

NEWS

Bridges of Iowa

August 2000

A Proven Path To Success!

Support builds for Bridges

I've been in Iowa less than one year and I've learned a lot about the quality and the caring of the people of this state. As I've made the rounds to talk about Bridges of Iowa, the reception has always been courteous and warm.



Dr. Peter P. Vallone
Executive Director

I am amazed and gratified at the tremendous amount of understanding and support that is building for Bridges of Iowa. Iowans, I have learned, are a compassionate, thoughtful people who when presented with the facts will embrace an idea and make it happen. And Bridges of Iowa is happening! We're in the process of putting our administrative support systems in place, including interviewing professional staff to fill key positions. In addition, our goal is to continue to work with the neighbors in the area surrounding the former Valley Junction Nursing and Rehabilitation building on Vine Street in West Des Moines.

Many of the Iowans I've come in contact with have expressed how a family member or a close friend has been touched by problems with alcohol and drug abuse. Bridges of Iowa is a lifeline to change the lives of these people.

In the year 2000, it is estimated the cost of incarcerating inmates in the U.S. will exceed \$100 Million Per Day!

Directors purchase West Des Moines site



Bridges of Iowa Board Member Larry James speaks to a group of neighbors and interested people at a meeting held at the Sacred Heart Church on Grand Avenue in West Des Moines. Most of those who attended live in the neighborhood where Bridges of Iowa is proposing to locate its first Iowa rehabilitation center.

The Bridges of Iowa program, patterned after a highly successful Bridges of America program in Florida, is making considerable progress in establishing the first rehabilitation program in Iowa. The Board of Directors have taken a "leap of faith" and purchased the old Valley Junction nursing home property at 1211 Vine Street in West Des Moines, said Dr. Peter Vallone, executive director. "James V. Sarcone Jr. is

working with us to start the application process for the appropriate zoning," he added. "We have plans to make major landscaping improvements to the property and renovations to the building. We have already begun the planning process."

Plans are to invite neighbors to tour the property in the near future so they can have a first-hand look at the facility," said Vallone.

WHAT IS BRIDGES OF IOWA?

Bridges is a not-for-profit, faith-based, inclusive, residential rehabilitation program for persons with alcohol and/or drug dependency. The Iowa program is based on a time-proven program that has operated successfully in Florida in cooperation with the Florida Department of Corrections for more than 25 years.

• Bridges rehabilitation treatment is designed to seek out and eliminate the root cause of the addictive behavior.

• The Bridges program has a proven success rate. Four out of five persons completing the program have never returned to incarceration.

• The Florida program this year was accorded special recognition by the American Correctional Association (ACA) as being among the best in the nation.

• Bridges saves taxpayer money, costing on average 62 percent less than incarceration.

Bridges
of Iowa Inc.

Bridges of Iowa Questions & Answers

Why is Bridges coming to Iowa?

Every family in Iowa is affected by alcohol or drug abuse, either from family members, friends, or because we all pay the costs through higher taxes for incarceration and treatment programs.

- Currently, 75 to 80 percent of all correctional clients entering the Iowa Department of Correction facilities have a history of substance abuse.
- Bridges of Iowa will be the first long-term rehabilitation program in Iowa to help these people recover and return them to society as productive, tax-paying members of our communities.

Who supports the program?

Expressions of support have come from elected officials, key legislative and business leaders, judges at the state and federal levels and from high-ranking members of the Iowa Department of Corrections, as well as members of the Iowa Parole Board.

How do participants enter the program?

Participation in Bridges of Iowa is strictly voluntary. In other words, a person must make a strong personal commitment before he or she will be admitted. All participants will be carefully evaluated before being approved, including completing a careful screening process that includes:

- Approved participants must have served between 30 and 40 percent of their adjusted sentence.
- Approved participants must be deemed to be non-violent.
- Approved participants will have completed recommended institutional programming.
- Sex offenders will not be considered for this program.
- Persons convicted of offenses involving children will not be considered for this program.

Why West Des Moines?

The 5.9-acre site at 1211 Vine Street, the former Valley Junction Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, has been identified as an ideal location. Now vacant, and in disrepair, the 58,000 sq. ft. one-story structure has five residential wings, radiating from the central core, with all necessary support areas, including kitchen facilities.

- The deteriorating building complex and land surrounding it will be completely remodeled and upgraded.
- The five-acre site will be landscaped to a park-like appearance, making it a source of pride to the entire neighborhood.
- A neighborhood advisory committee will be established, with representatives meeting with Bridges of Iowa leaders on a regular basis to discuss activities, concerns and positive ways to enhance the relationship.

What about property values?

Experience based on the Florida Bridges program suggests that neighborhood centers are a positive addition and have no impact on area property values. In fact, surveys indicate that the Bridges centers are good neighbors who take excellent care of the facilities.

- William F. Griffin of Pompano Beach, Florida, has said: "The City of Pompano Beach is grateful to have an organization (Bridges) that is such a valuable resource to the citizens of this community."
- A Des Moines minister, the Rev. Tom Beattie, said this on his return from visiting Florida Bridges centers: "In talking to neighbors where the Florida treatment centers are located, they were positive in their comments and many shared that the Bridges treatment centers are excellent additions to their neighborhoods."

Will traffic be a problem?

No. In fact, there will probably be very little activity since all treatment candidates will be without cars. Plans are to open the facility with approximately 50 treatment participants. This is expected to grow to 100 within a year. There will be approximately 30 professional staff members coming and going. There also will be a limited number of small vans transporting participants to and from jobs as they enter the final phase of their treatment program.

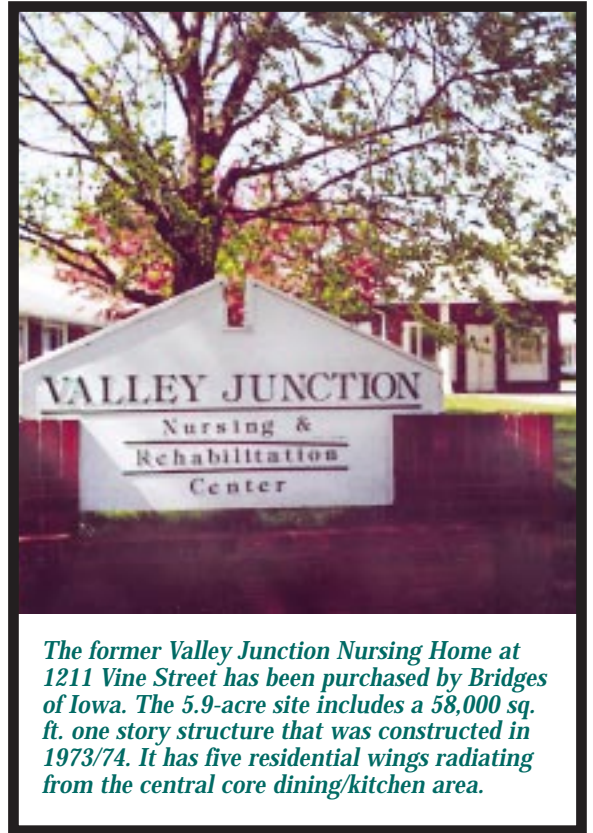
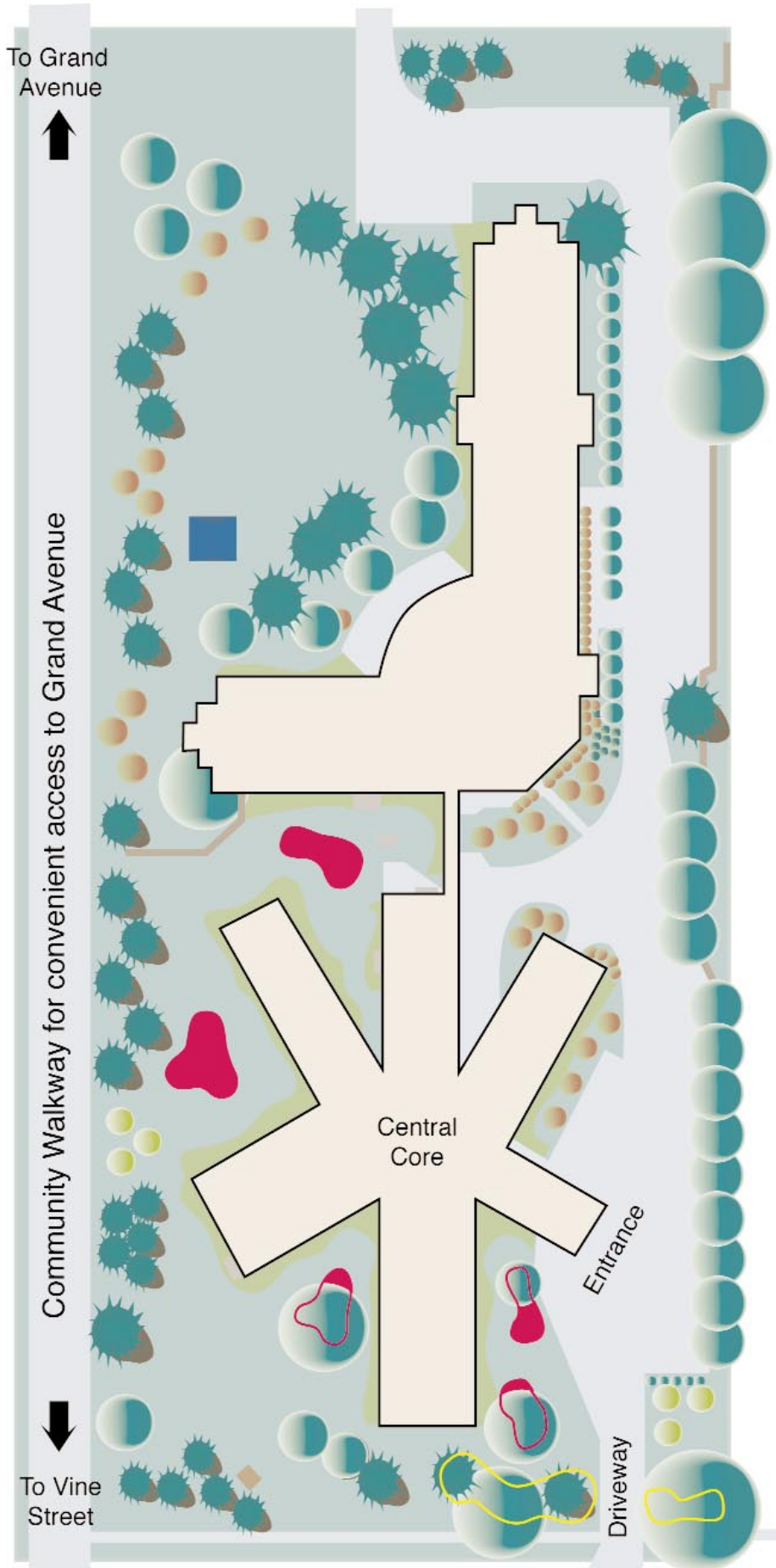
What kind of security?

All persons approved for treatment will be carefully screened and evaluated for the program, and they must meet stringent standards related to personal conduct. Non-uniformed security staff will be on duty at all times. Professional counselors are trained to recognize and to act swiftly if problems are encountered. Those breaking rules will be immediately removed from the facility. The facility will meet all standards for licensing from both the state and local officials, and activity will be monitored at all times with respect to the rules and regulations. Parole officers will work with treatment participants on a regular basis.

How long will participants be in the program?

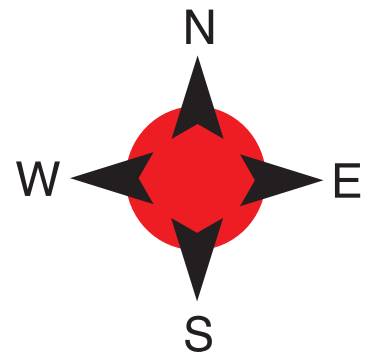
Once approved for the Bridges program, participants must successfully complete a three-part program, consisting of orientation, treatment and work release, and a relapse aftercare phase. The three-part treatment can be successfully completed in 10 to 12 months.

Park-like landscaping planned for center



The former Valley Junction Nursing Home at 1211 Vine Street has been purchased by Bridges of Iowa. The 5.9-acre site includes a 58,000 sq. ft. one story structure that was constructed in 1973/74. It has five residential wings radiating from the central core dining/kitchen area.

Among the proposed changes to the site is the addition of a "community" walk on the west edge of the property to allow neighbors convenient access from Vine Street to the Dahl's supermarket on Grand Avenue. Plans are for extensive landscaping and other improvements to give the facility a "park-like" setting.



- Perennial Beds
- Plantings
- Concrete & Sidewalk

Specific goals of Bridges of Iowa programs

Bridges of Iowa is a carefully planned program based on one of the oldest and largest provider of adult substance abuse and treatment, Bridges of America, based in Orlando, Fla. Here are specific goals of the program:

- Educate clients about the effects of chemical dependency and identify the underlying causes of addiction.
- Challenge criminal thinking and destructive behavior patterns.
- Increase the clients' awareness of alternatives to substance abuse and the benefits of sobriety.
- Teach clients to identify thoughts, behaviors and situations that trigger drug use.
- Assist clients in the development of relapse prevention plans.
- Encourage links to the community, including community-based referrals and especially connections to church and family.



Who will be the 'typical' client served by Bridges of Iowa?

If you were to paint a profile of a person who will be admitted and served by Bridges of Iowa, it would look something like this:



The non-violent individual would have an extensive history of drug or alcohol abuse in his past, resulting in a dysfunctional lifestyle that includes family, legal and behavioral problems, plus a poor work history. The individual will have no history of violence, and will have made a strong, personal commitment to ending his substance abuse. The individual will have undergone extensive background evaluation by trained professional and will be considered to have an excellent chance to successfully complete the Bridges program. The individual will have been recommended to the Bridges by the Iowa Department of Corrections and closely supervised by professional staff.



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