

# The URBAN EDGE

Your Exclusive Update On Your Generosity At Work | Fall 2022

**How generous hearts  
like yours helped  
shape a summer of  
fun at Gem Lake**

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**Together, we can create a life-giving space that the  
North End is proud of and where kids feel safe.**

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# URGENT COMMUNITY UPDATE:

## Why your support and prayers are more important than ever

For over 36 years, kind-hearted people like you have been helping us bring hope to the core in Winnipeg's inner city.

But this year, something is happening that we can't ignore: Things are getting worse... not better.

Anyone who drives down Main Street is confronted by the fact that although there are more support organizations than ever before, levels of poverty, violence and despair in our downtown are rising.

With inflation, many families in the North End have officially reached their breaking point. There are more encampments at the base of the Disraeli Bridge—and beyond—than we've seen in a long time.

**The use of meth is higher than it's ever been.** Many people in the North End make it themselves and sell it to their friends. It makes having a reasonable conversation so difficult. In fact, even our veteran

Community Ministers aren't entirely sure how to deal with this new reality—or how to walk people through it.

Even so, we still believe that supportive, grace-filled relationships are the answer. And we will continue to work towards them—no matter the challenges.

**This isn't the first time there've been rough times in the North End. And we want you to know: the hope that got us through before—the hope of Christ—will get us through again.**

But your support and prayers are essential right now as we spend dedicated time on the front lines, trying to figure out where it went wrong and how we can right the ship.

**We are so grateful to have compassionate people like you on our team as we continue to ask difficult questions and look for creative solutions! ✕**



### **“This is our community too!”**

*Caring and compassionate Manitobans—like you—continue to give a hand up to inner city kids who need it most.*

After years of hanging on to their grown-up kids' hockey gear, Tom & Debbie did a Google search to see who could benefit from a donation of hockey sticks.

The result? Inner City Youth Alive!

“The biggest thing for us is that we LOVE kids! It bothers us when we see children missing out on really simple things,” Tom says. “ICYA is all about providing the fundamentals of life—and children are our most important asset.”

Just like us, North End families are facing the highest cost of living in decades. But unlike many of us—with good jobs and safety nets—these families are wondering how they're going to feed their children or afford new clothes to replace the ones they've outgrown.

**“It is a family and wealth issue, sure, but it's more than that... it's a community issue. This is our community too. And we're all in this together. You don't need a vault full of money to help.”**

What started as an accidental introduction—thanks to a hockey stick donation and a Google search—has resulted in a long-term commitment and personal connection to ICYA's mission.

“It's very emotional for us,” says Debbie. “People need to know that they're seen—that they're not ghosts. Even if it is to simply say hello.”

**“ICYA introduced us to our inner city neighbours and now we can't look away.** Every time we give a donation to ICYA, we know that we are making an impact in our community. Each gift we give is helping young people have a sense of belonging and purpose—providing hope of being able to break the cycle of poverty.”

**Thank you, Tom, Debbie and caring people like you for your commitment to children and families in Winnipeg's inner city! ✕** \*Names have been changed



# Life-Changing Memories

How your generous heart helped support a summer of fun at Gem Lake Wilderness Camp

**Thanks to your kindness and support, 77 kids got to go to camp this summer—leaving behind the conflict and pressures of the inner city for one whole week!**

To be honest... this year was anything but ordinary. After being closed for the last two years, every week of camp came with a new challenge.

If the success of camp was based on everything our team had to overcome—camp was a trainwreck. But *real success*—the kind that matters—is best understood through the eyes of our campers... and staff who were once campers themselves!

“Summer has been great! You have no idea how long I’ve wanted to work at Gem Lake,” said Autumn. “Camp means the world to me. Thanks to a kind donor, I grew up going as a camper, and this year I got to come back as a paid staff!”

What a gift you’ve given to young people like Autumn. From a young Bridge Drop-in participant, to a Gem Lake camper, to a paid staff member! A beautiful full circle moment.

“I volunteer and do life with these kids throughout the year. But camp gives a unique opportunity to connect on a deeper level,” Autumn explained. “They really start to open up about their fears and how fast they must grow up in the city.”

**Your support helps these kids get to camp, where they open up to leaders like Autumn. Your support is also what makes it possible for leaders like Autumn to build supportive and caring relationships with kids that continue back at home!**

Grateful is an understatement. Thank you for all you do!

Until next year! 🙌



Thank you for making this summer one to remember!



Autumn had a wonderful summer thanks to you!



# A healthy and strong community—one basketball court at a time

*Together, we can create a life-giving space that the North End is proud of and where kids feel safe.*

From morning to night, you can hear the “thunk, thunk, thunks” of balls hitting the pavement at our Drop-in basketball court.

It's *constantly* in use. And not just by kids who attend our programs—by young people from the community, too!

We're thrilled when we see that. Out of all the activities available to teenagers on a Friday night in the North End... they came to us. They came where it's safe.

**Over the years, we've come to understand that our basketball court is actually our community's court.** A safe place for kids and teens to just... be kids and teens for a while. (Not to mention a fantastic entry point into our programs!)

Only problem is... some kids affectionately refer to our court as “a jail.” With its chain-link fence and lack of colour, we see what they mean. And it's definitely *not* the feeling we want to give off!

That's why we want to hire some local artists to create a colorful mural—reflective of the vibrancy of our friends and neighbours in the North End—so it remains a place where kids want to hang out for years to come...

...And so it becomes a place our entire community can be proud of.

We're wondering if you'd be able to help?

The total cost for this project is \$30,000. Which means, if everyone who reads this newsletter gives just \$20, we'll be able to completely cover it and get started before winter hits!

But your gift today will be much more than colour on a wall. Together, you'll be helping us create a warm, inviting space that will impact young people in the North End for *years* to come. Your gift will really be a colorful commitment to North End kids, their families and the entire community!

If now isn't a good time for you to make a gift, we totally understand. Instead, please consider praying for any young person that steps foot on “*our*” basketball court. That they feel safe... and that they feel inspired to dream big!

Thank you for being part of Team ICYA!



*Yes,*

**I WANT TO HELP CREATE A COLORFUL MURAL ON THE WALL OF ICYA'S BASKETBALL COURT THAT OUR WHOLE COMMUNITY CAN BE PROUD OF.**

Helping inner city youth take a break from the conflict and pressures of the inner city this summer is something I feel passionately about. That's why I'm choosing to support the amazing programs and services at Inner City Youth Alive.

I will use the enclosed coupon and reply envelope to send in my most generous gift today!

**To donate by phone, call (204) 582-8779, or give online at [icya.ca/basketball](http://icya.ca/basketball)**

418 Aberdeen Ave,  
Winnipeg MB R2W 1V7  
[icya.ca](http://icya.ca) | [info@icya.ca](mailto:info@icya.ca)  
(204) 582-8779  
Charitable Business No.  
13279 9495 RR0001

