



August News Letter
Volume 1, Issue 2



Pandemic... Which One??

Covid has taken the Headlines

Niagara Region Emergency Medical Services reported from January to July 2021, they have responded to 509 suspected opioid overdoses. This is approximately 73 responses per month. In 2020 there were 625 suspected opioid overdoses for the entire year, responded to by EMS. If this trend continues there will soon be double the number of overdose responses for 2021. Is this not a PANDEMIC? From January to March 2021 there were a total of 47 confirmed opioid-related deaths. (1st quarter of the year) This is approximately 16 per month. Total deaths for 2020 were 150, and in 2019 there were 90; is this a trend that the public is missing?

75% of EMS opioid overdose calls are related to males, mostly age 25-44**

24% of EMS opioid overdose calls occurred in Niagara Falls**

**Statistics from Niagara Region Opioid Usage Statistics in Niagara

JC's Place Ministries has witnessed too many drug use and drug overdose situations this month; it is distressing to witness while attempting to lend a helping hand in these situations. We have now placed a cell phone with the ministry in order to be able to call 911 ASAP when needed; hopefully, we will be able to carry and use Naloxone kits on the ministry vehicles soon. Two of our volunteers, John and Pam were witness to a case earlier in August and another this past Sunday August 22, where we found a young man far too spaced out and behaving strangely. So much, in fact, that he was like a spinning top that was losing momentum and was about to topple over. Volunteers John and Gino were able to catch him and guide him to a park bench. 911 was called but amazingly the young man came to and denied needing assistance. Did you know that this is occurring on the streets of Niagara Falls, that pristine tourist destination that we all enjoy? And yes! This is happening just behind the tourist attractions: drug use and overdoses, robbery, fighting, stabbings, fire bombings and personal violence that we would like to see come to an end. There has to be a better solution to this situation.

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August News Points:

- New Phone # 365-880-0818
- Information Brochure Available
- To Volunteer 905-975-6394
- Financial Donation see last page
- Web Site Coming
- Drug Overdoses on the Street
- Stabbing on the Street
- West Lincoln Community Care shares with JC's Place

Direct Report From Volunteers John and Pam

On the Streets

John and Pam are dedicated volunteers who not only travel with the ministry van on Sunday afternoons for 3 hours; they also go out on Wednesday... sometimes Thursday, Friday, Monday, Tuesday when the weather is in the 30 degrees plus range delivering cold bottled water and maybe a sandwich or two, to those who are truly on the streets without shelter from the elements. They visit fewer numbers of people but are able to spend more one-on-one time with the homeless, an opportunity to engage in more personal relationship building. During this time, John and Pam listen to the private needs that can now be expressed: prayers, hopes, joys, guilt, stories of misfortune, sorrows etc. and write down and list items that are requested, making sure these items are on the ministry van for Sunday or passing on requests to other agencies who can provide bus passes, medical attention, and counseling services. Sometimes they come upon people who need medical attention; the following are some of those stories.

One Wednesday, John and Pam met a man with severe burns on his legs, telling them that he was attacked, held down and his legs burned with a torch, because his attackers thought that he had stolen goods and property and this was the revenge. Even after spending a month in hospital, and released back on the street with his cardboard sign, he was still in need of some bandages, gauze, antiseptic wipes to clean the open sores on his legs. Words of good cheer and two bottles of cold water and a small meal and some reading material were given. With a huge smile on his face, he said: "Why are you so concerned about me?" Then with thankful words and blessings he sent them on their way.

A little later the same day John and Pam came across a homeless couple, bringing food and water to them. Suddenly the man fell forwards hitting his head hard on the concrete they were sitting on; the lady with him was able to sit him up, but blood was streaming down his face and an ugly bump was forming on the front of his head, John ran back to the ministry vehicle to get a wash cloth and antiseptic wipes to clean up the mess. The lady in the meantime began to administer CPR as the man's face went from normal to ashen white and then to purplish blue, with his eyes rolling back into his head. He had stopped breathing and she began to shout and yell "Call 911!", "Call 911!", "Call 911!" Another man across the street was yelling and waving, "They're on their way; the ambulance is coming". The overdosed man on the ground then vomited all over the lady doing the CPR, while she was yelling "It's okay, he's coming back." John responded to her, "The ambulance is still coming." Again the overdose victim fell back and his eyes rolled back again and the colour went to purplish blue. Paramedics arrived and took the man to hospital. We cannot tell you the final outcome, but I'm sure you can surmise the sad ending.

Still further to emphasize the cover story, Pam and John found out that another man whom they had visited manytimes died of an overdose on the street; just another of many similar stories. Another lady who has been on our list to visit every Sunday at her tent home was hit by a car, suffering numerous injuries, and is in hospital right now. And still another homeless man who has been served by our care team many times was stabbed in the chest. He survived the attack and after a hospital stay, was back out on the streets this past Wednesday August 25th with a wound dressing on his chest. He rode up to John on his bicycle and asked for cold water, saying, "John, God spared me. I am the one who was stabbed in the chest and just got out of the Hamilton Hospital." John gave him a hug, and said, "I am glad you are here," and gave him the water requested and the book ***Steps to Christ***, and encouraged him to read the book. "I will, I will," he said.

With all of the events related above, John says "I sometimes come home in silent tears, wondering if I and the Ministry are making any difference in this world that is so full of needs . . . physical, spiritual, mental, and more. Are we making a difference?" And the still, small voice says, "Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in Heaven." *Matthew 5:16*

"Thank you for listening to our stories. Your prayers and support are needed and welcomed." ~John and Pam

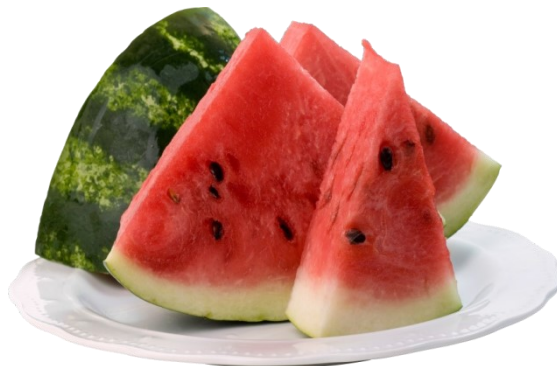


JC's Place Ministry Van on Location West Lincoln Farmers Market

West Lincoln Farmers' Market

Smithville Friday 13th of August 2021

JC's Place Ministries was granted a no-cost market stall to promote what the ministry is doing for the homeless on the streets of Niagara Falls. Our day began with setting up the van using its full potential for the first time: our awning was stretched out, display tables and chairs set up, TV monitor connected to the side wall of the van, and goods displayed on our tables (see photo). We were able to promote Bags of Hope, a supporting ministry creating quilted tote bags and quilts for sale in support of JC's Place Ministries. Secondhand coffee table books, some valued at more than \$50, were offered for free, and if so inclined, a free will donation was accepted. Gospel-related books were also offered. Many people stopped at our booth to accept an information brochure, to look over the merchandise, and to dialogue with our volunteers regarding what the Ministry was all about. We closed up shop shortly after 6:00 pm one hour early to avoid a drenching downpour of rain and lightning that hit the area soon afterwards. Overall, a very successful outing for our ministry van team doing some promotional outreach.



Ice Cold Watermelon Slices! Yummy!

What a Surprising Find:

A Watermelon Discovery

Do you often find that, when only two persons are living in a household, it is not easy to purchase an entire watermelon and eat the whole thing without losing some to waste. Well, this is the beginning of an interesting discovery. Carl and Sharon purchased a watermelon which was on sale at their friendly Costco for \$4.99. Since Sharon hates the taste of watermelon, Carl decided to give 3/4 of the melon to the homeless on the streets of Niagara Falls. Responses from the Street: "I haven't had watermelon in 10 years!!"... "I can't afford to buy it"..."I can't eat a whole melon by myself"..."It's delicious"..."Thank you for such a special treat."

The next week we heard: "Do you have watermelon again today?"..."Thank you again for such a special treat"..."What?! You ran out of melon?" A \$4.99 item has become a special treat for those on the street who haven't been able to buy or afford it on a hot and humid sunny day when the temperatures were pushing 40 degrees Celsius. What a blessing for our ministry's volunteers to see that extraordinary smile and to receive words of appreciation when the treat is truly delicious and refreshing, all in a simple piece of cooled fruit given as a small token of love.

Thanks to West Lincoln Community Care!

JC's Place Ministries wants to express our appreciation to West Lincoln Community Care for sharing with us their surplus food supplies, consisting of Christies Premium Soda Crackers, Triscuit Smoked Gouda Biscuits, Ritz Swiss Cheese Crackers, Oreo Chocolate Eggs, DeBoer's Natural Peanut Butter, and lentils. We will be using the lentils with our fall soup program along with some of the soda crackers. Right now we are making mixed snack bags using the different crackers and biscuits; these are given to the people we meet on the streets. This has been done for three weeks now; each and every time we are being asked for more snack packs. People have said: "Oh, I love the Triscuits."; "I can't get enough of the Ritz Cheese Crackers.", and "Oh! Oh! The chocolate eggs are so delicious." The peanut butter is used in some of our sandwiches each week.



"Sharlene, your team and donors have been a blessing to us at JC's Place Ministries and we are passing it on to the folks on the street. And those on the street say "Thank you for your kindness and thoughtfulness."

Looming Crisis...

We are hearing distressing news from the homeless who have been moved to motel housing from off the streets, that a crisis is looming of a proportion that is as yet undetermined. The impact of Covid-19 has affected landlords and tenants. The rent relief has assisted many tenants to remain in their accommodations, but others have not kept up with their rental fees. The ban or hold on evictions has stopped motel owners from evicting anyone who has not paid their rental fees. Many have told the Ministry volunteers that with the rental protection removal by the provincial government, they have been issued or are being threatened with eviction notices. This process will occur in October, forcing more people onto the streets at the beginning of the cold weather season. The courts are backlogged, and these new cases will not get a hearing in time to prevent this situation from occurring. JC's Place has a limited budget that is already stretched to the limit; with this crisis comes a need for more food, warm clothing, supplies on our truck, and continued additional financial support. This ministry has been offering prayers of support with many of these motel residents looking for a solution to their housing dilemma. Let's be there for them this fall.



JC's Place Ministries: A mobile ministry of the
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