

Young and Old Working Together

BY PIERRE BARBEAU, DIRECTOR

During the last three years, we have received substantial funding from Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) to hire youth interns who work with local charitable and non-profit organizations we support throughout Canada. Their salaries are completely paid for by HRSDC. The 23 young people we have hired are working directly with seniors living in poverty. They are employed on a full-time basis for a period of eight months so you can just imagine how many needy elderly people they are helping.

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MIRAMICHI, NB

Internet Dating at 82?

BY ERICA SIMMONDS
 HELP THE AGED INTERN

Half an hour after Jack McLean came into the VON foot care clinic in Miramichi, he was chatting with Help the Aged intern
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Katie McCormack with Jack McLean.

WILLIAMS LAKE, B.C.

No running water, no electricity and just a tiny propane heater.

The following letter to Help the Aged was written by Sarah Spring Stump. We have supported Sarah's organization (Abraham's Lodge and Care Society) in Williams Lake, BC, since 1992.

Hi Pierre,

Thank you for the cheque and for paying the bill for the delivery of the dry goods from Rogers Foods.

It is very humbling to go out past Riske Creek and find Herbert and his partner Edith living in this wee tiny shack

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Edith and Herbert in their Riske Creek home near Williams Lake, B.C.

\$50,000 Grant Received from BMO Nesbitt Burns

Help the Aged was very grateful to receive a \$50,000 grant from Nesbitt Burns to support our Elderly In Need program which provides assistive devices such as wheelchairs, hearing aids and eyeglasses to seniors living in poverty. The program also provides support for services such as dental work and respite care. Assistance is provided to seniors throughout Canada living in poverty who are referred to Help the Aged by local



health workers and social workers. Help the Aged pays for expenses not covered by provincial/federal levels of government.

Included in the photo from left to right are Pierre Barbeau, Executive Director, Help the Aged with Michael Castledine, Nesbitt Burns Division Manager; Betty Gittens, Help the Aged Board member; Whit Tucker, Nesbitt Burns Vice-President and Investment Advisor, and Rudy Gittens, Help the Aged Board member.

No running water ... (continued from page 1)

in what one would have to call a pile of disaster in the snow. Each shack they have lived in these past years has burned to the ground. This tiny shack is 10 feet by 16 feet long. No running water, no electricity and just a tiny propane heater sits on a tin pail, but the room is too tiny to take a picture of it all.

My heart ached to see that after all these years of trying to help our aboriginal neighbours that indeed not many people can identify with this type of hardship therefore many become hard hearted to the problem.

Edith is close to being somewhere around 75 years old. Her guess she told me was 82 years but not really sure. Edith does get a pension for old age.

This is Edith's 'workshop' where she stores leather hides used for her arts and crafts products.



Herbert is about 47 years old and for years had been nearly blind. He didn't go to school and was also deaf. When he was in his teens, they sent him to have his eye-sight corrected. You can see that Herb needed a home and someone to care for him and as well Edith, our dear elder, needed also someone to help her and care for her.

What can we do to help? This is Canada. We regularly take out several boxes of food and meat, and green plastic bags full of pillows and blankets.

Can we help people like Herb and Edith? We asked Herb and Edith if we could write to you about their story and they were pleased to tell us yes!



Pastor Timothy Meisenheimer is responsible for the Capital Mission in Ottawa. We began providing financial support for the elderly poor visiting the Capital Mission last year. They are the newest members of our Canadian "family".

Help the Aged intern Joanne Fernandes (HTA T-Shirt) was assigned for an eight month period to St. Christopher's House in Toronto to assist with their Meals on Wheels program and the Older Adult Centre.



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Their job descriptions include everything from arranging flu shots to helping with Meals on Wheels. Your generous support is used to pay for wheelchairs, hearing aids, crutches, eye glasses, dental services and medications.

One of the benefits of this program is that both the elderly and the young benefit from sharing with one another. Seniors benefit from the services provided and the interns learn a great deal from the elderly. Also, they develop friendships which are mutually beneficial.

According to Statistics Canada, over 647,000 seniors in Canada live below the poverty line. Thank you for considering to support elderly Canadians living in poverty through Help the Aged.

Internet Dating at 82? ... (continued from page 1)

Katie McCormack about everything from her family to the fact that he had never married. "I couldn't believe that", says Katie, 22. "He said he didn't have much of a chance now, because he's 82". She jokingly suggested he check out Internet dating sites. He laughed and said he didn't think women would be interested in a man his age.

Miramichi is a small community and when visitors like Jack first meet Katie, they have to know who she is and who she's related to, says Shauna Bowie, a registered nurse who works with Katie. After a couple of minutes, they usually find a relative, friend or neighbour they both know, which creates a bond.

Jack is an example of the seniors Katie speaks with during her internship with VON Canada. The majority of clients are over 80 years old. There is a large group of Second World War veterans who receive care on a regular basis – quite a few of whom are over 90.

Before Katie came to work at the Miramichi office, telephone calls were transferred to Bathurst, which many of the clients found frustrating, says Shauna. Having Katie has been a great help, and it "adds a younger point of view".

Katie is very good at dealing with the public, and is not afraid to make conversation, explains Shauna. When Shauna's in her office, she can hear Katie talking and laughing with the clients. "She's very bubbly and friendly and they really respond to her as a young person".



Part of Help the Aged intern Laura Turner's responsibility at The Good Companions is to accompany seniors living in poverty on their bi-weekly grocery bus program. Seniors who are unable or can't afford the transportation costs to pick up their groceries greatly appreciate this service. As Laura noted, "the grocery bus helps with more than groceries. It connects people to one another who otherwise would be struggling alone".

Wendy McCarl (right) at The Mission in Ottawa, a shelter for homeless men. "Many Canadians live from pay check to pay check – really only one step away from the Mission".



Christine Acton (left) finds that one of the most challenging aspects of her position as an outreach worker with the Centretown Community Health Centre is trying to motivate seniors who have addictions to change how they've been living most of their lives.

She also describes how loneliness is another important problem she deals with: "Participants find tremendous benefits from socializing with other seniors. One participant described to me the significance of the group support she received during her battle with cancer. By talking to others with serious problems, she realized that she wasn't alone in her struggles. She also improved her physical recovery by participating in an exercise class offered at the Centre".



Line Robichaud recently completed her eight month internship with le P.A.S. de la rue in Montreal which assists isolated seniors living in poverty. Line wrote "I quickly realized that I was learning a great deal about life's challenges from the seniors who visited our facility on a regular basis. The devastation caused by alcohol abuse, gambling and other addictions changed their lives and their family relations and many wished they could have a chance to start over. Despite their age, it is very important for them to believe that they still have the potential to change for the better".



Every winter, Rogers Foods donates a container full of flour, rice and other food products to Abraham's Lodge. Shipping costs are paid by Help the Aged. This photo shows the container backing up at the Lodge to unload.



Sarah Stump is shown delivering food (and clothing) at Edith and Herbert's home. They also care for homeless people who live with them at Abraham's Lodge.

Local volunteers unload the donated food which is stored for distribution at a later date.



Teamwork!

BY PIERRE BARBEAU, DIRECTOR

Help the Aged began supporting Sarah and Danny Stump's charitable organization (Abraham's Lodge) in Williams Lake in 1992 following an Associated Press article which described their work with the poor. The article described the level of destitution in reserves near Williams Lake and how Sarah and Danny were dedicating their lives to make a difference. Both of them were later awarded the Caring Canadian award by the Governor General of Canada.

I must confess that I was a bit skeptical before I first arrived in Williams Lake fourteen years ago. Surely the reports about living conditions for seniors must have been exaggerated. I was shocked to find people living in similar conditions that I had seen in developing countries. I became an instant convert to Sarah and Danny's cause.

We have continued to assist Abraham's Lodge and Care Society in many different ways from purchasing donated cattle to paying for the shipment to Williams Lake of flour, rice, etc. donated by Rogers Foods. These photos illustrate the teamwork involved in this process.

Simple acts of humanitarian aid and charity as shown in the photos have been repeated over and over again by local volunteers since Abraham's Lodge was founded.

With your ongoing support, we hope to continue helping and encouraging Sarah and Danny's team for many years to come.

Thank You for Caring!

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