



**The perfect gift is one that can be shared by others.**

**When you give to Mark Preece Family House, your tax-deductible gift helps families at a very difficult time in their lives.**

**Call us at 905-529-0770 to discuss how you can help or go online to [www.markpreעהouse.ca](http://www.markpreעהouse.ca)**

## They called Steve in his truck and asked him to pull over



It's been said that you get by with a little help from your friends and for Kaitlyn Dancy, that has certainly been the case. It was help that literally saved her life.

Kaitlyn, 26, has a masters in animal biology and works as a lab coordinator at the University of Guelph. She woke up one morning in August to a 'wicked' headache.

She texted her good friends Sydney and Casey and they came right over. When Kaitlyn called one of them by name and not the other, they knew something wasn't right.

Very concerned, her friends took her to the hospital where staff asked her to take a seat. Noticing that 'she was still off', her friends insisted that she be seen immediately. A CAT scan was ordered for her.

Sydney and Casey texted Kaitlyn's mom Sue whose husband Gil was in hospital in Ottawa after having had an ATV accident. Sue texted Kaitlyn's dad Steve from Prescott who jumped in his truck and drove to Guelph.

The girls called Steve in his truck and said: "can you pull over?" He got off the road and they updated him: Kaitlyn had suffered a severe brain bleed.

Half an hour later Kaitlyn was in an ambulance headed for Hamilton General Hospital.

Her friends then arranged for flights for Sue and Kaitlyn's friend Lucy to come to Hamilton. They brought Steve's truck from Guelph and picked up Sue at the airport.

If Kaitlyn hadn't been seen to so quickly, she could have died. "Thank goodness she was surrounded by smart people," Steve said. "It literally saved her life."

Fortunately, the House was able to give two rooms to Kaitlyn's friends and family and everyone bunked in together to make it work for their stay here.

They can't say enough about what the House has done for them. "With the meals, you don't have to think about anything," Steve said. His wife Laurie said the people are amazing, helpful and caring.

"Everyone is sharing their story and it makes it easier to open up and share," Laurie said. "It's been a godsend and the price is so reasonable."

Being within walking distance was also so helpful. "It's been wonderful," Steve said.



Kaitlyn Dancy, right, and her wonderfully supportive friends Casey and Sydney.

# It has been my privilege to do this work

One of my fondest memories of the House is from a grey, blustery winter's day. I came in that morning to see two women sitting by the fireplace, cuddled up in blankets, cradling mugs of coffee.

The scene symbolized to me a lot of what the House stands for. It is warm, safe, comforting and it gives time to rest and restore. The two women were sisters and were staying here while their mom was in hospital.

That scene and many like it have played out over the past nine years that I have had the privilege of leading the service we provide to families in need. And now, that time has come to an end.

It's true – I am retiring at the end of the year and turning the reins over to someone else who will continue to steward and support this wonderful House.

To say that it has been a privilege to work with our staff, volunteers, donors

and families on this service would be an understatement.

I wish I had known Mark Preece – from all of the stories I've heard, he must have been quite a guy. I was fortunate enough to know his Dad, Norm, who passed several years ago. And one of my favourite people on earth is Mark's mom Rita Preece. I will miss my heart-to-heart conversations – not to mention many laughs - with Rita. I also know that the Preece family is so incredibly proud of what we do here.

In this role, one operates sort of behind the scenes, occupied with financial statements and developing policy and sorting out the latest curve a 150-year-old building can throw at you.

Our wonderful staff are capable and caring and forge marvellous bonds with our families. Our hard-working volunteers have time to interact with families – often while tidying the kitchen or preparing an evening meal.

And our donors make it all possible. I have been so grateful to have had the



opportunity to get to know so many of you over the years. Your generosity and loyalty make all the difference in keeping the lights on at this incredible place.

So, that's it for me. Thank you to our Board of Directors for your stewardship of this organization and special thanks to Michael Veri for finding me and giving me this superb opportunity.

I thank you all for the incredible opportunity to touch the lives of so many families going through difficult times. Have a wonderful holiday season.

Pearl Wolfe  
Executive Director

## In Memoriam

We were so sorry to hear of the loss of our former volunteer Carol Gillespie this summer. Carol became a volunteer in 2010, just before the House opened and she was awarded a 5-year award in 2016.

Carol participated in the life of the House in many ways. She would bring her grandchildren Sophia and Brady here to bake cookies and decorate for the various seasons. When the call went out that we needed poinsettias at Christmas, she was the first to respond.

Most endearingly, she faithfully re-tweeted all of our tweets and liked our Facebook posts.

We are so sorry for the loss of Carol and we are grateful for the contribution that she and her family have made over the years.







Kim Prince

# Welcome to our new ED!

The Board of Directors of the Mark Preece Family House is delighted to welcome Kim Prince as our new Executive Director. Kim comes to us from the Ontario Community Support Association (OCSA) in Toronto where she acted as the Director of Resource Development.

The OCSA represents members who provide a variety of health and wellness services to help client groups, including seniors and people with disabilities, remain independent in their own homes and communities. Kim was promoted

to that role from the position of Membership Engagement and Marketing Manager. Previously, she has worked in sales and marketing for long-term care and retirement homes.

Kim's education is in Journalism and she has a BA in International Development. She is in the process of obtaining her CFRE designation (certified fundraising executive) and she has served on the board of an older adult centre and hospice. Welcome to MPFH, Kim!



## Adopt-A-Day and make a difference

This holiday season, consider a really meaningful gift for your clients or family and friends.

For your donation of \$500, you can Adopt-A-Day to help people get through a stressful and challenging time in their lives by supporting the operations of this wonderful House. 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.



Katharine Edmonds and Patricia Gowan

## Trillium Award

Volunteer Katharine Edmonds accepts another Trillium Award for the House from Patricia Gowan, Chair of the Trillium committee. The presentation was at An Evening of Horticultural Excellence recognizing properties and businesses that contribute to the beautification of our community. MPFH won the "Award of Excellence", one of two for Ward 2.

### Many thanks to the most recent donors to the Adopt-A-Day program:

- |                                 |                            |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Charno Birk                     | Rita Preece                |
| Jane & Sandy Craik              | Ernest Romain              |
| David Mannsfeldt                | James Simpson              |
| Karen McDonald                  | Devin Smith                |
| Kadeem Phillip<br>Memorial Fund | Helen & George<br>Vecchies |



# It was a lucky seventh event in yet another beautiful fall!

Fall for Beer, another wonderful success, was held Oct. 24 at the Leander Boat Club in Hamilton. It netted more than \$27,000 in support of House operations. Because the House is funded entirely by room rentals and fundraising and donations, support from the community is essential.

We are so grateful for the support of Nickel Brook, Wellington, and Beau's breweries and Arterra Wines Canada.



Photography was donated by Donna Waxman.



Wellington



Nickel Brook



Arterra Wines



Wonderful food was provided by Charred, Cause & Effect and the BBQ Gourmet as well as by volunteers in our own Thyme4Dinner program.



Thanks to volunteers Tracey Schockaert, Jan Milne, Natalie Mancini, Lori Gabriel, Pam and Wayne Bigelow, Sara Parker and Adrian and Jan Boomgaardt.

We also greatly appreciated the many donors who provided raffle, auction and door prize items.





## Volunteer Profile

# A quiet, kind, everyday hero

Volunteer Marilyn Birchall seems to be missing in action most of her Monday morning shifts. But it's only because she's quietly and capably cleaning the kitchen – a space that is often in need of some TLC after the weekend.

Marilyn has been volunteering at the House for four years. She was a retail sales worker who wanted to keep busy when she retired. She followed the story of the House in the newspaper and watched with interest as it was being built.

Her favourite project at the House is the kitchen – there is always lots to do and she likes to keep busy.

One of her favourite parts about working in retail was interacting



with people and that's what she likes about meeting the families who stay at the House, she says.

She likes the atmosphere of the House – it's so beautiful – and the staff are very friendly.

Marilyn is also a donor to the House. She has always wanted to give to a charity but not to one of the big ones. She likes giving to a smaller charity that needs help. Given her experience as a volunteer, she feels she knows where her donation dollars are going and that feels good.

Marilyn is a perfect example of the kind of quiet, kind, everyday hero who does great things for people in need. She works behind the scenes to keep this wonderful House warm and welcoming. Thank you, Marilyn – for all you do in so many ways.



Marilyn Birchall

## Donor Profile

# We are so grateful to Margaret

Margaret Toomey heard about the Mark Preece House from a friend of a friend and then realized that support of this organization is a really good fit for her.

Margaret is a long-time resident of Dundas. She learned about the House from a friend's sister who was in Hamilton General Hospital. Her roommate was someone from northern

Ontario whose family was staying at the House.

Margaret was particularly impressed that hospital security escorted the guest between the House and the hospital. The guest said everything was wonderful here and they were so well taken care of.

After Margaret arranged to tour the House and made a generous donation, she shared her own story.

Years ago, her late husband John was in a serious workplace accident and spent

a month in a Toronto hospital. Margaret drove back and forth to Toronto every day. She not only had to face the drive but she was extremely worried about her husband. The stress was so severe she developed an ulcer.

After learning about the House, Margaret said – "This seems like a good place for me to give my money."

We are so grateful to Margaret and donors like her who understand the importance of their support to our sustainability. Thank you!







Our friend and volunteer Mary Whitfield has organized the Nightingale Tournament for seven years in support of the House. Golfers enjoyed a beautiful fall day this year. Pictured are Irene Turpie, Brenda Davis, Margaret Obermeyer, and Barb Buccichio. Thanks for your support!



The family of Kadeem Phillip came to make a large donation of wish list items to the House in Kadeem's memory.



We are delighted to have our young friends from McMaster's World Vision Club back. These folks do it all – housekeeping, baking, organizing – whatever needs to be done.



Pearl Wolfe receives a generous donation from Andre Gaudet, Distinguished Past Lieutenant Governor and Secretary/Treasurer of the Kiwanis Club of East Hamilton.



The Tonic Rotary Club made a beautiful pre-Thanksgiving dinner for families.



Larissa and Lisa Haefner made an incredible feast for Thanksgiving.



## Mark Preece Family House Board of Directors

Jim Murray, Chair  
Vince Brown, Vice-Chair  
Chris Holtved, Treasurer  
Tom Cochren  
Tim Craik  
Meaghan Drury  
Leslie Gauthier  
Michelle Hutton  
Cheryl Stepan  
Andy Vanin  
Michael Veri

### Our Mission

The Mark Preece Family House is a not for profit organization that provides temporary, affordable, accessible accommodation in a supportive environment for families of acute care in-patients being treated in a Hamilton area hospital.

### You Can Make A Difference

#### Your organization and special events:

We would be delighted to hear if you have a community event and would be interested in supporting the House through your efforts.

#### In-Kind Donations:

Do you have resources or donations that could help House operations?

#### Cheques may be made payable to:

Mark Preece Family House.

General donations as well as special tributes and memorial donations will all help sustain House operations.

#### To donate online go to:

[www.markpreecehouse.ca](http://www.markpreecehouse.ca)



Hospital Family Houses of Ontario  
Charitable registration  
# 86700 9615 RR0001

#### Mark Preece Family House

191 Barton Street East, Hamilton  
Ontario, L8L 2W7

P: 905-529-0770 • F: 905-529-9955

[info@markpreecehouse.ca](mailto:info@markpreecehouse.ca)

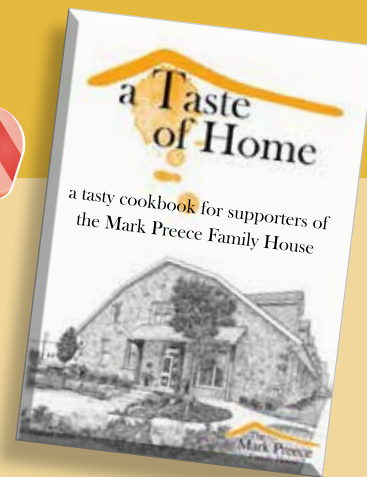
[www.markpreecehouse.ca](http://www.markpreecehouse.ca)

# A Taste of Home

Now available for \$20

Makes a great  
gift for the holidays!

Call us at **905-529-0770**  
and tell us how many we  
can put aside for you!



## Mark your calendar for Golf4Life 2020!

**Tuesday, June 2, 2020**

**Flamborough Hills Golf Club**

71 Highway 52 North, Hamilton ON L0R 1J0

Call 905-529-0770 or [info@markpreecehouse.ca](mailto:info@markpreecehouse.ca) to register!

## Sad News

We were deeply saddened to learn of the loss of our beloved therapy dog Hershey this fall.

Volunteer Sylvia Pauls and Hershey started coming to the House in 2015 and their visits were eagerly anticipated every Thursday afternoon.

Hershey even graced our holiday greeting card in 2017, in spite of the fact that she was notoriously camera-shy.

Hershey comforted many of our guests facing difficult times and especially those who missed their companion animals at home. Staff and volunteers miss her very much.



Sylvia and Hershey