



IJC's *Just News*



Volume 1, Issue 11

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Inside this issue:

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
|  | 2 |
|  | 5 |
|  | 7 |
|  | 10 |

IJC's Purpose

We come alongside people living with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and intellectual disabilities, and those currently or previously incarcerated, helping them to achieve a better quality of life for themselves and their communities

Our Values:

Christian Faith: We serve in **Christ's name and seek to model** our faith and values without imposing them on others.

Human Dignity and Worth: We respect and value all persons as **uniquely made in God's image** and loved by God.

Restorative Justice: We work with victims, offenders and the community to seek healing and restoration.

Relationships of Integrity: We offer supportive relationships and community to victims and offenders.

Peace Tradition: We pursue peace, rather than returning evil for evil, in all our relationships and communities.

Community Involvement: We encourage and facilitate participation by community volunteers in healing and restorative relationships, modeling positive values and lifestyles



The grass is slowly turning and the trees are beginning to bud. The sun is shining hotter and for longer periods each day. Spring has come to our land and the green promise of change brings new energy and excitement.

And so it is with our programs at IJC – growth in participants and in programs, a refocus of energy and a determination to do as much as we can with the resources we have, both human and financial.

There was a farmer who grew excellent quality corn and every year he won the award for the best corn. One year a newspaper reporter interviewed him and learned something interesting - he discovered that the farmer shared his seed corn with his **neighbours**. **“How can you afford to share your best seed corn with your neighbours when they are entering corn in competition with yours each year?”**

“Sir,” said the farmer, “Don’t you know? The wind picks up pollen from the ripening corn and swirls it from field to field. If my neighbours grow inferior corn, cross-

pollination will steadily degrade the quality of my corn. If I am to grow good corn, I must help my neighbours grow good corn.”

So it is with our lives and work here at IJC. Through stories – individual stories of love, of challenge, of change, we are shown that to live meaningfully and well, we must help enrich the lives of others. For the welfare of each is bound up with the welfare of all and the value of a life is measured by the lives it touches.

I am profoundly grateful to our participants who challenge us to be authentic, and who teach us each day. I am indebted to our staff who approach their work with good humour, with commitment and with grace. I am thankful for our Board and for the many volunteers who help us create relationships that offer hope. I am deeply appreciative of our funders, Mennonite Central Committee Manitoba, the Province of Manitoba, and the many churches and individuals who continue to support the work of IJC through financial donations, through volunteering and through prayer. Thank you. Happy Spring!

Gail

“STRIDE AHEAD”

That is just what we are doing! Next month we will celebrate the 3rd anniversary of our Stride Program at WCC. This past year has indeed been one to remember. In November we had the dedication of our Wall Hanging designed and crafted by Stride Volunteer, Carol Caron. The only direction and supplies I passed along to Carol was the bag of scraps from our No Sew Blankets and one of our handmade cards made by Volunteer Brenda Galston Ross.

Prior to the release of each of our Stride Sisters we make a blanket which is gifted to her along with an exquisite handmade card. Each card has a butterfly on it, symbolizing the “new life” that is ahead for them. In November the wall hanging was complete in time to be dedicated when our colleagues and friends from the original Stride Program in Kitchener Waterloo, were here to attend our Stride Program. The name “Taking Flight” was chosen after a number of names were submitted by our Stride Volunteers.



OPEN CIRCLE IS A FAITH-BASED, NON-PROFIT PROGRAM THAT ENCOURAGES VOLUNTEERS TO LIVE OUT THEIR FAITH BY VISITING PEOPLE IN PRISON AND OFFERING CARING, NON-JUDGEMENTAL SUPPORT.

Alongside the Wall Hanging a plaque is mounted:

Taking Flight

This piece was lovingly created by Carol Caron to celebrate the **Stride program's two year anniversary at the Women's Correctional Centre in 2015.**

Stride participants at this facility meet weekly, as a group, with volunteers from the community. At each meeting the women celebrate their joys and lighten their burdens within a sharing circle. They also make crafts and engage in other community and self-building activities. With Stride, women are assured of a safe, positive environment where they can laugh with one another in good times and lift each other up in difficult times. Some participants say that this is the first time in their lives they have felt valued.



Managed by Open Circle, Stride works hand in hand with Women's Correctional Centre staff to provide the program.

For the brightly coloured butterflies the artist embroidered remnants of fleece that women inStride have used to make gift blankets. Together, the women craft unique blankets that they present to each participant on her release from the Women's Correctional Centre.

The multi-coloured butterflies symbolize the world on the outside, the black, white and blue butterflies in the centre represent the time of incarceration, while the silver butterflies embody spirit - the spirit of hope for better life.

When our Stride Program began three years ago there were 10 Participants and about 6 Volunteers. We are very proud to say we now have 17 Participants and 25 Volunteers.

A February highlight that had our Monday night electric with excitement was when one of our newest volunteers made his first appearance at Stride Night; Robert Falcon Ouellette. Robert shared profound and humorous stories with us and we gifted him with a sweet grass braid which he promised he was taking to his office in Ottawa and would smudge there with it, so all of our spirits will join him there.

Each and every week we are inspired by our many Volunteers who continue to be so very generous with their gifts of time and talent. Just one example is a very busy woman who chooses to share her respite time as a foster mom to come and join her Stride Sisters on Monday nights!

Every single one of our Stride volunteers are helping us to [Imagine a Just Community](#).

– Pat Van Ryssel, STRIDE Coordinator

Holding Glenn in the Light

Our Open Circle Program Director, Glenn Morison, continues to be on a medical leave. Thanks to all of you who have passed along your prayers and wishes to me, I have endeavoured to pass these on to Glenn.



I am pleased to announce that, as of April 1, 2016, Initiatives for Just Communities welcomed Hank Dixon as Interim Director for Open Circle until Glenn's return. Hank brings a wealth of knowledge and experience with prison chaplaincy to the position having recently been the Supervisor of Chaplaincy Services for Kairos Pneuma following 15 years' service as a federal prison chaplain at Atlantic Institution and Stony Mountain Institution.

Jim Chapryk, Open Circle Program Associate



Faith Community Reintegration Projects

Correction Services Canada (CSC) has renewed the Faith Community Reintegration Project (FCRP) with IJC, for 2016. The FCRP is a contract awarded by CSC to organizations presently working with federally released individuals. The key role of the FCRP is to support the successful reintegration of offenders into the community and into the faith community of their choice.

FCRP's assist in this role by:

- Bridge building between released individuals and their identified religious and spiritual communities;
- Liaising with parole, justice organizations and faith communities;
- Developing faith community capacity to engage with released individuals
- Assisting those being released from federal prisons to become contributing members of society.

With its long history (over 40 years) of working with men and women in prison and **with one of its mandate being to, "support the healthy integration of people in prison back into the community", Open Circle believes there is real value in partnering with CSC.** In a number of respects the FCRP dovetails nicely with the dedicated commitment of our volunteers, where friendships sometimes moves beyond prison walls into the community.

Circles of Support & Accountability is a community-based Interfaith program that seeks to walk alongside of persons with high risk offence histories (our core members) as they integrate within our communities. In an attempt to facilitate healthy relationships and identify/develop positive interests and activities, we provide weekly circle meetings with trained volunteers and staff.



Farewell, Dear Practicum Students!

Matthew recently completed his practicum through the Conflict Resolution Program at the Menno Simons College. He has been a great addition to CoSA during his time with us. He easily made connections with core members and volunteers, and made an effort to attend nearly all of our volunteer meetings, coffee chats, camping weekends, and holiday celebrations over the past 8 months. His sense of humour and skills in the kitchen were a welcome addition!

Not only was Matt able to help us out as a practicum student working on the CoSA volunteer manual and contributing



NG (left), Matt (Right)

his relevant research to the program, he joined a circle as a volunteer as well. He made fast friends with the other volunteers and the core member in the circle

and surely became a better bowler in the process.

We are so fortunate to have landed Matt as our practicum student and continuing volunteer. Thanks for all your hard work, Matt!

Emily and Bernard have also wrapped up their practicum with us through the **University of Manitoba's Sociology Program**. The students conducted important **research about CoSA's struggles with funding and public perception**. They analyzed how Winnipeg organizations that have an **"image problem," or do work that's viewed negatively by the public because of perceived controversial methods used, such as restorative justice**. These negative perceptions affect how much funding organizations receive. However, their research **showed that it's not restorative justice that's the issue, but negative perceptions of the participants themselves**. We have a lot of work ahead of us to break down the stigma our core members experience in society. This research provided CoSA with critical information for moving forward in terms of gaining public support and sustainable funding.

We thank Emily and Bernard for their hard work, open minds, and super sunny attitudes!! Good luck in your studies!

Submitted by Natalia Ilyniak

Bowling and Pizza Night



CoSA and friends had a wacky night of funky bowling at the Polish Fraternity Bowling Alley.

A big thanks to A Little Pizza of Heaven for providing an awesome deal on their delicious garlicky pizza. A huge thanks to everyone who came out- we had a

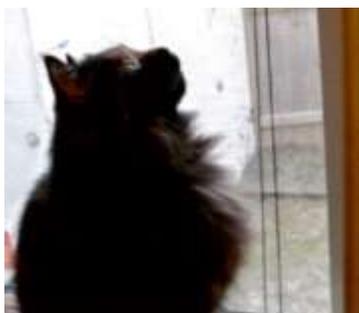


blast!!

A Core Member's Short Story: *Minnie Series*

By: NG (with small additions by Matt, Mischa, and Natalia)

This story looks at a day in the life of Minnie Dee-Gee Bupplie. Her name might be Minnie, but she has some big ideas! Some call her the “alarm clock,” because



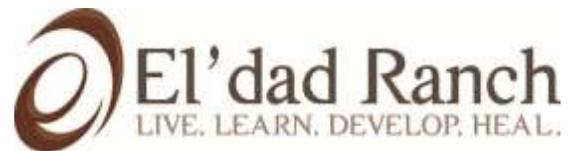
she wakes me up early in the morning. A notorious guard cat- she swats at other people (“friends”) of mine. Beware neighborhood cats, Minnie is not your friend. She guards the home from strangers and friends alike- watch those ankles! She’s always on the hunt for her next big meal. Don’t hold out on those Temptation Treats! She doesn’t keep her opinion to herself... she likes to meow meow meow a lot!

Like the eye of Sauron, neighbors feel her gaze from the window, atop of her scratching post tower. Despite her terroristic tendencies, she’s been a very good friend to me for the past nine years and four months, so far.



Volunteers Needed! Do you know anyone male-identified folks looking for a volunteer experience? CoSA Winnipeg is looking for men willing to commit to volunteering for one year in a circle of support and accountability. Please contact Natalia or Jen at 204-925-1915 for more information.

Realizing the inherent worth of individuals, we seek to embody **God's love for people with intellectual disabilities by providing a secure and nurturing place to live**



After two months we are finally in our new building! I had the pretty cool job of purchasing items for **the new offices, who doesn't love to shop right? While purchasing items with John (Day Program manager), and a mutual Day Program Outreach participant we went to IKEA to purchase chairs for the new space.** It was fun spending time outside of the office together (especially watching John ride the karts through IKEA).

With this new space we are now able to do things as a whole outreach group whereas before our options were limited due to lack of space. We had a meeting with Outreach participants and staff to talk about potential activities and programing we could now host and we had some awesome ideas come forward such as traditional artwork, volunteering in the community and multiple of community based events. We also had some unique ideas like Ostridge riding (yes it is a real thing).

So far we have had a successful movie and pizza night. We also went to see the most talked about movie (at least here) Batman vs. Superman. In the upcoming months we plan on starting an art workshop as well as a sharing circle which one of the Outreach participants is going to be facilitating. **It has been so exciting and rewarding to help plan positive recreational activities for El' Dad's participants. Almost all of the activities have been open to all of El' Dads programs** –which, as a huge group filled with different ideas, sense of humors, and interests, we can get together build relationships through common interests and fun experiences.

Submitted by Kelly Woods

Ice Fishing Trip

It's always nice to escape the daily grind and share some good times with good people, and our ice fishing trip in Lockport seemed to be just what we all needed!

Fish were caught, connections were formed, and smiles and laughter were in abundance.

Once we assured ourselves we weren't going to fall through the ice, we each cut our own holes with an ice auger, we baited our lines, we casted, and we waited. Altogether we caught almost 10 fish! Some of us had never caught a fish before, or had even gone fishing for that matter, so for many it was a day of "firsts" and new things learned. Our Day Program manager John even showed us how to successfully make a bonfire on the ice, despite our initial (and obvious) fears.

To top it off, a few lucky individuals had a fish fry later that evening with the day's catch!

Let's cross our fingers we can go again next season and make more memories!

Submitted by Jamie Daniuk



Of White Stuff and Gratitude – Missing the Fluff . . .

Tunji Olasunkanmi

I was in Heidelberg, Germany for a conference in the first week of February 2013. It was supposed to be winter time but knowing what I know now of winter, probably they have to think of another name to call that period in Europe. ***That ain't winter!*** I remember I had to stay up one night because the weather forecast said it was going to snow and I wanted to witness it for the first time ever in my life but unfortunately what they called snow could not be seen on the ground.

Fast track to Nov 17, 2015, Steinbach, Manitoba, going home from my very first (shadow) **shift with El'dad, I saw the "white flakes" in tonnes. Oh mine! It was as if all the doors and windows of heaven were flung open.** It was just pouring. You need to see the joy on the faces of my kids seeing the snowflakes pouring from the sky that night. Waking up the next morning and we had to wade through heaps and heaps of snow to get to our car was just exhilarating. Thank God for a good neighbor who was at her car just about the same time as I. **I didn't have anything to clear the white loads on our car but she gave me a spare snow brush** in her car and we were able to free the car from the loads of white stuff that had drenched it. The children had so much fun helping me out.

How do I describe snow? Really I lack the words to do that. It is so beautiful, so fluffy, kind of powdery, white sand but not really sandy; ... **it's really indescribable.** Later I could understand what God meant in the Scriptures when he said **If only I could come to Him, "though your sins are red like crimson; they shall be white as snow."** Wow! Now I see myself better—**my skin color notwithstanding! I may be ... on the outside, I am pure white on the inside!** Wow!

I know too much of snow could become a nuisance but we need to appreciate God for fluffy blessings. There are billions of people in the world who had never seen snow before in their life. Some families with means travel at this time of the year just to catch a glimpse of it. **Yet we take this "blessing" for granted.**

In everything, the holy book says, give thanks. Do you know that some people's livelihood depends on this blessing? I know how such people will be looking forward to the arrival of the white guest every December with great anticipation.

As we battle another season of snow, let's see it as a blessing rather than a necessary "evil." I've had my own share of terrible experience of being stuck in snow when my car couldn't move an inch at my workplace in Greenland. But thank God for another good neighbour who brought out his ATV to clear our driveway even without any invitation. He just did it for the fun of it.

Whether the cup is half full or half empty depends on how you see it. For me, I had fun this winter.

Submitted by Adetunji Olasunkanmi

Firewood Price List 2016

(Dealer pricing)

Kindling (20lbs) cut and split Pine - \$5.00 per box
(free delivery on 15 units)

Mesh bags (approximately 35 lbs) Pine: \$6.00 per bag
(free delivery on 15 units)



½ Cords:

Tamarack (cut and split) - \$140.00 (pick up @ **El'dad Ranch**)

Pine (cut and split) - \$130.00 (pick up @ **El'dad Ranch**)

Ash (cut and split) - \$155.00 (pick up @ **El'dad Ranch**)

Full Cords:

Tamarack (cut and split) - \$270.00 (pick up @ **El'dad Ranch**)

Pine (cut and split) - \$250.00 (pick up @ **El'dad Ranch**)

Ash (cut and split) - \$300.00 (pick up @ **El'dad Ranch**)

Delivery Charges:

Steinbach - \$20.00

Mitchell - \$25.00

Kleefeld / Landmark / Niverville - \$30.00

Winnipeg- \$50.00

Oakbank- \$40.00

Stacking fee per cord - \$25.00 ½ cord \$15.00



5% GST sales tax added to all orders and units

Pick up of bags and kindling can be arranged at our Steinbach Office @ 1-32 PTH 52

Call John @ 204-371-5875 or Rob @ 204- 890-6739 to place an order



THE VISION OF TOUCHSTONE FASD PROGRAM IS TO HELP YOUTH AND ADULTS LIVING WITH FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDER (FASD) ENJOY BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE BY AIDING THEM IN EVERYDAY SITUATIONS.

A Tribute to Touchstone's Outreach

Workers – by Jewel Reimer

The Outreach Program at Touchstone has been and remains the largest piece of Touchstone programming since we had the privilege to get to know our very first Outreach Program Participant back in November 2003.

Since that time, as Touchstone's Program Director, I have had the immense honor to have worked with just over 60 incredible Outreach Workers and it is time to pay tribute to all of them!

The role of Touchstone's Outreach Workers is essentially to develop and nurture a relationship between themselves and program participants and to do this authentically, compassionately, ethically, and therapeutically. I have witnessed Touchstone's workers develop these relationships and then continue to nurture these relationships with participants while supporting them through both every day and very difficult and traumatic experiences. The most beautiful piece deserving true tribute is that I have time and time again seen our Outreach Workers approach this work with such openness that they too take away learning and growth by being in real relationships with our very courageous and resilient program participants. I want to thank each worker for their time with Touchstone, for being the committed, hard-working, intelligent, and courageous souls that you are!

The work of Touchstone would be nothing without you at the grass roots!

Learning about FASD - by Lorielyn Cadiz

I began this line of work shortly after graduating from the University of Winnipeg. I became affiliated with Initiatives for Just Communities through some volunteer experience with the Open Circle program and it quickly became the start of another learning experience, much different than the one I had just completed in school. Since joining the out-



Lorielyn Cadiz and Harri Vallittu

reach team at Touchstone Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) program, it has opened my eyes to see a different side of people, other than the ones I learned about in textbooks and stories. My experience as an outreach worker has been far from ordinary.

There had been no information about FASD in my years of schooling and even in University, FASD was not widely spoken about. I came across the subject of FASD when I was doing my last final paper of my university degree. FASD has a strong stigma attached to it, which is no wonder I was never made aware of it. My experience working with participants living with FASD is that they are just like anyone else, with strengths and weaknesses. Despite my job position as a mentor, I feel that I've also been mentored in some way. Each day on the job is different and I am able to grow and learn from the different situations with which I am faced. It's terrible for me to think about how unaware I was of FASD and how it affects so many Canadians. Since I began working with Touchstone, I have been able to educate others that I find to be in a similar situation as I was.

Hello Spring People 😊 I am writing to introduce myself, and Touchstone's new version of our ongoing Residential Support Program!



Caitlin Hutchison

My name is Caitlin, I have been an outreach worker with Touchstone for the last year, and am happy to be transitioning to the role of Residential Coordinator. This means that I will split my time between the office, and an apartment in the West End that Touchstone has recently acquired to house our Residential Support Program.

The Touchstone staff suite will be a space for drop-in and/or scheduled mentorship, companionship, and **support regarding participants' desires, and needs**, in the maintenance of safe, comfortable homes, and in their tenancies. The goal of the Residential Support Program is that this space will contribute to long term, consistent support to participants and advance their feelings of autonomy, and a sense of ownership of their homes, as well as contribute to positive caretaker/landlord-tenant relationships, mediation, and eviction prevention.

We are currently furnishing the apartment and are seeking donations! We would be grateful for any furniture, and house and kitchen wares, from dish cloths to arm chairs, and anything in between. If you are inclined to donate something to us, please feel free to contact me at 204 291 6465, or chutchison.fasd@initiativesjc.org

Many Thanks!
Caitlin Hutchison

Christmas in May

This project revolves around helping the participants of Touchstone who live with FASD (fetal alcohol spectrum disorder).

Imagine you only had 6\$ to live on per day. That is the average budget of the participants of Touchstone, after they have paid for housing. FASD is a big problem in the world today, the people who live with FASD have a higher chance of living in poverty and therefore rely on food banks for essential groceries. Christmas time is one of the only times a year

when they are the recipients of luxury items such as the ones listed below.

We know that this will not reduce poverty, but it does raise awareness for what living in poverty is like. This project is asking for your donations so that we can bring Christmas to them in May.

Date: May 5th 2016—June 8th 2016 | Contact Times: 9:00am—5:00pm | Contact

Donation Address: 302-1200 Portage Ave
(Donations can be dropped off or contact us for pick up)

Christmas in May is a project for a global issues class at Kelvin High School.

Wish List—Bold items are in high demand!

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ◇ Deodorant | ◇ Condiments |
| ◇ Shampoo | ◇ Jam |
| ◇ Shavers | ◇ Powder drink mix (ex. ice tea) |
| ◇ Soap (body, dish, laundry, softener) | ◇ Can openers |
| ◇ Tampons | ◇ Disposable plates/cutlery |
| ◇ Brushes (hair, teeth) | ◇ Garbage bags |
| ◇ Toilet paper | ◇ Travel mugs |
| ◇ Coffee | ◇ Gair dye |
| ◇ Tea | ◇ Makeup |
| ◇ Canned food (ready to eat, easy to prepare) cheese | ◇ Nail polish |
| ◇ Meat (bacon, sausage, lunch meat) | ◇ bobby pins |
| ◇ Eggs | ◇ Gift cards (ex. Price Choppers, Tim Hortons, Walmart, Cineplex) |
| ◇ Sugar | ◇ Socks |
| ◇ Butter (normal and peanut) | ◇ Coupons |
| | ◇ Towels/ cloths |
| | ◇ Pillows |
| | ◇ Sheets |
| | ◇ Reusable bags (even backpacks) |
| | ◇ Bus tickets |



What's Coming Up?

CoSA Advisory Meeting - May 4th at 7 pm

CoSA Camping- June 18th-19th at Hnaua Unitarian Church Camp

The Annual General Meeting – June 16, 2106 at 7:00 pm at 302, 1200 Portage Avenue

If you would like to receive the IJC Newsletter electronically, please let us know!

Send your email address to

gschellenberg@initiativesjc.org

If you would like to help IJC out by underwriting the costs for the IJC Newsletter (photocopying, mailing) \$200/issue please let us know!



Another way to support our programs is to use our co-op number whenever you fill up at one of the 31 Red River Gas Bars in Manitoba.

Our number is 0361906.
Thank you!



Check us out on Facebook!

Circles of Support & Accountability (CoSA), Open Circle and Touchstone are located at our office at 302, 1200 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3G 0T5. Our phone number is 204-925-1928 and toll-free is 877-912-2299. Fax number is 204-925-3414.

El'dad Ranch is located at 39136 Ridgewood Rd, RM of Ste. Anne. Mailing address is Box 9 RR1 Grp 3, Steinbach Manitoba R5G 1L9. Our phone number is 204-326-1050 and fax is 204-346-9602.

