



### From the Director

Sometimes it is difficult to write a Directors report, when there is so much activity in the ministry. Between the work I do as a Youth Chaplain in the Detention Centre, and the ongoing building and directing at the Rock, there is not much time.

I have been quoting this scripture for 22 years and God continues to impress this message to me. In James 1:27 we are told *“Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.”* The scripture constantly reminds me of why The Rock exists.

Yes, we have awesome programs at the Rock, too many to mention here in this note, but they all come back to James 1:27. Like when I hear about the impact our staff had on Maegan at the Spa Night, or what happens at the Wellness Works Program, and when staff are visiting and engaging with the youth and their children. Or when I hear from the youth in our Gathering (Youth Chapel) and they come to me and ask me to pray for them, I know that God is breaking through with the Gospel.

What is the Gospel to the orphan and the widow? Is it social justice? Access to food and clothing? A community like the Rock where people legitimately care for them, without any strings attached, or big funding dollars available? It may be sitting with a youth in custody who has just killed someone and telling them that God loves them and still has a plan for their lives despite what they have done.

In our gathering time, I often tell the youth and staff that the reason the Rock exists, with all its programs, is not due to some great public relations on the part of the founder, or even the result of our great prayers to God, but it is simply a personification of God's love for the orphan, the widow, the alien and the stranger. As Tim Huff put it in his book *Bent Hope*, we have a great opportunity to be enriched by the youth that we serve.

**Rev. Al Craig**

## CLEAN PARKS = S

If you would like to sponsor a youth this summer in helping to  
Tim or Mary Anne at 905-52

## ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

**T**he Living Rock has been greatly encouraged and supported through this annual event, which alone has raised over \$220,000 in the past 11 years. This year the Golf Committee is excited to announce the goal of raising money for renovations such as improving the stairs to the Food Bank, acquiring extra large storage bins for donations and paving the alley behind the building. With enough money raised, we hope to also increase the program space for one-on-one counseling and administrative support.

We appreciate your support and look forward to your participation in this year's tournament.

## ROCK HOUSING STORIES

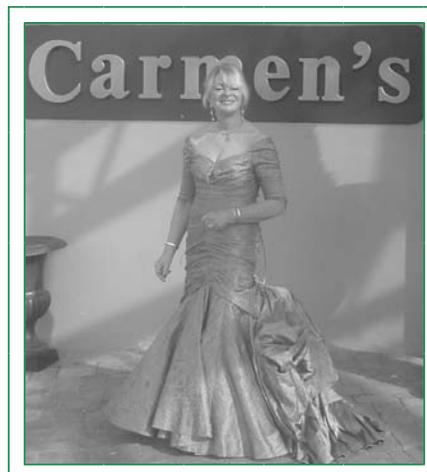
**T**here are at least 600 street-involved youth aged 16 to 21 in Hamilton (according to an October 2005 report from the Social Planning and Research Council) who access emergency youth shelters and programs like the Living Rock's Breakfast and Evening Programs. This number does not include youth aged 22 to 25, or those who sleep in abandoned buildings, parking lots, local parks and on friends' couches.

One 20 year old, sleeps by a famous city pavilion. Another youth sleeps in a park in an upscale neighbourhood, returning to the downtown core each day. Both refuse to live in a shelter because they feel unsafe, and hate the stench of rotten socks and body odour.

One of the Breakfast Program regulars stays in a shelter. His 'street mom' recently gave him his own apartment, but he lived there for less than three days. "Honestly, I feel safer in the shelter," he explained. "I have been in and out of prison so much I've become institutionalized. The rules in the shelter make me feel safer than living on my own."

Another youth shares a bachelor apartment – for one person - with 17 others. They sleep in the unplugged refrigerator, fight for the balcony, share the bathroom floor and take rotations on the couch. Each youth checks their pockets at the end of the month, praying they can pay the rent.

## C.R.I.E.D.A. FASHION SHOW



**C**.R.I.E.D.A. (Children Requiring Immediate Effective Direct Aid) held its annual spring fashion show at Carmens Banquet Hall on Sunday April 6, 2008. The evening also featured great music, food and a silent auction. The sold out show helped raise money for the Living Rock. Michelle Crugnale, Founder of C.R.I.E.D.A., is pictured wearing a stunning dress designed for her by Christopher Lu (17), one of the students showcased at the event.

## SAFE PARKS

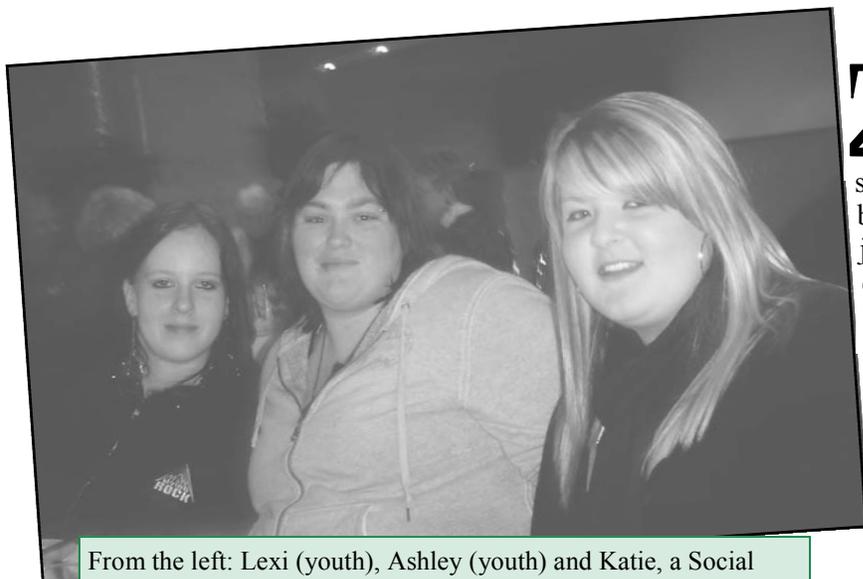
To clean up our downtown parks, please contact:  
28-7625 x232



When a youth secures an apartment, the situation is often unstable. There is desperation to find a place, any place, and despair when youth realize their options. Horror stories are common – like the girl who left her stove on to keep from freezing on a winter night. Her apartment burned down and she was left with nothing.

In response, the Living Rock has two Housing Support Workers that last year helped 173 youth find and maintain stable housing, connecting with them through the Breakfast Program, TRI-Rock employment program and Rock Resources (where youth earn household appliances and develop life skills so they can turn their housing into a home) as well as drop in appointments.

The Housing Support Workers provide housing information and weekly education groups, act as an advocate with landlords and Ontario Works case managers, and viewed apartments. The Housing Support Workers had 1025 meetings with youth last year. They also provide referrals to trustees, drug counsellors, shelters, subsidized housing and legal aid clinics.



From the left: Lexi (youth), Ashley (youth) and Katie, a Social Services student, at Zonta's dinner promoting the program.

## ARTS OF AUGUST

This year's annual 'Creativity through Diversity' Fashion Show will be held at the Jamesville Community Centre on July 24, 2008. Admission will be \$2.00 per person, with all proceeds going towards Brain Injury Services of Hamilton (BISH).



Thursday August 28 is our 6th Annual Arts of August Grand Finale. This will be held at the Central Hamilton Public Library (55 York Boulevard) from 7:00pm - 9:00pm. This is a city-wide youth initiative, hosted by Living Rock. Youth aged 13 to 25 submit art and poetry to the Rock or local libraries on the themes of peace, equality, love and culture. There is no admission charge and all are encouraged to come out and enjoy the art on display!



## ZONTA



Zonta International is a global organization of executives and professionals working together to advance the status of women. They have sponsored the Living Rock to follow "5 girls for 5 months" to better their education. The participants set goals and wrote journals detailing their experiences. Each girl had a different story to tell, through various stages of education and schools. There was a high school student, somebody obtaining their GED, one at the City Centre working on credits, another at Notre Dame House and someone at the YWCA Literacy Council. After completing the 5 months, the girls involved were given a dinner with a certificate of completion and yellow roses.

"I hope someday I can be a role model for others like the Rock has been for me."

**M**cMaster University's Korean Christian Fellowship, brought boxes of canned goods from the "Overflow of Giving" Banquet. Students helped in The Living Rock's Evening Program Auction. From this, many students expressed interest in serving the Hamilton Community throughout the summer and school year.



Karen Craig leads Janis Joo and team to help in the "Underground Rock Shop" (Youth Food Bank).

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

Arts of August Fashion Show  
**July 24, 7-9pm**

'Creativity Through Diversity'  
Jamesville Community Centre  
209 MacNab St. (@ Colbourne)  
Admission \$2

Arts of August Grand Finale  
**August 28, 7-9pm**  
Hamilton Public Library—Central Division

23rd Anniversary Gala at Carmen's  
**Thursday October 23, 2008**

For tickets or information please call:  
Call 905-528-7625 x236

## **MEMORIALS**

The following is a list of donations made to Living Rock Ministries in memory of past friends, colleagues and family:

<u>Received From:</u>	<u>In Memory Of:</u>
AIG Life Insurance Co. of Canada	Dorothy McMaster

## **LIVING ROCK MINISTRIES**

Contact Info:

30 Wilson St., Hamilton ON  
L8R 1C5

Phone: 905-528-7625

Fax: 905-526-8723

Website: [www.livingrock.ca](http://www.livingrock.ca)

Charitable # 88345 8812 RR0001

We would like to take this time opportunity to thank all the volunteers who have supported the Living Rock at our recent events.

### **SOUPFEST PLATINUM SPONSORS**



### **YOUR RIGHTS AS A DONOR**

If at anytime you would like to change the amount of mail you receive from us, please contact the Development Team at 905- 528-7625 x239, and we would be happy to comply with your request.

In addition, Living Rock Ministries assures its donors that personal information is not used for commercial purposes. We do not rent, sell, trade or share our donor information. Personal information is kept confidential and is used to mail information about our services to donors.

### **LIVING ROCK MINISTRIES PROGRAMS & SERVICES**

- youth food bank ▪ breakfast program ▪ evening meals ▪ positive recreation programming ▪ anti-racism initiative ▪ employment readiness training ▪ chaplaincy ▪ visiting youth in custody ▪ urban ministry training ▪ addictions counseling ▪ health clinic and medical supports ▪ volunteer opportunities ▪ educational assessments and supports ▪ youth work-to-earn ▪ incentives ▪ computer resource room ▪ housing support ▪ supports for pregnant and parenting youth ▪ creative art competition celebrating diversity ▪ self care and health promotion for young women ▪ gang prevention



Founded 1985

905-528-7625

[www.livingrock.ca](http://www.livingrock.ca)

SPRING 2008

## THINKING OF YOU

**A**shleigh Maegan Carmichael was a youth who came regularly to the Living Rock's Evening Program. Full of life and with a passion for music and singing, she had many friends at the Rock.

At just 15 years old, Maegan was murdered in a shocking incident on April 7th. A 25-year-old male deliberately reversed his car over Maegan after driving towards her and her friends. He then drove over her forwards. Her last words, according to the Hamilton Spectator, were "help me". She died a few hours later in the hospital.

Maegan was remembered by youth and staff at the Gathering – the Rock's youth chapel – two days later. Although people were still in shock and grief, they shared their thoughts and memories of this beautiful young girl.

"She was one of the first youth I met when I came to the Evening Program," said Kristen, a youth support worker at the Rock who had worked closely with Maegan. "She was fun and beautiful. People think we impact the youth, but they impact our lives too. They make us smile and encourage us."

Julie, who works in the Evening Program, told the Gathering how she had spoken to Maegan at Spa Night, a monthly event supported by Philpott Memorial Church, C.R.I.E.D.A. and community volunteers. She told Maegan how she had begun Spa Night in order to share God's heart with the youth and to love and pamper them.

The Gathering continued with songs of hope from Peter Tiggalar, a gifted Hamilton musician. His song was everyone's prayer – 'Peace come to our streets'. Prayers were said for the youth, for Maegan's family and friends, and for Cheever Street where the incident happened.

Later that day, staff and volunteers went with youth to visit



Maegan (left) with Jessica at Spa Night

Maegan's memorial at Cheever Street, where they laid flowers in her memory. "Maegan's death reflects the violence on our streets", Karen Craig, the Rock's Program Director, stated. "The youth are incredible in supporting each other and honouring their friend." The Rock was able to support youth in providing food and flowers for the memorials and funeral.

"It shows the urgency of our work, because we never know how much time we have," Kristen said. "Everything that happens at the Rock is an opportunity to build relationships."

