growing food, while helping get the work done. The educational aspects of both gardens has bloomed this year, as we welcomed many diverse groups and individuals to our shared space. Our interns gained valuable hands-on expertise in the operation of a small scale market garden and in turn passed their knowledge on to volunteers. Through the Living Classroom project, grade 7 and 8 students from Blessed Sacrament Elementary School learned how to grow and enjoy a variety of healthy vegetables. The youth at Conrad Grebel's Peace Camp spent several days in the gardens learning about local food and the many ways it helps build strong communities. Kids from Relish Cooking Studio's Camp Program came to see where many of their ingredients came from and found out first-hand that local vegetables simply taste better than the alternatives. The hands-on participation of these groups and our regular volunteers builds our community's capacity to grow more

healthy and sustainable foods.

So, with fall comes the excitement of that final push towards winter. With lots of sunshine still in store and plenty of vegetables left to harvest, it's clear there is no better place to enjoy the changing seasons than in the garden.

To Volunteer email hacienda@theworkingcentre.org or call 519-575-1118.

KW's First Compost Bicycle Pick Up and Delivery Service

This summer, with help from The Working Centre, Greg McCann established K-W's first compost bike service. For a small fee he is picking up compostable material and delivering it to the HS Market Garden. Greg's first customers were St. John's Kitchen, Maurita's Kitchen, Queen Steet Commons Cafe, and Matter of Taste!



Community Access Bikeshare

by Adrian Underhill

We are happy to announce CAB has launched!

Community Access Bikeshare (or CAB) is designed to serve a diverse group of people by providing a fleet of well-maintained, easy-to-ride bicycles. Bikeshare members can access CAB bicycles at convenient locations - use a bike to get to a meeting, run errands, or meet a friend. It can be a spontaneous activity, or part of your daily routine.

CAB has 5 locations with more coming:

- Kitchener City Hall
- Kitchener Market
- Charles Street Bus Terminal
- Sun Life Financial building (Caroline St. entrance)
- 150 Frederick - Region of Waterloo

A map of the stations and their hours can be found on our website: theworkingcentre.org/cab.

Registration for the memberships is open and there is lots of interest. Bikes are used for commuting be-

tween the Charles St. Bus Terminal and Sun Life, short trips and errands during lunch, and for weekend recreational rides.

Here are the key details of membership!

- Use your membership card to



pick up a bike from any one of our stations;

- Each bike comes with a lock so that you can make a stop during your trip;
- Bikes are available for short-term trips of up to a few hours;
- When you are done, return the bike to any station!

Discounted memberships are

available for the remainder of the 2013 Season - valid until mid-November. Memberships can be purchased in two ways:

- Online: theworkingcentre.org/cab
- In person during CAB drop-in hours: Mondays 12-3pm, Wednesdays 3-5pm, Thursdays 9am-12pm.

If these times don't work for you please give us a call to arrange another meeting time: 519-743-1151 ext.172.



www.theworkingcentre.org/cab