

# *The Ubuntu Tri-Annual*

Vol 1 No.2: Fall 2014

**I am whom I am because of who we all are**









### ***The Ubuntu–Tri-Annual***

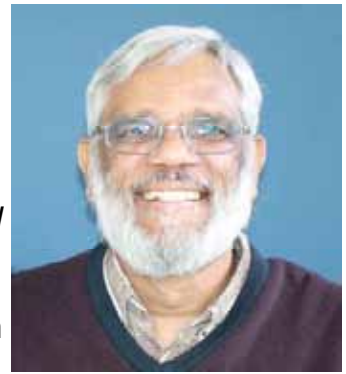
- Expresses its profound gratitude to Liben Gebremikael, the Executive Director, Tony Jno Baptiste, Manager and Karen Marshall for their wholehearted support (for this project).
- Acknowledges the invaluable assistance rendered by Yushra Ahmad with the layout of this issue
- Invites feedback from our readers. Please see back cover for contact information.



## Editorial

### Volunteering at TAIBU

*If you go out and make some good things happen, you will fill the world with hope, you will fill yourself with hope. ...President Barak Obama*



This is precisely what a dedicated team of volunteers undertake to do on a regular basis, at TAIBU.

On occasion, some of these devoted individuals take two or three trips to the Centre, in order to meet their commitments. Some walk, some drive, others take the TTC, sometimes changing two or three buses. Such commute is especially arduous on bone-chilling winter days. They do it in good spirit.

The fact that Doriasammy, Earl and Jean Guevara, and others would willingly forego the warmth of their home, on a Saturday afternoon, and expose themselves to rainy, blustery weather conditions, to do a twenty-minute laughter yoga presentation in the park, is truly remarkable. They wanted to promote Laughter Yoga; they wanted to publicize the Ubuntu Laughter Yoga Club; above all they wanted to highlight TAIBU. (The presentation was well-received by federal MP, Rathika Sitsabaiesan, and her invitees).

It is most inspiring to recall the satisfaction beaming from the faces of Ken Douglas, Agnes Scott, and their team, as they supervised the computer literacy programme they had organized, at short notice. They willingly drove from Port Union and Pickering, and presented themselves with admirable equanimity, at every session

### Philanthropist, Mother Teresa:

***It is not how much you do, but how much you put into the doing that matters.\****

It is an inspiration to watch members of the Food and Nutrition Group - Mabel, Margaret, Shira, Sue, Aliceson, Jean, Agnes, Anita, Ula, Norma, Kesh, Carmen - working in the kitchen at TAIBU. **\*To witness the warm smile on Mabel's face, and sincerity in Ula's eyes,** as they scrub the pots, pans and utensils used to prepare meals for the children participating in the LEARN programme, is a privilege. The kitchen is flooded with the light that shine from the eyes of the volunteers, as they lay out the food they meticulously prepare. They exude pride and satisfaction as they watch the young children savour the delicacies presented. These volunteers do a lot and they do it with a love- immeasurable love!

There are several other groups of volunteers who make invaluable contribution to TAIBU. Among these, are the indefatigable members of the Ubuntu Advisory Committee; the dynamic team of volunteers who run the women's group; the volunteers who run the Laughter Yoga and Writing Group. All these women and men (and others who might not have been mentioned), perform their service for love, not fame and glory.

In recognition of the contributions made by volunteers, the Ubuntu Advisory Committee has recommended that TAIBU should participate in World Volunteer Day, in April 2014.

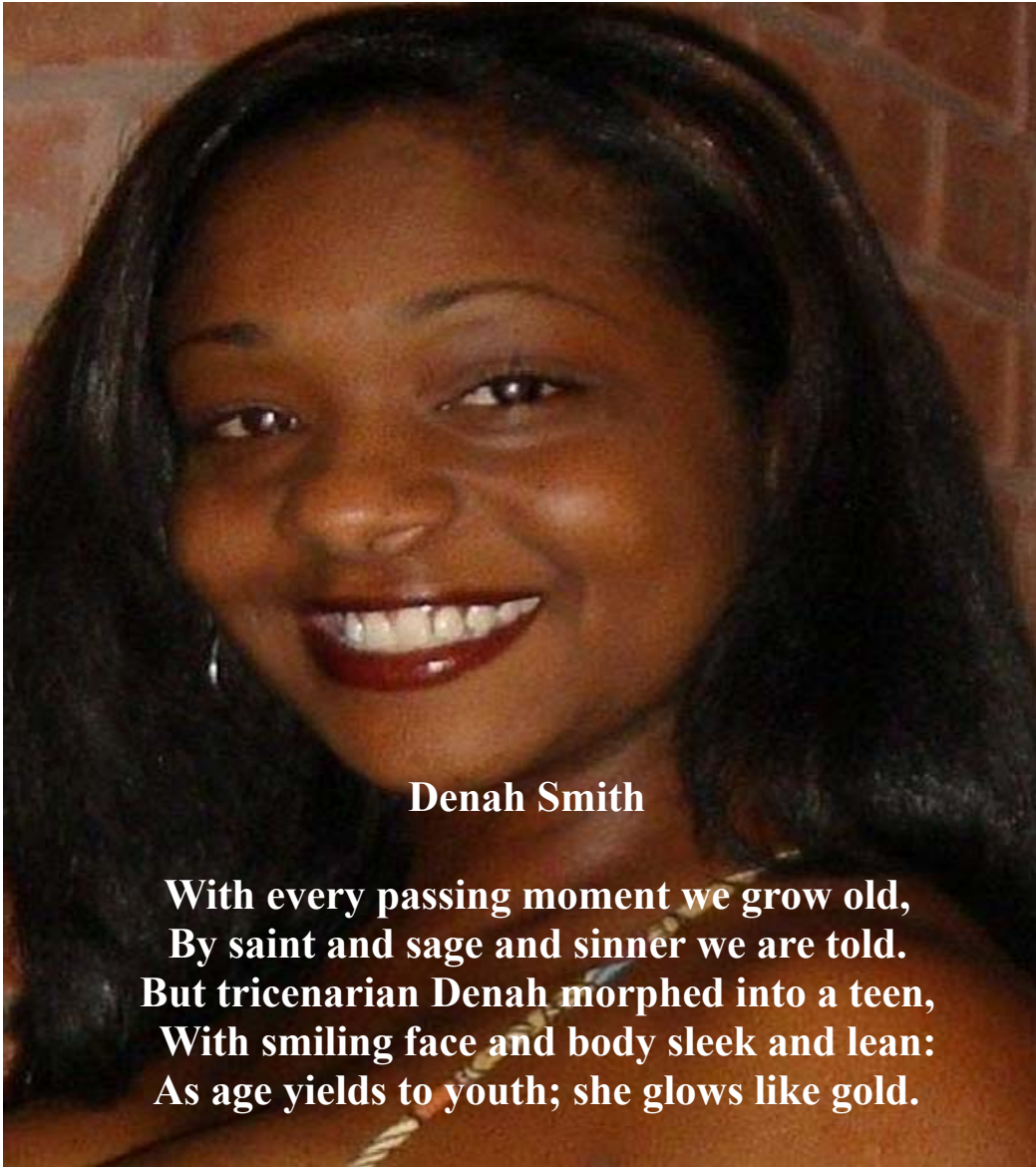
**Kesh Kumar**

## TAIBU CURRENTS

- Between the summer barbecue and fall bazaar, the Malvern Women in Action Group went on a day trip to Port Hope and on an in-town outing. Their Monday meetings are abuzz with physical, educational and inspirational, activities. The Ubuntu Singers have also sprung to life.
- The Men's group has seen an increase in membership. Educational talks and presentations highlight their Monday sessions. They have been enthusiastic participants in events organized by the women's group.
- Three months after its formation, the Ubuntu Writers Group published the first issue of the *Ubuntu Tri-Annual Bulletin!* The second issue is due this fall. The group meets on Thursdays, when they write, share their writings, and experience catharsis.
- The Ubuntu Laughter Yoga Group has done presentations and demonstrations at several different forums. Recently, they presented at MP Rathika Sitsabesian's Barbecue. On World Seniors' Day, Group Leader, Kesh Kumar did a presentation at Scarborough Village.
- The Sickle Cell Support Group (part of the Caring Group) has been participating in activities such as mini golf and bowling. They have also been meeting socially, to share experiences and discuss strategies for coping with the Sickle Cell affliction.
- Deshon and Ulysse have been organizing workshops and presentations for the Young Boys' Gifted Group. The objective of these workshops is to enable the youths to feel a sense of empowerment, to enhance their self-esteem, and to apprise them of resources they could tap into, in their quest for advancement.
- The Chronic Care Group has been meeting on a regular basis. Members continue to engage in meaningful planning for the benefit of the community.
- Another Computer Literacy session has been launched this Fall. Enrolment is at its peak. It is a pleasure to observe participants tapping on the computer key boards, under the able supervision of Agnes Scott, Ken Douglas and their helpers.
- On Friday mornings the salsa and line dancers doff jackets and coats and immerse themselves in mirth, as they dance/exercise.
- The Food and Nutrition and the LEARN groups have combined to present a model of intergenerational interrelation, when they meet on Tuesday evenings. It is most gratifying to observe the young children, tweens and teens, assiduously pursuing their goals, as the young adults provide help. While they are engaged thus, the older adults and seniors fondly don hats and aprons to prepare meals and snacks for them. The mutual acceptance and appreciation of their respective roles, the affectionate interaction, is most admirable.







**Denah Smith**

**With every passing moment we grow old,  
By saint and sage and sinner we are told.  
But tricenarian Denah morphed into a teen,  
With smiling face and body sleek and lean:  
As age yields to youth; she glows like gold.**

### **Limerick**

I was dancing up a storm at a fete,  
When a handsome young man I met,  
He really looked fine,  
To him, I took a shine  
When he said, "I want you as my pet!"

**Agnes Browne**



# Metamorphosis

Joan Gardiner

One of my staff always wore sunglasses to work. Curious about the fashion statement she seemed to have been making, I made polite enquiry at lunch, one day. She stared at me, slowly lifted her hands to her head and removed the sunglasses.

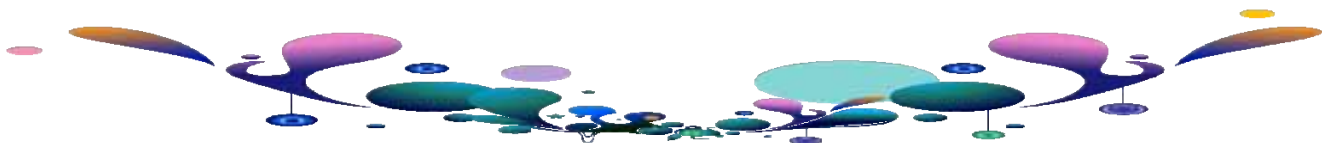
"My goodness, what happened to you?" I could say no more. I was shocked. Her eyes were bloodshot. The makeup she used could not conceal the discolouration of the area surrounding the eye sockets. I was horrified. Through her swollen eyes she must have seen my painful expression. After what seemed like an infinitesimal silence, she answered my unasked question: "It was my husband."

"Your husband?"

She then burst out sobbing. I held her in my arms until she stopped shaking and crying. I took her to a private office, as I felt compelled to help her in anyway possible. She sat there in silence for a very long time. It took a while before she was able to communicate. Then she removed her blouse and I saw some open wounds on her body.

"Despicable!" I cried.

It took a lot of persuasion before she called the police. She was off work for the next two weeks. When she returned she had shed the dark glasses. She smiled and thanked me for advising her to seek help. We became friends. I witnessed a total metamorphosis.



## Limerick

We went out for a walk today,  
The wind nearly blew us away,  
It blew off my hat.  
I said, "Look at that!"  
As we watched it land in the bay.

Agnes Browne



## Bright Future

### Juan Garcia

Juan came to Canada in 2008. Today, six years later, he is fluently tri-lingual! He speaks Spanish, English and French. His mother is so confident in his proficiency in French, that she has persuaded him to teach the language to his younger brother. (As an incentive, she grants him a small stipend).

He is a very confident, articulate young student. Speaking of his tutors and mentors, in the LEARN programme offered at TAIBU, he eloquently asserts: "They are friendly, helpful, approachable, and show concern for all the children in the programme." On account of his positive attitude, he is able to utilize the help offered, to enhance his skills in Mathematics and Science.

Juan Garcia has shown traits of selflessness. He encourages other young students to attend the LEARN programme, so they also could strive for amelioration! He has had success in this endeavour, for those around him view him as a credible example, and they follow his lead.

### Andres (and Juan)

Among those who follow Juan's lead, is his younger brother, Andres. For example, the latter, readily concurs when his brother pontificates on the importance of healthy eating. "The volunteers encourage us to eat right and not to have too many candies. Instead of pop, or Coco-Cola, we are encouraged to drink lots of water." They readily learn, and practise and propagate what they learn. In a society plagued by a prevalence of junk food, these youngsters are heralds of hope.

These two lads embrace the aphorism- *mens sana in corpor sano* (a sound mind in a sound body). They actively engage in physical activities. They are avid soccer players. Their most noteworthy achievement on the soccer field, has been playing for the team that won the Malvern Soccer League Championship a few years ago. They also enjoy swimming.



Andres is a budding karateka. Through discipline and perseverance he has been able to earn his brown belt. His eyes light up when he speaks of his next goal (in karate). "Black Belt! In addition to being high achievers in school, on the soccer field, in the swimming pool and the dojo, Juan and Andres also assist with the household chores, their mother pointed out, beaming with pride.



These two young men seem to be treading the path that would lead to a successful future. Maybe someday they would come back to TAIBU to share their success stories, and to volunteer to help the youths of the day.

**Good Luck! God Bless, Juan and Andres!**

**Yvonne Browne Joyette (et al).**



## BAKU AT CHRISTMAS

Kesh Kumar



It was raining snakes and alligators that December. The roads were slick; the sidewalks slippery. From stagnant road-side puddles, mosquitoes that had spawned in profusion, flitted about freely pestering passersby with bombastic songs and smarting stings. Dense dark clusters of cumulus clouds threatened yet more copious downpours. But the spirit of Christmas shone forth. Nothing could have dampened the Christmas spirit.

The smell of sorrel and ginger beer permeated the air. The aroma of duck curry and dhal puri; smoked ham and pepper pot; and black cake saturated with rum, induced profuse salivation. Anxious stomachs growled in anticipation. And little Baku, securely locked up in a brown bottle, was growing delirious. It

was a wonder he did not drown in the saliva that streamed from his open mouth; or that noise that his growling stomach made, did not rupture his eardrums.

Unfortunately, his master, Clint McIntosh, who was caught up in the bustle and din of the season, had forgotten completely about Baku in the brown bottle. Baku was as desperate and dejected as a hungry child, crying to be fed. He was as furious as a jilted lover.

As he had been doing for several years, Baku had accomplished a lot for the boss man, who had amassed tremendous wealth. Now, the boss man was so busy spending his fortune, he had forgotten his benefactor.

Well, that night Baku could have rewarded his master's neighbour's dog, as lavishly as the canine might have desired. The old mutt was searching for a bone he had buried, behind a shed, in his neighbour's (Baku's master's) backyard. As he was pawing and clawing, he found the bottle in which Baku was buried. Baku's owner was in the habit of caching the brown bottle behind the shed which was built on the property line. The old dog grabbed the bottle and started running into his own yard. But he could not get a firm grip on the smooth, shiny surface. When the bottle fell down, it hit a rock and broke. Baku, ecstatic, darted into the darkness and disappeared.

All Baku could see that night was the light of the fireflies that flitted around, in the backyard. The crickets droned in the darkness, and in the distance, was heard the drumbeat of a bullfrog trying to attract his mate. Baku, puffed up with rage, grew a whole inch - from two inches to three. He was hungry for revenge.

*Clink, clank, clunk*, the shattered window panes crashed to the ground. Boss man, McIntosh, rushed out of the dining room to investigate. Frightened, he frantically called for help. His

desperation echoed in the darkness. Either no one heard; or frightened by the crashing sounds of the broken windows, no one dared to respond.

Boss man dashed downstairs, madly. He jumped into his car to go the police station. As he backed out of the driveway, he heard the wheels grinding on the asphalt. Flat tires!

“This is just the trailer, wait till he see’ the real movie,” Baku said to himself. As he trudged over to the backyard, bent on wreaking havoc with windows at the back of the house, his nose was tickled by a salubrious aroma rising into the night air . He followed his nose and came upon a huge bunch of bananas. Suddenly Baku’s rage abated. He hurriedly picked a handful of fruits and engorged himself greedily. He ate so much that the he could hardly move. Then, overcome by lethargy, he fell asleep.

Boss man, McIntosh, had hardly slept a wink that night. Tossing and turning, he also kept his wife awake



As the sunshine peered through the eastern windows, and the kiskadees broke dawn’s silence, Boss man’s wife got up and began cleaning the dining table that they had abandoned hastily, the previous evening.

“Look at the caviar he had scrambled so hard to find, checking here, there and everywhere . . . and the smoke salmon and ham imported from the mother-country . . . tst,” she sucked her teeth as she chucked the barely half -eaten dinner into

the garbage can.

Having inspected the damage to the front windows, Boss man went to the back of the house. A pile of banana peels, moistened with morning dew, attracted his attention. As he got closer to the banana tree he noticed Baku sleeping contentedly, on a bed of dry leaves.

He hurried into the house, got a glass of milk which he sweetened with honey. And after pampering Baku with a few more bananas, he gently coaxed him into another brown jar which he sealed really tightly.

“We have to take care that we keep him fed and watered. Neglecting him could prove disastrous.” Clint McIntosh told his wife, as he poured liqueur into his coffee “Can’t agree with you more, Clint,” Mrs McIntosh affirmed.”

## Jamaica: “Out of many one people.”

### Claudette Guy

Jamaica, once home of the indigenous Tainos and Arawaks, is one of the most picturesque islands I have visited. As a teenager, I had always dreamt of going to Jamaica. I finally fulfilled that dream six weeks ago. The first thing that hit me as I disembarked at Montego Bay, was the Reggae music by the world famous Bob Marley, as well as dancehall music

I went by Leroy’s Tours taxi, to my hotel at the Holiday Inn Sun Spree Resort. At this all inclusive vacation resort, I was greeted with a cold virgin Pina Colada that was refreshing and thirst-quenching. The resort was unbelievably beautiful. A large lagoon-shaped pool was equipped for wheelchair accessibility. It was complemented by another with a whirlpool and a bar. Other attractions included mini golf, pedal boats, arcade games and shopping I could not wait to check in and begin enjoying the facilities.

The food was superb. There was an abundance of delicious local dishes, meticulously laid out. Ackee and Saltfish, Stamp and Go, Jerk Chicken, Callaloo, Rice and Peas, Plantains, Escoviche. The fare was so tempting, it was hard to exercise restraint. I did gain a few pounds after a week!



The staff was friendly, kind, and efficient. They offered service with a smile and were always willing to make an extra effort, to make the guests comfortable. I visited several sites and attractions. The most memorable was Dunn’s River Falls in Ocho Rios. It is a 600 feet climb from the foot of the falls to the top. Guided by competent staff, I helped to form a human chain, by holding hands with other tourists. This area is also known for its shopping, dining and beaches.

My next venture took me to the Negril Resort, where the most beautiful coastline stretches out for seven miles. I enjoyed walking on the pristine beaches. The sand was of a pure, golden, hue. Swimming and sun-bathing at the Resort was a most relaxing experience.

I had a blast in Jamaica. It was an unforgettable vacation in the sun in Jamaica!



## Wealthy?



to be wealthy in debt  
do you want the  
overflowing with nothing?  
possessing an abundance of worthlessness  
is the priceless  
achievement of systemic inequalities  
living on credit  
from hand to mouth  
zero down payment  
don't pay until 2018  
a paycheck away from homelessness  
is the modernized  
systemic abstraction  
of enslavement  
slavery in its senior years  
confronts humanity into  
an absolute deadlock  
where the expulsion  
from living in the present  
gives way to ultimate fusion of  
the subconscious and conscious worlds  
into  
an abyss of virtual reality  
that interfaces with technology  
to enable  
the addictive manipulation  
of the global consciousness...  
where  
reality  
becomes self-reliant  
on the prescriptions  
by the abductors  
the purveyors  
who have  
engineered the permeation of  
past, present, and future  
into a recurring impracticality  
dubbed the cyber-abyss...  
that  
harmonizes the injustices of  
a globalized group-think mentality  
where the wealthy in debt are  
eternally seduced and manipulated to serve  
the wealthy in riches  
sightlessly



*by Tony Jno Baptiste*

## Laughter Yoga (Synopsis in Verse)

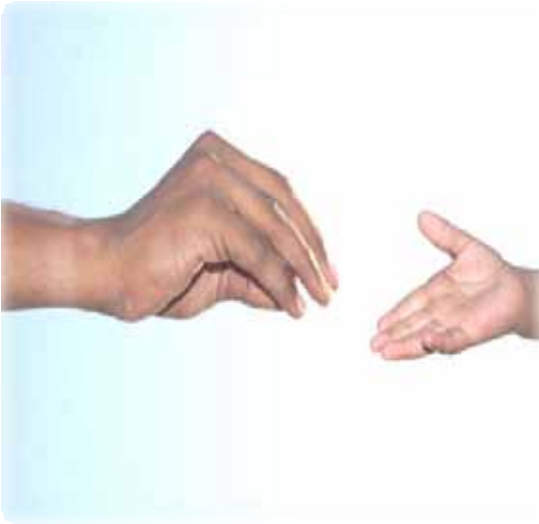
Ha! Ha! Ho! Ho!  
Laughter to sow.  
Laughter to grow.  
No need for comedy,  
No need for ribaldry,  
Just a commitment to be joyful  
And a pledge to be playful,  
Would make the endorphins  
flow,  
And childlike playfulness glow.  
If you think you can't make it,  
You simply have to fake it.

Whether it's real laughter, or pretence  
The body can't tell the difference  
The benefits are always the same,  
However you play the laughter game.  
Lively clapping and chanting  
And focused yoga breathing,  
Increase the flow of oxygen  
To both the body and the brain  
As you laugh cheerfully and exult  
You get a full physical work out.  
So laugh Ho! Ho! Ho!  
Wherever you go  
In the morning noon and  
evening  
Winter, summer, fall and spring.

And thank Dr.and Mrs.Kataria  
For launching Laughter Yoga  
In 1995, in Mumbai, India.



## Inspired to Help



On Friday November 14, I was on my way to the Eaton's Centre to meet my co-worker for lunch. My husband drove me to the YORK Mills subway entrance and I rushed down the stairs. When the train stopped, I decided to enter the car, two doors down from where I was standing. As I stepped in, I observed a young lady looking extremely sad, as though she had given up all hope.

She was neatly dressed, her hair was well-styled, but the sadness in her eyes was very noticeable. I felt an urge to write her a note of encouragement. I reminded her of the scripture verse- 1 *Peter* 5:7 which says, "Cast all your care upon Him, for He cares for you." I also quoted *Proverbs* 3:5 which says, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding;

in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths." I folded the paper, dug into my purse and enclosed a \$20.00 bill. Just as I was about to give it to her, a thought came into my mind, urging me not to give away my money to a stranger. I did not let the thought deter me. I quickly folded the paper with the money and handed it to her. As she unfolded the paper, and read the note, tears began to run down her cheeks. Instantly her countenance changed. The hopeless look she had, when I first saw her, had vanished. "Thank you," she whispered. I reached my stop and got off the train. It was a great feeling, knowing that I brought hope into someone's life.

A week later when I was at a shopping mall, I felt a tap on my back. When I turned around, a young woman asked if I could remember her. She said she was the young lady to whom I had given the note and the \$20.00 bill. She thanked me again and said on the day I saw her in the train, she had just lost her job and did not know what to do. She felt hopeless, but when I handed her the note and money she started to believe that there is a God who loves and cares for her; and that she would continue to trust God in every area of her life. I thanked God for guiding me and giving me the opportunity to help someone in despair.

## Hyacinth Paris





## Autumn

### Yvonne Browne Joyette

My morning walks have become more infrequent now because some days are too windy and cold. On my last walk I noticed some trees had already shed most of their leaves, while others were still going through the process of change. The autumn weather has stripped every vestige of clothing from a huge maple tree thereby exposing all hidden nests, built by squirrels and other animals.

A little black squirrel made an eye-catching picture, when he grabbed a half-eaten apple in his mouth and ran up the totally leafless, dark-colored tree. He stood out-of-reach, looking at me as he shook his bushy tail in annoyance. A cute little chipmunk dove behind a rotting tree trunk, then raised his head and looked at me with huge compelling eyes. When I made a step towards him, he scurried off into the bushes. The earth smelled damp and wholesome. I looked up at some trees that will remain green throughout the winter season. I tried to remember the different names but at this stage in my life, it is rather difficult to recall them with accuracy.

Everywhere, a carpet of gold, tinged with green, brown and rusty-red covered earth as the trees continued to shed their leaves in preparation for the coming winter season.

The beautiful, well-kept flower gardens I used to enjoy looking at have disappeared, but the chrysanthemums still flourish boldly, flaunting their brilliant colors - gold, pink, orange, white, yellow, red, and blue. The kitchen gardens have also disappeared. The ground where they stood have already been tilled and fertilized in preparation for the coming year.

As I entered the park to continue my walk, a feeling of sadness came over me. The once luscious greenery has been replaced by bare twigs and branches which allow more sunlight to filter through. I visualized a person, a fox, or a bear coming at me. But only the wind rustled, and some more reluctant leaves fell to the ground. Even the scary looking wasp's nest no longer looked threatening. It's torn and tattered remnants still hung from a pine tree.



I returned to my home and looked out at my backyard from my kitchen window. There stood the asparagus fern, lush, yellow and wispy like a full head of hair that has not changed in texture over the years, only in color. I recalled that I had actually purchased this edible asparagus, and planted it. For the last fourteen years, I have watched it rise and fall through summers and winters. I do absolutely nothing for this plant. The only time it receives water is when it rains; yet, it remains green, from early spring until the end of October.

The whistling kettle startled me! I grabbed my favourite blue mug and made a sizzling cup of hot chocolate, sat back in my rocking chair and sipped my drink with relish.



Picture of Molly Tyson  
not available

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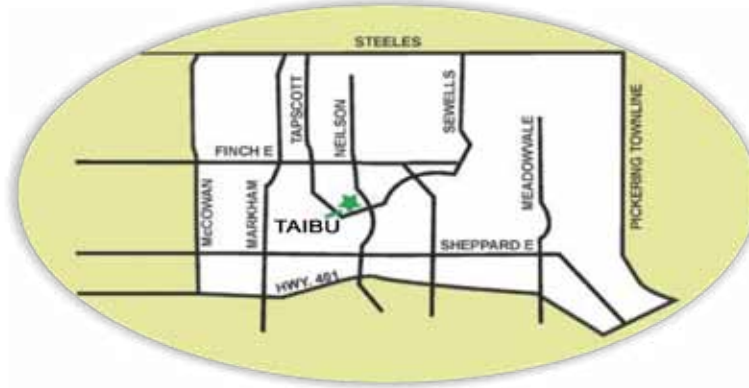
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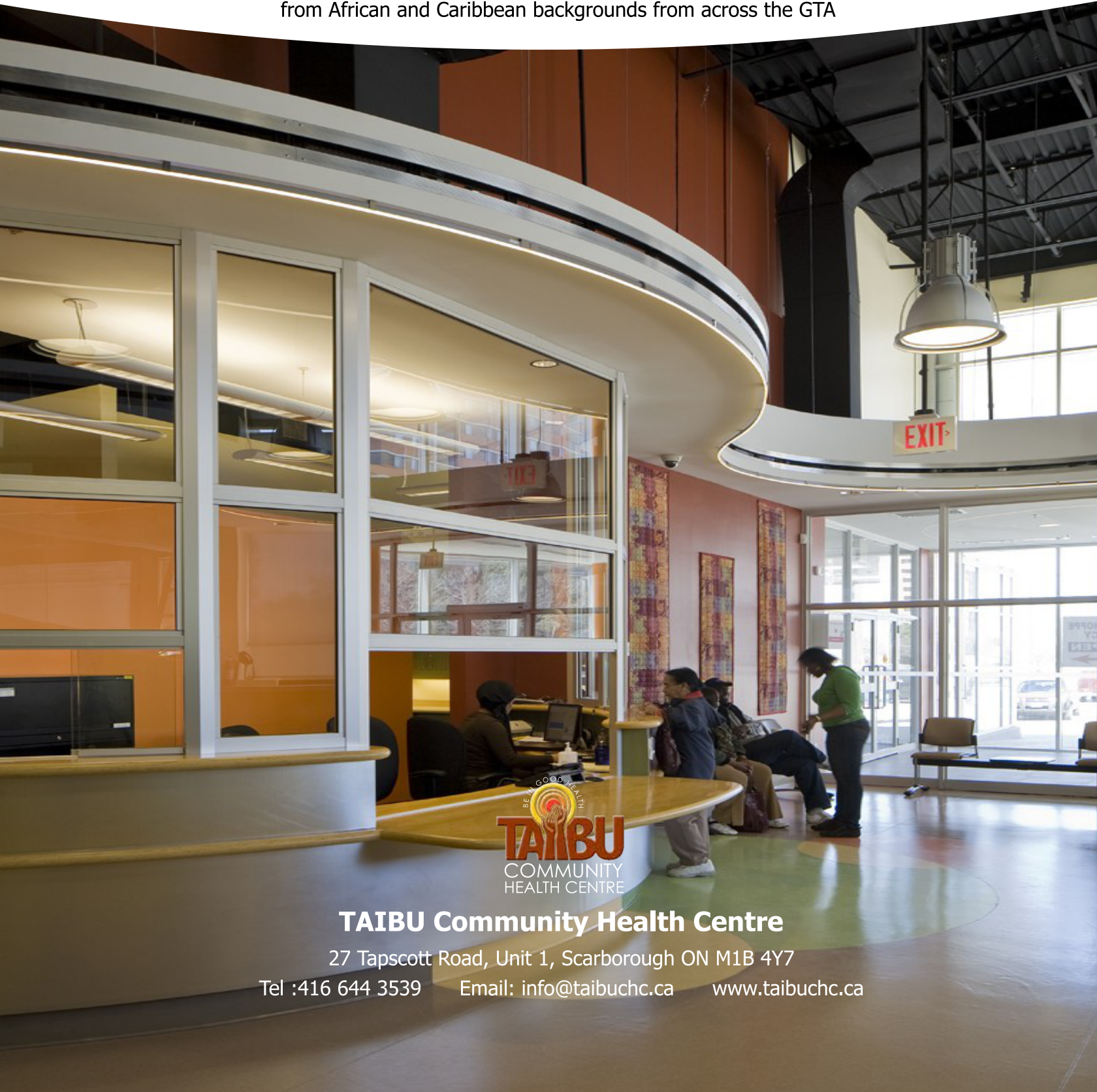


<http://www.youtube.com/taibuchcmedia>





We serve all residents of Malvern. We also have a mandate to serve communities from African and Caribbean backgrounds from across the GTA



## TAIBU Community Health Centre

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