

# Simon Voices



Simon Speaking

## Five Years and Growing Together

Exciting news. On our first anniversary we are delighted to launch our new name.

We felt our previous name, National Group for People Who Use Simon Services was too formal. We have changed our name to Simon Involvement and Action Group – a *Voice for All* to reflect the fact that we are a working group and that everyone in the group has a voice. We do a variety of work, as well as producing Simon Voices, and each meeting is different. We share information and we share ideas that are relevant to people who use Simon services, in order that we can be more proactive and involved in our Communities.

**'We share information and we share ideas that are relevant to people who use Simon services...'**



The group meets once a month, usually in Dublin, and new members are always welcome. Currently we are also launching an Information Pack which we hope will inform people further about the group and encourage you to attend. The packs will be available in your local service or ask a staff member about them. **LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD**

### Expand Your Horizons

In a recent survey of people who use Simon services carried out in Galway Simon Community, it was found that "a striking feature of the survey is the level of loneliness that service users experience" and that "the meaningful use of time is difficult for some".

When people don't have enough to do, it can have a negative impact on their thoughts that can lead to low self esteem, a loss of ambition, hope and faith. Loneliness can also trigger addictions and mental health problems.

Some people in Midlands Simon Community, recognising that they wanted to use their time more positively, established a Group that they run themselves. Through this Group they organise many activities including day trips to Kilmainham Gaol and the National Stud Farm and regular visits to the cinema, bowling etc. Being involved in the Group where each person has his or her own role is seen as beneficial, and described by one member as 'good therapy'. It can also instil a discipline leading to growing self confidence, the confidence to sometimes takes risks in this new

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### IN THIS ISSUE...

#### Poet's Corner

Two new pieces from people in our Communities on page 3.

#### It Really Happened

Shelly tells us her story.

#### Recipes

Two easy no cook recipes to get you in the mood for summer...

## IT REALLY HAPPENED...

# Working Around Literacy



The idea of first teaching literacy came to me in Dublin Simon Rehab. whilst attending the Job Club in Chapelizod. It was here that it was suggested to me that I would be good at teaching, as I had a way with people.

Before this I taught children from poor backgrounds to read and write. I remember the delight on one little boy's face, to read and write on his own meant so much to him. It was great; the children wanted, so much, to learn.

**'I remember the delight on one little boy's face, to read and write on his own meant so much to him. It was great; the children wanted, so much, to learn.'**

I took my time in Rehab and was deciding what I wanted to do, what I might like to do and

what was available.

I sat in my own room thinking a lot, relaxing and actually, writing for Simon Voices gave me the confidence to expand. The support from the Group and the enthusiasm from the facilitators carried me forward even more.

After a while I started getting itchy feet, I knew I was ready to do some work, not knowing what work, but I knew I would like to work with people.

I remember sitting in the Simon Women's House (Aftercare) having started to work as a volunteer and wondering will I do well at this? I knew I'd like it and I got great support by talking and sharing with the Simon Aftercare team. So for all those in recovery, it can be done if you stick with it.

After this I became a Literacy Volunteer Tutor. I attended tutor classes for a year and put my heart into it. I was then offered

## Expand Your Horizons

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life, and of not being afraid of failure. Organising events, having something to look forward to and then being around others can have a very positive effect.

For some people moving away from homelessness and into Simon Services, it can be difficult to know how to use time positively. By taking part in service user groups and other opportunities offered in the Community we can learn new skills and re-establish the qualities we once had. Going on and putting them to use can become the gateway to a better lifestyle.

By being informed of what is available and having the confidence to take part we can move on, take control and expand our horizons.

more students from home and abroad. I was delighted with this and got on great with all the students. You come in to contact with people from all walks of life. I'm now very relaxed and enjoy teaching.

I have now got into my own little pattern of teaching. I teach on a Monday night and Wednesday and Friday morning and also work part time in a Charity shop. I converse with a lot of people and I love it. I can now say that I enjoy what I am doing and I would not be doing all this if I took up my addiction again.

So I say again, with all my heart, thanks to Dublin Simon Community and all who work there for all their support, training and wisdom that they give to me.

*Shelly*

# Poet's Corner

## Download Me Jesus

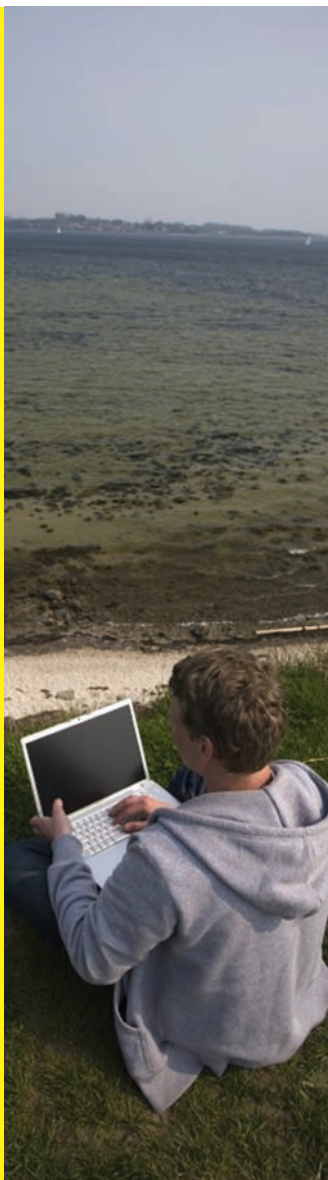
Oh download me Jesus on your  
Laptop tonight  
Help me go straight and make me do right  
To help a friend and show them the way  
But most of all Jesus for me to repay

For far too long I've strayed from  
The faith  
I've missed your love  
I was in the wrong place  
Asking for something that I'll never know  
But peace was not there Lord,  
Wherever I go

Oh how I've missed you  
But I did not know  
I ran from my feelings  
Afraid for to show  
Now I've stopped running and I'm in the right  
place  
I'm facing my fears at a safe pace

So download me Jesus  
Keep me on track  
Don't let me stray far from your path  
Yours is the right way  
I've learned from my past  
Your love is true Lord  
I know it will last

*Michael*



## Spider

After weaving her intricate splendid design,  
She thought to herself,  
Soon he'll be mine,  
He'll wander over,  
Into my snare,  
He'll look deep into my eyes,  
Seeing true fear,  
I'll then scurry over,  
Striking with thunder,  
There is no chance of escape and no chance of blunder,  
I'll wrap him in silk,  
And tomorrow I will devour,  
I'll especially like his innards,  
Because they are so wickedly sour.

*Alan Maguire*



## Competition

**Brighten up  
your summer  
and be in with a  
chance to win a  
€50 voucher.**

All you have to do is  
answer the following  
question:

**How many colours are  
there in a rainbow?**

- A. 5
- B. 7
- C. 9

Thanks to everyone who  
entered our last  
competition.  
Congratulations to the  
lucky winner from  
Dundalk

Answers please to: Simon  
Involvement and Action  
Group  
c/o Catri O'Kane,  
Simon Communities of  
Ireland, Dublin 2.

The Competition closes  
31st August 2010.



Well done to Síle Nic  
Niocaill who won 2 Gold  
Medals and a 5th place  
Ribbon for Bowling at the  
Special Olympic National  
Games in Limerick in  
early June.



## If we can do it – you can do it recipes

### Tomato and Mozzarella Salad



- 3 ripe tomatoes
- 1 packet mozzarella cheese
- 2 tablespoons of olive oil
- 1 handful of fresh basil leaves or 1 teaspoon dried basil
- Salt and pepper

#### Equipment

- Sharp knife
- Chopping board

#### Method

- Slice the tomatoes and mozzarella
- Arrange on a plate
- Pour over the olive oil
- Sprinkle over the basil and add salt and pepper to taste

*Suggestion:  
Enjoy with crunchy  
fresh white bread*

### Fresh Summer Fruit Salad



- 3 peaches, peeled, stoned and chopped
- ½ lb strawberries, rinsed and sliced
- ¼ lb pound seedless green grapes
- ¼ lb chopped melon
- 1 large banana sliced
- ¼ cup granulated sugar, or less, to taste
- 1 small tin of pineapples

#### DRESSING:

- Juice of one lime
- ¼ cup pineapple juice
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon

#### Equipment

- Sharp knife
- Chopping board
- Large serving bowl
- Small mixing bowl
- Whisk

#### Method

- Mix chopped and sliced fruits in a large serving bowl
- Sprinkle with sugar
- Whisk together remaining ingredients in a small bowl
- Pour dressing mixture over fruit and toss gently to combine
- Cover and chill the fruit salad thoroughly before serving

*Suggestion: You can use any fruit you prefer and leave out the dressing too. Serve with cream or ice cream*

## Simon Voices Needs You!

We want to hear from you. Please send your personal stories, opinions, poems or news to: Simon Involvement and Action Group, c/o Catri O'Kane.

Contact details for any contributions or feedback: Simon Involvement and Action Group, c/o Simon Communities of Ireland, St. Andrew's House, 28-30 Exchequer Street, Dublin 2. Tel: 01 671 1606 [catri.okane@simoncommunity.com](mailto:catri.okane@simoncommunity.com)

We may not be able to publish everything we receive. Thank you to everybody who has sent in a contribution. Sorry if it has not been included in this issue.