



VOLUME 3, NUMBER 3

SEPTEMBER 2005

## Coming Events

LIGHT is pleased to announce our upcoming events for September to December 2005.

### LIGHT Film Series

LIGHT will be presenting a series of films with spiritual themes once a month, starting in September, with discussion following. Admission is free.

**Location:** Robert A. Steen C. C.  
980 Palmerston Ave. - Fireside Room  
(side entrance off the parking lot)

#### Dates

**Sunday, September 18 - 7:00 p.m.**

*What the Bleep Do We Know!?*

With a combination of conventional plot, animation and interviews with scientists and other researchers, this unique film draws connections between individual human consciousness and the quantum level of physical reality. You may or may not agree with the film's conclusions, but there is no doubt that it will expand your understanding of the human potential.

Facilitated by Doug Tataryn, Ph.D.

**Sunday, October 16 - 7:00 p.m.**

*Enlightenment Guaranteed*

A German comedy (with English subtitles) about two brothers who go to study at a Zen monastery in Japan, this film brings a different perspective to the search for enlightenment.

Facilitated by Tim Freeman and Ernie Strauss

### LIGHT Lecture Series

The talks, with discussion following, will be held on the first Tuesday of the month in October, November and December. Admission is free.

Attendees are invited to a buffet starting at 6:30 p.m., with the talk to follow at 7:00.

**Location:** Charisma Restaurant  
83D Sherbrook St.

**Tuesday, October 4**

Robert Pasternak  
"Symbolism and Spirituality"

**Tuesday, November 1**

Carol Ann Gotch  
"Meeting the Stranger: Conversation and Community"

**Tuesday, December 6**

Douglas Staley  
"Sacred Gardens East and West"

**Sunday, November 20 - 7:00 p.m.**

*Koyaanisqatsi: Life Out of Balance*

This classic 1983 film, with a haunting soundtrack by Philip Glass, presents a kaleidoscopic series of images showing the artificial environments which separate us from the natural world. Based on Hopi concepts, this apocalyptic vision attempts to reveal the beauty of the beast in which we are immersed.

Facilitated by Sharon Wisemyn

### Simplicity Workshop

LIGHT, in conjunction with the Simplicity Practice and Resource Centre, will be presenting:

**Invitation to Simplicity**  
with Mark Burch and Eszti Nagy

**Date:** Saturday, October 1  
9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

**Location:** Robert A. Steen C. C.  
980 Palmerston Ave.

**Cost:** \$50.00 (LIGHT members \$42.50)

Bring something to share for lunch.

For further information or to pre-register, call 453-2717.

Voluntary Simplicity is a way of life that cultivates mindful attention to life's inner richness. This presentation explores how practising simplicity reduces meaningless stress and complexity so that life, time and energy can be re-focused on the values that matter most to us. Simple living can also help those on reduced incomes re-direct life energy toward financially realistic and personally meaningful goals as well as reducing our ecological footprint on Mother Earth.

Please see page 3 for an interview with Mark Burch, founding director of the Simplicity Practice and Resource Centre (SPARC).

# LIGHT's Annual General Meeting

On June 7, **LIGHT** held its first Annual General Meeting. The first part of the meeting was devoted to business and the election of **LIGHT**'s board of directors. Zanna Joyce, **LIGHT**'s Executive Director, presided over the formalities and introduced the founding board members. Douglas Staley, the founding President, gave a brief overview of current activities and projects and provided a description of some of the activities planned for the upcoming year. Ernie Strauss, founding Secretary/Treasurer, presented an income statement that indicated a modest surplus for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2005. He noted that the assets of the organization included a small lending library of videos and DVDs and a multimedia projector, for which funds have been expended.

Zanna then presided over the election of the Board of Directors for 2005-06. The following individuals allowed their names to stand: Richard Bredsteen, Tim Freeman, Rosemary

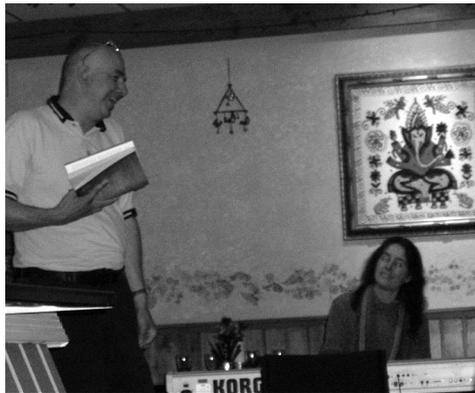
Miguez, Douglas Staley, Ernie Strauss and Sharon Wisemyn. As no new nominations were received, the above candidates were declared elected by acclamation.

The formal business was then adjourned for the evening's eagerly-awaited entertainment. **LIGHT** was pleased to present recitalist David Stubel and musician Deborah Judith, who performed both individually and in concert. David, who has performed at the Winnipeg Fringe Festival and at many venues in Winnipeg, amazed the

audience with his expressive recitations from Winnie the Pooh, Annie Dillard and the Sufi poet Rumi.

During the recitation of Rumi's poems, Deborah provided accompaniment on her electronic keyboard to great artistic effect. Following David's performance, Deborah played beautiful music of haunting power that she improvised through her own gift of inspiration. The audience was enthralled by both artists, and everyone in attendance agreed that it had been a special evening of magic and enchantment.

As the evening ended, **LIGHT** gave a special thank-you to our host, Mitesh Trivedi, the owner of Charisma of India restaurant. We plan to continue the Lecture Series this Fall at Charisma and invite all who are interested to attend the talks (see page 1 for details).



David Stubel and Deborah Judith

## LIGHT Plans a Second Donation of Children's Books to the Winnipeg Public Library

In September 2004, **LIGHT** donated over 130 children's books with spiritual themes to the Winnipeg Public Library. Our goal was to make available to the children of Winnipeg books which feature spiritual content and themes, intended to promote greater inter-faith and cross-cultural understanding and a more peaceful community. Many of the books were written by well known Manitoba authors such as Carol Matas, Joe McLellan and Sheldon Oberman. Others were by internationally acclaimed

writers like Idries Shah and Brian Wildsmith.

In June of this year **LIGHT** received a report on the circulation figures of the donated books compiled from the 20 branches of the Winnipeg Public Library. Karin Borland, Administrative Coordinator of Youth Services, indicated that the books donated by **LIGHT** showed "a very healthy rate of circulation." In fact, for the six month period from January to June 2005, 573 books were circulated to members of the Winnipeg Public Library. Karin noted that the books of Idries Shah, in particular, appear to have a great appeal to young readers. Karin also kindly wrote: "My sincere thanks to the members of **LIGHT** for this vibrant enhancement of the library's children's collection. Clearly, the books are being well-used; an endorsement of your careful and thoughtful selections."

We are very pleased with the

reception of the books we chose last year and wish to continue to serve the Winnipeg community by donating a further collection of children's spiritual books. Due to the very favorable reviews of Idries Shah's books we have decided to make more of his children's books the centrepiece of our donation this year. For over 30 years Shah's collections of teaching stories and fables from the Sufi tradition have captivated the hearts and minds of people from all walks of life. This year **LIGHT** plans to donate the following titles by Shah:

- *The Silly Chicken*
- *The Man with Bad Manners*
- *The Farmer's Wife*
- *The Old Woman and the Eagle*
- *The Clever Boy and the Terrible, Dangerous Animal*

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## LIGHT Interview: Mark Burch

LIGHT recently interviewed Mark at his home in tree-lined Riverview. Mark, who is an avid practitioner of organic gardening, has created a wonderful natural labyrinth in his backyard, patterned on the famous Rose design of Chartres cathedral in France. We were welcomed inside to a home that represents the style of simple living that Mark promotes and teaches - comfortable yet without any of the clutter and excesses of the materialistic consumer society.

Mark is an author, educator and group facilitator who holds an M.A. degree in psychology from the University of Manitoba. Currently he teaches courses at the University of Winnipeg on voluntary simplicity and international development issues. He also works as a freelance writer and workshop facilitator.

For many years he has been deeply interested in the practice of 'voluntary simplicity' and has integrated this

approach to modern living with his lifelong pursuit of spirituality. Mark is the founding director of the Simplicity Practice and Resource Centre (SPARC), a community based organization that strives to help Canadians cultivate a simpler, more sustainable and rewarding style of living. SPARC's goal is to promote the values and practices of voluntary simplicity in both individuals and the community, through education, research, partnership and example.

LIGHT first worked with Mark in December 2004 when he gave a talk on "Simplicity and Spirituality" as part of our monthly lecture series. Mark's gifts as a lecturer and group leader impressed everyone at the talk and we have continued our relationship by partnering with SPARC to offer a workshop on Voluntary Simplicity. See page 1 for details.



The French have a song called: "Qu'est-ce qu'on Attend Pour Etre Heureux?" ("What Are You Waiting For To Be Happy?"). When I practice breathing in and I say, "I have arrived," that is an achievement. Now I am fully present, one hundred percent alive. The present moment has become my true home.

When I breathe out I say, "I am home!" If you do not feel you are home, you will continue to run. And you will continue to be afraid. But if you feel you are already home, then you do not need to run anymore. This is the secret of the practice. When we live in the present moment, it is possible to live in true happiness.

- Thich Nhat Hanh

If your desires are personal, only for your own enjoyment, the energy behind them is necessarily limited; it cannot be more than you have. When you desire the common good, the whole world desires with you. Make humanity's desire your own and work for it. There you cannot fail.

- Nisargadatta Maharaj





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Ernie Strauss  
Sharon Wisemyn

**Newsletter Editor:**  
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**Contributors to this issue:**  
Douglas Staley

## Book Donation

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**LIGHT** also plans to donate two titles from the **PARABOLA** Storytime series, which feature stories and legends from Native American oral traditions:

- *The Boy Who Lived With Bears and Other Iroquois Stories*
- *How Rabbit Tricked Otter and Other Cherokee Trickster Stories*

We welcome suggestions from friends of **LIGHT** of book titles that you think would be suitable as donations to the Winnipeg Public Library. **LIGHT** hopes to make this project an ongoing effort to expose the young readers of Winnipeg to as many spiritually oriented books as possible.



As Muslims, we have inherited a legacy that tells us that unity requires uniformity, that debate is division, and division is a crime. A new generation of Muslims in North America is challenging that, if only because here we have the freedom to think, express, challenge, and be challenged, without fear of state reprisal for doing so. Most people in the Muslim world cannot yet claim that as a right.

I say this not because I think that we have to teach them how to do this. There was a clamor from interested young people in Muslim countries for my book to be published in Arabic and posted on the Web. A lot of these kids want North American Muslims to lead the way because, by whatever we say in North America, we are helping our Muslim brothers and sisters in other parts of the world create a climate to say even half of what we have the freedoms here to express.

- Irshad Manji, as quoted in  
*Shambhala Sun*, July 2005

*Irshad Manji is the best-selling author of The Trouble with Islam Today: A Muslim's Call for Reform in Her Faith, which has been published internationally in a number of languages, including Arabic and Urdu.*