

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

We are the Jefferies' family. My name is Lesley, my husband is Lance. We have three children, Brett -16, Neil -14 and Morgan -11.

Sixteen years ago our son Brett was born with a rare form of cerebral palsy, called lissencephaly, roughly translated, "smooth brain" and a seizure disorder, which thankfully is now under control. We were told he would not to live past two years old, and here we are, so many years later, grateful for every day we have been given with him.



When as a Mom, I chose to stay at home to raise our children, I was not expecting to have the challenges that Brett would bring to our family. Brett is quadriplegic and non-verbal. He needs our assistance for every movement, every function. The limitations of his little body demand that either Lance or I be available to assist him day and night.

The level of care Brett requires means Lance and I do not have evenings out. We do not pop out for coffee with friends or even a quick trip to the store for milk. We cannot expect his brother, sister or other family members to look after him and to call on a neighbor would be asking too much.

Living an hour outside of Ottawa, the Rotary Home is the only source of respite or care giving we have. Along with regularly scheduled visits we have peace of mind just knowing that the Rotary Home is a phone call away, if we need them.

I found it very hard dropping Brett off at the Rotary Home the first time. I had never left him with anyone else, ever. What about all the things we do for Brett like feedings, dressing, bathing, medications...cuddles? I found it hard to believe that anyone was capable of looking after him as well as I could. We could not have been more wrong. Brett is catered to when he goes to the Rotary Home!

When I drop Brett off, I am always amazed at the activities they have planned and the opportunities they offer the children. We are always met at the door with huge smiles from the staff and the other children. I will never forget the time I went to pick Brett up after a visit, only to be told that he had been out in a paddle boat on Dow's Lake. Brett's brother and sister wanted to know why they had never been in one and Brett had.

The Rotary Home gives us a chance to recharge our batteries and it enables us to do family things with our other two children. We are able to schedule family vacations and outings around Brett's visits. I don't have to worry about all those routine things we normally spend doing for Brett, or his "singing" that I have to admit can get too loud...especially when he's having a sleepless night. I always say that Brett is getting a much needed break from us too.

Brett has been a part of the Rotary Home family or, perhaps I should say, the Rotary Home has been a huge and very important part of our family, for over eleven years. Now, I cannot imagine our lives without the wonderful, caring staff.

Please support the Angel Campaign. Keep Brett and our family, along with the other Rotary Home children, smiling. Our families would be incomplete without the love of the Rotary Home family.

Thank you and Happy Holidays!

Lesley

The Ottawa Rotary Home Angel Campaign. 30 Rochester Street, Ottawa Ontario, K1R 7V3 613-837-7376

Lesley and Lance are not extraordinary people. They are a quiet, charming couple who wanted a family. But life is not always what it seems and when Brett was born what should have been another lovely chapter to their story became a frightening lesson in reality. Being told Brett had Cerebral Palsy and a seizure disorder was ...unthinkable! *Life...parenting...marriage...*none of it was going to be what they thought it would be.

It is easy for parents like Lesley to become consumed by the care of their child. Even as babies a child with Cerebral Palsy can be very difficult to feed and can often be inconsolable. Not many people are comfortable handling a child with special physical and medical needs. Many parents, especially mothers, become isolated. It is not a healthy way to live and many marriages do not survive the first few years.

Lesley was right when she said nobody can replace the care and love children receive from their parents. But they know a child needs healthy parents and siblings. They needed to be a part of their extended family, shop without watching the clock or just go on a date. So, when Lance and Lesley were ready, The Rotary Home was ready to welcome them.

Brett has spent upwards of 80 weeks or 400 nights sleeping at The Rotary Home in the past 11 years and has seen many transformations to the Home. His friends and favorite staff (*Sarah*) are still there, but now there is a team of nurses who care for his friends who are dependent on technology to stay well. The house had some renovations a few years ago but the bedrooms haven't been painted for some time and could use sprucing up. Given the number of nights he's spent in them, it seemed fitting that proceeds from this Angel Campaign be used to repaint the children's bedrooms, bathrooms and connecting hallway with exciting vibrant colour over the holidays.

You can help fill the Rotary Home with Angels this holiday season and bring a spark of colour to Brett and his friends next year. There are so many ways to participate. Please take a moment to consider how much your gift could mean to those who need us to be there for them.

How can you help bring a spark of colour to Brett and his friends this year?

- **Return the enclosed response card** along with your gift or make a gift online at orhfoundation.ca.
For every \$10.00 donation we will hang an Angel in your name at the Rotary Home.
- **Purchase Angel greeting cards** in packages of 10 for \$10.00. Cards as seen here are available at the Ottawa Rotary Home or by contacting the Foundation at 613- 837-7376 or by email at orhfoundation.on.aibn.com.
(Non-denominational cards are also available)
- **“Simplify Your Holiday Gift Giving.”** When you make a donation of \$10.00 for each person on your gift-giving list, the Foundation will mail personalized holiday greetings *from you* stating that a donation has been made in their name to the children of the Ottawa Rotary Home.
- Present the enclosed form to any Teller at participating **TD Canada Trust** location and ask to have your gift deposited directly to The Ottawa Rotary Home Foundation - Angel Account.

