



THE BRIDGES NEWS



Therapeutic Paws

We are so fortunate to have Sue and her therapy dog, Tremaine of Therapeutic Paws of Canada visit us weekly.

TPOC is a non-profit, volunteer-based organization providing animal resources for physical, mental, educational, motivational, and socialization needs.

Animals can make such a positive impact on our lives. Just some of the benefits include lifting spirits, providing comfort, lowering anxiety, assisting with calming, and reducing loneliness and isolation. Tremaine has certainly put smiles on a lot of faces here at Cambridge Shelter.



Volunteers Giving Back!

Cambridge Shelter is fortunate to have Barbara Gross as one of our long-time volunteers, who has been volunteering assisting with meal preparation now for 10 years!

When Barbara first began her volunteer role, she was overwhelmed with the understanding of how many people in our community needed the programs and services of Cambridge Shelter. Today, we have an average of 100 people join us each day for every community meal, including a community breakfast on Thursday morning where Barbara dedicates her time.



Barbara Gross helps prepare breakfast

What has surprised Barbara most since becoming a volunteer is to see how much community involvement and commitment it takes to keep Cambridge Shelter running and to see firsthand how generous people can be.

Barbara highly recommends becoming a volunteer with CSC. As she put it, "I think this world needs more kindness and compassion. Treat others as you'd like to be treated. Put yourself in other's shoes. Volunteering keeps me humble and reminds me to be thankful for my blessings and give back in some small way connecting with fellow human beings."

Here at Cambridge Shelter we value volunteers like Barbara who offer their time and skill to enhance the lives of others in our community.

If you are interested in learning how you can become a volunteer with us, please [click here](#) to visit our website.

Or call (519) 624-9305 ex 106

The Bridges News

Written By: Lee-Anne Barker
Contributing Writers: Anne Tinker & Paul Corkery
Designed By: Brittany Markovski

Working Together

A lot has happened since our last newsletter.

We strive to be good neighbours to the downtown community and have participated in discussions around how we can help with issues related to the opioid crisis. It was good news when our Provincial government announced more funding for mental health and addiction support.

Approximately 62% of our residents suffer with mental health issues. Many have not been assessed and are not being treated. They are in shelters for months and years as there is no housing that offers the supports necessary for them to live independently.

We have been fortunate to receive a grant from the United Way of Waterloo Region for a Mental Health Manager. Wayne Paddick started in this role on February 3. Wayne came to us from the Canadian Mental Health Association. His transition to providing full-time mental health supports to our residents has been seamless. Wayne is a nurse, so brings those skills to this role as well.

We are intentionally working with our residents with mental health issues to find them permanent, affordable housing. We have created a staff team which includes Wayne, our Housing Support Workers and one of our Drop-In Support Workers. Working together they:

- assess each person for mental health concerns
- connect them to health care and income support
- determine any community, family or social supports
- assess housing readiness and type of housing needed
- find appropriate housing
- provide short-term support after being housed

We have also connected with a private landlord who provides assisted living. We hope to house those residents whose mental health requires round the clock support for them to live independently. We have already moved a few residents into his facilities, and it has been very successful. We are hopeful.



Photo Credit: Brittany Markovski

While this is perhaps the most exciting initiative at the moment, it is not the only one. We are working with Therapeutic Paws and St. John's Ambulance to provide pet therapy to our residents. The calming power of animals is incredible. We feel very blessed to have these wonderful dogs and their handlers visiting us.

We have been in discussions with Cambridge Memorial Hospital and Waterloo Region Police Services to find ways to better work together, particularly around hospital discharges when someone is homeless. We have developed protocols with each of them and are working towards respectful, successful transitions going forward.

A recent added challenge is the Coronavirus. We sometimes have 100 vulnerable adults staying with us, many of them seniors. We have been diligent in our preventative measures. We do not have the option of working from home.

Our staff is the backbone of this organization and I continue to feel very privileged to work with such an inspiring and caring group. They provide compassionate service while keeping the environment safe for everyone staying here. That is no small feat. Together, we are trying to make a positive difference in our community and in the lives of those entrusted to our care.

Anne Tinker, Interim Executive Director

The impact of COVID-19 is being felt around the world. We believe we are better when we work together. It's important for us all to take the necessary steps to keep ourselves, our loved ones, and our local and global communities safe and supported.

These are challenging times for all of us. Now, more than ever, we need your help to provide essential, emergency services to people experiencing homelessness. Here at The Bridges, we are working hard to keep everyone safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. You can help us make a difference by donating today. [Click here to donate online.](#)

We're so grateful for your ongoing support. Thank you!

Spotlight on the Board of Directors

Both Rosalyn McKay and Ann Marie Macey grew up in rural communities where homelessness was not visible, not talked about, and they never even knew the issue existed. When these women began to understand homelessness, they wanted to learn how they could help.



From the left: Rosalyn McKay & Ann Marie Macey

Rosalyn, General Manager with Chartwell in downtown Galt, joined the Board of Directors in 2018. She shares, "When I learned about the services that Cambridge Shelter provides, I wanted to be involved. CSC understands that supporting people in a crisis is a valuable and needed service, so we provide Emergency Shelter. But we don't stop there. We offer the supports needed to get through the crisis, and then move on through the continuum of housing assistance to secure housing."

Rosalyn shares, "Understanding and awareness is the start to progress and change".

Ann Marie started volunteering in 1998 with the Out of the Cold Program at St. John's-On-the-Hill, which was one of 7 local churches working together in the winters to provide a meal and overnight shelter. When Cambridge Shelter Corporation grew from this program, it was, "a wish coming to fruition...to have all these services

and supports now under one roof". Ann Marie has been dedicated to the Thursday morning Community Breakfast now for over 10 years. She served on the Board of Directors from 2013-2016 and has now returned for a second term.

Ann Marie tells us, "These are your neighbours, people in hard times. There should be no shame in needing help. We all need help sometimes."

Rosalyn adds, "Come see the work we do meet the people who need our support. Let us show you around so you can learn about all the services and programs we have in place for people. We have so many ways for people to make a meaningful impact through volunteering and donating. We really are changing lives, and I would encourage everyone to be a part of that."

At the time of print amid the crisis of COVID-19, we would ask people to visit us as soon as deemed appropriate.

CSC Board of Directors

Sharon Livingstone
(Chair)

Rosalyn McKay
(Vice Chair and Treasurer)

Bobbie Goldenberg
(Secretary)

Barbara Kavanagh
Bob Howison
Dr. Erin Dej
Ann Marie Macey

Kathryn McGarry
(Ex Officio)

Ryan Pettipiere
(Ex Officio)

Your Newsletter. Your Way!

We would like to communicate with you in the way you prefer!

If you would like to sign up to receive this newsletter electronically, please email info@cambridgeshelter.ca



United Way

Thanks to a grant from United Way, we are very excited to begin working with some of our most vulnerable residents, working towards finding them permanent, supportive housing.

Thanks United Way Waterloo Region Communities for your support of our work and for making it possible to ensure that everyone in our community has housing.



WATERLOO REGION

HHTH

We are honoured to be included as a recipient of the incredible fundraising efforts of Hockey Helps the Homeless Waterloo Region!

The tournament takes place this October 30, 2020! Sponsorships are still available! If you are interested in sponsoring, please contact: robway@swiftspaceinc.com

Housing Team Spotlight

Cambridge Shelter has always worked to move people through their emergency shelter needs to finding and sustaining housing.

When someone first walks through the door at The Bridges, we begin to look at what we can do to help this person to be housing ready. Once we can assist with securing the right housing for their needs, we look at what this individual needs to be able to sustain that housing and help prevent them from having to re-enter the shelter system again. Cambridge Shelter has 2 Housing Workers, Allison and Dean, and we are now doubling and intensifying our efforts, adding Wayne, our Mental Health Manager, and Jake, working on frontline assessments.

Housing Worker Allison tells us, "Our goal is to house the persistently homeless and prevent the reoccurrence of housing breaking down. It's not just about finding affordable housing. It's finding the right housing, with supports in place to sustain."

The right housing could be a room in a rooming house, a shared apartment, or supportive housing that is staffed 24/7.

To help someone be "housing ready", Cambridge Shelter starts with an assessment tool to understand where they are now, and what they need in place to be ready. Jake tells us, "It's a housing ready to-do list. The individual may not have I.D, so we will refer to our in-house Identification Clinic. If they need financial assistance and budgeting, we can offer the Blair Voluntary Trust Program."

Wayne, a mental health nurse, helps to ensure that people have what they need from a medical perspective. Supports needed include primary care (a family doctor), the right diagnosis and the right medications, with treatment and counselling in place if needed. Wayne tells us, "It is extremely common that people come to The Bridges with no family doctor and without having proper treatment for their mental health. We work to make sure they are stabilized to set them up for success."



Pictured from left to right, Jake, Wayne & Allison.



CSC Identification Clinic



Housing Worker, Dean

Working to ensure people get housed, and stay housed, increases the capacity of shelter services to be available for emergency shelter needs, as intended. A person who doesn't return to shelter means there is a bed available for the next person who needs it. Cambridge Shelter is working to make sure people have what they need to be housing ready and that they are supported through the transition of homelessness to housed. Because, as Allison reminds us, "Everyone matters. And it can happen to anyone."



You Can Help By Donating Items

Top 5 items needed:

- | | | | |
|----------|-----------------------|----------|------------------|
| 1 | Serviettes | 4 | Underwear |
| 2 | Hand Sanitizer | 5 | Coffee |
| 3 | Toiletries | | |

Chapstick, Toothbrushes,
Toothbrush, Razors &
Deodorant

Gift in kind donations over \$10 will be issued a charitable receipt!

[Click here to visit our website.](#)

A Real Life Story of Inspiration & Hope

Bill is gentle, polite and soft spoken. But there is a sadness in his eyes that tells a story before he utters a word.

Born into the Ojibway Tribe, Bill lived happily with his mother and father until he was 5 years old. His world was shattered when he was suddenly taken away from his family, along with his 3-year-old brother and 2-year-old sister, as a part of the Sixties Scoop.

The Sixties Scoop saw thousands of Indigenous children removed from their homes. Some children were placed directly in foster homes. For Bill and his siblings, and an estimated total of 150,000 other Indigenous children, they were taken to a residential school to be assimilated to Canadian culture before they could be adopted out to white families.

It is understood today how prevalent the abuse and neglect of children was in these residential schools. As Bill shares his story, he talks about the beatings he regularly endured. His voice cracks as he says, "It's still touchy". He shares how helpless and hopeless he felt.

At nine, Bill was moved away to a different residential school for youth. He would never see his brother and sister again. He would later learn that his brother had taken his own life, and as for his sister, "To this day, I have no idea what ever happened to her".

At age 10, Bill was adopted by a family and started "real school" for the first time. Bill lost his language, his name, his family and a connection to his culture and heritage. Bill shares, "I still have nightmares, every single night".

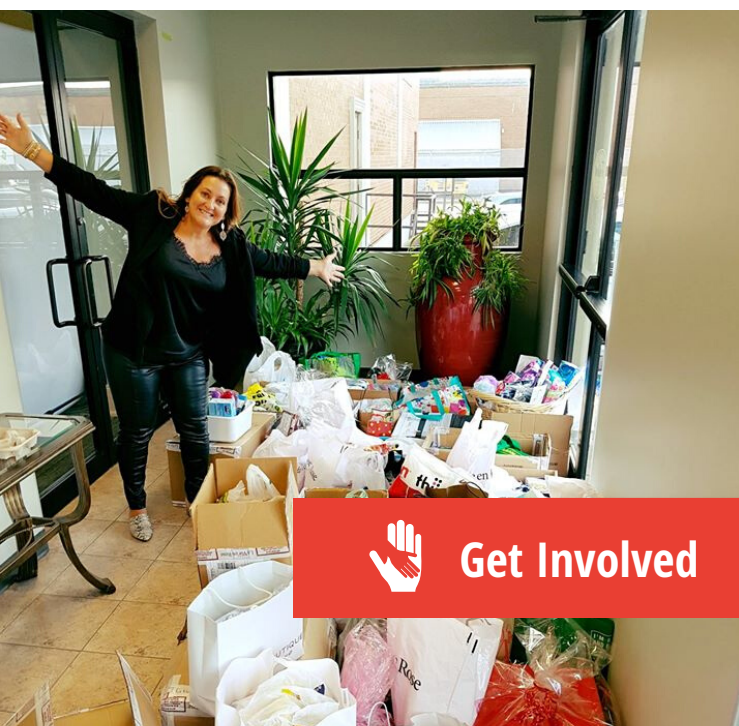


Bill's adult life was filled with the after-effects of this childhood trauma. He used substances to try to cope. He funneled his anger into fighting and as a result was incarcerated for many years. He experienced unemployment, poverty and eventually, homelessness. When Bill had no where else to turn, he came to The Bridges.

With the help of Cambridge Shelter, Bill has been making improvements to his life every day. The CSC Housing Workers worked with Bill to secure and sustain housing. They connected Bill with Indigenous connections at Lutherwood, as well as Family Counselling Centre of Cambridge and North Dumfries. One of the housing workers, Allison, has been able to personally offer Indigenous support, providing him with smudge and ceremonial supplies. He has secured full-time employment and is proud to say that he has been clean for 20 years.

With a place to call home, a full-time job, and supports in place, Bill now has hope for his future.

Thank you for supporting people in support of their hopes and needs!



Get Involved

You Can Make a Difference Today

Give people the hope they need to move beyond homelessness. Donating is Easy!



Donate Online

Visit us online



Mail

26 Simcoe St, Cambridge, Ontario N1R 8P2



Call Us

(519) 624-9305

Charitable receipts are provided for every donation \$10 and over. Cheques payable to Cambridge Shelter Corporation.

Raising Funds & Awareness to Make a Difference!

Preston Mennonite Church Pancake Supper

Thank you to our friends at Preston Mennonite Church for hosting a delicious Pancake Supper event in support of Cambridge Shelter!

A special mention to event organizer, Nancy Kinsley, event sponsors, Bruce Witmer and Shirley Schiedel, and to Dan Walsh Beardzone for providing the musical entertainment!

We would like to thank the many volunteers who helped to make the evening such a success, and of course, thank you to everyone who attended!

Third-party events like this are integral to help Cambridge Shelter raise funds and awareness. If your church, school or group would like to find out more about hosting an event in support of Cambridge Shelter, we would love to hear from you!



Pictured top: Shirley Schiedel and Bruce Witmer Pictured bottom left: Nancy Kinsley and her grandchildren



Corry Van Iersel from The Vancor Group with draw winner Randy Novak.



Cambridge Mayor Kathryn McGarry; CSC Board Chair, Sharon Livingstone.

Cambridge Shelter Golf Classic, Presented By The Vancor Group

The 1st Annual "Cambridge Shelter Golf Classic, Presented By The Vancor Group" was a great night out for a great cause! Thank you to all our golfers, sponsors, prize donors and our venue, Golfplay, for helping to make our 1st annual indoor golf tournament a great night for a great cause!

Special mention to our Presenting Sponsor, The Vancor Group, who share the belief that everyone is deserving of safe shelter and a place to lay their head each night.



Some of the golfers enjoying their evening.



Fundraising events like this are vital to Cambridge Shelter's ability to make a difference in the lives of people experiencing homelessness in our community.

An evening dedicated to “Changing the Conversation”.

Building communities that welcome all. This was the theme discussed by Keynote Speaker, Dr. John Lord, at the Cambridge Shelter Corporation Speakers Event, “Changing the Conversation”.

John provided the definition of belonging as “full inclusion where you are seen, known, welcomed, accepted, connected, cared for and valued.” John encouraged us to think about ways to build strong communities and neighbourhoods that would support belonging and reduce social isolation.

Changing the Conversation also featured two guest speakers, Marjorie Knight and Don Johnson.

Marjorie told us, “No one could have ever told me I would be homeless.” Marjorie was an Executive Manager but when she moved to Canada, she could not find an employer that would recognize her experience and skills. This meant precarious work that did not pay enough for her to pay her bills, and eventually she could not afford her rent. Marjorie described what it felt like to be homeless, carrying all her things with her on the bus, feeling judged by everyone, “feeling about an inch tall”, all the while working full time.

Don Johnson explained how within 3 years he went from having it all, to showing up on the steps at Cambridge Shelter on a cold night in December. He talked about his journey from being well-off with a large home and a good-paying job to losing it all to addictions when traumatic memories from his childhood surfaced and he began to suffer from



depression. Don talked about what it meant to him at that time when he had no other place to go, to have a warm place to sleep, a warm meal to eat, but more than that – to be welcomed without judgement. “This gave me hope.”

Cambridge Shelter would like to thank our sponsors, donors and guests for your eagerness to be part of the movement to change the conversation to one of social belonging and inclusion. You are making a difference!

To view video of our speakers, please [click here](#) to visit our website.



Official Sponsor



Sponsors:



Celebrating Christmas Eve at The Cambridge Mill

Everyone deserves to celebrate the holidays with a traditional meal, surrounded by caring people, warmth and joy. This past Christmas Eve, our dedicated community partner Cambridge Mill welcomed The Bridges to their beautiful restaurant, providing dinner to 300 people! The night included live music, a cozy fire, dinner, dessert and coffee prepared by the outstanding Cambridge Mill chef team, and a big group of kind-hearted people showing their compassion and dedication to our community.

A special thank you to Alex Kastner and Michelle Smith at Cambridge Mill for everything that went into planning and executing this truly lovely evening!



Anne Tinker, Michelle Smith & Alex Kastner

Yes! I want to help today! Please cut out this portion if you wish to make a donation.

Charitable Registration Number: **89025 9419 RR0001**

Donation online go to: cambridgesheltercorp.ca/get-involved/donate/

Please make cheques payable to: **Cambridge Shelter Corporation**

☐ \$25 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$250 ☐ \$500 ☐ Other \$ _____

☐ Sign me up as a Monthly Donor.

☐ 12 post-dated cheques enclosed

☐ Permission to charge my credit card

I may withdraw from the program at any time. Please provide 12-post-dated cheques or credit card information below.

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If you would like to receive the Newsletter by email, please include your email and check here ☐

Email: _____

Donations of \$10 or more will receive a tax receipt

Ask your employer about Employee Matching Programs

Imagine Canada's Standards Program

We're very pleased to be recognized as an accredited non profit agency by Imagine Canada. Imagine Canada's Standards Program launched in May 2012. Designed to strengthen public confidence in the charitable and not for profit sector, the Standards Program is among the first of its kind at a national level, offering accreditation to charities and non-profits that demonstrate excellence in the following five key areas:

- Board governance
- Financial accountability & transparency
- Fundraising
- Staff management
- Volunteer involvement

For further information please contact the Standards Program Coordinator at standards@imaginecanada.ca



Cambridge Shelter Corporation

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