



Envoy

Summer 2008

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In Their Own Words Stories of Hope

"For the record, my name is Chad Andrew Hines.

I was asked to keep my story one paragraph but there are so many great things to say about E4C's Meadows Place.

Meadows Place changed and improved my life in so many ways. It doesn't feel like a group home. I have my own personal space. I mention space because I have a lot of it. When I tell people where I live I say, 'I'm renting a house with three other roommates.' Not entirely true but living in this house give me a sense of pride.

I've been here for around five years and to my family and friends I've grown a lot. In the beginning, I didn't feel like doing anything but living day to day. I wanted to be left alone. Just getting fresh air by walking to the main house for meals helped me get out of a slump. The positive care and attention makes Meadows Place a calm and soothing for the new residents. The staff are incredible! I can't stress this enough. The help and support the staff give is above and beyond any learned qualification. Their caring makes it a home.

When I came here, I wasn't ready for society in the sense of going to work or social functions. The opportunity to live and grow at my own pace made it easier when I was ready. Knowing that there isn't a time limit on my stay, and that I wasn't going to shipped off somewhere else just when I became fond of my new surroundings or people took a big load off of my mind.

At Meadows Place, we learn and practice the skills to become independent. Abiding by simple rules that would apply to any apartment complex or community living situation helped me with my treatment. Each resident has the responsibility of cooking and cleaning, with staff available to assist us if needed. Proper nutrition is essential for any human. For our benefit, staff drop by on a regular basis to make sure each household is a healthy environment for each individual. Meadows Place gets an A-PLUS.

If I were to asked to explain the best thing about Meadows Place...without a doubt I would say the staff every time. The extra effort and selfless times they put into making us happy can bring tears to my eyes. They make each of us feel like somebody. For some this is their only family.

How has it helped my family? Simple... they know I am happy and healthy and that gives them a great sense of relief.

Each staff here has truly touched my heart. They are kind, humble, hard working people who will be apart of my life forever in one way or another.

A special thanks to the staffPearl, Fiona, Morgan, Moe, Brenda, Joan, Margaret. Also to past staff: Scott, Leo, and Bernie, and to our Director of Housing, Sundari.



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If you have any comments or submissions for the newsletter please feel free to contact the Envoy editor, Judith Paquin. Call 424-7543, write to 9321 Jasper Avenue, Edmonton, AB T5H 3T7 or email: jpaquin@e4calberta.org



Words from the Executive Director

Ending Child Hunger

Imagine no hungry children in Alberta...

Reality is... there are many. For over thirty years E4C has offered for a series of programs and services that respond effectively and efficiently – in as far as finances allow – child nutrition programs. These include the School Lunch Program, Nutrition Snack Program, Breakfast Club, Snack in the Shack, Young Chefs, Coop Kitchen and other activity.

These programs provide essential nutrition to thousands of children facing food security issues every day. This is possible because of a loyal, generous and dedicated group of funders and donors – from orders of government to the United Way and Foundations to community clubs, volunteers, families and individuals.

Extensive research has documented the myriad of benefits of child nutrition programs. No one questions the value of results that clearly demonstrate that feeding children results in:

- Better school achievement
- A reduction in negative/disruptive behaviours and more positive child-teacher and child to peer interactions
- Increased participation in both classroom and extra-curricular activity
- Less stigmatism as a “poor kid” and more positive peer interactions

Some research suggests that school based nutrition services can result in greater parent engagement and stronger, more positive parent-child relationships

It currently costs about \$4 a day to provide a child with at least one nutritious meal and snack. Given the current economic factors, we can expect food costs and transportation costs to increase.

Rising costs will increase the pressures on families that are below and near the poverty line. This will lead to an increased need for child nutrition programs.

We at E4C are concerned about our ability to continue to provide food security to the kids participating in our current programs. We are painfully aware that we are only reaching about 1/3 of the children who do not have enough to eat.

Just a bit of a digression for those readers that don't know about E4C's child nutrition programs – we are not talking

about a foreign or 3rd world country – these are the hungry children of our communities. In affluent, booming Alberta, we have children who are hungry every day.

Working with many of our strong supporters and funders, we are undertaking a three-step plan of action:

1. adopting a strategic approach to the funding of current child nutrition programs through discussion and planning with major financial supporters
2. conducting a thorough review of demographics and need with our partners in both the Public and Catholic Schools and within the other settings where E4C feeds hungry children – though this, anticipating current and future need
3. advancing a sound plan for the elimination of child hunger – province-wide – forever through an all sector endowment

We are the wealthiest province in Canada. Enjoying recurring and sizeable annual provincial surpluses without a significant dialog about, nor made detailed plans, for the heritage we want to leave to the future.

By taking a modest percentage of one year's annual provincial surplus and then challenging the corporate sector and private donors to match the surplus contribution, we can achieve a Child Food Security endowment that would fund the necessary child nutrition programs to essentially ensure that there would be No Hungry Children in Alberta. Forever!

Now, isn't that a heritage that anyone could be proud of?

Imagine being a representative of government who can say to people in any other province or nation, “we have no hungry children in Alberta”. What could be a greater gift to the future? What could be a greater gift to child school success?

We would like to have your engagement on this issue – we want to hear what you think about the idea and our approach. We need your involvement to come up with the best way to end child hunger.

- Michael Farris

E4C celebrates 38 years of dedicated service to the community at its AGM on May 22, 2008

2007 marked our 38th year of responding to people in need. During our AGM we took the opportunity to honour and recognize our service users, our staff, our volunteers, our leaders, our supporters and benefactors. We reflected on our diversity: our continuing support of services to pregnant and parenting women, to pre-school children, to elementary, junior high and high school students, and to adults of all ages; how our work feeds the hungry and builds individual and community capacity; we have worked hard to end sexual exploitation, to shelter the homeless and offer a range of supportive and affordable housing services; our programs promoted early childhood learning, adult literacy and numeracy. Ultimately, we reflected on how E4C builds strong communities, individuals and families.

In keeping with this theme our guest speaker this year was, Audrey Poitras, President of the Métis Nation of Alberta, who is a champion of Métis identity, rights and recognition in Alberta and across Canada.

Her words had a profound impact on everyone in attendance; accordingly, we want to share her powerful message.

"I am happy to be in a room with so many people dedicated to a common goal – helping out our fellow citizens. You deserve kudos for what E4C has done to change lives of people for the better in Edmonton.

Our Métis Nation and E4C have always shared the ideal of improving the lives of others. The Metis Nation of Alberta and E4C have similar beginnings.

E4C is soon approaching 40 years as an organization which is a milestone for any organization. Like many good ideas E4C was created over food. The E4C was conceived during lunch hour by four clergymen who liked to meet twice a month to discuss theology and the plight of the people who lived around their churches – namely the inner city poor who lived on the streets.

This group of men wanted to do something to improve the lives of the people around them, so rather than just talk, they formed the non-denominational organization of E4C to develop programs to help those who needed help. Over the last 40 years E4C had the wisdom to include other community organizations in their endeavors.

Teamwork is a lot more efficient than going alone and E4C is proof action accomplishes more than talk. The evidence is in the established programs that have helped make Edmonton a much better place to live.

One thing that E4C started to do in the 1970s was feed children a healthy snack at school. It doesn't sound like a revolutionary thing to do but what a difference food makes. The children who received a snack were able to concentrate on learning and their behaviour improved. It is creative thinking an implementing projects like this is why we are here tonight celebrating E4C.

The Métis Nation of Alberta has a similar story to its development. It started with five Métis men who wanted to improve the lives of Métis people. I think it would be safe to say the men met several occasions over food to discuss issues facing the day.

The men pushed the Alberta government to do a Commission on how Métis people lived throughout the province in the late 1920s. This was at a time when Métis were known as half-breeds. Half-breeds were ignored by both European Settlers and First Nations people for not belonging to either group.

The Alberta Government listened to the group now known as the Big Five and formed the Ewing Commission to study the plight of the



Audrey Poitras, President of the Métis Nation of Alberta, accepts a gift of original artwork by the youth of the Kids in the Hall Program from Kristin Morra, E4C Board President, after her speech.

Métis in Alberta. This led to the beginnings of self-government with the establishment of the Métis Association of Alberta. The Association continued to grow by developing and implementing programs to create opportunities for people to improve their lot in life. The Association eventually became the Métis Nation of Alberta, an organization that has flourished and created programs to help people get an education, find employment and have a place to live. The Métis Nation of Alberta is a strong proponent of rights with our right to harvest for food being at the forefront of these rights.

These last few years the Métis Nation of Alberta and E4C worked together to achieve similar goals and to help people help themselves. Our Labour Market Development unit has worked very closely with E4C to improve the lives of people through training & employment. The partnerships have helped young people learn skills for the workforce, and provided women in emergency shelter with employment readiness supports.

Years before celebrity chef Jamie Oliver had the idea to take unemployable youths and give them the skills to work in the restaurant industry E4C had the vision to create a program to help youth learn the skills needed for working in a restaurant. In 1995 E4C partnered with many government organizations and community agencies to develop the Kids in the Hall Bistro. The bistro was open for business the following year and it is good to see young people who felt hopeless graduate from the Kids in the Hall program with skills that will help them for the rest of their lives. Many of these youths came from a life of poverty, were involved in criminal activities, and abused substances. In 2002-03 the Métis Nation of Alberta

came aboard as a partner to sponsor the many Métis youth who access the Kids in the Hall Bistro with hopes to make a new life with skills for the workforce and the counseling to help deal with life.

E4C's Women Moving Forward is another project the Métis Nation of Alberta funds in partnership with Alberta Employment & Industry. This project provides employment counseling, training and job development on site at E4C's Elizabeth House and Women's Emergency Accommodation Centre. These shelters are so important because in times of need there has to be a sanctuary for those escaping domestic violence or unsafe streets. While these women try to better their lives it is important they can access career development activities and set goals in a safe environment. This project allows women to develop such goals where they are comfortable and with an organization that truly understands their needs. Aboriginal women in Canada are five times more likely to die of violence than their non-aboriginal counterparts according to Amnesty International. This is a startling and sad statistic and all we need to do is look no further than our daily newspapers to see violence against aboriginal women. To provide a sanctuary for women looking to escape violence and hopefully pursue aspirations of sustainable employment is something the Métis Nation of Alberta is proud to support and will continue to support.

In a province of prosperity not everyone is prosperous. The income gap between the rich and the poor has been something economists have spoken about since the birth of the economy. The French Revolution occurred because the peasants watched their leaders squander money on their extravagant objects while the peasants worried about where their next meal was coming from.

In recent years in the North American economy, the rich have become richer while the poor become poorer. Many people arrive in Alberta believing it to be an escape from low wages and an opportunity for a new life. Unfortunately, we watched housing prices soar rapidly, the cost of bread rise and the cost of gas double since the boom began in Alberta. Leaving people without a place to call home, including the working poor.

Our economy would fall apart without people working in the service industry and our economy depends on the labour of the working poor. The next time you are shopping at Superstore or any of the big box stores that dot the outskirts of our city you could be served by someone who is homeless. Why should someone who puts in an honest day's work not have anywhere to go after they are finished their shift of dealing with sometimes crabby customers? It makes very little sense. E4C was one of the strongest advocates for helping people living on the streets to find a safe place to sleep at night. It is also the wish of the Metis Nation to see a roof over everyone's head and a safe place for people to call home.

E4C knows action is louder than words and you should be proud of your beginnings and what you have helped people do in the past, what you are doing in the present. And I know good things are to come in the future. We will continue to work with E4C to improve the lives of our fellow citizens for the betterment of the future.

Thank you and keep up the good work."

Heritage Naming Presentations

At our AGM we continued our tradition of honouring and recognizing long time leaders and benefactors of E4C by naming rooms and buildings after those individuals who made significant contributions to E4C.

The naming of these rooms reflects our sincere gratitude for the important contributions made by these individuals. Their courage and conscientious efforts over the years on E4C's behalf were of great benefit to us all. Their understanding of community problems led to compassionate actions that have contributed to the betterment of individual lives and the community as a whole.

Linda Manuel Room

Linda Manuel passed away January 19th, 2008 after a one year struggle with cancer. Linda dedicated her life to E4C's WEAC for 28 years. Her endless patience and selflessness helped thousands of women. Linda Manuel was the heart and soul of WEAC and a corner stone in the foundation of E4C. She was the great protector countless women and a very dear friend to those who knew her.

Linda endlessly gave to all. Her dedication and tireless efforts shined through all her good work. Linda held the hands of women while they waited for the ambulance; she gave comfort to those who feared fear the worst. Countless times she bandaged and cared for women after they slashed their arms to express their pain. She always listened to them.

Linda touched the lives of thousands of women in the Edmonton community and she will be greatly missed by all.

We renamed the current staff office at WEAC, to the Linda Manuel Room, in recognition of Linda's dedication and efforts on behalf of the WEAC, the community and E4C.

Liz & P.J. Duggan Gym

Liz and P.J. Duggan devoted their time and lives to community development. Their understanding of community issues led to compassionate actions that benefited individuals and the community as a whole. Their devotion to helping kids and their commitment to sports and athletics enhanced the lives of countless people and the community. They inspired a generation and devoted their time to the building character of young people.

Liz passed away this past winter after a courageous battle with cancer. Liz devoted her life to her family, while also committing herself to helping young people and making our community a healthy place to live.

P.J. is a long time Board member and supporter of E4C. He retired from the Edmonton Police Service in 2007 with the rank of Superintendent, and was awarded the Order of Merit of the Police Forces that same year. P.J. has always shown his commitment to our community through his work, volunteerism and integrity.

We renamed the Gym at the E4C Head Office located at Alex Taylor School, to the Liz & P.J. Duggan Family Gym, in recognition of their tireless efforts on behalf of the community and E4C.



Linda's son, Wilfred Giroux, accepts a plaque on behalf of Linda's family.

Our Supporters...

Making a Difference...



Loretta Fontana, decided to celebrate her 50th birthday in an inspirational way; in lieu of gifts, she asked her guests to donate to the School Lunch Program.

Loretta told us, "As a child, I envied kids with lunchboxes and school money. I always thought about what I would do when I grew up and had kids. If I had enough I would be sure to share. If I didn't, I would find out how to help in other ways!"

Over the years, she could not imagine a child not eating. "My sons always had good lunches for school or at home, but I wanted it for all children. I saw that kids who ate properly did better at school, sports and stayed out of trouble." Working as a Teachers Aide, she saw exactly how important nutrition is for concentration.

As a member of St Thomas More Church, Loretta was inspired by their School Lunch special collection. "A light bulb went off. I decide on a 'lunch bag invitation' for my 50 birthday in lieu of gifts," she says. "I was excited to send out the invitations and so ecstatic to receive positive feedback and donations."

\$1,660 was raised for the Lunch Program. "It was my absolute pleasure, and am working on another project for my workplace," says Loretta. "Plus I am Italian, EAT EAT EAT."

REALTORS' Community Foundation Rides for Kids

Ride for Kids kicks off with Bike Nights every Wednesday from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM, from May 14 to August 13, 2008 at the Ranch Roadhouse. Enjoy a fun filled evening, which includes a burger BBQ and nightly prize draws.

It all began in 2005 when a group of Realtors and friends who were motorbike enthusiasts combined their love of riding with raising money for kids and supporting those in need.

Since then, over \$125,000 was raised, thanks to our great sponsors and dedicated riders who continue to support us every year.

This year, they will be riding to Golden, BC via Jasper, a 3-day ride leaving on August 15 for Jasper and returning home on August 17, 2008.

Please join in on this fantastic fun ride and help raise money for Edmonton's School Lunch Program .

Raffle tickets are also available for a custom Kawasaki Vulcan 900 through either Victoria Powluk at E4C, 424-7543 ext 116 or the REALTORS' Foundation.

If you are interested, please contact Melanie Boles @ 462-5000, or by e-mail at: melanieboles@remax.net. You can also check out their web site at: www.ereb.com-realtorsfoundation/about.html for more information on the ride.

Law Show Supports Child Nutrition

On January 18 and 19, the Faculty of Law held their annual cabaret fundraiser, The Law Show, in support of the Nutrition Snack Program. This show raised over \$30,000 to help feed over 6,200 children in our Nutrition Snack Program.

This dedicated group has been committed to supporting our program for the last three years and offers the show to all-ages. It is staged entirely by the students and faculty of the Faculty of Law at the University of Alberta. It includes dramatic and musical performances, featuring satire and parody directed at the legal profession and was held at the Myer Horowitz Theatre, on the University of Alberta campus.

Thank you, Faculty of Law!

For more information on the Nutrition Snack Program visit our website at: www.e4calberta.org/nutritionsnack

Student Profile Breanne Evanisky

Making a Difference



After completing my first year of the Social Work Program at Grant MacEwan, I was faced with the challenge of choosing my field placement for my upcoming final year of the program. I knew that I wanted to work with children and families—as this relates to my long-term goals—and I wanted to gain a broader understanding of the challenges of low-income families. I also wanted to learn more about parenting and early childhood development. After doing some research I came across Early Head Start. I was intrigued by their philosophy on supporting families and I was also immediately drawn to the client centered model. I decided that Early Head Start seemed like a wonderful place to learn and to further develop my professional self. My placement began in September 2007.

I was completely caught off guard by the genuine warmth and interest that the team welcomed me with. My supervisor never failed to amaze me over the following eight months with her dedication, enthusiasm, and genuine care for the families we worked with.

Over the course of my placement I co-facilitated and helped plan weekly parent groups. I participated in playgroup activities with the parents and children and accompanied my supervisor on eye-opening home visits with numerous families. On my days in the Early Head Start office I participated in monthly parent and play group planning meetings and monthly staff meetings. I also had the privilege of participating in monthly day-long debriefs between our team leader, the parent and the play group consultants from the four Early Head Start sites. These debriefs were an incredible learning

experience for me, as I got to hear from different consultants on the challenges and positives they were experiencing with their families. I was able to observe such an involved team helping one another through feedback and support.

A huge amount of the learning I accomplished over the past eight months came through exposure, both directly and indirectly, to the families in the Edmonton area. I had no idea the societal and systemic challenges that low-income families face living in our community. I also learned a great deal about parenting, child development and the wonderful resources available within E4C and through other supports within Edmonton. And since there was a new focus on cultural competence within the program, I ended up gaining an unexpected amount of knowledge about the different cultures in our community and what a family's culture means to them and the way they raise their children.

Overall, my field placement with Early Head Start was everything I wanted and more. The cohesion and support within this team is remarkable. E4C's Early Head Start truly embodies the values of this organization: Courage, Compassion, Connection, Commitment.

- Breanne Evanisky

E4C Programs Include:

Child & Youth Nutrition
Edmonton's School Lunch
Nutrition Snack
Snack in the Shack

Child & Family Success
ArtStart
Clareview Head Start
Early Head Start

Community Mental Health
Laboucane Place
Macdonald Place
McCauley Apartments
Meadow's Place
Our Place
Sorensen Place

Places to Call Home
G-C Place
Gold Nugget Suites
Our Other Place
Stollery Place

**Youth Services, Housing
& Job Training**
Crossroads House
Kids in the Hall Bistro
Northeast Teen Centre

**Emergency & Transitional
Services**
Crossroads House Too
Crossroads Outreach
Elizabeth House
Holmes Place
WEAC

Founded in 1970, E4C is a registered charitable human services organization.

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