



ISC Views and Voices

“Education is not a preparation for life; education is life itself.” - John Dewey

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www.indigosudburycampus.com (780) 929-6792 indigoinfo@shaw.ca

Thank You, Ric and Corinne!

by Nicolette Groeneveld

In June 2001, I organized a meeting to pull together people who might be interested in helping me to start a Sudbury school. A lady who worked at Ascendant Books offered space there for the meeting and suggested I contact a man named Ric Rosborough who, she said, was interested in alternative education. She gave me Ric’s e-mail address, and I sent him an invitation to the meeting. That was our first contact.

Ric and Corinne came to that first meeting and when the time came for people to sign up as founders or supporters, Ric put his name on the founders’ list.

The next day, as I was going over my list, Ric e-mailed me to ask what I needed him to do. I gave him two things to look into for me, and at the end of the afternoon he got back to me with answers. I was impressed; he seemed to mean it that he wanted to be involved and was willing to help!

I don’t remember exactly how our partnership became the solid working team we ended up forming, but I do know that within a very short time, Ric and I were meeting almost daily to take what steps we could toward our goal. We met with people from Alberta Learn-

ing and Edmonton Public Schools, and we met with Ron Bradley of Argyll Homeschooling Centre who, much to our good fortune, suggested we operate as an unregistered school by having our students sign up as homeschoolers. He also quipped that we were “blissfully unaware” in terms of what we were getting ourselves into, and that’s something Ric and I joked about often in the following years.

During that planning year, one of our main goals was to find a building, and Ric succeeded by securing us a wing of the St. Andrews School. We also visited many businesses trying to raise money to buy resources for the school, and though all we got in cash money was \$1200, we did end up on opening day with a fully equipped and furnished school.

While Ric and I were busy on the forefront, Corinne was quietly working in the background, helping us with the business side of things: organizing our corporation, setting up our bookkeeping and advising us on our business plan.

We opened the school in September 2002 with twenty students. Having been voted in by the group of parents and students who came to our pre-opening meetings, Ric and I took on our new role as Sudbury Staff.

To maintain order on our first day of school—before having the chance to create our “lawbook” with the students—Ric suggested we have a general rule like the introduction to the Sudbury Valley School’s lawbook; Ric came up with the idea of the umbrella rule of being respectful, responsible and reasonable, and then went further to suggest we could have that as our one and only operating rule instead of creating a whole lawbook. That was put to the students the next day at our first Campus Meeting, and there was passed our “One Rule”, which has

been our very simple 3 R’s ever since.



Since those early days, Ric’s contributions have been many. From the start, he displayed very strong boundaries and had very high expectations of our students in terms of their behavior. I believe this helped to create the foundation on which we still operate today—a foundation that, while not perfect, is definitely strong.

He also always held the students’ freedom as a priority; when someone wanted to make a new rule about something, he always reminded us that it was covered under the “umbrella” of the One Rule, and as such, we didn’t end up with a whole collection of little “sub-rules”!

Ric was also always a “yes” man, in the sense that when students asked if they could do something, he never limited them with a “no”, but rather asked them



how they could make whatever they were planning work.

Ric also always had an acute awareness about things: he was always reflecting on the school to see if there were ways we could improve, and he always had a general sense of what was going on around the school so as to ensure the stu-

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dents' safety.

Ric always kept his focus on each student's goodness, he gave many second chances and he always believed in each student's ability to succeed. He helped many students gain confidence in their abilities and helped many to reach levels of success they hadn't envisioned as possible.



Ric spent hours and hours and hours playing with our young students, and he took great pride in our graduates. He was always willing to help, and he delighted in every opportunity he got to connect with students and parents.

Ric was always willing to receive feedback, he was always looking to find the cause of things rather than the symptom, and he was endlessly researching, reading and learning new things.

Ric blessed me by supporting me in



having Josephine at the school with me every day, and he worked many long hours filling in for me when Josephine or I was sick. Ric also put in countless extra hours when we had events like



potlucks and sleepovers.

Corinne also continued to work behind the scenes over the course of our six



years. She did all our bookkeeping and much of our administrative work and she, of course, is the one who made our beautiful country location possible.



I learned a lot from Ric and Corinne in the seven years we worked together, and I am thankful for all they contributed to ISC. They helped me to build my dream, and that is something it is hard to find enough thank you's for.

I wish Corinne and Ric all the best as they move forward in their new direction, and I bless them with gratitude as we go our separate ways.

Quotable Quotes

From Lucas and Shayden's wedding:

Kaelyn, 15 minutes after the wedding was supposed to start: "We're having a wedding dress malfunction. We have to cut Shayden out of it! Don't worry, we have a backup dress."

Josh, acting as priest, was reading the long version of the wedding discourse. Members of the wedding party started telling him to skip certain parts and hurry it up. He bounced through the text trying to get to the "I do" part, saying, "Wait, wait... wait, wait... oh, damn it!"

Kylen was late for JC. As she came in and someone commented on her tardi-

ness, she replied, "I was training a horse." "Which horse?" Josh asked. "Kassie," Kylen replied.

Out of the blue, Caleb began singing to Emily (daughter of one of our volunteers): "You're my lady hump, my lovely lady hump".

Monique, the other daughter of our volunteer, is a very petite three-year old who stands only one inch taller than Josephine. Monique was on the trampoline with her sister, Emily. I approached and asked if Josephine could join them. "Yes, she's okay to come on," replied Monique. "She's just itsy-bitsy!"

Emaghea: "Mexico is a wonderful place to be except Josephine might get lost because it's a very lostful place. You'd have to wait till she's a little older."

Izzy: "When I'm sick, the school makes me healthy! When I'm at home I'm all blah, and then I get to school and I'm like, 'YEAH!!!!'"

"There are so many things I want to buy: a guitar, an archery bow... I need to organize a fundraiser for my life!" Alyassa

After three years happily buzzing along at our school without reading, Kassie, at age eight, suddenly knew how to read. Neither her family nor the staff at ISC knew how she'd learned to do it. Kassie has since become a voracious reader and is perfectly capable where writing is concerned. I asked her one day, "Kassie, if someone asked you how you learned to read and write, what would you say?" "I don't know," she shrugged. "I just did."



Thesis by Michael Munroe-Cote



up and prepare the ceremony. I do this every Sunday and the occasional odd day of the week. I do this to help prepare me for the Sundance ceremony, which happens once per year. Rarely do I miss a day; I am responsible in the fact that I show up, and I'm dedicated. About three days every week, I go to the gym to maintain my health and wellness and to increase my physical strength. I do all this on my own and it's always been my decision. In the last two years, I have also been working part time on multiple renovation jobs; I have yet to be fired. These are some of my disciplines which I'm always practicing which prove that I am a responsible young man to society.

I now understand how to handle conflicts in a reasonable way... compromising

I first started Indigo four years ago. During my first couple of years, I was a very quiet boy who liked to keep to himself. I did my chore, took care of my responsibilities and mainly just focused on having fun. At that time I did really well. Very rarely was I ever written up, and I only had a mediation called on me twice or maybe even only once.

It's only been the last year and a half that I've had to look at myself as to what it means to be respectful. I began to look at my emotions and connect with them: my fears, hurts and my short temper. At one point, I physically hurt one of my friends out of anger. I felt terrible about it, and it motivated me to heal, which in time I did. I've found many healers in my life who have guided me in the last two years. Since then, I've grown into a respectful young man, not only to others, but to myself as well. Nowadays, I'm often called upon for help from students at the school. I never ask for this or force knowledge down their throats; they just simply come. Saying that, I believe even in this moment I aid communities inside and outside school.

I have taken on a fair number of responsibilities inside and outside school. I decided to share the role as Campus Chair with a friend of mine. Being Campus Chair has helped me to fully find my voice and express my opinions and feelings in a humble and healthy way. Outside of school, I've made a commitment to show up at the sweat and help to set



is the word for it. I always remember to be reasonable in any situation, whether it's good or bad. I now have the communication skills and a proper language to speak reasonably and to negotiate with people wherever I choose to go, and at any time.

I truly do have a passion for art and culture. I like all forms of art and all cultures in the world. I am really into the traditional native ways, and I'm currently on my second year of a Sundance. This is a huge responsibility which requires me to live a life of peace and the three R's. Sometime in the future, I plan to be a successful artist. I don't know how or when exactly, but these are the questions I've been asking myself. I have the tools and the pure desire to succeed in life. I feel it in my heart that I'm ready to finish this school.



Thesis by Kaelyn Bergquist

I've been looking forward to writing my thesis since my first day at Indigo, three years ago. The development of a thesis has always been an integral part of the Indigo process to me. It's easy to write about world issues; there is a huge sea of information out there begging us to dip our toes in. When it comes to writing about your own person, there is only really one resource and it just happens to be exactly that, yourself. We can Google ourselves, but often nothing comes up. Luckily, I've been attending Indigo for a few years, so I have a pretty good idea of who I am. I will probably never fully



understand the vastness that is Kaelyn but I believe it's important to have a little bit of mystery in your life.

Being responsible, respectful, reasonable and peaceful are some of the amazing family values I've grown up with. I didn't learn these values at 'Indigo', 'Indigo' gave me a chance to practice and flex these values. I have taken on the responsibility of chore checker and have contributed to Corporations such as the Music Corporation and the Yum Yum food group. I treat all of the students and staff with respect because that's part of being a role model. Being reasonable and seeing everyone's side to a situation before jumping to a conclusion is also another important part of being a role model, I believe.

Indigo gave me a chance to be mo-

tionless in an ever moving world. At Indigo I learned to define chaos and discover my boundaries. I have been able to converse for hours with friends about subjects that most teens never have the opportunity to explore, in an environment free of ridicule and judgement. We've covered topics like friendships, drugs, sexual health, parallel universes, super powers and politics. I've used my own words to express my opinions, creating relationships that will last me lifetimes.

The relationships I have created have affected me in numerous ways. My relationships in school helped me with my relationships outside of school. I've been working at a donair shop called Maina's Donair for a year and a half. At work I have many responsibilities that include preparing food, clean up and dealing with the public. I'm able to communicate comfortably with my boss without hesitation, from practicing with Nicolette, Ric and Tim. Many of my friends that I have grown up with, outside of Indigo find it challenging to speak with adults.

Through all my conversations and experiences, I have learned a mass amount of new skills. I have learned to forgive, to move on, to be patient and to be tolerant. I've learned that everyone, big and small, has a voice and that sometimes the biggest voices come out of the smallest bodies. Having super human expectations of people only creates super human disappointments. As a society, we need to lower our expectations and give humans a chance to blow us away.



Indigo gave me a multitude of human accomplishments to witness: Josephine, for example, being potty trained only months after being born or Demico overcoming his anger issues and becoming one very peaceful young man. These are only a couple of the students who blow me away everyday. The personal network at Indigo has all kinds of people, with all kinds of backgrounds, all getting along and becoming close friends. A network built on our three R's and support – support that I know will accompany me after Indigo.

It's my responsibility to choose my next step, and I have made the choice to further my education outside of Indigo. I am going to take correspondence courses and plan to graduate in 2010. I came to Indigo, to find my own person, to have the freedom to play, to try something new, to be out of the ordinary and be in a place where I could perfect my super powers. This is a choice I made all on my very own, because at Indigo it's about making choices – choices that will benefit me or choices that I will regret, in the end they are all choices I have made.

The last three years have gone with incredible pace, and I have enjoyed every moment. I'm leaving with new skills and tools that will prove to be exceptionally valuable for future endeavours. Have I taken responsibility for preparing myself to be a respectful, responsible and reasonable human in the larger community? I do strongly believe so.



Thesis by Shona Macdonald

To know the Way,
We go the Way,
We do the Way
The way we do.

It's all there in front of you,
But if you try too hard to see it,
You'll only become Confused.

I am me,
And you are you,
As you can see;
But when you do
The things that you can do,
You will find the Way,
And the Way will follow you.

-Winnie the Pooh

* * * * *

Whenever I've taken a seat and gotten myself in the mode to write my thesis, a myriad of thoughts from this past year run through my mind. So much has happened over the last few months, and not just with me, but with the school itself and everyone connected with it. Although it's all been necessary change, it's been incredibly overwhelming at times; it's a wonder some of us haven't exploded (or imploded) yet.

It frightens me to think of where I was in life just over a year ago. If I had finished out the year in public school and passed all the courses I was in, I would have graduated from high school. It would have been easy enough if I'd had the desire to complete all my assignments and projects and to study for tests, but there had been something nagging in me for a while. For years I had been unsure of what my intuition was trying to tell me, and it was only late in the school year last year that I realized I needed to be living a more unconventional lifestyle. I was not at all happy with the public school system, nor was I thrilled with the idea of years of university and one single career for the rest of my working years, so I knew some big changes needed to occur in order for me to be truly happy.

Public school and I never truly got along. In the early elementary years I had made some good friends and got above-average grades, but once late elementary and early high school came around, I began questioning everything from life's greatest mysteries to clothing

trends, as well as common systems, specifically public school systems and how they don't work for everyone. I had many stubborn opinions concerning education then, as well as a lot of anger towards the corrupted system.

I've always loved learning, as well as new experiences, so early on I thoroughly enjoyed almost every subject taught in school. Even up until grade 12, I was very interested in everything I was learning, but the fact that we had no choice in what was being taught really brought out the rebellious side of me. I was deep in the process of finding out who I am, and having knowledge shoved upon me that I wasn't necessarily sure I cared about really bothered me.

Throughout 12th grade I began rebelling in my own quiet way, and was constantly late for class, skipping school, late on handing in assignments, not handing in homework, and generally becoming frustrated. This was around the time I started looking into alternative forms of learning. I knew I wanted to further my education in some way, so I spent a lot of my time last spring researching as much as I could about Montessori and Waldorf schools, as well as home schooling. None of these seemed to fit what I knew I needed to experience, so I continued to look around, but with increasing discouragement.

I don't remember when or how I came across information about Sudbury schools, but I do distinctly remember how much their concept and philosophy resonated with me. At the time of my discovery of these amazing schools, three of them existed in Canada, but none anywhere near Langley, B.C., where I'm from and was living at the time. I think it was from my dad's recommendation of Edmonton as a city that I looked further into Indigo Sudbury Campus. Once I saw the picture of the school on the website, my intuition kicked in hard, and there was no looking back. I could already feel myself at the school and attending it as a student, so I didn't really question whether or not I should move at that point. I finally took the plunge and left high school at the end of May last year. Even though I was afraid of the future, as well as what people would think of my apparent "dropping out" of school, I was excited to be taking one of the first real steps towards the sort of life I wanted to

be living.

When I first started attending Indigo in September of last year, I was overjoyed to be here, but I was rather quiet and mostly kept to myself. I was genuinely excited to go to school for the first time in my life, and I felt that I had easily transitioned into the ways of a Sudbury school. The lack of bells was one of the differences that really stood out to me, and of course I was much more stress-free than I had been in a while due to the lack of dictation of where to be at a certain time. I was reading a lot through the month of September, as well as writing and making various forms of art.



Everything was going perfectly in my mind, until October came around. It was during my second month here that I began questioning my purpose at this school, and if I should move back to B.C. I had really started missing my old friends, and I hadn't made any really close friends yet. A road trip back there seemed necessary so I could find out where I really should be living and what would be the best step for me to take in life. Of course I had in the back of my mind the typical Sudbury transition, but I wasn't aware at the time that's what I was going through.

I went through a dark period in my life around then; my friends were going

through tough times when I visited them, and I didn't really have anyone to lean on other than myself. When I left to come back to Edmonton in late November, I knew it was the right thing to do; the Langley chapter of my life was closed, and I needed to move on.

On the trip back, I hit my lowest point. There were many times when I was tempted to let my truck drift off the side of the cliff I was driving on, because I felt like I was done with life, in a simple and calm, non-attention seeking way. The music I was listening to at the time was guiding me otherwise, though. The optimistic sound resonated deep inside me and had a lingering impact, and kept me going. It also led me to realize that the "finished" feeling I had was not associated with feeling that this lifetime was done, but actually to do with letting go of the old life I was living, as well as my anger and frustration towards the public school system. It took me a couple of months to actually enjoy going to school again and to get over the "bottoming out" hump, but once I did, I came to a number of empowering realizations directly linked to the impact the "3 R's" had on me.

In being reasonable, responsible, and respectful inside of the school when it comes to chores, J.C., attending Campus Meeting, and just interacting with other students and staff members, I have become more aware of how I act outside of school. I've always been a fairly reasonable person, but I'm now aware of how vital it is to be one in order to successfully function in a larger community. Being reasonable will oftentimes involve negotiation, which I have found to be very important in our weekly Campus Meetings, as well as everyday conversations with others. Up until a couple of months ago, I stayed silent during Campus Meetings, as well as in J.C., even if I had something I felt was important to speak up about. It's only been recently that I've felt confident enough in my reasoning skills to share my opinions and have a say in the goings-on of our school.

I've also learned to take responsibility for my actions. Kaelyn, Kylen, and I have recently learned from a common experience that we need to be responsible, especially as three of the older students. We've become aware of the impact we can have on the school, and that the younger students do look up to us in

a way. I know I want to be seen as a good role model, but also as a human being who makes mistakes and owns up to them, which is what I did.

Outside of school, I've been living on my own (albeit in basements of others' houses), but with my parents paying for the majority of my expenses. I am in the process of learning to manage money better, and I can't thank my parents enough for allowing me to be almost entirely job-free this year. Since I do have my own living space with no one telling me what to clean and when, I've learned to do it on my own. Although I don't clean my current suite as much as I know I should, I am doing better with taking responsibility for it and respecting the fact that I'm just a renter.

I am respecting my environment much more than I did before. I've always cared about animals and have been a vegetarian for years, but I still didn't care as deeply about all living things as I have started to over the past year. I can see and feel the aliveness and presence in all creatures, and I've begun to sense equality in all, whether it's in trees or the birds or a fellow human being. While I used to often play the role of psychologist to others, I've now learned to let people deal with their own issues on their own time. I respect that others' problems are their own, and I don't make them into mine anymore.

This is also linked with respect towards myself. I really had to question why I didn't have respect for myself before Indigo; early on in the year I wasn't getting the sort of respect I thought I should be receiving, so I figured it must have originated from somewhere inside me. I believe I came to all of these realizations as I was coming out of my funk, which led me to transition easily to where I am now.

I am now entirely comfortable with everything I choose to do at school. Creative writing is a class recently started up, and I'm really enjoying focusing on poetry and reading works from a variety of poets. I've also been working on an online workbook from Oprah and Eckhart Tolle's class based on Tolle's book "A New Earth". Reading and music have always been constants in my life; I often have either a book or my ukulele in hand. Analyzing astrological charts has been a favourite of mine for years, and I continue to do this, along with discussing this fascinating subject with friends.

In the next couple of weeks I plan to

go job hunting for work that I feel well-suited for, perhaps a bookstore or music shop. Sometime next spring or summer, I'd love to travel to North Carolina and attend the John C. Campbell Folk School for a couple months and choose a few courses from their list of hundreds. They have courses there ranging from blacksmithing to nature studies to quilting, all taught in a non-competitive, traditional environment.

Along with these plans, I have two major dreams in this lifetime: I'd love to travel and be on the road for a while, continuing to meet awesome people, while learning as much as I can about my interests. I'd also like to settle down somewhat and have a family, and live in a sustainable house with a big garden and lots of animals. I plan to combine both of these dreams somehow, and allow both to exist in harmony.

I've realized fairly recently that my purpose in this life is not about what I do or accomplish, but rather how I go about accomplishing whatever I choose to do. This one year I've spent at Indigo has been exactly what I've needed to learn this. I have had this amazing chance to strip down many aspects of my life and get to the core of who I truly am. Although I don't know what to expect for the future, this doesn't worry me. The confidence I've gained in myself, and my ability to be reasonable, responsible, and respectful is the strong and unbreakable base of whatever I choose to do. All I need to do is be simple, and simply be.



Thesis by Kylene Groeneveld-McAteer

And Go.

This is the signal of an end of an era.

The line clearly drawn between the way I once was and the start of something fantastic.

When I first came to ISC four years ago, I was an average, quiet, reserved young girl with little self-confidence. I was the kind of kid who would just do whatever I was told because I didn't want to make any waves. I was never very forward and only voiced my opinions when I deemed it absolutely necessary. This, of course, changed dramatically over the course of the following years.

If you've come to know me recently, you'll know that I have the capability of becoming quite passionate about my opinions. Sometimes a little too passionate. There have been, in the recent past, a few situations where my new-found robust sense of leadership has come across a bit too strongly. I have been written up twice for unfairly freaking out at other students regarding their attitudes towards certain things. But both times I almost instantly recognized my overzealousness and held myself accountable for it in JC. The second time I found myself yelling at the two boys, I went up to each of them individually and apologized the next morning. I have become much more aware of my definite humanity and am always trying to figure out how to deal with situations in a way that will get my point across without me biting the head off the person I'm dealing with. I believe myself to be a fairly reasonable person in the vast majority of cases, but I am still and will always be human.

In my time here, I have also become much more confident within myself. It's been a slow process but a definite one. Just purely taking part in Campus Meeting every Wednesday has made me want to have my voice heard and views acknowledged. Then it all started to translate into me taking on more and more of a leadership role in the community.

I feel I've done a lot within ISC, taken a lot of the leadership positions. I've done things like creating and directing various Corporations, being Fines Clerk, Chores Clerk, Elections Clerk, I've always been part of the Visit Com-

mittee, the Safety Committee and starting this year, the elusive Off-campus Committee, along with just simply being a very vocal and opinionated member of the community. Over the past four years, I have maybe missed fifteen Campus Meetings, give or take. I've made it a point to be involved in almost all the important decisions made by the Campus. It has been very important to me that my opinion and the opinions of everyone be heard clearly and held at a high regard.



As I grew more and more confident, I started making stronger and stronger bonds with the people around me. At one point, two years ago, the main topic of discussion between my friends and me was moving out of our parents' places and living with each other. It came to the point where we decided to do a trial week when one of our parents went out of town. There we were, seven of us co-existing in a large house for a week. Free to be as we pleased. Learning to keep ourselves afloat, going grocery shopping, doing the general up-keep of the house, being with each other 24 hours per day for six days. We were all under the impression that we would drive each other crazy and really bond through working it out, but truth be told, that never happened; it was just a lovely time all around. At this point, I can't say it was a really overwhelmingly life-changing thing, but it definitely is one of my most memorable experiences because of how it affected our relationships with one an-

other, getting much closer on a new level. Although getting a taste of what it's like to be "on your own" was super exciting in itself, despite how short-lived it may have been.

On the note of taking steps outside of school, getting my driver's license this past year has been a most wonderful learning curve. With it, I was given endless freedom to go wherever life takes me no matter how far, but along side it, I was handed more responsibilities. I have my own car for which I pay the monthly insurance, not to mention gas and the general upkeep. I have been working for the past year now, but just recently, in order to afford my car, I got a new, higher paying job where I work 3-5 nights per week. On top of getting myself to all the places I need to be, for the past few months, I have been carpooling with some kids who live in my area on a daily basis. I also have been, for the last little while, helping the school by picking up and dropping off the girls at the horse ranch every Thursday.

I love to drive, and I dare say I do it well. But the thing that tickles me most about it is all the potential travels. Lately a wander lust has been slowly settling in my brain, working its way into my thought process and shaping both my short and long term plans. I have, in my life, done many travels and seen many different places. I've been lucky enough to have one parent living in and moving all around south-east Asia, so I have been exposed to places like Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand and soon, China. I have also been to Cuba, Mexico, Australia, Maui, and when I was much younger, Holland. I have also done my fair share of Canadian exploration. When I was in grade seven, back in public school, I went on a week long school trip to Quebec City and Montreal where I was taken in by a lovely French family along with three other people I didn't know. On my own time, I have also been all over British Columbia. Just recently a few friends and I went on a road trip to a little town called Creston for a weekend of camping.

Another example of my deep love for exploration and travel is my insatiable passion for sailing. Every summer for the past 6 years (minus last summer) I have participated in some kind of sailing camp. I started off on the little two-man Lasers

just jutting around Wabamun lake. Then four years ago, my Opa heard about an organization called the Sail and Life Training Society, SALTS if you will. They are based in Victoria, BC and they offer ten-day sailing trips on big schooners that go all around Vancouver Island. Essentially we live on the boat and learn to do pretty much everything a sailor must do. From learning to circumnavigate, to setting sails, to swabbing the deck, we get the full package. It's also a Christian camp mostly catering to youth, so there have been some serious life experiences/ lessons learned on top of doing what I love. Some of my most memorable times have been from being on that boat, sailing on the open ocean. I don't know when, but I am absolutely convinced that I will, for one year of my life, take off and sail around the world on a tall ship. It's a dream of mine that will one day be a reality, be it sooner or later.

Over the past years, my love for art has done nothing but grow on all levels. I have explored numerous art forms and created hundreds of little artworks at the school. I have always fancied the idea of attending the Emily Carr institute of art and design. But alas, there are so many things yet to be explored outside of all the institutions that I am not immediately pulled to dive back into such a massive commitment. I would much rather, for now, fly with the proverbial wind. I can't wait just to keep on tapping deeper into my own flow and going with it.

In recent times I have been pulled very strongly to get involved in projects and events surrounding creating a more environmentally friendly, independent and sustainable way of life. Taking steps towards shrinking my personal footprint on the planet. I was introduced to all these sorts of things by a collective of lovely people called the Arcatribe, who have been hosting equinox celebrations at our school for the past two-and-a-half years. I have attended 4 of the 5 events, and I have been slowly beginning to get deeper into the idea that there are some necessary changes that need to be made in our way of life, just by talking to people and attending some of the offered workshops. Some of the things I have been wanting to get into are spin farming, cob housing, working towards building off-the-grid houses, and being part of a completely self-sustaining community. I will be going to Maui in the fall to be-

gin taking courses on organic farming, and experimenting with different forms of environmentally friendly building methods. Within the next year, I will be heading off to West Virginia to the Twin Oaks community where they offer a three-week visitation period. They pretty much take you in and teach you all about growing vegetables and the inner workings of their sustainability. Very labour intensive, but personally I prefer physically working towards goals that can be seen, although I am very aware of the fact that it's not always going to be easy and that obstacles and tedious, time-consuming tasks are an inevitability. My biggest dream for the future is to build up and live in a sustainable community. But there are many, many steps to take, and things to learn before even coming close to doing that quite yet. Nevertheless, I am perpetually working towards it.

I have a lot to learn still in this lifetime. Despite all my efforts to be a completely reasonable, respectful, responsible human being, I know I am nothing close to perfect. I still have a bundle of things that need to be worked on. I will never be done learning, changing, and growing. That is, however, exactly the reason why I feel I am ready to take the next step in life. I have been itching to get out and really start pushing towards the things I want in this life while still integrating a triple R way of living. I may be leaving ISC, and subsequently ending my "Schooling" phase for now, but truth be told this move will only cause a change in scenery.



~ ~ ~ Samples from the year's

Looks on Reality
by Alyassa vanden Biggelaar

Is this an optical illusion
Or just a great confusion
Maybe my imagination
But it's the painful reality
I drink from this fountain of deception
I breathe this air of corruption
So why do I consume this
In this broken reality
In this shattered dream
As this hole in my mind deepens
My grip on reality slips
As my dreams fade
What can be done?
What can be said?
What can be forgotten?
Reality may be my demise.

My Friends
by Azley Watson

My friends are my friends because they
have imaginations, dreams
They are all unique in their own way
They are all beautiful
I feel like there's more joy, happiness
colors red, blue and violet in my life
when I'm with them
They're like sisters to me
They shine incredibly strong in my life
All year round
I feel like I can be myself around them
They are nice, joyful, peaceful
Our friendships are still growing
They are like my family
I have amazing memories with these people
For example
Milk (Kassie)
Creampuff (Asiah)
Muffin (Alyassa)
Cookie (Izzy)
T.T. (Mei-fah)
And many more.

I can express my feelings
in a way they always understand
They respect my boundaries
They respect me
They are my friends.

Brain Children of an Amazing Life
by Kylen Groeneveld-McAteer

No one can have what she's got
Not unless she lets you have it.
She's keeping it safe, letting them sleep
And why not?
It's hers to do with what she pleases
Too many attacks out there
Too little choice
Her ideas stay quiet
warm and content
the seedlings are ready to urge their way
out
Being patient as can be
they sit and wait
waiting to tear a hole through our hearts
like a rocket might do
given the opportunity
When I see her eyes now
She isn't aware of what's going on... not
fully
She's always had them there
now in slumber
still the little ones won't stop growing
and the big won't stop changing shape
Every now and again one wakes
lets out a squeak
"Quiet my sweet.
This is not the time or the place where
being heard would be beneficial to the
group.
But oh, the days.
Aren't they inspiring? Dream of them."
When she speaks to me now
I have to take a step back
take a walk, let them away with me
we sneak to my room
where everything once thought to be a
driving force
is now powerless.
"Shall I close my eyes?"
"Of course!"
then I let the little ones take me away
on the stories she used to tell.

Music
by Marlaene Moore

When I hear music, it feels like a harmonic wave is splashing upon my ears, and this universal sound lifts me by the soul and makes me want to be lost.

When I hear music, a gold strand of water wraps tightly around my mind and widens so much that I can see every aspect of the universe.

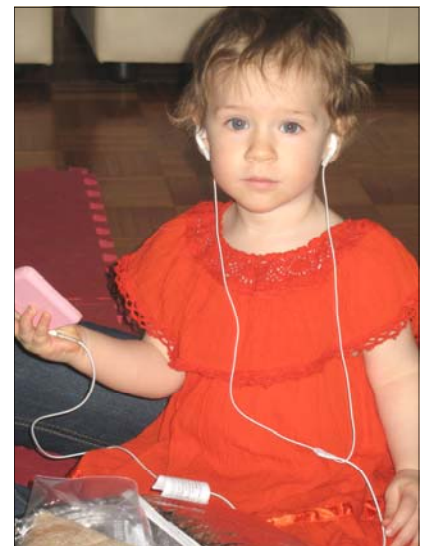
When I hear music, I feel like love is possible, and my heart fills up like a balloon, and I giggle with this passionate rush.

When I hear music, I can see the writer's broken heart is a mirror, and I close my eyes and float away.

When I play music, it is my story, and I tell it in a code that I can only understand. With my words, I sink into your mind With my song, I creep into your heart Or that's what I try to do.

My songs come in different music and lyrics but they all say the same thing: listen.

Everyone can hear music, but few can listen to my song.



Creative Writing Class ~ ~ ~

Untitled
by Shona Macdonald

I cry out low for you

So low, it is inaudible
to your
high and delicate frequency

So low, my voice's only impact is a
slight vibration
on your heart's outer skin

So low, my own
heart sinks
with my call

I should know better—

I should know better than to reach with
anything but selflessness and selfishness
in perfect harmony
I should know better than to pay attention
to nothing else than my mind's ideals
I should know that sometimes these
things just aren't mutual

I've always been good at letting go
And I'd do it gladly
But the lilac tree blooms against the grey
sky
And these feelings linger.



Chai
by Asiah Holm

I'm waiting, I'm watching, she's finally
here.

I hold her, I love her, she's mine, she's
so dear.

All that I go, she's not far behind
To school, to bed, even the shower she'll
find.

One normal day, I feed her so sweetly.
One large cough and she stares at me
blankly.

She chokes, I panic, she falls to the
floor.

My mom scoops her up and she does
sheep CPR.

Mouth-to-mouth, crying, that's one
crazy day.

But for a girl and her sheep, they're both
blown away.

The bond is so strong, the wind can't
comprehend,

Something just happened, we don't un-
derstand.

But it's all over now, my baby's okay.
She looks at me fully, we were both so
afraid.

But she's wrapped round me tightly,
telling me it's okay.

And from this day forth, we broke
through the clay.

Where all of our doubts just withered
away.

Four weeks pass rather quickly, I've
seen her growth,

She's like a daughter to me, I love her so
much, I won't ever let her go.

She stole part of my heart and conjoined
it with hers.

Now you may think I'm insane, I mean
it's only a sheep.

But somehow I let her travel too deep.
Then one day something happened, I had
to leave.

And never again see her or take her
home with me.

Sorrow began etching itself upon me
near the end of the day.

For it was then that I realized this was
my last real goodbye.

From there it began closing me and I'd
wished to run away.

Confusion tangled itself deep into my
pain,

Tearing my eyes and not going away.
I hold her close and I want to cry

Because after a while she'll wonder
"Who am I?"

She presses her body deep into mine
I look at her, she looks at I.

She baa's one last time before I leave
Letting go of her is the worst thing for
me.

But my eyes tear even more when I think
of her letting go of me
I'm all she's known right from day one to
33.

It's time to go, I have to leave.
Walking away eats at me.

As she loses sight of me, and I walk away
She cries so loud it echoes in me.

When I got home, I went to bed
Crawled under my covers where silence
filled my head.

I held back no longer, I was finally alone,
I just let loose, allowing my feelings to
roam.

I started to cry, I'd waited all day,
If I'd waited any longer I might have
faded away.

This was the longest and hardest I'd ever
cried

Tears consistently falling, bed bugs below
might have thought it's raining inside.

Once tears stopped falling and I could no
longer cry,

I felt so much better once I let my feel-
ings inside

I didn't push them away, I just let them
be

And allowed rain to fall for as long as
need be.

I still feel sad, but completely okay,
And I can feel the pain, be okay with that

and just love her to pieces forever and
always.

This is the only time I've ever felt this
way.

I'm scared of her dying, or forgetting of
me.

For when she gets older she'll no longer
need me.

And that day when she almost died, that
scared me so much.

'Cause when her fragile body dropped to
the floor,

I thought she was gone and I had her no
more.

This event scared me, but the real part
that pains me

Was the day when Chai, my sheep, forgot
of me.

Finding a Starting Point by Looking at the End

by Nicolette Groeneveld

This article was offered to Birth Issues Magazine for their Fall "Education issue".

In the mid 1960's, in Massachusetts, a group of public school teachers whose children had come of school age got together to discuss education. Interestingly enough, all of these teachers were clear about one thing: they didn't want their children going to the same schools in which they taught; they wanted something different for their children.

"Let's create a new school!" they said. "But what kind?"

And so they started at the end and worked their way backward. They started with the question: When our children are 18 and graduating from high school, what kind of adults do we hope they will have become?

They drew up their list: happy, fulfilled, life-long learners; responsible, respectful, resourceful; self-motivated, self-disciplined, self-confident; and willing to learn from failure rather than fear it. They also hoped they would be skilled at communication, critical thinking and problem solving.

"So what kind of school do we need to create in order for our children to become all these things?" they wondered.

It ended up being quite simple. If they wanted their children to be happy, they had to allow them to spend their time in ways that made them happy. If they wanted their children to be fulfilled, they had to let them do things that had meaning and relevance in their lives. If they wanted them to be life-long learners, their children would have to enjoy their learning processes. In order to become responsible, their children would have to be given real responsibility. To become respectful, they would have to be treated with respect. To become resourceful, they would have to learn to do things themselves rather than have things done for them. To be self-motivated, they might have to become bored enough to realize they wanted the responsibility of creating their own life. To be self-disciplined, they would have to have less imposed on them and more freedom to make their own choices. To be self-confident, they would have to

know the joy that comes from forging through obstacles to the victory of success. In order to accept rather than fear failure, failure would have to be seen as a normal part of the learning process rather than some "bad thing" that reflected a lack of ability or intelligence in their children. And finally, to become good communicators, critical thinkers and problem solvers, they would have to be allowed to talk, have opinions about things, and be actively involved in solving real problems!

What would this look like in a school? More discussion ensued until finally was born the Sudbury educational model, where children ages 4 through 20 are active, voting members of a democratic school; where students make real decisions about real issues every day; where students are empowered to the point of being able to vote in and out the adults who work with them.

And within this was inserted the "unschooling" approach to learning, where children chart the course of their own education, learning even the most basic skills only when so inspired; and where students pursue passions and interests for minutes, days, months and years until, lo and behold, at the end of their secondary education, they are passionate possessors of all of life's most essential skills... plus every imaginable combination of other skills, talents, understandings and volumes of information.

Forty years of Sudbury graduates have proven the effectiveness of this educational approach, and six years worth of students at Edmonton's Indigo Sudbury Campus have equally proven the magic of this model.

The Indigo Sudbury Campus is moving from its country location back into the city, and we welcome anyone who is interested in "going out on an educational limb" to visit us at our new location in September. For details, please visit www.indigosudburycampus.com.



Goodbye Country... Hello City

by Nicolette Groeneveld

Four years ago, we entered through these gates, delighted to have found a



magnificently beautiful country home for our school. Things weren't all smooth sailing, however, as we quickly discovered that if we wanted to operate a school, our building had to be up to code for a school. The County of Leduc was gracious enough to allow us to operate after we met the modified code requirements they set out for us.

This country location has been a wonderful place to be. Our students have had the opportunity to enjoy buffalo, run



through wide open fields, climb on hay bales, skate on the pond, collect frogs, and many, many other country adventures. The country quiet, cheerfully interrupted by the sound of birds has been a welcome change from the city's noise.



However, our time in the country is now at a close. Today, June 30th, we will



exit these gates,



turn north



and follow this road back to Edmonton where a new location awaits some TLC and the happy sounds of our students.

Announcements

- We wish everyone a great summer holiday! School will start up again on Tuesday, September 2nd.
- Thank you David Schumacher for doing an amazing job as JC Clerk this year! I don't remember a day that you weren't there!
- Thanks to Alyassa, David, Kylen and Kaelyn for checking chores all year. That was quite a commitment!
- Thanks to all the other students I haven't named who took on clerkship and officer positions this year.
- Thanks to all the parents who helped with sleepovers and other school activities.
- Thanks to all the people who donated items to the school during the year and who we may have missed sending a thank you card to.
- Thanks to all the people out there who continue to spread the word about us!

Prepared by Nicolette Groeneveld