



Man pushes cart

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A successful businessman, who at one time was homeless, will be passing through Maple Ridge on Friday – pushing a shopping cart – raising money and awareness for homeless youth at risk. Joe Roberts will be at the Caring Place, 22188 Lougheed Hwy. at 10 a.m. on Friday.

This week, Roberts, founder of “The Push for Change” – a fundraising and awareness campaign for Canada’s homeless youth – will be making a pit stop in Maple Ridge to talk to The Caring Place about his story of hardship to success.

This is a summer warm-up training trek which will take place between Calgary and Vancouver.

Joe Roberts was formerly homeless in Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside and, with the help of The Salvation Army along the way, is now a successful business man. He created The Push for Change to raise money and awareness for homeless youth at risk.

Roberts is planning to push a shopping cart across Canada in 2013 to build awareness and support for homeless youth in Canada. He and business partner, Dr. Sean Richardson, a sport psychologist, are hoping to create a call to action to get people involved and inspired. “What if we could catch them before they graduate to the worst postal code in Canada?” he noted.

Roberts shares that he is well aware of the issues of homelessness, having spent seven years on the streets of Vancouver’s East end as a young man. Those years were spawned by drug use at a young age.

“My story is that I lost sight of the idea of how much of an extraordinary person I could be,” he explained. After reaching rock bottom he made a call for help and went to rehab.

The idea is for communities and individuals to help push the cart with him, generating funds to support existing services and resources.

“If all we do is create awareness then we would have failed as a project,” he said. “Engagement is the key, if we can get enough people wrapped around this and they get their hearts in it we can make a real impact.”

Roberts will be pushing his cart through Maple Ridge on Aug. 17 and stopping at The Caring Place and 10 a.m. to share his story and his vision.

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