

**Mark Preece Family House
Annual Report
2015**

Guests and Guest Services:

- We hosted the Cardiac Care Network in May to aid in their deliberations about the eventual establishment of a regional cardiac care centre for Thunder Bay.
- The founder of Therapy Tails Ontario was a patient in hospital who eventually passed away. Her husband was so grateful to have stayed at the house, they have become major donors. They have also arranged for Hershey, a chocolate lab therapy dog, to visit the house every Thursday afternoon. The families love to visit with Hershey.
- The House served 777 new families and had an occupancy level of 71 per cent.

Sustainability:

- **Fall for Beer and Girls' Night Out** events continue to contribute to fundraising goals.
- **Donor Report:** A stewardship vehicle called Comforts of Home was created. This is a report to donors who have given multiple times or who make an on-going donation.
- **Charitable Fund:** Arcelor Mittal Dofasco and an individual donor again contributed to the charitable and bereavement fund.

Awareness:

- We had two excellent Open Houses for referral sources. Awareness activities have been conducted with outlying hospitals and the LHIN.
- An MBA marketing program at McMaster conducted a project to recommend ways to increase awareness of the house in terms of occupancy and fund development. Many ideas came out of the project including: ideas on search engine optimization, asking families where they heard about us and producing a post card in massive quantities to be distributed throughout hospital sites. We have a marketing plan which includes creating a small e-newsletter that will go to hospital staff on a regular basis.
- We had a social media guru do a workshop on Facebook. His analysis showed that the majority of our followers on Facebook are females aged 25 – 34. We now have more than 1,000 followers on twitter.
- We had considerable excellent coverage in the Spectator this year: Sim, the volunteer who cooked dinner every week; Hershey, the therapy dog; dinner for Mother's Day. We also had a story in Hamilton Magazine.

Human Resources:

- Staff have benefitted from a training session on compassion fatigue and vicarious trauma. A session on difficult conversations was scheduled for January.
- In 2015, we increased our housekeeping hours from four to seven hours per day to protect our investment and maintain our high standards of cleanliness.

Volunteers:

- We won the Trillium Award again in 2015.