



THE PLUSE

Why I walk...Gord Brown's story

Noreen and I have been married for 50 years. Things certainly haven't always been easy for us. In 1999, I had my first Grand Mal seizure. I have had four others since then. It's a miracle that I have had only five of them. It is really a miracle that I am still alive. This was one of the hardest thing my wife and I had to go through...

However, I have to confess that our many needs have been met by moving to Welland and serving the people here. Serving the people of Welland through Open Arms has been an honour. I get to help in many ways. I help through, sorting, driving, delivery and distribution.

My heart really breaks for those we serve at OAM. No one should go hungry. Many people are in need, through no fault of their own or because of some choices they have made in life. Serving at OAM has allowed me to really see the needs in our own community. I see the needs of both the young and old in Welland. Serving those in our community has opened the eyes of my heart. As I continue to see the needs in our community, I find purpose in giving back and loving unconditionally.

I have been walking in the CNOY for five years now (Gordos team). Walking in the CNOY allows me the opportunity to get involved and raise awareness for the cause. The need has never been greater. The numbers of people OAM is serving is up. The food weights are up...Covid has affected us all. No one deserves to be without food. Many have asked me why do I walk? Why do I walk for the CNOY and my answer is Matt 5:16. Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in Heaven.



SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE PANDEMIC, WE HAVE DISTRIBUTED MORE THAN 190,000 POUNDS OF FOOD—AN INCREASE OF 80% FROM LAST YEAR.



During the Wainfleet BIC "Free food pop up" I saw a beautiful display of kindness. As the line was coming to an end we began to run out of food and had to limit the number of bags we were distributing. The family I was serving was met with this news. The news was met with much sadness. This was seen by the clients lined up behind the family. When these clients saw this they immediately gave their food to the family and in their words they said.. "they need it more than me." Kindness always wins.

Josh Walsh
Communication & Development

People who are experiencing homelessness have been in the news lately. Recently, Josh Walsh, the Director of Communication and Development, and I slept outside to raise awareness about this issue and raise money for the Coldest Night of the Year. As this event approached, someone asked, "How does Open Arms Mission help those who are experiencing homelessness?" This was a great question since Open Arms does help people who are experiencing housing problems, including those who do not have one.

In response to this question, I told this person about a friend of the Mission named Jamie. She is older, live on the streets, and has mental health problems. She comes to the Mission once a week or more to get food. She is given items that she can eat easily without cooking or any in-depth preparation, like vegetables, fruit, shelf stable juice, and granola bars. She is always grateful and returns our kindness with a smile often.

As I spoke with this individual, I was reminded about God's heart for "least of these" in this world. In the Old Testament, Moses acknowledges "there will never cease to be poor in the land. Therefore I command you, "You shall open wide your hand to your brothers, to the needy and to the poor, in your land.....give generous to them" (Deut 15). Throughout the Bible, God's people are called to help those who are hungry and in need. It is truly a joy to be able to live out this mandate each day Open Arms is open providing physical as well as spiritual food to those who need it.

Marty Misener
Executive Director, Open Arms Mission