



bethlehem
housing and support services

2016
Spring/Summer
NEWSLETTER

49 FAMILIES
INCLUDING
59 CHILDREN
LIVED AT
BETHLEHEM PLACE IN 2015/16

Donor Recognition

Thank you to people and organizations who have supported Bethlehem Housing and Support services, with special thanks to those who have donated \$500 and over between April 1, 2015 to March 31, 2016.

- Airbus Helicopters
- Dorothy Barley
- Emily Barry
- Craig Bartlett
- Beatties Basics
- Brouwer Construction (1981) Ltd.
- Curtis Brown
- Busy Bee Junk Removal Services
- Court Holdings Ltd.
- Canadian Tire Financial Services
- Canadian Women's Foundation
- Maureen Chudyk
- Douglas Court
- Covenant Christian Reformed Church
- T.J. Critelli
- DJ Dominoes Disc Jockey Service
- Estate of Iva Muriel Grant
- First Reformed Church of St. Catharines
- Valerie K. Fleming
- Josephine Franzak
- Friends of Linhaven
- Grant Thornton
- Mike & Anne Jones
- Jubilee Fellowship C. R. Church
- Kiwanis Club of St. Catharines
- L. Walter & Sons Excavating Ltd.
- M & N Walker Foundation
- Randy & Mary Momot
- David & Karen Morgan
- Niagara 21st Group Inc.
- O'Brien/Jackson Family Foundation
- O'Hara Trucking & Excavating
- Paula's Elegant Bride
- Penn Terra Group
- Lisa Punch
- Gail Richardson
- Mark Rittenhouse
- Rotary Club – St. Catharines South
- Elda Ryan
- Sam's Delights
- Carmen Sauer
- ServiceMaster of Niagara
- Chris Sora
- St. Andrew's United Church
- St. Catharines United Mennonite Church
- St. John's Anglican Church
- St. Thomas' Church
- Sullivan Mahoney
- Sunmar Films
- Beverly Swann
- Synergy Benefits Consulting Inc.
- The Ontario Paper Thorold Foundation
- Mary L. Turner
- David Vilim
- Willy's Greenhouses Ltd.
- Sonja Zanuttini
- Anonymous Estate

We also wish to acknowledge the contribution of our donors who wish to remain anonymous and those who gave to the United Way and designated Bethlehem Housing and Support Services as the recipient of your gifts.



A word about charitable gift planning.....

A legacy gift is a lasting statement of your generosity and care for people in your community and their future. It is one of the most valuable ways you can help Bethlehem Housing and Support Services. These committed funds provide us with financial resources required to operate the various in-house and community support services and programs that are so vital in helping the many men, women and families we serve to get back on their feet and lead more fulfilling lives.

When planning your financial future, you may want to consider charitable giving and making a legacy gift of which you and your family will be proud. Included is an insert with detailed information about the mutual benefits of charitable gift planning for today and tomorrow. We hope you find it informative. We would be happy to help educate you further about the many options available to you, by arranging to meet with our caring and knowledgeable charitable giving specialist or just by calling with your questions.

On behalf of our client families of today and tomorrow, we thank you from our heart to yours for your most generous gifts of support.



*Thank You
TO OUR
VOLUNTEERS*



EMPTY BOWLS FUNDRAISER

At our 11th Annual Empty Bowls fundraising event, in addition to some of our annual volunteers, we had approximately 20 volunteers from the Event Management program at Niagara College. Thank you to all of our wonderful volunteers for supporting Bethlehem through these fun events!



VOLUNTEER MILESTONES

Mary Bondarchuk – 20 years
Dawn Gordon – 10 years
Roberta Schmidt – 10 years
Sonja Zanuttini – 10 years



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:

Volunteers are needed for our Bingo nights held at Delta Bingo in St. Catharines, one Wednesday night per month from 7:30pm-9:30pm and one Saturday afternoon per month from 1:30pm-3:30pm. Bingo is an easy way to help us raise funds. If you are interested in helping out please contact Lindsay McKillop at 905-684-1660 ext. 4 or lmckillop@bethlehemhousing.ca





FASHION IN BLOOM EVENT



PAULA'S ELEGANT BRIDE

The 10th Spring Fashion Show "Fashion in Bloom" took place on Friday, April 15, where all proceeds were donated to Bethlehem Housing and Support Services. The event was hosted by Domenic Cortese and Lisa McLeod of DJ Dominoes Disc Jockey Service, who have been loyal supporters of ours for many years. This year, the event raised \$1,447 for Bethlehem!

On Sunday, November 6, 2015, Paula Shaw, owner of Paula's Elegant Bride, hosted the 4th Annual Charity Bridal Fashion Show with proceeds going to Bethlehem Housing and Support Services and non-perishable food donations to Bethany Community Church Food Bank. The event keeps getting bigger every year, and in 2015 an amazing \$6,470 in proceeds were donated to Bethlehem!

The proceeds from these events allow Bethlehem Housing to continue to help people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless due to issues with poverty, physical disability, mental health, domestic violence and family breakdown. From 2015 – 2016 Bethlehem offered 45 life skills workshops and 6 different support groups including coping with stress, dealing with grief and loss and maintaining healthy relationships.

DIY Fundraiser



The Fashion in Bloom event and Paula's Charity Bridal Fashion Show are two great examples of DIY Fundraisers that supported Bethlehem Housing. You too can be a DIY Fundraiser for Bethlehem. Planning an event is another way to show your support of our organization – and can be a lot of fun! A third party fundraising event is organized and managed by people other than Bethlehem staff and funds raised benefit Bethlehem. Some of these events include golf tournaments, car washes, BBQs, garage sales and much more!

Visit our website at www.bethlehemhousing.ca or call 905-684-1660 ext. 4 more information.

After School Program



Bethlehem's After School Program is an interactive club for children in full day kindergarten up to grade 8, held Monday to Thursday's from 3:30 p.m. – 5 p.m. at Bethlehem Place and is free of charge. During the After School Program children can get creative with open-ended craft activities or participate in outdoor fun and games. On the first Tuesday of every month they visit the St. Catharines Public Library for educational fun. Thanks United Way "All That Kids Can Be" for improving access to early childhood learning and development programs.

If you are interested in joining Bethlehem's After School Program please contact Tiffany Grant at 905-641-1660 ext. 25 for more information.

Valerie's Story of Success

Growing up Valerie moved from home to home as her mother worked on the ships in Ontario. At the age of 15 years old, she left home and worked as an exotic dancer in order to provide for herself. When she reached an age where she could support herself more, she became a waitress and worked in the hospitality industry for a number of years. "By my 20's, I was in an abusive marriage with two children." Her partner controlled every aspect of her life and she had very little freedom. Although Valerie worked her entire life, her partner controlled all of the money. Along with finances he also controlled the children, her friendships and her relationships with family. He became abusive, both physically and verbally, and Valerie began to fear for both her and her children's safety. Feeling like she had nowhere to go, Valerie turned to alcohol to help cope with her problems.

Valerie struggled with alcoholism for much of her life but in November 2012 things took a turn for the worse. "My younger brother passed away while serving time in prison." Because of her struggles with addictions she had spoiled relationships with her friends and her family. Valerie felt alone and her life began to spiral out of control. Unable to handle the grief of the loss of her brother, she continued to drink to numb the pain. By 2014 she was homeless and living on the streets of St. Catharines. During the cold winter months she decided she had enough and she looked to get help. Valerie stayed at the YWCA and during her stay they introduced her to Bethlehem Housing and Support Services, where her journey to recovery began.

The YWCA put Valerie in contact with support workers at Bethlehem and in July 2015 she had a place to call home at Bethlehem Place. At Bethlehem Place she was able to talk about trauma, the disease of addictions and how to cope with both so that she can move forward in life. Valerie attended many of the life skills programs provided at Bethlehem, which has made her feel useful again. Through the positive mentoring and support she has seen a change within herself and a change within the other people living at Bethlehem. She noticed children began to smile again and women began to raise their heads with confidence. "Bethlehem assisted me in becoming more secure with my life and finding peace within myself." The support of the community has provided her with a sense of belonging, giving her a more positive attitude towards life. The support from the workers at Bethlehem, along with their hard work and dedication, is why Valerie is at the place she is today. Once living in complete fear, Valerie now feels a sense of security in her life.

Seeing her younger brother struggle with addictions and spend his life in prison is what encouraged Valerie to seek help. She isn't only doing it for herself but for the memory of her brother as well. Valerie believes that faith plays a huge role in encouraging her to live a more spiritual and grounded life. "Because I have been able to grow spiritually, I see myself helping others in the future so that I can help guide others out of the life I once lived." This encourages her to stay sober and keep moving forward. At one point Valerie was asked what it was like to live at Bethlehem Place and she replied, "It's where miracles happen." Valerie loves living in St. Catharines and because of the support and guidance from Bethlehem Housing, she now feels like she is a part of the community.

Both spiritually and emotionally, Valerie is at a wonderful place in her life. At the end of July she is moving to a place of her own and she is so grateful to Bethlehem Housing for helping her get to this point. Bethlehem has given her the opportunity to heal her relationship with her children and she keeps in contact with them regularly. "Both of my children are university graduates and they are also very thankful for the new beginning that Bethlehem provided their mother." Valerie's face lights up with joy when talking about her children and the accomplishments they have made.

If there is one thing Valerie wants anyone to take from her journey is that if you are struggling with homelessness, addictions, or domestic abuse, you are not alone. "Bethlehem Housing is here to support you and guide you towards a better life."



Garden City Food Co-op will be a grocery store located in downtown St. Catharines filled with fresh, locally produced and fairly priced foods directly from local farms. In this store, the money you pay for your groceries will be a contribution to the sustainable development of your local community. All for the better, you'll feed yourself, your family, your neighbours, and the local economy. The store is not owned by a corporation but by its members who have an active role in how it is run through their one member one vote system.

Working together, Garden City Food Co-op and Bethlehem Housing created the "Sponsor a Member" campaign, where they managed to receive 12 sponsored memberships for residents of Genesis Court. Through these sponsored memberships, residents will have easy access to fresh and locally produced food. They will also be supporting Niagara producers, local employment, family farms, community development and community connections.

Interested in becoming a member yourself?

Visit Garden City Food Co-op's website at <http://www.gardencityfoodcoop.ca/> for more information.



Wish Box

Many of our residents at Bethlehem Place arrive at our door with only the clothes on their backs and have difficulty meeting their basic needs. To help improve the quality of life for our residents we accept gently used and new children's clothing and toiletry items. The following donations are welcomed:

- Toiletries - feminine products, hair products, toothpaste, tooth brushes, soap, toilet paper, etc.
- Baby Items - children's clothing/footwear, strollers/baby cribs (must meet current safety standards), diapers, wipes, baby shampoo, etc.

Due to space limitations we cannot accept furniture or kitchenware. We use the assistance of our community partners to gather these items for residents who require them. Although from time to time we may have a resident who urgently needs such items; therefore we use our Facebook page to share these donation requests. www.facebook.com/BethlehemHousingandSupportServices/

For further information regarding in-kind donations contact 905-641-1660 ext. 25.

Donations can be delivered Monday to Friday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. to: Bethlehem Place, 58 Welland Avenue, St. Catharines.



Bethlehem Housing and Support Services

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