

ANNUAL REPORT 2018



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Peter Ratcliff

BOARD CHAIR

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I thank everyone who contributed to the Christmas Bureau and our two programs - the festive meal program and the Adopt-A-Teen program in 2018.

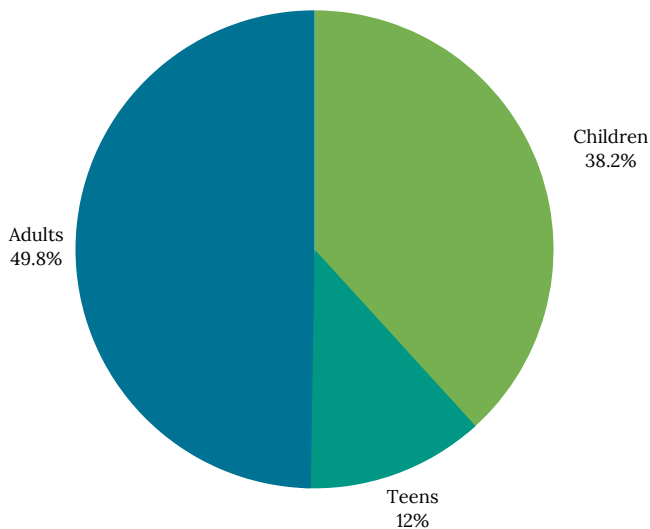
As I complete my third year as Board Chair, I reflect on all the volunteers, donors, clients and supporters that I have met and who have left an impact, not only my life, but on the lives of so many in Edmonton. The stories you have shared have brought us closer together as a community.

The Christmas Bureau is stronger than ever thanks to our continually growing community that comes together to donate time, resources, money and talent in support of Edmontonians in needs at Christmastime. As we enter our 79 year of operation, I look forward to working with a dedicated Board of Directors, Committee Members and staff as we continue to grow and enhance our services.

2018-2019 Board of Directors

- Peter Ratcliff, Chair, Board of Directors
- Andrea Peyton, Vice Chair / Chair, Adopt-A-Teen
- Tom Sides, Past Chair / Secretary
- Heather Murk, Treasurer / Chair, Finance
- Sharon Bell, Chair, Communications
- Randall Yatscoff, Chair, Fund Development
- Mark Reid / Barbara Engelbart McKenzie, Co-Chairs, Governance and Strategic Planning
- Susan Sarrasin, Chair, Human Resources
- Gilbert Drapeau, Chair, Social Services
- Lucille Gans, Chair, Volunteers
- Nancy Bochard
- Margaux Burgess
- Susan Der
- Harry Fuccaro
- Bente Hallin
- David Kovacs
- Wendy Massey
- Hugh Murphy
- Lana Nordlund
- Ivan Sawchuk

WHO WE HELPED

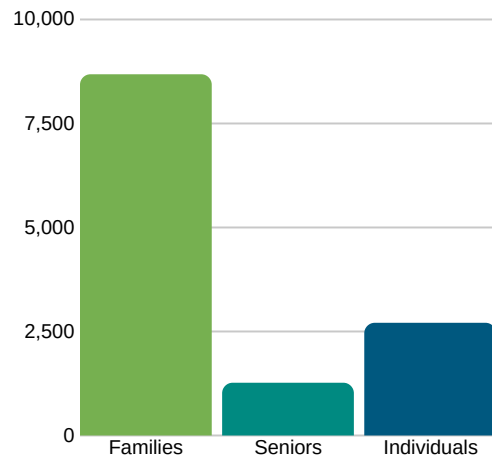


HOUSEHOLDS HELPED

Families come in all shapes and sizes—and we help all of them! From a single dad, to multi-generational families, we ensure that all those who are in need receive assistance at Christmastime.

PEOPLE HELPED

A total of 39,137 people received the services of the Christmas Bureau in 2018. 50% of those were children and teens who would have also received assistance through 630 CHED Santas Anonymous and our Adopt-A-Teen program.



THANK YOU !

"Thank you so much for your generosity and much needed help for my daughter and I this Christmas.

Having been a social worker for over 20 years, I've known about the amazing work of the Christmas Bureau and have often referred clients in need. One time as a teenager my Dad and I volunteered to deliver hampers and it was a very memorable and eye opening experience.

This year I called and requested help myself, which was a humbling and difficult step because I've always been on the giving and helping side of the desk so to speak. I know that asking for help is a sign of strength and I always encourage my clients to remember that we all go through tough times and to not feel bad about reaching out for help when needed.

This year was the first time ever in my life that I found myself in a very difficult and financially desperate situation. The financial struggle started back two years ago when I adopted a beautiful 6 year old little girl. As a single parent adopting beyond infancy I knew the road ahead would be wonderful yet filled with challenges. As a first time mom I was excited for this new journey and I went on parental leave to give my new daughter and I a chance to bond. Unfortunately shortly after adopting I was diagnosed with ovarian cancer and had to go through a major surgery. I remember thinking well at least I'm already off work on leave so I guess I can use this time to not only adjust to motherhood but to recover and get my health back. The surgery was successful and I moved on hopeful for a new lease on life. Shortly after I returned to work last year, I was laid off due to budget cuts. At first I was really stressed and angry but decided to look at this as a chance for more time with my daughter and to work on getting healthy enough to return to work. I went from parental leave to regular EI. Unfortunately late last year, I was cut off EI and also found out my ovarian cancer had returned. I went for another major surgery in earlier this year and have been in a downward spiral and struggling with my health and finances ever since.

I have been living on my visa and line of credit which I know was not the best plan but finally all my resources were completely exhausted and I was left feeling I had nowhere to turn. In consultation with my family and my Doctor last month, I came to the acceptance and realization that returning to full time work at this point with my health battle is not possible right now so I made some calls and reached out for help.

A few days ago a beautiful gift hamper and gift card for food arrived and it was awesome. I know my daughter will love her gifts they are a perfect fit for my sweet now 8 year old.

I want to say a big heartfelt thank you to the Christmas Bureau and all the wonderful people who help and who donate tons of time, energy and resources to make this all possible. What you do really matters and truly makes a difference. Christmas is a wonderful time to celebrate the truly greatest gift of life and your generosity has made this wonderful season and celebration even brighter and happier for this Momma and her girl! Thank you!"

Sincerely,
Grace, 2018 Client

HOW WE HELPED



1,345

Hampers delivered by Christmas Bureau volunteers to households across the city.



7,896

Grocery gift cards provided to families, seniors and individuals to purchase their festive traditions.



1,233

Hampers assembled and delivered by 602 private hamper sponsors to families and seniors.



2,114

Families served through our partner agencies - such as Salvation Army, Junior Chamber International, Saint Vincent DePaul Church, and the Church of First Nations.

HOW ADOPT-A-TEEN HELPED



4,702

Teens received a \$50 Walmart gift card, thanks to the Adopt-A-Teen Program.

"I am writing to let you know that we have received the Walmart gift cards. My two girls and I feel that we are not alone. We feel like we are still a family. Thank you for your kindness.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!"



Thank You

To John Caputo, Graham Hicks and the Edmonton Sun for their ongoing support of the Adopt-A-Teen program.

WHAT OUR CLIENTS SAY

Monique and Miles said:



"I would like to say thank you kindly and sincerely for the two gift cards we received at Christmastime. My son took his gift card to Walmart and bought two pairs of pants (he has been growing fast) and a Nerf gun that he was very happy with. We enjoyed our Christmas dinner and greatly appreciate the Christmas Bureau for being there to help. Keep up the great work you do. It's wonderful for us and so many other families."

Dawn said:



"Many people talk about how difficult it is to be a single mother. They empathize and give praise for what a great job I'm doing. I'm grateful for the uplifting words I receive but what really helps is when someone lifts a bit of the never ending financial strain that comes my way. I was elated to receive Christmas Bureau gifts and a food card. The amount of work and dedication by the Christmas Bureau is greatly appreciated by everyone of the recipients in my parenting class. Women in my group were brought to tears when speaking of the relief the Christmas Bureau brought them."

HOW OUR VOLUNTEERS HELPED



3,053

Hours spent at donation desks around Edmonton.



1,438

Hours spent packing and delivering hampers.



1,312

Hours volunteered at special events.



558

Hours spent helping in the office.



445

Hours volunteered by Board and Committee members.



1,731

Hours spent helping families, individuals and seniors at Walk-In Days.

WHAT OUR VOLUNTEERS SAY

Angie has been serving the public for many years. Whether that's as a Sargent with the military, or working with the Christmas Bureau of Edmonton. At present, she is a member of National Defence – Real Property Operations Division. She came to Edmonton with her son and daughter when she was posted here in 2014. Not knowing anyone she decided to ease some of the loneliness by delivery hampers for the Christmas Bureau and that's where her story of volunteering for us begins. She has since gone on to work in hamper packing & delivery program and now leads a team of volunteers who look after gift wrap and donation desks.

When we asked her why she continues to volunteer, this generous lady tears up and says "it's because the people appreciate what she does." After composing herself she stated that people are genuinely in need and they told her that they were so touched by what she did. Why does she continue to volunteer? "I enjoy it. I meet so many people. I do it to give back to the community".



Fadi and his daughter showed up to our walk-in days in 2017 for the first time and he knew something was different. He waited patiently in line like the many who had come that Friday. As he waited he watched all the people being assisted by the many volunteers who had come to give back that weekend. He noticed so many different languages people spoke and the different countries they came from. Families, single people, seniors and many children, all there looking to make their festive season a little brighter.



He noticed one of the Christmas Bureau workers struggling to understand and help a couple that didn't speak any English. He stood nearby and then cautiously asked if he could help. The staff member asked "Do you speak Arabic?" he replied he did and helped with the many questions for that couple. He then asked if we wanted him to stay and help translate for the rest of the day. We did and he went about helping so many people with his 5-year-old daughter by his side.

Fadi says he is grateful for what he received that day. He was also so happy to give back to a place that welcomed him so well. "I want to come back every year".

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS.

Great things can happen when we work together!

The Christmas Bureau worked with over 90 social services agencies in Edmonton who help screen clients, ensuring that Edmontonians in need know where they can receive help at Christmas. We are proud to partner with Junior Chamber International, the Salvation Army, Beulah Alliance Church and the Sacred Heart Church of the First People. These agencies also provide festive meals to people in need—we work together to ensure that our services are not being duplicated. By working together, we can reach even more people in need.

We are also very grateful to St. Francis of Assisi Elementary School who, every year, give up part of their school for a week in December so that we can manage our hamper program. To the staff and students, we are extremely grateful for your support.



Members of the Christmas Bureau Board and volunteers giving back to St. Francis of Assisi Elementary School - a hotdog thank you party!

THREE CHRISTMAS PROGRAMS

Together, we ensure that families have everything they need for Christmas.



Christmas Bureau Food Program

Provides a one stop application process by administering the client screening process. Provides a festive meal to families, seniors and individuals in need.



Adopt-A-Teen Program

A program of the Christmas Bureau. Provides a gift card to teens aged 13 to 17 years of age. Proudly sponsored by the Edmonton Sun.



630 CHED Santas Anonymous

Provides a gift to children aged 12 and under. Gift packages include a new playable toy, books, stuffy, and a secondary toy/activity.

WHAT IT MEANS TO OUR DONORS

Bruno, Caron Transportation Systems



Fostering employee engagement through generosity.

For more years than he can count, Bruno Muller, President of Caron Transportation Systems, has been supporting the Christmas Bureau of Edmonton, first as an individual donor, then as a corporate donor through an employee donation matching initiative. The donation matching initiative started with an idea. His employees had always received a Christmas gift—it was the company's way of thanking them for all their hard work throughout the year. "But," Bruno thought, "what if we gave them the option of donating the value of the gift back to the Christmas Bureau instead? On top of that, we'll match their donation." And so started a tradition of corporate giving.

"It's a source of pride among our employees," said Bruno. "As leaders in our workplaces, I think it's important that we give employees the opportunity to contribute. It's uplifting." Employees understand that there's certainly no obligation, but having the option available for those who would like to participate is important for the company.

For Bruno, the reason for supporting the Christmas Bureau was simple. "I know they're responsible with their spending," said Bruno. "Most of the money goes directly to people who need it." There are so many worthy charities to support, however, the Christmas Bureau has a special place in Bruno's heart. "When was the last time these people in need had a great meal, that was more than just the staples? It's something we take for granted and yet it means so much."

"It's more than one meal, on one day. It creates lasting memories."

ETHICAL FUNDRAISING.

The Christmas Bureau is proud to be Imagine Canada accredited since 2015.

The Imagine Canada Standards Program awards accreditation to charities and non-profits that demonstrate excellence in five areas of operations:

- Board Governance
- Financial Accountability and Transparency
- Fundraising
- Staff Management
- Volunteer Involvement

The Christmas Bureau was required to meet 72 standards in these five areas in order to obtain accreditation.

The Accreditation Trustmark demonstrates to our donors, supporters, and stakeholders that the Christmas Bureau meets the highest standards of business practice in the charitable sector. When you support the Christmas Bureau, you can feel confident in knowing that we're committed to ensuring your donor dollars are going to where they are needed most: families, seniors, and individuals in need.

**The Imagine Canada
Trustmark**



HOW YOU CAN HELP.

1

Volunteer

Offer your time to volunteer at one of our many volunteer opportunities throughout the holiday season.

2

Fundraise

Organize an event or small fundraiser of your own to help families in need.

3

Donate

Make a monetary donation that will go toward providing a festive meal to a family, senior or individual in need.

4

Leave a Legacy

Consider adding the Christmas Bureau to your legacy giving plans and have a lasting impact on people in need.

5

Sponsor a Hamper

Deliver the holiday spirit in person by sponsoring a hamper for family or senior in need.

6

Spread the Word

Follow us on Twitter, Facebook or Instagram and help us to spread our message by sharing and liking our posts.

WHO WE ARE

*'It is greater than one meal.
One act of kindness can impact someone for a lifetime.'*

Our Mission:

Promotion of the spirit of Christmas caring and sharing in the City of Edmonton.

Our Mandate:

To provide a festive meal and coordination of Christmas giving to Edmontonians in need.

Our Core Values:

- Share the spirit of giving and collective caring
- A spirit of compassion, generosity and support
- A spirit which offers hope
- Culturally inclusive
- Non-judgemental

Our Principles:

- All persons in need are treated with utmost dignity, respect, courtesy and confidentiality.
- Provide assistance to a person in need to be charitable—not disparaging, disconsolate or punitive.
- Provide assistance in accordance with good stewardship principles.
- Pursue and develop partnerships in the community.





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