



**Red Door**  
FAMILY SHELTER



## Shelter News Spring 2010

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Participate, or pledge your support to help the Red Door in this year's Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon Charity Challenge. This is our first year participating so let's make it a great one!

Whether you do a Marathon, Half Marathon or 5k, or support someone who does, your fundraising makes a difference!

Help us reach our goal of raising \$10,000 to support our shelter and outreach programs this year.

For more information, please email: [fundraising@reddoorshelter.ca](mailto:fundraising@reddoorshelter.ca)

### Fewer homeless sleeping outdoors - but shelter population soars nearly 10%

Donovan Vincent, The Toronto Star - April 16, 2010

Toronto's second survey of its homeless population shows a 50% drop in the number of people sleeping outdoors, a finding one city councillor is calling "phenomenal."

Results from the long-awaited, one-night snapshot survey done April 15, 2009, indicate there were about 400 homeless people on the street that evening, a drop from 818, when the first study was done three years prior.

City officials are attributing that drop to Toronto's Streets to Homes program, in which homeless people on the street are approached and offered help getting permanently housed before other changes are made in their lives.

Phil Brown, general manager responsible for the program, maintains that of the 2,800 people housed since the initiative began in 2005, 90% remain so. Councillor Janet Davis, who chairs the committee that oversees the homeless file, called the drop in outdoor homeless "phenomenal."

"Outreach workers (with Streets to Homes) have clearly been successful in finding housing and providing support services to keep them housed," Davis said Friday afternoon.

But the latest survey shows less promising results for the number of homeless using city shelters. Though there's also a city program aimed at finding them permanent homes, the number of shelter users actually jumped from 3,649 in the 2006 snapshot to 3,990 on last year's survey night, up 9.4%.

Brown, manager of the city's shelter support and housing department, pointed to the fact the largest jump in shelter users was in families, where the numbers rose from 785 people in 2006 to 1,093 last year.

Rather than the recession, Brown says that increase is due to the fact more refugee families are staying in shelters.

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His department estimates that on average, 39% of families in the city's family shelter were refugees in 2008, up from 29% in 2006. "We ask people why they're in our shelters and where they're coming from. We have a pretty good data source — hard numbers — to support these estimates," Brown explained.

"These results show we need affordable housing for a range of families in Toronto," Davis said, adding the province and federal government need to step up efforts in this regard. Overall, there were at least 5,086 homeless people outdoors, in shelters, in health-care and treatment facilities in detention centres and battered women's shelters — virtually unchanged from the 5,052 found in 2006. Other notable findings in the new survey:

- Though they make up just 1% of the city's population, aboriginal people were 29% of the homeless people found outdoors.
- The 2006 survey showed that 36% of all respondents were on a waiting list for housing. That rose to 45% last year.
- Panhandling has decreased as a reported source of income. In 2006, that was the source of earnings for 17% of respondents, but that declined to 9.8% of respondents last year.
- About 40% of homeless people encountered that night answered the survey questions.

The latest study was delayed, city officials say, by last summer's city workers' strike and the fact staff had to compare results from the 2006 survey. The new survey cost about \$119,000 to conduct, up from \$87,000 for the first. Critics have slammed these costs, which include payments to "decoys" pretending to be homeless to ensure the areas are thoroughly canvassed by those posing the questions.

About 460 volunteers helped conduct the latest survey, supervised by about 360 team leaders, about 280 of whom were from community agencies. The next study is planned for 2012.

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## More ways you can change a life!

Your support makes it possible for us to provide critical programs and services that go beyond food and shelter. Your donations help people living in crisis reclaim their independence and begin a stable life beyond the shelter.

### [Become a Red Door Family Guardian](#)

Our Family Guardian monthly giving program is designed to make giving easier and reduce administrative costs. Whether it's \$20 or \$5, your monthly support provides the Red Door with predictable and steady funding year round, which provides more stable services to hundreds of families in need.

### [Leaving a Legacy](#)

Friends of the Red Door find peace of mind knowing they are securing a future which will enrich the lives of many. Bequests are a simple and powerful way to leave a legacy and create significant tax advantages.

For more details please visit:

[www.reddoorshelter.ca/how-you-can-help/leave-legacy](http://www.reddoorshelter.ca/how-you-can-help/leave-legacy)

For more information, email [fundraising@reddoorshelter.ca](mailto:fundraising@reddoorshelter.ca), call 416-915-5671 extension 232, or visit us at: [www.reddoorshelter.ca](http://www.reddoorshelter.ca)

## Remembering mother's who need help on Mother's Day

According to Statistics Canada in 2008, 4,273 women spent Mother's Day in a Canadian shelter. In a given year, Canada's shelters support over 100,000 different women and children, the largest demographic of homeless individuals by far. Many of these women are mothers who have struggled to make a safer future for their children and each one of them deserved to be honoured on Mother's Day for their extraordinary strength and courage.

Mary, one of our former residents had her harrowing story told in this year's Mother's Day edition of the National Post.

As a refugee from Nigeria, she spoke of the conflict she faced daily in her home country and her brave decision to flee to Canada while 7 months pregnant with twins. She expressed her deep gratitude for the help she received at the Red Door and for her safety and health of her two young children: "If it weren't for the help I received, I would not be a mother today."

Full story is in the Saturday May 8th, 2010 edition of the National Post, online at [www.nationalpost.com](http://www.nationalpost.com)





## Donor spotlight: Betsy Barber and Ron LaConte

Betsy Barber and her husband Ron LaConte have been unique donors to the Red Door Shelter since 2006. Every month Betsy checks to see what the shelter's needs are and then goes shopping! It can be anything from children's socks and underwear to towels, school supplies, cookware and more. On receiving a pot, one woman began to cry and remarked that she had never had a new one in her entire life.

This May, due to their inability to obtain permanent Canadian residency, Betsy and Ron are setting up a new home in Savannah, Georgia. To say goodbye, the staff of the Red Door threw a small party to thank them for all their support and to wish them well. As a parting gift, Ron and Betsy have established a fund to pay for educational and recreational outings for children and youth during school and summer breaks.

The Luisa Cinquegrana Fund is named in honor of Ron's maternal grandmother, an immigrant from southern Italy and a woman whose own life bore so much in common with Red Door clients. This program provides outings for the children and youth living in the shelter to ensure they get to experience social and learning opportunities that expose them to new ideas and activities. Thank you Betsy and Ron for your support and good luck in the future.

## Volunteer spotlight: Never too young to care!

On Thursday March 4, 2010, the Red Door Family Shelter welcomed the kindergarten class from Jackman Junior Public School. About 20 children, along with their teachers and several parents, cheerfully distributed gifts that they had each purchased for the children at the shelter. They sat and listened to stories about the Red Door and shared some stories of their own.

The children wanted the experience of giving their gifts directly to someone at the shelter rather than just dropping them off at the door. In the words of one of the parents, "The teacher and students were really happy to participate... just the act of getting on the bus got them feeling engaged in their donation and helped them appreciate why they were giving."

We would like to thank the Jackman kindergarten class for their hard work and generosity. It was a pleasure to meet the kids and introduce them to the work we do. We are delighted that they chose the Red Door Family Shelter!

## 2010 Annual General Meeting

Another year has passed already! The 2010 Annual General Meeting of the Red Door Family Shelter is scheduled for:

Thursday June 24th, 2010  
Ralph Thornton Center, 2nd Floor  
765 Queen Street East, Toronto.

The meeting starts at 5:30 pm, followed by a reception. Appetizers and refreshments will be provided. All are welcome to attend. Please RSVP to Beverly Webb, 416-915-5671, ext. 235.





# Spring Cleaning? Donate your items to the Red Door!

Your donations have a great impact on the lives of our clients.  
Our current needs are:

- New, or gently used household items: toasters, microwaves, dish sets, cups, mugs, blenders, cutlery, etc.
- New, or cleaned and gently used sheets and towels.
- New undergarments: underwear, socks, for men, women, and children.
- New, or cleaned and gently used baby items: strollers and baby clothing.
- New, or cleaned and gently used seasonal clothing.
- Non-perishable food or Food Vouchers for our shelter food banks (\$25, \$50 or \$100 denominations from No Frills, Food Basics, Price Chopper, Metro or Loblaws).

Please note that only items on this list will be accepted. Drop off times are Monday through Friday- 9am to 5pm at 21 Carlaw Avenue, Toronto. For further details about donations that we can accept, please contact Joyce Hsu at 416-915-5671 ext. 222 or visit our website at: <http://www.reddoorshelter.ca/how-you-can-help/kind-gift>



## Staff Service Awards



At a recent staff meeting, a group of our employees were honoured for their long-term service to the Red Door. Honourees included:

**25 or more years of service:** Agnes McKenna (pictured left.)

**20 or more years of service:** Cathy Bedford, Doug Lee.

**15 or more years of service:** Linda Fenton, Sophie Giraud.

**10 or more years of service:** Maria Abrego, Phat Adriano, Virginia Balmaceda, Olivia Bowen, Valerie Esau, Sandra Hargreaves, Yolande Howard, Annette Huggins, Abdi Hussein, Mansooreh Khoshkam, Tanya Lord, Asmindia Portillo, Parvane Rezaei-Dodani, Izabela Slijepcevic, Nelly Vilches.

**Congratulations and thank you for all of your hard work!**



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