

the writer

Stories, poems and musings

My Gift

Clinton Yakubowski



On Christmas day my daughter was born. The first time I saw my little angel she had these little elf ears. They used to be noticeable, now they are normal ears. My daughter's name is Ashley, she is turning ten years old. Ashley loves watching horror movies with me. Ashley has two favorite horror movies. They are Freddy and Child's Play. Ashley loves to spend time with her uncle Kelly. He takes her out wherever she likes to go.

Someone Watching Over Me In My Dreams

Kim Wilson

It feels so good to open my heart and reach out to my brother. He is like me. When I talk to myself, I hear his voice. I love him so much. He talks to me in my dreams.

Dad's Cooking

Suzanne Boskoyous

I am writing about my dad's wonderful cooking. He made everything with hamburger. Hamburger and fries was my favorite. He made hamburger pie, hamburger muffins, meat loaf and hamburger soup. He could do anything with hamburger.

He was a cook in a lumber camp, that is where he learned how to cook. The guys in the camp used to call him Hamburger Man.

Best Friends

Holly Williams

A dog is your best friend. You can take a dog for a walk, you can give a dog a bath. A dog can be a watchdog and can catch a ball too. Dogs can catch a frisbee too. Dogs like to ride in cars and in the back of trucks. I love dogs and cats.

My Dog Lady

Kim Wilson

When I was living at home, my dog Lady woke me up. I was eight years old and I smelled smoke. My dad was smoking on the couch and the fire caught the curtain. I was sleeping upstairs. My mom came half way upstairs, but she tripped and fell down. I tried to open the door, but the doorknob was too hot. I had to go out my window. I was scared of heights. But I was brave enough to come down the ladder. Lady came down the ladder too, she pulled me away from the house.

I was scared to go back in the house, but I had to. My mom told me to put the fire out. I put it out with a big pail of water. My mom told me, take your dog to your sister's place. You stay with her and Al, she will help you. My dog Lady was brave.

My Dog Mister

Tammy Wilson



My dog's name is Mister. He is a year old. He is a rotwieller and sheppard. He is a big dog. He barks at anyone that comes to the door. He likes to be outside. He likes to run in the backyard. He likes to play with a ball and a shoe. He gives me a warm welcome home, he is my suck. He likes to lick a lot. I don't want to give him up.

Eagles

Garrett B.C.

I'd like to be an eagle because the eagles fly high in the clouds. They fly over the big buildings and mountains too. The eagle means to be proud and happy. It means to be strong and brave. I would like to be an eagle because they are free. They are beautiful birds. I have seen a few eagles flying over the city and in the country. One time I went fishing with friends. We saw an eagle fly down to the river and grab a fish with his claws. Everybody said that it was cool.

Memories

Jim Croswell

One of the memories that I hold dear was a situation between my four year old daughter and her grandmother, who had offered to baby sit the children. After getting the three kids washed, she gave them each a large slice of homemade bread with peanut butter and an over abundance of strawberry jam. Next came the story telling. She then gave them each a hug and a kiss and saw to it that they said their little prayers.

Later, as she sat at the table, she got to thinking, "Maybe those kids are right, I am getting on in years, it is time this old girl goes to bed as well. But I got to get down on my knees even if it is hard to get back up."

Apparently she did not hear the patter of little feet. The four year old granddaughter tiptoed up to the doorway and took in all she saw. Even at that age she knew enough not to interrupt someone, especially at prayers. Upon getting up, grandmother saw the child standing in the doorway with a puzzled look on her face. She looked at her and asked "What's wrong my little one?"

"Me need jink, lots of cookies too."

Grandmother told her, "The floor is cold! Get into Grandma's bed."

She went for the milk and cookies. As grandma sat at the foot of the bed she saw that the child was still puzzled about something, she asked, "What do you wish to know?"

"Oh grandma! How come you wave your fingers around in front of your face? Gee grandma, I scared you poke your eyes out! You want God to hear you? Look up in the sky where he lives. Call him, Yoo Whoo God, it is me Grandma, we need to talk."

Grandma told us later that at first she was hurt, but when the little one's eyes welled up and the tears came, she just held her close. She said that when we got home she heard us come in, although the wife found them both asleep in each others arms!

Somehow the wife and I got blamed for this as she looked at my twelve year old sister-in-law with a big grin on her face and told her, "If you marry a Protestant, I will hit you along side your empty head with my twelve inch cast iron frying pan!"

My Mother

Mary McGinnis

I have a very special mother, who is intelligent. When I see her, I help her with everything. Although she is getting old, she works very hard. I love her fondly and will always have her memories.

My First School

Richard Tomkow

My first school was in St. Paul, Alberta. I started at age seven. Also, I was singing at New Hope School in St. Paul, Alberta.

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Thanksgiving

Christine Schaub

Turkeys are large birds
Harvest in the fall
And lots of food
Nice to eat
Kitchen is full of nice smells
Stories of harvest
Gathering together
I enjoy Thanksgiving
Vegetables from the garden
Into a pot they go
Neighbors come over
Giving THANKS

The Railways

Harry Hendrickson

I am interested in trains. I went on the trains from Winnipeg, Manitoba, to Edmonton, Alberta. To Kamloops, B.C., from Edmonton, Alberta. It took me four days on the beautiful train.

Pauline

Pauline Fraser

Pauline
Tall, Friendly,
Worker, Learner, Biker,
Happy, Relaxed, Contented, Calm,
Swimmer, Knitter, Sewer,
Responsible, Punctual
Pauline

My Name is Holly

Holly Williams

Happy Holly
I'm a fun person to be around.
I'm cheerful because the sun is shining.
If I'm in pain, I'm down in the dump.
I knit when I can.
I ride my bike when the sun shines.
I love my fluffy, cuddly cat around me.
she makes me forget my pain.
I feel good because I can actually do this.
The End

A Story My Grandfather

Told Me

Garrett B.C.

Long ago my grandfather Jim told me a story about his childhood. His story is about an old man who told the people "stop drinking and hurting people." He was a medicine man. He said something could happen to their children.

They didn't believe him, but my great grandmother believed him. She put something on the top of the door and she told Jim "Don't look out the window." He saw a cloud come down around the houses and he thought he saw children's souls floating off the top of the houses. He was scared and went to bed. In the morning the people were crying because some children died.

My grandfather Jim stopped the story, he looked nervous and I left him alone.

Space of Freedom

Brian Maxwell

It's another Friday night, I think I'll go into town, and take a trip with Cid.
I'm just searching for my space of freedom.
I walk down the street, eating a stale muffin, wishing I could rest my feet.
I'm just looking for my space of freedom.
I sleep through the day, drink triple rum and cokes through the night.
I'm just hunting for my space of freedom.
I get home at four in the morning, my Mom calls me at eight, telling me to get up
or
I'm going to be late.
I'm just wishing for my space of freedom.
It's another Saturday night, I'm at a party in the bush, with a joint in one hand,
use the other one to push.
I'm just working for my space of freedom.
Through the week I sit in class, always wondering if I'm going to pass.
I'm just learning about my space of freedom.
Now it's Sunday, as I sit in church, I say a silent prayer for an end to my space
of freedom search.
I'm just finding my space of freedom, without the evilness outside the church.

Edmonton

Ann C.

Downtown is chaotic. The people downtown can be unreasonable. For example, they don't think that social services understands what we go through. We want to work as a team with social workers instead of working against each other. We need to sit down and understand the rules, what people can do, before social services can take the baby away.



Los Angeles

Garrett B.C.

Los Angeles is a beautiful city. I liked the beaches too. I went swimming in the ocean with friends on a beautiful sunny day. I saw the Hollywood sign, it was big. I saw the names of the big stars on a Hollywood sidewalk. I saw big names like John Wayne, Bruce Lee, Marilyn Monroe, Walter Matthau, and Jack Lemon.

When I finished sightseeing I went to watch the sun go down at the beach. It was so beautiful. One of these days I want to go back and I will take pictures this time.

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What Change Means To Me

Ben Sinclair

I moved to Edmonton to get out of Fort McMurray, to get myself educated, to start a business. I got tired of working for other people. I figured it's time for me to move on to other things. I worked in industry for twenty-five years, I enjoyed the work. I like the heavy equipment operator's life, but you get tired of it as the years go by. It's like any other thing you do in life.



Independence

By Pauline Fraser

*"Never let anyone take your independence away."**

I really believe in this saying from my childhood days. I lived in foster homes and group homes. I felt dependent because I had to obey rules which I never liked.

At age fifteen, I decided to leave the group home. I was living and make my own life. I found work as a waitress in a restaurant in Stony Plain. I made enough money to pay my rent and for my food. From the moment I got my first paycheck I have been paying my way.

*Kathy Russel

My Life

Ivan Nikiforuk

Ivan Nikiforuk I would like to introduce myself to the students at The Learning Centre. I am a male adult, from greater Edmonton, where I attended Ross Sheppard Composite High. I have one hundred credits, plus general skills. At eighteen, I owned my car (cash) and sold it! Through the years, I have developed a mental illness and must see a psychiatrist regularly. Now I am quite independent. Thank you!

I was initially introduced to the Boyle Street Co-op, to assist as a volunteer and to develop a structure for the work world. I attended a work seminar at the Sport-Ex, where I approached a booth that would put me in school. Because I was already a volunteer, my case manager introduced me to The Learning Centre. Finally, it would lead me back into a programming environment to get back into work. I am educating myself and getting myself the career I want.

Growing Up

Oulinda Ayvazzadeh

I grew up in Iran. It was a very good country. It is very warm and sunny there. I went to school in Iran until grade six. In those days the Shah was still alive and there was freedom.

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My Body and Spirit

Clint Yakubowski

When I'm alone
I like to stare at the
sky. I hope to see
my
son and best friend
again when my time
is to come home.



When I am looking at the sky I feel
relaxed. I feel the joy of someone
watching me. I can feel the presence
of their spirit.

When I am alone I sit and think of my
best friend and the things we used to
do together when we grew up.
Sometimes I think of my son and the
things I could have done with him.

When I am sitting alone, my body,
mind, emotion and spirit are relaxed.

Dealing with Racism

Marilyn Dymchuk

I get called retarded by my father
when I talk. My father teases me
when I talk and walk. I feel like no one
likes me, and so I feel like doing
myself in. So I asked for help to work
with that. I was unhappy, because of
that I feel like I should go to
counseling.

My New Place

Robert Crawford

I like my new place because it is
bigger than the one I had before. I got
new furniture, three shelves and a
new couch. My new place is on 104
street and 107 avenue. It is four
blocks from The Learning Centre. The
other place was about twenty blocks
away.

My Hearts on Fire

Brian W. Maxwell

My heart's on fire with a burning desire to find a love that feels true.
My heart's on fire with a burning desire to try something new.
My heart's on fire with a burning desire to be abstinent for you.
My heart's on fire with a burning desire to remember all of you.
My heart's on fire with a burning desire to be forgiven by all of you.
My heart's on fire with a burning desire to remember my writings in my past.
My heart's on fire with a burning desire to believe in all of you.
My heart's on fire with a burning desire to forgive all of you.
My heart's on fire with a burning desire to remember "Space of Freedom," I wrote
when I was just seventeen.

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The Learning Centre

Helen Herbert

The Learning Centre is a wonderful place to be. I have seen lots of old friends and made some new friends here. I know more things now than I did in normal school. The teachers are wonderful people. They are here to help you with every thing that you need help with: finding work, resumes, math, computer or just to talk to.

There are friends that you can go out for coffee with, or just go for a bike ride. I really had a good time being here with everyone. I hope everyone has a wonderful holiday and wish everyone a good time at school too.

A Star Judith T.

I made a star, the color was blue. The star reminds me of family. The star reminds me of my father and sister. I am glad to be back at school.

What Literacy Does For Me

Cindy Lingrell

Literacy opens up the world for you, it helps you to be independent and run your own life. You will be able to manage your own money, go places you have never been before on your own, without being escorted.

You will be able to make yourself understand in ways you never could before. No one will be able to make you feel like you are mentally challenged again.

Reading gives you an understanding of world events and why they are happening. Books can entertain you or open up new worlds for you.

You will be able to talk to people in a way you never could before. More importantly, you can tell them what you think and understand. You will be able to express your own ideas and express your own feelings.

Literacy helps you find a place in the world and be able to hold on to it, and yourself respect. I'm so glad that four years ago I had the courage to walk into The Learning Centre. My life is so much better.

*Our thanks to all the writers who contributed
their stories, poems, and musings for publication.*

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