



INNsights

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

Spring 2017

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,

At long last the sun has finally made an appearance with warm rays to melt away the last of this 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.

Recently I had the opportunity to share about the heart of Welcome Inn. What exactly is Welcome Inn anyway? We have so many things happening every week— afterschool mentorship for kids, teen drop in, food bank, financial literacy projects, peace workshops, tax clinics, thrift store, spiritual care, senior's visiting and dining... the list goes on! But the real beauty of Welcome Inn doesn't come from the many good programs that we offer for support. The beauty is with the people. People from every walk of life working together to end poverty in Hamilton. When we see new neighbours working alongside 'old timers' and sharing a laugh—it's Beauty. When one senior makes a special trip to visit another in hospital—it's Beauty. When a sporty teen and bookish teen eat together around the table as family—it's Beauty. It is the connection and shared love that is our Beautiful gift.

Deep Community. Good Food for all. Empowerment. This is what we are about. 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 Spring!

Hidden Figures

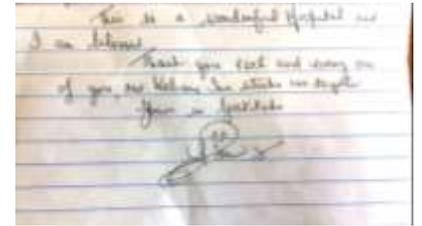
Let's go to the show! Our kids had such a great time on an outing to the movies. *Our Write Canada* is a volunteer group that advocates for women's literacy in developing countries. As part of this work, the group enjoys promoting trailblazing women and their stories. They teamed up with the Welcome Inn to take our kids to see the movie "Hidden Figures."



The movie is a true story about three brilliant women that crossed all gender and race lines at NASA to inspire generations to dream big. We hope to do the same, inspiring our kids to think big no matter what. We are thrilled that we could take our girls to this matinee. Everyone had such a good time and left inspired. We are so proud of our youth—strong, smart and tenacious people who are taking on the world! Empowerment!

When one of our seniors was recently in the hospital, we witnessed a beautiful expression of love. Many people visited, offered encouragement and care. A community rallying together. The thank you note read that

"our Welcome Inn sticks us together." This is what we do. **Deep community.** When the tough times come, we stand together.



In Tandem with Sobi Hamilton

"I am able to visit my kids because of the bike." Having the flexibility and ability of being able to get to where your kids are—when you are needed—is one of the gifts that these bikes are bringing to our community. Empowerment through pedal power is one way our community members are growing. Hamilton Bike Share and Welcome Inn are partners in the Everybody Rides Initiative which provides community members access to the SoBI bike infrastructure. Our members are able to use the shared bike system to travel throughout the lower city. Pick up a bike in one spot, then lock it up a hub somewhere else. All for free through this partnership! By removing the barrier of needing a credit card and online payment, people are able to be more active as they move around the city under their own power.

"I'm able to hold down a job because of these bikes."

I want to ride my bicycle...



Save the dates! CAMP! July 4-28

- 1) Super Friends: team building
- 2) Super Adventure: amazing race
- 3) Super Sports: athletics & sports
- 4) Super Planet: nature & science

I <3 Welcome Inn What a great time was had at our 3rd Annual I <3 Welcome Inn benefit concert! There was wonderful music, food, prizes and PIES! A special thanks to everyone who baked a pie for us to auction off in the liveliest manner. A delicious way to support our children's programming at the Inn. I see that hand!



Black Bean Burgers & Chickpea Stew

Each month, about 400 families come to Welcome Inn to access our food support program - that's over 1,000 people. Our goal is provide at least 3 days worth of food for each member of the household. With increasing costs of hydro, rent and living expenses, getting **good food** becomes out of reach for many who are on a fixed income. We are seeing larger sized families! The number of families with 6 people or more doubled when we compared January 2016 to January 2017! A hamper of food can include things like eggs, milk, meat, fresh produce, pasta, tomato sauce, cereal, rice, school snacks, canned veggies & fruit, tuna, and peanut butter. One of the struggles that we see, is the lack of knowledge about what to do with some of these ingredients. So, we began a food literacy project to provide a demo and sample of simple food recipes that can be made with the groceries that would be picked up here at Welcome Inn. We've heard great reviews of this project! Being able to sample the food, take a recipe, then pick up the groceries onsite makes it easy to increase food literacy. Black bean burgers and chickpea stew are two favourite recipes that will be debuting in many Hamilton homes this month!

Good Food For All!

We are proud to be a member of Good Food Organizations.

We have renewed our membership again this year and confirmed our 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.



Community organizing is all about building **grassroots support**. It's about **identifying the people around you who share a common vision, and working together on a passionate cause.**



Annie turns 99!



For Valentine's day we held a Love Boat Cruise day with our seniors. A celebration of love to bring some

warmth and light to the winter greys. Special Valentines passports allowed each person to come aboard to play games and have some fun, and partake in tropical treats.



It was also our beloved Annie's 99th Birthday. Happy Birthday, Annie!!



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

I am delighted to have joined the board of Welcome Inn. The Centre's long and rich history of helping and supporting the community was one of the key reasons that I



was moved to become involved. Hamilton has always been our home although my 40 year working career with Royal Bank was in Toronto. I don't miss those daily trips on the GO Train! Now that I am retired I am happy to have the time to try and give something back to other Hamiltonians. I am active as a board member, elder and trustee of Central Presbyterian Church and have over the years been involved with sports at Coronation Arena as well as volunteer work at Theatre Aquarius.

The opportunity to be involved in the recent fund raising evening gave me a chance to experience the enthusiasm and commitment of the staff, volunteers and board. I think the future for the Welcome Inn looks very bright and look forward to being a part of it. *David Dutchak*

Board of Directors 2017

Leah Schwenger -Chair, Bob Charko - Past Chair, Gale Payne, Sarah Lawson- treasurer, Sarah McDonald -Secretary, Peggy Savage, David Dutchak, Matthew Carson, Matthew Thompson

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

Thank You!

To our donors & Supporters

Hamilton Mennonite Church
Hamilton Food Share
Edith Turner Foundation
Marshall Memorial Fund
BMO
Hamilton Bike Share
Willow Salon
B&T Steel



New Horizons Thrift, Vintage & Collectibles Store
Mon-Sat 10—5pm

Please drop off donations during store hours.

www.welcomeinn.ca/new-horizons-social-enterprise
Come and enjoy SPRING at New Horizons.

We are all about celebrating the new season. Brightly 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 Suzanne @ 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



Seedling Swap & Plant Sale Saturday May 6 10am

Bring your seedling starters, seeds, gardening books & gear to our yearly garden event. Join vendors & other community members to learn about your garden and get the goods to grow a vibrant garden this year!



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