

SPORTS

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Peace Prize winner criticized, B9
Diesel-fuelled price hikes, B10

17,500-plus registered for five races in this weekend’s Royal Victoria Marathon



Runners at the Island Savings 5K on Saturday. DARREN STONE, TIMES COLO-

ourplace
Hope and Belonging

When people think of Our Place, they often think of Pandora Avenue

I understand why. Our Community Centre at 919 Pandora sits in the heart of one of the most visible and challenging areas of our city. The suffering on the street is impossible to ignore—and we shouldn’t ignore it.

But I also invite you to look through our doors, and beyond them.

Because Our Place is so much more than Pandora.

Across more than 10 locations, almost 300 staff are helping people move forward every day.

Each night, we shelter and house close to 400 people in emergency shelters, transitional and supportive housing. We operate therapeutic addiction recovery communities for men and women, support people into second-stage sober housing, reconnect families, help people find employment and create opportunities through our social enterprise.

And at 919 Pandora, we provide meals, showers, clothing, connection and belonging. Increasingly, we see the Community Centre not as a destination, but as a starting point—a first step on our Pathway of Support.

Someone may first walk through our doors because they are hungry. Over time, a relationship develops. Trust grows. That person may move into shelter and housing, enter recovery, transition into sober housing, reconnect with family, find employment and ultimately live independently.

Not everyone follows the same path. Not everyone is ready today. But everyone deserves the opportunity.

That is why we have been actively building what we think of as an addiction recovery ecosystem over the past 6 years—a continuum where people are not simply helped to survive, but are given genuine opportunities to recover, rebuild and thrive.

Over the past year, we have made a conscious choice to focus our energy on what we can change. We cannot solve every challenge on Pandora Avenue, but we can create real opportunities

for people to move forward—and we are seeing those changes every day.

We can help someone come inside tonight. Find a home. Enter recovery. Rebuild a relationship with their children. Find meaningful work and community.

At every step, we can offer Hope, Belonging, Safety, Unconditional Love and Teamwork.

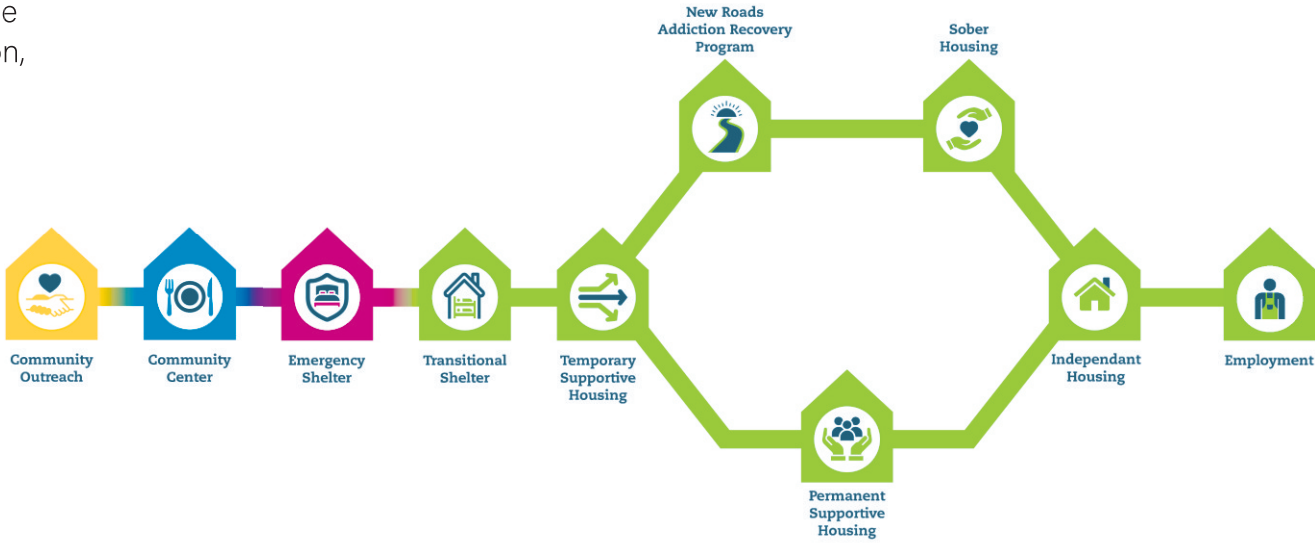
So when you think of Our Place, think of Pandora—but not only Pandora.

Think of someone sleeping safely tonight. Someone graduating from treatment. A family reunited. Someone receiving their first paycheck in years.

Think of people moving from surviving to thriving.

Because that is what Our Place is about.

With gratitude,
Julian Daly
CEO



To donate to Our Place Society, please visit us at:
ourplacesociety.com/donate, call 250-940-5060,
or email donors@ourplacesociety.com





This Thanksgiving, thousands of meals will be shared around tables across Greater Victoria



At Our Place, we'll be setting the table too — just as we do every single day of the year. More than 2,200 meals are served each day across Our Place programs — more than 787,000 meals a year. On Thanksgiving, our kitchens will be especially busy, preparing a traditional holiday meal for people who may not have another table to gather around. But after more than 50 years of serving meals, we've learned something important: a meal is never just a meal. Our roots began with The Upper Room and The Open Door, two organizations built around the belief that food brings people together. Twenty years ago, they joined to become Our Place Society. At the time, about 200 meals were served each day. Today, meals remain at the heart of what we do. At our Community Centre on Pandora Avenue, breakfast, lunch and dinner provide warmth and nutrition, but they also create connection. Around those

meals, people access housing support, paramedics, seniors' programs, tax clinics and countless other services. In our housing sites, meals provide a daily opportunity for support workers to knock on a door, check in and make sure someone is okay. Dinner draws people from their rooms and creates community. At New Roads, our long-term addiction recovery program, nutritious, scratch-made meals help residents rebuild bodies depleted by years of addiction. Residents also learn to cook, budget and prepare meals — skills they carry with them into sober second-stage housing and, ultimately, independent lives. From homelessness to housing, recovery and beyond, the table is a constant along the pathway. So this Thanksgiving, while many of us gather around tables of our own, there will be another very large table being set across our community. And there is always room for one more.



To help provide warm, nutritious meals this Thanksgiving and every day of the year, please make a gift to Our Place Society. Visit **ourplacesociety.com/donate**, call **250-940-5060**, or email **donors@ourplacesociety.com**



Matt, manager of New Roads men's program provides individual plans for every resident at the long-term addiction treatment program.

Recovery takes time. It also needs somewhere to go next

For people living with long-term addiction, recovery rarely happens in 30, 60 or even 90 days.

As Cheryl Diebel, Director of Our Place Society's New Roads Therapeutic Recovery Community, has emphasized, addiction often develops over many years. Recovery needs time, structure and the right supports, too.

At New Roads, men can remain in treatment for nine months to two years. The program operates within a licensed and regulated treatment environment, with clinical and medical supports, counselling, recovery programming and the structure of a therapeutic community. These layers of support, accountability and oversight are not found in many recovery programs, yet these layers are critical to delivering a safe, effective and successful long-term recovery program.

Long-term recovery is about more than stopping substance use. It is about understanding the patterns that contributed to addiction, developing new habits and relationships, and having enough time to practise a different way of living.

John knows that difference firsthand. After becoming dependent on pain medication following a serious back injury, he spent years cycling through addiction and short-term treatment programs.

"I always had the information in my head from all the different treatment centres," John says. "But nothing had changed my habits."

When he came to New Roads, the difference was time.

"I had been to eight different treatment centres, and they were all short-term," he says. "This one worked because it is long-term."

But successful treatment cannot be viewed in isolation.

What happens after treatment can be just as important as what happens during it.

Completing a recovery program and moving immediately into isolation or unstable housing can put hard-won progress at risk. People need somewhere safe to continue practising the skills they have developed while rebuilding employment, relationships, finances and independence.

That is why Our Place has continued to lengthen its Pathway of Support.

For men graduating from New Roads, second-stage sober housing provides that next step. Residents can return to work, save money and build greater independence while staying connected to peers, counselling, meetings and a recovery community.

Today, John works full-time with Our Place, is completing peer-support training and will become the first House Lead at Our Place's second sober housing home.

His journey shows why recovery works best as a pathway rather than a single intervention.

Treatment needs to be long enough to allow real change. It needs appropriate clinical oversight, regulation and accountability. And when formal treatment ends, people need safe housing, meaningful work, ongoing recovery supports and community.



John has one word for what ties those pieces together:

"Belonging. That's it. One hundred per cent."

Recovery should not end at the doors of a treatment centre. The goal is not simply to help someone become well enough to leave treatment. It is to help them build a life they are able — and want — to keep living.



To donate to Our Place Society, please visit us at: ourplacesociety.com/donate, call **250-940-5060**, or email donors@ourplacesociety.com





Let Our Youth Lead the Way



What if sponsoring a meal could nourish our family members — and help nurture the next generation of compassionate Victorians? Through our Youth Sponsored Meals program, young people come into our Community Centre to serve a meal, meet our family members and experience what it means to show up for someone else. For our family members, seeing young

people walk through our doors sends a powerful message: you matter, you belong, and you have not been forgotten. For the youth, it's a chance to see their city through a different lens, build empathy and discover the difference they can make in their own community. The enthusiasm is already there. What many young people don't have is the financial ability to sponsor the meal themselves.

That's where you come in. Sponsor a Youth Meal and your gift does double duty: you provide a warm meal today while helping nurture the volunteers, helpers and compassionate community leaders of tomorrow. **Interested in sponsoring a meal — or have a young person age 18+ who would love to serve? Contact Sharra at sharrah@ourplacesociety.com.**





HUNGRY HEARTS EVENT SERIES: TWO GATHERINGS TO GO

Presented by the Leon Judah Blackmore Foundation and Odum Brown

Our Hungry Hearts series continues with two more opportunities to come together, connect, and celebrate our community's impact.

Community Centre Gathering—October 22, 2026 | 5:00–7:30 PM
Our Place Society Community Centre, 919 Pandora Ave., Victoria
Join us at Our Place for an evening of connection and conversation. Hear inspiring stories from the people and programs you help make possible, connect with fellow donors and community partners, and learn more about the vital work our Community Support Workers do every day.

Gratitude & Impact Gathering — November 5, 2026 | 2:30–5:00 PM
Fireside Grill, 4509 W Saanich Rd., Victoria
We'll wrap up the series with an afternoon of gratitude and reflection, featuring our Seniors Program and the opportunities and connections it creates. Together, we'll celebrate the people who made this fall series possible and reflect on the impact we've made together.

Two gatherings remain, with plenty of opportunities to connect, learn, and celebrate the difference our community makes.

For tickets, please scan the QR code.



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