

Saskatoon Convalescent Home Residents ROCK!

On August 1st 2017 the *Saskatoon Star Phoenix* newspaper released an article called "Paint it Forward". This article described the story of a cancer survivor who paints rocks with inspirational quotes or paintings. These rocks are placed in various places within that community and anyone is welcome to take a rock if the message speaks to them; this is now known as the *Kindness Rock Project*. When the residents at Saskatoon Convalescent Home (SCH) read this story, they were immediately moved.

There is a famous quote by Paulo Coelho that says 'The World is changed by examples, not by opinions'. Though the residents thought this was a wonderful initiative, they too wanted to change someone's day or life, by painting rocks. They organized themselves and partnered with SCH leaders, volunteers, staff and family members to collect rocks and share messages from the bottom of their hearts to someone else's. Doreen Kopp, SCH Director of Recreation and Spiritual Care is proud to highlight that this project was fully initiated by residents and it has now brought many people together for a common purpose. Residents hope to lovingly hug perfect strangers with encouragement, support, positivity and strength. They have named their project '**Because We Care**'.



Residents painting rocks with inspirational and motivational messages

"We are doing this to inspire people, to cheer them up and wish them a happy day. If it lifts the spirits of one person it would brighten my day and make the project be successful. It is a small way to make an impact and to make a change in someone's day". –Agnes, Originator and lead of the *Because We Care* project and Resident at Saskatoon Convalescent Home.

"When people are having a bad day they might see the rocks we have painted and it will give them a totally different outlook on their day. It makes me feel good that I can still make a positive difference even at this age. It makes me feel useful to be part of this". –Anne, Member of the *Because We Care* project and Resident at Saskatoon Convalescent Home.

Sheila Gordon, SHC Director of Care explains that supporting residents in what they believe are meaningful activities, is the best way to help them **live fully**. To care for others even while being care for themselves gives them a sense of purpose and achievement....while giving staff and other persons around them inspiration, strength and passion for life.

Since the '*Because We Care*' project started, residents have placed rocks at bus stops, parks, in front of their home, under trees alongside walkways, and they have also partnered with Caswell School and a community church that supports those in need to expand their reach. In the near future, *Because We Care* would like to place rocks in other locations of the city including supportive living homes and they look forward to expanding their existing partnerships with others who may be interested in supporting their initiative!



On October 19th, Residents presented seventy-five rocks that they lovingly painted to Audra Remenda, Client and Family Centred Care Regional Steering Committee (CFCC) member



Above - Agnes, Originator and Member of the *Because We Care Project*, placing the first rock down on August 30, 2017 at a bus stop near the Home accompanied by Doreen Kopp, *SHC Director of Recreation and Spiritual Care*.

To learn more about the *Kindness Rock Project* please visit:

<http://thekindnessrocksproject.com/>



Above and Below - Residents painting rocks with inspirational and motivational message

