

Friends of Harmony House

Spring 2004 No. 7



Harmony House Staff

Dawn Blakley
Executive Director
Jessica Sauv -Griffen
Children's Advocate &
Family Support Worker
Nicole Lafond
Transitional Support Worker
Trish Elliott
Financial Administrator
Christine Irvine
Manager Fund Development

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Nicole Deschesne
President
Dawn Morewood
Vice-President
Clementine VanVeen
Treasurer
Patty Angus
Secretary
Mira Abdillahi
Mary Beshai
Andrea Christensen
Linda Gustus
Cynthia Sanoy
Toni Todd

Volunteers

Jaden Winfree
Erin Williams
MaryAnn MacIntosh

Thanks

Cynthia Sanoy
Web Design
Sue Wilson
Fundraising
Toni Todd
Newsletter
Cynthia Dwyer
Run For Shelter

A Nurturing Relationship

Since 1986, when Harmony House was first formed, St. Matthew's Anglican Church and Harmony House have had a special relationship. Two members of St. Matthew's parish, Andrea Christensen and Mary Beshai, have been involved with the Harmony House board for over a year now. In that time, we have seen many changes. The one change that we would like to reflect on is how the relationship between the bodies of Harmony House and St. Matthew's has grown.

In the last few months St. Matthew's has been busy trying to redefine its role as a friend to Harmony House as well as a constant support and nurturing body. Over the past year, representatives from Harmony House, Dawn Blakley (Executive Director), and Nicole Deschesne (President) held discussions with St. Matthew's Parish Council to address the role that St. Matthew's parish could play in the future of Harmony House. We are delighted to be working on this!

There is a great potential for continuing growth and development between St. Matthew's and Harmony House. After all, we have a common goal. We are called to nurture within ourselves an attitude of reverence and respect for each person who is in our care. These persons are the women and children of Harmony House. Along with this calling comes a belief that everyone has something to learn and to receive from others no matter what their gender, status, colour or situation in life. As representatives of St. Matthew's and members of the board of directors of Harmony House, we are called to listen and to learn. And, we are ready for the challenge.

*Mary Beshai and Rev. Andrea Christensen
St. Matthew's Representatives
Board of Directors
Harmony House*

Harmony House Women's Shelter
P.O. Box 57082
Somerset Postal Office
Ottawa, ON K1R 1A1
Tel: (613) 233-3386
Fax: (613) 567-1707
www.harmonyhousews.com
info@harmonyhousews.com

Annual General Meeting

All members are welcome to attend our Annual General Meeting to be held Thursday, June 24, 2004, 6:00 p.m. at St. Matthew's Anglican Church, 217 First Avenue. Please see inside for your membership form.

President's Message

Each year the most challenging task as a board of directors is to deal with the uncertainty of no government funding. In the last twelve months, we focused on developing a corporate package, a strategic plan, and fiscal partnerships with different organizations, which are recognized in this newsletter under the list of corporate donors. Our individual donors continue to represent over 50% of our donations and we thank you for your ongoing support.

In the spring of 2003, our property manager became the Ottawa Community Housing Corporation. Our assigned property manager Francoise Lagroix and our maintenance representative Kim are very attentive to our property and we are grateful for the work and changes done over the past year.

Despite all the efforts made by several organizations in addressing violence against women, we are experiencing ongoing waiting lists. Harmony House is, therefore, in the unfortunate position of having to explore the possibility of an expansion. This year, we will analyze our options and develop a project plan so that we can approach different funding sources for capital expenses. Our initial plan is to add two units for families and expand our programming space.

As a shelter without government funding, volunteers at Harmony House are an incredibly important part of our ability to provide services to our families. We have many people to thank: the Run for Shelter committee, front line volunteers and the board of directors. Your involvement is critical to our services.

You may have noticed our new logo and our updated website! We are proud of our new look and feel. We invite you to visit us at www.harmonyhousews.com

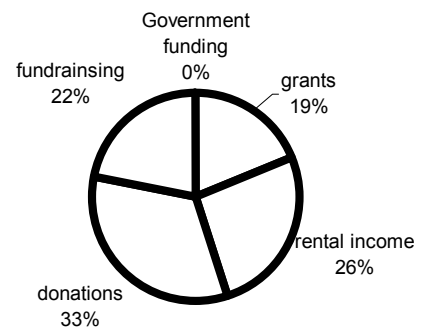
Nicole Deschesne
President
Board of Directors
Harmony House

Letter from 9 Year Old Resident

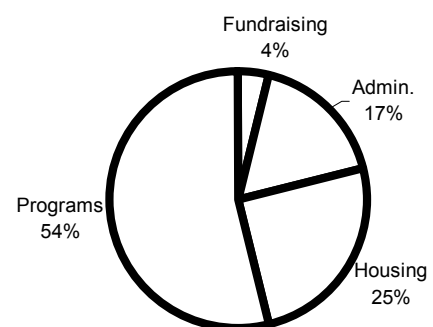
I like it here because...

I have people that help us like Jessica. She helps children like me but there are two really nice people named Crystal and Katie. They help me with all they can do. And there is childcare that helps my heart because I see a lot of caring and sharing. What I don't like about here is we can't live in a tiny room all of us get sick all the time. We need to get a house really fast. And a lot of people are doing this for us.

Where our money comes from



Where our money is spent



Our New Look

Harmony House recently adopted a new logo. This new design was the result of a project to update the graphic image of Harmony House as a safe haven for women and their children fleeing violence. The house in the logo is meant to re-enforce the shelter aspect of the services that Harmony House provides.

Jeff M. Schroeder, a graphic design student at Algonquin College, designed the logo. Jeff donated his time, talents and resources to create this new logo for Harmony House. The Board of Directors wishes to extend thanks and appreciation to Jeff for his efforts.

Thank You !!

Thank you to those who responded to our annual campaign. The package that was sent out in December is our main fundraising event for the year. It is through the generous support of our donors that we are able to provide programs and services to the women and children who are at Harmony House. If you have not yet made your annual contribution to Harmony House, please consider doing so. Every contribution is helpful.

New Play Structure

Last fall, Harmony House received funds to purchase a play structure for our children. The Ottawa Community Foundation donated over \$14,000 for the structure, installation and community garden, which is being organized this spring. Additionally, the United Church graciously donated \$5,000 towards a new play therapy program, to work in conjunction with the new play structure. We are appreciative of the support that these two groups have provided to Harmony House.

Planned Giving

When you make a bequest to Harmony House in your will, you leave a legacy of hope. It is a way of perpetuating your support for Harmony House and the program you care about.

Planned giving is one of the best ways to maximize your investment on behalf of those who need it most. Leave a legacy for Ottawa's only second-stage shelter for women and children.

Partnerships

Because Harmony House is wholly funded through donations, we rely on the generosity of the community to keep our doors open. We depend on a network of partnerships with other community organizations and on the generous sponsors who donate significant resources. Our partnership opportunities continue to grow in 2004. Thank you to all of these organizations that continue to show their support for Harmony House:

- Ottawa Community Housing Corporation
- Success by Six
- St. Matthew's Anglican Church
- Algonquin College
- Gas TOPS Ltd.
- Hill Charity Golf Classic
- Jagged Mind Media Inc.
- Pharma Plus
- United Way International
- First United Church of Ottawa
- Great Canadian Theatre Company
- Ottawa Kiwanis Club
- St. Bartholomew's Anglican Church
- Carleton University
- RBC Financial Group
- Ottawa Community Foundation
- Ottawa Food Bank (provides weekly delivery)
- The Civil Service Credit Union
- Rotary Club of Kanata
- The New RO
- St Basil's Church
- Dekcuf Cafe

Privacy Statement For our Donors

Harmony House respects your privacy. We protect your personal information and adhere to all legislative requirements with respect to privacy. We do not rent, sell or trade our mailing lists. We use personal information to provide services and to keep you informed and up-to-date on the activities of Harmony House. This includes programs, services, special events, volunteer opportunities, funding needs, and other ways to donate, through periodic contacts from Harmony House. If at any time you wish to be removed from any of these contacts, simply contact us by phone at 613-233-5990 or via e-mail at director@harmonyhousews.com, and we will gladly accommodate your request.



EVENTS

Run For Shelter

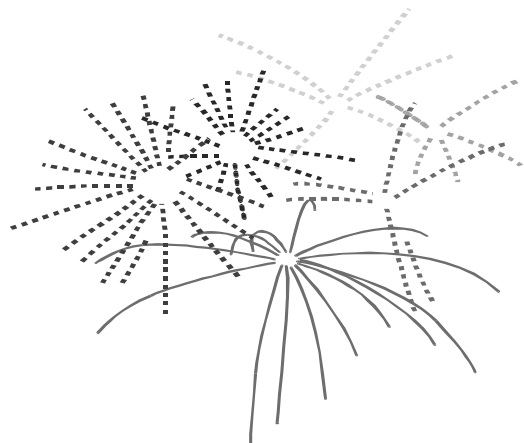
The Run for Shelter date is Sunday, June 27, 2004. We hope to see you there.
For more information:
www.runforshelter.org



Run for Canada

Hudson's Bay Company is doing the first ever Canada Day Run in Ottawa to raise money for CHEO and local charities on July 1, 2004. They are inviting people from all across Canada to participate. Harmony House will be one of the recipients of the proceeds from the run.

For more information:
www.hbcrunforcanada.ca



LETTER FROM A FORMER RESIDENT

Harmony House ... what could we say about Harmony House? Since its creation Harmony House has sheltered how many women? You know the statistics, so I won't give you numbers.

I will tell you my experience. It is not a once upon a time, because it is a true story. A few years ago, I was living in Montreal with my husband and my five-year-old son. I was pregnant with my second boy. My husband and I were working full-time and studying at university part-time and we owned a townhouse in the suburbs of Montreal. My husband and I already planned that our oldest son will attend a private school for Grade 1.

I was working, studying, pregnant and too tired to run and do everything by myself (my husband had a busy and stressful job). I decided to take a break after giving birth to my second son and to stay at home to raise him until he turned three years old. I also wanted to complete my university degree by correspondence. My husband agreed. I stopped working when I was six months pregnant and gave birth to a beautiful boy.

Then the nightmare, when my unemployment insurance was over, my husband didn't want to give me money or the car and was insulting me. I know you will think, why did he change? I would not say that he changed. My husband was always controlling and paranoid. He said that he wanted to protect me because I was too naïve. I wrongly believed he was controlling and paranoid because he loved me.

Being at home without money opened a door for him to be more abusive. I was like a bird in his cage. Many times I tried to talk to him but he was always right. I asked him to leave the house, always no. He said that he can kill me and nobody will know it, and he would kidnap the kids, always to hurt me. I was scared, always crying.

I didn't know what to do, then his cousin called me from Ottawa and I explained to her my problem. She told me that I had to go to a shelter in Ottawa and put me in touch with the shelter. Days later, I called the police, left with my kids and a few clothes and went to a short-term shelter. As I didn't have any housing offer we had to move to a long-term shelter – Harmony House. Months after, we moved to an apartment but he came back, said he changed and I trusted him and moved back with him. Same scenario. We ended up back at Harmony House again.

My story is not a sad one. I don't regret anything. I am happy that I left with my kids, that means I don't want an abusive relationship. I wanted to start a new life and have a new home without being harassed by him. I wanted to have peace, dignity, self respect, and happiness. I did it and I am so happy and proud of me. My two boys (12 ½ and 6 years old) and I are living in a nice place, I have a permanent job, have completed one diploma at university with more to come.

I hope that one day women and kids won't have to run away from their homes. We will build shelters for abusers.

It did happen to me. It was not my fault. My husband wanted to break me but he didn't succeed. It could happen to any woman. It could be your sister, your niece, cousin, neighbour or friend. If it is happening to any woman, you will be happy that Harmony House exists. As you know, Harmony House continues existing because of your donations. Please donate generously for women and kids, to ease their stay at Harmony House.

Membership Definition

The membership shall consist of those individuals, staff and residents of Harmony House, corporations and groups who are interested in furthering the Mission Statement of the Corporation and who apply for membership. Members must be a minimum of 16 years of age. Memberships are renewable annually.

TO BECOME A MEMBER OF HARMONY HOUSE

Please sign and bring to the Annual General Meeting or mail to the address below:

Mission Statement

Harmony House is a second-stage shelter for women and their children who are survivors of violence. We provide a transition period from crisis shelter services to independent living in the community. At Harmony House we provide safe, affordable housing for up to a year, along with a program of individual and group support, accompaniment, advocacy and referral. Harmony House promotes the creation of a world where women and their children are safe and free from all forms of violence and oppression.

Signature

Name: _____ Address: _____ City: _____

Postal Code: _____ Email: _____ Phone No.: _____

TO BECOME A FRIEND OF HARMONY

I would like to make a donation of:

\$30.00 ! \$50.00 ! \$75.00 ! \$100.00 ! \$200.00 ! Other \$ _____

Please Print

Name: _____ Address: _____ City: _____

Postal Code: _____ Email: _____

Credit Card Information

Account No.: _____ Exp. Date: _____ Signature: _____

Please send your tax-deductible donation to:

Harmony House Women's Shelter, P.O. Box 57082, Somerset Postal Office, Ottawa, ON K1R 1A1