



# ART WITH A HEART

## NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2014



### FAITH

From Sinclair Secondary School in Whitby joined some fellow classmates and teenagers in a one-session workshop in Expressive Arts with a topic based on happiness and personal support systems. She wrote a brief article about her experience:

"My experience at Art With A Heart was great. If I had to describe Expressive Therapy with one word it would be experiential. Expressive therapy was definitely not what I expected it to be. When doing the happiness test in the beginning my score was not as high as I would have thought it would be. After taking the test we were asked to write a list of everything in our lives that make us happy and attach a colour next to it. After doing that activity we joined in a circle. We were asked to share our current emotion. Most of us said that we were stressed for upcoming exams. We then proceeded to play some instruments. Each person was given 30 seconds to play their rhythm and then the next person would add on eventually tuning it into a song. We then would name the songs based on the feel of the different rhythms. We then returned to our list of things that made us happy. We were asked to trace an outline of ourselves and put the colour that was attached to the thing that made us happy on your body. When we were done we gathered back in a circle and retook the happiness test. There was a significant change in happiness after the therapy. The list of things that makes me happy made me take my mind off of the school work that was stressing me out and put my mind on the things that made me happy. Expressive therapy helped me express myself in a way that I normally wouldn't. This experience was definitely memorable!"

### Fiber Arts

by Kim Mather, Board Member, Facilitator, Zentangle and Fibre Arts specialties

Fibre Arts are making a huge impact in the art world. Juried shows such as "Threadworks", presented by The Ontario Network of Needleworkers showcase the diversity of fabric art. The possibilities for manipulating fabric with needle and thread, resists, paints, dyes, transfers and embellishments are countless.

There are many techniques that I look forward to trying. Currently I have been working with machine and hand stitching to sketch and paint with thread, adding layers of fabric and notions to create fibre art collage.

Since the age of five, fabric, thread, wool and needles have been a part of my world. With the guidance and mentoring of Sheri I now realize that I am an artist. Working and teaching with AWAH has been a positive influence, making me look at the artistic side of my life differently. All our students are amazing, when I teach or assist in classes for AWAH I find that I personally learn and grow as an artist.

### Youth and Philanthropy Initiative

By Matthew Dykstra, volunteer and IT guru Art With A Heart Inc.

The Youth Philanthropy Initiative is a program where youth engage through a combination of in-class learning and community development experience. The Youth Philanthropy Initiative gives students the tools to understand and get involved in their community's advancement. Students form teams and research, meet with, and advocate for a local community charity in those teams. Through this advocating relationship with a local charity, the students have an opportunity to win a grant for the charity of their choosing. All of these things work together to help teach the students the fundamentals of philanthropy, as well as teaching them presentation, research, writing and consensus building skills. The Youth and Philanthropy Initiative is being taught in over 200 schools throughout Canada, USA, England and Scotland and has reached over 160,000 pupils internationally, providing students with new skillsets and expertise, and has granted millions to hundreds of local charities.

### Special thanks and appreciation to:

Ontario Trillium Foundation, M2 Financial, Just for You Weddings & Events, Paul Shannon Caterers, In The Redhouse Designs, J.C. Humphries & Associates, CSR-Eco Solutions, Empty Cup Media, Kimat Designs, Renewed Computer Technology, Heather McCullough, Matthew Dykstra, Local artists Kim Mather, Sheri Gundry, Amanda Juby, Alex Skordakis from Sutton Group, Klockner-Pentaplast of Canada Inc., Palestine Peace Awareness Inc., TWIST Sports Conditioning, Lavish Salon & Spa, Zehra's School of Bellydance, Cineplex, Edith Brown, Durham Region Epilepsy, Sunflower the Clown, Beach Sewing Machine Centre, Flutters Whitby, Menchies Frozen Yogurt Whitby, Kimat Designs, Penny Waller Interiors, Samantha Fortomaris – Design Fort Graphics, Katherine Mather, Annie Balgobin – 5th Avenue Collection, Demetres Whitby, Empire Theatres Whitby, Trinity Irish Pub – Whitby, Andre Hall.



I have been reflecting about 2013 and the progress, and the forward momentum happening at Art With A Heart Inc. It has been slow, steady progress, with the greatest thing being the move to a new office/studio space in Whitby in Durham Region. We are now situated in the heart of the Region on a major transportation route with full accessibility. We see a steady stream of people at our facility. Our grand opening event in early December was a great success, with attendance from our MPP Christine Elliott and an exciting ribbon cutting ceremony with Mayor Pat Perkins, Counselors Lorne Coe, Don Mitchell, Derrick Gleed, Ken Montague. And Town Commissioner Peter Lebel. We are very thankful for them taking time out of their very busy schedules to celebrate our new location and the work we are doing in the community.

We have seen increase with our volunteer base, hosting over 10 new volunteers this past year in various positions. They man our booth in public showcase and community events and meet the public through art making, they greet and assist with our gala, and some are weekly regulars that donate their talents through at our new office and studio space. We have welcomed 3 new facilitators that have been part of regular programming and running ongoing programs with various partners in the community. We are again going to be seeking a few new Board Members this year who have a passion for community, art and emotional and mental health issues, and broadening our volunteer base as our programs continue to expand.

Our new studio space also houses an art showcase that will be shared with various artists in the community to showcase their work through. We are going to be partnering with local art organizations to allow artists to partner with us.

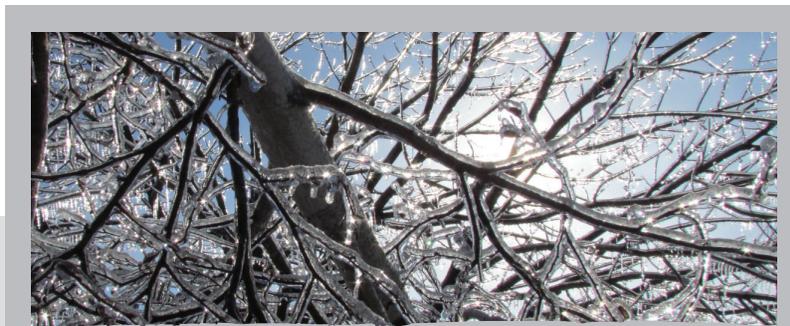
We have grown our programs, and are thankful to our Ontario Trillium Foundation funding which has helped us to expand. We are working with partners in Pickering, Ajax, Whitby, Oshawa. Our programs include Maternity Homes and Pregnancy Centers, Seniors facilities, Employment Programs, Temporary Shelters, Parenting Groups, and more. We have been part of collaborative conferences within the region encouraging positive parenting, and attachment relationships within the family structure. We have also participated in large scale events in the community, at festivals and fairs in Ajax/Pickering, Whitby, Oshawa, and Port Perry.

Our gala at The Lake House in Pickering hosted over 100 guests with a spectacular dinner (thank you Paul Shannon for your continued support) which performances from Patrick Tevlin's New Orleans's Jazz, Master Storyteller Brad Woods and musician Kevin Morse, live painting by Tiffani Brown, live face and body art by Heidi from I'm Living Art and Durham artist Sherie Forrester. Our volunteers were able to accumulate over 130 prizes from local businesses, which was part of our fundraising over the evening. Over 12 artists showcased their work and donated half of their proceeds to our event and cause.

We have fielded and supported 4 different groups from the Youth Philanthropy Initiatives in Durham region and beyond and were able to have one of the groups participate in a full-blown Expressive Arts Therapeutic Session to see first hand what the work is like that we do in the community at large.

I would like to take this time to thank all of our donors, partners, corporate sponsors, and individuals that continue to believe in the work we do.

Exciting things are on the horizon for 2014.



## Volunteerism in the Community

By Meghan Grigg

My name is Meghan Grigg and I am 15 years old. I have been involved with Art With a Heart for a couple of years. I have helped with advertising events and in any way that I am needed. I have helped run information and outreach booths at events to explain what we do and to raise awareness for the charity. This helps us to connect with the community at large, as they are who we are trying to help. Working the booths has made me more confident in speaking to people, and has given me the opportunity to see firsthand how much the work of the charity is appreciated.

The most challenging task I have done and helped me to grow the most as a person was helping to find gift sponsorships and donations from local companies for the annual gala last year. The Executive Director Sheri Gundry took me out to show me how to explain what Art With a Heart was all about, explain the gala, and to win over the manager to partner with us. Sheri brought me to two companies to show me how to approach people and helped me become more confident with the task. She showed me that she believed I'm me and knew that I could accomplish the task. I was very nervous and apprehensive but I knew the gifts were an important piece of the gala. The gifts were being used as part of a balloon pop live fundraiser at the event, and people would purchase balloons, and in every balloon there was one of the gifts from the sponsors. It stretched me as a person, and also made me leave my comfort zone. Even though I was nervous, I presented the partnership to many places, and found that the community showed great support. We raised and received many gifts and sponsorships. This experience has made me become more confident around people, and also allowed us to reach out to the community.

I once attended an Art With a Heart Expressive Arts Therapy session on Happiness and Stress to see what they were like, and ever since then I feel I think differently. I learned that the influence we have on each other is powerful and that no matter what we are doing we somehow show how we are feeling, whether it be through music, art or discussion. Art With a Heart sessions make you learn things about your perspective of yourself and of others. I find it very fulfilling to be a part of this important charity, and feel that it really can help anyone. The volunteers and staff are all caring, friendly, inspirational, and I always enjoy their company. When working with Art With a Heart I find it both humbling and rewarding. This charity is a wonderful way to express yourself, learn about yourself, and to find your inner confidence. This organization has been a joy to see come together, and will help a countless number of people through their work.