



# FROM THE ROOFTOPS

## NOVEMBER 2015

### Gather Around the Table at Octopus Books

Renowned cookbook author Ellie Topp shared her recipes, expertise, and passion for affordable housing on September 24th. An enthusiastic crowd joined her in tasting a variety of recipes from our amazing cookbook, "Gather Around the Table". From exotic fare to comfort-food staples, it's all here, edited by Ellie. You can get your copy at the MHI office for just \$20.00.



### From the Tenant Relations Team

Blake House tenants held their annual BBQ on September 4 with a wonderful turnout of about 40 people. This year, Blake Street neighbours were invited to join us for a lovely, sunny afternoon of good food, conversation, and games for children. Our heartfelt thanks to Helene and Jean-Michel from Vanier Community Service Centre for their support, and congratulations on the publication of the local services guide.

### National Housing Day Prayer Service

The Membership and Outreach Committee would like to invite our tenants, members, and the public to this year's National Housing Day Prayer Service and Reception to be held on Sunday, November 15, at Centrepointe Studio Theatre, located at 101 Centrepointe Drive, in Nepean. The annual interfaith service will be from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. with a reception following. Suzanne Le, Executive Director of MHI, will be the keynote speaker. If you would like more information, please contact [mhi.office.mgmt@gmail.com](mailto:mhi.office.mgmt@gmail.com).

**National Housing Day**

November 15th, 2015  
Interfaith Prayer Service: 2:30-3:30 p.m.  
Reception: 3:45-4:30 p.m.  
Centrepointe Studio Theatre, 101 Centrepointe Drive, Nepean (free parking)  
With Keynote Speaker Suzanne Le, ED of MHI

*Providing A Haven Together*

## Cycling Cleric Challenge

Imam Mohamad Jebara, Ottawa's own Cycling Cleric, issued a challenge to Ottawa's faith communities. The spiritual leader of the Cordova Spiritual Education Centre called on his fellow clerics to raise support for more affordable housing in Ottawa. "Housing is essential; every person deserves to live in dignity. I feel very passionate about Multifaith Housing Initiative and I think all faith communities should be involved."

Each year, Imam Jebara gets on his bike to support worthy community causes. "Faith groups are very generous and benevolent, and most of the contributions come from congregations or individuals throughout the city. But clergy need to be out there doing more, so I thought of this challenge for clergy to lead by example," said Imam Jebara.

Rev. Martin Malina was the first to jump on board and answer the call. "It's a challenge because it draws us out of our comfort zones to do the right thing," he says. "There is a commonality between all our faiths which call us to care for those in need."

The Multifaith Housing Initiative was the beneficiary of this effort on October 18. Riders and their supporters gathered at Parliament Hill in unseasonably cold and windy weather. Suzanne Le, Executive Director of MHI, flagged the cycling clergy off for a 14 km ride through Ottawa to Andrew Haydon Park. Hot chocolate and warm treats were waiting at the finish line. Many thanks to the cyclists: Imam Jebara, Rev. Martin Malina (Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church), Rev. Maggie Melanson (Barrhaven United Church), Eric Saumur (Solseed), Rev. Robert Campbell (First Baptist Church), and Gary Stein (Or Haneshamah).

Read about the Cycling Cleric Challenge in the [Ottawa Citizen](#).



## Volunteer profile: Barbara Levine, Chair of the Development Committee

“I first heard about MHI over five years ago through Fran Klowdasky, the past president,” said Barbara Levine. “She heard I was recently retired and asked if I had an interest in getting involved with the issue of affordable housing in Ottawa.” Not long after, Barbara was attending a meeting at City Hall and knew she was committed. “I’ve been on the Board almost four years now and on the Development Committee for about five years.”



Barbara has been involved with issues of community and local economic development both in Canada and internationally her whole life, having worked for both the Canadian government and the not-for-profit sector. Prior to joining MHI, Barbara had limited experience working in affordable housing. “I was dismayed to learn things had gotten much more difficult for low-income Canadians in the intervening years.”

Barbara explained how she felt driven to get involved and become part of the solution. Although she had no past experience with property development or real estate, Barbara was confident in the talented network of experts and volunteers who advised and helped on all MHI projects. “I felt I could contribute my project management skills, as well as my ferocious belief that MHI had to grow in order to make a real difference to residents in Ottawa.”

*“I believe that people, working together, can make a difference in the lives of others, that we can together ‘repair the world.’”*

As Chair, Barbara explains the mandate of the Development Committee is to acquire properties for MHI to be rented at an affordable rate and to help find the resources, both financial and non-financial, to make this happen. “In my time on the committee, we have scoured the market for older buildings, we have developed proposals and designs for new initiatives like The Haven at Longfields, and we have imagined the unimaginable, such as our Veterans House for homeless veterans.” The development committee works with architects and engineers, sustainable building experts, financial institutions, investors, and partner agencies, as well as an amazing team of volunteers. “We work in a complex,

challenging and dynamic environment, always striving to find the right balance between doing the best we can with limited resources, while keeping the interests of our tenants, current and future, at the centre of everything we do.”

Although Barbara had many options and opportunities in a variety of not-for-profit organizations, she chooses to work with MHI because it enriches our communities by seeking sustainable solutions to those at risk of homelessness. “I think that ‘can-do’ attitude is a defining feature of MHI.

## Member of the Month: Temple Israel

Temple Israel has been a valued member of MHI since 2003. The congregation has a long history in Ottawa. Founded in 1966, Temple Israel will celebrate its 50th anniversary next year. MHI has been very grateful to have the support of Temple Israel members to champion affordable housing in the congregation. Two members who have provided exceptional leadership to MHI are Fran Klodawsky and Micah Garten. Fran served as Vice President and President between 2003 and 2013, while Micah was a staff member from 2010 to 2014. Fran is still active on the Membership and Outreach Committee.

Importantly, the leadership has not been restricted to the congregants. Newly retired Rabbi Steven Garten, Rabbi Emeritus at Temple Israel is one of MHI's most active patrons. He has been [Temple Israel's](#) longest serving spiritual leader. This month, Temple Israel will install their new spiritual leader, Rabbi S. Robert Morais. "Rabbi Morais was born in Toronto and attended York University where he earned an Honours degree in History and Judaic Studies. He received rabbinic ordination from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati, Ohio in 1997. In the summer of 2011, Rabbi Morais became the director of Shalom Street Museum, a hands-on Jewish children's museum. Also in 2011, Rabbi Morais became the rabbi for Temple Beth Israel in Jackson, MI."

Rabbi Morais will be installed on November 14th. Please see below for details. All are welcome!

Temple Israel has been and remains a vital member of MHI. We look forward to continuing this wonderful relationship to provide affordable housing to those in need.

November 14th, 2015

Shabbat morning service and installation at 10:15 am

Led by: Rabbi Emeritus Steve Garten, Temple Israel Ottawa; Rabbi Dr. Laurence A. Kotok, Rabbinic Scholar and Senior Advisor for Lifelong Jewish Learning, Temple B'rith Kodesh, Rochester, New York; Rabbi Sharon L. Sobel, Temple Isiah, Stony Brook, New York.

-Kiddush Lunch, RSVP 613-224-1802

or [reception@templeisraelottawa.ca](mailto:reception@templeisraelottawa.ca)

-Adult Education Panel Discussion 2-3:30pm



This quilt was crafted completely by congregants for the 40th anniversary of Temple Israel which was in 2006. It took a year to produce, and is hand quilted by many hands! The background is to look like an open Torah scroll, the colours are taken from the Wailing Wall in Israel (The Kotel) and the four sections represent the four main festivals in Judaism, from right to left:

- \* Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur with the Torah scrolls
- \* Shabbat table – with the stained glass Mogen David window
- \* Simchat Torah, dancing with the Torah – with the Ner Tamid (everlasting light)
- \* Pesach / Passover – with the Temple Israel tree of life

\* All around are squares done individually by the children of the religious school

\* from the website: <http://templeisraelottawa.ca>

Multifaith Housing Initiative

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