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We thank Mail-O-Matic for donating resources to print this colour newsletter



Message from Julian

This summer's newsletter features Stacey's story.

As you read about her journey, I hope you'll see something that we witness often at Our Place: lasting change rarely happens all at once. More often, it happens one step at a time.

Before coming to New Roads, Stacey experienced housing instability, addiction, significant health challenges, and all the uncertainty that comes with simply trying to get through each day. Today, she is nearly 15 months sober, employed through one of our social enterprises, rebuilding relationships with her family, and helping others find their own way forward.

Her story is inspiring, but it is also something more than that. It is a reminder of what becomes possible when people

have access to the right support at the right time.

At Our Place, we often talk about the Pathway of Support. We know that people arrive at different points and with different needs. For some, the journey begins with a hot meal, a shower, a visit to a nurse, or a conversation with a member of our outreach team. For others, it starts with shelter, housing, recovery, or mental health support. Wherever someone enters that pathway, our goal is the same: to help people move from surviving to thriving.

Stacey's journey included supportive housing, recovery support through the New Roads Women's Therapeutic Recovery Community, meaningful employment, ongoing connection, and the opportunity to rebuild relationships with the people she loves. None of those steps happened in isolation. Together, they formed a pathway towards stability, health, and hope.

One of the things Stacey's story reminds us is that recovery does not end when treatment ends. In many ways, that is when the next chapter begins. For women leaving treatment, access to safe, supportive housing and a community of encouragement can make all the difference between maintaining recovery and returning to old patterns.

That is why we continue to invest in recovery programs, housing, employment opportunities, and family reconnection. We know that lasting change is most likely when people have support at every stage of their journey.



The work is rarely about a single program or intervention. More often, it is about walking alongside people for long enough that hope has a chance to take root again. It is about creating the conditions where people can begin to believe that a different future is possible and then supporting them as they take the often difficult steps to get there.

As you read the stories in this newsletter, I hope you will see the many different ways lives are being transformed every day. Behind every meal served, every recovery bed, every housing placement, and every employment opportunity is a person taking their next step forward.

Thank you for making those steps possible.

Thank you for helping people move from surviving to thriving.

With gratitude,

Julian Daly
CEO



THANK YOU!

WE CAN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU. We are truly grateful to everyone who contributes to Our Place. We appreciate the care and compassion shown by donations of time, talent, and money that benefit our family members. The many programs and services offered are only possible with the generosity of Our Place volunteers and supporters like you. Thank you!



Our Place's Pathway of Support



Handsome Day haircut



Mike, with coffee from the Nutrition Bar



Immunization clinic



Indigenous workshop



Art therapy with the 55+ club

Hope & Belonging at Our Place

Our Family

*Written by Vivian Smith,
Guest Contributor*

It's July, and summer is finally in full swing. Like a lot of us, Stacey is excited about a camping holiday up-Island. She's been working hard at a job she loves, helping her Mom with technology (mostly it's the darn phone) and enjoying her friends, colleagues and family. She's also among many Victorians who never used to think too much about homelessness, but are now worried about finding a comfortable, affordable place to live themselves.

Her story so far, with its ups and downs, sounds not unusual. But Stacey has come a long, long way on a far



bumpier road than most. Today, she is celebrating more than 15 months of staying sober. "It's the longest I've been clean since I was a kid," Stacey says with pride. She is an inspiring example of what can happen when someone has access to the right support at the right time—and the opportunity to keep moving forward.

Before entering New Roads, Stacey struggled with addiction and the uncertainty that comes with living day-to-day in survival mode. She moved through temporary housing, shelters, treatment, relapse, and more housing instability, all while trying to find a path forward.

She knew she needed something different - and that was long-term treatment.

After "hounding the heck out of them," Stacey became one of the first women offered a place at the New Roads Women's Therapeutic Recovery Community, where women can stay as long as two years, the only long-term recovery program on the Island. She arrived hopeful, while facing physical and emotional challenges. Years of addiction had taken a toll on her health. Even walking was difficult.

Recovery from addiction has been hard. The structured schedules that at first seemed an imposition, slowly became the pillars of her recovery. Difficult conversations, challenging personal work, and facing moments when she wanted to quit made her realize her resilience. She knows she can do hard things, even taking longer and longer walks that at first were not possible.

She also learned she didn't have to do those hard things alone, as relationships

with staff and fellow residents became part of her recovery.

"New Roads taught me how to be my own person,"

says Stacey, but it was the whole community of New Roads that helped her move from surviving to thriving.

It's never over though; Stacey continues her commitment to addiction recovery through meetings, friendships, and the community she found along the way. Every Friday she attends an AA meeting with her father, who has been sober for more than 30 years. "That's the highlight of my week," says Stacey.

One of the most significant milestones came when she was offered administrative employment with Your Place Victoria, Our Place's social enterprise landscaping company that was created for graduates of New Roads. Participants earn a living wage, gain work experience, build confidence, and continue strengthening the routines and accountability that support long-term recovery. For many graduates, meaningful employment becomes the next step on their pathway toward independence and stability.

For Stacey, it was the right opportunity that came at exactly the right time.

"Somehow a job landed in my lap that I already knew how to do."

But what matters most to her is what the work represents: a sense of responsibility to herself and others who struggle.

BECOME A MONTHLY DONOR

JOIN OUR COMMUNITY BUILDERS
PROGRAM TODAY

You can make a big impact all year long and ensure there is help available in our community every day. As a monthly donor, we'll send you just one consolidated receipt for your annual donation in time for filing your tax return each year. Call our philanthropy team at 250-940-5060 or choose 'monthly' when donating online at www.ourplacesociety.com/donate



After experiencing homelessness and addiction in her own life, Stacey says she sees the world differently now. She understands the challenges firsthand and feels a deep connection to helping others find a way forward. "I couldn't go back to pretending homelessness and addiction weren't a thing. I needed to do something in that community."

For many leaving addiction treatment, this transition back into everyday life can be one of the most vulnerable periods. The supports of the treatment program disappear, and individuals are often expected to figure out housing, employment, finances, and recovery largely on their own. Treatment is not the finish line—it is one important step on the pathway toward lasting stability, housing, employment, family reconnection, and purpose.

Many graduates leave treatment with few financial resources, limited family support, and nowhere to go. Others are rebuilding relationships with children, reconnecting with family, or trying to establish themselves in the workforce for the first time in years.

"Coming out of treatment is scary," she says, which is why Stacey speaks

passionately about the urgent need for more second-stage sober housing for women. Affordable housing in a market like Victoria's is scarce. Recovery and sober-focused housing options are that much more limited. Many sober programs offer only a few months of support before women are expected to move on.

Without safe, supportive housing, the risk of relapse for people like Stacey increases dramatically. "It's like throwing someone into the deep end without being able to swim," she says.

Stacey knows this drowning feeling.

Following a previous treatment experience, she entered a second-stage sober housing program that provided little support or accountability. When she relapsed, and admitted it, she was told to leave. Immediately.

As Stacey explains, recovery is not simply about becoming sober. Recovery is about building a life worth staying sober for. It is about reconnecting with family, finding meaningful work, developing

healthy relationships, and becoming part of a community. Those things take time, support, and opportunities to succeed. It is about learning an entirely new way of living. That means time to practice the skills learned at New Roads. Without safe housing, supportive peers, structure, and community, that work becomes exponentially harder.

Today, Stacey is thriving as a resident in community sober housing, where she can stay for up to six months. She hopes for a place of her own soon and, one day, perhaps even a dog again.

Thanks to the support of donors, women like Stacey are finding the opportunity to recover, rebuild, and reclaim their futures. Her story shows what is possible when people have access to a complete pathway of support—from treatment and recovery to employment, community, and housing. The next critical step is ensuring more women have access to the safe, supportive housing that helps turn recovery into lasting stability and lasting change.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

It's easy to apply. We now have a user-friendly online application that opens and pauses depending on our recruitment needs as well as an orientation process that enhances your Our Place volunteer experience. Please visit www.ourplacesociety.com/volunteer to get started.

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR AMAZING VOLUNTEERS!



Our Donors

Homelessness and environmental sustainability are connected in a very tangible way—that's something that Bizz Killigan, owner of the Green Thimble understands very well.

Bizz grew up with a love of nature and a habit of saving small treasures others might see as waste. Though she was always crafty, it wasn't until her mid-20s that she began sewing, starting with quilting.

"I picked up quilting at first, because I liked the idea that it was taking the scraps and making something beautiful and functional from them," she says.

That mindset has shaped her work ever since. Bizz went on to learn sewing machine repair and maintenance, driven by a belief that fixing and reusing what we already have is key to reducing the consumption of resources.

The Green Thimble is rooted in low-waste, eco-friendly values—principles that align closely with Our Place's work to increase accessibility and reduce waste in our community. Less waste means more access for everyone.

Since opening her shop, Bizz has been a dedicated supporter of Our Place. She donates 10% of her profits from sewing machine sales and recently hosted an extremely successful fabric swap and fundraising event, with a portion of the proceeds also supporting Our Place programs.

She chose Our Place because she sees the difference we make together every day and feels closely connected to that impact right here in Victoria. Her support is never just a number—she's part of a community where she is recognized, valued, and makes a real difference.

"If you have extra to give, spread it around," she says. "There's need, and enough for everyone."

Get Involved

A Legacy of Compassion

The values that guide us through life often show up in the ways we care for others: the causes we champion, the hands we extend, and the hope we choose to invest in.

Including Our Place in your will is one meaningful way to ensure those values continue to make a difference for generations to come.

A legacy gift can help create a community where people facing homelessness, poverty, addiction, mental health challenges, or isolation have the opportunity to take their next step forward. It can help ensure a warm meal is waiting, a shower is available, medical care is close at hand, and someone is there to offer encouragement, connection, and practical support.

At Our Place, we see every day that transformation is not usually one big moment. It is a series of steps: from crisis to safety, from safety to stability, from stability to recovery, housing, employment, family reunification, and a renewed sense of purpose.

Your legacy can help keep that Pathway of Support open and people moving forward.

First and foremost, your will should take care of the people you love. But even a small

gift to Our Place can make a meaningful difference and reflect the values that have shaped your life. Naming Our Place in your will is a lasting way to let your family and loved ones know that, alongside caring deeply for them, you also cared about the broader community and the people within it.

A gift of any size can help provide the steady, compassionate foundation that allows people to build a different future. It may help someone find safety today, while also supporting the programs, relationships, and opportunities that create lasting change tomorrow.

It is a powerful way to align your future plans with the values you have lived throughout your lifetime: compassion, dignity, community, and the belief that every person deserves the chance to move forward.

Your legacy can be one of hope, possibility, and a community that continues to show up for one another.

If this sparks any questions, please contact Janice Kalin at 778-676-7106 or janicek@ourplacesociety.com. For sample will language and other information your lawyer or financial planner may need, please visit our website.

Our Place Sponsored Meals



MEALS OPEN DOORS

Sponsored Meals are a special volunteer experience at Our Place that brings joy to hundreds of people in need.

With a donation starting at \$600, you can upgrade regular mealtimes to something special and join us to serve it to the community.

Turn the standard breakfast of oatmeal into hearty bacon and eggs and join our team to hand it out directly! See the smiles you bring to those struggling in our community firsthand.

If you can't make it downtown to our community centre, or you just want to make this volunteer experience possible for someone else—Donate to our Matching Meals Fund to create special volunteering opportunities for others.

Email Sharra at sharrah@ourplacesociety.com or call 250-940-5060 ext. 5108 to learn more and sponsor a meal today!



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Hope and Belonging

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