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## MAY 2002 NEWSLETTER

### Vol. 3 Issue 5

“Summertime and the livin’ is easy...” For those of us who have experienced a long Canadian winter, how those words resonate! With Spring come longer, warmer days. Soon the barbecues will be out, parks will be filled with little league baseball and soccer players and their parental fans, and holiday plans will be finalized. It’s a welcome change to the greater demands that winter seems to make on our time and our energy levels

For people whose lives are spent mainly on the streets, summer also brings promise. Often, the rumour mill generates “news” of housing opportunities, jobs or just plain easier living in a different place. People move about, from city to city or within the city.

Often, they set up home, really temporary campsites, near waterways, under bridges, away from the cramped spaces and hot pavement of the inner city. Although Ottawa’s hot, humid climate remains a formidable challenge to easy living, it is better than the cold.

Nevertheless, there are problems that come with this more relaxed style of living. Sometimes, older people have to deal with intimidation by younger folk, some of whom come to the inner city by day or evening to hang out, returning to their homes at night. There is increased theft of what few belongings they may have. If the days are rainy for any length of time, there are the practical problems of keeping sleeping bags and belongings dry.

At Capital City Mission, these changes mean that we will see new faces and miss some of those that have become familiar to us. We will have more requests on laundry days for use of the dryer. We will fill many requests for sneakers, the most practical footwear for anyone who lives outside most of the time. As we do all winter, on rainy summer days, we will serve lots of coffee!

As well, we will be able to offer some pleasurable summertime experiences to our guests. Last year, we enjoyed fun and fellowship at our “Outreach in the Park” events. Everyone enjoyed the barbecued burgers, the music and the ball games. We are planning more such occasions for the coming months.

As you become busy with your own summertime plans, we thank you for your continued prayerful support of our guests, our staff, and our volunteers. As we did last month, we introduce you in this issue to another of our regular guests at CCM. Her name has been changed to respect her privacy.

## **LINDA**

Linda really loves Jesus. She is 31 and she is a heroin addict. She is the mother of a school-age daughter and has parents of her own on the East and West Coasts. And sometimes, Linda goes weeks in a good, solid walk where she doesn't hurt herself.

Sadly, however, temptation and oppression eventually come in like a flood and she feels defeated and depressed. She surrenders her dignity to provide for her habit, helplessly selling herself to fill the need that for the most part has devoured her health already. Day in and day out, Linda puts herself into a place of violence; a place of mental, physical, emotional, social and even spiritual abuse. Many well-meaning people have tried to give her simple answers for her very complex problems.

Linda is a user. Without a room of her own, she lives her life roaming from place to place. Occasionally, she convinces older men who have drinking problems to give her a safe place to stay. Because Linda has a history of using and abusing relationships, she has worn out her welcome at most women's shelters in the area. Often breaching probation, Linda is in and out of "Innes" (jail).

Linda would love to spend time with her daughter. Three years ago, after admitting her addiction and knowing that she was about to go to jail, she gave her little girl to the father. Although her daughter is not far away, Linda does not get to see her.

"I'm going to that program soon, " she claims, after having spent another short term without her methadone, the medication provided by the Government to replace the desire for heroin. Despite so many failed attempts to rise above her addiction, Linda is resilient. She can be so sweet and she really wants to trust that her Jesus can help her. She just hasn't seen it totally happen yet.

## **PRAYER CALENDAR**

- SUN Thanks for the evidence of God's blessing on CCM
- MON. For Christian politicians and public policy makers, that they will sense God's blessing on them and seek first the kingdom of God as they carry out their responsibilities.
- TUES. For guests such as Linda, who need strength and support to conquer addictions and for those who are vulnerable and at risk because of mental illness
- WED. For wisdom for staff and volunteers
- THURS. For the board as they consider decisions regarding much needed increased space
- FRI. For Timothy Meisenheimer, CCM director, and Matthew De La Foresta, assistant director, as they present the challenge of loving the poor to churches and the message of God's love to the poor
- SAT. For God's continued material blessing on CCM, enabling us to meet the needs of those we serve

**CURRENT NEEDS:** As mentioned earlier, our most pressing need is for new running shoes, both men's and women's.

**FOR INFORMATION:** See our web.site [www.capitalcitymission.com](http://www.capitalcitymission.com) or call Timothy or Matthew at 613-241-2407