

Resolving Homelessness

With a final blast of colour, the foam house comes to life and is now bound for its first destination. The eight foot tall model house represents a vision of hope for homeless families.

“I wanted to come up with a unique way to generate awareness and donations for Inn from the Cold, Calgary’s largest family emergency shelter,” explains Roger Balm, Chairman and CEO of Resolve by RPM Software. “I thought a creative way was to build a whimsical Inn with foam and drop it off on a donor’s driveway or lawn. That person can then pick the next location, and if that person donates any amount to the Inn, we will then move the house to a person of their choosing - and so on.”

Balm says he was inspired to do more to help homeless families in the community after a rewarding volunteer experience at the Inn.

“A friend was serving dinner at the Inn and I offered to help. The experience was not only fun but gratifying, and I was especially proud of some of the families helping with the cleanup of the kitchen after dinner. It made me realize some of the considerable benefits the Inn is providing to homeless families in the community.”

When Balm came up with the idea, he approached the Inn’s Executive Director, hoping she would see the potential for his vision - cleverly named INNspiration House.

“We were thrilled when Roger came to us,” says Executive Director Yvette Rasmussen. “The impact of third-party support is huge for the Inn, and can make all the difference for homeless families. We believe that INNspiration House is going to generate a lot of public awareness.”

An initiative that couldn’t come at a better time. Over the past several months, the Inn has seen a dramatic increase in homeless families seeking help. Unlike emergency shelters for individuals, family emergency shelters like Inn from the Cold are at capacity.

“It’s definitely been a busy summer,” says Rasmussen. “Family homelessness is on the rise, even though we are serving more families through prevention and community outreach efforts. All family members are impacted in different ways and require different resources, so it can be very complex. Even the littlest things - such as washing clothes, bathing a baby or doing homework - become the biggest challenges for homeless families.”

The path of INNspiration House will be tracked through social media. As the house travels from location to location, Calgarians will be challenged to take notice.

“We wanted to make this fun and interesting,” says Balm. “We’ve created a Twitter and Facebook account where people can follow the house to see where it’s set up, guess where its next location will be, that sort of thing. We’ll have some cool prizes to give out as well.”

Balm says he’s hoping that people will learn more about the Inn and family homelessness through this initiative.

“As a Calgarian, I hope to show the profound difference that a small company can make with a little creativity and support from a great charity.”



Roger Balm, Chairman & CEO of Resolve by RPM Software, poses beside INNspiration House

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