

# NEWS

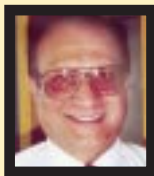
## Bridges of Iowa

June 2000

A Proven Path To Success!

### Compassionate leader at helm

Dr. Peter Vallone, the executive director of the Bridges of Iowa program, has more than 25 years of experience in the area of alcohol and drug rehabilitation. Prior to accepting the Iowa position, he was a part of the Bridges of America program in Orlando, Fla. He holds a doctorate degree in chemical dependency. He and the Bridges staff in Florida created a program there that has maintained an extraordinary success rate of over 80 percent (clients who remain drug free for over a year).



Dr. Peter P. Vallone  
Executive Director

"Ours is not an easy program, nor should it be," Dr. Vallone said. "It requires commitment on the part of the person being treated, it requires discipline and self-sacrifice. However, our proven programs produce positive results, for the individuals served, for their families and for the general society."

He pointed out all Bridges centers in Florida have full-time security 24-hours a day. Clients who have earned work-release privileges are allowed off the center's property only during working hours; there is lock down at night at 10:30 or 11 p.m.

"Our experience is that it's much safer to have recovering addicts in your neighborhood in a secured facility where they're getting help than living next door without any supervision," he said.

### 'Bridges' off to very successful start!



Directors explained the goals and vision of the program to judicial, legislative and business leaders.

Iowa Gov. Tom Vilsack and former Lt. Gov. Joy Corning were among those in attendance.

Noting that every family in Iowa has been affected by alcohol or drug abuse, Donald F. Lamberti urged all Iowans to become a part of the solution to the problem. Lamberti and his wife, Charlene, have made a substantial donation to initiate the Bridges of Iowa program.

The Bridges program is patterned after a similar one in Florida that "has a tremendous success rate in helping people break the cycle of addiction," Lamberti said. Bridges can help Iowa's judges, public defenders and others deal

more effectively with non-violent offenders. Bridges also restores and helps re-build families that have been devastated by the consequences of alcohol and drug abuse.

Following the meeting, numerous messages of encouragement and support were received from judges, Department of Correction officials, legislative leaders and from people who are suffering from addictive behavior, as well as from their family members. Each cited the critical need to have a program like Bridges here in Iowa.

### KEY FACTS

*A new study shows alcohol and drug abuse cost society nearly \$246 billion in 1992 and is projected to cost \$276 billion in 1999.*

— Report for the National Institute of Drug Abuse

*Bridge treatment costs 62 percent less than incarceration and instead of just "warehousing" the individual, extensive rehabilitative services are provided by an organization with a proven 80 percent success rate.*

— Florida Report on Inmate Cost

*Many years of statistics prove that treatment is significantly more cost effective and is a successful alternative sanction.*

— Rand Drug Policy Research Report



# Bridges of Iowa reaches out

Those who attended the Bridges of Iowa introductory meeting learned that in Iowa 75 to 80 percent of all correctional clients entering the Department of Correction facilities have a history of substance abuse. Members of the board of directors met recently with Iowa leaders to gain support and understanding for the planned rehabilitation programs.



*Charlene Lamberti chats with Iowa Governor Tom Vilsack.*



*Director Almo Hawkins greets people as they arrive.*



*Director Dick White (right) discusses program goals with guests.*



*Director Ako Abdul-Samad (right) chats with Bishop Frank Constantino and Don Lamberti.*



*Director Larry James (right) emphasizes how the Bridges program can help.*

## Bridges is effective—and a good neighbor!

The program that Bridges of Iowa is patterned after has been operating treatment centers in Florida communities for nearly 20 years. These are comments from Florida leaders about the Bridges program.

*“The city of Pompano Beach is grateful to have an organization (Bridges) that is such a valuable resource to the citizens of this community.”*

William F. Griffin,  
Mayor of Pompano Beach

*“The work that you and your staff do provides an excellent treatment for individuals who are recovering from addictions....As a legislator, I appreciate the cost effectiveness of the program.”*

Florida State Rep. Paula Dockery

*“I do not know what makes the Bridge program different from other treatment centers but my experience with your graduates has been exceptionally positive.”*

Jere E. Lober,  
Circuit Judge,  
Eighteenth District

*“Bridges of America, Inc., is addressing the real causes of addiction and cutting down recidivism. They are also saving jails space for more serious criminals.”*

Judge Roger McDonald,  
Criminal Circuit Judge

## What is a Bridge?

Bridge programs offer a continuum of care with the ultimate goal of reversing the cycle of substance abuse. The continuum is individually tailor-made to meet the client where he or she is RIGHT NOW and help them transform their own decision-making process before they return to the same environments that helped precipitate their incarceration in the first place.

# Bridges plans center in West Des Moines

Major investment in property would make it a 'good neighbor'



**B**ridges of Iowa has identified the former Valley Junction Nursing and Rehabilitation building complex as an ideal site for its first Iowa rehabilitation center.

"The 5.9-acre site at 1211 Vine Street would work well for our new home," said Dr. Peter Vallone, executive director. The 58,000 sq. ft. one-story structure has five residential wings radiating from the central core dining/kitchen area. It was constructed in 1973/74 and was operated as a nursing home until last October when the owners closed it because the business was not profitable.

**Bridges of Iowa Inc.**

*A proven approach to drug and alcohol rehabilitation for convicted non-violent felons.*

April 26, 2000

Dear Friend:

We understand from the City of West Des Moines that you have an interest in learning more about Bridges of Iowa. We plan to locate an alcohol and drug rehabilitation center in the old Valley Junction Nursing Center at 1211 Vine. Please be assured that this older, now abandoned facility will be completely updated and modernized to make it the pride of the neighborhood.

Obviously, we understand your concerns. However, we would ask you to withhold judgment until we have the opportunity to present you with all the facts about Bridges of Iowa and its highly successful programs.

As you know, there is hardly a family in Iowa that hasn't been touched by problems with alcohol and/or drug abuse. Bridges of Iowa is a faith-based program that is led by an experienced team of counselors who seek to identify and eliminate the root causes of the addictive behavior in non-violent offenders—providing healing for the whole person: body, mind and spirit. We want to break the destructive cycle and return these addicted people to productive places in society.

The Bridges of Iowa program is patterned after a tested and proven program in Florida. You need to know that the "Bridges" rehabilitation centers in Florida are operating very successfully in neighborhoods much like yours in West Des Moines.

I'll be in touch with you soon to demonstrate with facts and testimonials that Bridges of Iowa will be a good neighbor to you.

Yours in Faith,

*Peter P. Vallone Ph.D.*

Peter P. Vallone, Ph.D.  
Executive Director

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The Des Moines Register  
Thursday, March 30, 2000

THE REGISTER'S EDITORIALS

## Private gift, public failure

A generous donation for drug treatment highlights the state's inadequate efforts.

**D**onald and Charlene Lambert's generous gift of \$2.1 million to provide drug treatment for non-violent felons is as remarkable as the state's failure to do enough on this count.

That failure is openly acknowledged. "There is no question that drug use is one of the most critical issues that we face day in and day out with the offender population in Iowa," Jeanette Bucklew, deputy director of the Iowa Department of Corrections, told the Register. "The resources that are available to address that need are woefully inadequate."

Gov. Tom Vilsack is proposing lawmakers spend an additional \$12.5 million next year from Iowa's share of the tobacco settlement for substance-abuse treatment.

Meanwhile, the Lambert's donation to the Greater Des Moines Community Foundation will be used to establish a 100-bed treatment facility to be called Bridges of Iowa. The nonprofit program will be modeled after a successful Florida program. It is sure to fill up fast, given the extent of the drug problem.

Donald Lambert, chairman of Ankeny-based Casey's General Stores Inc., spoke of how every family in Iowa, including his, has been affected by alcohol or drug abuse. He wants to help every family in Iowa has been affected by alcohol or drug abuse.

people with addictions resume normal, productive lives. The couple's son, Anthony, 39, is an inmate at the Newton Correctional Facility serving 25 years on drug-related charges.

Providing adequate substance-abuse treatment is critical for reasons that are painfully obvious. Addicts and their families would be better off, even with setbacks that are sure to occur. So would everyone else, with less crime and prison crowding as a result.

The cost of doing too little, in personal and public terms, is huge.

Private citizens, such as the Lambert's, shouldn't have to fill in where the state falls short.

*"Providing adequate substance-abuse treatment is critical for reasons that are painfully obvious."*

— Editorial, Des Moines Register

# Des Moines group visits Bridges programs in Florida

A group of Des Moines-area citizens recently visited Florida for a first-hand look at Bridges programs operating in Orlando and Sanford. While there, they met with leaders of Bridges of America, state correctional officials, and neighbors in the communities where treatment centers are located. Here are comments of four of the citizens who made the trip:

*"I returned to Des Moines from the trip feeling much better about having a treatment center in our West Des Moines neighborhood. The Bridges program is effective and it makes better sense to treat people suffering from addictions rather than to simply lock them up."*

Stella Lane, West Des Moines

*"I found the Florida programs to be quite unique, and that the Bridges treatment centers are operating with the support and cooperation of the neighborhoods where they are located. I think it should be emphasized that the people in the treatment centers are not criminals in the sense that they are hard-core offenders. These are people with addictions who are assigned to the Bridges program under direct court supervision. Without Bridges programs, they would be in our neighborhoods anyway. With Bridges, they're being carefully screened and placed on a progress track to successfully overcome their addictive behaviors."*

Ben Kahn, West Des Moines

*"I was pleasantly surprised to see such a large and successful faith-based program operating in Florida. I'm excited about seeing Bridges of Iowa get started here. In talking to the 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."*

The Rev. Tom Beattie, Des Moines

*"Two things impressed me about the Florida Bridges programs: the discipline in the centers, and the opportunities that those undergoing treatment had to educate themselves to become productive members of the society. There is zero tolerance for trouble makers, and in fact those in the program take great pride in conforming to the rules and making certain others do the same. Many were earning their high school equivalency diplomas, some were even taking college-level courses. Many were learning a trade, like air-conditioning technology. When they entered the work phase of treatment, most were earning \$10 an hour or more because they are considered skilled workers. They were in such demand, that many employers were sending vehicles to pick the workers up in the morning. The Bridges staff was very professional and you could see the pride in the organization by the immaculate way they kept up the facilities, including yards and flower gardens."*

The Rev. Arno H. Melz, West Des Moines



*From left to right: Marianne MacKenzie, women's program director for Orlando Bridges; Ako Abdul-Samad, Bridges of Iowa board member; Stella Lane, West Des Moines; Don Snow, men's program director for Orlando Bridges; the Rev. Arno Melz, Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church, West Des Moines; the Rev. Dan Beattie, Des Moines; Almo Hawkins, Bridges of Iowa board member and Ben Kahn, West Des Moines.*



*From left to right: the Rev. Dan Beattie, Ben Kahn, Stella Lane, Ako Abdul-Samad, Almo Hawkins and the Rev. Arno Melz.*



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[www.bridgesofiowa.org](http://www.bridgesofiowa.org)

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