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## Upcoming Services

Hello TUFF and TUFF friends, from allison calvern, chair of the adult program committee. We have a crackerjack year planned for you, especially now that Patricia desChamps has signed up for the committee !! Please consider signing up yourself; we can use your enthusiasm and general helpfulness.

Also, since the talks after the services are such a vigorous part of who we are, we remind everybody that we need lovely people to volunteer for coffee hour duties. We have a sign-up sheet, and clear making-coffee-and-tea instructions. How easy is that? (Brownies are optional for anybody who feels so moved.) Please look for the sign-up sheet after the service on Sunday. It is fun to set up every once in a while !

Our theme this year is beauty, an exploration of its various presentations. Beauty compels us—to look, to touch, to smell, to feel and to listen. And sometimes it compels us to act. Our seven principles, fluidly incorporated into the small and the large parts of our lives, are beautiful. They compel us to act, either in celebration of beauty, or in response to despair. How many ways

can beauty challenge us to act?

We are planning Sunday services to include presentations from people working in Guatemalan communities; from a person who appreciates the gift of life in spite of great physical burdens; from a couple who struggles daily with a life-altering disease; and from a person who works in disaster relief. We are hoping to have services that centre on music and services that tell us who we are—historically and currently. These plans are in the works, and include a keynote speaker whose whole life has been dedicated to seeing beauty in this wide world around us.

As for concrete details, though we are very clear on the why and where, we are sadly lacking in the specifics of who, what, when and how. Bear with us, and come along to Sunday services for the latest news. We will let the newsletter know as much in advance as we can (thanks to the long suffering patience of the editor.)

Thank you for your attention, and take care !

allison calvern, on behalf of adult program

p.s.

Sunday, October 2, 2004

Topic: Our Whole Lives Training Weekend

Presenters: George DeMille and allison calvern

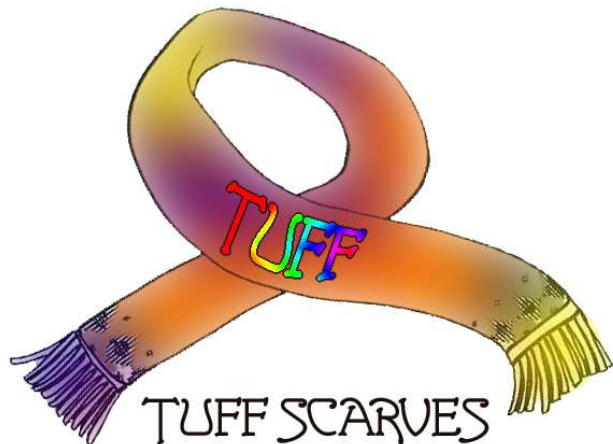
George and i spent last weekend in Ottawa, undergoing the intensive training necessary to become Our Whole Lives facilitators. Our focus was on two of five offered levels, grades 7-9 and grades 10-12. We were fed information on both content and delivery, and managed to connect strongly with fifteen (plus) committed, intelligent, and marvelously skilled people working in the area of sexuality education. Join us on Sunday to find out a bit about Our Whole Lives, a CUC program that has been developed jointly by the UUA and the United Church of Christ.

On October 9'th, we have tentatively scheduled Judy Loo to give an update on the Guatemalan school project.

On October 16'th, Tom Hanley will speak about his vol-

unteer work with the Red Cross in Louisiana.

*In fellowship*  
allison calvern



We are collecting knitting needles and yarn to make scarves for international students attending UNB and STU. PLEASE help yourself to yarn and make a scarf! PLEASE bring in your old yarn and knitting needles for others too!

For more information - Call Patricia 454-6019

*In fellowship*  
Don Flatt

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## Social Responsibility Report

I am again looking for members for my social responsibility committee. Please bring your ideas to me.

There is one project which I would like to undertake this year (05-06). I would like to raise at least \$250 for the New Hope Foundation Scholarship Program in Guatemala.

The New Hope Foundation was founded in 1997 by Jesus Tecu, a massacre survivor. The foundation set up a school for Achi children in Jesus' village-Rabinal. Guatemala's population is over 90% indigenous. This school will be an indigenous school where the children will be able to develop their minds as well as their culture.

The \$250 symbolically pays for the tuition of one student but in reality the money will go to the maintenance of

the school, since the school tuition is free.

My idea for fundraising is to have a Guatemalan dinner. I am there fore, looking for cooks and helpers.

This is a good opportunity to learn traditional Guatemalan cooking. Please contact me if you are interested in helping to plan this event or cook.

My phone number is 457-1995, my e-mail is gtrbc@stu.ca

*In fellowship*  
Najat Abdou-McFarland  
Social Responsibility Committee Chair

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## Women's Pot Luck

The next women's pot luck will be held October 28th. at 6pm. Janet Stoppard will host the gathering in her home at 730 Mitchell St. (455-1155). The "show and tell" topic has not been decide on yet. Come and enjoy an evening of good food and good conversation. Suggestion has been made that soup creations are difficult to manage, so please limit your skills to foods other than soup. Thanks so much.

For more information contact Joan Brewer at 455-5169 or jrjeb@nb.sympatico.ca

*In fellowship*  
Joan Brewer

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## 3 C's for Kids!

The Children's Religious Education program is now in full swing! We are running what I am unofficially calling the 3 C's program. The C's are for Children's Church, Craft and Choir! We have not yet found the time to get to the choir part but I am ever optimistic and am considering a democratic process where-by the children could vote on the order of activities on any given Sunday! Thanks to all the folks who have volunteered to help out-you are appreciated-never doubt that.

This month ,as part of our "Children's Church" ,we have been working through our Children's Covenant . The basis of the conevant is that when we come to our Fellowship, we make promises to each other, spoken and unspoken. These promises are sometimes called a "covenant." A covenant describes how we will treat each other, what we will do to create a safe and sacred space where all

may learn and grow. Our covenant, in this Fellowship, is grounded in our Unitarian and Universalist Principles. We have been looking at one principle/week, discussing it and acting out how we would act if we were/weren't respecting that Principle. This has been an educational and fun time and we are looking forward to continuing these activities until the end of October.

Thanks to the families who have filled in their registration forms and to the facilitators who have filled in theirs. We are looking forward to getting all the paperwork together so if you and yours are still looking at the documents on your kitchen table, we would love to put them in our files instead! Ha!

Finally, thanks to all for singing the children out of the meeting hall on Sunday morning. You really help create that feeling of a big family when you dedicate a song especially to the wee ones. I'm honoured to be a part of that family.

*In faith*  
Sharon



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## Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice and TUFF

The Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice exists to develop and maintain a vibrant network of Unitarian and Universalist social action in Canada and elsewhere. The board is comprised of U\*U's from across the country. I, a Tuff member, am helping represent the Eastern region on the CUSJ board. One of my responsibilities is to serve on the editorial board of the JUST News publication. The most recent issue, Volume 9, #1 has just arrived-so be sure to check it out! Our Fellowship has a number of copies. Of course, CUSJ members receive their copies at their home address. If you are interested in submitting a social justice related article, please do not hesitate to contact me. I would love to have more Maritime stories. As well, I would love to continue the CUSJ presence locally. When our family was a member of the Saint John Church we participated in a CUSJ chapter and would love to continue this chapter-perhaps as a Saint John/Fredericton chapter?

This year, I am joining the board of the Fundy Region Safe Spaces in Saint John as a CUSJ rep. and would love to have chapter involvement with this group. The Safe Spaces organization is committed to ending discrimination around issues of sexual orientation and gender identity. They connect and work with youth to reduce isolation, promote accep-

tance, and provide information, resources, and support. For more information on this project, check out: <http://ca.geocities.com/rockett15@rogers.com/safespaces/about.html> It is a complicated address but once you get there I hope you will be pleasantly surprised at the progressive approach and positive change that this group is making for the Queer youth in our region. You could also google Fundy Safe Spaces to locate the site.

With the ACM coming to Saint John this spring, the national CUSJ organization will be having their AGM in Saint John as well. This is a fantastic opportunity for our region to showcase its efforts in the Peace, Justice and Environmental field. A chapter would be a valuable asset to this end.

Finally, I am also the Unitarian Universalist United Nations Office representative for this region and have plenty of news and information to pass on about our global UU friends and the United Nations. Again, a CUSJ chapter could work with the UU-UNO, helping to spread the word about our world wide efforts to promote Peace and Justice-UU style! We just need you and U and U!

Be sure to check out the CUSJ website that our very own TUFF/CUSJ member, Don Flatt, has built and is maintaining. It can be found at CUSJ.org.

*In faith*  
Sharon Flatt



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## Communications and Outreach

Hi Folks! First up this time around Communication, with a capital C. If there's something you need to know, someone you need to contact, or something you want to share, please let me know. I'll forward the information to the proper people. All beefs, kudos, concerns, comments and announcements welcome. Let's stay connected! You'll find my contact info at the end of this article. Please note: No interpersonal issues PLEASE ;o)

Da News: Patricia is well into her TUFF Scarves campaign. Help yourself to wool in the basket (or drop some off). Feel free to talk to her about this if you are interested in knitting one or donating supplies for others to knit a scarf (see the advertisement elsewhere in this newsletter). The finished scarves will be donated to international students at UNB and STU.

In Social Responsibility, Najat is planning a traditional Guatemalan dinner for sometime in the winter (we're thinking January or February). The money raised will help fund a traditional Mayan school in Guatemala.

They need all the help they can get! As for membership, Sheila has some great ads that Patricia and I will be "tweaking". Look for some (slightly) provocative advertising coming soon to a publication near you.

And speaking of provocative, there was a great service (in my humble opinion) on September 25th regarding peace, war, and Christianity. I found it enlightening and empowering. I recorded the audio of most of this service. If you're interested in getting a copy, let me know!

In other news, all of our committees in the Communications and Outreach section need more members. If you are interested in Membership (Sheila Moore - Chair), Public Awareness (Patricia desChamps - Chair), or Social Responsibility (Najat Abdou-McFarland - Chair), please contact me or the committee chairs and we'll get you involved! If you think you're already on one of these committees, drop a line to your committee chair so she knows you're out there ready and raring to go. It can be good fun to be on a committee. Sometimes they meet often, sometimes not. In any event, joining a committee is always a great way to get to know some of the people of the Fellowship.

There's a new addition on the wall of the sanctuary/meeting room/ worship hall/lecture theatre. I've put up a calendar that will HOPEFULLY keep everyone up to date as to the comings and goings around the Fellowship. Please use this calendar to book your events (after going through the proper channels, that is, Ed Leslie and Tracy Walls are in charge of facility use). That's it for now, Enjoy the fall!!

Contact me, Don Flatt, at any of the following:

454-7634 (h)  
470-3321 (w)  
don\_flatt@cbc.ca  
donflatt@nb.sympatico.ca

*In fellowship*  
Don Flatt



## Interested in Paganism?

Don and Sharon Flatt are hoping to run the Paganism 101 course starting at the beginning of November. They are planning on Monday evenings starting at 7:30 at the Fellowship. The Flatts took the course when they were attending the Unitarian Congregation of South Peel in Mississauga. The Paganism 101 course was developed by a U\*U woman, Louise Bunn, who hoped to help educate U\*U's and friends about the many types of Pa-

ganism -their differences and similarities. A UU stlye of Paganism is encouraged throughout the course with the end result being a working knowledge of ritual and Paganism. The course will run for 9 weeks and there will be a small charge for course materials. Please register with Don or Sharon by emailing [dafatts@nb.sympatico.ca](mailto:dafatts@nb.sympatico.ca) or calling 454-7634.

*In fellowship*  
Sharon Flatt



## Eastern Region Fall Gathering

### Bridging the Distance

Plan now to attend the 2005 Eastern Region Fall Gathering in Montréal, a city with many bridges, from Friday, November 4, to Sunday, November 6. This years event will be hosted by the Unitarian Congregation of Montréal. The theme is "*Bridging the Distance*".

The programme, registration forms, and all the information you need may be found at:

<http://www.easterngathering.ca>



## A Note From Linda

Program Information, comment & information

September 2005

Beloved Community

I think it fair to say that each of us, who has found one of our Unitarian Universalist congregations, has a mental picture of what community life ought to be like.

When community life becomes challenging, I almost always hear people say, "I don't think conflict belongs in a church'. We seem to have an idea that congregational life should always be completely harmonious.

Yet, congregations are, among other things, human communities. One of the characteristics of human community is conflict. So why are we surprised by it? I think it is because we understand religious community as the laboratory for 'how it can be'. When I was President of my congregation there was a rather intense conflict that resulted in the resignation of a minister, and the hard discernment about who we were as a congregation, supported by two interim ministers. I remember writing at the time that I felt like I had lost my sense of naiveté. Through the process, though it was difficult

and challenging, I learned an important lesson: It is in the struggle that we grow. Looking back on that period of congregational life, now over 10 years ago, I still sigh with sadness-few of us were at our best. But, without it I know the congregation I love so much and that so many of you enjoyed during the recent Annual Conference and Meeting, would not be the congregation it is today. I would not be the person I am, and much of what I know and believe about congregational life would be merely theory.

Yet, we do hope for more from our congregations. We look to our principles and say, 'why can't we live these'. I think we can live them, but only in fleeting moments. Life is not static. Things change and our congregations are after all, made up of humans. However, striving for the community of our dreams is, in my opinion, more instructive and enriching than living it.

Because 'Beloved Community' is a longed for goal and because it doesn't come easily we must struggle to understand what it is, and how to help our congregations have 'Beloved Community' moments.

I'm not assuming Beloved Community consists of 'blissed' out folks, who smile and hug ceaselessly. I imagine people having honest conversations about what works, where they are challenged, and how to manage the real differences that get in the way of congregational effectiveness and a sense of community.

In our U\*U congregations we often focus on individuals. I hear stories about how individuals have been affected by finding one of our congregations.

I've heard beautiful and inspiring stories about individual transformation, about freedom and about important and life saving support. What I don't hear are the stories of community transformation and about outward focus. I long to hear someone say, 'Together, we have created the congregation that serves the world and its members, and together we have created a congregation that calls each one of us to be personally accountable for the health of congregation.' I'm not suggesting an 'either/or' approach to congregational life, but believe more 'both/and' thinking can help us. Is it any wonder then that we feel unease when congregational life is challenging. We long for deep and Beloved Community, but too often focus on our own needs.

Congregations that think about this tension, that engage their members in a conversation about 'how we want to be' and that, through a process of discernment, make some agreements about their ideals for community life, are better able to weather the inevitable storms. Having made agreements about ideals and processes helps to ensure they focus on the congregational lessons to be

learned rather than on the 'right' or 'wrong' behaviour of individuals.

If we Build it, will they Come?

There is no sense offering a religious education program...there are no children here." We don't need to worry about our steep stairs...none of our members are disabled." Sometimes I hear congregations saying these types of things in response to a suggestion that they need to develop a particular type of program or to embark on a particular course. However, the important question to then ask is, "Is the fact that we've not done that very thing, the reason that we don't have any \_\_\_\_\_ types of people here?"

In some cases the answer is, "No". Some congregations can say that demographics or other factors are the reasons that the congregation does not reflect a certain type of diversity. I am aware of one congregation that has no children. In fact they have no members under 55 years of age. While that might be a real cause for concern and might (and should) cause some congregational leaders to worry about the long term viability of the congregation, the leaders of the congregation in question are perfectly happy with the membership profile. Why?, because they are located in a retirement community.

However, most of our congregations are situated in the midst of diverse communities and sadly some do not appear to reflect that diversity at all. It isn't good enough to wait until a particular kind of person finds you to start developing programs and facilities to meet their needs. Congregations need to ask some hard questions so that they are able to welcome diversity, rather than to react to it.

In order to make effective decisions that will create a vital congregation (and facilitate growth) we need to do a bit of reflecting. Congregations that want to change to meet the challenges that they face need to ask themselves some basic questions.

What do we currently do very well? What are our organizational strengths?

What do we do now, that is somewhat lacking? Perhaps your music program is adequate but lacks punch.

What have we been unable to do with any measure of success?

What gets in the way of meaningful change and congregational vitality?

Who are our potential 'constituents'. Think big. Are there ethnic minorities in your area- some may belong to their traditional churches, but others may be looking for something new. Are there a lot of seniors in your

area? Are you in a suburban community with lots of families or are you in the city, where there is likely to be more singles?

What do our potential constituents need? Do the seniors need a liberal community that provides a meaningful alternative to some of the other traditional churches? Do the families need access to open minded religious education for their children? Do the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender communities need a religion where they are respected and where they have access to meaningful rites of passage?

Once there have been careful reflective answers developed to these questions the planning can begin. Congregations are urged to forget about some of the things that seem just too much for them. Working from existing strengths to meet identified needs and to be of service to the community is more likely to result in success than trying to start a new program. Often modifications to existing programs or new ways of handling those things can result in great successes. Does your congregation do a great job with adult Religious Education programs? Does the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender community need support? Perhaps a publicized workshop series on the UU heritage of inclusion could be a happy combination. Congregations without significant diversity often find, once they begin planning, programming and practicing as if there was diversity, that it follows in fairly short order. A more accessible building often results in more people who have difficulty getting around. Improved children's programs often result in more families with kids. The idea is to plan, to not try to do everything at once and to work from your strengths.

A Program Stream, on Appreciative Inquiry, at the Regional Fall is a good place to begin thinking about the skills and successes your congregation has already experienced. Building on past successes also acknowledges the contributions of long-time members and helps to integrate their learning in new endeavors.

Conversational Prompts and Questions- If we Build it?

It is common to hear people say, when beginning a planning process, "We have these planning meetings, but nothing really changes". Too often this is true. Most congregations have, somewhere in their archives or on their shelves a mission statement or two and a few dusty strategic plans. I believe that this is because the 'starting place' for these planning exercises is often based on a desire to sustain the organization. If we plan because we want membership growth, or more money for improvements to the building that we love, or because we are growing older and think new program options are in order, then we plan to maintain an existing congregation.

Grounded in the congregation as it is, and focusing on what we (who are already present and accounted for) need, these plans are often doomed before the ink is dry. If we use 'taking care of business' as the starting point for consideration we are unlikely to really engage with 'what can we create together' options. This is not to stay that we ought to ignore our history and strengths. To my mind asking 'how can we promote growth in this congregation' is the wrong question. Better questions, more likely to call out new ideas and energy include,

What can this congregation be?

What will the \_\_\_ U\*U congregation look like when it focuses on being a centre of vital liberal religious community?

How can we serve the world?

These questions don't encourage us to use the status quo as a measuring stick for success. They ask us to use the way we engage with one another, and the communities in which we are located as our measuring stick.

If you are hesitant to begin a planning process because others have failed, ask yourselves:

Have previous planning exercises been focused on institutional maintenance?

Have the needs of existing members been the starting point for your consideration?

If so, a new process, that gets beyond 'what is' and engages people in 'what can be', may be the next step in your congregation's exciting history.

Dates of Note- Mark your Calendar!

Regional Fall Gatherings

Eastern Regional Fall Gathering - Montreal, November 4-6

Central Regional Fall Gathering - Olinda, November 11-13

Lay-Chaplaincy Training

Designing and Leading Rites of Passage ("the basics")

First Unitarian Church of Hamilton, April 28-30, 2006

See: [http://www.cuc.ca/lay\\_chaplaincy/index.htm](http://www.cuc.ca/lay_chaplaincy/index.htm) for more information about the Lay-Chaplaincy program and other training events.

CU\*UL School

The 2006 CU\*UL School program will be held in the Ottawa area from July 13-16. Plan now to support leaders from your congregation

Annual Conference & Meeting

Saint John,  
New Brunswick  
May 19-22



## Letter from the Mary Bennett

from <http://www.uottawa.com/June2005.pdf>

Jane Lindsay makes a Will

About this time last year I made changes to my will. I updated it to reflect the evolution both of circumstances concerning significant people in my life and of my thinking on how I might use my material assets, after my death, to contribute to a better world. In doing so, I made a bequest to the First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa.

It was not that I expected my estate to be of immense worth, nor is it a signal that I will no longer contribute in a variety of ways, while I am alive, to issues and organizations I value - including our Congregation. However, it was a reflection of my having deliberately spent time thinking about several questions. What did I feel were my obligations and desires with respect to significant people in my life who might outlive me? To what very short list of charitable organizations might I give even a small bequest? How might I apportion my estate to reflect my answers to these questions, taking into account the potential ballpark value of my estate? (I had already decided that I would not bequeath specific dollar amounts.)

Needless to say, the details of my will are confidential - and, I hope, a long way from coming into fruition - but I do want to share with you three conclusions I made.

First, as I thought about people who are significant in my life, I thought not only of individuals who are extended family or close friends, but also of the overall community that I experience in our Congregation.

Second, as I thought of organizations that make a difference in the world, and with whose goals and way of operating I feel a direct, personal connection, I again thought of the First Unitarian Congregation.

Third, as I looked at how I might apportion my estate, given my forecast of comparative needs and uses of money, I concluded that I could bequeath a modest percentage to the First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa.

Thanks to this reflection process, I was able to rewrite

my will in a way which has left me feeling comfortable that I have honoured important relationships. I have given myself the gift of knowing I will someday contribute in ways I cannot do now.

Jane Lindsay

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from UC Edmonton's website/newsletter:

### SHARING OUR ABUNDANCE

Last May a number of members attended a workshop called Dreams and Dollars. In it we were encouraged to create a 'culture of generosity' in the church. One suggestion the Board has adopted involves sharing our wealth. Starting September 11, each Sunday the unidentified loose cash offering will be shared with a local charity. Half will go to the church, half to the named charity. If you wish to make a larger donation to the charity, the ushers will have envelopes you can use. Mark the charity's name and all the money will go there.

Those of you making pledge payments to the church are asked to use cheques or mark you name and 'pledge' on donation enveloped.

The following charities have been selected for September:

September 11: Youth Emergency Shelter Society

September 18: WIN House shelter for abused mothers and their children-the children's toy and activity fund.

September 25: USC Canada, formerly the Unitarian Service Committee, an organization funding small self help projects in the third world.

Take care,

Mary

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PS -The International Council of Unitarians and Universalists is meeting at Montserrat, near Barcelona, Spain, November 5-9. Celebrating their 10th anniversary, this is a special conference and all are welcome. More information at [www.icuu.net](http://www.icuu.net)

Mary Bennett Executive Director Canadian Unitarian Council

018-1179A King Street West, Toronto ON M6K 3C5  
[www.cuc.ca](http://www.cuc.ca) 1-888-568-5723



## Letter from the Editor

I don't have much to say this month. I would like to thank all who contributed. Your contributions make this a true community bulletin.

Please note the subscription form. Fill and send it in or advise me in any way that you wish if you wish to continue receiving copies by mail. Please speak to me if you want to discuss details of the planned changes in the logistics of newsletter delivery.

*In fellowship*  
Tony Fitzgerald



## Subscription Renewal Form

In an attempt to contain costs and simplify the task of getting out the newsletter, the September board meeting suggested that we should consider some changes in the logistics of distributing the newsletter, especially considering that the newsletter is available from the web-site. The editor pointed out to the board that he had received a couple of requests from people who found the electronic copy from the web more flexible in that they could adjust the size of fonts to their preference or that they preferred not having the Fellowship incur the cost of printing and mailing. The editor also pointed out that printing in colour would be prohibitively costly for him and while Ed Leslie has graciously offered to do the printing, Ed's travel schedule has some conflicts with the printing deadline this year and there is unavoidable

delay introduced with the current arrangement.

We will continue to produce printed copies for people who do not have access to the web, however, the printed copies will be in black and white. The copy put up on the web will be in full colour. The next several issues will be mailed to everyone who has been getting a copy to date and each issue will have this form. If you want to be mailed a copy of the newsletter, please fill in the form and return it to me.

After giving adequate time for people to advise me of their wishes, we will be making printed copies available at the Fellowship for pick up and will attempt to hand deliver the newsletter to people who wish mailed copies. Copies that we can not hand deliver will be mailed. I may move to a smaller font on the mailed edition to keep the letter to under 30 gms if necessary.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to continue receiving \_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO  
Tuffnews via Canada Post

Please complete the above or a reasonable facsimile and return to:

The Editor, Tuffnews  
874 York Street  
Fredericton, NB, Canada  
E3B 3R8

This space wants your material!