
“The Provincial News”
The John Howard Society of BC
December, 1999

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Christmas, 1999!
The Last of This Millennium!

The Christmas Holiday Season is a time to be with loved ones and share with them the joys and sorrows of the past year. Those who are in correctional facilities can find this time of year very difficult. Let us remember them as we go into the next Millennium and renew our efforts to serve them.

To the membership of JHSBC, may you enjoy this wonderful season and have the happiest holiday ever!

Fraser Valley Dinner Celebrating 70 Years of JHS Work in BC!

Over 135 people gathered together on Friday evening, November 26th, to celebrate the work of the Society over the past 70 years. The birth of JHSBC was initiated at a meeting of the Vancouver Ministerial Association in May, 1929. The Society opened for business May 1, 1931 and was incorporated on February 29, 1932.

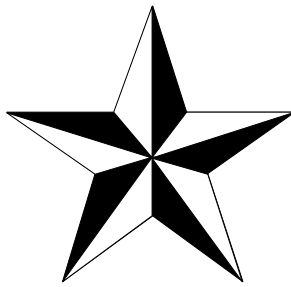
The guest speaker was Dave Barrett, former

Premier and former JHS worker. Dave talked about the JHS during his tenure and the need for JHS today. Also, in attendance were Merv Davis, Executive Director from 1955-1975, Norm Levi who worked for JHS in the 60's and was instrumental in starting the union to which JHS staff belong, Bill Hesketh who started Howard House in Vernon, and Rev. MacFarren, the last Executive Director prior to the amalgamation of JHSBC and JHS Vancouver Island.

The dinner and reunion was very successful and helped to raise some needed funds for the Fraser Valley Region.

Substance Use & Criminal Justice Update

Since the last issue of “The Provincial News”, the Society has been receiving some favorable response to our Policy Statement. About half of the Health Regions responded, and they welcomed the statement. They are all actively pursuing this issue. In Nanaimo, the Regional JHS received extensive media coverage when they released the statement in relation to Drug Awareness Week.



High Risk Offender - Community Advisory Program

The Provincial Government recently instituted The Community Advisory Program in relation to “High Risk Offenders” returning to the community. The objectives of the program are: (1) the enhancement of public protection through the release of appropriate information to individuals, groups, or the entire community, when a high-risk sexual or other violent offender is or will be residing in the community, and/or (2) the application to the courts for a criminal code 810 (1) or (2) recognizance to limit the offender’s behaviour.

An Advisory Committee will review all Warrant Expiry Date files and will make recommendations with respect to any need for some form of notification. The Committee is comprised of representation from the Correctional Service of Canada, the R.C.M.P., Municipal Police, BC Corrections Branch, the Public Safety and Regulatory Branch, the Criminal Justice Branch, and the Community Justice Branch - Victim Services. The Society had recommended that there be non-government representation on the Committee. This was not accepted.

A Review of Electronic Monitoring & Conditional Release in BC

A report on the Review of Electronic Monitoring (EMP) and Conditional Release in BC has just been made public. The report takes a general look at current operations of EMP, the rationale for its introduction in 1987 and the existence of dual releasing authorities.

When one looks at the statistics, one sees the prevalence of motor vehicle offenders entering EMP and the high incidence of admissions to provincial custody on sentences of 30 days or less.

The following are the recommendations for change to both EMP and the Conditional release process. The proposals include:

- ✓ changes to supervision standards to reflect risk
- ✓ wide-spread use of Community Risk-Needs Assessment tools for community re-entry
- ✓ the placement of probation officers in selected institutions to complement the risk-needs, assessment process & work with offenders to prepare them for conditional release
- ✓ a number of initiatives with respect to alternatives to conventional imprisonment for offenders serving brief sentences
- ✓ rationalization of the roles of the BC Board of Parole and of Corrections Branch managers who have authority to grant Temporary Absence passes
- ✓ measures to deal with the variety of reports & information needs peculiar to various releasing authorities
- ✓ the establishment of a 24 hour monitoring post for all forms of EMP as well as liaison with police outside of conventional office hours
- ✓ the use of staff from the nearest institution for enforcement purposes where necessary.

***John Howard Society of Canada
Board of Directors Meeting
January 28-29 ~ Toronto***

***John Howard Society Lower Mainland
Powder Blues Band Fundraiser
Commodore Ballroom, Vancouver
February 18th***

***John Howard Society of BC
Board of Directors Meeting
March 10-11 ~ Vancouver***

***PARCA Confernece
Youth Criminal Justice Act
April 10-12 ~ Vancouver***