

## REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**THIS YEAR THE ROAD WAS BUMPY**, unpredictable, and challenging for many of us.

We had to close our doors for periods of time, work from home, and struggle to learn new computer skills and virtual platforms. Our literacy program could no longer be provided in provincial or federal institutions and the fundraiser for the literacy program was delayed until October of this year.

We started a new program, the Healing and Harm Reduction Substance Use Program, just as the pandemic occurred and had to delay implementation until the start of 2021.

However, when roads are difficult to travel on, we often find new paths to continue our journey. We worked with the staff at Manitou House to arrange for some of the men in residence to attend our open group program through a virtual platform.

Similar arrangements were made with the minimum-security unit at Stony Mountain Institution. We are exploring the option of adding a third open group with some of the men from the Pathways Unit at the institution.

Much of our work with men in the community shifted from open group sessions to one-to-one case management. Further, the literacy program has increased its community outreach and focus, which brings services to more men in the community.

The offices and building have undergone renovations that have allowed us to use our space more effectively. We purchased new computers to meet the new demands for virtual services and learned new computer skills that will serve us well in the future.

Our Cultural Room has been updated in preparation for in-person services in the future. We are grateful for provincial and federal funding that allowed us to update our resources and continue our services despite the changes brought about by the pandemic.

This year, we have learned to appreciate

the value of our health and of our connection to each other and the world around us. We have benefitted from partnerships with community agencies that have supported us, promoted our programs, and helped clients access our programs.

Staff have stepped up to the challenges and helped our organization not just survive, but in many ways, thrive. I want to thank them for their support, their hard work and their flexibility.

Clients have shown perseverance, patience and courage in continuing to access services, albeit in alternate forms. I want to thank them for the trust they have shown in us and their dedication to continue their journey of healing.



*Executive Director Sharon Perrault at a previous fundraising event for the literacy department.*

In April of this year I accepted the position of Executive Director. I am grateful for the opportunity to work with the amazing and talented people connected to the John Howard Society of Manitoba. I look forward to being part of the exciting new road ahead and am honoured that we get to walk it together.

*Sharon Perrault*  
*Executive Director*

*Photos: Daniel Crump*