

Venture Teams International and River's Edge Adventure



Our Mission: To mentor, equip and inspire followers of Jesus Christ for purposeful global and community influence.

Dear Friends,



You have been a part of amazing moments in the history of Venture teams. You have helped us make a difference around the world through your prayers, support, participation and engagement in our ministries. Whether as a

volunteer, team member, staff or Board member, you have helped impact lives that have been changed for all eternity. As a Board we have recognized that without your faithful partnerships with the VTI family, nothing could have been accomplished. For all of your investments and partnerships throughout the years, we are ever grateful!

You are most likely aware of the recent decisions about our current operations and future plans. We want to update you on the situation and decisions that are being made to realign our ministries with Rivers Edge Camping Association (RECA). This update outlines some of the amazing things that God has been doing since the Board made the decision to partner with RECA. God's hand has been at work in this process LONG BEFORE we ever made the decisions to amalgamate our ministries.

First, VTI is not closing but rather realigning our ministries in partnership with River's Edge to continue the legacy of both ministries. The current assets and liabilities will initially be managed by an interim Board that will eventually decide on the organizational structure that will best benefit both ministries and comply with the Canada Revenue Agency's requirements for charitable operations. The Leadership Team of RECA will form the ministry development and management team to realign VTI's ministries to effectively impact the next generation with the gospel.

Second, the financial and donation side of the ministry continues to operate as VTI for now. All donations, including monthly automatic donations, will be receipted for tax purposes through the VTI charitable number and systems. As the ministry is still continuing to operate we will be trusting the Lord to continue to move in the hearts of His people to prayerfully sustain the ministry through their financial investment partnerships. We still need your support!

Third, Discovery Lodge and the Training Centre are not closing. Though the Calgary office is now closed and staff are engaged in their 'next steps', the Training Centre will continue to host families, schools, churches and especially missions groups training people for missions. The RECA Leadership Team will be seeking to promote and recruit an expanding ministry partnership that will eventually call the VTI facility their "home" for ministry training and sending events. Several missions organizations have already contacted us about possible partnership opportunities.

Fourth, River's Edge will become part of us just as we become part of them! As combined ministries, their programs, ministry events, facilities and missional opportunities will be available to all of us. We are joining forces to help River's Edge expand its focus and opportunities. We are confident that as God continues leading us into this new partnership that it is not about uniting a parcel of land but of expanding our collective global impact for generations to come.

Lastly, as in the past, we are seeking the Lord's confirmation in these decisions and His blessing. This Update gives a fuller idea of how we see VTI and RECA working in



partnership. Would you continue to pray about your level of connectedness? We invite you to continue as a partner in impacting the world for Christ as we fulfill our mission, purpose and strategies.

Please stay connected with us so we can celebrate all that God is doing and is about to do for His glory.

Yours, on behalf of those we serve,
Brian Rushton,
Chairman of the Board

Mission, Purpose & Strategy

There are three unchanging foundational statements that represent the core of Venture Teams International (VTI). VTI's **MISSION** is to **mentor, equip and inspire** followers of Jesus Christ for purposeful global and community influence. The **PURPOSE** is to **equip and give passion to people for ministry**, bridging the gap between head knowledge and life experience. VTI's **STRATEGY** is to **train and send short term missions teams** to present truths from the Bible dynamically and creatively!

Since Mel Slack first sensed God's call to train Bible College graduates for practical ministry and missions experiences to confirm God's calling them into ministry - our mission, purpose and strategy has never changed. And, in fact, in the moving forward they are still not changing! What is changing is how these three statements are fulfilled!

The world is also dramatically changing and an increasing number of Christian ministries are now more fully engaged in cross-cultural missions opportunities. Churches, colleges, camps and para-church agencies are training and equipping people for international ministry partnerships and experiences. Considering the few participants engaged in the VTI ministries over the



recent years, the VTI Board resolved to realign the VTI ministries in a unique partnership relationship with the River's Edge Camping Association (RECA).

The goal:

HARMONIZING THE STRENGTHS OF BOTH MINISTRIES TO MAXIMIZE THE IMPACT OF BOTH MINISTRIES.

Since 1998 RECA has been our neighbor who have shared the majority of the property that was first doing ministry as the Cremona Valley View Children's Home. The Children's Home was about *rescuing, restoring and renewing* the lives of children needing to know the Heavenly Father's love. As RECA's ministries developed they realized they had brought a new dynamic to the property. They were *releasing* people into ministry as a result of their experiences as campers, staff or guests involved in the camps' various ministry opportunities. Over 7,000 guests will have a RECA experience this year. This merger will make several new ministry initiatives possible, some of which are already being developed and many are known only to God.

River's Edge has established itself as a premier partner ministry for dynamic mission agencies such as Crossroads Missionaries, Evangelical Missionary Church of Canada - World Partners, Mennonite Disaster Services, Wycliffe Bible Translators, and Youth With a Mission. By hosting their training events RECA has helped them increase their impact around the world. VTI's **Discovery Lodge** will become the primary training facilities specifically assigned to agencies involved in cross-cultural ministries. Whether churches, para-church ministries or the missionaries themselves, all of these will have the chance to be further trained, refreshed, and released for expanded kingdom influence. Teams of young people will continue to be trained and equipped for missions as a mandate in the new merged ministry.

VTI's STRATEGY will still carry on.

Today RECA has become more than anyone ever imagined and the reuniting of the properties and enabling the Camp to establish an international global impact is the fulfillment of prayer and passion for the RECA leadership and staff. The global missional intention of RECA could not be accomplished without the objectives of a sister ministry such as VTI. By blending the two charities there is now the possibility for an expanded intentionality for equipping people of all ages to consider and engage them in cross-cultural missions.

VTI's MISSION will still carry on.

Camp ministry is about community. Sharing Jesus with those living close to you and with those you encounter in the fulfillment of your roles at camp. From the pre-schooler attending family camp to the teenager engaged in the summer leadership development programs to the young adult sharing Jesus for the first time with a camper wanting to accept Christ, camp is about equipping and creating a passion for Jesus and ministry. As a year round camp ministry facility RECA is committed to mentoring, equipping and inspiring people to be committed followers of Jesus Christ and willing to share Jesus' love with the world.

VTI's PURPOSE will still carry on.

The specifics of how these three statements will be fulfilled are still being developed. Some are underway and will soon be available on the website. Critical in this merger is the confirmation that God's hand has done this. Looking back over the years, VTI's legacy is one of seeing the hand of God open and close doors to direct VTI's impact. Both the VTI and RECA Boards have seen God's hand in the finest of details in bringing this realignment and redirection partnership together. Some of the confirming stories will soon be posted on our website. Maybe the VTI facility will host a Christian residential environmental research centre training students to use their professional vocational skills in reaching developing nations through a new missional strategy.

Maybe the expanded ministry will become a different kind of ministry training centre but one that is still the fulfillment of VTI's great legacies. Maybe there will be an equipping ministry that resources other missions agencies. Maybe there is a new model for the fulfillment of VTI's **STRATEGY, MISSION AND PURPOSE.**

Our two ministries believe there is! Do you?

We need to hear from everyone connected with VTI! Could you please complete the enclosed reply form and send it to us as *we want to give everyone an opportunity to join with us in creating something unique and engaging for the next generation of ministries hosted at the VTI site.* Normal average responses to his type of mailing is 10-15%. We need to do significantly better than that.

PLEASE beat the averages and send the involvement form ASAP. Your response will form our 'moving forward' ministry partner team! THANKS!

Brian Rushton
VTI Board Chairman

Daphne Willems
VTI Executive Director

Harold Cooper
RE Leadership Team Leader

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