

1ST FLOOR NEWS

THE MULTIFAITH HOUSING INITIATIVE NEWSLETTER

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HAVEN COMMUNITY CAPTURES PRESTIGIOUS DESIGN AWARD



MHI Executive Director Suzanne Le (third from right) accepts the Greater Ottawa Home Builders' Association trophy from the winning team at Hobin Architecture.

| OTTAWA | The Greater Ottawa Home Builders' Association (GOHBA) has recognized the Haven with a 2018 Housing Design Award.

Ottawa firm Hobin Architects took home the "New Community (Built)" trophy from GOHBA's annual gala on Oct. 20. The award recognized Hobin's work on the Haven, Multifaith Housing Initiative (MHI)'s innovative 98-unit affordable housing development in Barrhaven.

"To our joy, the Haven beat out the private sector to win this category," said Gord Lorimer, architect and partner at Hobin. Following the Oct. 20 ceremony, the team at Hobin

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Holiday break

We hope everyone has a safe and happy holiday season! The MHI offices in Barrhaven and Vanier will close on Mon., Dec. 24, 2018 and re-open Wed., Jan. 2, 2019. May everyone have a joyous break, and Happy New Year!

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Haven project beats out for-profit competitors

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Architecture decided that the 2018 Housing Design Award should remain in Multifaith Housing's possession. During a presentation at Hobin's Pamela Street offices in November, the staff who worked on the Haven re-presented MHI Executive Director Suzanne Le with the glass GOHBA trophy.

"The success of the Haven is only partly about design," explained Lorimer. "It is due in a large part to the vision of your organization and the faith groups that stand behind [MHI].

Consequently, we would like to pass this award onto you as the real winners."

Construction for the Haven began in 2015 and wrapped up in summer 2017. Ten homes of the 98 are fully accessible. The Haven features a mix of townhomes and two low-rise apartment buildings, multi-use community space, and a community garden that promotes a healthy living environment and community engagement. Located in the heart of Barrhaven, and with recreational amenities, transit services, schools, and shopping nearby, this project introduces 50 apartments and 48 townhouses to the popular suburban community. While Barrhaven is usually seen as a car-centric region, a strong central pedestrian axis was identified early in the process.

This holiday season, MHI is running a fundraising

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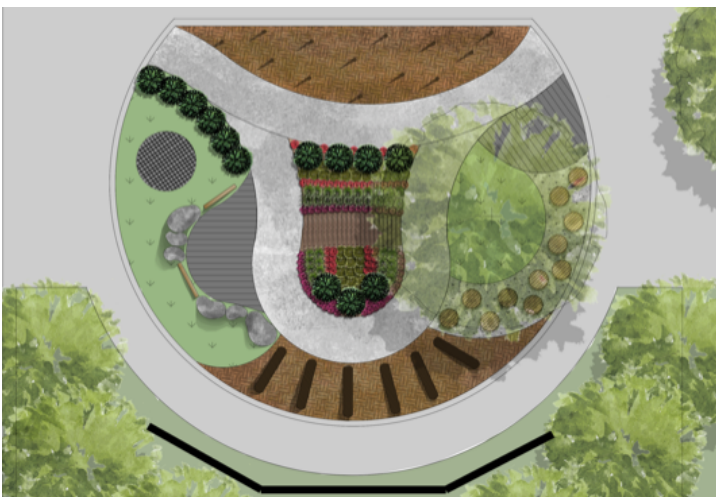
- Gord Lorimer, architect and partner at Hobin

drive to complete the final stage of the project: a children's playground nestled in the heart of the complex.

"MHI was absolutely thrilled that the Greater Ottawa Home Builders' Association recognized the Haven in this very prestigious way," said MHI Executive Director Suzanne Le. "We beat out all the for-profit developers – that, in and of itself, is a very formidable accomplishment."

About the Awards

Founded in 1951, the Greater Ottawa Home Builders' Association is dedicated to providing a voice for the building, land development, and professional renovation industry. According to GOHBA, the organization's 350 members have built more than 65,000 homes in the National Capital Region throughout the last decade. The GOHBA Housing Design Awards recognize excellence in design and quality of construction in the new home and renovation industry.



Holiday campaign continues!

There's still time to give to the Haven's playground fund! The playground, pictured at left in an architectural rendering, is yet to be completed at the Haven. **Lim Geomatics will match all donations up to \$10,000 until midnight on Dec. 31.** Visit www.multifaithhousing.ca for more information.

Canso Investment Counsel & Carswell Family issue lead gift to Veterans' House

| OTTAWA | A sizeable building block toward the creation of a new community for homeless veterans in the Ottawa area was announced in November by Multifaith Housing Initiative (MHI).

Canso Investment Counsel and its president and founder, John Carswell and his family, have made a lead gift to MHI to support Veterans' House, a building to be constructed for homeless veterans on the site of the former air force base, CFB Rockcliffe. MHI, which will own and manage the new community, also indicated the property and building will be named Canso Campus and the Andy Carswell Building, respectively.

MHI is a coalition of faith communities coordinating their efforts to provide and promote safe, affordable housing for lower-income households in Ottawa.

"Multifaith Housing would like to thank John Carswell, his family and Canso Investment Counsel for their generosity and the invaluable support they have provided to our Veterans' House fundraising campaign," stated Suzanne Le, MHI Executive Director. "They bring us another step closer to breaking ground." When complete, Veterans' House will provide a community of 40 units for homeless veterans and veterans at risk of becoming homeless. Following a Housing First model, it will include social support to help those with health needs.

The donation stems from the military service of the Carswell family, notably that of John's father, Squadron Leader Andrew (Andy) Carswell, AFC, CD. Andy served in the Second World War as an RCAF pilot. His Lancaster bomber aircraft was shot down over Germany in 1943. He was a POW for two years, escaping twice. In 1949, he rejoined the RCAF and was stationed in Ottawa at RCAF Station Rockcliffe, flying the Canso aircraft on northern mapping operations. Andy was



Veterans' House will be named the Andy Carswell Building after World War II pilot Andy Carswell, pictured above.

awarded the Air Force Cross by Queen Elizabeth for his Search and Rescue work in British Columbia. Sergeant Morrison Carswell MM, Andy's father, served during the First World War from 1914-18, earning the Military Medal. John Carswell was an RCAF air navigator, and his son, Colin, is currently serving as a Canadian Army infantry officer. "I can think of no better way to honour my dad's service than to make this gift," said John Carswell. "We are disheartened there is a need for Veterans' House, and that Canada's military veterans make up such an inordinate amount of the country's overall homeless population. This type of facility – a community embedded with medical and social supports – is a huge step in the right direction and a meaningful way to give back to Canada's veterans. My dad says, 'I don't mind having my name on something like that'."

The Veterans' House project is supported by several partners, including Ottawa Salus, CAHDCO, Royal Canadian Legion Ontario Command and District G, Soldiers Helping Soldiers, True Patriot Love, Canadian Forces Morale and Welfare Services, Helmets to Hardhats and Support our Troops.

Thanks to all our guests and supporters!

VETERANS' HOUSE GALA DINNER WRAP-UP REPORT



The Veterans' House Gala Dinner took place on Fri., Sept. 14, 2018. Top photo: The sold-out event was held at the Canada Aviation and Space Museum. Middle left: John Carswell, President & CEO of Canso Investment Counsel, whose company was the title sponsor for the evening. Bottom left: Guest speaker Lieutenant-General (ret'd.) Andrew Leslie, MP. Bottom right: The Ellen Cameron Highland Dancers provided entertainment for the evening.



| ROCKCLIFFE | On Fri., Sept 14, MHI hosted a sold-out gala at the Canadian Aviation and Space Museum for Veterans' House – a new supportive and affordable housing community to be built at the former Rockcliffe Airbase in Ottawa.

At the gala, which was presented by Canso Investment Counsel Ltd., MHI revealed that the building will be named the Andy Carswell Building. Andy Carswell, who celebrated his 95th birthday this year, is a decorated World War II veteran and a pilot who flew multiple missions over the night skies of Germany at the age of 19. While Andy Carswell was not able to attend the event, he was well represented by his son, John Carswell and his family.

Guest speaker Lieutenant-General (ret'd.) Andrew Leslie, MP, gave a passionate speech about the need to support our veterans, especially those who have fallen on hard times

and are dealing with mental and physical challenges, and are now living in shelters or on the streets. In his speech, he recalled a time when he met homeless veterans on the streets of Ottawa, the same brave and selfless soldiers he would have shaken hands with in Afghanistan, who desperately need safe, affordable, supportive housing to heal. Throughout the evening, the message was clear that a solution is needed now to tackle a growing problem, and Veterans' House is part of the solution. If the turnout at the gala is any indication of the support we hope to receive for this special project, MHI feels confident that Veterans' House will become a reality sooner than later.

Thank you to all our sponsors and guests for supporting the Veterans' House Gala Dinner. For more information about Veterans' House and pictures from the gala, visit www.multifaithhousing.ca/veterans-house-gala.html.

MHI thanks faith groups for post-tornado power outage assistance

| BARRHAVEN | MHI would like to extend a major thank-you to all the faith groups and individuals who helped the Haven's residents following Ottawa's tornado on Fri., Sept. 21. During the power outage following the tornado, many residents lost the food in their fridges and freezers due to spoilage.

MHI would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to our supporters, who swiftly raised more than \$8,500 in gift cards and cash to help the Haven residents replace their spoiled food.

MHI would also like to extend a special thank you to two MHI members – Sequoia Community Church and the South Nepean Muslim Community – for their efforts to provide

meals and other supports while Haven residents waited for power to be restored. Sequoia decided to cancel its Sunday morning church service, and asked congregation members to help out at the Haven instead.

Team Leader Donna Boisvert of Sequoia Community Church noted that despite the power outage, spirits were high at the Haven after the tornado. Residents gathered outside around Sequoia's trailer and enjoyed the available meals and camaraderie in a social setting.

"There was a great sense of community," said Boisvert.

MHI would like to extend a special thank-you to two faith groups that arrived on scene at the Haven to help during the power outages in September: Sequoia Community Church and the South Nepean Muslim Community (SNMC). Pictured at right: Sequoia Team Leader Donna Boisvert (third from left) with some of the congregation members who helped out after the tornado. Pictured at far right: SNMC Imam Zijad Delic.



MHI hires first Manager of Communications

| VANIER | Amanda Smith-Millar joined MHI in October 2017 as Interim Office Administrator to fill in during a maternity leave and then became MHI's first Manager of Communications in December 2018. Amanda holds three degrees from Carleton University: a Bachelor of Journalism, a Master of Arts in International Affairs from the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs, and a Master of Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership. Amanda brings to the table a diverse set of skills, having worked in the newspaper industry and co-founded/managed a nonprofit dance company. She remains passionate about working with vulnerable communities and populations and is looking forward to continuing her work with MHI in a new role.

MHI's newsletter, First Floor News, is published three times per year. For more information or to suggest a faith group, donor, tenant, or volunteer to be featured in the publication, email communications@multifaithhousing.ca.

MULTIFAITH HOUSING INITIATIVE

COOKBOOKS FOR SALE!

\$20



Cookbook sales ongoing at Multifaith Housing

| VANIER | Do you have your copy of MHI's "Gather Around the Table" yet? This compilation of tasty recipes is submitted by local cooks – including MHI supporters! Edited by home economist and top-selling cookbook author Ellie Topp, these delicious and nutritious recipes are sure to expand your culinary horizons. All proceeds will support MHI's ongoing efforts to end homelessness in Ottawa. Each copy costs \$20.

REMINDER FOR SALES REPS

A reminder to all MHI cookbook sales reps that the deadline to get your cash, receipts, and unused cookbooks to the MHI office is Thurs., Jan. 31.

Cranberry Nut Clusters

This recipe won the "Recipe of the Year - Published" at the Cordon d'Or Gold Ribbon Annual International Cookbook and Culinary Arts Awards. If you are a fan of cranberries and/or white chocolate, this will become a favourite.

3 1/2 oz (100 g) white chocolate, chopped
1/2 cup (125 mL) dried cranberries
1/3 cup (75 mL) chopped roasted pecans
2 Tbsp (30 mL) desiccated coconut

Line a baking sheet with wax paper.

In a double boiler over simmering water, or in a saucepan over very low heat, partially melt chocolate. Remove from heat; stir until chocolate is very smooth. Add cranberries, pecans, and coconut, mixing well. Drop clusters of chocolate mixture (about 2 tsp/10 mL portions) onto a wax paper-lined tray.

Refrigerate until firm. Transfer chocolates to an airtight plastic container and store refrigerated for up to several months.

**Makes 18
chocolate
clusters.**



"Shining above all gifts is the friendship between fellow volunteers, and the friendship that has grown between some residents and myself."

- Danielle Dugas, leader of PMT

Danielle Dugas – pictured here putting the finishing touches on repairs at a Blake House unit – serves on MHI's Housing Maintenance Committee and leads the Property Maintenance Team.

The rule of 'good enough, plus 10 per cent'

VOLUNTEER PROFILE: DANIELLE DUGAS

| VANIER | The business of helping out at MHI as a volunteer on the Property Maintenance Team (PMT) can be downright crazy. For eight years now, I have enjoyed very sweet moments; I have also cried in frustration and anger.

Over time, PMT – and I as its leader – have watched MHI properties evolve from looking and feeling a little decrepit to looking trim, neat, tidy and – dare I say? – appealing.

We have participated in groundskeeping, in the cleaning of recycling bins, in sorting stuff in storage, in painting lines for parking spots, in repairing sheds, in building and rebuilding community garden boxes, in planting perennials (that have stubbornly refused to collaborate), in painting and repainting doors and stairwells (three full rounds at Blake House, two full rounds at Kent House), in washing windows, and above all, as first priority, in preparing apartments promptly when residents move out.

Joyous moments occur when residents say hello first; when they express their appreciation for what we have completed; and, most

preciously, when they offer their help. It is very satisfying to inform the office that a unit is ready, that a place is fresh and neat and soon to be someone's new home. Frustration and sadness arise at the sight of carelessness and willful damage; foul language and the berating of fellow residents are very hard to bear. MHI goes back many years, several more than the eight years I have known it well. It has grown out of the huge, glaring (and persisting) need for affordable housing. It started as a sort of mom-and-pop project – with tons of goodwill and not much money – born out of the desire by a few persons motivated by their faith to go beyond prayer and to do something tangible about a bad situation. From five units at its first property on Kent Street, it has grown to house people in 139 units now. From making do with recycled materials that we hunted down from the Re-Store or with donated cabinets or other goods from people renovating a part of their home, MHI has

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evolved in a gradual shift toward more contracted work with new materials, which is especially satisfying to see in bathrooms and kitchens. PMT continues to contribute annually some 1,000 hours of labour, which represent significant savings on labour costs, even at minimum wage.

My neighbour, Gay Richardson, introduced me to MHI and asked me to join its board as secretary in 2010. To this day, I barely know how to turn on a computer, let alone file documents. Nevertheless, with help, I served on the MHI board for four years as secretary. Since board members are expected to participate actively on one committee, I soon found a place in the Housing Management Committee. This committee concerns itself with down-to-earth matters; it is deeply involved with dirt, grime, occasional bed bugs, mice and rats and the daily reality of people who struggle to make ends meet, of people whose hopes are totally anchored on a good future for their children, and of people who don't function all that well, who abuse substances, whose lives are pulled between gratitude at having a home of their own, reticence with forms and procedures, resentment at being answerable for small income changes in their paycheques, or

downright anger. Shining above all gifts is the friendship between fellow volunteers, and the friendship that has grown between some residents and myself.

Property maintenance is demanding work, and it never ends. More recently, in an effort to capture where to draw the line in our endless projects, one fellow volunteer offered this guideline: "good enough... plus 10 per cent." It is a good rule of thumb when in doubt, or when very tired.

When I was younger, and tempted to abandon projects, my mother would summarize the end point thus: *ce qui mérite d'être fait mérite d'être bien fait*. Her wisdom has stayed with me and helped me carry through with the less-fun parts of property maintenance and many other endeavours.

To volunteer at MHI means getting to know and working with good people, helping create good physical spaces where people can make a home, being appreciated and valued, finding gratitude at unexpected moments, being a member of a caring community, making a positive difference in strangers' lives – in short, doing God's work. These are the reasons that keep me on the team.



HAPPENINGS AT THE HAVEN

Two Ontario MPPs recently toured the Haven to learn more about MHI's innovative model of affordable housing. Pictured from left to right are: MHI Manager of Community Outreach Sahada Alolo; MHI Executive Director Suzanne Le; MPP Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs & Housing; MHI Vice-President Bill Austin; MPP Lisa MacLeod, Minister of Children, Community and Social Services & Minister Responsible for Women's Issues; MHI Manager of Fund Development Sheldon Leong.

National Housing Day & Tulipathon awards

| OTTAWA CITY HALL | MHI hosted the 2018 National Housing Day (NHD) at Ottawa City Hall on Sun., Nov. 18. Sister Jean Coulet, of Sisters of Holy Cross (pictured at right), served as the guest speaker for the day. To read Sister Coulet's speech visit <http://www.multifaithhousing.ca/national-housing-day.html>. Following the prayer service, Somerset Ward Councillor Catherine McKenney (bottom left photo) presented awards to the 2018 Tulipathon banner winners (pictured directly below): Or Haneshamah (1st), Saint Mark's Ottawa (2nd), and Knox United (3rd). Nazira Tareen (bottom right photo, pictured in the centre) presented the Farook Tareen Award to the First Unitarians, Tulipathon's top fundraisers. More info on the Tulipathon fundraisers can be found at <http://www.multifaithhousing.ca/tulipathon.html>. Thanks to all who supported NHD, especially former Gloucester-South Nepean Councillor Michael Qaqish, whose office sponsored the event.

