

306 baby  
layettes were  
handed out  
to new moth-  
ers last year

ELIMINATE  
POVERTY

## BRIDGES TO BOND COMMUNITY CARING

We all know that working is not always easy. And working in an inner city human services agency can sometimes be more demanding and stressful than the average job. Our staff works diligently every day to ensure our community members get the proper support to deal with their challenges, access resources to help them improve their circumstances, gain stable accommodations, and obtain viable employment.

Working with our community members, we naturally develop connections to the individuals we serve; therefore we deal with the after-effects of traumatic events that happen to them. As the providers of social, psychological, and mental health services, staff members are often the last to receive the support needed to stay strong and healthy at work.



In order to address these issues as well as feedback and suggestions received from staff satisfaction surveys and staff supervisions, the Lead Team decided to implement a monthly afternoon all-staff meeting on the first Wednesday of every month.

*The purpose of this half day meeting is to:*

- Provide training and professional development opportunities on a regular basis
- Facilitate team building
- Recognize that in order for staff to function

effectively, we need to put more emphasis on staff health and wellness

- Keep staff informed about Bissell changes, activities, policies & procedures
- Increase staff satisfaction and improve staff retention

The first meeting took place on June 1st and featured a delicious pot luck of different lasagnas and salads, followed by a seminar on Boundaries taught by Anne Kozak, human resources consultant for a cluster of non-profit agencies.



Future topics and agenda items will include:

- Agency, Human Resources, and Program updates
- Team building activities & workshops
- Training on stress management, work/life balance, staff safety, compassion fatigue (burn-out), trauma, etc.
- Motivational speakers
- Some fun activities - we all need to laugh a little more often!

A committee meeting was held on June 6th to start planning the next meeting, July 6th. During the meeting they discussed what to name the event. After some careful consideration about the purpose for the all-staff meetings, they decided on Bridges to Bond Community Caring. The words were chosen because of the letters "B" and "C" for Bissell Centre, in addition to how they align themselves with the goals of the meetings - bridging the gap between locations, employee health and wellness, team building, staff education, and community.

*Please note: Bissell's offices will be closing at noon for these meetings on the first Wednesday of every month. Bissell Thrift Shoppe will remain open during their regular hours.*

WORKING  
TOGETHER

2,195 families  
were served by  
Family Support  
Services in 2010

## PCL PROVIDES TLC TO MBC

Moonlight Bay Centre (MBC), our camp on Lake Wabamun, is currently under renovations. Bissell has been sending participants to MBC since the 1920s. Needless to say, it needs a little upkeep from time to time so we can continue to give our community members the chance to get out of the inner city for a short stay in a lake-front cabin, and experience fishing, boating, swimming, bonfires, and much more! Our camp provides inner city residents with a much needed reprieve from the trials and tribulations from a life of poverty. Last summer 159 community members, including 43 children, went to MBC for a retreat.

On May 28th, PCL Construction Management Inc. had a "Day of Caring" at MBC. Organized by United Way, a group of PCL employees, spouses and children went out and provided some much needed TLC and professional services to the different buildings on site.

Some of the renovations provided by PCL employees, family and friends included a brand new deck and wheelchair ramp on our Craft Shack, a cleanup of the grounds (hauling out and throwing away many old items we no longer needed), and electrical repairs in the kitchen/dining hall. PCL also enlisted the help of two contractors, L&H Plumbing and Jac Inc. to fix the plumbing and floors in the washhouse.



Thanks PCL volunteers for your support at Moonlight Bay Centre

Dave Charlton, PCL's Senior Project Manager, organized the group and says, "It was a fun and rewarding day for us. It felt good to use our time and skills to enhance a facility that provides adults and children with a kind of experience they might not otherwise get."

"It is because of generous people and companies like PCL that we've been able to continue operating Moonlight Bay for all these years." says Kristy Berryman, Bissell's Manager, Recreation and Wellness.

Renovations at MBC will continue for the rest of this summer; however our camp is only one aspect of our Summer Recreation program. We have two summer recreation coordinators who organize an abundance of free daily activities for our community members including trips to Fort Edmonton Park, Art Gallery of Alberta, bowling, swimming, Frisbee golf, barbeques, and the list goes on.

For information on volunteer opportunities, contact Sharonette, Manager, Volunteer Services at 780.423.2285 Ext. 134.

To donate to this year's Summer Recreation program, or next year camperships at Moonlight Bay Centre, please contact Joshua Marshall, Manager, Resource Development at 780.423.2285 Ext. 123.



Craft Shack gets a brand new deck

# Bissell News

**B** Bissell Centre  
Where hope finds help.

POSTAL  
STRIKE  
THREATENS  
DONATIONS

Page 3

## CONTENTS

1. Bissell's New Thinking
2. Transition & Change Message From CEO
3. Bissellebration Recap Postal Strike Going Paperless Facebook
4. Joining Forces on New Program News and Needs
5. Bridges to Bond Community Caring
6. PCL Provides TLC to MBC

### Bissell Centre

10527-96 Street  
Edmonton, AB  
T5H 2H6  
P. 780.423.2285  
F. 780.429.7908

### Thrift Shoppe & Sorting Centre

8818-118 Avenue  
Edmonton, Ab T5B 0T4  
P. 780.471.6644

### Store Hours

Mon-Sat 9am-6pm  
Sun 10am-4pm

### Drop-Off Hours

Mon-Sat until 4pm  
Sun until 3:30pm

[www.bissellcentre.org](http://www.bissellcentre.org)

Subscriptions

To help us save money and trees, please subscribe to our e-newsletter, by going to our website.

© 2010 Bissell Centre  
All rights reserved

## NEW THINKING FOR BISSELL'S NEW MILLENNIUM

2010 was a momentous year for Bissell Centre. Reaching the centennial milestone of service was a time for reflection on our past, present and future. On many occasions, Bissell Centre's Board of Governors discussed Bissell's vision, mission and long term outcomes - the difference we want to make for our community.

Thinking strategically about how to move Bissell into the next 100 years required new ways of thinking about the significant issues facing our community. While we still believe in the power of "neighbour helping neighbour", our vision is now to go one step further - to eliminate poverty in our community! This is a bold vision but one we believe is important and attainable for Edmonton.

But we can't do it alone. Our new mission is, "Working with others, we empower people to move from poverty to prosperity." Like our dreams, 'prosperity' is subjective and personal. Bissell believes that everyone has their own view of what a prosperous life looks like. For some of our participants, prosperity means that they have three square meals a day, a roof over their head every night, and family and friends who love and support them. "It's the simple things that mean a lot when you're homeless," says Dougie, one of Bissell's community members.

In North American society, we tend to think of prosperity in terms of wealth and/or physical possessions. However, we believe that living a prosperous life should include physical prosperity (health), emotional prosperity (happiness), spiritual prosperity, and financial prosperity (means). And a community where everyone can feel prosperous is a community that thrives and flourishes.

At the April 2011 meeting the Board unanimously adopted the new vision for Bissell. And people cheered enthusiastically at Bissell Centre's Annual General Meeting in May when the new vision, mission and related long-term outcomes were read out. This new strategic direction is all part of the ongoing evolution of Bissell and will help to guide our work and determine where we will allocate our resources. Our collective challenge is to persevere through change while respecting the traditions that have sustained Bissell over the last 101 years. We are up for the challenge and look forward to continuing, with your support, to make a difference in Edmonton's inner city.

### Vision

- We eliminate poverty in our community.

### Mission

- Working with others, we empower people to move from poverty to prosperity.

### Long Term Outcomes

- People are able to meet their basic daily needs and participate in community.
- People have sustainable livelihoods.
- People feel hope for the future and make plans for a prosperous life.
- People are fully engaged in life because of improved physical and mental health.
- The community is educated and engaged in creating a prosperous future for all.

10,359 Casual  
Labour place-  
ments were  
filled in 2010

EMPOWER  
PEOPLE

## TRANSITION & CHANGE AT BISSELL

By Phil O'Hara, Chair, Board of Governors

With the recent resignation of Jane Hirst, Executive Director/CEO of Bissell Centre, the organization is on a fast track towards change. Jane's commitment to Bissell spans nearly a decade, first as a member of the board, then board chair, from there progressing into a senior staff position, and culminating in her role as Executive Director. Jane's energy and enthusiasm for Bissell and the important work it does will not be easily replaced or forgotten. We wish Jane all the best in her next undertaking.

### So... what does Jane's departure mean for Bissell?

Change and transition in organizations can be difficult, especially when it involves a change in leadership. With this in mind, the Board is taking these steps to initiate a smooth transition towards change.

Effective June 20th, Mark Holmgren will serve as Interim Executive Director for a seven month period. Mark is a former Executive Director of Operation Friendship and has worked as a consultant with many inner city agencies as well as with United Way. We believe that the skills and expertise Mark brings with him will help us through this transition.

Over the next several months, the Board will be reviewing its governance model to improve our ability to provide strategic direction and support the work of staff. In the fall we will begin the recruitment of a permanent Executive Director with an anticipated start date of January 2012.

As a Board we want to do our part by working with staff during this transition and supporting the great work they do in the community.

There is another important transition underway at Bissell and that is the fundamental shift in our strategic direction - please see the story on the cover for more information on this exciting change.

## MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

One of my favorite Margaret Wheatley quotes is - "There is no power for change greater than when a community discovers what it cares about." I have been blessed to have been part of the Bissell community - a community that knows what it cares about and lives out the values of respect, diversity, acceptance, and inclusion every day. The changes that emerge because of Bissell's work are moving and inspiring. Some may be as simple as filling a tummy with a meal, warming a child's heart with a smile or as significant as helping someone come off the streets and live in their own home, or work to overcome barriers and rejoin the workforce. But the difference all of these changes make in our community members' lives is immeasurable.

Bissell Centre is turning a corner into its 101st year of service with a bold new vision and mission. During the last year I have spent time reading about the last 100 years and I can say unequivocally that the thread of hope, compassion, and the belief in our responsibility to collectively and individually help one another is woven through all of Bissell's stories and will guide its journey well beyond 2011.

I would like to thank Bissell Centre for allowing me to be part of their journey and I am leaving knowing that the powerful spirit that embodies Bissell will continue to change the lives of Edmontonians for a long, long time.

Jane Hirst  
CEO



PROSPERITY

## DARKNESS, LAUGHTER & TEARS

This year's Bissellebration, presented by Capital Power Corporation, was a memorable and successful evening. The Gala Dinner & Auction took place at Sutton Place Hotel on May 14th and was attended by 230 supporters. The night started off in the dark due to a power outage, however our guests had the pleasure of an intimate candlelit walk up and down the many silent auction tables as they placed their bids during our cocktail reception. Luckily the lights came back up as more and more people arrived, allowing Eileen Bell of 630 CHED, to lead the program.

The very talented singer/songwriter and former Canadian Idol finalist, Martin Kerr, gave a few performances before dinner, bringing the crowd to tears with his rendition of Hallelujah. Guests enjoyed a spectacular meal followed by a showing of our new history video - The Light of the World, presentations, and an energetic and comedic live auction by Olympic Gold Medalist and former auctioneer Jon Montgomery.

A special thanks to our corporate sponsors, vendors, auction donors, volunteers, staff and guests who came to be part of our largest fundraiser of the year! It was through your efforts that we were able to raise over \$90,000 in one night! We look forward to another enjoyable evening next year.



Jon auctions off a sliding suit similar to what he wears in the skeleton event



Martin Kerr's heartfelt performance

## POSTAL STRIKE SLOWS DOWN DONATIONS SENT IN MAIL

At the time of print, the postal strike had begun. Not knowing how long it might last, we are being proactive in asking that you not forget us at this time, as we could experience some delays in getting the newsletter out.

Every quarter we receive much needed donations from the return envelopes included with our newsletter. If you are able, we encourage you to donate online via our website or CanadaHelps.org, or via telephone to our office.

Thank you for your generous support.

## LET'S GO PAPERLESS

In an attempt to reduce printing and mailing costs, conserve trees and reduce our environmental footprint, please consider signing up to receive Bissell News via email. This can be done on our website at [www.bissellcentre.org](http://www.bissellcentre.org).

## LIKE US? DO SO ON FACEBOOK TOO

Did you know that Bissell has a Facebook page? If not, please search Bissell Centre, become our friend and "like" our agency page. Keep informed with the latest and greatest at Bissell Centre.

80 people  
are housed  
thanks to  
Homeless to  
Homes

RESPECT

## JOINING FORCES ON NEW INNER CITY REC PROGRAM

Bissell Centre has partnered with Boyle Street Community Services in a unique pilot project to provide recreational opportunities for our community members. The joint initiative is being funded by the City of Edmonton and United Way of the Alberta Capital Region for one year.

Marika Chandler, the Inner City Recreation Coordinator, has a schedule of activities for our participants that includes a dragon boat racing team made up of agency staff, volunteers and clients, swimming, activities at the Edmonton Humane Society, youth bowling, frisbee golf, tours of the Art Gallery of Alberta, a trip to Elk Island National Park, the Devonian Gardens, Royal Alberta Museum, and a slow pitch team.

"The people we work with are often excluded from mainstream recreation services because they are homeless, and face challenging mental and physical conditions," says Boyle Street Executive Director Julian Daly. "We feel this program provides them with some wonderful opportunities which they would not otherwise be able to enjoy."

Jane Hirst, Bissell Centre's CEO, says, "We believe recreation can contribute enormously to the well being of our population and we're very pleased indeed to be partners in this endeavor. We will be actively collaborating with all the other inner city agencies to ensure that their community members also access the recreation programming that will be on offer."



Community members give love and attention to an Edmonton Humane Society dog

## NEWS AND NEEDS

### Capturing 100 Years of Service: Oral History Video and Book

As you know, last year, Bissell celebrated its 100th anniversary in Edmonton. To acknowledge this momentous and significant milestone, Bissell Centre received funding from the Alberta Foundation for the Arts to record an oral history video, *The Light of the World*. The video is intended to capture, preserve and interpret the history of Bissell Centre, based on personal experiences and memories.

In addition, a history book entitled *Where Hope Finds Help - Bissell Centre: 100 Years of Service to Edmonton's Inner City Community* was written and published to capture the essence of Bissell's history in a hard cover timeless book.

Limited copies available; to order, please contact Marketing at 780.423.2285.

### LET US HELP YOU

Summer is around the corner, and we all know what that means... YARD WORK! Yuck! Well, you don't have to do it alone, or at all... our casual labourers can do it - and other odd jobs - for you.

Landscaping, moving, you name it - we have workers that are willing and able to work for you. Call Bissell Centre Employment Services at 780.424.4385. Minimum of 4 hours. Reasonable Rates. Bissell takes care of the Workers Compensation coverage.

### HOW TO HELP US...

#### Give a smile away, donate a toothbrush today!

We are in desperate need of **toothbrushes!** We give out more than **200** toothbrushes each month to our community members.

Call Barb at 780.423.2285 Ext. 159 to donate.

