



## Call for Submissions

We are looking for

- poetry,
  - stories,
  - artwork,
  - letters,
  - tips, and more
- to feature in an upcoming issue of The Inside Scoop*

The Inside Scoop is available free upon request from institution staff, the JHSM office, or on our website [johnhoward.mb.ca/insidescoop](http://johnhoward.mb.ca/insidescoop).

This project is made possible thanks to funding from the Government of Manitoba's Adult Learning and Literacy program.

Please note: We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. We will not print anything containing racism, sexism or homophobia, has gang symbols, or that glorifies violence, drug use, or gang involvement.

Send submissions and a signed copy of the waiver to:

**Annica Dickens**

583 Ellice Avenue, Winnipeg, MB R3B 1Z7

Or, email to [adickens@johnhoward.mb.ca](mailto:adickens@johnhoward.mb.ca)

**The John Howard Society of Manitoba**

T: 204-775-1514      583 Ellice Avenue  
F: 204-775-1670      Winnipeg, Manitoba  
E: [office@johnhoward.mb.ca](mailto:office@johnhoward.mb.ca)      R3B 1Z7

The John Howard Society of Manitoba offers support and resources for men inside provincial and federal institutions in Manitoba and for clients in the community. Our Literacy program equips participants to face the barriers that keep them from succeeding in various areas in life.

# The Inside Scoop

*Stories, poems, and art created by those who are or have been incarcerated*

Spring 2023

Community Edition



Art by Eddy

**Change from the inside**



## Boozhoo, Aaniin, Tansi, Hello!

Welcome to the Spring 2023 issue of *The Inside Scoop*. Before we get into this special issue, there are a few announcements I'd like to share.

## Winnipeg Remand Centre

Readers of *The Scoop* will know that the Literacy Program we offered at the Remand Centre was paused indefinitely in March 2020 due to the pandemic. We are happy to share that the restrictions at Remand have been lifted, and we will be returning next month!

## Community Classroom

I am excited to announce that last year we received a grant to upgrade our literacy office (thank you to The Winnipeg Foundation)! Our bright, new space includes several laptops, a printer, and a phone for student use. We welcome those of you in the community to come say hello, grab a coffee, and borrow a book! To make sure that the classroom is available, we just ask that you call or email us before coming. \*

\*Contact Deb: 204-775-1514 ext.113 or [dcapitano@johnhoward.mb.ca](mailto:dcapitano@johnhoward.mb.ca)

## New Workbooks!

We are in the process of updating four old JHSM workbooks. These new workbooks will focus on healthy eating, Indigenous culture, grammar, and mental health. These, along with the rest of our workbooks, are free to download from our website at: <https://johnhoward.mb.ca/workbooks>

## Indigenous Languages

On the next page, you will see some facts about Indigenous languages. In an effort to support and encourage the use of these languages, there will be a couple Indigenous vocabulary words included throughout this issue and our future issues!

In closing, I hope you enjoy the wonderful writing and art that is featured in this issue. Remember, you can become part of *The Inside Scoop* by sending us your own contribution!

Until next time,  
**Annica**  
Inside Scoop Editor

## The Inside Scoop Waiver

Please attach this to any artwork, stories, or poems you submit to *The Inside Scoop*.

Name (print clearly): \_\_\_\_\_

Name of poem/artwork: \_\_\_\_\_

I give my permission for the John Howard Society Literacy program to print my work in *The Inside Scoop* and confirm that I am submitting my own authentic and original work.

I also understand that my work may also be used in other John Howard Society publications, such as workbooks and facilitation manuals, as a handout in group classes, or for future promotional or fundraising projects.

Artist Signature

Date

Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Note: We will not print anything containing racism, sexism or homophobia, has gang symbols, or that glorifies violence, drug use or gang involvement.

# READ TO YOUR KIDS!

The *Get the Story Out* program is offered at Stony Mountain, Headingley, and Milner Ridge

Participants choose a children's book and record themselves reading it. The recording is then transferred to email or CD and sent to the child along with the gift-wrapped storybook!\*



\*Packages can only be sent if the child's caregiver does not have a no-contact order against the participant.

# FREE TUTORING FOR MEN

We provide online and in-person tutoring that fits your schedule!



## Build Skills for Jobs

- Create a resume
- Fill out applications
- Practice for job interviews



## Improve Basic Skills

- Reading and writing
- Math and budgeting
- GED prep



## Improve Computer Skills

- Writing emails
- Typing skills
- Creating documents

Sign up with Deb at 204-775-1514 ext. 113 or dcapitano@johnhoward.mb.ca

## Are you struggling with substance use and looking for supports?

Our *Healing & Harm Reduction Substance Use* Program offers in-person AND virtual programming on Monday from 6:00-8:30pm.



- One-to-one support from a caseworker and access to a Knowledge Keeper
- 22 open-group sessions (participants can join anytime!)
- Harm-reduction model
- Incorporates Indigenous culture and spirituality

## JHSM COMMUNITY REINTEGRATION PROGRAMS

### END TO AGGRESSION

This program helps participants understand how our thoughts affect our feelings and actions.

### NOBODY IS PERFECT PARENTING PROGRAM

This program (for parents of children under 5) provides information about child development, health, and behaviour.

### INTRO TO HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

This program provides information about healthy and unhealthy relationship habits, and tools to promote behaviour change.

### COMING TO TERMS

This program assists participants in evaluating their use of alcohol and drugs, and potential consequences of use.

Contact Tania at 204-775-1514 ext. 110

## INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES

70

There are close to 70 Indigenous languages in Canada.



About one in five First Nations people can speak in an Indigenous language.

## LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION

Many Indigenous languages are endangered because of past policies put in place by the government.

The number of people who can speak an Indigenous language has grown by 3.1% since 2006.

Now, the number of people who speak an Indigenous language is bigger than the number who have an Indigenous language as their mother tongue (first language).

This means that a lot of people are learning Indigenous languages!

## What does revitalization mean?

Revitalization means giving new life or energy to something.

Language revitalization means reversing the decline of a language or bring back an extinct language.

## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The John Howard Society of Manitoba operates on Treaty 1 Territory and is located on the traditional lands of Anishinaabeg, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, and Dene peoples, and on the homeland of the Métis Nation. We also acknowledge that our water is sourced from Shoal Lake 40 First Nation.

## What is a Land Acknowledgement?

An acknowledgement (ac·knowl·edg·ment) is a way to express appreciation of gratitude. Land acknowledgements are a way of recognizing and expressing gratitude to the First Nations, Inuit, or Métis land that you are on. They are an important step towards reconciliation.





Art by Eddy

**The Path of Me**  
 I was not born a criminal  
 Instead of mentors,  
 I had haters  
 From the time I could  
 remember,  
 I suffered abuse  
 And that's what I was taught  
 first, how to abuse  
 I never knew right from  
 wrong  
 Back then, when I couldn't  
 remember  
 All I remembered was my  
 grandmother  
 Who showed me the most  
 love  
 Out of every single person in  
 my life  
 Why it turned out that way  
 I'll never know  
 She has now passed on  
 Instead of learning how to walk  
 I learnt how to run, to run from the pain  
 I often ask myself, was I the only child that  
 felt this way?  
 My spirit was dead, as I ran into the darkness  
 I ran until there was nowhere left to run  
 Hate, anger, and confusion set in  
 I have been fighting all my life  
 When can I hang up my armour?



Art by Devin

And end this battle that  
 I fight alone?  
 How can everyone feel  
 good but me?  
 It seems I have been  
 doomed right from the  
 start  
 To endure a life of pain  
 And cursed with a  
 hardened heart  
 -Kenny



### Waits for Weights

In my brain it's always the same - a game, now I'm doing time  
Every day I'm caged like an animal, a heart waiting for release  
I go hit the gym to stay fit, not a wimp, so I may never quit  
Lets me step back and evaluate, my sets, lifting stacks of weight  
Each rep thought's shifting, how I feel it's great



I thrive, another set I learn there is no  
debate or trump  
Knowing I'm alive, the pain, the burn, the  
pump  
Next turn I forget everything and focus,  
more reps  
I search my core on all days,  
force myself to heal  
I'm sore,  
I know whatever I found and feel it's real

My deal put  
the stick to my  
heart  
Try my best,  
put my mind  
and body to  
the test

**-Kyle**

*Art by Devin*

### Indian Residential School Days

Where did it take place?  
We do not know where the young children  
were taken... our young generation, who didn't  
get a chance to say good bye to their mothers and  
fathers. Parents and families robbed of their  
loved ones. Their languages and community  
harmony disrupted. Caring, loving, humble  
communities lose their joy and happiness as  
they watch the beautiful children disappear.  
Their pride and joy taken without their  
permission... The little heart beats taken far  
away that they are not able to hear or experience  
life as it was meant to be... Too far to connect  
or to bring them closer to home, as a matter  
of Canadian Policy.  
Oh Canada, bring back the children you stole...  
Bring our children home. Our grandparents and  
parents who were taken as children are still  
hurting. As well as the children like myself,  
who never got to experience the stability  
that unconditional love nurtures inside the  
human soul and spirit...

This is dedicated to those who are missing  
and those still missing loved ones. With love,

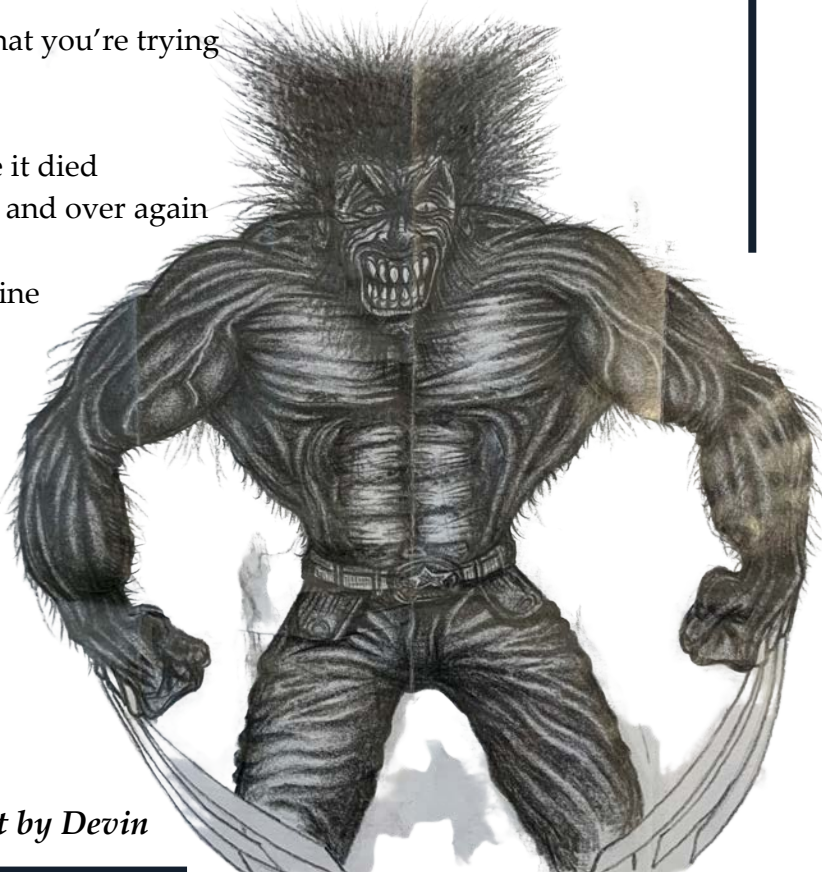
Niin Winston  
2023  
Caribou Clan

### Rougher Thoughts

Do you want to see me fall?  
 All for what spiteful thoughts, reasons for your crazy thinking  
 What you don't know is I'm in a jail cell staring at the wall  
 So there's your answer to why I never call  
 I wonder if we're together, after all this time have we lost our thunder?  
 Would either one of us shed a tear, if one of us slipped and went under?  
 I can never make up for lost time,  
 Just know when you see me and  
 look in my eyes  
 I'm looking for what you're trying  
 to find  
 And believe me,  
 my spirit feels like it died  
 Not once but over and over again  
 In this cell,  
 I can't even call mine  
 So call me a thief  
 and think about  
 what you want  
 Just know I lost  
 more than a stack  
 of cash  
 Lost in a jail cell  
 trying to find a  
 reason to hold on

*-Marlin*

*Art by Devin*



*continued from previous page*

I would apprentice under the cook  
 while working in the kitchen.  
 After all, the cooks in the jail are  
 red-seal chefs! So after 100 hours, I  
 could receive one credit. So, I did  
 it. Then after 200 hours, I got two  
 credits. After the paperwork and a  
 few signatures, it was done. I even  
 got my own "Apprentice of  
 Manitoba" card as a "Cook." I  
 could now use those hours in  
 post-secondary towards my red  
 seal if I continued to apprentice  
 under a chef – and I will.

So, I completed my high school  
 credits while in jail. I decided to  
 put pencil to paper. In the end,  
 after seeing my diploma, I was so  
 happy. I was proud to put it up in  
 my Mom's living room, beside my  
 brother's and sister's diplomas.

So to all of you trying to pursue  
 your education, don't give up, it's  
 never too late. There are people  
 out there to help. You don't have  
 to be in jail to do this either.  
 Good luck and focus on your  
 goals.

*-Rudy*

### A Negative to a Positive

It's a never-ending revolving door of  
 heartache  
 But I survive...  
 I am sick and tired of the emotions  
 that I fake  
 But I will endure...  
 I am sick and tired of living this life  
 But I will live on...  
 I hate being kicked down and beat up  
 The wounds will heal...  
 I have lived a life of hardship and pain  
 My heart will mend...  
 The people who raised me all wrong  
 I can forgive them...  
 The lessons I learned from the wrong  
 people  
 I can re-learn...  
 The hell I grew up in as a child  
 I can be happy...  
 The wolf I was raised to be  
 I am timid and strong...  
 All the bad things I have said  
 Can all be corrected...  
 The people that I have hurt through  
 life  
 Could they ever forgive...  
 I am me because I had to be  
 A negative to a positive can't you see?

*-Kenny*



## Just a Little Inspiration, Changed my Life

Hello, my name is Rudy.

My hometown is north of Winnipeg. I was raised by my Mother alone. My father was often in federal prison throughout my life. He offered no support to my Mother. My first memory of them together was my Mom getting beat up by my dad at a party – a memory that won't fade away. Alcohol and drugs were definitely present.

I spent some years growing up in Winnipeg. I lived in the North End where I went to school with my sister. The next six years I spent on Reserve with my mom, sister, and brother. At twelve years old, I moved to Selkirk for schooling. This was the start of all my mistakes, lessons in life, girlfriends, crime, drugs, jail, treatment attempts, education attempts, failures, and broken relationships. This went on and on until almost the present time.

It was during my last term in jail when my cellmate inspired me by saying: "It's never too late to finish

your high school." At the time, all I had was a few Grade 9 credits and one Grade 10 credit. I had pretty much given up on my education until that day.

I decided to put a request form in to the teacher and she sent me an assessment pack. The teacher was very persistent, as was I. I figured since I'm going to be in jail for about six months, I should try to make the most of it. I needed six more credits to obtain my mature student diploma. Around the same time as this was happening, I got a job working in the kitchen. I was really busy with work and school, but I put the pencil to the paper and didn't stop until it was completed.

I noticed that I could obtain two high school credits through the student apprenticeship program. So I asked if I could do this while in jail. After some research, my teacher lined it up for me. I was the first student at my prison to attempt this. I was the pilot project.

*continued on next page*



### Umm

I can write these poems  
Fill a page, fill a blank  
Make them flow  
Make them work  
Craft them  
But when I talk on the phone  
With my homie  
Or my sister  
Or the girl I like  
All I can think to say is,  
Umm  
Because fifteen minutes is a long  
time  
To fill with mouth noise  
Fifteen minutes is never enough  
And there's this feeling of  
expectation  
To say something worth saying  
But all I can come up with is  
Umm  
And I have so much to say  
And you're so far away

**-Andrew**

### Coffee

I was living in Osborne Village on  
River  
She was living in Central on Spence  
We walked downtown together  
For coffee and fresh air  
Late morning in spring  
City workers planting new flowers  
After a long cold winter  
We decided – to check it out  
A coffee shop on the corner  
Of Donald and Broadway  
Or maybe it was Smith and Broadway  
We had to walk through a lobby to  
enter the shop  
I ordered an XL chocolate iced frappé  
and cookies  
I can't handle sugar like that anymore  
That was one of our first dates  
Now, we don't speak  
She's moved away, moved on  
I look and catch glimpses of a city I  
once knew  
Through a dirty window, sitting on a  
metal bench  
Handcuffed, shackled  
The life I knew, a dead memory  
As I sit in the back of the jail transport  
On the way back from my trial

**-Andrew**

## POETRY

### A Rainy Summer Day

The sky is weeping he said  
Mother Nature cries for us  
Locked away from loved ones  
We crawled into the lodge  
The tent, the womb  
Under the buffalo, clockwise  
One entrance, one exit  
Crawled into the dark  
Bring in the grandfathers and  
grandmothers  
The red hot rocks  
Close the door  
Was it dark before?  
It's pitch black now  
Only the glow of the rocks  
Our faces are lit up briefly  
Cedar on the rocks flares

Cup after cup of water  
Let the steam rise  
Fill the air, fill the tent  
Around the circle, we pray  
Thank Creator  
The spirits of loved ones  
Who have passed, with us now  
Open the door  
Let the steam out, sweating already  
Breathe the cool air  
Rocks, more rocks  
More grandfathers and  
grandmothers  
Close the door  
The flap, the buffalo hide  
The glow of the rocks  
Darkness of the womb

## POETRY

More cedar, more water  
For grandmothers, for mothers  
Aunties, sisters, nieces, and cousins  
Bang the drum  
More water, more steam, sweat  
Sing with me for Creator and the spirits  
Sing our strength, sing our unity  
More water, more breathe,  
breath like fire  
The sweat pours from my body,  
stings my eyes  
Open the door  
Steam rolls out like mist  
Close the door  
Rocks, cedar  
Water, steam  
Sweat, prayers  
For grandfathers and fathers

For Uncles, brothers, nephews, and  
cousins  
Sing, bang the drum  
Cup after cup, we lie on the floor  
To escape the steam that fills the womb  
Open the door  
Breathe, drink water  
Cool water, back in  
Close the door  
Rocks, cedar  
Water, steam, sweat  
My skin burns, my breath is fire  
Pray for strength, sing for strength  
Bang the drum  
As we sweat with the grandfathers  
Grandmothers, helper spirits  
And Mother Nature cries for us  
**-Andrew**

rock

asin  
Ojibwe

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asinîy  
Cree