

1ST FLOOR NEWS

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MHI VOLUNTEERS, STAFF WIN CANADA 150TH MEDALS



Mavis Mason, left, was among the individuals affiliated with MHI who received a Canada 150th Anniversary Medal. She's pictured here receiving the award from Nepean MP Chandra Arya. Mavis is also our featured donor for the month (see page 3 for details). Photo credit: MP Chandra Arya's office.

NEPEAN – Five individuals with MHI connections have received Nepean's Canada 150th Anniversary Medal. Mavis Mason, Clarke and Ellie Topp, Sadaf Ebrahim and Sahada Alolo were among the Nepean residents who received their medals in the presence of about 500 guests at Longfields Davidson High School in December. The medals recognized Nepean residents who've achieved a high level of excellence in academics, science, sports, arts and culture, public service or other fields.

"As we celebrate 150 years of Canadian confederation, I felt it was important to recognize the unsung heroes who have made a difference in our community," said Nepean MP Chandra Arya.

(Story continues on next page.)

COUN. JODY MITIC TO HIGHLIGHT MARCH 18 AGM

GLOUCESTER – City of Ottawa Councillor Jody Mitic will be the guest speaker at MHI's annual general meeting on Sun., March 18, 2018 at St. Gabriel's Parish, 55 Appleford St.

Registration will begin at 2:30 p.m., and the meeting will start at 3:00 p.m, with a reception to follow. Parking is available onsite. All are welcome to attend the AGM and hear Jody share his experiences as a veteran, motivational speaker, author, and Innes Ward councillor.





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"It is time to reach out and give thanks to those in our community who give us so much, and ask for so little," he added. The MHI volunteers and staff recognized included: Mavis Mason (pictured on the cover), a longtime supporter and Resident Relations Committee member; MHI staffer Sahada Alolo (pictured, far left), Manager of Outreach and Community Engagement; Sadaf Ebrahim (bottom right), a Community Building Team volunteer who helped organize a fundraiser for MHI with the South Nepean Muslim Community; and Ellie and Clarke Topp (pictured top right and middle right, respectively), who provided MHI with its first major loan to purchase its original building on Kent Street. Ellie also produced MHI's cookbook for a fundraising initiative.

FEATURED MEMBER: OR HANESHAMAH

LINCOLN HEIGHTS – Or Haneshamah (OrH) is a liberal, egalitarian congregation affiliated with the Reconstructionist movement of synagogues. Based on the thinking of Mordecai Kaplan (1881-1983), Reconstructionist Judaism is a modern Jewish movement that views Judaism as a progressively evolving civilization. It is notable for welcoming all Jews, including unaffiliated, intermarried, and LGBTQ individuals and families. OrH was founded in 1987 as a small group of households who met for prayers at the homes of participants. It has since grown into a formal congregation of more than 100 member households living throughout the Ottawa area, and is one of three affiliated



Reconstructionist congregations in Canada. The organization meets for Sabbath services and Jewish holidays, and offers a number of educational and cultural programs, including Jewish Mindfulness Meditation, Exploring Judaism and a children's educational program. OrH is led by Rabbi Elizabeth Bolton (Rabbi Liz), the first female congregational rabbi in Ottawa. In 2016,

Rabbi Liz was named one of "America's Most Inspiring Rabbis" by The Forward.

She is a patron of MHI and participates in many MHI activities, including National Housing Day, the Cycling Cleric, and Tulipathon, where OrH received the 2017 Best Banner Award. "I thank OrH for supporting MHI," said Manager of Community Outreach Sahada Alolo. "They truly represent faith in action."

VOLUNTEER PROFILE: LEÏLA SEIG



BARRHAVEN – My name is Leïla. I volunteer at MHI, and now am a grateful and happy resident of the Haven. My then five-year-old son and I started volunteering with MHI about eight years ago for the MHI Tulipathon Committee.

As a single mom, I believe volunteering gives my son a great start in life, because it teaches children the value of serving others. Tulipathon is a very fun annual event. The first signs of spring, the tulips, and meeting different people of different faith groups who come out in solidarity to help MHI promote and provide affordable housing is amazing. Subsequently, I joined the Membership Outreach Committee to help in our engagements with

the Muslim community. As my son grew and became interested in photography, he became the official volunteer photographer at events like Tulipathon, National Housing Day and other events of MHI.

We moved into our new home at the Haven by the end of June 2017. At the Haven, I finally feel like I can b-r-e-a-t-h-e. I can open the main door and I am outside in a safe and beautiful environment. We are very grateful to be here. My son

found new friends. Our home doesn't smell like an ashtray, as our neighbours don't smoke, thanks to the Non-Smoking Policy. We are now in a safe, quiet, beautiful neighbourhood. To make the Haven community even better, I extended my volunteer role at MHI by joining the Community Building Team, Resident Team and Garden Team. I enjoy meeting my neighbours from different cultures and love their children. I look forward to continue serving MHI and my neighbours.

DONOR PROFILE: MAVIS MASON

BARRHAVEN – Mavis Mason has been involved with MHI for more than a decade as a volunteer, and she continues to do so as a member of the Resident Relations Committee. Mavis remains passionate about the work she's doing with some of our tenants to improve their quality of life and cares for the wellbeing of the organization itself. Early on, Mavis says, she sensed a level of comfort volunteering at MHI, and the multifaith approach appealed to her belief system. She is a strong advocate for our tenants, and throughout the years, she has helped many MHI residents, particularly the ones who live at Blake Boulevard. Her tireless efforts were recognized in 2016 as the recipient of the Gay Richardson Volunteer Award. Mavis also shows her support for MHI financially as a donor. Inspired by the generosity of another MHI donor, she made a significant donation to the A Place to Call

Home Campaign, which in turn supported the development of the Haven. Initially thinking of leaving a gift to MHI in her will, Mavis decided that she wanted to see what MHI can create while she still can, with her own eyes. Mavis has stepped foot many times in the new community that she helped build, and met many of the tenants who have since moved in. Mavis challenges others to think about the impact they can make by considering their donations in a purposeful way. She also advises other donors to talk to their financial adviser or bank official to help them navigate through the various ways of giving and their implications. "Whether cash or sale of stock, money is needed to supplement the dollars received from governments for more affordable housing," said Mavis. "MHI has been very creative over the past 16 years, with great leadership, and engages volunteers to help keep operating costs down. It has an excellent reputation and is truly making a difference."