



## WHO'S TO BLAME?

To every child in the world,  
who has something going wrong  
Sometimes I go hungry,  
or my daddy's gone too long  
My momma's on the bottle again,  
my aunty won't say a word  
My uncle's back in jail,  
but that's just what I heard  
My Brother, he's in a gang,  
hanging out with some thugs  
My sister and her boyfriend,  
I'm sure they're selling drugs  
Grampa he sleeps all day,  
while Granma watches T.V.  
The saddest thing about it all  
Is there's so many kids like me

To every child in the world,  
who's afraid to be alone  
Sometimes I'm called names at school,  
or hit with sticks and stones  
I go down to the park,  
hoping the kids might let me play  
They tell me I'm too little,  
I hear this every day  
I go home and tell my mom,  
she said, "don't be like your dad and lie"  
I asked to watch T.V. with her,  
she said "just go play outside"  
I'm sitting here all alone, can't anybody see  
The saddest thing about it all  
Is there's so many kids like me

Every child in the world,  
should be taught wrong from right  
I should be most important,  
always keep me in your sight  
Be careful what you say,  
and the things that you do  
I catch on pretty quick,  
and I'll grow up just like you  
I shouldn't have to grow up, feeling hurt and pain  
Sitting in the steps crying, is not a child's game  
There was no one there to teach me,  
the way life should be  
The saddest thing about it all  
Is there's so many kids like me.

*Tim Reilly*



## I DO WHAT I DO

Tell what me to do? I do for you,  
Whether the right or wrong way,  
Riskin' my ass, for cash in a flash,  
No more nickel and diming each day,  
Where you make your bread,  
should be left unsaid  
As long as you getting' your pay  
So if I show you how? Never later, not now  
Then you best listen to what I say  
When you workin' the street,  
be careful not to meet  
The ones who'll try take you away.



*Jaime (STACI) Abraham*

*This poem is for all my girls who know what it's like to work the streets and live to tell about it, but also for those who lost their lives because of it. This is dedicated to them.*

Writers and artists, the *Scoop*  
wants to hear from you!

Send your poems, stories, letters,  
jokes and artwork to:

The Inside Scoop  
583 Ellice Avenue  
Winnipeg, MB  
R3B 1Z7

We try to print everything we get.  
However, we sometimes need to edit  
submissions for length, and we won't  
print anything that is racist, sexist,  
homophobic, or that glorifies violence  
or gang involvement.

If you have any questions about the  
*Scoop's* editorial policy (or anything  
else about the *Scoop*), give JHS a call at  
204-775-1514.

# HONOURABLE MENTIONS

## THE BATTLE INSIDE ME

I ask myself how can this be  
Is this the end or beginning in me  
To continue or change is the question at hand  
Either keep going this path or else take a stand  
I know I can change and believe I would thrive  
But the life that I live is my way to survive  
Gangs and drugs controlled my life of violence  
Uncontrollable anger expressed in silence  
It's the way I live and the life I chose  
I made my decision it's the way life goes  
Is this forever or a teenage phase  
Am I not yet ready to change my ways  
My life is filled with answers to seek  
I question myself if my spirit is weak  
But in my heart I know I am strong  
And in my life I won't go wrong  
Inside my head I am always safe  
Because I never lost my faith

*Kyleton Pruden*



Artwork by Stephanie Shorting



## SHE SETS ME FREE

Joy returns to my world  
As I see you walk into view  
Beautiful hair flowing behind you  
A promise come true  
You shield your eyes from the sun  
As you look up  
Scanning the window for me  
I'm ecstatic, jumping and waving  
But it's hard for you to see  
All the guys gather 'round me  
Telling me how I'm "oh so lucky"  
To have such a gorgeous woman  
Smiling, waving up at me  
I'm drawing hearts in the window  
With coffee filters, so crazy in love  
She blows kisses right at me  
That make me feel cozy and snug  
A building, four floors  
An a window separate us  
We haven't felt each other's touch in 9 months  
But we still celebrate love  
She walks up and down the sidewalk  
Always looking in my direction  
This girl has the heart of an angel  
Blessing me with this little slice of heaven  
She waves one more time  
And begins to walk away slowly  
A kiss is blown with an "I love you"  
Saying goodbye to my one and only  
She disappears in the distance  
Like sun fades from day  
I only saw my best friend for 10 minutes  
But it took me so far away from this place.

*Deejay Saunders*

# FROM THE EDITOR

Greetings, *Scoop* readers! Welcome to the fall issue, which is packed with entries from our fourth annual poetry contest.

I'd like to begin by saying a big thank you to our panel of judges; I don't envy them, having to filter through the work of dozens of talented poets and choose just five to receive prizes.

Winners of the Speaking Out From the Inside Poetry Contest receive gift certificates from local bookstore McNally Robinson. Those who are incarcerated can either save their gift cards until they get out, or have JHS staff use them to purchase books and bring them in. Congrats to all the winners, and thanks to everyone who entered. We didn't quite have room for all of the runners' up in this issue, so if you don't see your poem here, don't panic. We'll be sure to print it in the December edition.

This year's panel of judges were: Cora Morgan, executive director of Onashewawin, an

Aboriginal restorative justice agency; Al Rae, an award-winning writer for television and radio and one of the creators of the show *Little Mosque on the Prairie*; and Gilbert Manitopyes, who is Cree/Anishinaabe originally from Muskowekwan First Nation and who has worked for and with First Nations and aboriginal peoples within government and non-government organizations throughout his professional career.

We run this contest every year, so if you didn't get an entry in this year, keep an eye out next spring for the next contest announcement!

That's not all for exciting *Inside Scoop* news; you may remember that the *Inside Scoop* Editorial Board published the summer issue of this newsletter as a fundraiser for the Norquay Community Centre. Instead of giving the *Scoop* away for free as they usually do, the board asked readers both in Remand Centre and in the community to give a small donation to the cause.

We raised over \$300 in the Remand Centre, and several hundred more in the community. Since Assiniboine Credit Union is planning to match the first \$500 we made, our total is now well over \$1000! We'll have the final total in the next issue of the *Scoop*.

All proceeds are going to the Norquay Community Centre, which provides programming, recreation opportunities, and

nutritious food to kids in the Point Douglass area.

The *Inside Scoop* Editorial Board is a group of inmates from the John Howard Literacy Program, which is offered on unit 400 of the Winnipeg Remand Centre. The board meets once per month to plan and design the *Inside Scoop*.

We had to put our meetings on hiatus for the summer because several board members were transferred or released, and I was away from work for several weeks, but now that fall has come and our program is back in full swing, we'll soon be having meetings once again.

Another fall project for the John Howard Society is to revamp our website, which advertises our programs and services to the community and makes it easier for other agencies to refer clients to us.

We would like to invite incarcerated and formerly incarcerated artists to share their artwork on our website. It's a win-win situation — we get a pretty website, and you get a platform for your work! If there are people interested in buying your artwork, we can arrange to put you in touch with them.

If you are interested in having your artwork displayed on the website, please call Kate Kehler at 204-775-1514.

Until next time, take care and happy reading!

Jacquie Nicholson  
Literacy Coordinator, JHS



Inside Scoop poetry contest judges Gilbert Manitopyes, Cora Morgan, and Al Rae.

# POETRY

## AS THE SUN RISES

I haven't felt the sun's rays on my back  
in over a week  
These steel bars and concrete cage  
have got my mind restrained  
And my body feeling weak  
I can feel this medication coursing through my veins  
And without I'm afraid my mind remains insane  
I've been thinking  
but not knowing what's on my mind  
When I look into the mirror,  
I'm looking into dark blank eyes  
The days they seem so long, as my time continues on  
And I'm left sitting here  
with nothing but my thoughts  
So as the sun rises and darkness fades away  
With sleep in my eyes all night I've remained awake  
Left here thinking of your beautiful face  
And how my heart is drained.

*Cosmo Olsen*



Being on the inside is like being free  
Free from the chains of the outside  
A place where coldness means warmth  
At one with the hardness of the concrete  
That holds within.  
Clenched fists and rage demands Respect  
Terror and demoralization excites the strong  
The soulless stare that becomes everywhere  
Ready to devour the sickness called the weak  
Realizing all of a sudden who gives a fuck  
This is life from the Inside.

*J. Monias*

## LUCKY IN LOVE

I love to hear your voice in the morning  
And I love to hear you say my name  
I hope this feeling lasts forever  
Don't think I'll ever be the same

The way I feel whenever you come around  
Puts a big smile on my face  
I can't wait to hold you tight in my arms  
And give your beautiful lips a taste

Cause I'm lucky, lucky in love  
I hope this feeling never ends  
Yes I'm lucky, lucky in love  
You're more than a lover, you're my best friend

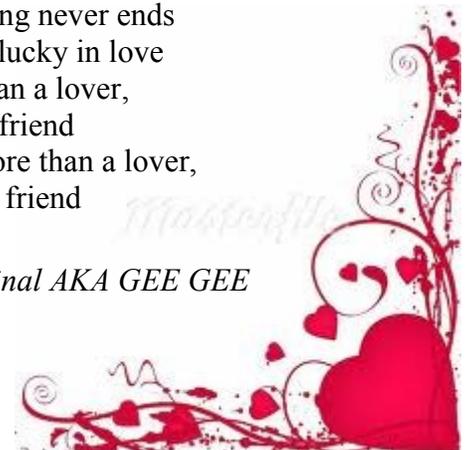
Yeah one day baby you'll be mine  
I'll wait forever, just give it time  
There's nothing girl that I would not do  
To be your man and go on loving you

Cause I'm lucky, lucky in love  
I hope this feeling never ends  
Yes I'm lucky, lucky in love  
You're more than a lover, you're my best friend

Tonight's the night that I'll make you mine  
Baby just you wait and see  
There's nothing in this world that I want more  
Than to have you make love to me

Cause I'm lucky, lucky in love  
I hope this feeling never ends  
Yes I'm lucky, lucky in love  
You're more than a lover,  
you're my best friend  
Yeah you're more than a lover,  
You're my best friend

*Gary Lee Cardinal AKA GEE GEE*



## I REMEMBER HIM

I remember when it was just you and me with a fresh start  
And two open warming hearts  
I remember you used to tickle me and make me laugh and smile  
Now I wish you were here and free to continue that style  
I remember when we always played B-Ball at Calli-Park,  
Then as months passed by our new baby boy was on board  
I remember when you named our son, Carmello is what you picked  
I remember when I would tell him Daddy loves you and Mommy does too  
I remember when we would have our talks,  
And walks in the nice breezy summer or in the cold freezing winter  
I remember when things turned upside-down  
And everything came falling down like the twin towers  
I remember when I used to cry for you day and night  
Just knowing you're in a cell with a constant dimming night light  
I remember when I told myself I ain't gonna get nowhere, I'm alone  
"Daddy's gone," Mommy's ill, filled with an addiction that had to be cured  
Now here I am sober and relieved I got away from that terrible life  
Waiting to go home to be with our son, now 2 1/2 years old  
Wishing for a letter or a phone call to hear Daddy's voice  
To say he will come home soon  
Then I can say, we heard from Daddy today  
We love you and miss you, please remember we will never forget you  
This one's for you, Gaston, \*G.

*Candyce \*C aka Candy Cee Cee*

## DADDY'S LITTLE ONE

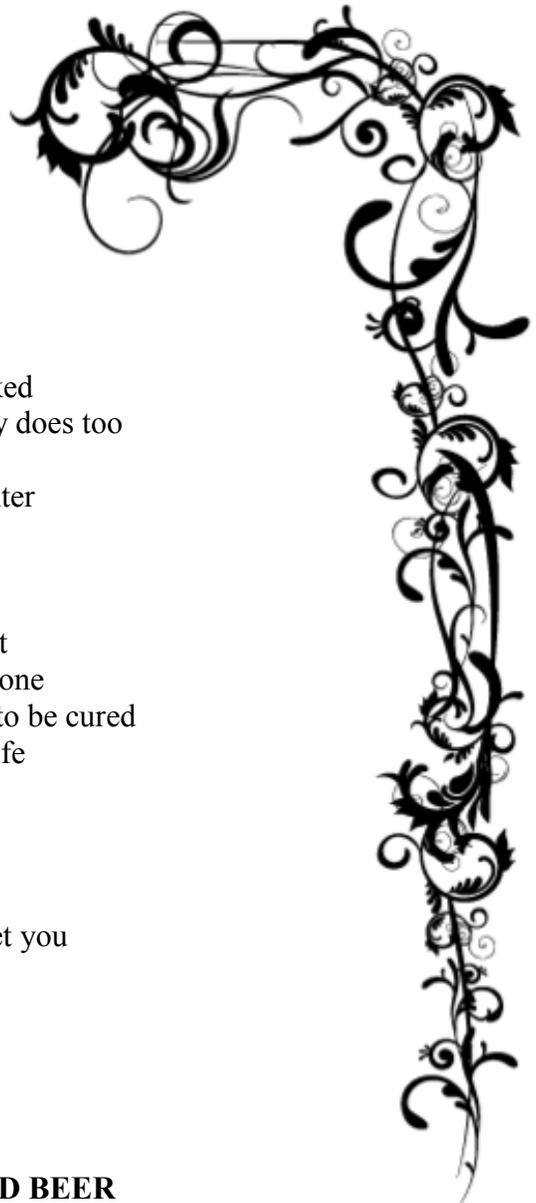
Flesh of my flesh, blood of my blood  
There's plenty of girls, but only one I love  
I give thanks everyday, you're my gift from above  
Your Mom gets jealous cuz you get all my hugs  
You changed my life the moment yours started  
I wouldn't think twice, I'm proud to be a Father  
And I'll admit, sometimes I can be restless  
You keep me strong,  
That's why you're Daddy's princess  
I left my past behind to create a future for us  
You give me purpose,  
That's why I love you so much  
The only girl I love, the only girl I trust  
The only girl I think of...  
Is Daddy's little one.

*Damain aka DEE/3DV*

## A COLD BEER

Relevance to life is a bitter cold beer  
The flickering city suns  
Satan snickers and sneers  
My crystal palace lit in smoke  
I draw up red my time is near  
Another smoke another poke  
another bill another joke  
Another life another tear  
Through all these thoughts I sip my beer  
I'm sad and stoned my purpose gone  
The sun it shines the road is long  
I run from crimes and sing my songs  
Strung and drunk I move along  
I live a lie another year  
All alone I sip my beers

*Grant*



# STUDENT ART

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Artwork by Stephanie Shorting



## WHAT I GOT

I'm so brown and I'm always down  
You would think I was from Pakistan  
At tymes I don't give a damn  
Cuz I'm stuck in a land  
Where people Do give a damn  
Man, I wish I was the son of Sam.  
Livin in tha peg city  
Where the rivers flow,  
And the gravez rave deep, too deep.  
Damn, all these unsolved mysteries  
I just hope they all  
don't go down in History.  
God please give peace,  
To the deceased  
and those livin in Mizery  
God Bless tha dead – Az one said.  
So az we continue to break da Bread  
Another one pops tha led  
Az tha homicidez continue to Rize  
But to no surprize  
The disguise iz a deep purple  
For all the demonz, full of semen,  
Makin our beloved bleed  
from the inside-out.  
For all those  
who are stuck in prison mentally,  
Who feel they're locked up –  
mindz all emotional  
And commotional –  
speakin to nothing,  
While the bodiez rot.  
Hope iz all we got  
Some say they can't stop  
and they won't stop  
Cuz they beee in the TRAP  
Sleep in tha TRAP  
Just to bridge the gap  
People do what they gotta do  
just to get through.  
Through what?  
Tryna get as much money az we can  
Man, I'm just happy for what I got...  
Me.

“2Key”

## SHINY, SHARP COILS

Shiny sharp coils glistening  
in the dark moonlit night  
Through the steel squares,  
cold, dreary, white  
Footprints coming and going  
Feelings never showing  
Gray suits, gloomy roots  
The thud then click  
of confining doors  
Internal, external freedom wars  
The pain comes in scores  
Flooding these bloody shores  
Daily duels  
Blue uniform fools  
Looking down  
On those black, yellow and  
brown  
Treated differently  
because I am white  
What a despicably ugly,  
disturbing plight  
To me we are all the same  
But to those who are vain  
One is better than the others  
But in my heart,  
they are all my brothers  
For we all bleed red  
And one day  
we will all be dead  
Soon we will all be free  
And we will have a chance to  
show them  
How beautiful we can be  
And maybe someday  
you and me will see eternity

*Robbie McLeod aka Big Rob*

## PRISON INSIDE PRISON

Prison within prison  
I was in prison before  
I came to prison  
There I was inside  
The prison within prison  
I was paying my debt  
To society  
I suffered in pain  
and loneliness  
Guilt and shame  
Denial and fear  
I took the time  
Looked at myself  
I wanted to escape  
The tools I had  
I used to chip at the walls  
I builded within  
With faith and hope  
as foundation  
The core of it all  
Here was honesty  
Along with trust  
To look at truth  
Right along with hope  
It was the only way out  
To escape  
from the prison within  
The truth of me set me free  
Have to learn to be patient  
To live the way of love  
Peace and happiness  
Inside/outside

*Morris John Hart*



## LESSON LEARNED

In this cage there's less to learn  
that's the lesson learned  
The same thoughts fill my mind constantly  
day in and day out  
With the same conversations of promises  
"ya I'm saying I'll stay out."  
That's my self-made misery  
the accomplishment is a backwards victory  
I'm hanging by a thin thread  
and stuck with words like instead  
I should have marched for missing women  
instead of slanging to hoes  
I could've went a more productive route  
instead of taking this road  
I was never one to proceed with caution  
didn't believe the option  
Again my life's stuck at a grinding halt  
more time to search and find my faults  
It's a hard hill to climb  
when it's the same hill you just toppled from  
Another promise is broken  
and this feels like the most awful one  
There's more debt to be paid  
with more time to invest in this cage  
With more wishful thoughts  
and more letter writing of "I miss you lots"  
I obliterated my freedom,  
gave the system another reason to sentence me  
The years are flying by  
and I recently turned a quarter century  
Yo, in this cage there's less to learn  
and that's the lesson learned...

Honestly though  
I'm finding it hard to believe my words  
but before you do  
I have to believe me first,  
I write true expressions and I  
Need these words,  
so till I destroy and rebuild myself  
My integrity is cursed  
so ya right here in poetry I'll search... peace.

*Montonio*

## THOUGHTS OF THE PREACHER'S DAUGHTER

I'm sitting here all alone  
Just trying to write you a poem.  
The thought of being apart  
Crushes this big man's heart!  
You were the treasure I was to find  
Thoughts of your beauty blows my mind  
As my days start to come to an end  
It feels that I've lost a great friend  
Having you out there, I have no fears  
Thoughts of losing you I would shed some tears.  
I hope you will still give me a chance  
To win your heart with romance.  
I know that you are a cutey  
Your mind and body is full of beauty.  
As I sit and think throughout these days  
I hope that your feelings never go away.  
I'm so sad being in this place  
But I'm happy when I picture your beautiful face...  
I just hope that it is not too late  
When I'm released to take you on a date.  
I know in my heart things will be fine  
Everything will correct itself in a matter of time.  
I hope soon you will still give me a chance  
To perfect an awesome slow dance...  
I just want you to know  
My heart beats strong and doesn't want to let you go.  
I wish I "could" sing you a song  
We have been apart way too long...

*Charlie Baron Sr.*



## ANGER, FRUSTRATIONS, AND CONCERNS

This justice system has my thoughts blocked up  
Anger and frustrations  
is how they have me while I'm locked up  
They got me feeling caged like an animal  
with a rage so phenomenal  
Sending subliminal messages  
that is coming from this criminal

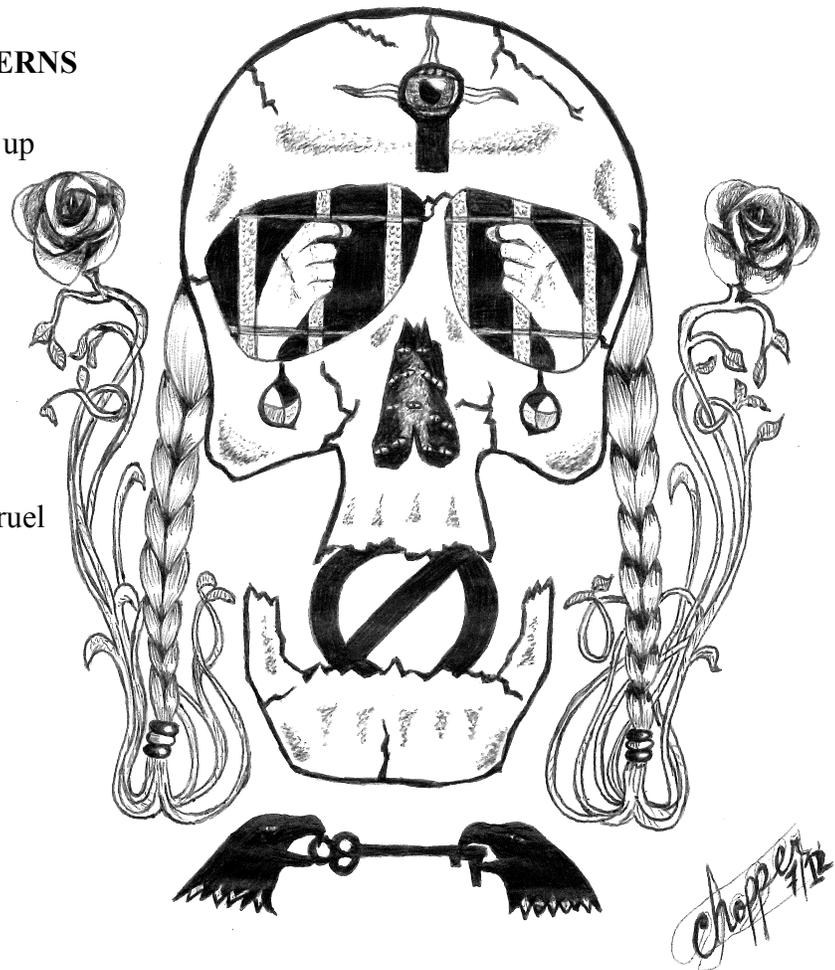
In this new form of residential school  
is where they house this Indian  
The shit that happens here is confidentially cruel  
without anyone's opinion  
I though it's supposed to be  
equal RIGHTS for all human beings  
Instead we have to fight for the rights  
to see what the government brings (nothing).

They love it when the stats of suicide  
and crime rates go up  
Because they sit back and laugh  
while their pockets blow up  
My people we're on the verge  
of a spiritual genocide like no other  
While our lil brothers are out there  
committing homicides for their colors  
We gotta man up because our lil sisters  
are left and found in the gutters  
We're supposed to be laughing and dancing  
to reach out for one another

The sounding of the drum  
is the heartbeat of our people  
But the downing of alcohol and drugs  
is the roots of all evil  
The blood in our veins they consider it lethal  
Through many floods of pain  
has obliterated our people

These are my concerns.  
Now I take a stand  
to listen and learn

*Tony Bone*  
(DayStoneMan)



## HAVING HOPE

As I sit here talking to myself, how's  
Everything going for my family hope it's  
Going well, try to stay strong and have faith  
Always pray and have hope, and forgive those  
People that hurt you in the past, and  
For those that hate you pray for them  
To find a better life, yeah am just writing  
Down what I'm thinking right now as my day ends  
Hoping each week flies by like an eagle in  
The sky, as my days go by, I sit here  
In this cell thinking about you! A lot!  
So I will push on from this day on, and  
Learn from my mistakes 'cause in the end  
This is what it takes to learn from my  
Mistakes and make my future worth living  
For! And just live one day at a time  
Until my time done, I'll be free!  
But for now all I can do is pray...

*A.N.C.S. #13*

# What's Up at John Howard Society

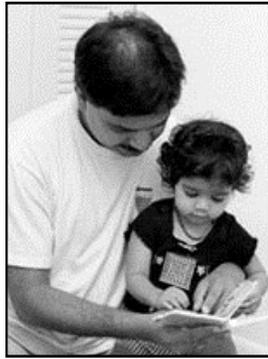
Hey dads!

Want to read to your kids from jail?

JHS runs a program called "Get the Story Out," where incarcerated fathers can record themselves reading a story to their child (or grandchild, sibling, niece or nephew). The recording is then burnt to CD and sent to the child as a gift, along with the storybook.

The program is open to anyone in Remand Centre, as long as you don't have a no-contact order from your child or your child's caregiver. It's free to sign up!

Give Jacquie Nicholson a call at 204-775-1514, ext. 303, or write "Get the Story Out" on a green request form addressed to John Howard Society.



Welcome, Tania!

John Howard Society has a new reintegration coordinator. Tania Wiebe has a BA from the University of Winnipeg, where she majored in Sociology and Conflict Resolution, as well as an honors graduate from the North West Law Enforcement Academy. Tania has worked with incarcerated men for the past 3 years and is an excellent fit for the John Howard Society. Contact her for help with release planning or other issues relating to reintegration into the community.



## JHS Bail Program

The John Howard Society offers a **Bail Assessment, Support & Supervision Program** to provide men with an opportunity to remain in, or return to the community while awaiting trial. This allows them to receive the support and programming offered in the community, and gives them the chance to address issues that put them at risk of re-offending during the pre-trial period. It also provides tools for men to break the cycle of arrest/incarceration and make positive life changes in future.

We work with up to 75 adult male offenders who pose a medium risk to re-offend and/or fail to comply with bail conditions. Our residential component can accommodate up to 20 men. The program provides a supervisory role over clients on bail with an obligation to report any failures to comply with bail conditions to the Crown and the Police. A breach of bail conditions by the client may result in eviction from the program. All referrals to our program **must be initiated by a lawyer** and we can be reached at (204) 775-6991.

Inmates need support.  
So do the people they love.

JHS shares space in its building with a new community group called the J.J.L. Group. They are a support group for people with loved ones in jail. Members of J.J.L. aim to support one another, share stories, and give each other advice and information based on their own experiences. They also plan to create a written "guide to the system" to help others deal with the stress, pain, and confusion of having a loved one in jail.

J.J.L. meet at the JHS building (583 Ellice) in the last week of each month, usually Wednesday or Thursday night. If you have a friend or family member who you think would be interested, you can tell them to get in touch at 204-334-0731.

All are welcome! Childcare and snacks are provided at meetings.

## THRU THE EYES OF A POTENTIAL LIFER

I thought I'd be doing time over slang'n flaps and tickets,  
Never expected to be looking at life  
over statements full of fiction,  
If you get a chance take a moment  
reflect on the choices you've made,  
And stick to what you know try to learn from my mistake,  
The thin line between right and wrong  
is so very hard to decipher,  
So now I watch days and months and years  
go by in in this recurring cycle,  
Over and over the same thing each and every day,  
People come and go but the faces stay the same,  
The system adds fuel to the fire trying to justify its meaning,  
While these cell bars and barbwire deprive us of our freedom,  
I can't lie and say I'd change if I walked out these gates today,  
The sad truth is I've grown accustomed to these chains,  
I'm going our squeezin' and buckin' till this metaphorical  
chamber be clickin'  
Cuz in the end it's up to the jury to make that final decision,  
So now that I realize I don't control or determine my own fate,  
I'm standing tall through the struggle and it will never change.

*VEE DEE*

## REDEMPTION

In a race against time to find redemption,  
As promised from one of many of these promising gods,  
I make no exemption, I go against the odds.  
Lost and lonely, I roam this maze,  
A blazing inferno of passion,  
Longing for better days,  
My faith is crashin'.  
Still I try to change my evil ways,  
I beg and pray to be forgiven,  
And liberated from this sinful life that I'm livin'.  
Disillusioned, feeling weak, yet my love I keep givin'.  
I am alive but feel dead,  
Discontent, I'm not livin'.

*UGLY*

## SITTING HERE TO PONDER

Back again, for my third bit  
Once again, in this chair I sit  
For the next little bit of my life  
Got a lot on my mind so I write  
Everything down on this paper pad  
Letting go of emotions ain't so bad  
Expressing my thoughts from a cell  
The story of my life is what I tell  
To anyone who cares to wanna listen  
My heart, is the one thing  
they say is missin  
I got heart,  
for the people who livin right  
I'm sorry!  
For what went on that night  
I got scared of losing my freedom  
So I fled,  
drove so fast right into them  
Now I'm in jail once again to ponder  
My actions will haunt me till I'm a goner  
I deserve the consequences of my actions  
I wanna serve the time for my infractions  
Change in my life is what I fear  
Gonna have to make  
the transition some year  
Open my heart to other possible ways  
Gotta clear my head  
it's so cloudy these days  
Lost my family over gang life bullshit  
Turned their backs on me because of it  
They chose to love people  
who ain't blood  
To them my love  
and word is only mud  
Me I'm good here,  
building to be stronger  
Also I'm really good,  
sitting here to ponder

*Young Cube*



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