



# Huron House Boys' Home CHRISTMAS BULLETIN 2009

Huron House Boys' Home, 2473 Lakeshore Rd, P.O. Box 260, Bright's Grove, ON N0N 1C0  
Phone (519) 869-4000 Fax: (519) 869-6999 E-mail: [info@hhbh.ca](mailto:info@hhbh.ca) Website: [www.hhbh.ca](http://www.hhbh.ca)



## Making a Difference, One Boy at a Time

Featuring Boys' Home Alumni

I would say that I am a true rags to riches story. I come from the poorest, most dysfunctional childhood that few can imagine or comprehend. I've lived on 'social assisted streets' in Sarnia and a drug infested, homeless tenement in the heart of the Edmonton slums. My mom saw me as an income source rather than a child to cherish.

But there was always something inside of me which told me that there had to be something more. At age 5 for a brief moment, at one of my many foster homes, I had that experience; the feeling of what it was like to be part of a normal functioning family. A family just outside of Mooretown gave me that for about 16 months, before I was returned to my mother. I always missed the Robinsons' home. It took almost 10 years to feel that safe again, the day I arrived at Huron House.

Huron House gave me the fond memories my family did not, from summer camping trips to ball games on the field of dreams; going to professional sport games, raking leaves, cutting grass, Christmas dances and Open House, Corvette Day, going to the video store on Friday nights. And then there was Todd McKelvie who put up with my many frustrating episodes in the study. It was his patience and belief that turned me from a flunking underachiever to an honour student. The Boys' Home gave me guidance and direction. It provided me with male role models and filled me with confidence and the feeling of self-worth. Without Huron House, there is no doubt that I would not have this wonderful life I live today.

Today I live in Kelowna, B.C., one of the most beautiful spots in Canada, where I am the accounts manager for a large packaging company. I am in the process of purchasing a small medical supply company, and look forward to becoming my own boss. I have been married for eight years to my wonderful wife Marcia, and we have two beautiful girls Ryley and Bradee. I have lived the life of a high performance athlete (Rugby) which has taken me across the globe. Most of all, I have the family and life that I had longed for. It is my hope that any child in distress and in need of structure may have the same opportunity that I had.

Chuck Bullock

## A Message from the Executive Director

Christmas is a time to be with family and friends. It is a time for people to come together and enjoy the holiday season, to laugh and share in the good times and rejoice in being with those who are important to us. Sharing stories around the dinner table, conversations held over doing the dishes or a hug at just the right time all paint a picture of love and caring for one another no matter the circumstance. We need to be thankful for what we have in life and for the people we share our life with.

In a time where there is a lot of economic uncertainty and perhaps family upheaval, holding onto what we have and cherishing those things in our lives is what's most important. After all, family will always be family.

At the Boys' Home, family is what we are all about - caring for those in need of help, providing guidance, support and encouragement to stand up and meet our hardships head on. For most of us that have life experiences to draw upon, pulling ourselves up and moving forward, although difficult, is usually accomplished with hard work. For young teenagers with no life experiences or skills to draw upon, it becomes a whirlwind tornado of where to start and how to make sense of all the confusion and turmoil in their life. Having someone who cares, who shows understanding and gives guidance is often all that is needed to help them to become healthy strong young men - young men that go on to be responsible employees, husbands and fathers. As I read Chuck's story, I am heartened to think that perhaps we had a role to play in his success and wish him, his family and all those we have touched and have touched us over the years a safe and happy holiday season.

Ken Akers

**It's easy to smile when someone cares!**



## Run/Walk/Skate/Bike—June 21

Once again, with thanks to generous sponsors, volunteers and participants, the annual *Run/Walk/Skate/Bike* was a success. Check out the photos and results online at [www.hbbh.ca](http://www.hbbh.ca). Under the *Run/Walk/Skate/Bike* tab click on 'Competition Results—This Year' for a link to photos and results.



One of the highlights this year was an exceptional effort by Northern Collegiate. With outstanding participation, including the football teams, for a total of 48 participants, they claimed the “greatest participation from a high school” award. Along with the trophy, they received \$1000 from Lambton Financial Credit Union for their Students' Council.



**Next year's event is on Sunday, June 20, 2010. See you there!**

## Summer at Huron House

Keeping 26 adolescent boys motivated and occupied through the summer is no easy task. Thanks to the creativity and dedication of staff, summer programs and activities continue to build both lasting memories and structure. As always, the Huron House Olympics were a big favourite with goofy games and an outdoor barbeque dinner.

Good behaviour paid off with trips to Canada's Wonderland, the Playdium in Mississauga, the Pinery and Grand Bend, as well as outings like swimming in Lake Huron, and fishing on the St. Clair River. Activities such as these are great motivators for boys to mind the rules, and demonstrate self control and respectful behaviour. The long term results are even more valuable as they move toward adulthood where such values are important in relationships and careers.



## Day of Caring—September 22

It's amazing what can happen in a single day when volunteers put heart to task. The day was Tuesday, September 22, the 16th annual United Way *Day of Caring*, when three corridors and eight bedrooms were transformed by fresh coats of paint.

The atmosphere was both festive and productive as 35 employees from four local businesses (Imperial Oil, Suncor, TD Canada Trust and OLG Point Edward) donated their time and talent. With tools and smiles they set out in the morning, and all day long their enthusiasm and their words of encouragement resounded throughout Huron House Boys' Home.

Staff and youth were delighted with the results. It wasn't just the fact that they did an excellent job, it's the way they did it...with enthusiasm, and a genuine understanding of the difference it makes when someone cares.



**It's easy to smile when someone cares!**





## Geocaching at the Wetlands—September 27

Participants ranged from Montreal geocaching enthusiasts to local first timers at *Geocaching at the Wetlands*. This first time event, where participants use hand-held GPS devices to locate hidden caches, was held in partnership with St. Clair Region Conservation Authority and sponsored by St. Clair Auto Repair. It provided fun, camaraderie and new experiences while raising funds for, and awareness of, the Boys' Home. See photos and find out more under the fundraising tab at [www.hhbh.ca](http://www.hhbh.ca).

The new caches remain in place for anyone interested in exploring the area. They are the HHBH series and can be found through [geocaching.com](http://geocaching.com) using Wawanosh Wetlands for the search address.



## Thanks for the Meals!

Many thanks to the Wyoming Fair Board which donated a side of beef to help feed our hungry teens. Anyone who has teenage boys knows how much they can eat!



## Visit from a Friend

Former resident Tom recently stopped in to visit, reminisce and see changes. Program Director Mick Mullen was happy to see him.



## Coming Events... *Men Who Cook is back!*



After a three year hiatus, *Men Who Cook* returns to the Grand Ballroom at the Holiday Inn, Point Edward on Saturday, March 6, 2010.

This upscale fundraising event brings together 40 men who are community leaders as 'celebrity chefs'. It's an evening of fun, food, silent and live auctions, and dancing. It's also a celebration of 40 years of success and service to the community. Join us, and be prepared to experience an awesome array of creative cuisine as local CEOs, businessmen, professionals, tradesmen and celebrities treat you to their personal specialty dish.

The 2010 *Men Who Cook* committee is excited about this unique event and hope you'll be part of the experience. From the time you arrive for hors d'oeuvres by talented local chefs, through culinary offerings of community leaders, a custom-designed martini luge, the excitement of bidding on auction packages that suit your lifestyle, and dancing to the tunes of Dave Burrows, you'll be glad you supported Huron House Boys' Home.

Proceeds from the event go directly to the work of Huron House Boys' Home. Visit [www.hhbh.ca](http://www.hhbh.ca), and click on *Men Who Cook* under the Fundraising tab, or call Sharon at 869-4000 to find out about sponsorship opportunities and tickets.



## Huron House Turns 40!

2010 marks 40 years since we opened our doors. Watch for a 40th anniversary celebration, including an open house and alumni reunion on Saturday, August 14.

If you're interested in planning or participating in our celebrations, call Sharon at 869-4000, or send her an e-mail at [scrowe@hhbh.ca](mailto:scrowe@hhbh.ca).

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## FRONTLINE SPOTLIGHT

Featuring Boys' Home Staff



There were celebrations and smiles in the halls of the Boys' Home this spring as long-time front line workers Jim Scherer (20 years) and Pam MacRae (6 years) tied the knot after two years of dating.

Jim is a graduate of the University of Windsor with a Bachelor of Human Kinetics degree. He worked at the Chatham YMCA before coming to Huron House. Pam brings experience from Eagle Rock Youth Centre, Parkhill Girls Home, START, and Craigwood Youth Services. She earned a diploma in the Child and Youth Worker program at Lambton College in 2001. Both are Resi-

dential Counsellors and enjoy the flexibility, challenges, and co-workers that are part of the success of Huron House Boys' Home.

Jim has an adult daughter and Pam has a teenaged son, both of whom welcome their union. Jim enjoys golf and horse racing in his spare time, while Pam prefers time with family, friends and books. They both agree, "life is good".

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## Since 1970... a Home and Future for Boys

**Yes, I would like to make a difference in a boy's life! Please accept my gift to Huron House Boys' Home.**

☐ \$50    ☐ \$75    ☐ \$100    ☐ \$250    ☐ Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make cheques payable to: **Huron House Boys' Home**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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**It's easy to smile when someone cares!**