



The RA Missive

JUNE 2018

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 2

Recovery Acres would like to thank Albert Health Service for our core funding as well as infrastructure support, and Alberta Human Services for funding for our individual clients.

Without their support and funding we wouldn't be able to do the work we do.

We also rely on donations from generous supporters.

If you'd like to donate to our program you can contact us directly or donate through:

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Notes from the ED

If you're reading this you're reading the second edition of the RA Missive and I would personally like to thank you all for taking the time to see what's happening here at Recovery Acres. We are off to a busy summer with staff taking advantage of myriad training opportunities, giving facility tours to other organizations and government agencies, fixing up the Robson Houses and doing all the usual business of operating a residential treatment facility.

Something struck me recently. Our deep fryer was acting up so Peter had someone in to see about repairs. In the process we found out that our deep fryer has been with Recovery Acres since we moved into this location in 1974! (Recovery Acres Society was established as a registered non-profit in 1972 but was originally out in the country, hence the "acres" then it moved to this current location in 1974.)

Firstly I found it quite remarkable that a piece of kitchen equipment used at least one a week was still operational up until a few weeks ago; secondly I got to thinking about how many men in recovery from drug and alcohol addiction have eaten fries or chicken fingers from that same fryer... then thirdly I got a little overwhelmed at the realization that *thousands* of men have come through this place over the last 44 years (46 counting before the move). And of those thousands of men we only know how a fraction of them are doing—we know about the ones that come back to see us and, unfortunately, we know about the ones who have passed away but the vast majority we have no contact with and really have no idea how they are doing.

I am hoping that moving forward we can change that.

One of the three ways in which we hope to strengthen our connection to graduates and past clients is through this newsletter. Over time we hope to grow our email list to include not just our community partners, Board members and recent clients, but also an ever growing list of past clients as well as their families.

We are also updating our website and social media platforms in order to better use technology to make it easier for former residents and the families of our residents past and present to keep in touch with us and see what is happening at Recovery Acres as well as what is happening in the recovery community around Edmonton (and Alberta and Canada when relevant).

And lastly we are planning on increasing the opportunities for former residents and their families to engage with current residents as well as staff by doing more community outreach and fundraising events (for example our Ride for Refuge in September, which you can read more about in this newsletter).

I don't know if the next deep fryer we get will last 44 years or if we will be in this same location for another 44 years and I know that I won't be here 44 years from



Recovery Acres hosts many 12 step meetings that are open to the community:

*Tuesday:
AA – 8:00
NA- 8:00*

*Thursday:
Crystal Meth
Anonymous – 7:30*

*Saturday:
NA – 1:00*

now—at least I hope I am retired before I hit 92—but I am confident that Recovery Acres Society will still be helping people with addiction and mental health issues. Maybe we will have expanded to include a program for women, maybe we will have a program that is specific to people involved in the corrections system, maybe a separate program for youth; hopefully we will have continued to address the gaps in the continuum of care by expanding the number of transitional housing beds we offer or maybe we will even have our own medical detox and stabilization facility.

Wherever we are and whatever we are doing we will require the continued support of our current partners and we will need to expand and grow our connections in the community and I hope that development will begin with a better network of graduates and the families of past and present clients.

Thanks again for taking the time to touch base with us and I hope that you are all able to enjoy a wonderful summer and take the time to relax and have fun with the people most important in your life.

All the best from all of us at Recovery Acres.

Jeremiah Aherne, Executive Director

Notes from the Board

Who are we and what do we do?

The board of Recovery Acres consists of a group of volunteers who donate their time to assist with the basic fundamentals of running a non for profit business. We are focused on the primary vision and mission statements created for the facility to ensure we keep true to our path.

Our Vision is and has been: Recovery Acres provides residential treatment, counseling and transitional housing for men with a history of addiction, who are motivated to develop and maintain a responsible, productive and healthy lifestyle.

Our Mission statement is: Our mission is to empower each of our residents to recover from addiction and re-enter society as a productive, law-abiding citizen, with a three month immersion treatment program of addiction awareness, life skills and Twelve Step Study, and additional three month program of relapse prevention and community transition and finally peer support based transitional housing in the community.



These are powerful statements and as a governance board we act with duty of care. Effective governance and strategy are integral to the sustainability and long-term effectiveness of a nonprofit operating in today's complex and competitive world.

To succeed, nonprofits (like all organizations) must continuously renew the link between what they do and the needs and interests of the community they serve. They must ensure that they are providing the services needed and valued by their clients and constituents, and in ways that are consistent with the organization's core values and principles. As the organization serves its clients and the community, governance involves making judgments about how well or poorly the organization is doing and then making choices about how it can be more effective.

We are so proud of our team, the success of our facility and the programming provided to our clients.

We wish your health and above all hope for your success and continued growth, living clean and sober.

One day at time we do recover.

Ride for Refuge

This fall, Recovery Acres is participating in the Ride for Refuge, a non-competitive bicycling and walking fundraiser with locations across Canada. We're joining with hundreds of other charitable partners like us who care for displaced, vulnerable and exploited people.



- Our goal is to raise \$20,000 for our residential treatment programs as well as our transitional housing program.
- To accomplish our goal we're looking for **Team Captains** (of all shapes, sizes and affiliations to Recovery Acres) to recruit 6-8 friends and raise a minimum of \$2000 per team.
- Of course, we're also looking for a whole pile of riders and walkers to join our teams and help us raise this critical **\$20,000**.
- **Will you join us?** We need you! What could be better than all of us squeezing into our spandex and sweating together while raising money for Recovery

Visit rideforrefuge.org to start or join a team online today! If you have any questions, please contact us:

Email Address:

beth@recoveryacresedmonton.org
bonnie@recoveryacresedmonton.org
jeremiah@recoveryacresedmonton.org

Notes from the clients

The Journey -

By Robb D.

The Journey of what has been the greatest period of my life to date began in Kelowna, 2017. I was spending three or four nights a week in the homeless shelter, and the remainder intoxicated on the streets, not having even a pot to piss in. I had heard about a program that had the power to change lives. I felt

What's a Missive?

Definition of missive:

: a written communication

: a letter, especially a long or official one

"The noun missive comes from the Latin word missus, meaning "to send." You may have heard the phrase, "fire off a missive," meaning a note, memo or dispatch that was written and sent with urgency and conveyed an important message."

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at that moment that I had been beaten enough. I was down and out and so willing to know change, I would have done anything to do anything. A friend of mine had come through Recovery Acres so I decide to make my way here, and after 12 days in detox, I enrolled in the program, clueless of what it was, or what was even being offered. All I knew was that I never wanted to use again, however I had no idea of what it would take to make that happen.

I was told, "It's simple. The only thing you need to change is everything." I didn't like myself, I had no real relationships of value, and fewer people willing to associate with me. I literally walked in with a handful of clothes and a chip on my shoulder. Lucky I met some people that were healthy and patient enough to love me when I couldn't love myself. I met Doug, the Recovery acres House Manager and there wasn't one word he could say that I wouldn't take seriously, like my life depended on it. He was the first person I met that had what I wanted.

Like many other clients before me, I was argumentative, stubborn and very closed off; I had an ego. I put my wishes and well-being at the front of the line. I spoke without thinking, I was rude, and I was struggling to listen, to really hear what was being offered to me. About a month into my recovery, something changed in me. This was also at the same time I would meet my three biggest supports of this journey. Beth took her time patiently watching me bounce ideas around, offering me advice, and gently guiding me to a more peaceful stare of mind. I am still just learning what my sober self is all about and her office is where I find who I am, who I am becoming and who I will continue to grow to be.

Brandon is a fellow Recovery Acres alumni and he remains my best friend today. We laugh, we cry, and we have learned what it means to be happy in recovery together.

I also met my sponsor, Clayton, at the Tuesday night meetings at Recovery Acres. He is another person who has what I want. He guides me through the steps, the book, and every struggle I have in my daily life.

I'm very grateful for all the staff at Recovery Acres. Each one has had a part in my recovery. Living in one of the Robson houses has been a good experience for me, helping me as I slowly integrate back into the community, back into everyday life, while having a healthy, safe place to come back to each day. At



Recovery Acres I found more than just my sobriety. Being here has allowed me to build a solid foundation and get the tools I need to live a healthy life.

Now people tell me how much of a change they have seen. And for the first time in my life, I can feel it too. Today I like myself.

Today I realize the best thing I can do to help myself is help another struggling addict. I am

not cured by any means. However, today I have a daily reprieve from my disease contingent on the maintenance of my spiritual condition. This is a spiritual journey not an intellectual challenge.

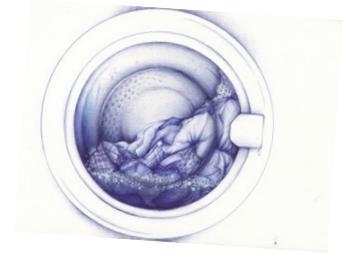
I'm so grateful to Recovery Acres and to Jeremiah for all the work he does to make this possible. I'm grateful to Beth for her unconditional patience and for knowing how to challenge me to get all I can from this journey. And I am

grateful to all the staff that continue to support me and others who want it. I am over 9 months into this journey and hope to one day to “have what someone else wants” so that I can share what worked for me. I am truly fortunate to be able to say that I changed my life and it all started with Recovery Acres.

Robson Houses

By Jonathan S.

If you're serious about recovery you may be giving your aftercare plan some heavy thought. I know I did.



I hadn't the faintest idea what to do once I finish the program at Recovery Acres, but after a quick chat with Beth, I was given applications to a multitude of sober living transitional housing options. I chose the Robson Houses as my first pick for a number of reasons: the rent is very reasonable; the houses are quite comfortable; but most important is the fact that you are still held accountable.

In the Robson Houses you still receive the same level of care as you did while living at Recovery Acres only with quite a bit more privacy and freedom to do whatever you want (to some extent), and the added benefit of having a few less personalities to deal with—you don't have to stress out about trying to track down who left their the clothes in the washer or complain about the food (because you cooked it!) If you're bored you're welcome to leave anytime you want to take in a meeting or two. I recommend you do this as much as possible while living in Robson housing because the only thing that's going to get in the way of your recovery is you.

Robson Houses will give you a pretty comfortable place to live while you do just that: live as a recovering human being.

Picture Gallery

As part of the Recovery Acres Life Skills Program's Communication week the clients go to an escape room. The clients learn communication skills, teambuilding and problem solving (and so far they've all managed to escape...)



Join our Ride for
Refuge
Campaign or
Donate to one of
our Teams



Every year Recovery Acres takes part in an annual block party with our neighbours. RA supplies the burgers and hot dogs and our neighbours supply the backyard, the salads and sides and the hospitality.



How to Reach Us



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