



View Engage online at: <http://www.tamarackcommunity.ca/newsletter/engage.htm>!

Engage!

## **New Zealand: Islands of Social Innovation**

It's a world away, but in March I discovered that New Zealand can feel like home.

I spent four weeks in this magnificent place, traveling from one end of the country to another. Along the way I encountered warm, welcoming people dedicated, like so many Canadians I know, to making their communities better places to live.

In fact, there's a lot we can learn from New Zealand. Like Canada, it has a superb human service system; a system that's getting a lot of things right.

There were five things that caught my attention in New Zealand:

1. The Maori people
2. The Tindall Foundation
3. Community Trusts
4. The Ecology
5. Natural Beauty

 [Learn more about Paul's Top 5 New Zealand list, as well as the social issues he observed and the fun things he recommends you do when in New Zealand!](#)

By: Paul Born

## Helping Collaborations Fulfill Their Promise

---

Collaboration is a necessary part of any community effort.

Could you work in a community and not know the importance of collaboration?

But that doesn't mean that collaborative efforts always fulfill their promise. In fact, people working in collaborations often find them to be hard work.

Successful collaboration is much more than coordination or partnership. It is a way of working that builds the will of the community to work together to bring about a desired future.

A collaborative leader needs not only traditional leadership attributes, but also a range of skills that help guide collaborative participants to new levels of understanding and commitment.

Now there is an opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of collaborative approaches and your leadership role.

Tamarack's first ever *Communities Collaborating Institute*, to be held September 18-22, will bring together some of Canada's leading collaborators to develop a powerful learning community dedicated to collaboration.

 [on the \*Communities Collaborating Institute\* and the reasons why you should be part of this amazing experience!](#)

### Related Links:

- [Download the Institute's brochure!](#)
- [Apply now!](#)

By: Susan Taylor Simpson

## Wheels for Workers

---

Ontario's Niagara Region covers 1,841 square kilometers, with most employment opportunities concentrated in Niagara Falls with its plethora of hotels, restaurants, and casinos. Limited public transportation creates real problems for individuals wanting to access these opportunities, and employers in Niagara Falls often have to contend with a shortage of people to fill positions.

In late 2005, Opportunities Niagara, along with Ontario Works and the Niagara Training and Adjustment Board, piloted a "Job Bus," running from Port Colborne and Welland to the Marriott and Embassy Suites hotels in Niagara Falls. The pilot project saved the Niagara Region \$500,000 in social assistance costs and resulted in Opportunities Niagara being presented with the Business Education Council of Niagara's Trivial Pursuit Community Partner Award for 2006.

Work continues as, on April 3, the Fort Erie Job Bus began transporting workers from Fort Erie to the Hilton Hotel in Niagara Falls.



Niagara's Intermunicipal Transportation Strategy

### Related Links:

- [Opportunities Niagara](#)
- [Job Bus again creates opportunities for employers, employees](#)

By: Susan Eckerle Curwood

## Vibrant Communities Update

---

**Waterloo Region, ON** – On May 23, Opportunities Waterloo Region will host Kate Bezanson, co-author of *Telling Tales: Living the Effects of Public Policy*, as she speaks on the impact of federal and provincial policies at the local level. Learn more [here](#).

**BC's Capital Region** – The Quality of Life CHALLENGE is sponsoring a supper theatre on May 15 to celebrate the first annual Corporate Social Responsibility Week. Learn more [here](#).

**Hamilton, ON** – On April 20, collaboration expert Jay Connor presented “Working Differently: Achieving Community Solutions” to the Hamilton Roundtable on Poverty Prevention. Access Jay’s presentation [here](#).

## **Embracing Complexity: Brenda Zimmerman**

---


The world needs more people like this! Smart, for sure, a talented writer, teacher and curriculum concept creator like no other. But what really makes Brenda Zimmerman one of my favorite people is her passion for embracing the complexity in our communities.



By embracing complexity we move away from simple solutions that are easy to replicate and begin to look for whole systems change.

Some issues are just too important for a simple, “follow the recipe” response. Take children for instance. Those of us with children know that raising one child “right” does not provide an iron clad formula for raising the next one. While many of the same principles apply, a child is complex. He or she requires us to engage in their life, to adapt to their uniqueness.

This same principle can be applied to communities. Viewing community development as a formula would lead us to think that “best practice” can be applied or replicated. But each community has its own personality, a unique set of circumstances and assets that require us to adapt to emerging issues and circumstances.

 Brenda will be a guest facilitator at the Communities Collaborating Institute in September. Learn more about her [here](#).

### **Related Links:**

- [Articles by Brenda](#)
- [A Board's Journey into Complexity Science: Lessons from \(and for\) Staff and Board Members](#)
- [Getting to Maybe](#)
- [From Baking Bread to Raising a Child](#)

By: Paul Born

## A Taste of the Home Country

---

When my British mother made English Trifle we used to think we were indulging in a special treat from the home country. Or perhaps it was a special treat because of the generous quantity of sherry that she put into the trifle. We giggled every time she served our favourite dish and there were always lots of jokes about her hand slipping, pouring in too much and getting us kids tipsy. Actually, my mother has since confessed putting sherry into the English Trifle was a teachable moment – introducing us to the social aspects of drinking in a responsible way.

Now I'm the one known in my circle of friends as the English Trifle maker whenever we have community dinners. Although I use a white pound cake and fresh fruit (my Mother used leftover cake and canned fruit cocktail) the sherry-soaked dessert still sets us all a tweeter. Giggles, friends and trifle for dessert – does life get any better?

 [Get Susan's recipe here!](#)

### Related Links:

- [Visit our \*Soup's On\* page for more Tamarack recipes](#)

By: Susan Taylor Simpson