

# City of Refuge

A Voice from the Street

Summer 2010 • Vol. 9- Issue 2

## "Get a job...Really!" by Alan Beattie

Aaaahhhh...work. Those of us who are fortunate to have paid employment can often be heard complaining - sometimes playfully and sometimes not - of the hardships we have to endure. But when we are honest with ourselves, we acknowledge that our jobs have incredible value for us, don't they?

The most immediately tangible benefit may come from the paycheque which (for some of us, at least) makes it possible for us to put food on the table, pay the rent, afford an education, take in a movie, entertain friends and who knows what else. But there is so much more value in work than just the pay. Think about it:



- "There's such satisfaction in a job well done." It provides affirmation of our gifts and abilities.
- "I am so grateful to get out of the house for a few hours." It often meets a basic social need.
- "I feel so good knowing that I have helped someone out." It gives us opportunity to have our skills valued.
- "Some days, my co-workers drive me up the wall!" For better or worse, it's a great training ground for relationships.

If paid work can have all those values (and others too) for those of us who can regularly have those needs met in other contexts as well, how much more valuable then must work be for the young guy sitting on the sidewalk wondering about your spare change.

What if "Get a job!" became more than just a nasty rejection? What if, for an increasing segment of society, it actually expressed our heart's deepest desire for that man or woman sitting there before you? (One simple change is that we would be less likely to hear the more colourful "Get a !@#\$\$% job"...)

At our woodworking shop at Sanctuary West, we count ourselves fortunate to have a space in which we can begin to offer those gifts to a few of our friends who have lived far too long without them. As they work at the newly re-named studioSanctuary, each of those benefits accrues to them:

- The simple satisfaction of earning a paycheque through hard work;
- The pleasure that comes from standing back and admiring a freshly-completed and beautiful piece of craftsmanship;
- The value of having a productive activity in which to be engaged for several hours each day;
- The boost that comes from knowing that "something I have made is now sitting proudly in someone's living room";
- The challenges, joys and growth that come from working alongside someone else!

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

A View from Here.....	2
Calendar of Events .....	3
Financial Update.....	4
Calendar of Events .....	5
Vaudeville - recap.....	5
Faces of our Community.....	5

....continued on Page 3

---

# A View From Here...



**Greg Paul**

In what feels like another lifetime, I was a carpenter. It was satisfying work, a nice combination of problem-solving to engage the brain, physical labour to stretch the body, skill and creativity enough to fulfil the soul. Mostly I did custom residential work: additions, renovations and new construction of homes for people I often got to know in the course of the job. I loved knowing that those people would enjoy and actually live within the work of my hands for a long time to come.

I did a lot of historical renovations through the years, working on houses and small commercial buildings that had been around more than a hundred years. There was something sweet about encountering the handiwork of a long-gone craftsman, respecting what had been done with painstaking effort in an era when power tools were undreamt-of. Thinking to myself that maybe, another hundred years hence, someone else would see the signatures and dates I'd scrawled in broad-tipped pencil inside a wall cavity, wonder about who I was, and feel the same sense of pride in carrying on an age-old heritage.

One of the best aspects of building was the concreteness of the accomplishments involved. At the end of any given day, I could actually look at what I had accomplished: walls framed, doors hung, cabinets installed or windows trimmed. I'd be able to tell whether or not I had done a good job, and whether I'd gotten a little or a lot done. I'd also know that, when I returned to work the next day, it would all still be there, and I'd be able to move on to the next thing.

So much of what I do now is impossible to quantify in the same way. Very little of the work that I do - or, at least, that part of it which matters most - is measurable in the short run. In fact, it's often hard to know what on earth a measurement would look like.

Still, when I look back over more than eighteen years at Sanctuary, and more than thirty of some kind of involvement in street-level outreach, I can see enough 'walls' built and 'rafters' raised to recognize the silhouette of accomplishment. My work gives me more than it costs. I believe that what I do from day to day actually matters to poor and excluded people for whom Sanctuary has become a kind of home, and also to others who are relatively wealthy and secure, but have been drawn deeper into the beautiful mystery of God's Kingdom by connecting with society's outcasts.

My street-involved friends don't tend to use the word 'work' very much. They hustle, stem, pan, boost, deal, turn tricks, fight, and more. The women in our community are not even high enough up the ladder of prostitution to ever talk about 'sex work', as some do, as a viable occupation. They don't talk about it at all, except perhaps in our clinic. For our gals, it's just one of the requisites of survival.

My people are far from lazy. They'll walk across the city, often on feet that are raw and pulpy, for a meal, or to see a nurse, or just to connect with someone important to them. My friends often go to sleep sitting up, or sprawled on a concrete floor, because the energy required in any twenty-four hour period simply to survive is enormous.

They're tough, incredibly determined in any matter but their own self-care, highly skilled improvisers, careful observers of social and power dynamics, and often have a gift of the gab that would suit a politician or salesperson. Many work periodically at labouring trades. When employed at 'normal' jobs, they usually work at the same frenetic pace at which they live their lives on the street, but they often have some trouble staying focused. They get shafted by fly-by-night employers in more than a few of those situations, and just as frequently shaft the employer by failing to show up for work after the first or second or third pay.

In short, my friends work hard, but the actual value of work escapes them. Because the point is survival, there's no progression or permanence to what they do. What they 'produce' is not valued by others. There's none of the dignity inherent in being able to say, "I'm a carpenter,

*....continued on Page 6*

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Andy Burgess - Chairman  
Merv Mercer - President  
Bruce Gooding - Treasurer  
Ted Smith - Director  
Cindy Gladstone - Director  
John Anderson - Director

## Mark Your Calendars

Upcoming Events at Sanctuary

**June 4th, 2010**

A Night at Grace's

**July 17th, 2010**

5K Walk for Poverty + Justice!

**September 11th, 2010**

Corn Roast & Concert in the Park.

**October 15th, 2010**

A Night at Grace's

**November 12th & 13th, 2010**

arts eXtravaganza

**December 3rd, 2010**

A Christmas Night at Grace's

When we talk about the Studio, we often speak of providing "meaningful and dignified work" for our friends. We are aiming much higher than simply offering a paid distraction for the day. We've proven that we can do more than simple entry-level grunt work. Have you seen the items pictured on the insert that came with this newsletter? Aren't they something to behold?

We have been greatly energized over the last few months as we have hit our stride manufacturing these beautiful Wave Boxes and high-quality pens (I think something like One-of-a-Kind Jaw-Dropping Script Devices captures their essence more aptly than "pens"). We have found products that meet our criteria of being "meaningful and dignified" and figured out how to make them in a predictably consistent way. Perfect!

Now we just need to get the word out!

As a friend of Sanctuary's, can you help us with this? Maybe you can use unique gifts like these in your own personal or professional life. Maybe you can brag about studioSanctuary's work to your friends or family or co-workers or boss.

No matter how it looks, we will be grateful for your support of the Studio. In doing so, you will play a really important role in offering members of our Sanctuary community a gift that that they all-too-rarely receive. Their experience of the profound meaning of work will be that much more complete as they see their workmanship going out the door and into grateful homes.

Thank you for all that you do in support of Sanctuary and studioSanctuary!



## Corn Roast & Concert in the Park!

**September 11th  
Noon - 4pm**

**Join us for Plenty of  
Music & Maize**

## Financial Update

We have had a slow start to the year, with donations lagging almost 10% behind last year's numbers at this time. We expect the early months of the year to be slower than November and December but this unexpected slowdown will put an added strain on our cashflow. And with the addition of four new staff last year (all of whom are working to raise their own support but it takes time to build up a base of support!), we will be feeling the crunch even more through the summer months.

We remain confident, however, that God will continue to provide as He has in the past. And we thank you in advance for continuing to support us through your friendship as well as your financial support. We couldn't do any of this valuable work without your partnership with us. Thank you!

A huge thanks to those of you who have signed up for the Pre-Authorized Giving, that spreads your annual giving out evenly through the year. This type of giving really helps get us through times like this!



This street-walk is a great way of both raising funds for and walking in solidarity with our friends, many of whom live on the street and walk miles every day in search of food and shelter.



**Show up:** 1.30pm  
**Start Walking:** 2.00pm  
 ... BBQ to follow

**Location:** 25 Charles St. E,  
 Toronto, ON

**To sign up\***, contact Nada at 416 922 0628 x.225  
 OR [nadat@sanctuarytoronto.ca](mailto:nadat@sanctuarytoronto.ca)

**\*SIGN UP BY JUNE 30TH** and raise a minimum of **\$100** to receive a **FREE** Sanctuary ball cap; raise a minimum of **\$500** to receive a **FREE** handcrafted wood pen by studioSanctuary (retail value: \$75).

↑ N		
	BLOOR ST. SUBWAY	
YONGE ST.	HAYDEN ST. CITY PARKING LOT	CHURCH ST.
	25 CHARLES ST.	
	ISABELLA ST.	

## Second Annual



**Saturday**  
**July 17**

[sanctuarytoronto.ca](http://sanctuarytoronto.ca)

---

## Faces of Our Community

### - Chris Van Hartskamp -

Chris has one of those smiles that lights up the whole room and his jokes are always good for a chuckle... "what happens when you put yogurt in the freezer?..." He has been a friend of Sanctuary for about 11 years, most of which he spent living on the street. He has experienced some victories, like overcoming an addiction to crack, but also some heart-aches such as losing the love of his life and last year, he buried his 25 year old brother.

Chris has many close friends here and we are so blessed that he is a regular face at our drop-ins and community events. When he isn't hanging out in Toronto, he spends time with his sister, brother-in-law and nephews in Oshawa and sometimes he heads up north to see the rest of his family and his 18 year old son, Lawrence, that he is so very proud of.

We love you Chris! By the way, the punch line of his joke is... "culture shock"! hehe



Chris

### - Alison Marthinsen -

Alison has known about Sanctuary for years and popped in occasionally, but it wasn't until October of 2009 that she became a regular face around here. At that time, she and a friend decided to try Street Outreach and the Ladies Drop-In and found them to be a perfect fit. Since then, she has been regularly participating in both to the great delight of many folks in this community.

Alison has lived in Toronto for 33 years (except for a 7 year stint in England) and has been involved with leading and teaching a Bible study in her home for years. She is married to Craig, has three sons, Ryan, Ian and Kevin and has a beautiful black dog named Cody.

"I have participated in Community Bible Study for years and this has made me realize the value of community. That is what I love about Sanctuary...that it is all about community and supporting each member of the community no matter where you are coming from. Each person is valued for what they bring to the community. I like doing street outreach because I feel I am being Jesus' hands and feet to the community."



Alison

## "Vaudeville (Voice of the City)" Update

Thank you so much to everyone who attended our 3rd annual spring theatre production - *Vaudeville (Voice of the City): Unrelated Acts On A Common Bill*. It was a fun-filled romp with 14 actors from a variety of backgrounds performing 3 separate one-act comedies. Over 400 people came out and supported our community with peals of laughter and rounds of applause.

Many thanks to everyone who supported this years production, whether through the *Gift Of Culture* program or otherwise:

**Northpark Community Church**  
**Monica & Chris Shearer**

**Loiuse Barnard**  
**Marg Gilligan**



....continued from Page 2

an executive, a trucker, a home care worker." It's a measure of the true depth and nature of the poverty of some of my friends that they can hardly even imagine themselves in such terms.

If asked to look back and assess what they've accomplished, most would be more likely to describe a deep pit than a house. In fact, many of the skills they develop are ultimately destructive to their own souls - the ability to fight, or con someone, or to sell themselves for meagre returns. To navigate a sub-culture in which the law of the jungle prevails at the most basic of levels; to live outdoors in a wilderness of concrete and glass, or in prison-grim rooms where you look both ways before entering the hallway.

When I read the bleak, existentialist observations of the writer of the Ecclesiastes, I recognize the 'grievous evil' he describes in the lives of my friends:

*As a man comes, so he departs, and what does he gain, since he toils for the wind? All his days he eats in darkness, with great frustration, affliction and anger.*

I'm glad Solomon didn't stop there. We've come to believe, at Sanctuary, that dignified, meaningful work is both a great blessing in itself, and a means to recognizing God's blessing in our lives. This is why we're committed to helping some of our friends, long since written off as 'unemployable', re-discover the beauty of work:

*Then I realized that it is good and proper for a man to eat and drink, and to find satisfaction in his toilsome labour under the sun... Moreover, when God gives any man wealth and possessions, and enables him to enjoy them, to accept his lot and be happy in his work - this is a gift of God...<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup>Ecclesiastes 5:15b-17 then 18-19.

## Yes, I want to partner with you...

- I would like to order \_\_\_ copies of **"God in the Alley"** book (Retail price \$12.00)  
I would like to order \_\_\_ copies of **"20 Piece Shuffle"** book (Retail price \$16.00)  
I would like to order \_\_\_ copies of **"A Night at Grace's"** CD (Retail price \$15.00)  
Enclosed please find a cheque for \$\_\_\_\_\_.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I want to <b>financially support</b> your ministry: | <input type="checkbox"/> I would like to support Sanctuary on a <b>monthly basis.</b> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arts & Drama  | <input type="checkbox"/> My <b>church/workplace</b> should hear about Sanctuary.      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employment Training                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> I would like to learn more about <b>volunteering.</b>        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> General Fund  | <input type="checkbox"/> I commit to <b>pray</b> for the Sanctuary community.         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Housing   |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drop-In Meals                                       |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Staff Name _____                                    |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Street Outreach                                     |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Where most needed                                   |   |

**DONATE BY CREDIT CARD**  
at [www.canadahelps.org](http://www.canadahelps.org)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Province \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Tel. \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Please make donations payable to: **Sanctuary Ministries of Toronto**. Tax receipts will be issued at year end. Designated funds will be applied as directed by the donor. Funds given in excess of an approved or discontinued program will be applied at the discretion of the Board.

Charitable #89037 9340 RR 0001

06-10

### CANADIAN TIRE MONEY



Help Sanctuary purchase building maintenance supplies and tools for the shop by collecting your Canadian Tire Money. Collect them through your church, study group, workplace, or as an individual.

**Mail them to:**  
SANCTUARY MINISTRIES  
25 Charles St. E., Toronto, Ont.  
M4Y 1R9

**Any questions please call:**  
Erin at 416-922-0628 ext.210  
[info@sanctuarytoronto.ca](mailto:info@sanctuarytoronto.ca)

# SANCTUARY

25 Charles Street East  
Toronto, Ontario  
M4Y 1R9

Tel.: 416-922-0628  
Fax: 416-922-4961

Sanctuary West  
186 St. Helens Avenue  
Toronto, Ontario  
M6H 4A1

Tel.: 416-778-0694  
Fax: 416-778-7432

[www.sanctuarytoronto.ca](http://www.sanctuarytoronto.ca)  
[info@sanctuarytoronto.ca](mailto:info@sanctuarytoronto.ca)

*Sanctuary Ministries of Toronto is committed to protecting the privacy of our friends and supporters. We do not share or sell any of the information that we collect but rather use it solely for the purpose of communicating with you regarding the work in which we are engaged.*