

## Fashion Show Rocked the Runway!

In June, Kelowna's Gospel Mission staff and volunteers 'suited up' for our first annual Helping Hands Thrift Store Fashion Show at The Habitat! Wearing only clothes which had been donated to the thrift store, the 15 'models' walked the runway, with all proceeds raised going towards an air purifier for our men's dorm.



After the fashion show, there was a charity auction with items from our thrift store, including a low-rider bicycle, a black gown worn in the show, and a talking Donald Trump doll!

We're always looking for volunteers for our events! If you'd like to participate, please call Sonja Nelson at 250-763-3737, extension 204.

We can keep you on a list of special volunteers who help to make these great events a success!



## Bikeathon 2009 was a great success!

*Our second annual 30k Club Bikeathon was a great success this year, with beautiful weather and a great turnout. This year, we added a wrap-up BBQ to the day's events, which was generously supplied by Divine Feast Catering. In total, we raised over \$15,000 for the 30k Club!*

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Kelowna's  
Gospel Mission

# Our Mission... Your Mission.

Your donations at work

Newsletter

August 2009

## Feeling Whole Again- Joseph's Story

It may not have always been easy, but Joseph has made it this far, and credits his faith with where he is today. After a life filled with struggling with addiction, he made his way to Kelowna's Gospel Mission, where he says he feels safe, welcome, and loved unconditionally.

Joseph was born in New Brunswick, and moved to Prince Edward Island when he was four. He and his family were very involved with the Catholic Church, and in New Brunswick, he was an altar boy until the age of 11. However, this was when Joseph's life took a turn for the worse. After the death of his 3 month old nephew, Joseph began to question God, his faith, his family, and everything which had previously seemed so secure. He fell into a young life of alcoholism, and wound up on the cold, unwelcoming streets in Toronto, Ontario. "It's easy to get lost and hide on those streets," he recalls. In Toronto, he received several drinking driving convictions, and in 1971, he moved to Kelowna.



Joseph and Veronica

In Kelowna, Joseph's drinking problems continued. For 20 years, he found himself drunk nearly every day, but never found help because he continued to maintain a full-time job. Meeting with a Christian friend one day, Joseph unloaded his burden. "Do you want to be a part of God's family?", his friend asked. Together they prayed, and asked for God's forgiveness, and to take away Joseph's endless desire to drink. "I haven't touched a drop since that day", says Joseph, with a smile in the corners of his lips.

But Joseph's struggles weren't over. After sustaining an injury that took him out of the workforce, Joseph found himself in the Downtown East Side of Vancouver. "Being there sure has a lot of bad influences", recalls Joseph. "Addictions prey on the weaknesses of those poor men and women." He tried to become a friend to his neighbours, and encourage them to become better. But it was a struggle to help the street people, and after three years, he gave up, and returned to Kelowna.

In Kelowna, Joseph found himself without any form of social network. Without shelter or a job, he came to Kelowna's Gospel Mission, to seek help and encouragement. There he met Veronica, a case worker. "I felt the love of God in the Mission", he says, "I was meant to come here." Veronica worked hard to ensure that Joseph wasn't just housed, but that he truly dealt with his addictive behaviour once and for all. "It had now turned into a gambling addiction", says Joseph.

Joseph is now living in Downtown Kelowna, in an apartment that Veronica found for him. When his health allows it, he volunteers in the Kelowna's Gospel Mission kitchen, serving and dishwashing. "I really enjoy being here", Joseph says. "I finally feel worthwhile and accepted. I am in the right place, where I need to be."

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Thank you Capri Rotary!



We would like to take the opportunity to thank the Rotary Club of Kelowna Foundation for their recent generous donation of an industrial refrigerator for our kitchen. This new refrigerator will be used to store food items when our large walk-in cooler is inaccessible.

A lot of people do not realize that many of the men who stay at the Mission are working or actively seeking employment as they move toward stability in their lives. To assist them in this process, we provide bag lunches for them to take with them to work. As well, we keep "late suppers" in the fridge for those whose work schedules don't allow them to eat at the normal dinner hour. Their lunches and suppers are kept in this new cooler. Thank you again Rotary, for your part in helping to lead people into wholeness.

**KELOWNA'S GOSPEL MISSION: HELPING SERVE THOSE LEFT HOMELESS IN THE 2009 WEST KELOWNA FIRES**

Kelowna's Gospel Mission has been one of the premiere providers of service to those in need for over 30 years, and for that reason we have been called into action to help our community once again. We have sent 14 members of our staff to be trained by the Red Cross to do emergency registrations and recovery-phase ongoing care.

From immediate action in Terrace Mountain to post-fire clean-up in West Kelowna, there are innumerable ways in which we will be contributing to the recovery efforts for the wildfires of 2009. Our Executive Director, Randy Benson, has joined the District of West Kelowna Community Needs Committee for the fire recovery efforts. He will be representing Kelowna's Gospel Mission on that committee, and will help to ensure that our resources will be used wherever possible to aid those still struggling with the after-effects of the fires. The funds that were raised for the recovery process have been earmarked for ongoing expenses related to the fires, including additional staffing, facilities, and equipment use costs.

**COST FREE DENTAL CLINIC CELEBRATES ITS FIRST FULL MONTH**

For the last year, Kelowna's Gospel Mission had been running two-week rotations of UBC Dental Residents in our fully-equipped dental clinic; in those clinics, we offered cost-free dental services to those under a certain income level.

We are proud to announce that on July 6th, the clinic opened full-time, Monday to Friday, 8am to 4pm.

What this means is that families can now access dental care which they previously were unable to afford. One such person is Kerry, a single mother of one young boy. "Before I had my teeth fixed, I would always smile with my mouth closed", says Kerry. "It was really bad, and it was a major insecurity. My three front teeth were nearly rotting out. When my son first saw me after getting them fixed, all he could say was 'Mum, you look so different!'".

**At Kelowna's Gospel Mission, we are making an effort to ensure that your requests are reflected in our communications efforts.**

If you have a preference for the number of fundraising mailings you receive throughout the year, please fill out this portion and return it to the address below. Please allow 6-12 weeks for changes to take effect. Also, unaddressed mailings and newsletters will not be reflected in your selection.

I would like to receive (please check only one):

- One Christmas mailing
- Monthly donor mailings
- Holiday mailings (Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter)
- One Thanksgiving mailing
- All mailings

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please cut out and return to: Kelowna's Gospel Mission, PO Box 22087 Capri PO Kelowna BC, V1Y 9N9



The clinic's Dental Director, Shirley Goebel, acknowledges that this couldn't have been possible without the support of the local dental community, as well as all the donors who helped with housing and a vehicle for the resident, and equipment and funds for the clinic itself.

Major donors to the clinic have included Patterson Dental, Webster Group, Progeny Dental, Dental Ez, Henry Schein, Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance, and the Kelowna and District Dental Society. To be involved, call Shirley Goebel at 250-763-3737.

**Shiloh House Renovations**

Thanks to your donations, and generous donations and volunteer hours from the Home Depot Team and Capri Rotary, we've recently renovated the basement at Shiloh House, our women's transitional home. We will now be able to house at least two more women, or potentially a woman with children. The space downstairs is now bright, open, and completely redone, just waiting to serve as a haven for women who have graduated from our women's recovery program at Harmony House.



The men who made it happen: (from left to right) Corey Pilling (Home Depot), Glen Fraser, Brian Elliot, Len Custance, John Mullock (All from Capri Rotary), Randy Benson (Executive Director)