



Fall 2011

VOICES

**Second Yellow
Brick House
Shelter A Reality**

**Celebrating
Our Outstanding
Volunteers**

Feature Article

**Frank Scarpitti:
Pathsetter**

Did You Know?

November
is Women Abuse
Prevention Month.

To learn more, visit:
yellowbrickhouse.org



Welcome to VOICES



*Be the key
to opening
the new
shelter...*

You are making a difference.

Just a few years ago, the Yellow Brick House Board and staff had a vision to open a second Yellow Brick House shelter in York Region. Now we are thrilled to say that with your support, the second Yellow Brick House shelter is a reality! In April of 2011, we announced that the *Second Shelter, Second Chances* Capital Campaign had reached a critical point with the purchase of a property.

This time in our Capital Campaign is a huge step toward being able to provide vital assistance to women and children who are living in dangerous homes suffering violence. Last year alone, 468 children and 198 women could not get a shelter bed in this region. Safe shelter from abuse can be a matter of life or death. Many women, ready to make the brave decision to leave an abusive situation, are forced to stay in dangerous homes until a shelter bed becomes available. Some seek shelter in other parts of the province, far from family and friends. Others may lose their courage to flee domestic abuse when there is no support available. This is the reality.

With your unfailing belief and support in our organization, we are changing this reality. The shelter will provide the safety, help and support that is desperately needed. Thanks to your generosity and vision, we will be able to help those we were unable to in the past.

We would not be where we are today without you and we thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

Our Campaign is not over though and we still need your help. Our Board and staff, committed to our future, have all made a financial contribution to our success. Now, we need each and every one of you too as well.

Please, be the key that opens the doors to our second shelter.

Lorris Herenda
Executive Director

Second Shelter a Reality!



From left to right: York Regional Police Chief Eric Jolliffe, Lina Bigioni, Director of Government Relations and assistant to the Chairman and Bill Fisch, Chairman and CEO of the Regional Municipality of York.

Yellow Brick House proudly celebrated the announcement of the purchase of the property that will be the organization's second emergency shelter. Many Yellow Brick House staff, volunteers and community supporters were present to share this important milestone in the *Second Shelter, Second Chances* Capital Campaign.

Among the special guests were York Regional Police Chief Eric Jolliffe, Bill Fisch, Chairman and CEO of the Regional Municipality of York, and Lina Bigioni, Director of Government Relations and assistant to the Chairman and a long time supporter and advocate for Yellow Brick House.

Markham Mayor Frank Scarpitti, Chief Jolliffe and MPP Reza Moridi shared words of support and congratulations. Executive Director, Lorris Herenda and Board Chair, Nora Priestly thanked the community for the incredible generosity and support extended to Yellow Brick House. Both Nora and Lorris shared that although the property has been purchased, there is still an urgent need to continue with the challenge of the Campaign to raise the critical dollars needed to open and operate the shelter.

We are almost there! Please support our Campaign to open the second Yellow Brick House shelter!

The Toskan Casale Foundation – Celebrating Youth & Philanthropy Initiatives

Yellow Brick House has participated in the Youth and Philanthropy Initiative (YPI) for the past four years. YPI strives to empower young people to actively participate in the development of their communities and engage them as dedicated problem solvers and volunteers. This year more than 30 groups, over 100 high school students, chose Yellow Brick House as their charity and competed against their schoolmates to win \$5,000 for our cause. A group from Emily Carr Secondary School in Vaughan, Pierre Elliot Trudeau High School in Markham and Dr. J.M. Denison in Newmarket each won, resulting in \$15,000 being awarded to Yellow Brick House! Thank you to the students for your hard work and for advocating on behalf of Yellow Brick House.

We would like to thank the Toskan Casale Foundation for their generosity. Julie Toskan-Casale, the President of the Foundation, was recently presented the first ever **Premier's Award for Philanthropy in Education** by the Honourable Dalton McGuinty, Premier of Ontario, and the Honourable Leona Dombrowsky, Minister of Education, Province of Ontario.

Congratulations Julie, and thank you for your dedication to youth and philanthropy!



Lorris Herenda, Pam Odam and Nora Priestly



Bill Fisch, York Region Chairman and CEO

Our sincere thanks to everyone involved for your wonderful contributions to our sixth annual *Mending Hearts...Creating Dreams Gala*. The sold out event was organized by a team of committed volunteers under the leadership of Gala Chair, Pam Odam. Words of congratulations and support were extended by Bill Fisch, York

Region Chairman and CEO. Markham Mayor Scarpitti, joined by members of the Frank Scarpitti Charitable Foundation, announced an unprecedented sponsorship of \$250,000 to support the Yellow Brick House Capital Campaign and Children's Resource Centre at the new shelter!

A special thank you goes out to our generous Gala sponsors:

GOLD SPONSORS

Johnson and Johnson
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SILVER SPONSORS

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IBM Canada Ltd.

BRONZE SPONSORS

CIBC
Royal LePage, Your Community Realty

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CREATIVE MARKETING

Compass Creative Media



Fabulous Gala Volunteers



Vivian Risi - Capital Campaign Chair



Dianne Gentili, Marnie Sigmar and Pam Odam



Honoured Guests

A special thank you to Pam, our fabulous Gala Chair for leading the way to another successful event! We also wish to extend a special thank you to our participants, contributors, volunteers and to Angus Glen Golf Club and Conference Centre for making this a very special evening.

**YELLOW BRICK HOUSE
and IBM CANADA**



Present the

**SEVENTH ANNUAL MENDING HEARTS...CREATING DREAMS GALA
Friday, April 27, 2012 at the Angus Glen Golf Club and Conference Centre**

Please contact Marnie at marnies@yellowbrickhouse.org for sponsorship opportunities and Gala tickets.



L to R: Norine Graham-Robinson, Judith Puttock, Vinnie Berman, Christine Brezina, Glenna Stelzer, Lorris Herenda, Nora Priestly, Jennifer Gleitman, Diana McNeven, Nimet Samji. Absent: Charles Scott, Michael Soragnese, Jackie Wilson & Diana Kawarsky

A Word From the Chair

“It takes a village” is an expression often used for raising a child or accomplishing other important feats. The concept is a vision of many people, living in the same community, all doing some part towards a greater goal. The combined efforts of many result in something that could not have been done as well by less. The second shelter opening later this year is a testament to the efforts from so many of you. Thank you.

Women Fore Women

On June 20, 2011, Wendy Hanson and her fantastic group of volunteers hosted the 16th Annual Women Fore Women Golf Tournament. The event was a great success and was held at the stunning Granite Ridge Golf and Country Club.



Thank you Wendy!

Yoga Fest

Three hours was all it took to help shape the future for thousands of women and children in our Region. Thanks to all who took part in this event which was focused on empowerment, confidence and strength and was enjoyed by many mothers, daughters and sons. Participants were treated to three unique yoga classes and prizes. It was a day to remember! All proceeds raised benefited the Second Shelter, Second Chances Capital Campaign.

We wish to extend a special thank you to Mike Soragnese and Luigi Presta and their incredible team at Compass!

The Power of Powerstream

Thank you to the Powerstream team! Team members worked together to repair and build 30 bicycles for Yellow Brick House shelter residents and outreach clients. The donation was complete with helmets. All of the bicycles were adopted and put to good use within a week of the donation.



Markham Youth Council - Spring Meets Summer Fashion Show



On Sunday, May 1st, the Markham Youth Council in conjunction with the Mayor's Youth Task Force held a Spring Meets Summer Fashion Show at the Markville Mall in Markham. Through their hard work, passion and philanthropic efforts they created an event that exceeded everyone's expectations.

Thank you Markham Youth Council!

Submit your email address to amberg@yellowbrickhouse.org for your chance to win a ticket to the 2012 Gala!



Your donation, supporting the Yellow Brick House, will make living violence free lives a possibility for thousands of women and children in York Region.

YES, I want to support the Yellow Brick House!

Here is my contribution of \$100 \$50 \$25 I prefer to give \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

City/Province/Postal _____

Phone _____ Email _____

I have enclosed a personal cheque

I want to charge my Visa MasterCard Amex

Card # _____

Expiry _____ Signature _____

I would like to make the gift: In honour of In memory of

Their name _____

Send acknowledgement card to:

Their name _____

Their address _____

City/Province/Postal _____

* My name on acknowledgement card: _____

* If not specified, we will use your name as it appears on your cheque or credit card.

52 West Beaver Creek, Unit 4, Richmond Hill Ontario, L4B 1L9 | T 905.709.0900 | F 905.709.1308 | yellowbrickhouse.org

Please note that charitable tax receipts are issued for donations over \$20. Charitable registration number: 11910 5187 RR001

In our continuing effort to be respectful of your time and support of Yellow Brick House, we would like to know if you prefer to receive newsletters and information via: e-mail mail or not at all.

The Frank Scarpitti Charitable Foundation: a Pathsetter



From Left to Right: Mayor Scarpitti, Lorris Herenda, Don Ferguson, Khalid Usman and Art Moad.

The highlight of the 2011 *Mending Hearts...Creating Dreams* Gala was an unprecedented major gift contribution to the Yellow Brick House Second Shelter, Second Chances Capital Campaign! With his foundation members along side, Mayor Scarpitti presented a cheque for \$250,000 to Lorris Herenda to provide the exclusive Pathsetter sponsorship!

The Pathsetter contributor will have a significant and direct impact on children who experience domestic violence and who seek shelter and support from Yellow Brick House. The Pathsetter sponsorship level will focus on the development of the Children's Resource Centre. Every child comes to Yellow Brick House with a different set of dynamics, social factors, and coping mechanisms and every child perceives family violence in a different way, even though the circumstances of trauma may be similar. To respect the diverse experiences of these children, the Children's Resource Centre will be designed to respond to all of the needs of the children who are residents in the shelter.



Children's Resource Room – Providing Life Changing Support

CHILD COUNSELLING

will take place in the Children's Resource Centre. Yellow Brick House child counsellors will work directly with each child. Individual confidential counselling will help these children express their feelings about experiences and help them adjust to their new family environment. The children will work on self-esteem and behaviour issues and the counsellors will address each child's needs with the mother/caregiver.

'LET'S TALK' Group counselling will be offered to every child. 'Let's Talk' is an early intervention program for children who have witnessed or experienced abuse. To help children understand the cycle of abuse and deal with their feelings, the program covers: types of abuse, normalizing feelings, managing anger, family dynamics, responsibility for abuse, conflict resolution, safety planning, dating violence, sexual abuse and promoting self-esteem.

ART THERAPY

will be offered to every child on a weekly basis. Art experiences help us understand what children are saying and feeling through their art. Visual art is used to make sense of crisis, pain and psychic upheaval. For children who have been abused or have witnessed abuse in their homes and are often silent in their suffering, art expression can be a way for what is secret or confusing to become tangible.

IBM Centennial Day of Service



To commemorate the 100-year anniversary of its founding, IBM challenged its employees and retirees to set a record for community service.

Yellow Brick House, long supported by IBM, was lucky enough to be chosen to benefit from this Centennial Day of Service. With close to 100 IBM volunteers on-site at three different Yellow Brick House locations, all were simultaneously transformed.

Yellow Brick House staff members were delighted with the enthusiasm and commitment each volunteer showed that day. Thank you for what was accomplished!



A special thank you goes to Christine Brezina, our Board Member, for making this happen!



Mark your calendars for an exciting event that will be taking place on Friday, November 18 at Angus Glen.

Diamonds and Dice, a third party event planned to support Yellow Brick House, will no doubt be a great night out – roll the dice, enjoy great food, take your chance at winning a diamond and dance the night away!

For additional information, please contact marnies@yellowbrickhouse.org.



Volunteer of the Year

We are honored and proud to highlight Shelley Brooks as our Volunteer of the Year for all of her amazing contributions to our organization. Shelley's story with the Yellow Brick House began on January 5th, 2010, when she walked in our door looking to make a difference in any way she could. She has certainly accomplished her goal!



Shelley is a volunteer who will take on any project, even at the drop of a hat! This is proven by her numerous responsibilities and tasks such as providing reception duties every Monday night for over a year, participating in warehouse chores, taking care of the children of our clients at the shelter and outreach, helping sort donations, chipping in during the Day of Giving and leading the committee for the Tastes of the Hill which generated \$30,000 towards the *Second Shelter, Second Chances* Capital Campaign. She is also a team member for our Public Education Program and presents abuse prevention workshops to school aged kids and teens.

Shelley's passion and commitment to the cause and her volunteer responsibilities are second to none. We are truly lucky to have this one of a kind volunteer on our team!

Congratulations Shelley and thank you very much!

Schools for Change

Through a generous grant from the **Canadian Women's Foundation**, a violence prevention program called Schools for Change was piloted. This year, grades 4, 5 and 6 students from Highgate Public School in Markham participated in the full-week program and five follow up sessions. School for Change encourages the development of healthy relationships by promoting respect, communication and conflict resolution while challenging gender role stereotypes and abusive behaviour.

Thank you to our supporters at the **Canadian Women's Foundation** for making this project possible and thank you students and staff of Highgate Public School for your dedication and participation in this project!



Ontario Service Awards

Yellow Brick House is very fortunate to have wonderful volunteers who make it possible for the organization to do everything that it does. With limited resources, volunteers are a critical part of the Yellow Brick House team. We are proud to share that Suzanne Shields and Christine Brezina were awarded five year service awards by the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration. In addition, Marisa Bellotti received a Citizen of Character award from the Character Community Foundation of York Region. Thank you to Suzanne, Christine, Marisa and all of our wonderful volunteers!



Kathy Powers & Suzanne Shields

Holiday Giving

Please consider making a donation to support our efforts to provide a happy holiday for all of our clients.

Fourth Annual Royal LePage, Your Community Realty Golf Tournament



From Left to Right: Vivian Risi, Zebedah Din, Joanne Colangelo, Mario Colangelo and Daron Mason

A big thank you goes out to our Capital Campaign Chair, Vivian Risi for hosting the fourth annual Royal LePage, Your Community Realty Golf Tournament. Over 150 golfers enjoyed a great round followed by dinner and auction emceed by Michelle Risi. Tournament organizers Shawn Zigelstein and Justin Risi report that over \$40,000 was raised this year, with a grand total of close to \$100,000 for the four years combined! A huge thank you and congratulations to tournament organizers, supporters and most importantly to our Capital Campaign Chair Vivian Risi, for an outstanding job once again this year!

Red Carpet Gala

On May 21, 2011 the Cadence Dance Academy hosted their second annual Red Carpet Gala. Held at the beautiful and classy 99 Sudbury in Toronto, the gala featured live music and world class Salsa, Bachata, Hustle and Hip Hop dancing. A special thanks to Andrea Hanak of Royal LePage, Your Community Realty, for choosing Yellow Brick House as the charity to benefit from the event.

Our Communities of Support

When corporations, community groups and volunteers plan team building exercises and events for Yellow Brick House, we benefit in many ways. In some cases, special projects are done and in other cases events raise funds to support the work we do. In all cases, these efforts help raise awareness about the seriousness of the issue of violence against women and children and the services and supports that are offered at Yellow Brick House.

Over the past few months we have had the honour of having groups from **Free the Children, The Co-operators, Royal Bank of Canada, the Toronto Montessori School, KPMG, Father Michael McGivney Catholic Academy, Levi Strauss, ACA Insurance, State Farm, Youth for Christ, Johnson and Johnson, Oracle and State Farm** plan projects and events for Yellow Brick House.