



# Batshaw Alumni Association

## Newsletter

VOLUME 1, ISSUE JUNE 2011

### Retiring to or from?

By Barbara Kemp

Because retirement is experienced by people in many different ways, we thought it would be interesting to include a segment in each newsletter about how some Batshaw "alums" are spending their time these days. I am going to get this ball rolling partly because I am on the newsletter committee where this idea was explored, and partly because I represent a retirement plan so free of responsibility and scheduling that anyone who reads this will be reassured that they have very productive and exciting lives indeed.

I remember when I was about to retire, someone said to me that I was not retiring from something, but I was retiring to something. The problem with this concept for me was that I was all for retiring from. After years of school, housekeeping, children, volunteer work, and employment, I wanted to know the freedom of waking up

in the morning with a wonderful day ahead of me that I could fill (or not fill) as I wished. I savour that long first cup of coffee while reading the newspaper in the morning. I love having the luxury of enjoying a good book in the middle of the day without knowing that somewhere someone is saying "Why isn't Barbara here?" or "Where's Mom?" I like not feeling rushed or tense because there is too much to do in too short a time.

I want you to know that doing almost nothing does take a little practise – especially in dealing with those feelings of guilt when watching a movie at 10:00 in the morning, but it can be done – and for me it is the most delicious of freedoms.

Of course not even I can live without some physical and social activity – much must be said for keeping body and soul in good

shape. I go to the gym on a regular basis, I enjoy meeting friends for lunch or a movie, I participate in the Batshaw Alumni Committee activities, and I give my love of reading a higher purpose by being part of not one, but two book groups. I do as much traveling as the budget allows. Most of all I revel in the joy of being part of a great relationship and a wonderful family which includes having time to spend as a grandma to my four beautiful granddaughters.

But essentially, when people ask me what I am doing these days, I am pleased to be able to answer that I do whatever I want whenever I want. It is a privilege I feel I have earned.



# Gardening Amongst Thistles and Thorns: Seeds of Inuit Resiliency and Hope

By Fred Anderson,

**Program Manager Ulluriaq Adolescent Center**

Some definitions. Our name Ulluriaq is Inuktitut for star. Inuit hunters and travelers always used a particular star as a guide to returning home. Our Inuit personnel chose our name to ensure that our staff, youth, parents, and partners see our center as the guiding star that will safely return their youth to the North.

Inuktitut for retirement is pinasuarraqniq. But I am not really retired as in give up work, leave, withdrawal, departure, or go to bed. I have left Batshaw. But I am still there as alumni writing for the alumni newsletter.

Inuuq nuuriaqtuq is Inuktitut for moving on. So I am not retired but in motion.

So what is it that I now do?

I am in motion with Inuit youth. Inuit girls. Immersed in the struggle to make meaning of being Inuit and girl; reconciling the traditional and contemporary as these contending forces play out as determinants for diminishing life circumstances or enhancing life choices. Immersing self as learner and teacher.

Being the “holder of hope” or “timekeeper for the future”. Doing circle of courage, talking circles, and providing safe space for the expression of the unsayable.

Every culture has an explanation for its pain. So we are in motion with alternative healing practices, other concepts of personhood, and community.

Inuit Specificity. History: (both

pre/post qalluaat, meaning white or southerner). Geography. Cosmology. Spirituality.

So we are asking some similar but also some qualitatively different questions. There is always the why do so many choose to die.

However, we are digging/furrowing deeper and ruminating on why, so many others, despite the historical and cultural impositions, dislocations and economic deprivations and other racially informed trauma, did not wither and perish. That so many did and continue to resist and embrace the life giving impulse for integrity for self, culture and the Inuit collectivity.

The youth in our care are seedlings of ancestral derivations. Their roots, though windblown, continue to be a source of pride and nurture a strong sense of belonging, generosity, pride, and the will not simply to survive but to prevail. There is to be heard, if you pause and silence the hoe and shears, amidst the noise and clamor of pain-based behaviors, a quite but insistent murmur and summoning of the ancestral life-line.

Every morning is girl group meeting (talking circle). There are always stories/narratives to be retold/reframed. Minifying defeat. Surfacing buds and blooms of courage and resistance. Weeding and hacking out space necessary for the protection of those ceremony and traditions that have survived and passed on to successive generations.

We march to a more primordial drumming. A drumbeat of ancient skins, rhyming out tales of connections, suns, rains, moons, snows, courage, belonging,

mastery, independence; an ancient drumbeat pulsing the bloodline of hope and resiliency for Inuit Youth.

I am in motion with the rose standing sentinel on the frozen tundra; the tumbleweeds or cacti of arid plains or wind swept deserts. Why not orchids? They can be found in every habitat from deserts to the Arctic Circle.

We are in motion with Inuit youth.



# Volunteering for Batshaw clients

by Julia Paré

It may be surprising to learn that transitioning from the scheduled and hectic world of the workforce to the easy pace and leisure of retirement can be a stressful experience.

It starts with a need to redefine oneself, letting go of past roles and finding new interests, adjusting to the tempo of unscheduled time, deciding what to do with one's time and how to prioritize the events of the day. It can be a steep learning curve for some!

But inevitably ,with time and planning ,the transition does occur and most of us soon find ourselves looking back at our careers

wondering how we ever managed the pace and responsibilities for the many years we did.

Old interests are revived and new ones are developed. The scheduling of one's day is more often controlled by oneself and not by others .Time for oneself and time for others become more possible than ever before.

Among the many options in this phase of a retiree's life is the opportunity to volunteer some of this new found time to help individuals who are struggling to manage the demands in their lives. Volunteer needs in the community are endless. A little research and exploring in the community will likely result in a good match for anyone interested in finding a volunteer experience.



At Batshaw the need for volunteers is varied and constant.

The opportunities to enrich a child's life or ease a parent's burden are available in many forms. Being a Big Sister or Big Brother or a tutor or a mentor, helping with homework, driving children to doctor appointments and giving home support to families are some possibilities.

Courtney Sewell is the manager to contact if you have an interest in exploring this option. He can be reached at 514-932-7161 ext 1234



**Are you interested in writing an article for the Batshaw Alumni newsletter? Would you like to participate in a Fun Lunch? How about attending a lecture or a music concert with old friends from work? Maybe you have a great fundraising idea to support Batshaw youth? The Batshaw Alumni Association welcomes you and all your ideas and suggestions!**

Contact the Batshaw Alumni Association office at 514-932-7161 ext 1151, or email us at [Nicolette\\_desmit@ssss.gouv.qc.ca](mailto:Nicolette_desmit@ssss.gouv.qc.ca) or [byfc.alumni@gmail.com](mailto:byfc.alumni@gmail.com)

# President's report

by Jerbanoo D. Irani

Welcome to the fourth Annual General Meeting of the Batshaw Alumni Association. In the past four years, the membership has grown steadily and presently we have sixty persons listed as members.

The Executive Committee met seven times, once at the Boscoville Campus. One of the goals of the Committee was to establish a working relationship with BYFC. The co-operation extended by Maureen Cohen has been invaluable. With Maureen's help, her liaison with Technical Services and the perseverance of Nicolette deSmit and Julia Pare we now have an office for the Alumni Association in Room 50 at 6 Weredale Park with a to

telephone, filing cabinet, access the BYFC network and mailing support. Thank you Maureen, Julia and Nicolette. We got clarification that paid membership is available to the Alumni to use the Relax-Action Centre facilities & programmes.

The Social Activities Committee had a successful lunch and will continue to plan activities for members to get together. The Communications Committee launched the first Newsletter I would like to thank each member of the Executive Committee for their dedication and co-operation over the past year. They are Nicolette deSmit, member at large, Julia Pare, Secretary and member of the Communications Committee and chair

of the Volunteer Committee, Van Small, Treasurer, Zalman Bitensky, chair of the Social Activities Committee. I was initially the Vice President replacing Bob Guezen and later stepped in for President, Roger Fortin whose post retirement commitments necessitated his resignation from the Executive. I would also like to thank the members on the various committees who have worked to fulfill their respective mandates. In conclusion, thank you for your attendance today and I would encourage each of you to speak to your many former colleagues and friends to join the Alumni Association.



## “Fun Lunch”: Social Committee

by Zalman Bitensky

The Batshaw Alumni Association Social Committee formed a year ago has been hard at work developing opportunities for us to socialize.

The first event on Oct. 7th 2010 was a "fun lunch" which was a great success. It was a good opportunity to catch up on news of former colleagues and to renew friendships. Having more people join us would make the next one even better!!

**PLEASE RESERVE TUESDAY JUNE 14, 2011 FOR OUR NEXT LUNCHEON,** details to follow or leave a message with Barbara Kemp 514-564-9306.

We encourage you to invite all your Batshaw friends - retired, soon to be retired and still working.

Any suggestions for future gatherings are more than welcome.

Please send to:

[zalman.bit@gmail.com](mailto:zalman.bit@gmail.com)



Alumni Social Committee: Zalman Bitensky, Marilyn Green Crestohl, Barbara Kemp.