WHERE YOUR DONATIONS GO



Elise Monaghan Joubert

Every donation to Chez Doris helps us respond to the immediate and evolving needs of vulnerable women. While some gifts support specific programs, most contributions help address our **greatest needs,** giving us the flexibility to act quickly when urgent challenges arise.

A recent example is our Day Centre. When government-funded *halte chaleur* support ended on March 31, we chose to keep the Centre open 24 hours a day, providing a safe space for women who would otherwise have remained on the streets overnight. This was only possible because of donor support.

Your generosity also helps offset rising operating costs. As demand for our services continues to grow, so do the costs of providing meals, shelter, and essential support. Donor support allows us to meet women where they are and respond when they need us most.

Your support makes all the difference. By making a gift to Chez Doris today, you help ensure that vulnerable women have access to essential services, compassionate care, and a safe place to turn when they need it most.

Thank you for making this work possible.

Elise Monaghan Joubert
Director of Philanthropy

50 years
Chez DORIS

NEWS FROM CHEZ DORIS

COURRIER

For Our Donors and Partners

FALL 2026 EDITION



JOAN : A CHANCE TO BREATHE AGAIN

"There are still too many prejudices about homelessness. We don't always realize that sometimes just a few difficult events can turn a life upside down."

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NEW !

Holiday FAIR

DECEMBER 4, 5 & 6

This year, visit us at the Village de Noël de Montréal at Marché Atwater.

Come discover our handmade creations in a festive atmosphere while supporting women experiencing vulnerability and precarious circumstances.

Information: **chezdoris.org**

For any questions:
don-donation@chezdoris.org



50th anniversary

Sherry W.
Chez Doris client

This year, Chez Doris will celebrate a significant milestone in its history: its 50th anniversary.

Since 1977, thanks to your generosity and commitment, we have supported vulnerable women with compassion, respect, and dignity.



PREVENTION CHANGES LIVES: The Transitional Housing Residence is already seeing real success!

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THE IMPACT OF YOUR GENEROSITY: Your gifts help us meet women's essential needs

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PREVENTION CHANGES LIVES

There are moments that move us deeply and remind us why we do this work. One of them happened on the morning of the neighbourhood open house for our new Transitional Housing Residence on St-Hubert Street.

"What a relief!" said a woman who was already waiting at the door that morning, just as it opened. She told me how grateful she was to have finally found a place where she might be able to put down her bags, catch her breath, and have a roof over her head. She wasn't just looking for shelter—she needed a chance to regain stability, a sense of dignity and a little peace of mind.

Her story reminds us that no one is immune to precarity. Because her immigration status prevented her from accessing the Rent Supplement Program (PSL), she would not normally have been eligible to stay at the residence. Thanks to the support of our donors, however, we were able to set aside nine rooms outside the program and open the door to her. I still remember how moved I was as I welcomed her. In moments like these, we see the importance of our mission and the very real impact your donations can have in a woman's life.

A few months later, the first results from the St-Hubert Street residence confirmed our hopes. Women are finding the support they need to regain their footing, at their own pace. Some have already met the goals they had set for themselves and are now continuing on their own path. One of them has even regained custody of her children and found housing where she can rebuild her family life.

These successes remind us of one essential truth:

"Stepping in before a situation gets worse makes all the difference."

At Chez Doris, we support women at different stages in their journey, from the Day Centre to permanent housing. With the new Transitional Housing Residence on St-Hubert Street, we have added a crucial bridge in this continuum of services. We can now welcome women who need a safe environment for a few months, while they complete an administrative process, find housing, stabilize their situation or simply catch their breath.



Diane Pilote

And the needs are very real. Over the summer, our team welcomed new faces. Several women told us about their unsuccessful efforts to find affordable, safe housing. Others feared eviction or were trying to hold on to what little stability they still had. This reality reminds us every day why prevention matters.

That commitment is also what drives me. I continue to speak with government authorities, institutional partners and decision-makers to secure the future of our services and develop new solutions for women. Needs are growing, realities are becoming more complex, and we have a collective responsibility to make sure resources keep pace.

I am also proud to see community organizations in the field joining their voices more than ever. Together, we are working to ensure people recognize the distinct reality of women's homelessness and understand that investing in community organizations is not an expense, but a concrete way to prevent crises and offer women real prospects for the future.

"When a woman can keep her home and stay off the street—or when she regains her autonomy—it can change the whole course of her life. Often, it can change her family's future too."

None of this would be possible without you. I want to thank you sincerely for your trust, support and generosity.

We are now redoubling our efforts to open the Fulford Residence as early as possible in 2028, so we can offer that same opportunity to even more women. Because no woman should face such a turning point alone.

Diane Pilote
Executive Director, Chez Doris

JOAN : CATCHING HER BREATH

When you meet Joan, she is far from the image many people still associate with homelessness. A university graduate, she worked for many years as a technical writer. Like many other women, she had built her life around work, responsibilities and plans for the future. Nothing had prepared her for a time when she would be the one asking for help.

Yet, over time, the difficulties began to mount. Losing her job marked a turning point. Despite an active job search and numerous interviews, she was unable to find another position. Then came the isolation of the pandemic, health concerns and the death of her faithful companion of 17 years, her dog. As she faced one ordeal after another, the stability she had counted on began to crumble.

"People still have so many misconceptions about homelessness," she explains. "We don't always realize that sometimes just a few life setbacks can turn a life upside down."

Once her Employment Insurance benefits were exhausted, Joan could no longer afford her rent. She stayed for a while with a friend, convinced it would only be temporary and that she would soon find work again. Like many women we meet at Chez Doris, she held on for as long as she could, believing that a solution would eventually appear.

Then came the moment when she no longer knew where to go.

It was through another woman that Joan first learned about Chez Doris. She did not really know what to expect, but she still remembers the relief she felt when she walked through the organization's doors for the first time. At that point, the idea of going to a mixed shelter worried her deeply. Although she had not experienced violence herself, she worried about spending the night somewhere she would feel vulnerable.

"I felt safe right away," she says. "The staff were so kind and welcoming. For the first time in a long time, I was able to sleep and catch my breath."



Joan R.
Chez Doris client

Feeling safe may sound simple. Yet for a woman who has just lost her bearings and does not know where she will sleep, it is essential. A place designed for women can welcome them without judgment, help them rebuild trust, and become a first step toward rebuilding their lives.

In the months that followed, Chez Doris gave Joan the support she needed to get through this difficult period. The team helped her with administrative steps and with access to different services. When she finally moved into her housing, she received clothing and essential items to set up her new space and gradually find her bearings again.

Today, Joan lives in a Chez Doris residence. She speaks with gratitude about the team that supported her and the women she sees every day. After a period of isolation, she is slowly rediscovering the joy of being with others. She also participates in the women's committee, which gives her a chance to build new connections and keep moving forward at her own pace. She also wants to thank donors and share how much the hygiene products and prepaid grocery cards she receives each month are a real help and mean a lot to her.

Although some challenges remain, Joan now looks to the future with greater confidence. This fall, she will begin a pre-employability program in cooking that could open the door to a new career. When asked about her greatest dream, she answers without hesitation: to travel to Egypt and see the pyramids with her own eyes.

Her story reminds us that homelessness has no single face. It also reminds us that beyond housing, what women often need most is a place where they can catch their breath, rebuild confidence and look ahead. Thanks to the generosity of our donors, women like Joan can begin rebuilding their lives and start believing in the future again.