

## **URBAN HERO: Artist Honey Novick uses her talents to encourage creativity in a marginalized community**



Honey Novick is a singer and poet who shares that passion with her community.

The downtown Toronto resident has found her niche and said she is grateful.

Novick is a Star Metroland Media 2021 Urban Hero Award winner in the Arts category, People's Choice.

“There are very few singers that get money, fame or whatever,” she said. “ I love to sing. That spread to teaching. I realized when I taught others, I realized I was teaching myself.”

Once the door was opened to teaching, it created opportunities to share her talent.

“There is money in the health-care system. I was able to find work teaching others and work kept coming to me,” she said. “It has to be like a flowing river. It has to be serene.”

Ruth Ruth Stackhouse nominated Novick for an Urban Hero Award for dedicating “her skill and talent in music and creative writing/poetry to making theatre more accessible.”

Along with her community-based artistic work, Novick is an artist with the Friendly Spike Theatre Band, a grassroots theatre organization dedicated to encouraging creative expression from people who are often marginalized.

“Friendly Spike Theatre Band was created to do plays by and for people of the psychiatric community,” Novick said. ”They are very, very creative.”

Stackhouse, who is director and founder of the band, said Novick is making a difference in the community.

“Through her work as an artist-in-residence with the Friendly Spike Theatre Band, she has encouraged countless underserved individuals to participate in a world that habitually dismisses them, and in doing so, this world has become enriched.”

One of Novick’s latest projects is a spoken word piece, “I’m Mad — I Matter, Making a Difference.” It’s a history of the theatre band.

“This is my own epic song/poem, a stream of consciousness about this extraordinary endeavour, and my involvement with it, a relationship going into two decades. With the help of founder/director Ruth Stackhouse, I am detailing the history of this company (although not comprehensive and with poetic licence) by howling back at tragic madness and creating something beautiful.”