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Building a Fence around Bridges - Day of Caring

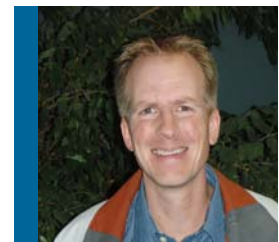
If good fences make good neighbours, then Bridges Treatment Program at Howard House became an even better neighbour last fall. On September 11 and 18, three youth residents joined with 25 men and women volunteers to replace the fence and improve the landscaping at Howard House. The project was one of two selected by the Alberta Capital Region United Way for the third annual Engineering Challenge Day of Caring.

The Day of Caring is part of the annual United Way campaign but services are provided over and above in-house fundraising campaigns. Local engineering firms pool their resources, provide the staff and supply all materials for the selected projects. Their goal is to strengthen communities by providing practical support to non-profit agencies.

The youth from Bridges worked alongside these caring adults, helping to improve the place they currently call home. More importantly, they learned that they are important to people in our community.

“The youth in our programs are often faceless, and get labelled by society,” said Maureen Collins, Executive Director of EJHS. “What the volunteers do for them is more than build a fence or improve a sidewalk. They help to mentor these young people and model a work ethic that, hopefully, they will take with them back into the community.”

The Bridges Treatment Program at Howard House is a partnership between EJHS, Alberta Health Services, Edmonton Public Schools and Alberta Solicitor General and Public Security. It offers residential treatment services to male young offenders who are struggling with addictions and mental health issues.



Welcome to JHSA!

We would like to welcome Chris Hay to the John Howard Society family. Chris was hired as the Executive Director of the John Howard Society of Alberta on October 27, 2009.

Chris brings a wealth of experience to his position at the Provincial office. He holds a Masters Degree in Criminology from Carleton University and a BA in Criminology from the University of Alberta. Chris is passionate about research and issues related to social justice. He returns to JHSA where he worked many years ago as a Researcher Assistant.

We look forward to working closely with Chris and with our sister organizations throughout the province.

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Annual Festive Gathering

Staff and friends of EJHS celebrated the holiday season at the annual Festive Gathering, December 3, at the Santa Maria Goretti Community Centre. The annual Festive Gathering is an opportunity for EJHS to celebrate its work and show appreciation to its staff, supporters, funders, community partners and volunteers.

Santa Gives...and gives away!

In a unique twist on an old theme, Secret Santa brought each staff member a toy that they would have wanted to receive as a child. All the toys were then given to the Bent Arrow Healing Society for *today's* children to enjoy.

Students share their stories at Learning Luncheon

The Adult Transition Learning Centre (ATLC) celebrated the holiday season and celebrated success – at its second annual Learning Luncheon in December. Four brave students, Mark, Gloria, Kevin and Keri (who was ill but allowed her story to be read in her absence), shared their stories of the literacy journey. They told of their struggles and triumphs, clearly reminding us why we do the work that we do.

Food, fun and festivities with clients and friends

Four Christmas dinners, two Christmas lunches, one Christmas breakfast and a Party for youth in the community! (To the tune of "12 Days of Christmas.")

The holiday season was in full swing in December, as EJHS residences and programs shared the joy of the season with clients, support workers, families and friends. The LOFT, Bridges Treatment Program at Howard House, Independence Apartments and 101 Street all hosted annual Christmas dinners, while Satellite House hosted a Christmas lunch and cookie making day.

Even the Adult Transition Learning Centre (ATLC) got into the swing with a Learning Luncheon for students, staff and guests as well as hosting a Christmas luncheon for students and community supporters.

REE*START held its first-ever Christmas party for youth in the community. The party was a huge success, thanks to donations of food and gifts from these community businesses: Boston Pizza, Domino's Pizza, Tim Horton's, Great Canadian Wholesalers, Flirt Cupcakes, Est-Elle Academy, Edmonton Oil Kings, Edmonton Rush and Chicken Scratch.



Staff retreat more than just fun and games...really!

EJHS staff met at the Goldeye Lodge near Nordegg for its biannual Staff Retreat, September 23-25, 2009.

The retreat is an opportunity for team building and skill development in a fun and relaxing environment. Games like the Cash Flow game, Agency Jeopardy, a scavenger hunt and "model" building depicting the ideal of the EJHS future, creatively engaged staff in learning more about themselves, the agency and the meaning of our work.



C.A.R.E.-ing for clients in the Basket!

No one would deny that EJHS staff and volunteers *care* about our clients. One could even say we *cherish*, *appreciate*, *rejuvenate* and *energize* our clients. Since April 2009, we have put those words into action with the C.A.R.E. committee. In this case C.A.R.E. refers to the feelings and actions that promote self-care: Cherish, Appreciate, Rejuvenate and Energize.

The C.A.R.E. committee collects donated items from churches and individuals (including our EJHS staff!) and puts together C.A.R.E. Baskets for clients seeking support through our Family Violence Prevention Centre (FVPC). The baskets are given on client birthdays, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Christmas and in times of personal

need. Each basket includes a Message of Hope, written by a donor. Donors are encouraged to provide a few "kind words" – in the form of a poem, quote, drawing or story – which will help the basket recipients "to recognize their inner strength and self-worth."

The idea for C.A.R.E. came from staff and their interactions with clients in the program. An outreach worker reacted to a story told by a client who expressed anxiety about a coming court date, worry about her children and difficulty dealing with the struggles of that day – and then said "It's my birthday and I don't even have shampoo for myself." At the same time, other staff members asked for funds to purchase journals that they could give to clients

to creatively express their ideas. These events and others prompted a discussion among staff members about what they could do for their clients – and the C.A.R.E. committee was born!

The C.A.R.E. committee members are very eager and excited about this initiative and hope that, with your help, we can continue to offer a higher level of C.A.R.E. to our clients. Donations of new items (see Wish List) can be dropped off at our main reception desk on the fourth floor during regular office hours. For questions or more information, please contact Monique at 780.970.5129.

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Outreach Team

Message of Hope

Every situation can be a positive situation if you look upon it as an opportunity for growth and self improvement.



Wish List of Items for C.A.R.E Baskets (New Items only Please)

- Men's and women's personal hygiene products (e.g. hair products, hair accessories, bath products, lotions, toothpaste, cosmetics, perfume/ cologne, nail polish, deodorant)
- Jewellery
- Stationary (e.g. journals, pens, cards)
- Candles, aromatherapy products
- Baskets
- Clothing
- Children's toys
- Books
- Stuffed animals
- Gift certificates (e.g. movie theatre passes, recreational activity gift cards)
- Recreational items (e.g. beach towels, mitts, toques, scarves)
- Coloring books and crayons
- Art/craft supplies
- Kitchen items (e.g. baking supplies, cook books)
- Motivational items
- Home decorations



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We're on the Web!
www.johnhoward.org

Upcoming Events:

Volunteer and Staff
Appreciation
April 20, 2010

Annual General Meeting
June 2010

Note:
There will be no
2010 EJHS
FUNdraiser.
Please stay tuned
for a twist on
Evening in
Greece/China in
2011!

"Safety and Harmony in our Community"

In Memory of James (1954-2010)

James first became involved with Edmonton John Howard Society in 1996 as a client in our Intake Program. James lived with serious mental and physical health issues which prevented him from gaining permanent employment, securing stable housing, and accessing other things that most would consider necessary for survival and daily living. James received help from our organization with such things as clothing, food, and access to medical supports and transportation.



He was a member of "our" community deserving of a full measure of respect, dignity, and support. James always did the very best with the resources he had. We valued his resilience and his determination to lead an independent life.

James was a well known figure in Edmonton's downtown core. His infectious laugh made those around him smile. He touched the lives of the people he met and the workers he came in contact with. He was only too willing to share his own food, clothing, or anything else he might have with the other clients who were waiting in our office to see an Intake Worker. James came in daily and often brought in "gifts" for staff which were various treasures he had picked up on the street. While these trinkets might not be valued by some, it was the thought behind the gifts that counted. James really wanted to give back to others in our community. He will be dearly missed by all of us who knew him at EJHS.

Supporting EJHS

I want to participate in the work of Edmonton John Howard Society.

I would like to support crime prevention and reduce the impact of crime in my community.

My/Our tax deductible donation of _____ is enclosed.

- Please allocate \$10.00 from my donation as my membership fee.
- My membership fee in the amount of \$10.00 is enclosed.

Cheque
(payable to Edmonton John Howard Society)

Visa MasterCard

Card Number _____

Expiry date _____

Signature _____

Donations can also be made online at www.johnhoward.org

Name _____

Address _____

Postal Code _____ Email _____

Phone: _____

