

BRIDGES TO NEW LIFE

FOR INDIVIDUALS
AFFECTED BY OUR JUSTICE SYSTEM



Issue 1: Volume 18

Spring 2016

VOLUNTEER CLIENT SOCIAL



Friday evening March 5 2016 was one of the most memorable events I have ever attended. I had no idea of the compassion that Bridges supporters and volunteers have for the well being and success of their clients. I felt no judgement, but only love and acceptance. Everyone was open and made me



feel welcome. The genuine sincerity of the fellowship, is seldom found in today's society.



The food (my goodness) could not be described as anything other than awesome, and I imagined that everyone was competing to see who could bring the tastiest dish. The selection was so tantalizing and delicious, I overindulged (Lord forgive me) and then there was dessert . .



The duo of 2 men playing guitar, harmonica & singing in absolute harmony, was stirring & a nice compliment to the ambiance of the evening. Their energy inspired us, while their worship glorified the King of kings!

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July 23 Summer Beach BBQ

For more information
please
call Bridges office
at
250-448-6975
or
1-888-448-6975

OPPORTUNITY TO HELP

*Solid committed Christians
interested in being a Mentor
or Pen Pal
Please give us a call.*

*If you have home furniture,
bedding, kitchen utensils
or men's clothing
(in good condition)
Please give us a call.*

It was a privilege for me to share my testimony with those who so freely give their time and resources to such a needed and worthwhile cause. There can be no doubt that Bridges to New Life ministry is God ordained. All glory & honor belongs to our Lord and Savior.



The highlight of the evening was a powerful and timely message delivered by Pastor Eldon Schultz on "Reconciliation." We who call ourselves "Christian" are not only to be reconciled to God; we are compelled to share that message with the lost of this world: as well as maintaining right relationships with our brothers and sisters in Christ – with whom we often fight over such petty and eternally unimportant matters.



I am thankful to have had the opportunity to share that delightful evening and dinner with such honorable, loving souls. I am grateful for all of your efforts and feel blessed to have been in the company of such wonderful people. The wholesome, genuine caring you extend out of the goodness of your hearts, motivates me to wake up in the morning and work hard to try and better myself and my life.

God bless "Bridges to New Life" & the many workers/supporters who dedicate themselves to this ministry - we are privileged to call them "friends."

From the Inside

I write to you from the South West Detention Centre in Maidstone, just outside Windsor, Ontario. On October 18, 2011 I was incarcerated in the Kamloops Regional Correctional Centre. Then on October 18, 2014 (after serving 36 months) I was charged inside the institution and transferred directly to Sarnia, Ontario to face 8 charges for offences I had committed 8 years prior.

As of today I have been incarcerated continuously for 4 years, 4 months and 4 days, and am still awaiting sentencing on those old charges. I have really seriously screwed my life over; but at least in Kamloops I had outside people who came in to visit every couple of weeks. Since I am from Penticton BC; absolutely no relatives, friends or acquaintances visit me now. Here I have no cellmate; and no access to anyone - not even a newspaper.

Just so you know, I am now 59 years old; have an infectious skin disease, a bad heart (2 stents) and diabetes. I am living in the infirmary and have been in infirmaries both in the Sarnia jail and here. I miss the outdoors and though I am not finished, I am beginning to lose track of myself.

On Christmas of 2012 (in prison in Kamloops) I was given a 2013-2014, 28-month planner. Inside that planner was a Bridges stamp with your address. I still have that planner and since I remember being told you are someone who helps inmates, I decided to reach out - as you are the only address/hope I have.

I would sincerely appreciate a return letter. I am wondering if there is a Bridges office or something similar in Windsor or Sarnia. An organization I could write and find a good pen-pal; someone who can be honest and open and just help me feel like I am still part of the human race. My trial is in April and I could be sentenced to another 4 or 5 years. If that happens, I will try for a transfer to finish my time in BC.

Thank you so much for taking the time to read my letter and for any help you can provide. If you have another 28-month Day planner, I would very much appreciate one.

Respectfully

MT

I'm writing this note to somehow convey to you and all your workers that my conduct & abuse of your compassionate hearts has not been without grave remorse. I know none of you deserved my manipulative manoeuvres or contamination. I would again like to express my sincere apologies for burdening everyone with fear, anxiety & undeserving exploitation of your love for humanity.

Bridges has provided me with many lessons & even though not recognized initially, the messages and teachings have registered. Thank you for everything you've attempted to help me with while residing at your safe house. Though headed back to prison, I sincerely pray that one day I'll be afforded the opportunity to reciprocate some of your generosity of spirit. I am still alive today for a reason beyond my comprehension, yet the Lord reminds me that He has a purpose (not yet revealed) for my life. He has also given me confidence that I do not need to have all the answers. Please know that I feel your prayers & love, and one day (God willing) I'll make all of you smile.

With Love

RK

To all the staff at Bridges to New Life Society,

What a kind and thoughtful gesture to send me a birthday card remembering me and my birthday. Yes in less than a week I will turn 53. Wow! I am old, prehistoric ha ha ha. You and all the staff made my day when I got my mail today. Thank you for caring about me. Thank you for matching me with a great penpal with whom I exchange letters regularly. He is a very fine man; a Christian brother who is becoming my friend. Thanks for all you do for us prisoners both in here and on the outside. My plan after release is to settle in Victoria, BC. I will keep in touch and update you on my progress both here in prison and beyond. God bless you and all staff.

Keep Smiling!

Your Christian brother and friend

I would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. I do not recall ever really thanking you and all the people connected with Bridges to New Life Society for the incredible service and support for my wife. I think the Lord had a lot to do with it, but if I had not talked to you that first time at the institution, I don't know what would have happen. Though separated from my wife for many years now, she has made a terrific recovery because of your help and I will be forever grateful. I know the Lord guided me to you because I strongly believe I picked the right person with His guidance.

My wife's mentor has been and still is a God-send for her. I know she is still very lonely most of the time, but she really looks forward to seeing her Bridges mentor every week. As you know I am in touch with her husband who writes regularly, has visited me a couple of times and we have had some great face to face talks. He has become a vital sup-

port and is a God-send to me personally. I cannot begin to tell you the incredible difference these fine people have been for us.

I am still very worried about my wife. I talk with her everyday, and though she is doing much better, she has bad days and good days. In her 82nd year she is becoming somewhat fragile. It is especially difficult for her in the winter months because she has problems with snow removal and is worried about driving the car in winter especially.

I will be applying for day parole at the end of April and I was wondering if I can get some support from your organization. I hope to hear from you soon and would like to keep in touch.

K K



Rob & sister Janice
at Vancouvers Missions Fest



Sam & Shanna Fellichle's wedding

Philanthropy

Canadians don't really give a lot to charity, compared to their U.S. counterparts. In 2008, 27.3 per cent of Americans donated to good causes, compared to 23.6 per cent of Canadians, and according to an annual study on giving by the Fraser Institute, Americans gave almost twice as much.

A recent study by the Conference Board of Canada found that virtually all of the wealth created in the past 30 years has gone to the top 20 per cent of income earners, about one-third of it to the top 1 per cent. The middle class, meanwhile, are feeling not just poor, but insecure. When people feel anxious about their current income or their future retirement income, they cut back on giving. When the 2008 and 2009 recession hit, donations fell by almost \$1-billion.

Philanthropy in Canada is in the midst of unprecedented upheaval. An uncertain economy threatens to send already dwindling donations from an aging base of givers into permanent decline, while increasing government deficits – will mean less tax dollars to share with charity. As economic growth flags, needs grow more acute, and demonstrably less government money is available to help.

Between 1990 and 2007, charitable donations in Canada almost tripled, from \$2.9-billion a year to \$8.6-billion. The number of charities soared as well, more than doubling from 42,000 in 1980 to 85,000 in 2007. Yet the number of Canadians who donated slowly began to fall, from about 30 per cent of those who filed tax returns in 1990, according to Statistics Canada, to an all-time low of 23 per cent two decades later. Charities could cope as long

as their remaining backers picked up the slack – and they did. The median donation increased from \$120 in 1990 to \$250 in 2007, even as those giving the money aged, notably from 47 on average - to 53.

Fundraising experts have long been concerned about the widening gulf between the "richest" and poorest charities. The top 10 charities, which include Oxfam and the RSPCA, account for 25 per cent of all donations. Headline figures from research, to be published within months, show one in three charities has suffered a fall in giving from individual donors. This bucks the long trend of year-over-year increases in overall charitable giving .

"A lot of forces are coming to bear at the same time," adds Ken Mayhew, chief development officer for the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada, and some agencies simply won't survive. The transformation springs from a trend – the aging and shrinking of the donor base – that has been taking shape for years, but accelerated greatly in recent years.

Today attracting support has become more complicated and costlier than ever. The traditional workhorses of direct mail and telephone solicitation – are being overshadowed by the Internet and social media. But raising money online isn't as easy as it may appear, since social-media donors tend to give relatively small amounts and have little long-term attachment to a cause. That means charities must spend more on fundraising, even as increasingly savvy donors are scrutinizing charities administration costs.

In an era where fiscally restrained governments confront rising need created by economic turmoil, the private sector must do more. And the private sector is each of us. We're all going to have to become a lot more entrepreneurial and work much harder because of

greater competition for finite resources.

So what is Bridges doing. Though very costly and misunderstood by many of our donors, the database project we have been working on for the last year; is all about streamlining operations and improving efficiencies going forward. We are still within budget and have just started training in that new program. We would appreciate your prayers for a smooth transition, as it will mean relearning how to do most of our data management activities.

We are also considering ways this society might be able to start generating some of our own revenue, so we are not completely dependent on donations, which seem to be dwindling. One possibility would be repurposing the new database so we could market it to other potential users. Another consideration is whether there might be some new business Bridges could get into that would expand our client services while generating some revenue.

Bridges has also been talking to other organizations about ways we could network, to expand the work while reducing or avoiding duplication of efforts.

In the south Okanagan, we are doing some checking into possible opportunities that the opening of a new prison in Oliver at the end of this year will present. Please pray with us for God's leading as we consider these many possibilities for the future direction of this work..

"Everyone can rise above their circumstances and achieve success if they are dedicated to and passionate about what they do."

From the Heart

"Harm reduction is a set of practical strategies and ideas aimed at reducing the negative consequences associated with drug use. **Harm Reduction** is also a movement for social justice built on a belief in, and respect for, the rights of people unwilling or unable to stop drug use."

The pharmaceutical companies have created a drug for almost everything (real or imagined) that ails you and the general public, encouraged by our health care professionals are popping pills like never before.

Since our governments abandoned the concept of sobriety in the 1990's and replaced it with the philosophy of harm reduction, the use of intoxicants legal and otherwise has reached epidemic proportions; with most of the costs born by the working public. As the profits of pharmaceutical (Pharmacia) companies and drug dealers soar, the cost to tax payers of drug purchases, recovery/support programs and welfare/disability payments have gone thru the roof.

A little known fact is that in the last decade more and more people are being deemed to be disabled or unemployable by our healthcare professionals. Social workers are visiting our prisons and recovery programs encouraging people to sign up for disability, which includes lifelong medical & prescription coverage.

That, combined with the fact that there is no longer any government funding for beds that endorse abstinence, rather than harm reduction; today it is getting next to impossible to find clients who are not medicating legally or otherwise.

It is also getting next to impossible to find clients who feel any necessity to work, because tax payer fund-

Giving Opportunity:

Bridges still needs \$60,000 above our normal operating expenses to see our database project completed.

Bridges is committed to doing what we can to shape a better world! If you support our cause, Thank You for making this work possible, by praying and carrying in small and large ways the burdens that we bear!

Upcoming Events:

- March 26 - Movie Night**
- April 8—AG Board Meeting**
- April 16—Adopt a Road**
- April 23 - KRCC Chapel**
- April 27 -Overcomers' Grad**
- April 30 - Go Carting**
- May 4—Life Skills Bible Study starts**
- May 28—Whitewater Rafting**
- June 4 - KRCC Chapel**
- June 18 - Fishing Trip**
- July 9 - Cycling**
- July 15 - Board Meeting**
- July 23 - Beach BBQ Social**



Please Pray for:

- Chaplains & staff at prison's around BC
- Thanksgiving for Bridges wonderful volunteers
- Overcomers' leaders and students
- More traffic for our Weekly Drop In Offices
- Faithfulness, divine wisdom & unity for our volunteers & staff
- Improved focus & increased effectiveness of our discipleship efforts
- Employment, accommodation, victory over old habits & perseverance of clients in following the Lord
- Increased giving to meet ongoing monthly expenses
- Divine wisdom for new ministry direction
- Wings as Eagles—Cranbrook
- Just Equipping—Africa
- Monies to complete the Database rebuild

Financial Report to March 17

YTD Income \$ 48,470.22

YTD Expense \$ - 63,866.04

Net Income = \$- 11,620.22

Bank Balance = \$-31,354.19



Memorial Gifts

A memorial gift is a lasting way to honor a friend or loved one, while making an eternal investment in the kingdom of God.

Memorial Gifts have been received in loving memory of Shirley Goode, Bert Baskin and Steve Middleton.

Business

Donors please note:

The effectiveness of this ministry depends on the involvement of God's people.

By visiting our Website at www.bridgestnl.org you can now enjoy the convenience of **giving directly from your Bank Account** or **via Credit Card** - by simply clicking the "Donate" button.

You can accomplish the same things with the enclosed envelope, or use it to mail a support cheque to Bridges.

PLEASE NOTE THAT OUR MONTHLY GIVING NEEDS YOUR HELP!

Financial information is available to supporters by request



ed social & health care workers in prison, recovery houses and the community at large - are knowingly and inadvertently encouraging dependence on tax payer handouts for their every need.

With Bridges philosophy of believing that a daily relationship with Jesus Christ is vital to successful living, it seems we are becoming a bit of a dinosaur. Also our trying to encourage a life of abstinence, and the importance of getting and keeping a job, is becoming very foreign to the world most of our clients live in today. Outside of our walls it feels like the establishment is encouraging our clients to buy into satan's lie of 'give up and give in' to believing in an us & them world. A world that says 'you have been dealt a poor hand in life, therefore you can't ever join the working elite, so don't even try. But don't worry, because society is obliged to provide and care for you.'

This is the little talked about new reality that Bridges operates in. We covet your prayers for strength and wisdom, as we seek to represent Jesus well in our day to day activities. Please also pray for Godly wisdom for our politicians making policies and spending our tax dollars; that new initiatives would not add to, but rather rectify some of these problems.

Because of being in a deficit financially Bridges has not filled our volunteer/client development coordinator position since last August. This has meant volunteers and clients have not received the attention they should and prevented me from taking earned time off to recharge. However I am grateful for the volunteers who covered last month while our safe house had only one well behaved resident, so I could take a week of vacation.



As we think about Easter, a time of huge sacrifice by our Lord for the salvation of our souls, I am hoping and praying that some out there would be motivated to reach deep into your savings and give sacrificially so that Bridges can pay off our debt and get us on a better financial footing. That as Christ was raised from the dead, so we could have a new beginning; by being able to hire another staff member to help share the work load, and start moving the ministry forward again.

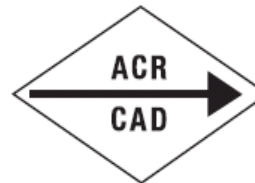
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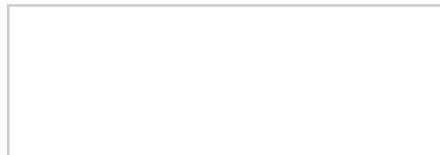
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CORRECTION D'ADRESSE DEMANDÉE



RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED
PORT DE RETOUR GARANTI



We're on the Web at
www.bridgestnl.org

Offering Hope & Restoration to Individuals whose lives have been impacted by our Justice System