



Cooking together brings back memories, creates new ones

By MICHELLE MILLS



L'ABRI'S NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, STAR GALE (CENTRE) WITH COOKS (L. TO R.) RICK, SCHMOAL, ALYSS AND ANNA ARE HARD AT WORK ASSEMBLING PIZZA WITH CAULIFLOWER CRUST

Since May 2019, L'Abri en Ville residents have been meeting monthly to cook and eat healthy meals together. Our new community kitchen project has almost 20 regular participants, including staff and one or two volunteers. They set up on the second floor of our home base in Little Burgundy, using its well-equipped kitchen and working from tables in the adjacent office space.

Getting together to enjoy food allows the contributors to build and reflect on happy memories. Growing up in Madras in southern India, resident **Nithya Sethuranan** remembers cooking with her mother. "She used to make gulab jamun—donuts in sugar syrup. I didn't often help in

MICHELLE MILLS

the kitchen, but when she made the donuts I would roll out the dough." While working, she would enjoy a chat with her mom. Cooking with friends at L'Abri, she says, brings her some of the same feelings of calmness and joy. (*Nithya shares a favourite chickpea curry recipe with us here.*)

Some residents find the group has helped them relax. **Amina Najibova** dislikes large crowds, and finds being in a group setting "a bit of a challenge." She sees the community kitchen as "something like therapy. [It helps me] expose myself safely to groups." She finds the presence of volunteers she knows "helps me a lot. I feel safe, and don't feel isolated."

Nythia's Chickpea Curry

Pour **3 Tbsp oil** into a saucepan, and heat over medium

Sprinkle on **1/2 tsp cumin seeds** (not powder), cook 3 minutes

Add **3 onions** (chopped), cook 10-15 minutes until golden brown

Sprinkle on **1 tsp garlic powder**

Stir in **2 large tomatoes** (chopped), cook 15 minutes until well blended with onions

Sprinkle on **1 tsp curry powder** and **1/2 tsp salt** (or to taste), cook 10 minutes

Pour in **1 can chickpeas** (drained and rinsed), cook 10 minutes and serve

(Tbsp = Tablespoon, tsp = teaspoon)

Makes approx. 4 servings
Delicious served with rice!

Coordinator **Cathy DeChambeau** sees the cooking group as "a bonding experience for the residents. It keeps them connected." And as our McGill social work intern, **Jayne Persiko**, adds, "It's great for people to learn some practical recipes they can make and take home."

It's hard not to love a community kitchen that fills the office with enticing aromas, and the bellies of our participants with delicious, healthy meals.

MICHELLE RECENTLY REPLACED STAR AS AN APARTMENT COORDINATOR

SAVE THESE DATES!

DECEMBER 2-3 2019
Citrus fundraiser distribution 2-8 PM

DECEMBER 9 2019
Holiday Party for the L'Abri community

MARCH 16 2020
Annual General Meeting

Her calm, collaborative style will be missed Cheryl steps down...

By SANDRA BAINES

SHEILA MCCARTHY



PLANNING FOR L'ABRI'S FUTURE WAS CHERYL'S FOCUS IN THE MONTHS BEFORE HER RETIREMENT

CHERYL LAFFERTY RETIRED as our Executive Director at the end of the summer, after six and a half years of dedicated service to L'Abri en Ville. During this period, Cheryl led us through some major changes in the organization, always considering carefully the impact of these changes. Her respect for the residents, her empathy and genuine concern for our well-being was evident in her relationships with all of us.

The purchase of the property we now call home in Little Burgundy was a major event in the life of L'Abri during this period, presenting staff with new tasks to be dealt with. Trained like Cheryl as a social worker, I once remarked to her that buying real estate and all the responsibilities related to property ownership were not what we signed up for when we entered social work!

Cheryl's calm, steady approach to all the challenges we faced during her tenure was always collaborative, whether working with board members, staff, students, volunteers, residents or the community beyond L'Abri.

Anticipating and planning for the future life of L'Abri was very much the focus of Cheryl's attention leading up to her retirement. Surely one of the most valuable attributes of a good leader is to prepare others to take on new responsibilities. Cheryl did just that, sometimes with the help of others outside of L'Abri, specifically her husband Jacques, whose business expertise figured into her calculations related to human resource issues. As Jacques said, Cheryl was so passionate about L'Abri that it was impossible not to share his experience and offer advice.

Cheryl promises to keep in touch. We will count on that and look forward to seeing her at the Holiday Party in December, when the whole community will have an opportunity to wish her well in her retirement, and great joy with her new baby granddaughter, Théa. Best wishes to Cheryl from all of us at L'Abri. 

SANDRA IS PERSONNEL CHAIR ON THE L'ABRI BOARD OF DIRECTORS, PAST PRESIDENT AND A LONG-TIME APARTMENT VOLUNTEER

RESIDENTS GATHERED IN FORCE AT THE BAHAMA APARTMENT IN SEPTEMBER TO THANK CHERYL (REAR, CENTRE, IN WHITE) FOR HER KINDNESS AND SUPPORT, AND WISH HER WELL IN HER NEW LIFE.



STAR GALE

From music TV to mental health leadership ...and Star steps in

By CECILY LAWSON

COURTESY OF STAR GALE



**BUILDING COMMUNITY
THRIVES ON RECIPROCAL
RELATIONS AMONG PEOPLE
OF DIFFERENT AGES**

A CHANGE IN LEADERSHIP can be challenging for community organizations. But as L'Abri en Ville bade good-bye to retiring Executive Director Cheryl Lafferty in August, we were fortunate that coordinator Star Gale was able to take on the top job, ensuring a smooth transition.

Star first joined L'Abri in 2011 as an intern studying for her Bachelors degree in social work at McGill University. For that academic year, she worked with us two days a week, connecting with our residents and with the day-to-day operations of the organization. Committed as she is to social causes, Star became involved in widespread student strikes at the time over tuition increases, and was a member of the strike mobilization committee at the School of Social Work. Her activism got the support of staff at L'Abri who shared her commitment – and an affinity was born.

Following the completion of her three-year program at McGill, Star returned to L'Abri briefly before going to work at Benedict Labre House, a day centre for the homeless. It was while she was there that she was approached by Cheryl Lafferty to join L'Abri as a coordinator, a job she started in January 2016.

People come to social work from various disciplines and backgrounds, but Star made the unusual choice of opting for the profession after a ten-year career in television. She started as a production assistant at MuchMusic in Toronto in 1999 and left as a producer in 2009, heading to Montreal to enter McGill.

Star takes a research-based approach to identifying what makes L'Abri work, and how residents make their shared housing arrangement a success. She is interested in our project's intergenerational character, convinced that in daily life, building community thrives on reciprocal relations among people of different ages.

In Star's view, "L'Abri has a magic to it, and... I want to find out how it is able to do what it does, and to make that visible to other communities."

Concurrently with her work at L'Abri, Star is pursuing an correspondence Masters degree in community development at the University of Victoria. She lives in Notre-Dame-de-Grâce with her partner, her son, her stepdaughter and their dog Marge. 🐕

CECILY IS PRESIDENT OF L'ABRI EN VILLE AND AN APARTMENT VOLUNTEER

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FAMILY ALBUM

Wildlife puts on a show as wind whips up a flurry

Three days and two nights on the beautiful Île Saint-Bernard in Châteauguay — this annual August holiday in nature is the highlight of summer for many of our residents. This year, the sun didn't shine brightly enough to tempt would-be bathers into the swimming pool, and the wind sent people indoors to get their jackets. But residents enjoyed the pontoon boat tour, birdwatching, nature walks and sunset viewing. This year, the setting sun performed for us from the point at the Manoir D'Youville — not as usual from the porch of volunteer Joan Esar's cottage. Joan has, alas, given up her cozy summer home, so our holidayers will miss the evening hike to her place, her spectacular view and the warm welcome that had always awaited them.



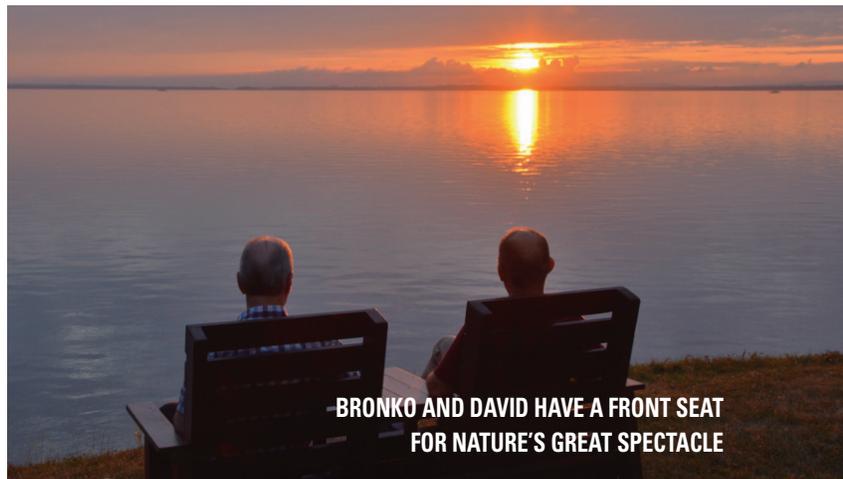
SEAN AND RENÉE BRAVING THE ELEMENTS



SAM BEITEL



A VARIETY OF BIRDS, AND EVEN A DEER, DELIGHTED NATURE LOVERS SHEILA MCCARTHY (ABOVE, LEFT) AND CHERYL LAFFERTY



BRONKO AND DAVID HAVE A FRONT SEAT FOR NATURE'S GREAT SPECTACLE

 FAMILY ALBUM

World Mental Health Day celebrated with lively activities



SAM BEITEL



This year, the annual event focussing on mental health took the form of a lively “celebration” in September at the Olympic Park’s Esplanade. Above (l. to r.), volunteer **Suzanne**, residents **Shmoal** and **Evelyn** and coordinator **Michelle** attended, and had fun blowing bubbles and listening to foot-tapping music. Pet therapy and face painting were also on offer, and despite lower attendance than Montreal Walks for Mental Health has had in past years, people enjoyed the party atmosphere. Our group hopes that next year the event will attract more attendees and be an even greater success.



SAM BEITEL

No hot dogs for Luna



CATHY, JAYME AND MICHELLE DID A GREAT JOB KEEPING THE HOT DOGS COMING AS HUNGRY EATERS RETURNED FOR SECONDS

Our annual hot dog barbecue drew many residents and volunteers to Angrignon Park on a lovely September afternoon. Even the Canada geese turned up! As an evening chill crept in, friends mixed and mingled. **Joan Esar’s** dog **Luna**, pictured at left with **David**, kept us all company, and obediently dined on dog food — though possibly tempted by the aromatic treats on the grill!

NOTES FROM THE OFFICE

Recent months a time of hiring and role change at L'Abri

By STAR GALE

This summer went by quickly as we planned and prepared for changes in staff roles and welcomed new team members. **Michelle Mills**, who came to L'Abri as a summer student, has now joined our team as a full-time co-ordinator. **Jayne Persiko** began work in September as this year's intern from the McGill School of Social Work. In addition to meeting regularly with residents, Michelle and Jayne helped organize our annual barbecue in Angrignon Park, and participated in the inaugural Celebrate Mental Health event, in a new format replacing Montreal Walks for Mental Health.

L'Abri board and staff gathered on 22 September 2019 for a special brainstorming meeting facilitated by **Jess Malz**, a consultant from COco Montreal. Our discussions focused on

how L'Abri can create an engaged, active, intergenerational community. Having just stepped into the position of Executive Director, I found this to be a timely and helpful experience. I was impressed by the skill set and wealth of knowledge shared by our community members, and look forward to facilitating any new initiatives that come from this day's hard work. Stay tuned for more information and new opportunities to engage with L'Abri!

As the months grow colder, the office will be busy making sure our annual winter events, like the citrus fundraising campaign and Holiday Party, go off without a hitch.

We will also be preparing for one more change in our team as we bid farewell to **Cathy DeChambeau**, who has been with L'Abri as a coordinator for almost



SAM BETTEL

THE FOCUS WAS ON L'ABRI EN VILLE'S FUTURE AS MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND STAFF MET AT GAEL EAKIN'S HOME ON A SEPTEMBER SUNDAY.

eight years. While we will miss Cathy very much, we wish her the absolute best in her retirement. Thank you for all your hard work and compassion Cathy! 🇨🇦

STAR IS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF L'ABRI EN VILLE



La voleuse de livres (The Book Thief) par Markus Zusak, Marie-France Girod (traduction). Les Éditions OH! (2007), adapté au cinéma en 2013

L'histoire de **Liesel Meminger**, une fillette de 10 ans, que sa mère amène dans une famille d'accueil, commence en 1939, dans un train où son frère meurt. Lors de son enterrement, elle s'empare de son premier livre : « Le manuel du fossoyeur ».

Liesel ne revoit plus jamais sa mère, mais sa vie est emplie de confiance, de loyauté et d'amitié. À Molching, petite ville imaginaire d'Allemagne, dans sa nouvelle famille, elle se réveille chaque

nuit en hurlant, mais son père adoptif la reconforte en lui apprenant à lire. Peintre en bâtiment, il peint les pages du Mein Kampf du parti nazi en blanc pour y écrire des mots nouveaux. Petit à petit, le pouvoir des mots la rattache au monde. Elle vole son deuxième livre en 1940 lors d'un feu où les Nazis brûlent des livres. Par ailleurs, à Noël, sa nouvelle famille lui offre deux livres achetés en vendant des cigarettes.

Entretemps, ils hébergent un Juif, Max, dans leur cave et Liesel lui fera la lecture régulièrement. Aussi, chez la femme du maire, elle rapporte le linge propre que sa mère adoptive lave pour boucler les fins de mois. Un lien étrange se tisse entre elles, et Liesel en profite pour dérober des livres.

Au milieu des bombardements, toute la rue se réfugie dans un sous-sol jugé assez creux pour les protéger; malheureusement Max doit quitter leur cave lorsque les Allemands se mettent à fouiller partout.

L'histoire prend fin à la mort très lointaine de Liesel lors de son douzième livre écrit par elle-même.

Best-seller international, traduit dans vingt langues, la voleuse de livres a reçu le prix Millepages jeunesse. Il est destiné à la fois aux adolescents et aux adultes. Une lecture à ne pas manquer. 🇨🇦

MARIE-JOSÉE, RÉSIDENTE DE L'APPARTEMENT BRASILIA, EST UNE LECTRICE AVIDE

CRITIQUE DE LIVRE

Une histoire de guerre à travers des livres... volés !

Par MARIE-JOSÉE PICHÉ

For volunteers, many ways to be a friend

By SUSAN PURCELL

There is no road map for volunteering at L'Abri en Ville. Each person brings his or her own interests and abilities to the table, and puts them to use as best they can. Here are a few of the thoughtful contributions volunteers have made to our residents' lives.

Petronella Beran



COURTESY PETRONELLA BERAN

Afric Eustace



COURTESY AFRIC EUSTACE

Maxene Rodrigues



COURTESY MAXENE RODRIGUES

Campbell Stuart



COURTESY CAMPBELL STUART

Not all are “real readers”, but all three women at the Brasilia apartment enjoy meeting every second month to discuss reading in different forms. **Petronella** had the idea for a book club along relaxed lines: members summarize any book they’ve read or give a critique, even outline a couple of newspaper articles. Sometimes another volunteer joins in, and refreshments are always a must. Petronella likes to bring the book she’s reading for her other book club. “When I first started volunteering I asked myself, What could I do?,” says the former school internship supervisor. “I thought of this, and it clicked.”

Every Thursday morning at about 11, **Afric** phones the men of the Benny apartment and asks “What would you like to do?” That’s her day to be their driver, whether to the barber shop, the grocery store or just out for coffee — and she does it “in rain, snow or whatever.” One resident trained as an architect enjoys viewing attractive buildings from different eras. Restricted by having to use a walker, he welcomes the chance to get outdoors. In summer, they might go to Pointe Claire and visit Stewart Hall, or stop for ice cream. “They’re pleasant company,” says **Afric**, a former psychiatric nurse. “They look forward to it.”

Maybe it’s the years she worked as a high school teacher that made her so good at getting reluctant subjects to participate. One sunny day, **Maxene** called the three men of the Lasalle apartment with a plan: Let’s go down to the Old Port and board a boat to Pointe-aux-Trembles! The reaction was muted; the effort of getting ready and taking bus and metro seemed huge, and for one resident, the prospect of having to walk between legs of the trip was almost a deal breaker. Not one to take no for an answer, **Maxene** used patience and humour to make the day a success.

As a lawyer, he’s an invaluable member of L’Abri’s Executive Committee, but to the men of the Jolicoeur apartment, **Campbell**’s the guy who goes on outings to the Dollar Cinéma with them. No film is too silly or outlandish — Sunday night is movie night and it’s always fun. “We play it loose and connect on Sunday during the day to see who wants to go and what we’ll see,” says **Campbell**. “The Dollar Cinéma is a real godsend as it’s within everyone’s budget.” **Bronko**, a resident, adds, “I like the movies. They get me out of the house and I enjoy every minute of it.” 🎬

