

Support the Champions Centre

Editor, The Bulletin;

We have reached very exciting, yet challenging times. The exciting news is that The Alberta Secretariat for Action on Homelessness has just released "A Plan for Alberta - Ending Homelessness in 10 Years". The challenge will be rolling out the strategies during a time of financial restraint due to economic times at hand.

Despite all of this, there is reason to celebrate. The Champion's Centre is actively pursuing start up in Brooks to help address a housing shortage. The Champion's Centre is more than just a place to hang your hat. They offer a homelike atmosphere, friendship and support to those struggling to live on their own. The struggle to live independently can be one of many reasons such as a limited income, unemployment, physical or mental illness, loneliness and lack of support.

I have been privileged to visit the Champion's Centre in Ponoka and was instrumental in bringing a similar centre to Medicine Hat some years ago. At the time I was the Chair of the Crisis Assistance Network, a social network of individuals, agencies and organizations working together to address poverty and the impact of it in our community. The community has been very supportive of the Centre and has witnessed the safe secure home provided to the men living there.

Over time the Champion's Centre outgrew its first location and has expanded trying to meet the need of men who require extra support to live happy and fulfilling lives in our community. These men have seen an improvement in their physical health, living in a safe and secure environment with healthy nutritious meals. They have improved in their mental health with support, regular medication and outreach services. The Champion's Centre offers spiritual guidance and support for those who might be interested, but it is not a requirement for the men to join any services or bible studies.

The men feel genuinely respected and eagerly participate in the day to day operations of running any home. Their self-esteem and well being have improved greatly.

Supportive housing is one strategy to help deal with homelessness. Get on board the Champion's Centre bandwagon and help make it a reality! Offer your support as a volunteer, neighbor, and friend.

"Mental health matters"

Lois Bourassa,
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