

the HOT SPOT

News for Blythwood Out of the Cold Volunteers

May 2012



Marg, Lucynda and Trevor enjoy table talk that was a highlight of evening of discussing how best to relate to guests with mental illness, with special guest Sue McKechnie. Detailed report to come in a later issue.

OUT OF THE COLD MARKS 25!

May 9!

City-wide event at Blythwood

2012 is the 25th anniversary of the founding of Out of the Cold. Please join your fellow volunteers from OOTC sites across the city on Wednesday, May 9 to mark this silver anniversary.

Come for a great evening!

- *Eat and drink*
- *Share and hear stories*
- *Celebrate your contribution*
- *Reflect on the insights of special guest Sister Susan Moran (OOTC founder) and others*

Wednesday, May 9, 2012 7-9 p.m. Blythwood Road Baptist Church

Attire: As you are!

Get warmer inside

Meet a member of the Dixon Hall Support team- Page 2 → Bill McKechnie on crazy kindness of volunteers -Page 3 → Bearing Witness.-Page 3

WARM HEARTS

The connection builder

Salah is one of the newest additions to our Dixon Hall team, but he's no rookie.

Salah's been working at Dixon Hall for six years, first in their year-round shelter programs - Heyworth House and Schoolhouse - and now part-time supporting Out of the Cold. Salah's focus is in Mental Health Services and Mental Health & Justice Services.

Salah also works full-time for COTA Health, which provides mental health and community health services to support adults living with serious mental illness, geriatric mental health conditions, acquired brain injury, developmental disabilities and dual diagnosis. He works with his clients to link them with resources, find and/or keep housing and become stable in the community.

He said that his first step is always to patiently establish a rapport and trust with a client. Once trust is emerging, he and his peers can build a "service plan" based on the client's goals.

Salah believes in setting attainable goals and empowering his clients to achieve those goals. For example, if a client doesn't know how to take care of their apartment, it can be overwhelming. Salah will break the job into its components, such as teaching the person how to use a vacuum cleaner, and then helping the individual set a goal, such as



vacuuming once a week. He then can follow-up on the person's progress.

Outside of work, Salah volunteers within the Iranian community, helping newcomers adapt to Canadian culture, and connecting them to services. Salah himself came to Canada from Iran 20 years ago.

He said his philosophy is that if you want to be successful, you have to be

open-minded and you have to believe in yourself. His advice for everyone is to be positive: think positively, talk positively and act positively. Never think, talk or act negatively, because it affects you and the people around you.

Welcome Salah and thank you!

Help from the city comes through DIXON HALL

We are fortunate to have significant help from the City of Toronto, which has contracted with Dixon Hall, a well-known social service agency, to provide services to Out of the Cold sites. You can identify someone from Dixon Hall because they'll be wearing a vest or other identifying clothing.

Through Dixon Hall, we are provided with trained staff in the areas of safety, social assistance, cleaning, nursing and general assistance. They are paid and have job descriptions, and work under the supervision of the coordinator (a Blythwood volunteer) for each shift.

Dixon Hall is a multi-service agency that has been offering programs in the east downtown area of the City of Toronto since 1929. Dixon Hall operates a music school for children and youth, has training and employment programs, and provides services and supportive housing care for seniors.

COMMON GROUND

Bill McKechnie



Random acts of kindness? Crazy!

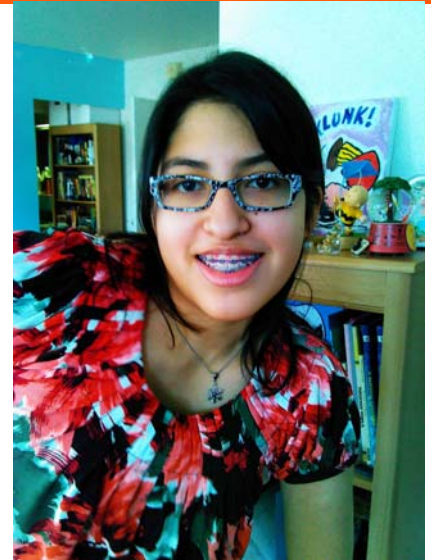
One of the many joys in my life is witnessing the generous impulses of others.

Monica Smith, one of our Out of the Cold volunteers, started a club at her school named CROAK (Crazy Random Acts Of Kindness). The name describes what they do.

One of the things they have done is raise funds for our OOTC program. But it's not that activity that prompts my thoughts, but rather the notion that we can bring "random acts of kindness" into our OOTC program.

Many of our volunteers already do it. Carmela is always lending an ear, hand or shoulder to one guest or another. Leonard's been bringing some joy to our guests' lives for nearly 18 years. I know firsthand what Byron does on Sunday morning. Just what Eileen's been doing since I can't remember when. And Sheila too. And the other Sheila. And Duncan. And so on...

Thinking about this has led me to resolve to be more purposeful in performing my own acts of kindness. I'll try to be alert to the little ways I



Monica Smith

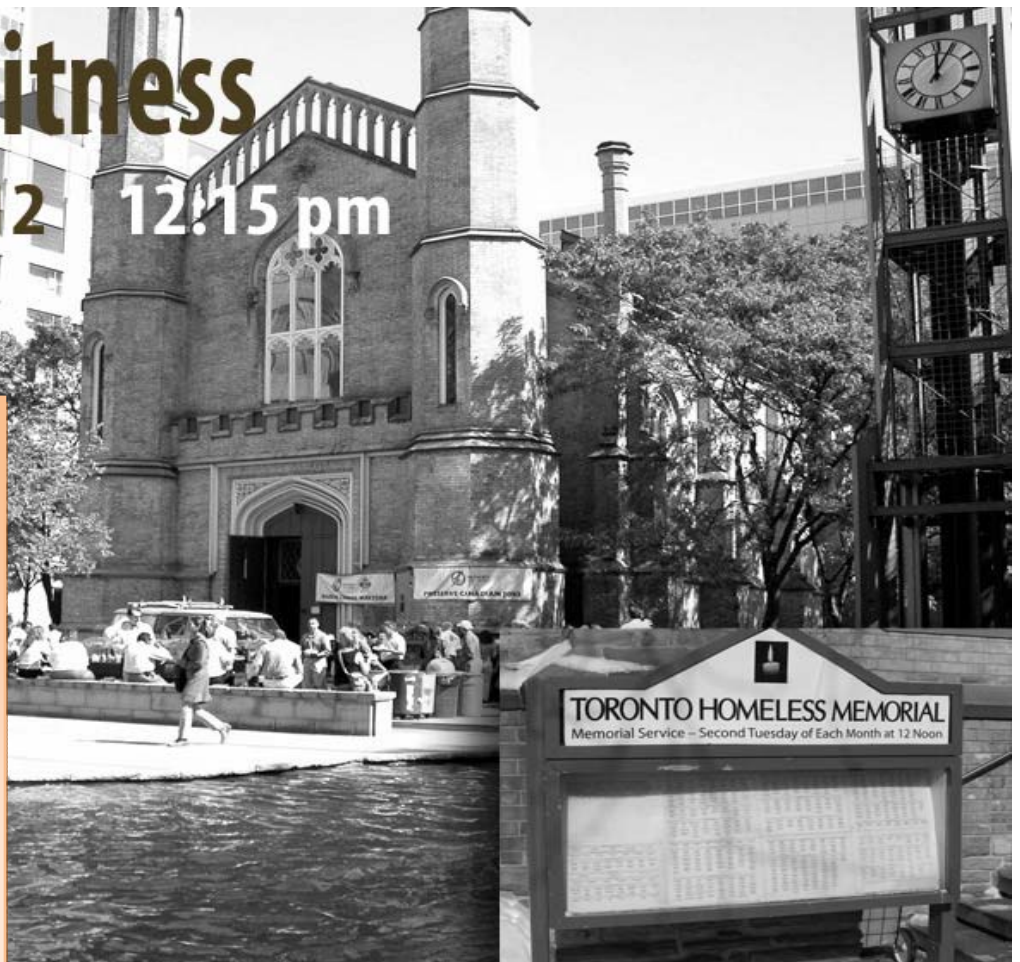
can help serve others and particularly our guests. Thanks, Monica!

Bearing witness

Tuesday June 12 12:15 pm

Sister Susan Moran, founder of Out of the Cold invites any and all OOTC volunteers to bear witness to the suffering and loss for individuals and our community that comes with homelessness.

On **Tuesday June 12, at 12:15 pm** she and others will gather in the courtyard of Church of the Holy Trinity, at the memorial erected to commemorate those who have died as a result of homelessness in Toronto. (The church is just outside the west centre doors of the Eaton Centre at Yonge and Dundas.)



EYE-OPENING ART

One of our sister sites, Beth Sholom Synagogue, runs an art program for their guests.

Through the program, which is supported by members of the synagogue and a local framing business, they provide their guests with paint supplies and the time and space to paint. At the end of the season they hold an art show to exhibit and sell the artwork that's been created, sharing the proceeds with the artists.



This year the show was held on April 22 and it was wonderful. It was eye opening to see the degree of talent our guests have and it was great to catch up with the artists and to see them so happy. Shown above is a part of one of the incredibly detailed works by Natan, who is often seen at Blythwood working with pen and ink in his sketchbook, and who made a major impression at the April 22 show.

OOTC CONTACTS

Host: Blythwood Road Baptist Church

Minister Rev. Dr. Bill Norman 416- 487-4571

Associate Pastor: David Thomas 416- 487-4571

www.blythwood.org

Lawrence Park Community Church

Contact: Cecilia Akeyempon 905-737-4849

Eglinton-St. George's United Church

Contact: Marjorie Hiley 416-483-2167

Saturday Evening Meals

Marjorie Hiley 416-483-2167

Volunteer Scheduling & Coordination

Carmela Natalizio 416-895-1832

Committee/Program Coordinators

Larry Matthews 416-461-0667

Bill McKechnie 416-489-5570

Donald McKinnon 416-285-1970

Leonard Swartz 416-845-5994

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