



INNights

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

Spring 2016

Welcome Spring!



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,

As the crocuses and tulips bravely poke their heads up with the promise of spring, we too are re-energized by the change in season. We are grateful for the renewal of each spring and the resurgence of hope and promise of growth that comes with it. There have been many changes this winter – life changes that have seen seniors band together in support one another with friendship and listening. Changes that have brought new staff team members to Welcome Inn. The neighbourhood is also changing. Many community conversations about the future of affordable housing in the neighbourhood are taking place. We are grateful that Welcome Inn is continuing to be a place where people can come together to support one another through all of this. 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! Inside this edition of *INNights*, you can meet Suzanne – our new Social Enterprise – Thrift Store Manager. You can also read about the caring ways in which community members give of themselves – in whatever capacity they can. Meet Rebecca, our food organizer and learn about our upcoming 50th Anniversary celebrations that are in the works.

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!

City of Hamilton Winterfest Kick-Off Event!

WELCOME INN TURNS **50**!!

Welcome Inn began as an outreach of Hamilton Mennonite Church in 1966 providing friendship to people isolated by poverty in Hamilton's North End. This year we celebrate 50 years of community in the North End! We are planning celebrations the weekend of September 23-25th. Mark your calendars!! If you would like to be involved in the planning of these events, please email 50years@welcomeinn.ca to find out how you can be involved. Stay tuned for more details!

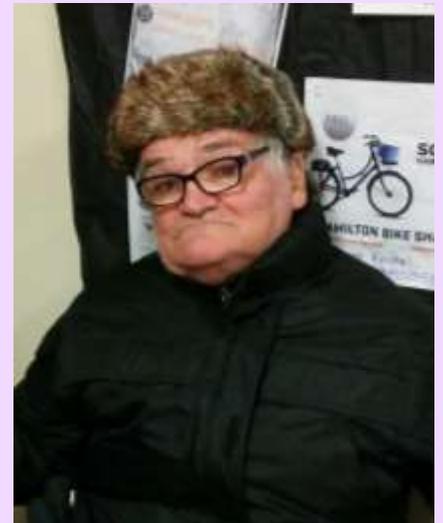


Welcome Inn Staff and Volunteers headed out on a chilly day warmed by the sun in February to the Winterfest Kick-Off Event held at Pier 8 Discovery Park. The event hosted a skating show, marshmallow roasting, arts and local vendors. The kick-off was the opening to a week long winter celebration with activities happening all over the City. We brought our big white truck down to the Pier and collected food donations. Cohen, one of our friendly volunteers thanked each and every

person who contributed to our food bank. We raised 237lbs of food for the bank! The future looks so bright especially with volunteers like Cohen!

Our Snow Angel

One day when we were chatting with one of our volunteer truck drivers who lives near the centre, it was mentioned that his driveway and sidewalk were always kept clear—he didn't have to shovel at all this winter. He had assumed it was his partner, but soon discovered that he had a snow angel! Bill, another of our volunteers had been secretly shoveling his walkway. When asked about it, Bill said "I just wanted to say thank you to him for all he does at Welcome Inn. He drives the truck real good for us." Throughout the Winter Bill has silently been shoveling the walk-way of Welcome Inn and the surrounding neighbourhood. When he sees it has been snowing, he heads out early with his shovel in the hopes of having everything cleared before people get moving for the day. Bill has lived in the North End forever and has volunteered at Welcome Inn for past 38 years! A true example of reciprocal community.



North End Theatre Troupe

NETT put on their very first performance this winter and it was a huge success! They even made the front page of the North End Breezes. NETT put on their performance for the senior group, they had door prizes for the guests and raised 67lbs of food for the food bank. Congratulations NETT! We are looking forward to future performances! If you would like to join in this fun theatre troupe, call Krista at 905.525.5824 or Krista@welcomeinn.ca

Second Annual
1-3 Welcome Inn
Community Centre Fundraising Event!
Friday April 1st 2016
6pm-10pm \$20
SPICE FACTORY
121 HUGHSON ST N
DARIN MARTIN
& The Otic Poets
Silent Auction
Good Eats
Cash Bar
Great Community!
Give us a call at 905-525-5824
or email Krista@welcomeinn.ca
for tickets!



Meet Suzanne ~ Social Enterprise– Thrift Store Manager

If we haven't met face to face yet, I look forward to doing so very soon as you help me find my footing with New Horizons and The Welcome Inn. I have been made to feel very welcome indeed, and aim to bring the very best of what I have learned in earlier roles with the YWCA, Wesley Urban Ministries, & The AIDS Network. Hamilton is home, and we each have something unique to contribute to our community, making a tapestry of what we share. When we meet, please tell me your favorite joke if you have one. Laughter brings relief no matter what ails us; and life is serious enough that we need to use whatever makes us smile to help get to the next step on the journey together. Be well, stay warm, & know you are never alone.



Meet Rebecca ~ Food Organizer

I moved to Hamilton in 2014 from Toronto, and as a way to start connecting with the community I searched out volunteer opportunities around the city. I found the Welcome Inn Community Centre, and immediately, it felt like home. With a background in International Development Studies, I bring to my new role as SNACK+ Food Coordinator a passion for community, food and people. When I'm not cooking or spending time with my son, I'm probably reading, singing, making something out of clay or exploring the city and trails on foot. I am excited about the new food literacy project that is being offered through our food bank. Food samples, recipes and education around ingredients will help to provide resources to community members to increase access to affordable foods. It's the year of pulses, so we're learning about legumes!



Community organizing is all about building **grassroots support. It's about identifying the people around you who can create a common, passionate cause.**

The Seniors Diners Club had an amazing time celebrating St Patrick's Day together. We laughed, ate Hearty Irish stew, drank green beverages, and LOVED our homemade Irish Pub. What a great afternoon of stomping our feet to Irish fiddle music and having beautiful blessings sung to us:



" May the road rise to meet you.
May the wind be always on your back.
May the sun shine warm upon your face.
And rains fall soft upon your fields.
And until we meet again,
May God hold you in the palm of His hand."



We meet every Tuesday afternoon at noon to enjoy a homemade meal together and participate in some type of fun activity. Everyone is welcome to join us! We are a lot of fun (even if we do say so ourselves).

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.

A Message from the Board



On behalf of the Board of Directors of Welcome Inn, I would like to thank all of our volunteers and community members that make this place the special community centre that it is. While the pace of life picks up in the spring, the activities of Welcome Inn continue to provide meaningful connection and opportunity during these months. Our seniors continue to have their lunch and activity each week. Our youngest participants enjoy daily activities with our camp program just

around the corner.

We as a Board wish to move forward with new programs, move towards fundraising for improving our physical infrastructure and serving our community where it is needed most. You will hear about our outreach to our community, our 50th Anniversary Celebrations and new fundraising endeavors throughout the year. We have listened to you and your goals for us when we met with you this year. We look forward to meeting you and saying hello.

From all of our staff, volunteers and the Board, thank you and we look forward to serving our community in the coming months.

Board of Directors 2016

Bob Charko - Chair, Leah Schwenger –Vice Chair, Tim Epp - Treasurer
Gale Payne - Secretary, ,Sarah Lawson, Keston Roberts, Steve Dykstra,
Rene Farrow, Louanne Shakeshaft

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

Thank You!

McMaster University
Picone's Fine Foods
Hamilton Mennonite Church
Hamilton Food Share
Mohawk College
Hamilton Tiger Cats
The Hamilton Store
World Vision
Edith Turner Foundation
Strathcona Seniors



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



An Update on Syrian Refugees

A special welcome to all of the new-to-Hamilton families that have visited Welcome Inn. Supports through our food bank, community programs and thrift store are helping families settle into new lives in the North End of Hamilton. Did you know that Jen Kellner, is sponsoring a family of Grandmother, mother, and teen daughter to resettle in Hamilton? Once they arrive, Welcome Inn will be lending support to help get them settled in their new home.

40 Wood Street East, Hamilton, On L8L 1E4

905-525-5824

info@welcomeinn.ca www.welcomeinn.ca