



FALL 2021

# Rossbrook House Circle



"No child who does not want to be alone, should ever have to be" -Sister Geraldine MacNamara

## A Fourth Wave

*It seems we have been staying afloat in the waves for a long while now.* This fourth wave is the result of a COVID-19 variant. We are still in masks and using hand sanitizer. However, with our double vaccinated QR codes we can sit down at our favorite restaurant or cheer on the Bombers and Jets in person from the stands.

I am now in my own fourth wave and still swimming strong. **Heading towards my 42nd year at Rossbrook House** and recently hearing the Beatle's iconic song *When I'm Sixty-Four* being played for me; I'm happy to say, "I'm still needed" and "still being fed." The food is varied and mostly comes through the eyes of my family and those in the Rossbrook community. The thought of your caring and support for the children and youth coming through the doors of Rossbrook House is also nourishment I hold dear.



this day. That spirit will embrace new challenges and open new vistas for participants. There will still be veterans left to mentor a new crowd to follow in the shallows. They will soon be cresting on their own.

*I plan to cherish this last year at Rossbrook House and will be in touch often to let you know how the ship is sailing and when we will be recruiting and announcing a new skipper.*

Until then, I look forward to swimming alongside you in whatever waves we face as we head towards calmer waters.

**Phil Chiappetta**  
Executive Director



The next wave for Rossbrook will bring exciting change. **I will retire at the end of September 2022** and guarantee a wonderful continuation of the spirit that began with a band of youth and a group of fearless nuns. Without two sticks to rub together they created Rossbrook House and imbued it with a quality that lives on through the staff and participants to



After 42 years at Rossbrook House Phil has decided that the time is right, for Rossbrook House and himself, to retire. It is a whole year away and Phil is not counting the days – he's cherishing each one. We will keep you posted as it comes closer to goodbyes.

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# Q&A with Jeff Coleman

## Rossbrook House Foundation Director and Fund Development Committee Chair

### How/when did you first hear about Rossbrook House?

I had heard the name *Rossbrook House* from various sources. Then in 2016 I was invited to a luncheon with former Foundation Board members. That was my first real exposure to Rossbrook House.

### Why do you feel it's important to support Rossbrook House and the Foundation?

Like I once was, I believe that people may be generally unaware of the needs that are presented to the community that Rossbrook House serves.

Perhaps there is an expectation or understanding that government at any level simply *funds* programs like ours and, while there is a certain amount of operational funding provided, there isn't always enough funding to go around. It is incumbent upon the Foundation to make sure that the funds required are raised from the community at large.



### What is something you are excited about during your tenure as chair of the Rossbrook House Foundation Fund Development Committee?

What excites me also frightens me. We are never sure of the level of *ongoing* support that we get from our key funding partners. It falls to the Foundation to accept the challenge of supplementing the existing resources, and building a reserve of funds.

### What Rossbrook House activity or program do you wish you could partake in?

All of the programs at Rossbrook House are worth participating in and as time allows, both my wife and I would like to be as involved as we can.

### What is something you wished others knew about Rossbrook House and the Foundation?

Winnipeggers need to be made aware that our youth need places and programs like Rossbrook House.

Rossbrook House serves a need for children and youth to belong, play, learn and become...

Thanks to our generous donors, in addition to programs and activities, we have high school graduates coming through Rossbrook House supported schools. We also offer career opportunities and scholarships.

### What is something you have learned from Rossbrook House and the Foundation?

Learning is a constant at Rossbrook House. Admittedly, I lived in suburbia and didn't really have a tremendous understanding of the needs of youth in the inner city. Learning those needs has been huge for me.

## From Participant to Junior Staff

A long-standing tradition at Rossbrook House is *hiring staff from within*. Many Junior Staff are participants first. We're proud to be able to give so many young people in our community their first job!

One of the most recent Junior Staff hires is **Dale**. He started dropping in to Rossbrook House when he was 9 years old. Now 13 years old, Dale is proudly a member of the Junior Staff team, something he has wanted to do for years.

"If I'm being completely honest, I was ten years old when I first thought about being a Junior Staff," Dale said. "It's crazy to think that all of these programs at Rossbrook House have helped me become a Junior Staff. Going from being a little kid in the programs we have; Leadership, Learning Always. It's a big process but it happened."

After being a part of the Leadership Program, a teen as young as 13 years old can apply for a Junior Staff position. Staff will get involved in helping them to apply for and pick up the personal identification that is required.

"Sheila (Learning Always Coordinator/Junior Staff Supervisor) offered me the job. I didn't have a birth certificate," Dale shared. "She helped me with the process of getting my birth certificate. Rossbrook House paid for it too, and I'm really grateful for that. She also told me how to get my Social Insurance Number and how to set up a bank account."



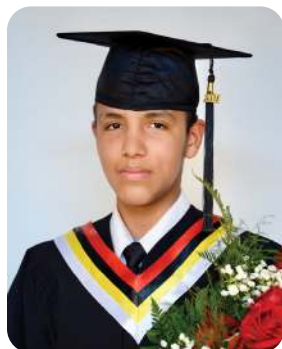
Rossbrook House drives participants home at the end of each evening. **Getting to** Rossbrook House is up to each individual child. In 2019 when Dale's family was moving, he shared his concern with Sheila about it being too far to walk. They discussed his need for bus tickets. After Sheila mentioned this to a board member, they volunteered to provide bus tickets for Dale and his siblings.

Dale was one of the *youth speakers* at the 2019 No Child Alone Dinner and spoke in front of over 500 guests. He shared his Rossbrook House experiences and mentioned this generous gift. That sparked others to start donating bus ticket funds for participants.

Sheila said that today many more children are asking for bus tickets to get to Rossbrook House as many families have moved father out of the area to find housing.

**Supporters like those who donate funds for bus tickets, staff who take time to help a youth navigate applications, and youth who are planning for their futures- this is all a part of the long history that makes up Rossbrook House.**

"At my age, there's a lot of things that could be happening. I could be doing the wrong things, following the wrong crowd," Dale said. "Rossbrook House helps you stay in the right lane. There are people here you know you can talk to, you know you can trust. And they can help keep you on the right path."



Rossbrook House schools had an exciting number of grads this past June. We're thrilled to continue to support Wi Wabigooni (grades 3-6), Eagles' Circle (grades 7-9) and Rising Sun (grades 9-12). Watch our 2021 Scholarship Celebration anytime: [rossbrookhouse.ca/2021scholarshipcelebration](https://rossbrookhouse.ca/2021scholarshipcelebration)