

WINTER 2015

# YOUR REDWOOD

your gifts at work for women and children

## NANCY WAS LIVING A CONSTANT NIGHTMARE OF FEAR AND ABUSE

WITH YOUR HELP SHE TURNED HER FEAR INTO STRENGTH

Nancy thought she had found the perfect partner — loving, funny and just right for her. Soon, she realized the man she shared her life with was abusive and unfaithful. Every day he put her down. The blows to her body were constant. Her children lived in daily terror. Nancy felt like all her dreams had been destroyed. With two children and expecting a third, she didn't know what to do.

Fearing for her life, Nancy made the decision to leave. She was terrified. Leaving her abuser left her alone in a war-torn country. With no one to turn to for help, Nancy decided to return to Canada where her family lives.

Nancy was hopeful that she and her children would be finally safe. But NO! Her nightmare began again. Almost immediately, she had to flee her mother's home. Her ex-partner had returned to Canada and found her.

*Her safe haven was no longer safe. He threatened to harm her. He swore he would take her children away from her. The nightmare began again.*

Nancy came to The Redwood. She wanted to be safe and healthy for the birth of her baby. With time, Nancy found a strength she never had before. Because of generous donors like you, Nancy found the support she needed to heal. She began to process her custody and housing applications. With counselling, her depression started to lift.

She struggled with self-esteem anxieties because of the abuse she had experienced. But one night at The Redwood, she realized something amazing.



Nancy had attended a wedding earlier that day and she spoke about another guest telling her she looked beautiful.

Nancy said to her counsellor, **“I finally accepted the compliments without ignoring them. They said I am beautiful and I looked in the mirror and I said... it is true, I am beautiful.”**

This past autumn, the gift of a brand new life arrived for Nancy. A beautiful baby girl. Nancy returned from the hospital to find her room decorated to welcome her and her daughter. Because of your amazing gifts to The Redwood, Nancy's new baby had all the essentials — formula, diapers, onesies and more.

Thanks to your ongoing support Nancy and her three children were able to have a wonderful holiday season. Your love and warmth gave her new confidence and strength — she is beautiful! And now she sees that clearly.

Your determination to help moms and kids heal from violence has given this family a new chapter. Isolated, afraid, and traumatized, 2014 was perhaps the darkest year Nancy had ever seen. But now she and her children are starting off 2015 looking forward to their bright futures free from the threat of violence.

# ANTHEA SEES A BRIGHT FUTURE FOR WOMEN LEAVING VIOLENCE

*Inspired by their strength, her lasting gift will create a lifetime of new beginnings.*

Passionate Feminist. Tireless Advocate. Committed Educator. Inspiring Leader.

It's hard to imagine anyone who works with more dedication for ending violence against women than Anthea Windsor. She is an unshakable force for change and an incredible advocate for moms and kids leaving violence. In many ways, she is the inspiring foundation that The Redwood is built upon. Anthea retired from her long-standing position as President of the Board of Directors this past fall. Even still, her heart and soul are still devoted to helping women leaving violence in any way she can.

*"The Redwood has a huge place in my heart. And I am deeply moved by the courage, stamina and strength of the women and their children who seek its services. For me, it's a very inspiring place to be involved with,"* she says. We couldn't agree more. Joy and anticipation of new beginnings make up every day at The Redwood. Lives are changed here thanks to donors and volunteers like you and Anthea.

Anthea has made a further commitment to helping women and children leaving violence by choosing to include The Redwood in her will.

*"The Redwood provides important services to women and children who have the courage to risk many hardships by leaving an abusive relationship. It's such a comfort to me that these families will still benefit from my continued financial support in the future."*

*"While I don't have much money, I want to make sure that what I do have goes to both those I love and to those who have found the strength to start over,"* she says.



*"What's more, it's so easy to make a bequest: it only took me a few minutes to speak to my lawyer who adjusted my will so that — after taking care of all my loved ones and expenses — I could continue to contribute to The Redwood's determination to support women and children fleeing abuse."*

Anthea has chosen to reflect her support of The Redwood in her will with a legacy gift. Today, she invites you to do the same. Any gift left in your will, however large or small, will make a difference in the lives of women and children. You can help. Please consider making an investment in their bright futures by including The Redwood in your will.

*"I made the decision to include a gift to The Redwood in my will because I like to think of families continuing to benefit after I'm gone."*

For more information on leaving a gift to The Redwood in your will please visit [www.theredwood.com](http://www.theredwood.com) or contact **Wendy Bray, Fundraising Manager,** at (416) 533-9371 x 227 or [wbray@theredwood.com](mailto:wbray@theredwood.com)

# WITH HELP FROM YOU, SOME PENCILS, PAINT, AND PAPER... A DEDICATED VOLUNTEER HELPS KIDS SMILE AGAIN

## Meet Evan Tapper! Volunteer since 2004.

Evan brings his passions for art, healing, and social justice alive as a volunteer at The Redwood! He is a multi-media artist and he welcomes conversations about social issues with his art. Oppression, violence, and isolation are recurring themes in his work.

*"I once heard that working with children at shelters was a really important thing men could do to end violence against women. That stuck with me."*

Evan strongly believes in improving the lives of families who have experienced violence. He feels his time with The Redwood has been a perfect match!

His work with the children's program makes such a difference in the lives of kids and youth who have left violence. Evan brings excitement and fun to his art program. His enthusiasm inspires the biggest smiles in even the shyest kids.

*"When I moved to Toronto from Japan in 2004, I was so grateful to find The Redwood,"* he says. In The Redwood he found an opportunity to combine his professional art expertise and his passion for feminist community work. It was like a dream come to life for Evan.

*"We've made sculptures, paintings, mosaics, prints, architectural models, collages, puppets, and stop-motion animation. We look at books, video, and websites and learn about different artists. I've taken the group*



*to the AGO a few times and once to the Museum of Canadian Contemporary Art. An annual highlight for me is the holiday party for former residents. At the party, I volunteer drawing caricature portraits for the children who I used to help in the art program,"* he says.

Evan's amazing work as a volunteer with the children's program is just the beginning. He has increased his commitment

to helping women and children leaving violence by becoming a Redwood donor.

What made him decide to become a donor? He saw the difference it can make in a child's life. Support from a caring, safe environment like The Redwood can change lives. He saw shy, reserved, sad kids start his art program. Soon they became active participants who were excited, joyful, and renewed.

*"During their time at The Redwood a transformation occurs. The children laugh, play freely, talk about their experiences, and make great art. It's so nice to see them again at this new stage of their lives. They are always doing so well,"* he says.

After seeing this change, Evan knew he wanted to make a financial gift to help the kids. His hope is that they can continue to have this experience for years to come.

A special thanks to YOU — you help fund programming like Evan's for the kids at The Redwood! We couldn't continue to help women and children heal from violence without the ongoing support of our amazing community of volunteers and supporters!

YOU HELPED CREATE  
HOLIDAY MAGIC THIS  
YEAR AT THE REDWOOD!

Your support for the second year of our Safe Haven Store was so inspiring. You put so much love and care into selecting items for our families. All that love was felt throughout the holiday season. The days and nights were filled with laughter, fun, and priceless family time.

THE SMILES SHONE SO BRIGHTLY, WE COULD  
HAVE LIT UP THE DARKEST NIGHT SKY WITH  
THEIR JOY.

Our amazing volunteers supported us in countless ways. From trimming the trees in beautiful decorations, to music, art and gingerbread house-building activities for our holiday party. You made some beautiful holiday memories come alive this year! Thank you to all our volunteers for your dedication. You have truly made a difference.

Moms and kids had a great time with all the fun and excitement at The Redwood and out in the community as well! Families visited the National Ballet for a beautiful production of The Nutcracker. That magical day has become a holiday memory to cherish for everyone.

And everyone had an amazing time at Fantasy Fair! They had a wonderful day of adventure and fun at the



indoor amusement park. Kids rode the Ferris wheel, played midway games, and more. What a great way to spend time together during the winter break! We are so appreciative of our generous donors who made this possible.

WITHOUT YOU, WE COULD NEVER HAVE  
GIVEN THE FAMILIES AT THE REDWOOD  
SUCH A MAGICAL HOLIDAY. THANK YOU!

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