

John's Story, Homeless to Housed

John Frances Campion, a Transitions to Home (T2H) participant, spent 5 years on the streets and shelter system, drinking heavily. In a cycle, he would have an apartment, but always returned to the shelter and streets. **"I don't want people's pity"** shares John, **"But I was asking myself has my life come to this?"**

He was twice in jail for drinking and impaired driving. John's life collapsed when he fell asleep smoking a cigarette, causing a fire in his T2H sponsored apartment with almost \$20, 000 worth of damage, a story picked up by local media. The fire was worse because he was hoarding scraps and bottles to support his addictions.

John Campion started out as his Dad's bartender at age 7, drinking a capful of beer each time. "I don't blame him. I just couldn't handle the alcohol, I would drink to be on the floor, to avoid life, forget things, forget pain." He worked a variety of jobs in his adult years. When both his parents died within 6 months, John, "...fell into the bottle, pitied myself, drank more, gave up wanting to be around family and friends that knew me. I didn't want to change." He describes how a dozen beers wasn't enough, how he didn't care if he was drunk or in jail, and would often be drunk by 11 in the morning.

After the fire, John was connected with the Wesley T2H addictions worker,



who gave him information about a rehabilitation centre and encouraged him to consider it. He wanted his family back, his two brothers and a younger sister. "When I was drunk, my family lost respect in me, just how I lost respect in myself." John found hope through family and recovery and is proud he graduated with honours. "I am 18 months sober now. I know what my triggers are and how to avoid them. I don't want to end up where I was."

He is now reconnected with his family. **"We are great, we talk every 2-3 days, they recognize my alcohol addiction."** For the first time in 5 years, John celebrated Christmas with his brothers and sister and when they did a celebratory cheer with drinks, his was non-alcoholic. His sister gave him the sweater he is proudly wearing in the photo.

John credits the T2H workers for his success. "They kept calling me, setting up meetings, built up a trust and I

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Message from Daljit Garry, Executive Director

I am delighted that John has chosen to share his moving story of homeless to housed. This truly is a success story for John and shows the immense impact of Wesley programs.

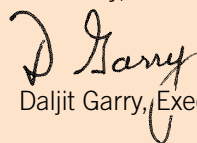
Thank you to our generous donors and dedicated volunteers that help us directly make a difference in the lives of the most vulnerable in our community, struggling with poverty, mental health and addictions.

Our volunteers and donors also made it possible for Wesley's Christmas Store to provide food and new gifts to 1,731 households. There were 5,428 individuals supported in total, including 2,607 children. This is an increase from 2012, including 176 more children!

In the picture, I am thanking Junior Charles, member of the ArcelorMittal Dofasco Employee Donations Fund for their employee and corporate holiday donation.

Please remember the need doesn't go away after the holidays. Year-round, Wesley supports individuals and families living under some of the highest poverty rates in Canada. Your continued support is most appreciated. I look forward to seeing you in 2014!

Sincerely,



Daljit Garry, Executive Director



Vision:

Wesley Urban Ministries has a vision of community, where justice and compassion guide the way we live, where all members are treated with respect and dignity.

Mission:

- Decrease Barriers by developing and delivering programs that address the needs of people who are marginalized
- Increase Opportunities by providing services that help individuals to achieve their full potential
- Be a model and catalyst for social transformation

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appreciate it. They have helped me figure out my ID, get a doctor, find stable housing, and help me maintain it." He used to check in with his worker twice a week but now that he is doing so well, he meets once a month.

After sharing his story, John reflects, "Thank God I am here. My doctor says I am healthy now, I enjoy going out for walks,

talking with my new friends. It is amazing, given all the damage I did to myself." He even had a paid seasonal job in December! At age 55, John is honest, genuine and positive about his life and the small and big steps he took to be where he is today. **Here at Wesley, we are so proud of John and look forward to continuing to offer him support, every step of his way.**

Raising the Roof Toque Tuesday

Congratulations to St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton, for selling the most Raising the Roof toques! The national campaign is a collective effort to "put a cap" on homelessness. Thank you to all the businesses, schools and groups that sold toques to support Wesley Youth Housing.

To buy your \$10 toque, call 905-528-5629 or visit wesley.ca for participating businesses.



Barbara Brearley and Gail Lorimer volunteer at Wesley's Christmas Store in the gift area



Sue Auton and Sharon Clark bring donations from Hamilton Port Authority for Wesley's Christmas Store

Thank you!

Wesley's Christmas Store made a big difference for:

- **A mother just regaining custody of her children** from Children's Aid and **a mother recently released from prison** told us that the store makes celebrating Christmas possible for their families - both meal and gifts
- **An Iraqi father, recently immigrated to Hamilton**, was pleased to find gifts for his teenaged daughters. He said finding frivolous things for one's children otherwise becomes a lost possibility when meeting basic needs and was happy to bring home jewelry and a curling iron for his daughters
- **A man, part of Wesley's Transitions to Home program** and previously street involved, smiled at finding a gift certificate for new shoes

Yuk Yuk's Stand Up Comedy Night



Friday February 28, 2014
8:00 pm

\$20 per ticket

Anchor Bar & Yuk Yuk's
2 King Street West, Hamilton
Proceeds to support Wesley!

To purchase tickets, please contact Wesley at 905-528-5629 or info@wesley.ca

Save the Dates!

Case for Kids Walk, Run, Ride
Sunday June 1, 2014
Bayfront Park

Wesley Golf Tournament
Monday September 8, 2014
Century Pines Golf Club

Sponsor or sign up! 905-528-5629 or wesley.ca