

# Man pushing shopping cart across Canada stops in Maple Creek

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Joe Roberts is pushing a shopping cart across Canada. His purpose is to raise awareness about youth homelessness, a condition he experienced firsthand before becoming the CEO of a million-dollar company. Roberts was in Maple Creek on the weekend of June 10 and spoke at The Salvation Army.

The story of Roberts' life is as captivating as his quest to walk across the country. He shared elements of both during his presentation.

To cope with the loss of his father and the abuse he suffered from his step-father, a teenage Roberts turned to drugs and alcohol before fleeing his hometown of Midland, Ont. at 15. Roberts ran away to Vancouver where his descent into substance abuse intensified. Less than 10 years later, he was a heroin addict living under a bridge.

He credits his mother and The Salvation Army for not shunning him when he decided to seek help and break with his former life in order to begin a journey toward healthy living.

After achieving sobriety, Roberts attended Loyalist College and completed his studies in business marketing. He graduated with a 3.94 GPA out of a possible 4.0.

Roberts is now a successful motivational speaker and the former CEO of Mindware Design Communications, a multi-media company.

Captain Ed Dean of the Maple Creek Salvation Army met Roberts at the junction of Highways 1 and 21 on June 10. Capt. Ed invited Roberts to speak at The Salvation Army service the following day.

While speaking there, Roberts echoed the parable of the Good Samaritan, which was the teaching given during the service. He encouraged his listeners to do what's within their capacity to help youth and to not judge them by their appearance. This support could come in the form of food, clothing or a donation of volunteer time to charities.

During his sincere and heartfelt talk, Roberts said youth homelessness is caused by four factors; they are trauma, abuse, family conflict along with addic-



NEWS PHOTO DOMINIQUE LIBOIRON

Joe Roberts shares his story at The Salvation Army June 11. He went from being a heroin addict who was living under a bridge to the CEO of a million-dollar company. The Salvation Army, Roberts explained, offered him assistance when his life was in chaos.

tions and mental health issues.

Roberts cautioned the audience not to assume youth homelessness isn't an issue in a small town. He said youth from small communities drift toward larger centres such as Swift Current, Regina or Calgary.

Capt. Ed supported Roberts' statement and said youth homelessness exists in Maple Creek, but isn't

visible because the teenage boys and girls it affects bounce from one friend's house to another.

Capt. Ed said if anyone knows of a youth experiencing homelessness in the community to please let The Salvation Army know so those affected can get resources to improve their situation.

There is a youth homeless shelter in the region,

Capt. Ed explained. Dorie's House Southwest Youth Emergency Shelter is located in Swift Current, but is currently without an operating budget so donations to help run the centre would be greatly appreciated.

Both Roberts and Capt. Ed encourage concerned citizens to lobby elected officials to invest in youth and families at risk. According to Capt. Ed, homelessness often leads to criminal behaviour, which then requires taxpayers to invest in correctional institutions. He believes money is better spent making youth productive citizens as opposed to incarcerating them.

After speaking at The Salvation Army, Roberts went to the Okimaw Ohci Healing Lodge to share his testimonial. For this presentation, Roberts went more in depth about his addiction and road to recovery.

At the time of his presentation, Roberts had walked

7,469 km out of his total of 9,100 km. He was on Day 407 of 517. His goal is to walk 24 km per day while pushing a symbol of homelessness across Canada. The journey began May 1, 2016 in St. John's, Nfld., and will end Sept. 30 in Vancouver. The 49-year-old mostly follows the Trans-Canada.

On June 12, he completed the last remaining kilometres of the Saskatchewan segment of this trek. Roberts was accompanied by Capt. Ed. The pair walked toward the Alberta border and were escorted by an RCMP motorcade from Regina. Mounted Police members from Alberta were at the border to greet Roberts and welcome him into the next province of his journey.

If you'd like to follow Roberts' daily progress, you can track him on his website at [www.thepushforchange.com](http://www.thepushforchange.com).

## Better heating, ventilation and more for Fort Walsh

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These investments represent the largest federal infrastructure plan in the history of Parks Canada.

Trimmer said the investments in guest infrastructure like visitor centres, trails and campgrounds as well as highways, parkways and bridges will ensure the quality and reliability of visitor facilities and continue to allow Canadians to connect with nature.

He explained Parks Canada is the country's largest tourism provider and is committed to providing visitors with exceptional and meaningful experiences at the agency's historic sites, national parks and national marine conservation areas. He encourages everyone to come and visit the new Visitor Reception Centre in 2018 to see it for themselves.

In the southern part of the province, Parks

Canada operates Fort Walsh National Historic Site along with Grasslands National Park. Other staffed sites in Saskatchewan include Prince Albert National Park, Fort Battleford, Batoche and Motherwell Homestead near Abernethy along with many designated buildings of historical significance.

Trimmer said that because of the refurbishing project the VRC is

closed to the public for the 2017 season. However, a kiosk is currently located in the parking lot to greet visitors and direct them to the fort itself where a temporary visitor centre and concession area has been set up in the Superintendent's Residence.

**YOU ARE INVITED TO THE  
GRAND RE-OPENING  
OF THE  
MAPLE CREEK TRANS CANADA  
VISITOR CENTRE**

**FRIDAY, JUNE 16TH, 2017  
@ 1:30PM**

**VISITOR CENTRE ON HIGHWAY**

 **CYPRESS HILLS**  
DESTINATION AREA

**Summer Job**

**Museum Summer Employment Program 2017**

  


The Jasper Cultural and Historical Centre is seeking motivated students to fill two museum assistant positions July 1st to August 26th (8 weeks) \$12.00 per hour, 8-hour day plus 1 hour for lunch (9a.m to 6p.m). Students must be enrolled in high school or secondary school, technical or vocational programmes with intent to return.

**Please Drop Off Or Email Resume To  
THE JASPER CENTRE BY**  
June 19. For further information  
Call: **306-662-2434** or Email: [jasper.centre@sasktel.net](mailto:jasper.centre@sasktel.net)  
or mail to Box 1504 Maple Creek • Sask. S0N 1N0

**Community Futures Southwest**

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
Thursday; June 22, 2017  
at 5:30 p.m.  
Walker Place in Swift Current, SK.

**Meeting is open to the public**

**Please R.S.V.P. By Calling  
306-773-0900 On, Or  
Before June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2017**