

## ***WHAT DO I DO NOW?***

By Monique Gauvin

My husband was at work all day and the kids were away at high school in Bells Corners. The boys, Slim and Stewart, our cats, were very busy napping. So the refrigerator and I have become the best of pals... "What do I do now?" became the woeful cry of a twenty year stay at home mom!

One day, while having breakfast at a local restaurant, I saw an ad in the paper that the Salvation Army was looking for volunteers. Great! Max, my son, had to do 40 volunteer hours for school.

I made the call on his behalf and **my** life changed! I made the decision to break ties with the refrigerator, to get out of the house and begin volunteering and a great new routine was soon established; my Saturdays were devoted to sorting donated clothing. While I thoroughly enjoy the semi-solitude of the sorting shed, it was the wonderful friends I have made over the past three years that truly made a difference in my life. People who began as mere acquaintances quickly became valued friends: women who were there whenever I needed them. We laughed together, cried together, prayed together and even shopped together. There was always someone to encourage me and give me support when I was feeling under the weather.

I also became more confident and sharpened my job skills after twenty years at home. Putting recent volunteer experience on my resume, as well as the contacts I developed helped me to land part-time employment at Giant Tiger. But you can still see me with my friends at The Salvation Army on some week days and Saturdays so please drop in and say hi! And if you'd like to open up some new opportunities in your life, why not come and join us – you'll be glad you did!

