



INNights

CONNECTING PEOPLE AND BUILDING RESILIENT COMMUNITY: It's a two-way street

Spring 2015

Welcome Inn and New Growth!!



THANK YOU

April is volunteer appreciation month; a time to recognize, celebrate and thank our volunteers. There aren't enough words to say thank you or express appreciation for the commitment, kindness and generosity that you have shown through your selfless efforts. Your dedication has provided comfort and relief and illuminated the lives of many. You form an integral part of Welcome Inn Community Centre and we love you. You are amazing.
Many thanks!

Dear friends,

At long last the sun has finally made an appearance with warm rays to melt away the last of this cold, long winter. We are grateful for the renewal of each spring and the resurgence of hope and promise of growth that comes with it. There were many difficulties this winter for some in our community - extra expenses for heat and hydro, feelings of isolation and obstacles of navigating snow-covered sidewalks with walkers to get food. We are grateful that Welcome Inn is continuing to be a place where people can come together to support one another through all of these challenges. We are grateful for you, who join with us in creating resilient community.

With spring's arrival, we see the cultivation of new ways of connection! There is exciting new growth! Inside this edition of *INNights*, you can learn about our new Third Space Resource Centre project – a response to our neighborhood's desire to have more opportunity to access support and build community together. You can also read about us joining the Good Food Organizations across Canada and our commitment to provide access to healthy food for all – regardless of income. You can meet Steve, Krista and Asta inside these pages and hear their stories.

We are sprouting and growing. We are grateful to you, our supporters, who help us sow seeds of hope in the North End of Hamilton. As part of our extended Welcome Inn family, you allow us to continue to journey in hope with our neighbours – thank you. With hope and warmth,



Jennifer Kellner,

Executive Director



Happy Easter!



Introducing the Third Space!

Looking for a good book, somewhere to use the internet, a space to relax and chat with friends or somewhere to learn a few new skills? You're not alone! We're reconfiguring how we run things to provide a new and improved space to meet these needs. A third space is a place that is NOT your home and NOT your workplace/school, it is a place 'in-between'. A space where you feel comfortable to just hang out and connect with others. A place where you can access a wonderful collection of books on a wide range of topics. This resource centre will allow for building of relationships in the community, as well as provide needed access to resources.

The key to creating an amazing Third space will be YOUR input and participation. What makes a space comfortable to you? Is there any skill you would like to learn or perhaps share with others? Would you like to see the start of any particular groups, like a book club or cooking club? Let us know how you think it can be used to help improve our community. In the true spirit of Welcome Inn, this new space is intended to draw us together as a community so that we can grow, learn and have fun as we live life together.

Please join us on May 9 @ 11:30 -1pm to share your ideas!

Bring on the veggies!



We are thrilled to become a member of Good Food Organizations. This step is a commitment to offering food programs based on the principles of health, empowerment, and respect! We hope to work towards a fair and equitable system where access to healthy food is



recognized as a right and a key determinant of health.

cfccanada.ca

New Horizons Social Enterprise - Building a Healthy Community

When Welcome Inn envisioned the New Horizons thrift store, from the get go we were confident that volunteers would be an integral part of it. The pure dedication of the volunteers has made our social enterprise a success within the community and brought a positive change. Volunteers have shone through their hard work and dedication - relentlessly contributing their part in making the thrift store a place of warmth and an attraction to the community. Simply put, words

"It's the people." "The fun environment," "The positive atmosphere." "My mind set is better." "I have met good people here." "Working together makes the days easy and fun." - responses of different community members on why they have chosen to volunteer at New Horizons

can't express our gratitude to this amazing group of people. The customers continually talk about how much they love coming to the shop and connecting with the volunteer team. "The bargains are great too", laughs one customer "but to be honest, what I like most is

the volunteers.. They are fun to be with. They know me now.... I like that!" Many have experienced this fun, happy and positive atmosphere and share similar thoughts and feelings.

Although the thrift store was initially launched with the intention to support programs offered by Welcome Inn, it was a surprise for us to see the enormous and positive response that we received from the community.

Impressed by our people and their warmth, many of our customers from the neighbourhood have now joined the volunteer team. New and deep friendships have been formed and this is what is called `true success`. . A healthy community is being formed!!



We are humbled when they say to us, "we just want to thank you for the experience of being here....of being part of this." And that's the point. We all get to be part of "this". The customers. The volunteers. The staff. The neighbours. We are all experiencing the beauty of reciprocal community, that in its own way, has become so life-giving, to so many of us, in this little corner of the north end!!

Meet Krista ~ Third Space Coordinator

I am a Hamiltonian born and raised! I feel so privileged to be able to raise my family in this amazing city, specifically in the North End. My creativity, love of community and my ability to see the potential in all, makes the North End an ideal landing spot for me. My background is in Nursing, with a focus in Acute Mental Health, but have spent the last 8 years raising my two children. Being creative is a major part of my life.....Knitting, sewing, bookbinding and paper craft are just a few of my hobbies. I am so excited to combine my skills and creativity along with the skills and creativity that we have in our community to build an amazing space here at Welcome Inn. The importance of family and the idea of community as family has always been a huge part of the way I live my life. From the moment I walked through the doors of Welcome Inn I felt like part of this community that feels like a big family.



We practice kindness and respect for everyone. We recognize that we do not all hold the same values or perspectives. Out of respect for one another we offer service and care to each other without judgement.

Asta's Story "I was born in a house on stilts, in Borneo, where crocodiles sometimes swam under our house" she proudly states. Truly a 'free and loving spirit,' meet Aleida. An artist who paints and sketches, and is better known by her middle name Asta, she was born in 1927 into a Dutch family. She is one of the seniors who attend our Tuesday Seniors Diners Club. Asta has fond memories of living



in her birth place and recalls off-handedly "I had a wonderful childhood except for the time I spent in a concentration camp." She reflects on the Island being a beautiful paradise where one did not hold on to 'things' and where there were many interesting people living harmoniously. She also lived in Semarang a coastal city in Java. In 1945, at the end of the war, they were liberated by the British and shortly thereafter moved to Sri-Lanka then Holland, New Zealand and finally settled in Canada in 1966. Today, Asta is a widow and lives in Hamilton.

Asta always knew that she would be an artist. One of her early memories is of getting into trouble in grade 2, when she was caught with making a cartoon of her teacher sitting on a potty. She is the oldest member of the Oakville Art Society as well as a member of the Burlington Arts Society. Some of her

works have been entered into juried shows over the years and she adds that she "never intended to sell her art but painted and sketched mostly for pleasure". At 87 years young she is still sketching. Asta says that it is important to stay active and to be optimistic. Sometimes she finds it difficult because of her age and her friends are passing on, but notes more important to find new friends. She says "seniors need to stay cheerful and laugh a lot."



When asked if she still had 'dreams', she says, "yes, the dream that I will always paint a better picture". She enjoys classical music, Bach being her favourite. Listening to the music brings back fond memories of her father who played the violin.

Congratulations Dee!



Dee is a long-time, dedicated volunteer at New Horizons, and she has landed a great new job! We are so excited for her as she begins this new journey. We are also thrilled that Dee will continue to be part of our volunteer team. Her work with us is invaluable.

Dee brings great leadership and strength to our team at New Horizons. Her new employers are VERY lucky to have her on their team. **We are so proud of you, Dee!**

"When I started volunteering at New Horizons, it felt like a relief to me. Working at New Horizons has increased my self-esteem, my respect for my abilities and my ability to voice my opinions" ~ Dee

Inspiring Education!

Teen LEAD students took trips to visit 5 campuses in order to get a taste of post secondary education student

life. Brock, McMaster, and Guelph Universities and Mohawk

and Niagara Colleges were toured. The trips help to raise awareness of educational options, inspire and encourage the youth to identify their own goals and inspire them to continue in school. Liz is in grade 12 and says, "I'm graduating this year so it's good to know what's out there. I'm not 100% sure about where I want to go but I definitely want to go into business administration. No matter what I choose for a career I want to help others!"



A Message from the Board

Greetings to Welcome Inn Friends and Supporters!

My name is Steve Dykstra. I am a new Welcome Inn board member, and am so excited to be part of this wonderful and dynamic organization.



I hope that, like me, you are taking some time to enjoy the outdoors, as the temperatures have finally crept up above zero. In my neighbourhood anyway, each year as the piles of snow shrink in size I'm amazed to see what lies just underneath. Candy wrappers, a toy left behind in the fall, and, unfortunately, what's left behind from pet owners who thought they could bury their pet's mess under a little bit of the snow. From my back window I can also see my garden slowly start to uncover. Still frozen solid, a lifeless brown, I think about the life that lies just under the surface of the remaining snow, and the sweet cherry tomatoes that will nourish my family in just a few short months.

At Welcome Inn, we continue to affirm that connecting people and building community is a two way street. There is joy and sadness, hunger and feasting, and friendship that leaves no staff, volunteer, or community member unaffected. As we welcome each other in community we notice that, just beneath the surface of our lives, under the winter of isolation and independence, there certainly may be mess, but there is beautiful, vibrant life that nourishes those around us.

Thank you for being part of the journey of Welcome Inn. I look forward to meeting you soon.

Board of Directors 2015

Bob Charko - Chair, Leah Schwenger –Vice Chair, Tim Epp - Treasurer
Gale Payne - Secretary, Theresa Picone, Sarah Lawson, Keston Roberts, Steve Dykstra

Get to know our board members and read their bios at www.WelcomeInn.ca



New Horizons Thrift Store
Mon-Sat 10—5pm

**Please drop off donations
during store hours.**

www.newhorizons.welcomeinn.ca

Come and enjoy SPRING at New Horizons.

We are all about celebrating the new season. Bright coloured clothing, spring jackets, rain boots, camping gear, gardening supplies, fun toys for the backyard.....and much, much more.

Our volunteer team will be happy to serve you!

Interested in joining our volunteer team?

Call Ruth @ 905-529-6891 to get the conversation started.

How can I make a donation?

Donations can be made by returning the enclosed self-addressed envelope with a cheque to Welcome Inn, or online at

www.canadahelps.org - Thank You!!

Join the conversation! @WelcomeInnCC.ca



We earned. We saved.
We enjoyed!



Bowling and Treats!! The teens put their financial literacy skills in to action by doing all the budgeting and planning for their fun night out in the town. The big winners of the night were Zack and Tom but everyone agreed they “had a ball” at glow-in-the-dark bowling and dinner. Teen LEADer Kassidy said, “I love nights out. It’s like we’re a family. It feels special.”

Thank You!

McMaster University

Picone's Fine Foods

Hamilton Mennonite Church

Bethany Mennonite Church

Community Volunteer Action

Matta Matta Tattoo Studio

Arcelor Mittal Dofasco

Edith Turner Foundation

Mennonite Foundation of Canada

The Hamilton Store

Hamilton Food Share

World Vision

Lyer Lyer Soap

Willow Salon

CHML

B&T Steel

I <3 Welcome Inn Benefit Concert



A huge thank you to everyone who helped out and supported our first annual I <3 Welcome Inn benefit concert and silent auction held on February 19th. It was a night of fun and great music by Darin Martin +Oticpoets and Andreas. It was a huge success! **We raised just over \$2,000!**

THANK YOU!

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