



Joe Roberts in 1989 (left) and today (right).

PHOTOS COURTESY PUSH FOR CHANGE

Push for Change will raise money for at-risk youth

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A successful businessman, it's almost difficult to believe Joe Roberts' was once a homeless drug addict living on Vancouver's infamous Skid Row.

Joe Roberts' story of transformation is one that speaks to the very heart of human inspiration. It's this very inspiration Roberts is hoping to capitalize on as he makes his way from Calgary to Vancouver pushing a modified shopping cart -- a challenge he'll take on full time next year when he'll push the cart across the entire country in event that has been dubbed "The Push For Change".

"All of us go through adversity and change," Roberts says. "That's why people resonate with my story. It's a story of humanity."

For Roberts, however, it's at-risk youth who harbour a special place -- after all he was once a teenager entangled in drug addiction and navigating the Downtown Eastside (DTES). All of the money raised from The Push For Change will go towards creating programs to help youth at risk. Roberts says the plan is to have different programs implemented from early prevention to accessing youth who are already homeless.

"There are a number of things we want to do, but the big picture is a mentorship program," says Roberts. "We're trying to prevent homelessness and addiction by going back a few steps. That's why the shopping cart because that's [homelessness] eventually the outcome."

The idea, says Roberts, is to get kids to change the way they think about how they are. "When I see kids who are on the street I have to question what happened to them for that to happen."

While Robert's rags to riches story is the spark behind the flame, credit for the idea behind Push For Change belongs equally to his business partner, Sean Richardson. It was on a flight from Vancouver to Calgary that the two began a conversation about making a difference. From there The Push For Change began its formation.

Currently Roberts is in the midst of his 1,000-kilometre pilot trek. When I spoke to him last week The Push for Change Team was resting in Golden. Besides Roberts and Richardson, the team includes cinematographer Ali Virk and road manger Rob Cook -- whom it turns out Roberts knew during his days in the DTES.

"We're making good time right now," Roberts says. "We looked at the National Campaign and we came up with a few logistics."

Those logistics include: the difficulty of raising the money to make push for change happen, the challenge of pushing a shopping cart across the country. Then of course there's the physical demand on Roberts. In order for Joe to make his goal during the 8,000-km National Trek set to take place in 2013, he'll need to walk 24 km every day, 6 days a week for 14 months. "I'm not an elite athlete. I'm a 45-year-old soft in the middle business guy. How do we get past that paradigm shift?" asks Roberts.

There's also the idea of gathering support, which is why Roberts says they connected with the Vancouver Film School which in turn led them to Burke. Burke is working on a short film that can be used to pitch to corporations.

"We've got a couple of good brands on board already," says Roberts.

One of those 'brands' is the Elks of Canada. In fact, it was George Hopkins of the Revelstoke Elks who contacted recre-

ation, facility and program coordinator Meghan MacIsaac to see if it would be possible to coordinate a place for Roberts to speak.

"I love getting together and working with different groups," MacIsaac says. "George and I met and began discussing how this could look and we went from there."

Putting together the event has been a bit of a whirlwind if you consider Hopkins first approached MacIsaac with the idea little more than a month ago. It's a lucky draw for Revelstoke too. While Roberts says during the National campaign there will be speaking engagements planned nearly every day, this time around only a few select events are being planned. This stop in Revelstoke is one of them.

"We're partly in Revelstoke to say thank you to the Elks, but we're also test driving the social media campaign," says Roberts. It's also a way to connect and shake hands along the way, as Roberts admits that while corporate sponsorships are important, he expects the bulk of the money they'll raise will be the \$2 or \$5 individuals donate.

It's likely Roberts will also rely on the skills he learned while hustling to survive in the DTES. I ask Roberts how these skills transfer to both business and The Push For Change.

"It happens when I'm really passionate about something. My mastery came from communication. My survival on the DTES was really based on my ability to communicate," says Roberts. "Today I can sit in a board room or I can sit face to face with an at-risk kid."

Of course, the idea of homelessness in the DTES may seem far removed from Revelstoke. I ask Roberts if he thinks smaller

see page 13



THE BUZZ

CRYOTHERAPY

Summer is here and with summer brings all different types of physical activities. Sure exercise is great, but it can also be hard on the body with potential injuries occurring to every joint and limb. Whether it is a sprain or strain Pharmasave has a vast array of products for first response to an acute injury.

Cryotherapy is a treatment in which an injury is subjected to cold temperature; this is considered the first response to an injury that is caused by trauma. Pharmasave has several cryotherapy products to choose from, including reusable and instant gel cold packs. As well as number of different micro bead bags and a cryotherapy tensor wrap.

When choosing the type of cryotherapy that would be best, it is important to consider where the injury site is and the size of the injury. When possible get a gel or micro bead bag that best fits the injured area and a portion of the surrounding tissue. An instant cold bag or cold tensor does not need to be kept in a fridge or freezer therefore instant gel bags are a must in any first aid or medical kit. As well, it is a great idea to pack them along with any type of activity where an injury may occur.

Cryotherapy works well when applied to injury site within the first 48 hours of injury occurrence. Cryotherapy will decrease muscle spasms, decrease swelling and pain to soft tissue and bone. When using cryotherapy one should apply cold to the injury for 15 minutes. Try to elevate the injured area if possible. After 15 minutes remove the cold treatment and allow tissue to return back to normal temperature. This process can be repeated many times throughout the day.

However there are a few precautions to take when using cryotherapy. Cryotherapy may be painful when applied to an injury site where lots of nerves are exposed such as a broken bone. If the cold feels very painful remove it. It is also important to make sure the site of injury still has sensation before applying cold, if there is a loss of sensation the skin may be susceptible to frost bite.

If you have any other questions, feel free to come down to Pharmasave and we will be pleased to help you.

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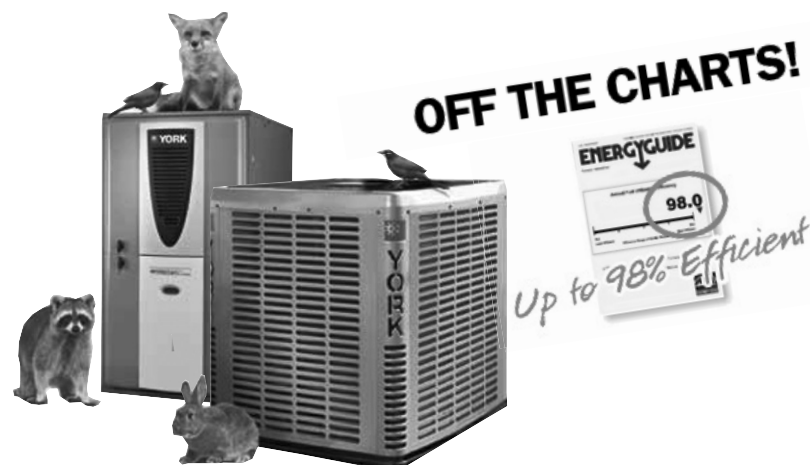
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