

UNDER THE BRIDGE

Newsletter for Last House On The Block Society



July 2014

Welcome to the July issue of Under the Bridge, the free newsletter of Last House on the Block Society. Not much to report this month. We were hoping to have a story submitted to us but it did not reach us in time for the deadline. So, I will tell you a story that you may have heard before. To protect the anonymity of other persons involved in the story, I have omitted their names. The story is called.....

Bacon and Eggs

Just over six years ago, at a few minutes past midnight, I heard a knock on my door. When I opened the door it was a guy I'd seen in a few AA meetings. I didn't really know him that well so I asked him what he wanted.

He said, "I can't stop drinking. I try and I get a little bit of time in and then I start again. I've lost everything this time. My relationship, my job, my truck. I'm sleeping in my dad's garage. I was going to do myself in tonight. I got the noose hanging from the rafters. But, they tell me you can help. Will you please help me? I don't know what else to do."

I experienced a moment of deja vu. When I was about five years sober, I was at a 12-step recovery website chat room. A woman whom I barely knew asked if she could send me a private message about recovery. She told me in that message that she was sitting in her apartment with a quart of rum in one hand and her side-arm in another (she worked in law

enforcement), trying to figure out if she wanted to get drunk again or blow her brains out. Then she said she'd heard I could help and wanted to know if I would explain to her how I stopped drinking. We talked for hours in that chat room. Last I heard, she was still sober. I don't know if it was anything I said. I think that sometimes just knowing someone gives a damn is enough.

I told the guy on my deck to come in and have a coffee and we'd chat. I figured it would take about an hour. We talked until the sun came up. We talked about a lot of things that night. I told him how I had slept under the bridge. I told him that I, too, had stood on a stool once, looking for a place to hang the rope. I told him how it had seemed to me that everyone had given up on me. I had no job, no place to live, no friends, no family. All I really had was a glimmer of hope that if I stopped drinking and went to meetings and did what my sponsor was telling me to do, that things would get better.

When my wife got up at five to go to work she made us bacon and eggs. That set a precedent. My friend was over at my house every morning for breakfast for the next 5 months. He often says he came to my place every morning for bacon and eggs but I think he may be using that as a metaphor. We didn't always have bacon and eggs, but we always had something tasty, sometimes it was just coffee. We went to meetings every day, often twice a day. I remember telling him I'd help him but I was a busy guy so he better not waste my time. He never did.

Together, we took the 12 Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous as we are directed to do in the AA Big Book. It would take too long to explain to you here how they are done. If you would like to know more about those, feel free to get a copy of that book and read it.

My friend doesn't sleep in the garage anymore. He has his own home. He runs his own business, he has a great woman. They just got married. He has also become a great friend of mine. We don't always agree but that wouldn't be much fun. My friend has over six years under his belt and many times he has bacon and eggs in his own home with some new guy who is struggling to get sober as he was in the beginning.

None of that is because of me. I do not take credit for getting people sober. I have sponsored many men over the past 16 years and most of them are still drinking. I just tell them what I did and whenever possible, I show them what I do now.

They say you can lead a horse to water but you can't make the horse drink the water. All I do is lead them to the water and show them how it quenches my thirst. It's up to them to drink the water.

At his 4th year anniversary I presented my friend with his medallion. I remember saying in my little speech something that I heard someone else say, that a person should live their life so that those who do not yet know God will come to know God simply by knowing them. My friend is a lot like that.

This article was written by a volunteer director of Last House on the Block Society. We encourage our readers to submit their own stories or articles. So if you have a story about life under the bridge or on the streets or if you are working or volunteering in this field, we'd like to hear from you. There is no payment for stories, articles, poetry or artwork submitted, however we will provide you with a printed copy of the newsletter.

Submissions should be addressed to:

Last House on the Block Society, 38 Trentonian Lane, Dartmouth, NS B2W 0C4.

You may also email them to us at : lasthouseontheblock@outlook.com

The Diversity Scarves

The scarves we provide are called diversity scarves. They are made from 3 different colors of wool, from odds and ends and often from discarded balls of wool. The idea is that many who suffer from addiction often feel discarded by society, yet when they break the chains of their addiction and go on the road to recovery they become a creation of warmth and beauty, like the diversity scarf. The three colors also symbolize that no matter what our gender is, or what our drug of choice may have been, it is our diversity that adds to our beauty.

What Do They Look Like?



How Are They Made?

Nancy has provided us with the basic pattern.

You use three different colors of wool all knitted together as one. Thick wool and thin wool can be used together.

Using size 10 knitting needles cast on 20 stitches, in rib of knit one pearl one until scarf is of a length to go from your hip around your neck and down to your other hip. This makes the scarf reversible and nice and thick to keep people warm.

We call it a diversity scarf because it is usually made from odds and ends and discarded bundles (although it can be made from new yarn as well) which when combined, becomes a creation of beauty and warmth. Each scarf is unique and can be worn by any gender from any fellowship symbolizing that although we are each unique, our diversity only enhances our beauty.

ABOUT US

Last House on the Block Society is a non-profit organization that provides community outreach and/or information services to men and women in recovery from addictions to alcohol, drugs and gambling.

By directing persons in recovery to treatment services, self-help meetings, life skills, leisure activities, training and employment agencies, and by offering them support and encouragement, we hope to help them build a positive self-image so that they may re-integrate back into society.

Whenever possible, we will donate items of clothing to persons in recovery from addictions.

Board Of Directors

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Donna Horne – Treasurer

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How To Contact Us

We don't have an office or a facility yet but our mailing address is:

38 Trentonian Lane, Woodlawn Village, Dartmouth. NS, B2W 0C4

Check out our website:

<http://lasthouseontheblocksociety.weebly.com>

Like our facebook page:

www.facebook.com/LastHouseOnTheBlockSociety

or become a member of our facebook group:

www.facebook.com/groups/lasthouseontheblocksociety

Follow us on Twitter @lasthouseonthebloc

or just send us an email and ask a question:

lasthouseontheblock@outlook.com

Submissions for Under The Bridge should be sent to the Editor, either by mail or email to the address above.

How To Be Involved

There are different ways to help with Last House On The Block Society. You can donate money or items (as many of you do). Please visit our website for info on how to donate. You can be one of our knitters (if knitting or crocheting is your thing). You can volunteer for fundraising events by getting on the fund-raising committee. Or if you'd like to be

directly involved in the decision-making process, you can make application to serve on our voluntary board of directors. Its a two-year term. We currently have 6 board members which is enough to operate the society, although our full complement is 11 board members. If you are in recovery from an addiction, we would prefer one year clean or sober.

This newsletter was compiled, manufactured, and distributed by one of the founding directors of Last House on the Block Society. All costs for publication, printing, and distribution are donated.

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