



Huron House Boys' Home SPRING BULLETIN 2011

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Making a Difference, One Boy at a Time

Featuring Boys' Home Alumni



Wow! Has it really been 39 years since this skinny six foot tall blonde kid with a baseball cap on sideways walked through the doors of Huron House? I thought I knew everything. I thought I was invincible. I trusted no one. I seemed emotionless. I was smart and knew how to adapt, how to survive and how to psychologically hurt those I did not like, and sometimes those I did like. That was me at 13 before I got kicked out of Huron House and sent to training school where I quickly learned how good I had it at Huron House.

I did not have a good home life. I was always being deserted, odd man out, the black sheep. Huron House gave me consistency, respect and caring. I learned to trust some people a little bit. The director at the time was like a father figure to me, and now he is still a good friend. In fact I made a few life-long friends during my five years as I learned how to get along with others. I remember a staff member took me to his home to join his family for Christmas one year. While in town for the Boys' Home 40th, I went cycling with him down the American side to Walpole and back up to Sarnia. At Huron House I also learned a strong work ethic. A group of us actually built the greens over at Huron Oaks where Mike Weir learned to golf.

Now it is almost 40 years later. I have been blessed with a wonderful family and a 24-year long marriage. I cut my business and human resources teeth at Sony of Canada. I have run a couple of communication companies. I have had my own consulting firm for eight years (management and human resources) and last October achieved my national certification in human resources, the Certified Human Resource Professional (CHRP). In 1994 a cerebral hemorrhage left me relearning how to walk, talk, write and hold a cup of coffee, but last year I cycled more than 6,000 km on my road bike. Some people call me stubborn.

Today you can find me staying at home and parenting our two youngest (7 and 13), working in the garden and riding my bike. You will see me leading weekly group rides and volunteering with various active transportation advocacy groups as part of my role as a member of the Manitoba Cycling Association Board of Directors. You can also find me in various volunteer roles with our parish and schools.

My advice to today's boys is: stay as long as you can, learn as much as you can, and decide who you want to be. You are in the driver's seat. Make it count.

Currie Gillespie

A Message from the Executive Director

Currie talks of how he overcame many struggles as a child and even later in life as an adult. Isolation, emotional avoidance, anger, mistrust and even fear of what would lie ahead for him seem to be common themes throughout much of Currie's life. Through his struggles one thing seems to have kept him going. He learned to trust, which led to lifelong friendships. He acquired inner strength to succeed and he has found his passion - a wonderful family and a satisfying career.

We congratulate Currie on his accomplishments and agree with him that the care and compassion of the staff at Huron House helped plant a seed so he could grow strong and healthy. Whether it was the staff from 30 years ago or today's staff, our employees hold the key to opening the door for young people to move forward from the challenges that life has thrown their way. Without their commitment, dedication and compassion many youth, including Currie, would not experience how it feels to be successful.

I hope you enjoy reading our newsletter and will continue to support the amazing work our staff do each and every day.

Regards, Ken Akers

It's easy to smile when someone cares!



25 Years is a Good Run!

This is our 25th annual Run/Walk/Skate/Bike! We've had 25 years of success, growth and change. When we began in 1987, we were one of only a handful of races, and we set a high standard. Many events have come and gone while we continue to thrive. Our event has evolved over the years, adding components and trying new things as suggested by participants and onlookers. This year we've added a **5k timed fun run!**



While some things change, some things remain the same. We still see lots of smiling faces, lots of families, and lots of people happy to know that their donations are being well used to make the difference in the life of a boy.



JOIN US JUNE 19!

2011 Start Times

| | |
|------------|------|
| Bike | 8:00 |
| Skate | 8:03 |
| 10k Run | 8:10 |
| 5k Fun Run | 8:25 |
| Walk | 8:30 |

There is no event day registration.

Are you a member of the 25 club? If you or your family has been involved in this event since the beginning, we'd love to hear from you. Call Sharon at (519) 869-4000.

Boys available for yard work

If you're finding your yard is becoming a bit too much to manage, you might want to consider hiring a boy from Huron House. Community jobs have been an important part of youth development since our beginning. Boys earn money while learning responsibility, with all their work being supervised by staff. Phone 519-869-4000 and ask for Karen or Mike to see if your needs fit with our program. Call now while there are still boys available!



FORE! Get your clubs ready for October 8th

Greenwood Golf Club will be hosting a scramble format tournament on October 8th and will donate half of the prize fund to the Huron House Boys' Home. For more information, please contact the pro-shop at 519-542-2212.

It's easy to smile when someone cares!



Dirt was the word!

Thank you to DeGroot's Nurseries for providing the opportunity and the supplies for more than 120 tons of compost blend soil. That's more than 6,000 bags of the fertile humus, bagged by Huron House youth, staff and supporters to enrich gardens of our community. In turn the community enriched the Boys' Home with \$13,000 in donations. Funds raised directly benefit the youth in our care.



Building on our experience last year, when we learned that 24 boys and assorted counsellors just couldn't meet the need, we reached out to local groups. Golden K Kiwanis became an enthusiastic partner, making this a club project, and we found many other supporters willing to dig in, including:

Youth groups - Scouts, Girl Guides, Harmony For Youth, Big Brothers and Big Sisters;
Corporate groups - Cabot Canada and WorleyParsons;
Community groups - Horticultural Society, Retired Teachers, Optimists;
Church groups - Temple Baptist, Bluewater Baptist, St. John in the Wilderness
and the Sarnia Muslim Association.

Winter activities

It was a long snowy winter, so Huron House boys had lots of opportunity to flex their muscles on the ends of shovels. When not clearing away the white stuff, they enjoyed visits to Sting games, thanks to donated tickets, and occasional outings to movies. More often activities were indoors so they look forward to a summer that gets them outdoors for activities on and off the premises.



Men Who Cook impresses again

As if to prove that the 2010 edition of *Men Who Cook* was no accident, the 2011 event was equally brilliant. Relocated to the Lambton Inn, we found the facility excellent, and every challenge became an opportunity. The slightly smaller venue was very popular, as were the volunteer servers. Also outstanding were the floral decorations tailored to the décor and donated by Jenny's Floral Studio. We are grateful again that support for Huron House abounds.



Jason Harris was the winner of the People's Choice Award for the second year, with his braided salmon plank. Runners up were Fabien Jagoo with Mama Jagoo's Curry Chicken and Rice, and Rory Ring with Bloomin' Scallops. Check out their recipes on our website www.hhbh.ca.

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FRONTLINE SPOTLIGHT

Featuring Boys' Home Staff



From summer student to Staff Supervisor, Paul Kern has seen many changes in his 30 years at Huron House. He doesn't get to spend as much time with the boys as he did when he was a youth worker, but he still enjoys the satisfaction of seeing the success of the kids he has had the opportunity to work with. The improvement over time in school performance and family relationships is a great reflection on the effectiveness of Huron House. Meeting with many of the former residents

last summer at the Boys' Home 40th Anniversary, and listening to each of them saying how valuable their time here was, and the positive impact it made, was truly gratifying.

As far as highlights, that's easy for Paul. In 1995 he and a Boys' Home resident were sponsored for an exchange to Kodiak Baptist Mission, a residential home in Kodiak Alaska. While there comparing programs and facilities they also got to experience deep sea fishing, a truly unique opportunity.

Away from work Paul values family life with his wife Ingrid and their five year old daughter, and enjoys golf, travel and keeping fit.

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Since 1970... a Home and Future for Boys

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