

## City Councilor Conjures Cosmo Controversy

Many of us have been following the controversy surrounding Cosmo after The Globe and Mail printed a piece on Saskatoon's ongoing debate over a curbside recycling program and reported that some Saskatoon city councillors are "skeptical about the value of the charity but wary of being seen as opposing disability rights." Since then there has been much debate on the issue of paying participants minimum wage and the inherent consequences for Cosmo and all those that work here. We thank all those that continue to support Cosmo and know that Cosmo is not just a workplace but also a gathering place for people with intellectual disabilities. Cosmo provides participants with a sense of purpose, a peer group and a social outlet. We have reprinted Letters to the Editor published in the Saskatoon Star Phoenix below.

### Busybodies spoil things

Printed Dec 30/10

The busybodies of a few decades ago are rearing their ugly heads again.

My husband's father was a psychiatric nurse at the Saskatchewan Hospital in North Battleford, and was allowed to rent a house on the hospital grounds.

We visited them on many occasions and were soon aware of the work opportunities available to the mental health patients.

Some worked in the barn caring for animals, others worked in the bakery, some in the gardens, in the orchards and on the farm, one built all the stonework, others flooded the curling and skating rink, etc.

These people were active every day and happy doing what they did.

Some patients helped in the residents' gardens or helped with cleaning and ironing.

They loved going to residents' homes because they could visit, have a cup of tea and a treat when they finished their work.

Then the busybodies decided it was not right to have these patients work for no pay, so eventually all those facilities and jobs were closed down. Then the residents had nothing to do but sit, watch T.V., do crafts and often yearn for the old days.

I hope that's not what we want for the Cosmo clients, who work for \$100 or less a month.

Leave things as they are. Let these people have a job to go to, a place

where they mingle with others, and where they have a purpose that leads to a feeling of self worth.

Maxine Sonmor  
Saskatoon

### Cosmo value beyond wage

Printed Dec 30/10

Re: *Cosmo defends stipend* (SP, Dec. 23) Cosmopolitan Industries cannot be measured by the same yardstick as other work establishments.

The clients who attend and work at Cosmo get so much more out of their "employment" than do most others in the workforce. Their rate of pay does not need to be the same.

For these people (my sister attends Cosmo in the Life Skills Division) the payment is in the job itself. They go to work with a sense of purpose and value. While there, they are part of a social circle that few other agencies in Saskatoon are able or willing to provide.

The argument for increased wages, while admirable for its support of rights for the cognitively challenged, misses the point. For my sister, as it is for many others, the work is the reward. What they want most in life is to belong and to have a sense that they matter. To this end Cosmo more than adequately compensates them.

Kudos to Cosmo for its delivery of services and its understanding of those with challenges.

Heather Grant  
Saskatoon

### Cosmo adds quality of life

Printed Jan 8/11

I wonder if Coun. Pat Lorje has ever even visited Cosmopolitan Industries. If she has, she would see it is not a sweat-shop.

My son has been working at Cosmo for almost five years. He loves his job in Waste Reduction. He feels that his job in recycling to save the Earth is very important. I've told him many times he can quit if he doesn't want to work there, but he wants to work.

Most of these participants live in group homes and do not have any outside activities. Without Cosmo they would be just sitting in their rooms watching T.V. wasting away. What kind of life is that?

Most of these participants had a sad childhood of getting teased and ridiculed, with no social life, no friends, no getting invited to birthday parties etc.

This is more than just a job to them. It's also their only social life. This gives them a purpose in life. They have friends there. It is something for them to look forward to each day. Cosmo treats them well. They have different activities to keep it more than a job. I hope this doesn't all boil down to the battle the city has going on over recycling. Please leave Cosmo alone and let it keep up the good work it does with these participants.

Lorje should go and see for herself. If others went to their jobs with half the enthusiasm these people do, the world would be a much different place.

Doreen Downs  
Saskatoon

## Diversity, Opportunity, Dignity

“It is unfortunate that some people are taking a couple of newspaper articles at face value. The articles don’t come close to providing the necessary context,” says Ken Gryschuk, Manager of Business Development and Community Relations at Cosmopolitan Industries. This is a segment of what Gryschuk wrote in response to a blogger who recently named Cosmo as an exploiter of labour.

At Cosmo there is a middle aged woman who has moderate function in one arm only. She cannot walk or toilet herself. She lives in a group home that provides for her shelter, personal care, drug costs, food, her necessities and most importantly: love. She pays nothing.

In the outside world, where would she work? How would minimum wage pay for all the services that she needs? The services she needs cost roughly \$3,400 per month. She often works recycling paper at Cosmo and has the ability to rip apart about half of one phone book, with her one good arm, in a day. She also thinks that she is the best phone book recycler in the world. As her father has often proudly said, “When you think that you are the best in the world at something, your life is pretty satisfying.”

It is a testament to our society that the worth of this woman is not based on her productive capacity and that the compassion of fellow citizens created a system where she has the dignity of a job and the pride of receiving a pay check for the work that she does. Notice that I specifically did not use the coldly accurate terms placement, activity, and allowance but used the words job, work and pay check instead, as they are the language of dignity and convey such to the individual.

*To view these articles in full go to <http://inclusivehumanity.com/blog/> and look for Sheltered Workshops= Labour Exploitation.*

### In Memory of

*Judy Cressman*

**October 10, 1943—December 12, 2010**



Judy Cressman was one of the original 30 participants that started at Cosmo when it opened in 1971. She attended full time until 2008, when she began to attend the Senior’s day program at Kinsmen Manor due to health reasons. Judy worked at a wide variety of vocational tasks in her years at Cosmo. Judy was proud of her work and a favorite saying of hers was, “no work, no pay.” Pay was very important to Judy because it bought her a diet coke every Friday at Cosmo. Those of us, who knew her, remember that a diet coke in Judy’s way of thinking could cure almost anything that ailed you. Judy also loved having fun at

Cosmo. She could always be counted on to join a baking group, or go for a walk in the gym to, “keep the weight down.” Judy also loved to dance with staff and fellow participants. Summer was Judy’s favorite time of year. She always attended Bible camp and Camp Easter Seal. These were highlights of her year, as was the yearly attendance of the Exhibition.

Judy was a kind and loving person who was always there with a smile, a hug, a backrub and a wise word of advice. She loved life and she loved Cosmo; from work to the play side, sharing a coke with a close friend to giving everyone advice to get more sleep or take more holidays.

Judy was much loved by many and is missed by all who knew her and were privileged to share in her life.

### I Want to Come Here

Cosmo is a good place to work. Staff treat us good. If it wasn’t for Cosmo I wouldn’t know what to do with myself. Maybe sit at home. I have friends here. I ‘harass’ the staff. I have baking groups. I have hockey history.

I have been coming to Cosmo for four and a half years. Before that I stayed at home and did nothing. I wanted to come here. I found out about Cosmo through my social worker. I came for a tour. I started in the Contracts Division and washed pots, then I tried Waste Reduction sorting papers. Then I wanted to go to Pathways. I think this is a good choice and fit for me. I feel like Cosmo is a good service. We are not doing slave labour.

I also think the articles should never have been written. It is out to lunch. They’ve never been here and they don’t know what it is like.

*Herb Nolan,  
Pathways to Opportunity  
Participant*

## Looking for people with a Passion for Music!

Confucius said, "music produces a kind of pleasure which human nature cannot do without." I hope you will take this opportunity to get involved in this very meaningful project.

The Kiwanis Cosmo Rhythm Band is known throughout the community for their unique and heart warming sound. Started in 1983, the Rhythm Band continues to grow with a group of about 40 members. The band is a partnership between Cosmo and the Kinsmen Kiwanis Club. The Kiwanis Club donated all the instruments and have led the band for the past 30 years. Our current conductor is looking towards retirement, therefore, we are in search of a conductor to lead weekly practices and performances. The conductor would be responsible for song selection, teaching timing and planning practices.

We are looking for a long term commitment. This could mean one single person, a group of people who rotate or an organization/ entity that would pass the responsibility on year to year.

Support during practices, a piano player, and booking performances in the community would all be done by Cosmo.

Practices will continue, for the time being, on Wednesdays from 10:30-11:00 if you are interested in dropping by to find out more. Please help us to keep this meaningful band alive.

**Contact Anna McCallum,  
Coordinator of Volunteer Services at Cosmo Industries  
Phone: (306)664-3158  
Email: [volunteers@cosmoindustries.com](mailto:volunteers@cosmoindustries.com)**

## Cosmo Community Delights

In December you heard about the 'Community Delights' program. January 11th was the first time staff members and a few participants made visits to Rawlco, CTV, Global and acting as 'Anniversary Ambassadors' by bringing cake to share and delight the staff of those businesses. Our Ambassadors will change throughout the year.

## Look for Cosmo on Sasktel Max

Beginning in February tune your T.V. to Channel 48 Max Local on Demand for Sasktel subscribers to see the 10 minute documentary featuring Cosmo.

## Cosmo Welcomes Volunteers from Canada World Youth



Founded in 1971 by the late Honourable Jacques Hébert (1923-2007), Canada World Youth (CWY) is a world leader in developing international educational programs for young people aged 15 to 29. A non-profit organization, CWY is dedicated to enriching the lives of young people that have a desire to become informed and active global citizens. CWY programs are designed to help youth experience the world for themselves, learn about other cultures and diverse Canadian communities while developing leadership and communication skills. The CWY program advocates learning by doing, a model in which young volunteers learn by getting involved in communities in Canada and in another country. CWY offers a two-part program, with one phase in Canada and the other in another country. We are happy to welcome Zoe (from Quebec) and Alex (from Nicaragua) to Cosmo. They are working on an art project to beautify various ceiling tiles throughout the building. First they are tackling the ceiling in Seniors. Participants are painting the tiles sky blue and Zoe and Alex are painting clouds with birds and even clothes on a clothesline. The new ceiling will compliment the Friendship Garden mural and add colour and interest to the space. Zoe and Alex will be here until the first week of March but the beauty of their art will stay at Cosmo for a great deal longer. Thank you to Zoe and Alex for all their hard work and creative and positive attitudes!



*-Anna McCallum, Coordinator of  
Volunteer Services*



### Longtime Volunteer Celebrates 90th Birthday

Wednesday January 12, 2011 was a special day for the Kiwanis Cosmo Rhythm Band as one of the long serving volunteers celebrated his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday! Frank Moore is one of the founding members of the Kiwanis Cosmo Rhythm Band and Cosmo is very glad to have him come every Wednesday for Rhythm Band practice for the past 30 years! So on behalf of the Kiwanis Cosmo Rhythm Band members and fellow volunteers, everyone at Cosmo, Linda Davidson (our piano player) and me, we would like to wish you a very Happy Birthday!

*Dave Parkalub  
Recreation & Leisure Coordinator*

### New Staff

**Derek Larsen**-Community Work Groups  
**Aimee Stock**- LSTD  
**Diana Hunt**- casual  
**Jovita Enriquez**- casual  
**Leonida Debuque**- casual

### Cosmo Says Goodbye

Tanis Shipman  
Tiffany Greer  
Kelly Weber  
Robin Wall  
Holly Ruston

### Staff Changes

**Nadine Trottier**- Contracts Coordinator  
**Deidre Dennis**- Term Manager LSTD to Assistant Manager LSTD  
**Frany Nieto Ruiz**- Term Assistant Manager LSTD to Pathways to Opportunity  
**Julia Francis**- term Pathways to Opportunity to casual

### Welcome Back

**Tracey Pederson**- Manager LSTD

### Cosmo Art Exhibit

Cosmopolitan Industries & St. Paul's Hospital Healing Arts Community Gallery invite you to join us for the opening of a nine piece collaborative art display created by participants at Cosmo with the guidance of Cosmo Volunteers. The official opening will be **Tuesday, February 22nd from 1:00-2:00 at St. Paul's Hospital**. Just go to the front entrance and to the left to find the Art Wall.

In 2011 we will spend the entire year celebrating our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary. This success has been possible because of all the things our fellow citizens do to show that they care. We've come up with a motto that states how happy we are to live in a city which values the contributions of adults with intellectual disabilities. This is also the name of our art project.

**"Because of you,  
opportunity lives here."**

Our pieces are called Happy Faces, Eternal Life, Happiness, Saskatoon Shines, In Motion, The World in Our Hands, Family Times, Visitors, and Home. The artists are Colin Brisebois, Chris Schafer, Kurtis Gosselin, Howard Langley, Darlene Bodnar, Janet MacDonald, Marie Holba, Janice Campbell, Susan Nickel, Jennifer Sholer, Kim Dorksen, Adele Esopenko, Larissa Morrison, Angie Weisner, and Brock Diachuk. Thank you to our Cosmo volunteers Sue Peterson, Jude Christianson, Barb McCallum, and Jean Williams for guiding the artwork and helping participants to create in an atmosphere of positivity.

*-Anna McCallum,*

## Skipping Stones



*By Brian Stones, Contracts Area Participant*

### **Whoohoo! It is January 2011!**

Hello! Hey! It's January! Yipee! I just want to say thanks to all of you staff & participants for all the hard work you put into making me feel at home in Cosmo. (I love you all here at Cosmo Industries ). Plus! let me tell ya about My *Dream Cosmo*. Wouldn't it be great if I ran the building? O.k. well, I mean with the help of all of you. But we'll see. O.k. Where was I? Oh yes! Before I get carried away, I want to say thanks to Angela Esler for being there for me and the rest of the gang in Contracts.

Well, let me tell you about my *Dream Cosmo!* Well it seems that I have saved the best for last, well you asked for it and you got it! Yup! While we're here why don't I tell you what I have been dreaming up to improve Cosmo Industries.

1. We just got a new stereo system in the gym and a new front entrance. Someone must have stole my ideas there.
2. I could get my own laptop so that I could come in and plug it in to the network but maybe some new computers for all the participants would be good.
3. Maybe some new gym equipment to get people moving in 2011!

Well, that just about does it but I will get back to you in February.

Brian Stones CCN news Cosmo.

P.S. Good luck, Lori glad to have you back.

## Congratulations!

**TeeJay Crockett & Brett Wilkenson**  
Welcomed a Baby Boy

*Benjamin Patrick Crockett*

Dec 7th, 2011  
7lbs 4 oz

**Tricia & Colin Karst**  
Welcomed a Baby Girl

*Sadie Anne-Marie Karst*

Jan 12, 2011  
7.9 lbs 21 inches

## TeleMiracle 35 on March 5th and 6th

### Upcoming Fundraisers

1. Rider Basket Raffle: Win a basket full of various Rider items. Tickets \$1.00 each or 10 tickets for \$5.00  
Draw Date is Friday, Feb 25th at 9:00 a.m.
2. Penny Drive- Send in all your pennies!
3. TeleMiracle Hands- Buy them for \$1.00 each

**All donations must be in by Thursday, February 24th!**  
**Thank you for your generosity!**