



Urban Lights

YONGE
STREET
MISSION

HOPE IN THE CITY SINCE 1896



CIRCLE OF GRATITUDE

Youth hate to leave Children's Clubs when they reach high school – so they come back as volunteers.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS APPRECIATE THE CHANCE TO VOLUNTEER THEIR TIME AND TALENTS AND YSM IS GRATEFUL FOR THEIR INVALUABLE ASSISTANCE.

BY KATHLEEN MAGLADRY

Volunteering is a family affair for Hamshaa Sivaruvan. Her mother Mathi has been a volunteer for years in the Women & Family and Children's Programs at Yonge Street Mission.

Hamshaa and her friend Adrienne

Chan began as participants in our children's programming. Hamshaa attended the Saturday Breakfast Club, computer classes and summer camps.

"I love this place. It's my second home!" says the enthusiastic 15-year-old.

Adrienne took computer classes, and

enjoyed drumming and guitar lessons. When they entered Grade 9, the girls jumped at the chance to volunteer with the younger children.

"I come every Saturday," says Adrienne. "I usually help out in the Art Room. My grandfather was a famous painter in China and art is my passion." (You may have seen Adrienne's artistic talent on one of the summer camp bookmarks YSM sent out last year.)

Hamshaa volunteers every Thursday with the Homework Club, helping kids with their spelling, or playing active games in the gym.

In this issue...

- Meet an Earthquake Survivor...page 5
- Summer Camp is coming...page 6
- Coldest Night of the Year...page 7

Continued on page 2

SAVE THE DATE: BRIGHT LIGHTS RETURNS TO THE CARLU ON OCTOBER 27!

...Continued from front page

"I can relate to how kids feel," she says. "I've also learned a lot about how to manage a group. Last summer I was voted best Counsellor-in-Training of the Week by the older counsellors. I can put that on my resume!"

Throughout YSM, participants of all ages volunteer in programs. It's a way to give back, it's rewarding and it's fun.

COMPUTER LAB

Toby Tang started as a student and for the past five years has been a teacher in the computer literacy centre. This semester he is teaching two after-school classes.

"I'm very grateful to have the chance to practice what I want to do in life," says Toby, a second-year university student, enrolled in a concurrent Education program.

"Toby has always taken the job seriously," says Julian Williams, Coordinator of Computer Education. "But now he is taking the initiative to develop new courses. I see how the quality of his teaching has improved too. And the kids all love him!"

FOOD BANK

Donna Menezes is a resident of our Genesis Place housing who has been a twice-weekly volunteer in the Food Bank for eight years.

"I think I could take over the operations if I had to," she laughs. "Seriously, I enjoy serving and making people feel good. Helping people feed their families – what's more important than that?"

CHURCH AT THE MISSION

J.J. Cheyne is a Grade 12 student at Rosedale Heights School for the Arts. As a child, he enjoyed YSM children's clubs and camps, especially summer drama camp. He has operated the sound system for CATM since age 13 and this year is teaching a course in 'Media in Worship'.

"I love being part of the unconditional love and acceptance that characterizes YSM," J.J. says. "I like to serve, not just in the arts,

but in any way I can. I'd like to work in Regent Park one day, maybe as a youth pastor."

ADULT PROGRAMS

Agnes Grayer comes to the Seniors Program by Wheel Trans but still manages to set up lunch for 70 every Tuesday and Thursday.

Agnes raised ten children and two grandchildren and ran a home daycare, so

"I'm now teaching crafts to the seniors," says Brenda.

Doug Steeves started helping with program set up, making the coffee in the Resource Room.

"I came here 22 years ago, same time as Janice. I'll be here until she fires me," says Doug. "I come by every day to check on things, see what needs doing. Other than that, I'm alone with my cats."

"Doug helped plan a March Break retreat this year," reports Janice. "He volunteers faithfully and reliably. It's been a pleasure to work with him over the years and needless to say, we won't be 'firing' him!"

WOMEN & FAMILY

Sureya Ibrahim received a Community Leader award at our International Women's Day celebration. She served on our Women's Advisory Council and volunteered at countless events over the years.

She no longer volunteers at YSM for the happy reason that she has a job – she is a community engagement worker at the Regent Park Centre of Learning. "What an asset to her community Sureya is! She now runs programs that we take our women to," says

Coordinator Karen Thorpe.

"Giving back is one way of empowering yourself," says Sureya. "The other way is training and I thank Karen for all the opportunities and support she provided."

"I really liked this organization and wanted to be a part of it." Toby

"Volunteering helped me get a part-time job." J.J.

"I'll be here until they fire me." Doug

"I have the best volunteer job ever!" Donna

"I get along with everybody here. You can't say that about a lot of places." Rob

"I love to feed people." Agnes

Photo: J. Cowie

she knows a thing or two about serving groups. She also sits on the Seniors Planning Committee.

"I always carry a YSM brochure with me so I can tell people about the programs wherever I go," says this tireless ambassador for the Mission.

"Agnes has gained confidence to venture into new areas of volunteering and now directs volunteer groups that come in to serve meals," adds Adult Program Coordinator, Janice Rainey.

Brenda and Rob Haist are a couple with big hearts, active in the New Hope Fellowship group. Brenda calls Bingo games and teaches crafts – crocheting and plastic canvas – while Rob provides security on the door.

"Brenda and Rob have both grown over the years of volunteering," says Janice. "Rob has really developed his leadership skills through being on the New Hope committee."

"It is a privilege to witness the transformation in many of our community members who volunteer here," says Ruth Pentinga, Director of Volunteer Resources. "Some remain as volunteers and their continued personal growth unfolds before our eyes. Others move on to education or employment but return to share the positive changes that YSM helped instigate."

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR AMAZING VOLUNTEERS. YOUR SERVICE ENRICHES THE WHOLE COMMUNITY!



www.ysm.ca

Email: info@ysm.ca
 Phone: (416) 929-9614
 1-800-416-5111
 Editor: Kathleen Magladry

Administration:

DR. RICK TOBIAS
President and CEO

KAREN BACH
Mission Program Officer

PAUL DAVIDSON
Mission Operations Officer

ANN BARNARD BALL
Mission Development Officer

JON UNGER BRANDT
Director of Development

KERRY BOWSER
Senior Program Director

MOREEN WHITE
Director of Finance

Branches:

GAIL MEATS
Director of Evergreen

MATTHEW PARKER
Lead Pastor/Director of Church at the Mission

CLAIRE BARCIK
Director of Community Services

RUTH PENTINGA
Director of Volunteer Resources

BILL RYAN
Director of Staff Care

KATHY WEBSTER
Double Take, Store Manager

LAURA AWOSANYA
Genesis Place, Housing Manager

Publication No. 1632817

Support Children & Youth

**LOS SILVERADOS
 GOLF TOURNAMENT**

Sept. 20, 2011. Sign up at
www.lossilverados.com

Light Up the Future!

Remember Yonge Street Mission
 in your will and provide hope
 for years to come.
 Contact Jon Unger Brandt at
 416-929-9614 ext. 4259.



Lend a HELPING hand

JOIN THE CIRCLE

The act of giving and receiving at YSM forges a circle of gratitude that creates satisfaction for everyone involved.

- Corporate groups who sponsor, prepare and serve hot evening meals for youth at Evergreen every month agree. They include Deeley Harley Davidson Canada, Los Silverados, KPMG, Boire Filler, and Marsan Foods.
- Employees of Labatt Breweries of Canada joined this circle at Christmas by holding a food and toy drive, plus a week of fundraising activities raising over \$8,000.
- From Stronger Together 2010, a coalition of Christian foundations across Canada spearheaded by Bridgeway Foundation, YSM was gratified to receive generous funding to equip our classrooms with new audio-visual equipment.
- Never underestimate the power of smaller groups. Total Health Chiropractic Centre had the largest Christmas food drive for the Mission and they are only a staff of three. They collected over 2,000 pounds of food.
- Artist Maggie Wang invited 40 of her peers to take part in art shows across the city, with the participation fee going toward YSM.
- Individual children and school classes continually give from the heart by donating their birthday or Christmas money.

By taking action and donating to help others, you too can join this never-ending circle of gratitude!



Yes, I'll join the circle!

Please use my donation: Wherever the needs are greatest
 Other _____

Enclosed is my donation of: \$ _____ My cheque is enclosed.

Charge: VISA MasterCard American Express
 Card # _____ Expiry _____ Signature _____

Name _____ E-mail _____

Address _____ Apt. _____

City _____ Prov. _____ Postal Code _____

Phone () _____ Fax () _____

Please send me: Information on planned giving, bequests, gifts of securities
 Information on In Memory and Milestone gifts
 I would like to arrange a tour

Yonge Street Mission, 306 Gerrard Street East, Toronto ON M5A 2G7
 Phone: 416-929-9614 Toll Free: 1-800-416-5111 Fax: 416-929-7204
 E-mail: donorservices@ysm.ca Web site: www.ysm.ca

Please make cheque payable to Yonge Street Mission. Charitable Number 11930 6181 RR0001

You can make a secure online donation at www.ysm.ca.

THANKS A LATTE!

I first became involved with YSM over four years ago in my role as a district manager in downtown Toronto. I was looking for a way for Starbucks to be involved in the community – for individual stores to bring together the customers, staff and neighbourhood. Yonge Street Mission seemed to be a good fit as it serves people in need in the downtown core and has opportunities for our staff and customers to volunteer.

Our first big partnership was the YSM Community Book Fair in May 2007. Forty-three stores collected over 1,000 children's books to give away to families who could not afford to buy books, and 15 Starbucks employees helped out at the Book Fair, sorting and distributing books.

The advantages of this type of partnership soon became clear to me:

- We were fulfilling our responsibility to be a positive force in our community
- Our staff appreciated the opportunity to give back to the local community and bond with each other at the same time
- We provided an avenue for our generous customers to help their community, too

Once I saw the effect that we could make in people's lives, I was hooked.

When we open a new store, we want to connect with the community right away. YSM's participation in many of our Grand Openings has helped raise money and awareness for their work with the poor, and provides an opportunity for our customers to



make a charitable donation when they enjoy a free coffee. It is a win-win situation.

I believe in knowledge and I believe in understanding. Starbucks' work with YSM has increased both for me. I've toured their new Centre for Urban Education and heard Rick Tobias speak to 80 of our managers about urban poverty. For some of us, life is comfortable and we lose perspective. The more you understand someone else's situation, the more you appreciate the value that each person brings to our society.

I thoroughly enjoy the relationship with YSM. I'm excited to continue to build the partnership. There's a ripple effect. Starbucks touches so many people who then touch

other people who can be educated about the needs that YSM is meeting.

Our stores do a lot of special collections for the Mission. In turn, YSM has allowed us to hold staff information sessions and district meetings at their premises. Our staff has first-hand knowledge of YSM. They've been in the YSM buildings, and met many Mission staff and clients. So they can answer questions when customers see the YSM Food Drive basket, for example. It all helps build awareness for a charitable organization working to make this a better city for all of us.

Starbucks is dedicated to volunteering our time to help improve the communities where we work. For many of our staff in downtown Toronto, YSM initiatives like the Clothing Drive, Book Fair and Christmas Market provide the opportunity to do just that. Helping the Yonge Street Mission really ties to our mission statement. Businesses can and should have a positive impact on the communities they serve. And it is an honour to be part of this important work.

Jenn Rakubi, Store Manager, recently invited YSM to set up a display at the Friends & Family Grand Opening of her Starbucks located at Church and Gerrard St.

"Customers asked me, 'Don't you LOSE money on this event?'

I told them, No way! Because the donations all go to YSM, that is a WIN!"

Get involved: VOLUNTEER

VOLUNTEER SERVICE FOR 2010:

- 587 regular volunteers provided a total of 38,752 hours of service
- 248 groups contributed 5,506 hours
- 55 Health Care Professionals contributed 2,986 hours at Evergreen
- 1209 Christmas volunteers gave 3,873 hours

Thank you to our amazing volunteers! Visit www.ysm.ca and check Volunteer Opportunities to see how you can help.

SPECIAL NEEDS

HELP OUR SUMMER CAMPERS!

Day Camp: 17 weeks of adventure for children & youth in Regent Park and St. James Town.

A week at the lake: 275 campers – children through to seniors – attend overnight camp. Basic hygiene items are needed.

Day trips: families, children & seniors visit attractions in the GTA & beyond.

Make a difference:

- **Hygiene kits** – pack a zip-lock bag with a bar of soap, toothbrush & tooth paste, small shampoo & conditioner, individual hand sanitizer and washcloth. *A great team project. Send as many kits as you can!*
 - **Fund day trips** – \$25 will take 4 seniors or a family to Toronto Island.
- Our Food Bank needs your help:** we serve over 3,000 people monthly.
- \$75 will assist a family for one week.

Donate online at www.ysm.ca.

For more information, contact Anne Keyes at 416-929-9614, ext. 4247; or akeyes@ysm.ca. Thank you!

Did You Know?

You can donate your Shoppers Optimum points to YSM to help us purchase toiletries, medications, hygiene products and other vital items for our community. Visit www.shoppersoptimum.ca. Your generosity is appreciated!



FACES OF YSM

January 12, 2010, was the day Sylvie's life changed completely. As she sat in the bank where she worked as an administrative assistant, the building began to shake and tilt. She escaped to find the streets of Port-au-Prince filled with thick dust, collapsed buildings, dead bodies, fires and unimaginable devastation.

After a two-hour walk, she found her family's home in rubble. Her father had survived with some injuries but her mother, aunt and uncle perished in Haiti's terrible earthquake.

"We buried my mother in the yard. We could not even get a priest to come. I sang her favourite song," said Sylvie.

Suddenly this 25-year-old girl became a woman who had to find food, water and shelter for herself and her extended family.

"I grew up in a middle class home, received a good education at a private college. I had never gone without or been responsible for the welfare of others. I really grew up fast."

At the urging of her siblings who live in Canada and the U. S., Sylvie and her father decided to leave Haiti. She paid some people to dig for three days to come up with her passport, which was buried when the house collapsed.

Eventually her father returned to Haiti where he now lives in the countryside but Sylvie settled in Toronto.

"The cold was awful at first. I had to wear so many layers of clothing," recalled Sylvie.

After a month, she found a volunteer position with YSM, lending her many talents in the Volunteer Department. In September, YSM hired Sylvie on a short-term contract.

"Sylvie was a most welcome addition to our team; she shares her skills in an enthusiastic and caring manner," says Ruth Pentinga, Director of Volunteer Resources.

Recently Sylvie landed a permanent job in the non-profit sector but will continue to volunteer with youth at YSM. She tutors high school students in French in St. James Town and helps with the Girls Group at the Community Centre in Regent Park.

"I keep busy so I don't have to think about the horrible things I saw in the earthquake."

The plans Sylvie had for her future crumbled on January 12, 2010. She is taking life a step at a time now.

"I am thankful for the chance to work with YSM and gain Canadian experience. You gave me a head start in my new life and trusted in my skills. Ruth and the other staff encouraged me and helped me to advocate for myself as a newcomer."

Bienvenue, Sylvie. Welcome to your new home.



SYLVIE DASNÉ

STORY OF A SURVIVOR

BY: KATHLEEN
MAGLADRY



"It was awesome to swim in the lake!"

BY ANNE KEYES

Children in our low-income community look forward to a summer of learning amazing things, and having lots of fun, at camp YSM.

"Camp gives shy children a place to become more confident. We get a good mix of newcomers and after-school regulars, so lots of new friendships form," says Children's Coordinator Julie MacLean.

A quiet girl proudly told Julie, "I became friends with everyone at camp last year!"

This year we have a record number of former campers returning as Counsellors in Training. The two-week CIT orientation camp brings our total of summer camps for children and youth to 17 weeks in 2011. Children aged nine and up have the opportunity to attend

overnight camp, for many their first chance to sit under the starry night sky and roast a marshmallow.

CITs also make a welcome impact at the Computer Lab camp. "Just a year or two ago all of them were campers," says Coordinator Julian Williams. "It's great to see how they bring that playfulness mixed with responsibility to their work with the younger children,

the joy of friendship & learning

and always seem to know what is expected of them. They build on our program's focus to keep on learning, in every way."

Computer camp this summer will include a week-long exploration of paper cut stop animation technique with Director's Cut. At a one-day workshop in February, their facilitator remarked, "The teamwork here is great!" This camp will give children a creative outlet to share their imagination in the digital world, and open up future possibilities. "Maybe I can do this when I grow up," said one budding artist.

Our St. James Town location will offer an expanded summer day camp for children and youth, including crafts, day trips and lots of outdoor activities.

YSM Camps take our children in new directions – attending Shakespeare workshops, getting up on stage in the talent show, rediscovering their neighbourhood via a photo contest – which enrich their lives and instill the value of giving back to help others. We thank the many generous donors who open up these possibilities.



Volunteer Corner

RAMON ALONSO

Father Ramon Alonso volunteers twice a week in the Christian Community Centre kitchen where he helps to cook, serve and wash dishes for hundreds of people.

"I receive more from the people I serve than I give," says Fr. Ramon, who is actually a Bishop in the Catholic Apostolic Brasilia Church, and has a small congregation in Toronto.

His faith and his father, who worked until he was 91, inspire him.

Ramon's joy in volunteering at CCC for almost four years is evident. "I feel so happy and have a deep satisfaction in my work here."

"It was a blessing when Father Ramon came to us," says Elaine Chisholm, the Community Centre's cook. "He puts a spark into the kitchen."



In this issue, Urban Lights highlights the Mission's core value of Gratitude

YONGE STREET MISSION CORE VALUES

As a Christian faith community we strive to consistently demonstrate our core values.

Love: of God and love for neighbour is foundational to all we do

Creativity: We embrace the creative spark in the expression of our calling

Integrity: We strive for transparency and truth in who we are, what we say and how we behave

Dignity: We value people as unique individuals and respect and care for all of creation

Justice: We recognize the rights of all for inclusion, and advocate for and with those living with injustice

Gratitude: We radiate joy and appreciation for all of God's gifts and celebrate the privilege of serving

Peace: We seek harmony with God, wholeness in relationships and health for our city.

NEWS BYTES

WARMING UP TO COLDEST NIGHT

Ten toque-wearing teams raised over \$22,000 for Yonge Street Mission in the first Coldest Night of the Year walkathon on February 26. Participants chose from a 5 km or 10 km course in downtown Toronto.

Congratulations to the Markham Baptist Church team who raised \$2,065, followed by Team Valleyfield who raised \$2,047.

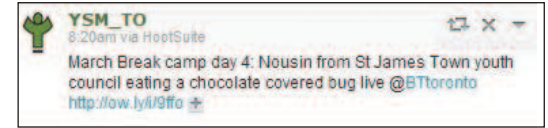
Spirits were high throughout the snowy night and walkers came back to YSM to warm up with hot chocolate and chili. We invite you to start now getting your colleagues, churches and companies involved in this fun event next February to benefit the homeless, hungry and hurting in our community.

In the meantime, read on for your other chances to walk or run for YSM.



"Your cold, hard cash warmed up my cold, tired feet!"

ISN'T THAT TWEET? YSM YOUTH ON BREAKFAST TV!



Join us on Twitter at YSM_TO.

DON YOUR SNEAKERS FOR SENIORS

Get ready for the Toronto Challenge on Sunday, June 12 at Metro Hall.

This family walk/run event raises money for charities like YSM that improve the quality of life for seniors in the community. Last year, 20 people from the Mission participated including our very own seniors who did the 1 km walk.

For more information and a pledge form, visit the website at www.toronto.ca/challenge or contact Julia Silvestri at (416) 929-9614, ext. 4281. Come on out and support our seniors!



Toronto Challenge 2010 participants included one YSM senior using her walker, accompanied by her granddaughter.

NEW SEASON, ANOTHER RUN

Want to make your mark? Take part in our first-time involvement with the Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon on Sunday, October 16. You and your supporters can designate pledges to YSM.

For details visit www.torontowaterfrontmarathon.com or call Julia at (416) 929-9614, ext.4281.



A group of energetic children thoroughly enjoy March Break activities at the Community Centre's gym. A one-week camp at the Computer Lab and activities in St. James Town and Regent Park entertained about 200 during school break.

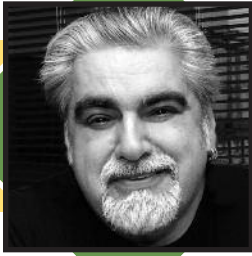
CONGRATULATIONS DR. BACH



Best wishes go to Karen Bach, Mission Program & Ministry Officer, who was awarded an honorary Doctor of Divinity by the University of Toronto's Knox College on May 11. Karen was YSM's former Director of Evergreen and the University of Toronto's first ecumenical chaplain.



"It is wonderful to have such a good meal with all our friends here," said seniors at their Easter lunch. Thank you, generous donors, for helping us celebrate new life and hope by providing meals, and sending back meal tickets and placemats to grace the Easter tables.



THE BACK PAGE

By: *Dr. Rick Tobias, YSM President and CEO*

This Mendicant Community Thanks You

In ages past we called them mendicant orders, religious orders who served people in need while living off whatever resources they could beg from good people. Some who gave had plenty and others had just a little more than the mendicants they supported.

The mendicants were the early monastics. They created the first hospices and understood that there is a direct connection between what you say you believe and how you engage the world around you.

Mendicants often lived their entire lives with the poorest of the poor, sharing what little they had and trusting that 'more' would be provided when it was required. Yet even in their deprivation, they considered themselves to be privileged and blessed. They thought themselves to be among the most fortunate of people because they were able to serve God, make a difference in the lives of people trapped in poverty and live true to their deepest sense of self.

This sense of good fortune gave birth to great gratitude, and the spiritual disciplines to nurture it: one ancient monastic teaching says that when we have prayed our thanks, we have prayed well, and prayed enough.

Truly they understood that giving, thanking, and gratitude are all connected at the root. This entanglement was even expressed in ancient Greek language: the

word 'charis' means 'grace' or 'gift.' Yet it also means 'thank you.' The implication is that when someone gives to you, your gratitude is a gift back to them.

Finding people today who truly know gratitude might seem challenging. Yet among the staff of Yonge Street Mission a sense of gratitude has been deeply



ingrained, inculcated into our DNA long before we ever wrote down our Core Values.

Yonge Street Mission is not a monastic community and our staff does not take vows of poverty. Yet we are very much a mendicant community. We survive and even thrive because of the generosity of others, some of whom have much and many who have just a little more than we do.

YSM could not exist if we did not continually receive countless gifts – food, clothing and 'stuff'; time, talents, and wisdom; and of course an amazing stream of small and large financial gifts. Like the early mendicants, our sense of our good fortune produces gratitude. Much more than simply a written 'core value' for us, gratitude is a deep-seated and heartfelt appreciation of your generous spirit.

Our gratitude also is provoked by our community and its members.

Our staff will tell you that the very people we "come to help" likewise enrich our lives beyond imagination. They introduce us to depths of wisdom and faith that are only learned in the face of persistent need and a struggle for survival. Our people freely share that wisdom and faith, delivering to me and my colleagues profound lessons in living, in courage, in service and perseverance. We are grateful to them, and we are grateful for them.

We serve the same God as the mendicants of old. And like them, we are grateful to God, because we are allowed to live among people we love and among people who so tangibly bestow their love on us.

I'm so glad you are part of it.