

In 2023 the Okanagan Commandery chose two projects to support: financial support to "The Bridge" Youth and Family Services, a charitable non-profit organization which offers programs addressing addiction and recovery, and works with youth who are marginalized, street entrenched, and disenfranchised in Kelowna and other communities of the Central Okanagan. The Commandery chose to support a specific program entitled "Beyond the Blues" - the donated funding permitted this program to be offered for at least a year. "Beyond the Blues" addresses the very serious issue of identifying and relieving post-partum depression. To raise funds, the Commandery Revenue and Development team held a very successful outdoor music performance in Commander Martin's vineyard entitled "Rocking in the Vines." The funds raised (\$28,380) when combined with grants from the Stober Foundation of Kelowna resulted in a total gift to The Bridge, of just over \$58,000.

A second project in 2023 was to support "Julia's Junction" - an inclusive playground project in West Kelowna accommodating children with special needs. Specialized playground equipment was purchased with funds totaling \$12,500. This sum was made possible because of the final gift from a generous multi-year 50% matching grant from former Commander Lynda-May Vexo, now a Dame in the Independent Commandery of Dagmar in the Grand Priory of Europe.