



When Cheryl Sajkowski arrived at the Mark Preece Family House in July 2021, she had already been in Hamilton with her husband Stephen (Steve) for about a month. She had been staying in a hotel and while he was receiving treatment was referred to The House by staff at the Hamilton General Hospital.

Steve had been diagnosed with a brain tumour, which was then determined to be Lymphoma and was receiving treatment at the Juravinski Cancer Centre. Cheryl stayed with us in one of our two-bed rooms so their children and other families would be able to stay as well from time to time. She visited Steve almost every day during visiting hours, or “until they kicked me out.”

During cancer treatments, including chemotherapy and stem cell therapy, he suffered multiple infections, a bout of pneumonia, and a fall, which only exacerbated his condition. Steve was discharged from the hospital after completing his treatments, but unfortunately, he was readmitted in September 2022 after one

of his lungs collapsed. During his stay, a new Lymphoma mass was discovered in his brain, and the cancer had returned. It was a shorter stay for Cheryl this time, and Cheryl checked out of The House and returned to Guelph with Steve on September 16, 2022. Sadly, despite his fierce determination, Steve passed away from cancer on Oct 27, 2022.

It was a roller coaster of emotions for Cheryl and her family, but she says that staying at The Mark Preece Family House meant “so much to be close to him.” She appreciated that during her stay at The House she got the chance to “take a break” and come back to take a nap or get something to eat. Cheryl was one of the first guests to stay at The House after the shutdown due to COVID-19, and as she describes it, “basically moved in” for 248 days.

If she had not been referred, she would have had to continue commuting for over an hour each way to and from Guelph. Cheryl was grateful to find out that The House had laundry facilities available to her, because she had been going home once a week to do it. She says that it was great to have because “I needed it.” She appreciated having a kitchen available and says having snacks and treats “was wonderful to always have something there” when she left for the hospital in the morning. She also says, “Thyme4Dinner was fantastic” and hosted one herself during her stay.

Cheryl says that she is appreciative for all of the support that she received during her stay, both from the staff and volunteers and from the other guests. She still texts and talks to other former guests and volunteers from her time at The House and says it helped to “have someone to talk to who was in the same boat.” She says that The Mark Preece Family House has “created a tight-knit family”, and that she will always be grateful to The House for being there for her.

The Mark Preece Family House has provided a Home Away From Home for thousands of guests since its doors opened in 2011 and we couldn't do any of it without the support of people like you. To help continue our work, please consider making a donation online at markpreecehouse.ca.

Thyme4Dinner Continues To Feed The Body And Soul



The Donnici Social Club's Spring Baking Event, Marisa's Easy Kitchen & the YMCA Newcomer Youth Mentorship Program have become welcome repeat providers at Thyme4Dinner

Thyme4Dinner continues to be extremely popular among our guests with volunteers preparing meals for families staying at The House. After a long, stressful day at the hospital, a home cooked meal is very appreciated by all of our families.

The Rockton Lions Club and the Retired ICU Nurses of St. Joe's Hospital continue their tradition as regular providers at The Mark Preece Family House. The Lions and Nurses have been coming to The House on a monthly basis for several years now and they are showing no signs of slowing down.

The Donnici Social Club has become a welcome repeat provider as part of their Spring Baking Event. The Club's dinners have been overseen by Marisa Mariella of Marisa's Easy Kitchen as she directed volunteers from the YMCA Newcomer Youth Mentorship Program and

ABRAR Trauma and Mental Health Services several different times throughout the Spring.

We have also had the pleasure of welcoming several new providers to provide delicious meals for our guests. The 2nd Mount Albian Pathfinders, Rangers & Girl Guides made Shepherd's Pie for The House on May 8th and their efforts were greatly appreciated. The Association of Women in the Metal Industries brought enough food from their meeting on April 13th to feed everyone Even though they were first time providers and we hope to see them again in the months ahead.

We also had several guests provide meals for their fellow guests. For some, it was an important way to show their appreciation to The House for the support they have received, while for others, it was a way to help themselves.

Groups or individuals prepare a meal for approximately 20 – 25 individuals, either in our kitchen or theirs. We often have house food available for use or volunteers supply the items needed for their meal.



The 2nd Mount Albian Pathfinders, Rangers, & Girl Guides are new providers at Thyme4Dinner and we thank them for their hard work

Are you or someone you know interested in volunteering for our Thyme4Dinner program?

You can volunteer once or on a more regular basis.

Contact us at info@markpreecehouse.ca

or 905-529-0770 to learn more!

Therapy Tails Offering Comfort And Cuddles To Guests



Ozzy (left) and Kai (right) visiting with guests at The Mark Preece Family House

Therapy Tails is a non-profit charity and dog therapy program that has been visiting The Mark Preece Family House for quite some time now. Kai, a Brindle Dutch Shepherd and Ozzy, a Bernese Mountain Dog have been welcome visitors to The House. Our guests, as well as our staff, always look forward to their visits on Mondays and Thursdays.

The Therapy Tails dogs had been regular visitors to The House prior to the pandemic but they were welcomed back in February. Therapy Tails “was built on the theory that when something is done for the right reasons it cannot fail.” Their volunteers and dogs go into communities in Hamilton, Burlington, and the Niagara area to teach, listen, visit, mentor, and become involved with numerous outreach programs.

Guests at The House are often far from their own communities and they may be missing their own

dogs at home. Therapy dogs often work with people who have lost a loved one or in the case of The House, have loved ones in the hospital. Being able to just sit and be comforted by a dog to help anyone who is dealing with the stress of an illness.

You can find more information about Therapy Tails at their website www.therapytailsontario.ca.



Golf4Life A Stunning Success



2023 GOLF4LIFE

The 26th Annual Golf4Life Fundraising Tournament for The Mark Preece Family House was a great success! On a hot and sunny June 1st, more than 100 golfers took to the links at Flamborough Hills Golf and Country Club for a fantastic day of golf and support for one of the first fundraisers created for The House.

Thanks to the generosity of our sponsors, donors, and golfers, more than **\$70,000** in revenue was raised.

Donna Waxman returned to donate her time and talent to take photos. You can check out all the photos of the day at <https://tinyurl.com/golf4life-2023>.

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Special Thank You To Our Donors For Helping To Make Golf4Life 2023 A Success!

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Adopt-A-Day and Make a Difference

Adopt-A-Day is a wonderful way to help people get through a stressful and challenging time in their lives by supporting the operations of this wonderful House.

Thank You to our Adopt-A-Day Donors for March, April, May, and June!

Janet Lachance

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In memory of Ken Archer

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Linda & Neil Smith
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Carolyn & Dale Nicholson
In memory of Jordan Nicholson



Become an Adopt-A-Day donor Today!

You will receive recognition and a charitable receipt. Best of all, you'll know you have helped to make someone's day just a little brighter. For your \$500 donation, you can recognize a birthday, anniversary, or a memorial message in honour or a loved one.

Contact us to learn more!

Happenings At *The House*



We hosted our Volunteer Appreciation Lunch at the Thirsty Cactus on June 16th. Several volunteers were recognized for 5 and 10 years of service to The House.



One of our now-former guests, Thelma Huges, has donated several hand-made quilts to The House, along with several items.



The Patel family had been staying at The House for several months but before they left they decided to host a dinner on March 6th for other guests as a thank you.



Dominion Lending Services TLC Mortgage Group hosted a Golf Tournament on June 23rd and donated the proceeds of about \$5,000 to The House.



Gail Berberick, President of the Lions Club of Hamilton visited The House on May 4th with a \$5,000 donation which she presented to Chris Pelletier, our new Communications and Development specialist

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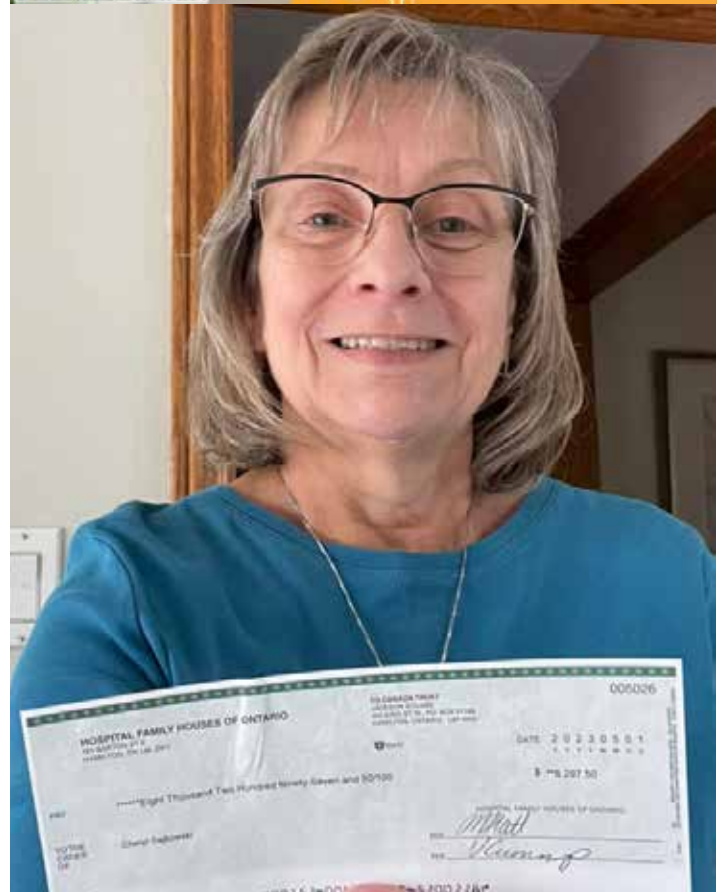


Donate To The House

You are so supportive and willing to take time to talk with all. It was nice to be able to talk with others at the home, some of whom have come from great distance and been with you for a long time.

- Heather Greig

Rather than a physical copy, you can receive the electronic version of our newsletter by scanning the QR Code



CONGRATULATIONS TO

**CHERYL
SAJKOWSKI**

WINNER OF \$8,297.50!

Creating A *Tight Knit Family*

As we enjoy these summer months we are very thankful to all of those who joined us again this year for 26th annual Golf4Life Tournament! It was a hot sunny day and a great time to catch up with so many supporters of the House.

In the last few months we have reached full occupancy which had not happened since prior to the pandemic. With the generous donations from our donors, we have been able to support over 265 families already this year. The full occupancy means we have a real sense of community within the House. The guests are caring for each other and finding support with other people in similar situations to their own. It is truly wonderful to watch the families of the House support each other in so many ways.

In March we welcomed Chris Pelletier to the team, as our Communications & Development Specialist. Many will have already noticed the increased social media presence. Chris is raising awareness of the House throughout our network and the broader community. Welcome Chris!

In April we highlighted the volunteers at the House on social media and the many ways in which they contribute, we are truly thankful for these wonderful people!

We are grateful to the many groups and individuals who have provided Thyme 4 Dinner meals for the guests so far this year. The kitchen truly is the heart of the House.

As the summer goes on, we will continue to provide support to those who require our home away from home. The patio and back deck are open, and the barbeque is back in use, so families can enjoy some time outside when they take a break from the hospital.

We are grateful for the volunteers, staff and donors who help us provide a much-needed service each and every day.

Mary Hatt



Co-Director + Finance & Operations



Scan the QR code to make a donation today or visit markpreceehouse.ca/donate

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