



RIVER'S EDGE REVIEW

Winter Newsletter - December 2023

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A MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD

As we approach the end of the year 2023 A.D. and reflect on it, we are once again reminded of the greatness of our God! He has sustained us through this year, in spite of the various challenges we faced. Anytime an organization makes changes in leadership positions there will be uncertainties how these transitions will go.

As Board we are very thankful how the switch from Nathan Kok, our previous E.D., to Avery Linde, our current E.D., transpired. We experienced great cooperation from all parties involved, which we accepted in thankfulness! Included in this mix of changes was the re-direction to more intentional mentoring and the new 11 - week Program.....more on that from Avery in this Newsletter!

The Board has been functioning well in the year past! Meetings are as a rule once a month, and while they can be fairly lengthy, they are productive and we accomplish lots. Early next year we will have one of the directors retire, as per our rotation schedule. If YOU have a desire to use YOUR talents in this capacity, by all means indicate this to myself or any Board member, so we can consider that when looking for a replacement.

The committees that serve River's Edge Haven of Hope, are all active in their various tasks. We welcome Tim Jonker who just recently joined the Promotion/Fundraising Committee. He already has shown his enthusiasm for this work during the Fall Fest held in late October.

Another exciting development occurred when the Board approved the establishment of the Human Resource Committee. As the Board systematically reviewed the existing and proposed policies, it became clear that the need for an HR Committee had arrived. With thankfulness, we could appoint Arielle DeBoer and Nathan Kok (where did I hear that name ☺) as core of the committee, with Tricia DeBoer as Board liaison and Jake DeJong as an advisor. They have already met a few times, and we are looking forward to their input and assistance in making this wonderful organization run well and responsibly.

I have come to the end of my contribution for the last Newsletter of this calendar year, which leaves me with wishing all a very blessed celebration of Christ's birth! It is our prayer that God will continue to provide us with His indispensable blessings and providence for the year 2024!

Till next time DV.
On behalf of the Board,
Nick VandenOever.



RIVER'S EDGE
HAVEN OF HOPE



VOLUNTEER.
MENTOR.
ENROLL.
SUPPORT.
JOIN OUR TEAM.

BLESSED CHRISTMAS

**FROM YOUR FRIENDS
AT THE FARM.**

**THANK YOU TO ALL WHO
CONTINUE TO WALK ALONGSIDE US
IN SHARING THE GOOD NEWS OF
JESUS CHRIST.**



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A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

"We love because He first loved us" John 4:19

As I write about the past months and the entire year at River's Edge Haven of Hope, it's clear what an incredible journey we've had! This year brought us new faces—mentors, volunteers, and staff joined us, and we also said goodbye to some. Young people came and went, some staying, others moving on. Our programs saw continuous growth with the introduction of 11-week sessions, completing our first season successfully. Looking back, it feels like navigating hills and valleys, experiencing both tough times and moments of joy.

Thinking about this, certain bible verses and songs resonate, all conveying the same message: even in life's challenges, we can hold onto the hope found in Christ. As we reflect on the year, the enduring hope in Christ remains our constant companion, guiding us through the changes and reaffirming our commitment to growth and resilience.

This is a message we share as a team here at River's Edge and continue to share to each individual who walks through our doors. Our aim is to actively engage with children and youth in their play, serving as mentors to teach, guide, and encourage confidence, a sense of accomplishment, and self-discovery. Throughout the past 11-weeks, mentors and mentees immersed themselves in a diverse range of activities, including woodworking, crafting, working with animals, baking, and more. It truly is amazing to see the smiles on youth's faces when they come to show you the projects they have created. In addition to the hands-on experiences, our youth had the opportunity to delve into scripture. Whether immersed in the outdoors, exploring nature, tending to animals, or simply sitting down to read captivating stories from God's word, both youth and mentors had the chance to deepen their understanding of Christ's boundless love for us. It's a reminder that this love surrounds us each day, providing a foundation for personal growth and spiritual exploration.





Looking ahead to the Christmas season, we are excited about celebrating the birth of Christ and sharing that meaningful message with those in our community. To spread the joy of the season, we have planned events during the Christmas holidays. One notable event is a series of camps organized by the Dunnville Youth Impact Centre. For more information, please visit their website at www.youthimpactcentre.com.



The past couple of months have been bustling with activity on the community front. We were privileged to showcase our work at various events, including our annual fall fest. During this fest, we highlighted the impact of our horse-centered activities on our program. In November, we actively participated in a conference organized by Insight Biblical Counseling, focusing on the theme "It Takes a Village." This experience not only strengthened our team but also expanded our network, connecting us with like-minded organizations. We are consistently grateful for the supportive community surrounding us, witnessing the willingness and ability of many individuals to assist those in need.



As I conclude my writings here, I want to express my gratitude to everyone who consistently assists and supports us. I eagerly anticipate the upcoming year. On behalf of the staff, I extend warm wishes for a blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year to all!



That's all from me for now!
Until Next Time,
Avery Linde

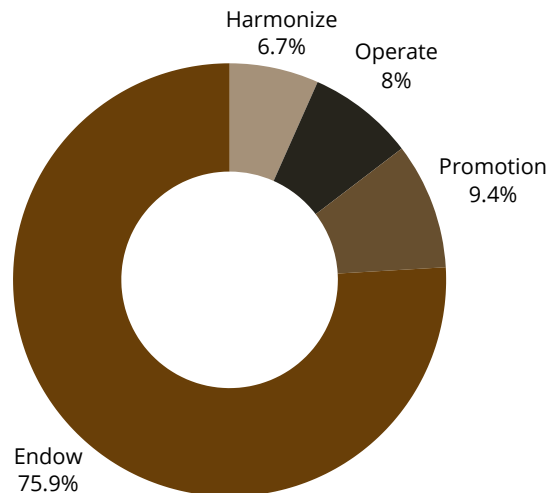
RAISING H.O.P.E. IN OUR COMMUNITY

"Dear supporting partner,

River's Edge supports people of all ages and walks of life to grow spiritually, mentally, and socially in a unique farm setting. As a Christian organization, our core purpose is to share the hope, love, and saving grace of Jesus Christ in a broken world. We do this by matching mentees with mentors and providing a safe place to explore the beauty of creation and grow together. Participants enroll in an initial 11-week program where they will walk alongside a mentor who will grow with them as they work to achieve the goals set out above.

River's Edge Haven of Hope is a registered Canadian not-for-profit charity. Our volunteers help us run the farm, but financial contributions are essential to ensure our services are free to children and youth in our community. Our sessions allow youth to explore Equine-assisted learning, life skills (gardening, baking, woodworking), and fun relationship-building activities. We seek financial support to allow mentees to come weekly to benefit from this mentoring program.

These funds continue to help us raise **H.O.P.E** in our community. Divisions between program costs include **H**armonizing community, **O**perations, **P**romotion, and **E**ndowing our organization with the resources necessary for mentoring. Every youth that enrolls in our program is offered sessions to meet their needs and desires and to create opportunities to learn valuable life skills such as woodworking, baking, gardening, caring for animals, etc.



Training is provided to our staff and volunteers every year to walk alongside mentees, intentionally walk them through challenges, and help them find goals in their life. Our programs would not be possible without the faithful support of our donors. We thank you for your generosity! A donation receipt for tax purposes is available at the end of the year.

ONGOING SUPPORT

We are thankful for the support we receive and realize it is from His hand! Thank you to all who have supported us both prayerfully, financially, and with their gifts! There is no fee for the participants, so we operate completely on donations. We are looking to build our monthly donor base. Please consider supporting us monthly!

Ways to Donate:

- Pre - Authorized Debit
- E-Transfer
- Canada Helps
- Cheque

Visit our website or email us for more information.

NEWS AND EVENTS

FALL FEST:

We would like to thank everyone for coming out to support us and the vendors at our Fall Fest. With your help we were able to raise \$14,000!

SAVE THE DATE:

Euchre Tournament: January 27, 2024

- Games begin at 7:30 pm sharp, at River's Edge Haven of Hope
- Donation of your choice, prizes and light desserts/snacks provided
- Please register by emailing: promotions@riversedge.ca by January 12, 2024. If you have any questions contact Sandra 905-229-8616 or AnnMarie at 905-745-6934. Hope to see you there!

WISHLIST :

We are looking for skates and helmets for our skating program this year. If you have any you would like to donate, please contact Avery at director@riversedge.ca.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Nick VandenOever - *Chairman*
Jackie Elgersma - *Vice-Chair*
Tricia DeBoer - *Secretary*
Mark Heeg
Rik Reinink

board@riversedge.ca

STAFF

Avery Linde
Executive Director
director@riversedge.ca

Melanie Heemskerk
Lead Mentor
melanie@riversedge.ca

Megan Devries
Horse Manager / Lead Mentor
megan@riversedge.ca

PROMOTIONS COMMITTEE

Nick VandenOever - *Chairman*
Sandra Oosterhof - *Secretary*
Ann-Marie Sjaarda - *Treasurer*
Rik Reinink - *Board Liaison*
Dave Jans
Tim Jonker
Avery Linde

PROGRAMS COMMITTEE

Mark Heeg - *Board Liaison*
Fred Vandenbos - *Chairman*
Jenna Vandervelde - *Secretary*
Monica Gabel
Kent Gabel
Avery Linde