

SHOWbiz

SUPPORTIVE HOUSING OF WATERLOO www.showwaterloo.org

“Safe, Supportive, Permanent”



**WE ARE HALFWAY THERE
TO 20,000 BRICKS!**

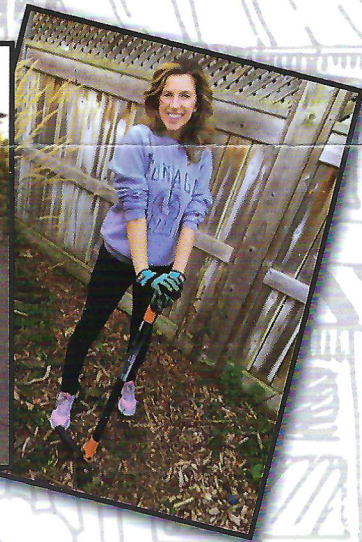
HELP US TO REACH OUR CAMPAIGN GOAL OF \$420,000!

362 Erb St. West, Office 5 Waterloo, Ontario N2L 1W6 • 519-886-8200

Dear friends...

As we approach the Christmas season, I am reminded how quickly the last 6 years have flown by at SHOW. I arrived in the middle of December, 2011 and immediately began the process of meeting tenants, organizing holiday events, hiring staff, and getting my bearings in this new community. Many of my evenings were spent sitting by the bedside of a 42 year old tenant who was in the final stage of his life, in the ICU at St. Mary's. We were strangers to each other, but over his few remaining weeks he taught me about homelessness here, the importance of "family", of community, how we need to be able to rely on each other and in the absence of those, how we are very much alone.

I have chosen this newsletter to highlight a few of our tenants' stories, and they all share a common theme, lives which have gone from hopelessness and desperation to stability and belonging. You, our supporters, are what make the difference between isolation and community, and allow us to build "family" for our tenants. Thank you for your generosity and wishing you peace this holiday season.



Baz's beginnings were fairly typical, he attended university and pursued a career and a life on the west coast and for many years was successfully employed and happily partnered. Baz's partner died and life was turned upside down. Shortly after, Baz returned to Cambridge to care for his aging mother but was himself diagnosed with a life threatening illness. Following her death life became quite difficult for this man, loneliness, isolation and his own poor health overwhelmed him and resulted in a downward spiral from which we have helped him emerge. Baz suffered a severe brain infection which resulted in memory and mobility loss as well as the loss of his rental housing, as he was in a coma and not expected to survive. Baz spent months in hospital, regained consciousness but became homeless as he had no one to ensure his rent was paid. SHOW offered him an apartment and we have worked with him to help him recover his mobility, and his memory, but more important than that, we have helped him find a community in which he is flourishing.

Tony, a tenant living in one of our accessible units, was diagnosed with Muscular Dystrophy when he was 9, though his rural farm family were never able to pursue medical supports on his behalf. Tony married but work was always a challenge due to his physical limitations and he was unable to provide the supports to his family he felt he should. The end of his relationship resulted in homelessness for Tony, but the "bullying" he encountered in the local shelters due to his disability resulted in him "camping" in a forest for over 4 years. The struggle to find enough food, sleeping in a tent in the harshness of winter, lack of hygiene and other necessities, resulted in pneumonia and Tony literally crawled to a roadside, seeking help. He was housed at SHOW upon his release from hospital and is slowly regaining strength, learning how to manage his own apartment and identifying a future that gives him hope. Tony requires intensive emotional supports and is very reliant on staff to assist him with many of his daily activities, supports which are made possible by donations from our community.



Maggie is 28 and has not been housed stably since she was 13, living on the streets, relying on a variety of drugs to dull the reality. She is a fairly new arrival at SHOW, still very suspicious of staff, not prepared to trust us, not yet able to call this home. We are nothing if not patient, staff are always ready to sit down, listen, care, offer resources or supports on the tenant's timeline. It takes some tenants longer than others to understand the concept of belonging, of knowing that we accept without judgement but we will get there with Maggie. Housing at SHOW will provide her with the stability to find fulfillment whatever she chooses to pursue, counseling, education, employment training, reconnecting with family, together we will help her make it happen.

Pedro came to Canada as a very young child, his family having arrived as immigrants from a Latin American country where they witnessed political brutality. Alcohol became Pedro's go to "safe" place, drinking dulled traumatic childhood memories, his mother held down several jobs in order to support her family so much of his time was spent alone. Eventually alcohol took over his life, his relationships, his ability to remain housed and a referral was made to SHOW three years ago. The first two years of his tenancy were marked by multiple police interactions, street fights, memory blackouts, hospital stays to address the damage alcohol had done to his body. And then one day Pedro decided he felt safe enough to not drink that day, and then the next day, and the day after. He realized being sober was ok, in fact he quite liked it. For the first time since he was 14 years old, he discovered what it was like to be sober. He is now 34 and has recently celebrated a year of sobriety. This young man who had been written off by every service in our community, who had been asked to leave every program that offered support, found his path at SHOW. We are here for Pedro, 24/7 and with your support and ours, his future looks wonderful.

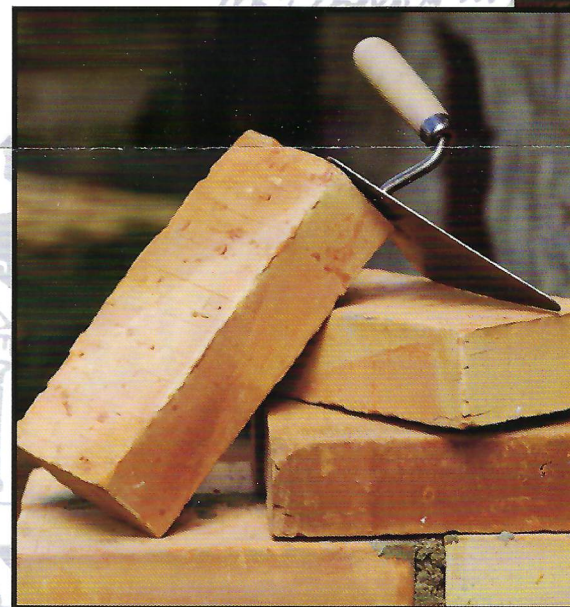
We are halfway there to 20,000 bricks which will create a new home for 9 people who desperately need affordable housing.

The budgeted capital cost of 402 Erb St. is \$2.2 million. To date, SHOW has secured capital commitments in excess of \$1.78 million, representing 80% of the total project budget, including commitments of:

- \$1.13 million through the Region's Affordable Housing Strategy and the Province's Investment in Affordable Housing for Ontario Program (2014 Extension)
- \$180,000 through Region of Waterloo and City of Waterloo Development Charges grants
- Other commitments of capital, including SHOW equity and a longterm financing commitment

SHOW is still seeking to raise the remaining capital through a fundraising campaign in support of the project.

**HELP US TO REACH OUR CAMPAIGN
GOAL OF \$420,000!**



Supportive Housing of Waterloo

362 Erb St. West,
Waterloo, N2L1W6

519-886-8200

Supportive Housing of Waterloo (SHOW) is a non profit organization whose mandate is to provide safe, supportive and permanent housing to those who have experienced persistent homelessness or barriers to affordable housing.

Friends of SHOW

CIRCLES OF FRIENDS is a wonderful program run by Mennonite Central Committee which provides volunteers who meet with some of our tenants to "encircle" them in friendship, enjoy some recreational activities and help our tenants build a stronger sense of community inclusion. So many of our tenants are completely isolated, having lost family ties, social connections and more due to homelessness or compromised mental health, the Circles have been a real blessing offering some of our tenants the only "friendship" they have. We are profoundly grateful to these wonderful volunteers and MCC staff for bringing joy to the lives of some of our tenants. Thank you Peter Mumford, Marvin Rempel and MCC staff Kimberlee Walker.

CREATIVE CRAFTERS

The Older Adult Recreation Centre in Waterloo has a knitting group which plains and purls their way to creating wonderful knitted items for our tenants every year. Christmas is a hard time for many folks, being isolated, not having a family, can often make that time one of sadness and loneliness but through the kindness and generosity of The Knitting Group every single tenant receives a gift for the holiday, a gift they all wear proudly and are

only too happy to show off to fellow tenants and staff. Our hats off to you, and many thanks from our tenants too.

COMMUNITY MEALS are a big deal at SHOW. People come together to enjoy the wonderful efforts of volunteers from the West Vale Neighbourhood who join our tenants several Friday evenings a month by providing a dinner which is always a joy for our tenants. On the other Fridays we have two amazing volunteers, Jeff Meyer and Katie Lawson who cook dinner with our tenants, pass on their cooking skills and great good humour and are very much part of SHOW. Saturday mornings one can find Betty, who had been our cleaner, in the community kitchen frying up four dozen eggs and bacon for "my boys" as she refers to our tenants. No one sleeps in here on Saturday mornings as breakfast is always too good to miss.

Sharing meals, sitting together, building community is vital at SHOW and we hope to be able to extend that to others as we explore an opportunity to have some of our tenants volunteer to create a lunch monthly for people in the community who are socially isolated, in a donated space. More to follow!

BUILDING SUPPORTED HOUSING, BRICK BY BRICK

Please help us build 402 Erb St. West by purchasing Bricks for \$5 each.
20,000 Bricks will create a new home for 9 people who desperately need affordable housing

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____ Telephone: _____

I wish to donate: \$100 \$50 \$30 Other _____

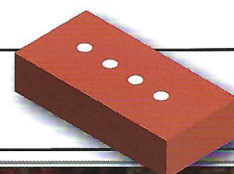
I wish to pay by: cheque VISA Mastercard

Name on Card: _____ CSH# _____

Credit Card #: _____ Expiry date: _____

Cheques are payable to Supportive Housing of Waterloo. Gifts of \$10.00 or more will be receipted for income tax purposes and are also accepted online at www.showaterloo.org or at CanadaHelps.org

I want to buy a brick for \$5.00 each: # _____



www.showaterloo.org