

*Carty House is a transitional home
and a community for refugee
women in Ottawa*



CARTY HOUSE

SUMMER 2014

Lena and Glennie-Ruth, Carty House Coordinators – Reflecting on another year

This past year brought many difficulties for refugees, most particularly refugee claimants, as we feel the very real impact in changes in government policy and legislation. Refugee claimants struggle with shortened deadlines for completing claims and a reduction in health and support services. We have seen a 50% drop in refugee claims, as reported by UNHCR, and an increasing number of negative determinations and removal orders. For Carty House residents, these struggles negatively affect their physical, mental, and psychological health.

Since May of last year Carty House welcomed eight new residents; two more residents will be arriving later this month. The house has seen great diversity, with residents from eight countries and two continents, both Christian and Muslim, and ranging in age from 20 to 50 years. Eight women were accepted as Convention Refugees and will soon receive their Permanent Resident Status.

We would like to pay tribute to all our community partners, volunteers, and Board Members, who continue to commit their time and resources to Carty House. We want to give extra recognition to the Congregation of Notre Dame, who has been our major donor since the creation of the house. Most especially, we honour the journeys of the refugee women whom we serve. You enrich this house and community with your stories, voices, and experiences.

It is truly remarkable to see the power of a model like Carty House.

- To witness cross-cultural sharing, friendship, and support
- To hear women exchanging stories and struggles
- To watch them learning and honouring each other's cultural and religious traditions
- To see them flourishing in their English skills
- To observe them gaining the confidence to pursue their educational goals
- To celebrate with them starting their first job in Canada
- To applaud those who receive a positive decision to stay here in Canada
- To realize how providing a safe and healthy home can give women the environment within which they can heal from past trauma and violence, build strong support networks and community, and thus grow and thrive in their new life in Canada

In the years ahead we look forward to maintaining our close rapports with Matthew House Ottawa, CCI-Reception House, Immigrant Women's Services of Ottawa, Sexual Assault Support Centre of Ottawa, Cornerstone Women's Shelter, Options Bytown, Sandy Hill Community Health Centre, and Community Legal Services, and to developing new partnerships and connections in the community.

Musings from Monia Bella, age 21, a resident of Carty House from Burundi

"Carty house is a place with happiness because there are smiles and smiles create happiness, and when there is happiness there is love, and with love you find a beautiful life and home. I love Carty House so much because, even with all the struggles we are passing through, when I reach Carty House I feel peace. At Carty House I find inside people who are caring for me – the residents, Glennie Ruth and Lena. May God bless Carty House".

Farewell and Best wishes to Eri and Ted

Attention to detail were the hallmarks of the approach Eri Yamasaki brought to her 4 years as the bookkeeper for Carty House. Eri took over the bookkeeping job while Carty House was in transition to a more systematic system. Under Eri's careful eye, receipts migrated from shoeboxes to file folders; ledger books became QuickBooks. Eri's precise nature accounted for every detail, ensuring budgeting, accounting and bill paying were routine activities.

Eri and her partner Ted Williamson, who was Carty House's "go to" guy for computer advice and help, are starting a new adventure in White Rock, B.C. Everyone at Carty House will miss Eri and Ted. We wish both of them the best of luck.

**Board Member
Lisa Fudge-Lunetta**



I have been a member of the Board since September 2013 and I'm also a member of the Fundraising Committee. I first became aware of issues specific to refugees when my parents helped sponsor a family during 'Project 4000' in the late 1970's when 4,000 refugees from Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos relocated to Ottawa. I remember learning about the dangerous political situation where this family had been living and feeling so relieved that they could now feel safe. Later, in law school, I had a mentor who encouraged me to do some legal aid work with a group in Ottawa who helped immigrant and refugee women facing violence here in Canada. I found that experience to be very rewarding as the project focused on human rights and women's issues and left me with an appreciation of different backgrounds, cultures and customs.

More recently, despite a busy full time career and two active children, I felt that I wanted to give more to my community and was actively looking for some volunteer opportunities. When I saw an advertisement for Board members for Carty House it seemed like a good fit. I admit that I was concerned about balancing family, work and committing the time needed to be an active Board member. It turns out that my colleagues at work have been nothing but supportive, donating to Carty house, preparing holiday baskets and many of them kindly purchased our raffle tickets! To my delight, there has also been a positive impact at home. My children have been asking a lot of questions about the countries of origin of the women from Carty House and what life is like for women in those countries. This has inspired conversations with my 11-year-old daughter about Malala Yousafzai, the Pakistani student and advocate for girls' education. It has also inspired my 15-year-old son to volunteer for causes that he is passionate about.

I truly enjoy working on a Board, and with volunteers and Coordinators who are exceptional. I can't think of a better word to describe them as they all have such compassion and commitment toward the residents. The residents themselves are also a great inspiration to me. Many have gone through so much and have proven to be extremely brave and resilient. What I have learned from volunteering at Carty House is that we have to model the way for our children. If we want them to be the kind of people who care about community, including our world wide community, then we need to show them that it is important to get involved and make the time to help others. That is what my parents did for me when they participated in 'Project 4000'. Now it is my turn.

**Thanks to all who bought raffle tickets to support Carty House
Your generosity enabled us to raise \$4,240 from ticket sales**

The winners are:

- 1st Prize: Diba Hughes** – Via Rail round trip voucher for 4 passengers, Ottawa to Quebec City
- 2nd Prize: Joseph Sebhatu** – International dinner for six guests prepared by Carty House residents
- 3rd Prize: Will Postma** – 2 Tickets to G.C.T.C and \$25 voucher to The Flying Banzini Restaurant
- 4th Prize: Christine Andress** – \$30 worth of vouchers for The Table Vegetarian Restaurant
- 5th Prize: Mary Egan** - \$20 worth of vouchers for The Table Vegetarian Restaurant

*We welcome **Kate Preston-Thomas** as the new Carty House bookkeeper. Kate is known to have a keen sense of detail so we are very confident that our accounts will always be in good order.*

Carty House
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through
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