



# Hey Jude!

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Without a doubt one of the most influential - and culturally transforming - innovations of our day and age has been the Internet. Few areas of life have remained untouched by its presence.

What is often forgotten is why the Internet was created in the first place (at least in its most popular form). It was to be a place to learn about other people and the world around us, to discover what exists beyond our front yard.

Yet over the past decade a less than subtle shift occurred. The focus is no longer on others. The Internet has become a vehicle to tell the world about me and to market myself.

Sites like *YouTube*, *MySpace*, and *FaceBook* have given people the chance to place themselves front and centre. See my picture. Watch my video. Read my blog and discover what I ate today, what I wore to work, who I'm interested in, and how many times I scratched myself. The common theme? Moi. Me-tube.

That's not to say such sites don't have redeemable qualities. Of course they do. They allow people to keep up to date and in touch with friends and family. That's good. And they're fun to boot.

Yet this shift acts - I believe - as a mirror to reflect our increasing fascination as people and as a culture with ourselves. And a corresponding indifference and disinterest in others. That's not so good. What if we all decided to push back against this trend? With that thought I make the following suggestion. For the next four weeks we make the daily commitment to learn one new thing about one person each day. That person could be a friend, a neighbor, the person in the lineup for coffee. Turn the spotlight on them, and less on you. Ask them about their day, what's on their heart, where they have been in life, and where they're still dreaming about going.

Let them be on the stage while we applaud.

The Internet is here to stay. Enjoy it. Use it as a door to discover the world. Just remember that the door that opens outwards to others always has a whole lot more to teach us than the door that opens inwards towards ourselves.

Alan



## Residents Get Tips on a 'Healthy Heart'



A Speaker's Forum was held on February 17<sup>th</sup> featuring Terry Pitz of the Heart and Stroke Foundation. The topic was "a healthy heart, healthy you"

Terry explained that each person's heart is the size of their fist. The average heart beats 100,000 times a day and pumps 7,200 litres of blood a day, he added. The heart is a pump with four chambers. The upper chambers are called the left and right atria, and the lower ones are the left and right ventricles. A wall of muscle called the septum separates the left and right atria and the left and right ventricles.

Terry noted that risk factors for heart attacks include age, gender, family history, and ethnicity—all of which can't be controlled. The risk factors that one can influence to some degree—mostly through changes in lifestyle—are high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, smoking, diabetes (blood glucose level), being overweight, physical inactivity, excessive alcohol consumption and stress.

It is estimated that 5 million Canadians smoke, 48% of Canadians are overweight, and 28% have high blood pressure. Terry brought along a number of brochures from the Heart and Stroke Foundation that had useful tips on maintaining a healthy heart, and lowering one's risk of developing heart disease. The following are some tips for maintaining a healthy heart, according to the Foundation:

- Be smoke-free;
- Be physically active;
- Know and control your blood pressure;
- Eat a healthy diet that is lower in fat, especially saturated and trans fat;
- Achieve and maintain a healthy weight;
- Manage your diabetes;
- Limit alcohol use;
- Reduce stress;
- Visit your doctor regularly and follow your doctor's advice.

Terry listed some typical symptoms of a heart attack. These include a sudden discomfort or pain that does not go away when resting. The pain could be in the chest, neck, jaw, shoulder, arms and/or back. The pain may feel like a burning or squeezing sensation, heaviness on the chest, and a tightening or pressure. (In women, the pain may be more "vague."). A heart attack victim might also experience shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, nausea, indigestion, and vomiting, as well as cool, clammy skin. Emotionally, the person may be afraid, anxious, and may deny that they're having a heart attack. Terry told us that if you believe you are having a heart attack, call 911 for help, or get someone to call for you.



Terry then mentioned what happens to the body when you are having a heart attack. First plaque builds up in arteries. There are 6 arteries in the heart, and when one of them becomes completely blocked, a heart attack is likely to occur.

We would like to thank Terry for taking the time to speak to us about this important topic, and Judy for organizing this event. In the near future, we are hoping to have a Speaker's Forum on the brain and strokes. For more information on heart disease and stroke, call the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario at (416) 489-7111, or visit their web site at [www.heartandstroke.ca](http://www.heartandstroke.ca).

John Domegan

### **Agency Profile: Yellow Door Learning Centre**



Tucked away in mid-town Toronto, at 6 St. Joseph Street near Yonge and Wellesley, lies a little-known secret called the Yellow Door Learning Centre (YDLC). According to the organization's advertisement, YDLC is a creative resource centre where people share their talents and support one another on their journey. The centre's goal is to develop more creative and compassionate ways of responding to the challenges of livelihood and homelessness. YDLC offers new ways to learn, in a hospitable community setting, featuring free arts, wellness and life skills workshops.

For example, on Wednesdays there is a Quilting Circle, a co-operative, hands-on class where everyone can learn the basics of quilting while enjoying tea and conversation. Artist Judith Hart facilitates Bricolage, a collage class in which people transform everyday items into beautiful works of art that tell powerful stories. Other art workshops range from acrylic painting to watercolor, in addition to poetry and creative writing sessions. Rita Citron hosts a weekly discussion group called "The Gift of Gratitude", teaching that people who take time to express gratitude experience more joy in their lives. In addition, there is a regular community meal every Tuesday or Wednesday at 12 noon, and everyone is encouraged to volunteer or participate.

I spoke with one of the organizers of the YDLC, Darlene, and asked her what kind of workshops would be of interest to the residents of St. Jude's. She replied that YDLC, also known as 6 St. Joseph House, enjoys a real sense of community. There is SWIFT, a group for people suffering from depression or shyness, which meets every Sunday. In addition, Chris and Catharine from Progress Place host "Double Recovery" from 2:15 to 3:15, for people struggling with mental health and addiction issues. In the future, said Darlene, YDLC is going to open 2 transition homes based on the 12-step method of recovery, on Broadview Avenue in Toronto.



The founding of YDLC was inspired by the community service visions of John McKnight, a professor of social policy at Northwest University in Chicago. In the book *The Careless Society: Community and its Counterfeits*, he writes that everybody has a gift, and a good community is where those gifts are shared. According to YDLC organizers such as Darlene, the key to having a real effect on people's lives comes from fostering heart-centered relationships.

In addition to the workshops listed above, you can come to YDLC and participate in Joyful Living, Steps to Success, Breath Lines, yoga, karate, Fundamentals of Nutrition, and sketching, paper mache and meditation workshops. Darlene stressed that if you come to YDLC, be prepared to meet others and participate in a workshop. Come and have fun, learn and let your hidden talents blossom! For more information please see the YDLC website at [www.6stjoseph.ca](http://www.6stjoseph.ca) or call 416-923-8836.

Simon

### **Residents Celebrate Ukrainian Food, Culture**



Residents were treated to a scrumptious Ukrainian dinner on February 21<sup>st</sup>, and also learned about this country's culture. The meal, held at Dundas, consisted of cabbage rolls stuffed with rice and meat, and chicken with sour cream and dill sauce, made by Susan. Bob and Aldene made stuffed dumplings, also known as perogies, and Catharine, Sam, and Ann made a fruit salad.

Aldene gave us a language lesson, in which we learned the following words: "yuk shemayish" (how are you?) and "debree duckyou" (fine, thank you). We also watched a video on 2 major cities in Ukraine, Kiev and Lvov. The video featured an old heritage museum of costumes, farming ways, pottery, food, and dancing.

The Ukrainian alphabet looks like the Russian alphabet, but differs somewhat. Aldene and Susan speak different Ukrainian dialects but they still understand each other. On January 6th each year, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church celebrates Christmas. Orest told us that this church does not recognize the supremacy of the Pope in Rome. Orthodox Christians make up half of the population of Ukraine, whereas Catholics, Protestants and Jews make up the other half.

There are 24 provinces in Ukraine, and the capital is Kiev. The Russian and Ukrainian languages are spoken in Ukraine, which is the second largest country in Europe, and used to be part of the Soviet Union. This country is next to Russia, Belarus, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, and Moldova, and also the Black Sea.



Food is an important part of the Ukrainian culture and bread making is well observed in Ukrainian customs. Bread was once regarded as one of the holiest foods. Bob mentioned that the Ukrainians follow the Julian calendar, whereas in Western Europe they follow the Gregorian calendar.

Special foods are eaten at Easter and Christmas that are not made at any other time of the year. At Christmas time, for example, kutia shinitchke--a mixture of cooked buckwheat grouts, poppy seeds, honey, and special sweet breads--is prepared.

An average Ukrainian diet consists of fish, cheeses and a variety of sausages. Head cheese is also quite popular in Ukraine, as well as Kovbasa, a type of sausage. Typically, bread is a core part of every meal, and must be included for the meal to be complete.

Ukrainians are also known for their dancing. Dancing used to be male dominated, but changed over time. People enjoy folk dancing and music, from rock to Ukrainian opera. In the folk dancing, men and women wear colorful costumes that are embroidered.

Many thanks to all who participated in this event, and especially Emma for her hard work in planning and facilitating it.

John Domegan

## **Losing Weight, Quitting Smoking Covered At Nutrition Group**



A number of health and nutrition topics were discussed at the Feb. 8<sup>th</sup> Nutrition Group, attended by 14 residents. Judy facilitated the group.

The first article we looked at, from the January 8<sup>th</sup> issue of The Toronto Star, was entitled *Start A Diary, Shed Pounds*. The caption read: "Those who keep track of what they eat, and share it with peers, can double weight loss, study finds." If you want to lose weight, it is suggested that you pick up your pen and write, the article said. Keeping a diary is one step that may help you to lose weight.

In keeping a diary, it's important to be honest when you keep track of what you eat. Susan said you should also keep track of the portions that you eat. It is believed that portion control is an important part of losing weight. For example, it's not a good idea to eat a whole bag of chips in one sitting. Another tip is to reward yourself—provided you are honest about your progress--and meet your goals.



Residents had a few ideas of their own on losing or gaining weight. Ruth said that chips are loaded with calories. Aldene suggested that one should eat only half a Snickers bar at a time—if you happen to eat this. John B. said that eating salad is a good way to lose weight. Sarah R. said you should drink a lot of water because it cleans your system and keeps you regular. Susan said she eats fat-free yogurt at breakfast.

We learned that there are lots of nutrients in lettuce, and it is a good source of fibre, with very few calories. It was said that fruits and vegetables are high in fibre as well. We also heard that oil and vinegar dressing has a lot fewer calories than other types of salad dressing.

The second hand-out was a note from Ruth entitled *Why Quit Smoking*. The article noted that smoking is a pollutant that produces “free radicals” in the body, and this can damage cells and can cause disease, including lung disease. It was noted that the walls of the airways in the lungs become thick and inflamed, and the airways end up being clogged. Smoking can also cause circulatory disease. Nicotine in tobacco speeds up the heart and shrinks the arteries, we also learned. In addition, carbon monoxide poisons the oxygen in the system.

One must be highly motivated to quit smoking. John B. mentioned that he uses the patch, in an effort to quit. Judy said that smoking is addictive. However, some people who quit smoking may give up part of their social network, the article claimed. A few residents of St. Jude’s have quit smoking. Ruth’s note made us all think.

The third article discussed was entitled *Third-hand Smoke A Real Peril*, from the Toronto Sun edition of January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2009. The caption reads: “Children, in particular, are susceptible to this insidious danger.” The authors of the article encourage smokers to minimize their loved ones’ exposure to cigarette smoke. However, what some people may not know is that many particles found in cigarette smoke become embedded in carpets, curtains, or other fabrics in the room. This form of “third-hand smoke” is especially dangerous for young children, who ingest two times more dust than adults, the article said.

It was an excellent Nutrition Group and we had a lively discussion. Maybe you will have a topic or an article you would like us to discuss. Come to a future Nutrition Group and bring your ideas and information.

Neil

## **Current Events Group Looks At Blood Pressure Drugs**



We had an interesting Current Events Group in mid-January. Two articles were read, one entitled “BP Drug Combo Dangerous,” and one which said “Canada Post Puts its

Stamp on Rate Increases.”

The first article said “a commonly prescribed combination of blood pressure drugs should not be taken together.” The article claimed that combining a so-called Ace Inhibitor with an Angiotensia Receptor Blocker increases the user’s risk of a fatal heart attack, kidney disease and the need for dialysis. These two popular types of hypertension medication are said to be safe and effective treatments by themselves, but not when combined. The article estimated that 175,000 Canadians with high blood pressure may be taking both of the medications. According to the Canadian Hypertension Program – which drew up the guidelines – most people who develop high blood pressure will need treatment with two or more drugs, as well as lifestyle modifications that will help to control the condition.

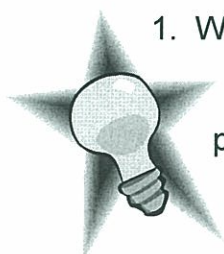
The second article dealt with the increase in Canada Post stamp rates. The cost of mailing a first-class letter within Canada has now increased to 54 cents from 52 cents. Letters to the United States have increased by 2 cents to 98 cents, while letters to all other foreign countries rose by a nickel to \$1.65. The increases have drawn criticism from the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, which says it opposes “arbitrary price increases” for service that it says is not dependable.

We also talked about former U.S. President George W. Bush admitting he made some mistakes, and also claims that the automobile industry needs to be more innovative.

It was an interesting Current Events Group and we all learned something new. David P. did a great job of facilitating it. Maybe you will see an article which you would like us to read. Come and enjoy the fun of learning something new.

Neil

## **Birthday Stars of the Month**



1. What is your best memory of the past year?
2. What is one goal you have for the coming year?
3. Tell us one or two favorite qualities that you like to see in people.

**Aldene (Dundas) – March 2**

1. *Being together with family at Christmas.*
2. *To lose weight.*
3. *A big smile and a cheerful hello.*



**Norm (Dundas) – March 5**

1. *Waking up on New Year's Day.*
2. *To master Microsoft Word.*
3. *Flexibility and forgiveness.*

**Nuno (Dundas) – March 11**

1. *Buying a coffee for a girl from the Our Place drop-in centre.*
2. *To maintain a good weight according to my height.*
3. *Respect and kindness.*

**Emilyn (Dundas) – March 14**

1. *When my son got married to a nice young lady.*
2. *To lose weight.*
3. *Friendliness and truthfulness.*

**Bijan (Milan) – March 19**

1. *My psychiatrist told me that I am treatable.*
2. *To be a chess champion in Canada.*
3. *Righteousness and correctness.*

**Paul T. (Dundas) – March 19**

1. *Having a job.*
2. *Stay alive.*
3. *Honesty, caring and loyalty.*

**Sarah R. (Milan) – March 21**

1. *My last birthday I celebrated with my daughter and grandson.*
2. *To quit smoking.*



3. *Ability to laugh at oneself and compassion.*

### **Murray (Gerrard) – March 26**

1. *Science fiction movie night at Normandy Apartments.*
2. *To explore the shops on Danforth and Queen Streets, nearby.*
3. *People who keep an open mind.*

### **Making Plans for Change**



We had an excellent Discussion Group recently in which we discussed our goals for 2009.

Aldene started this group off by talking about her goal of reducing her smoking by two-thirds. She also spoke about taking up a hobby and eating more vegetables. She also wants to exercise more, read and do sewing.

The writer said he wants to get a good job, but wants to ensure he makes the right choice. Susan said she wants to become more relaxed, and reduce her anxiety. It was stated that a bit of stress can be a good thing, as it gives one drive and motivation.

Peter handed out an article about keeping resolutions and achieving goals. There were eight steps listed: Get Real; Start Small; Incorporate into your Lifestyle; Write it Down; Check up on Yourself; Reward Yourself; Tell a Friend; and finally, Do not Delay.

Neil mentioned that he recently bought three bins to help him deal with clutter. His case manager suggested he go through his papers for ten minutes every day.

Susan said she wants to get her income tax done. Peter suggested that we throw out or give away things that we no longer have use for. It is important to monitor our progress. One should also reward oneself for accomplishing goals. It is necessary to follow through on intentions.

It was an interesting Discussion Group. Maybe you have a topic you would like to discuss at a future group. Come and bring your ideas.

Neil

## Nutrition Group: Healthy Eating on Special Occasions



A group of residents met recently to discuss healthy eating habits on holidays and other special occasions. Judy facilitated the event, using information from Canada's Food Guide and the Health Canada web site.

The group began by discussing portion control. Judy noted that many people tend to overeat during the holidays. She suggested that people should begin by having two glasses of water prior to meals. Water is very filling, and can prevent one from eating too much at dinner. Aldene said that she watches her cholesterol. We discussed eating Brussels sprouts, as they are a healthy food. It was also suggested that people eat salads before eating meat and potatoes. Eating a lot of fruits and vegetables is also said to be healthy. One bagel is the equivalent of 4 slices of bread, we learned. Also, it was suggested that celery is a good snack because it is low in calories, and helps limit food consumption at meals.

The conversation drifted to other aspects of food and nutrition. Sardines were mentioned as a healthy snack or at lunch, as well as broccoli. Eating dairy products gives you calcium. Soya milk is said to be healthy, and someone suggested eggnog, but it has a lot of sugar and sodium. Salmon, trout, and sockeye salmon are alternatives to red meat, and Judy said baked fish is a healthier option than frying it, as the latter increases fat content.

In general, we learned that it is wise to follow Canada's Food Guide. We learned that whether it is a holiday or any special occasion with family or friends, it is a good idea to limit portions of food, and enjoy.

John Domegan

## Heated Discussion Over Coffee at Current Events Group



On February 15<sup>th</sup> we had an interesting Current Events Group attended by ten residents. One article discussed was entitled *Starbucks at Your Service But Not Timmies*. It stated that Starbucks offers the best coffee shop service in Toronto, followed slightly by Second Cup. Six major coffee shops were ranked in the survey.

The article said the coffee experience is important to Canadians, and for many of them it is the key to starting the day. Starbucks did well in many categories of the survey, but Tim Hortons did not. The article prompted much discussion.



The second article submitted was entitled *CPP Fund takes Hit in Stride*. The CPP fund saw its assets drop by 6.7 percent, the article said. This is not as bad as other pension and endowment funds. CPP has apparently not been forced to sell good assets in order to keep its portfolio mix. The article indicated that this fund should weather the current market conditions well.

Another article we discussed was entitled *Interest In Darwin Survives 200 years*. Darwin shares the same birthday as Lincoln, and over 600 events worldwide were held to celebrate Darwin's 200<sup>th</sup> birthday. Darwin enjoys a unique place in Britain where his face adorns the ten-pound note. The Nature Museum in London has a show on Darwin that is billed as the largest exhibition ever devoted to the naturalist.

Despite this, a poll showed that 43 percent of British people believe that God created the world, as opposed to believing Darwin's theory of evolution. In Christ's College of Cambridge, where he studied, Prince Philip unveiled a bronze statue showing a young, intense looking Darwin sitting on the arm of a bench.

Neil

## Low Fat Scalloped Potatoes



- 4 potatoes
- 1 ½ cups skim milk or soy milk
- 2 tablespoons flour
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon garlic powder
- ¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- ½ cup chopped onion
- ½ cup cheddar cheese low fat, shredded (optional).

### Directions:

Peel and slice potatoes thinly. In a saucepan, combine milk, flour, salt, garlic powder and cayenne pepper, and cook over medium heat until sauce thickens. Add onions to the sauce.

Layer casserole dish with potato slices. Spoon half of sauce over slices and repeat with the remaining potatoes and sauce. Cover and bake in oven, preheated to 350 degrees, for 60 minutes. Optional: remove from oven and sprinkle with low fat cheddar cheese.

Aldene