

Ritchie Community League

Dear Friends and Neighbours of Ritchie,

This is our first newsletter! We are thrilled to be part of your community and wanted to let you know what is going on at the temporary 24/7 Southside Shelter.

Firstly, we are so very thankful for the overwhelming support from your community! This has been a remarkable experience and it is so great to see people wanting to help everyone living in the community of Ritchie.

times we have provided respite for people seeking shelter since opening on November 2, 2020

3,647

We opened November 2nd, and since that date we have provided respite for people seeking shelter for a total of 3,647 times. Of these 3647 people, 2784 identified as men, 845 as women and 15 as other. Amongst these folks, 28 identified as veterans.

WE HAVE MANY FUN AND EXCITING THINGS GOING ON TO SUPPORT THE PEOPLE WHO ARE STAYING WITH US:

- Board Games, Cards, Cribbage
- Movies
- Crafts and Fine Art
- Bingo
- Our art project with Lewis Lavoie who is a local artist with many famous art pieces around the world

We are also providing much needed wellness assistance including:

- 1 Community Paramedics visit several times per week and assist with needed wound care, doctor referrals, and other medical supports.
- 2 Pharmacy support is available at the site for folks who are prescribed regular, non-narcotic medications. Access to important medication is provided to people experiencing homelessness who would not have it due to loss of ID, proximity to a pharmacy, low mobility or mental illness.
- 3 Our EPS Beat Officers come in, visit and spend time with community getting to know each other and breaking down barriers.

Thank you to all those who have been donating or inquiring on how to better support the shelter space.

HERE IS A LIST OF OUR CURRENT NEEDS:

- granola bars
- fruit cups
- juice boxes
- underwear (men's and women's sizes l-xxl)
- long johns
- coats
- boots
- sweatpants
- socks
- gloves
- toothpaste
- toothbrushes
- shampoo & conditioner
- combs/brushes
- packages with pencil crayons and adult colouring pages/books (running low)



VOLUNTEER NEEDS:

Meal servers; coffee server; chess/cards/checker players; crafters; shower attendants (handing out towels, soap and shampoo); Indigenous Elder to facilitate smudging, beading, Cree lessons, talking circles, etc; skilled leaders for programs, such as morning stretches, crafts, etc.

If you feel so inclined or have some spare time and would like to visit, please contact our Volunteer Services department at volunteeredmonton@theseed.ca or log into www.theseed.ca and click Edmonton and Volunteers and complete the forms.

GOOD NEWS STORIES

An older mom with two sons who are developmentally delayed came to us looking for a place to sleep as they are experiencing homelessness. They were all symptomatic with signs of flu or Covid-like symptoms. They were very afraid of being separated as they rely on each other. The isolation team came and took them to an isolation site all together so as to lessen the stress and not break up the family unit! We were so thankful that they could get well and are now back in our community.

Two of our community have found jobs in the last 30 days! It is so exciting to see when people are stabilized and can get a good night sleep and access to basic necessities how they can move forward.

As well, three people are housed!! This is SUPER exciting! Our wellness advocates are at the shelter five days a week and are there to assist people with obtaining ID, or getting on EI or AISH in order to get income to get into housing. This is amazing as the follow up support workers will walk with these people for one year to help them with the adjustment period and whatever else may arise.



DID YOU KNOW...

We are one of the few shelters that offer couples sleeping quarters. This is one of the reasons many people do not go to shelters is they are separated into men's and women's sleeping quarters or completely different shelters and cannot be with their spouse/significant other. These mats are full every night with couples in long-term committed relationships

Our Old Strathcona Clean Team has made a concerted effort to come and clean around the Shelter and the neighbouring businesses in order to mitigate any litter our community may leave behind! This Old Strathcona Clean team is part of our employment program at The Seed. We train folks who may not have worked in sometime, or require retraining, to go out on their specific routes and clean our city. We have teams in China Town, McAuley and Old Strathcona.

Thank you everyone, on behalf of The Mustard Seed and our Shelter Staff and Participants!