

January 21, 2020

Mrs. Marg Pollon  
Founding Executive Director  
Bridges of Love Ministry Society  
109 Fairway View NW  
High River AB T1V 1C9

Dear Mrs. Pollon, *Marg;*

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me on December 17, 2019, regarding Bridges of Love Community Emergency Response Training (CERT) program. Your enthusiasm for the program, and dedication to bring this initiative to Alberta is appreciated.

Communities across Alberta benefit from gaining access to training from a variety of partners and backgrounds. Building partnerships with organizations like yours is integral to building a comprehensive emergency management system in our province. These partnerships are crucial to our success and ensures that when the time comes, we can work together at the speed of trust.

The Bridges of Love CERT program is an important initiative for our province. I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude for your work, and I encourage you to keep educating Albertans.

Thank you again for your continued interest in and support of emergency management in Alberta. I look forward to our continued cooperation in making Albertans safer and better prepared.

Sincerely,



Shane Schreiber  
Managing Director

April 15, 2013

Dear Nominating Committee,

It is my pleasure to recommend Ms. Marg Pollon for the Prime Minister's Volunteer Award. My recommendation is based on my personal knowledge of her outstanding volunteer contributions. Three years ago, I was introduced to Ms. Pollon's Bridges of Love Ministry. Marg emphatically shared her vision of seeing local churches networked and trained so that they could provide effective and coordinated disaster relief to their communities. Such a goal is not only admirable but has also proven to be highly effective.

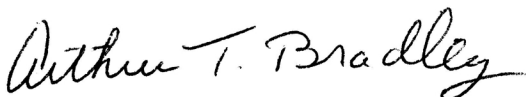
As the author of four national bestsellers on disaster preparedness, including the "Handbook to Practical Disaster Preparedness for the Family," I strongly endorse Marg's vision of having churches engaged in providing local emergency relief during widespread disasters. It is of little surprise that during and after disasters, citizens often seek assistance from their local churches, either in the form of shelter, food, or simply consolation to help cope with their losses.

I met Marg back in 2010 when she invited me to come up from the USA to Calgary to participate in the Church Emergency Preparedness initiative. The Deputy Mayor of Canada attended, as well as numerous representatives from Calgary's fire department, and the event was a great success. During the same visit, she set up and hosted two "Emergency Preparedness...Ready or Not" half day training sessions. One event took place at the Rocky Mountain College in Calgary, and a second event occurred in Red Deer. I truly appreciated all of the hard work Marg put into planning these events, as well as her commitment to providing the opportunity for the Calgary and Red Deer communities. I would be remiss if I didn't mention what a great ambassador Marg proved to be for Canada. Not only did she treat me as an honored guest, she also cared for me as if I was part of her own family.

I appreciate and applaud Bridges of Love Ministry's goal (and the associated Faith Emergency Preparedness Initiative) to see churches more ready to respond to the needs of their communities. Being prepared for calamitous events takes pre-planning, training, and broad participation. Marg is sharing her vision by hosting widespread preparedness activities, providing education on emergency relief, networking across public, private and government sectors, and connecting with community churches.

It is with great pleasure that I offer my highest recommendation for Ms. Marg Pollon to receive the Prime Minister's Volunteer Award. She embodies all that such an honor should recognize; including faithful and selfless service to others, unwavering commitment, and demonstrating genuine passion for a worthwhile cause that benefits communities all across Canada.

Sincerely,



Arthur T. Bradley, Ph.D.  
112 Zanca Turn  
Yorktown, VA 23693  
1-757-224-6608





## Devinder Shory

M.P. for *Calgary Northeast*

January 29, 2012

To Whom It May Concern:

### **Re: Faith Emergency Preparedness Initiative**

As Member of Parliament for Calgary Northeast, I am happy to recommend to you Marg Pollon, her Bridges of Love Ministry and her Faith Emergency Preparedness Initiative.

With full disclosure, I do so not because of the fact that she and her husband Tom have become dear friends of mine. No, it is actually because of her passion for reaching out and volunteering that our friendship has even been made possible. We come from different cultural and religious backgrounds, but this has not mattered to Marg. She forges ahead and builds these kinds of bridges based on open-minded principle: we are all fellow travelers deserving of the utmost of respect, care and love at all times including when the unthinkable may happen.

For this reason, as well, I see her Faith Emergency Preparedness Initiative as being vital. Much discussion has been raised lately about the importance of integration in Canada. Yet, integration does not mean stamping all things into the same mould but building bridges of commonality or community; these bridges are at the heart of Marg's work.

That the foundation points of Marg's bridges rest on faith communities is what makes this vision so powerful. By tying emergency preparedness into various communities of worshippers who (according to many of their vision statements) exist to help with man's basic physical needs prior to even spiritual needs, I can clearly see the perfect connection of getting these communities ready to act when the unthinkable happens. Not only are there vast facilities, auditoriums, rooms and kitchens spread across the city and ready to potentially house and care for thousands of people, additionally, the many thousands of adherents to these religious communities share already-established networks of communication, trust and vision for common purpose. I would not know how one could even be putting a tangible financial value on the value of this resource during a time of catastrophe, but it is clearly astronomical.

Therefore, as Marg Pollon looks for and continues to receive higher and higher levels of support for her big-picture vision, she has my full support in this endeavour as her friend and as Member of Parliament for Calgary Northeast.

Sincerely,

Devinder Shory, MP  
Calgary Northeast





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**Doug Schroeder**  
Pastor

**John Estabrooks**  
Pastor

**Allan Lambie**  
Youth Pastor

January 25, 2012

Chair, Council Strategic Initiatives Fund  
City of Calgary  
P.O. Box 2100, Stn. M Calgary, Alberta, Canada T2P 2M5

Dear Sir/Madam:

**RE: COUNCIL STRATEGIC INITIATIVES FUND APPLICATION FOR  
BRIDGES OF LOVE MINISTRY SOCIETY**

I am writing regarding the application of Bridges of Love Ministry Society (BLMS) for funding from the city to conduct Table Top Exercises with faith groups in the city in cooperation with ERMIC.

I am a pastor in the city of Calgary who has benefited, along with members of my congregation, from the work of Marg Pollon and the Bridges of Love Ministry Society. Our church is a Quadrant Lead for the NE and would affirm the value of these exercises to the churches in our quadrant.

Marg's tireless work has helped our congregation look outside ourselves to see the impact we could have on the community around us. The philosophy of BLMS has prompted us to get involved in our community association to partner with them in meeting community needs. We are actively involved as a partner with Community Kitchens to help lower income families in the community plan and prepare nutritious meals at low cost. We prepare bag lunches in cooperation with Brown Bagging it for Calgary Kids. We offer a free supper once per month to meet community food insecurity and isolation needs. Marg's passion for Calgary churches to make a difference in their communities has encouraged us in these and other community initiatives.

Although there are many para-church organizations that assist churches in a wide variety of activities, I don't know of another like BLMS that continually seeks to organize and manage efforts between government, church, and health organizations. BLMS is giving leadership to Calgary churches in areas such as pandemic preparedness. No other organization I know of is doing the same.

I would encourage you to give serious consideration to Marg's application as a way of encouraging the faith community's involvement in meeting the practical needs of our neighbours.

Sincerely,

Rev. Doug Schroeder  
Lead Pastor





January 18, 2018

To Whom It May Concern,

I would like to offer my testimony to the nomination of Bridges of Love & their Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) initiative in the Resilient Communities category.

When I first learned about CERT I was immediately drawn to it, because of my interest in Emergency Preparedness & building not only the resilience of my community, but on doing what I can to help rebuild after an emergency event occurs.

Many dismiss emergency preparation with a "the government will take care of it" mentality; but in reality home/auto insurance, roadside kits, savings accounts, etc. are all forms of preparation. As well, all levels of government now encourage & actively promote a 72-Hour Kit as a MINIMUM; with some making extensive preparation & continuity plans. Finding a balance in this spectrum is ultimately a personal choice.

I believe CERT offers a very non-threatening way for people to choose who & at what level they want to engage. I like that they encourage personal preparedness because if you are unable to care for yourself/family; you will be less effective assisting others. Being already involved in preparedness, taking the course was a natural fit. From there I became more inspired that there were others that felt the same I did. That, "It's not just about saving my skin, but helping others not only 'weather the storm,' but rebuild after it."

Since my training, I've had the pleasure of participating in others courses as a returning graduate to assist in training; encouraging others; answer questions, etc.; as well as expanding my knowledge/effectiveness through additional keynote addresses. This has further encouraged me in knowing I am on the right path. I've also volunteered at a number of events; most recently at 2 Emergency Preparedness fairs in a local mall answering questions about preparedness/resilience in general & CERT specifically. Many are unaware this type of thing exists & often very interested to know more; particularly when I share my experiences. The mall also recognizes the value of what CERT does & has invited us back for any future related events.

One particular assignment I do remember was when CERT assisted Chestermere, AB with their flood remediation payments signup. One applicant was clearly distraught with what they were told, but our team was able to directly use the skills learned in the Disaster Psychology module to stabilize & calm the person and provide them with additional resources. To me; if going through the CERT training, etc. & was only able to help in that one case it is well worth it. But CERT is more than that. It inspires, equips & encourages to not only look at yourself in a different way, but to also re/connect you to the communities you're a part of. As part of my interaction with CERT I recently signed up to act as Fire Warden for my work & am partially involved in a new resilience project in my local community. THAT is Bridges of Love & CERT in action!

Regards,

  
Cameron Nikitiuk

Minister of Public Safety and  
Emergency Preparedness



Ministre de la Sécurité publique  
et de la Protection civile

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0P8

MAY 06 2019

Marg Pollon  
Bridges of Love Ministry Society  
P.O. Box 2763  
Claresholm, Alberta T0L 0T0

Dear Marg Pollon:

Thank you for your correspondence of February 6, 2019, concerning Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training in Canada, and for providing a summary of initiatives undertaken by the Bridges of Love Ministry Society.

I also want to thank you again for your involvement in your community through your work with the Bridges of Love Ministry Society. Canadian communities are more resilient when they can count on initiatives like CERT training to have a positive impact before, during, and after an emergency situation.

My role as the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness is to keep Canadians safe from a range of risks such as natural disasters, crime and terrorism. I deliver this mandate by collaborating and coordinating our activities with a variety of partners. In Canada, emergency management (EM) is a shared responsibility between Federal, Provincial and Territorial governments and their respective partners such as Indigenous peoples, municipalities, communities, volunteers, the private sector, and non-governmental organizations. More specifically, Provincial and Territorial governments are responsible for emergency management within their respective jurisdiction, and the Federal Government exercises leadership at the national and international level. This cooperation supports a cohesive and integrated approach to Canada's safety and security.

Canada



I would like to mention that in January of 2019, I met with my Provincial and Territorial counterparts in Alberta, where we approved the *Emergency Management Strategy for Canada (EM Strategy)*. This can be found at: **<https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/rsracs/pblctns/mrgncy-mngmnt-strtg/index-en.aspx>**.

This strategy builds on previous efforts and seeks to guide Federal, Provincial, and Territorial governments, working with their respective EM partners, in carrying out priorities aimed at strengthening Canada's ability to address disaster risks and to respond to emergency situations.


The Federal Government supports a whole-of-society approach to EM that takes into consideration all levels of government and civil society, including local volunteers. Working jointly with our partners on the EM Strategy Action Plan, we will closely look at how best to work with community groups, such as the Bridges of Love Ministry Society.

I can appreciate the challenges that you outlined with respect to coordinating the expansion of your organization's role in delivering CERT training across Canada. I would encourage you to continue to work with your local municipalities, regional associations, community partners, emergency management related non-governmental organizations, and Provincial and Territorial representatives and authorities. This will help ensure more integrated and cohesive emergency response initiatives, in coordination with Municipal and Provincial authorities, which are the main EM partners of the Federal Government in Canada.

Canada's Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) will also continue to communicate with its membership concerning opportunities to increase whole-of-society collaboration, including initiatives like the GCcollab portal that you referenced in your letter. If you require technical support with the website, please do not hesitate to contact Canada's Platform for DRR at: **[ps.canadasplatformfordrr-plate-formeducanadapourlarrc.sp@canada.ca](mailto:ps.canadasplatformfordrr-plate-formeducanadapourlarrc.sp@canada.ca)**.

I would like to thank you once again for your continued contribution to emergency management in your community.

Yours sincerely,



The Honourable Ralph Goodale, P.C., M.P.