

Happenings

WE BELIEVE IN PEOPLE

Volume 1, Edition 2



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A MESSAGE FROM JANET



Thank you for reading our latest news at Community Living Oakville in this edition of *Happenings*.

We were pleased to announce on October 4th, 2019 that we received a three year accreditation from the Council on Quality and Leadership (CQL). Thank you to our Management Team for the work and self-assessment that was completed prior to CQL spending four days with us from October 1st to 4th to complete their assessment. We are proud to begin the journey of continuous improvement with CQL, and thankful to have their partnership.

Those who follow us through social media will have noted the broad array of experiences that people who use our services have chosen, and enjoyed over the last several months. Our sincere appreciation goes to all of the sponsors and supporters of the golf tournament as the funds raised have subsidized the costs of several opportunities, and ensured that everyone has access to new experiences.

At our annual Employee Appreciation event in June 2019 we celebrated milestone anniversaries with forty-five employees, including five who have been with Community Living Oakville for 25 Years.

Work is commencing on the development of our next three year Strategic Plan as we complete the current plan which will end in March 2020. A new Committee of the Board, CLO 2.0, has been tasked with considering our physical facilities and plans for growth that will serve our community well over the coming ten to twenty years. A variety of exciting options are being explored.

Thank you to those who attended our Annual General Meeting and 65th Anniversary Celebration on September 30th. We are very pleased to have a capable Board of Directors who bring a wealth of experience and skills to their leadership role. We are navigating challenges and opportunities during these changing times, and Community Living Oakville will benefit greatly from the commitment of our Board of Directors and workforce.

We hope you enjoy our newsletter, and welcome your input, feedback and suggestions.

Janet Lorimer
Executive Director

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CELEBRATING MILESTONES & NEW BEGINNINGS



Kaitlin Nesbitt is celebrating both a 15 Year Employment Milestone at Halton Region and a new employment position at Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital.

Surrounded by her colleagues and parents, Kaitlin was recently surprised with a 15 Year Recognition celebration at Halton Region. Sandy, the Director of Children Services presented Kaitlin with the framed signed certificate on behalf of Gary Carr, Halton Region Chair. Kaitlin considers Halton Region her “second home” and was honoured to also receive a memory book filled with pictures and stories shared by her cherished supervisor Andrea and colleagues over the years.

All of the office staff and Kaitlin’s work colleagues attended. They had many wonderful things to share in regards to having her on board and spoke of how much she is appreciated within their department. She makes an impression on everyone she works with. One colleague expressed, “I have learned so much from Kait” and another shared “we just love her.”

As a Program Assistant at Halton Region, Kaitlin’s duties include filing, preparing and sorting various packaging, ensuring that printers are maintained and fully stocked, inputting computer data and always keeping client confidentiality.

Kaitlin would like to acknowledge the Halton Region Children’s Services team who have been incredibly supportive and have encouraged and mentored her personal growth. They have set an extraordinary example. Kaitlin further stated “they are like

family to me...I go to work every time happy and ready for the day.”

In September, Kaitlin was also hired in the food services department at Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital. This environment, however, is not new to Kaitlin as she has been a dedicated volunteer at the hospital for 16 years! Serving many important roles, some of her volunteer duties have included: being a greeter for the welcome team, completing charting duties, acting as a transporter, volunteering as part of the outpatient rehabilitation unit and as a HELPP Lottery volunteer.

In Kaitlin’s newest employment role within food services, duties include: preparing and delivering dinner trays and sanitizing dishware, kitchen items and machinery. Her Food Services position is currently in the training stages but she has already gained many skills. Kaitlin’s motivation to succeed will continue to bring many more rewarding years at Halton Region, as well as valuable experience with her new venture at Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital.



RAISE YOUR VOICE COUNCIL

Raise Your Voice Council (RYVC) kicked off the Fall Season by hosting the third Annual Community of Voices Everywhere (COVE) Conference Glitz & Glam held on Saturday September 14th at the Sheridan Conference Centre. Council members worked alongside self-advocates from Community Living Oakville, Community Living Burlington and Central West Specialized Developmental Services to plan and run the half day of interactive opportunities, enjoyed by approximately 150 people from across Halton Region.

All our guests received a red carpet welcome along with their pictures taken at the Hollywood style photo booth. Four interactive workshops followed the introductory speeches given by Members of the Raise Your Voice Council. Our very own RYVC members ran the Spin to Win Workshop, which involved teams competing for points. On spinning the wheel, the teams were quizzed on healthy relationships. Thanks to the game show hosts and scorers for making this workshop such a fun success: Andrea Cervin- Lawry, Joel Layne, Greg Kozak, Michelle Francis, Sammy Rose, Sarah Connor, Robin Coster, Anna Merola and Steven Cranstone.

In another workshop, participants got a chance to increase their photography skills with a photo scavenger hunt around the building. Purple Stage Door took delegates on an acting experience, whilst Heryka Miranda, from Oak Park Neighbourhood Centre, led everyone to creatively explore their dreams. After the Workshops, guests relaxed on the sunny terrace and enjoyed a catered BBQ before ending the evening with a Karaoke session.

On October 8th, elections were held for all positions on the Raise Your Voice Council. Over the next 2 years members new to the Council will be able to take part in many new experiences whilst advocating for others. Congratulations to the following elected members:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Chair: | Andrea Cervin-Lawry |
| Vice Chair: | Cody Prevett |
| Secretary: | Whitney Lichaz |
| Treasurer: | Marty Copland |
| Fundraisers: | Sammy Rose and Robin Coster |
| Events/Training Coordinators: | Joel Layne and Steven Cranstone |
| Members at Large: | Sarah Connor, Sue McLachlan, Greg Kozak, Michelle Francis, Claudia Hibbert, Larry Watson, Serena Lupson, Randy Bates |

After the success of last year, the Holiday Market Place will return to 301 Wyecroft Road. Everyone (individuals, homes, and departments) is encouraged to make some unique handmade items to sell as holiday gifts.

Thanks yet again to all the volunteers that make the events organised by the Raise Your Voice Council so successful.



MEET ELISHA...



Golf and finding a job have many similarities, they require precise and focused preparation, the ability to reset after a bad shot or interview and being able to maintain a positive attitude throughout. Meet Elisha Donahay-Johnston, who spent most of her summer not just practicing golf for the Special Olympics but also applying to jobs, going for interviews, and sending 'Thank you' emails. When everyone around is making the best of their summer, here is Elisha who is working towards achieving her dreams.

As they say with hard work and dedication, anything is possible and guess what, Elisha's hard work paid off when she got a call from Fortino's to join their team as Cashier.

Initially Elisha applied to the PC express position at the Fortino's on Neagawa. A telephone interview with the hiring manager made them believe that she was a better fit for the Customer Service cashier position at the store. The job coach at Community Living Oakville then set up three separate work trials with the Manager. These work trials are more like trying on new clothes to see if it is the best fit. These work trials would give Elisha a better perspective of what the job demands and if that is what she enjoys doing.



Community Living Oakville has been collaborating with Fortino's for over 15 years.

Founded in 1961, John Fortino an immigrant steel worker and his siblings opened their first store in Hamilton. Today it has gained a reputation of being a 'Supermarket with a Heart'; from the owner to the management team to the team members, Fortino's treats their employees with heart. Working with the abilities of the people we support, accommodating job trials to ensure it is a good fit, and assisting during on boarding and the training period, Fortino's ensures the new team member feels welcome and ready to work.

Elisha is thrilled to start her new adventure at Fortino's and even more thrilled to see her savings go up.

In Henry Ford's words: "Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success."

If you would like to work towards success and need support in finding a job please contact the Supported Employment Team at 905-844-0146, ext. 251. We are here to help!



SAVE THE DATES: (Open to all)

- **November 29th (1pm to 4pm)**
Holiday MarketPlace
301 Wyecroft Rd
- **December TBA**
Annual Pizza and Movie Night



Visit the Raise Your Voice Council Facebook page (www.facebook.com/raiseyourvoicecouncil) for the latest information and photos from past events.

Would you like to join the Raise Your Voice Council or have any questions?

Talk to any of the above members or email Stephanie Butcher (Stephanie.butcher@oakcl.org).





In a busy classroom of enthusiastic students on the first floor of the Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital, a Halton District School Board teacher led a lively discussion recently on the concept of Mudita – a Sanskrit word for the joy that comes from delighting in the well-being of others. Many thoughtful ideas came from the discussion including an insight from one student who said Mudita was key to “unlocking your motivation.” The class was silent as the impact of that statement settled. That thoughtful insight was from a student named Marlo, as he reflected aloud to the class on what it means to share in the joy of others and the impact it can have on our lives.

The program Marlo is part of, along with several other bright and talented young students in their final year of high school, is a community partnership called Project SEARCH. The program was developed at Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center in Ohio in 1996 and there are now over 600 Project SEARCH host sites around the world. The primary focus of the Project SEARCH partnership is to simulate a true work environment in a safe and supportive manner for students (interns) to develop marketable job skills training leading to meaningful competitive employment in the community upon completion of the program. This new partnership between Community Living Oakville, Halton Healthcare (with Oakville Trafalgar Memorial hospital as host site), the Halton District School Board, and other community .

Project SEARCH offers a unique opportunity for young people with intellectual disabilities and barriers to employment to participate in real-life internships to gain hands-on learning in the workplace alongside a team of skilled mentors, skills trainers, and a special education instructor who also acts as a program coordinator. Skills trainers provide job coaching and conduct task analysis of each internship to determine essential tasks, duties, and core skills needed to be successful in their role. Interns also have the opportunity to identify personal goals for each internship and the team collaborates closely to monitor progress and work with interns to help achieve these goals.

Students participate in 3 different 10-week internships at the host site with an eye to goal setting, expanding and building on their various roles, and mastering new skills as they build confidence and self-esteem. Internships are carefully selected with input from the intern, skills assessment and job matching, and observations of trained staff. Through this collaborative process great care is given to selecting the right fit for the intern to ensure a meaningful and successful experience.

From the outset of the program launch on September 3rd of this year, it was clear that our young interns were eager to learn and ready to invest in the program and in themselves. Following a recent meeting with a manager offering an internship, one student was quite excited about getting started and was asked why he was so joyful. He replied, “I don’t know, I just like being who I am.” That joy, that Mudita, is indicative of Project SEARCH and, as pointed out by our student, Marlo, leads to unlocking motivation and developing skills and realizing potential for the future.

We would like to acknowledge RBC Future Launch and the TELUS Friendly Future Foundation for their support in allowing us to flourish this successful project. For more information about Project SEARCH Canada, please visit: www.projectsearchcanada.org

WHAT IS SELF-ADVOCACY?

Self-advocacy means you are able to ask for what you need and want and tell people about your thoughts and feelings. Self-advocacy means you know your rights and responsibilities, you speak-up for your rights, and you are able to make choices and decisions that affect your life. (selfadvocatenet.com)

Meet Steven Cranstone - Steven is an excellent example of self-advocacy at its best.

I had the pleasure to work with Steven this summer. Steven knows himself, is great at promoting himself; his skills and more importantly his needs. Steven is not shy about looking up services, resources and asking for help.

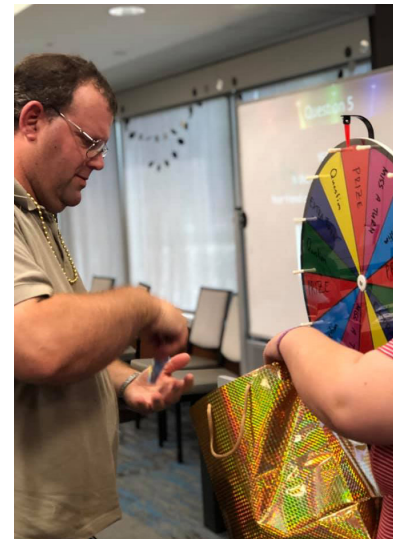
He enjoys his new home and takes great pride in it. Steven always extended me the courtesy to help address any issues that arose, however, if I was not quick enough to address something or if he was not satisfied with the outcome, Steven would take matters into his own hands and look for alternative options. Steven is a great example of many others supported who value making personalized choices and wish to live independently. Steven has great natural family supports in his life, who have encouraged him from a very young age to make informed choices and to advocate for himself.

One of the best memories I have while spending time with Steven, was a text I received from him to “come to Tim Hortons right away please” and that it was an “urgent meeting.” Upon my arrival and much to my surprise, Steven had invited a Rotary Club member from the Rotary Club - Oakville Trafalgar. Steven conducted the meeting very professionally, made the introductions and got into the nuts and bolts of the meeting right away. He said, “the group home I live in does not have a van as we don’t have money for it. The Rotary Club has money and can give us a van, now talk to each other.”

It is admirable that Steven takes the initiative, identifies a need and tries to address it. The Rotary Club member was very impressed and we spent well over an hour discussing options.

With characteristic enthusiasm, Steven also decided that he would like to learn more about using his voice to advocate further for himself and others. So, in February he began to attend the monthly Raise Your Voice Council meetings as a guest and contribute to the discussions. This eagerness led him to become involved in planning for the recent COVE Conference: Glitz & Glam. Steven was one of the team members to present the Spin The Wheel to Win: Healthy Relationship Workshop to the many guests who attended. Recently, Steven also had the opportunity to stand for a position on the Raise Your Voice Council and was elected as the joint Events Training Coordinator with his colleague Joel Layne. Steven’s keenness will make him a valuable member on the newly elected Council.

Self-advocacy is a skill that is developed and it takes practice. For those that are interested in practicing self-advocacy; Steven has very generously offered his time to mentor and support others in practicing this skill or providing feedback.



If you have any questions about sponsorship, registration, volunteering or to be added to the email list for future CLO events, please contact Tina Eidukaitis via email at tina.eidukaitis@oakcl.org.



GROWING COMMUNITY

Winter is snowy and extremely cold, and unless you have winter hobbies like, snowboarding, snowshoeing or skiing, it can be a long boring season. Many people look forward to the snow melting and witnessing the leaves and flowers grow, this signals a new season, a new chapter, a new adventure and to those with a green thumb it signals the start of a season of wonder and anticipation.

In the early spring, Community Living Oakville purchased five community garden plots at Lyons Lane Community Garden for people to plant and harvest their own vegetables. These gardens provide a true sense of community where complete strangers, many with an exceptional green thumb, come together to help and ensure all the gardens are able to flourish.

Surprisingly, a few people have never been able to grow their own vegetables; a staple of life so many of us would take for granted, yet a great opportunity for people to grow and enjoy their own food from a simple seed.

On the summer garden menu: zucchini, cucumbers, squash, pumpkin, peppers, red onions, radish, cherry tomatoes, heirloom tomatoes, peas, carrots and herbs- basil, chives and rosemary. For even a seasoned gardener this would be a task, but everyone was up for the challenge.

After doing some research, it seemed like the 3rd week in May was the best time to start, as frost is

no longer a threat. Warren, Ben, Justin, Joel, Mark and his brother Tim spent a few days at the garden, designing a plan, preparing the soil, marking boundaries for cultivation, digging up and turning the soil, weeding and planting. Once all the preparation work was completed- we waited and waited and waited...

Weekly trips to the garden to weed, water and visit with our friendly neighbouring gardeners became a tradition. Unable to make it one week during the summer, we thought the weeds would have taken over the whole place, thankfully one of our neighbours realized we could not make it so he weeded the garden for us, a true sense of community, everyone working together for one common goal.

The garden adventure proved to be a successful one. Hard work, dedication, and teamwork truly worked in our favour. We have been lucky to use the vegetables cultivated to make pizzas, and zucchini bread- a fan favourite made many times.

With a new sense of community and giving back, (and since there was an abundance of luscious herbs and vegetables) we shared the wealth and gave to Breakfast and Culinary Clubs making delicious home made meals. In turn, everyone has enjoyed the fruits of labour and love created from a simple seed.

As a new season approaches, a new adventure awaits!



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2019



September 30th marked the day of our 2018-2019 Annual General Meeting. This was a time not only to review details and operations from the past year, yet a time to celebrate all of Community Living Oakville's successes and our 65th anniversary!

People supported, board members, members, families and staff all came together for the meeting and also enjoyed a year end slideshow and videos of memorable moments. Guests were further treated and delighted by the delicious food provided by our culinary team, as well as a 65th celebratory anniversary cake.

Peter Nesbitt was officially welcomed as our new Board Chair for a three-year term and Barry Thompson was thanked for his tremendous support and dedication as former Board Chair. Board Members were also officially elected and thanked for their commitment in governing our agency. At this year's event, we further recognized and celebrated Brenda Kerr for her generous support in volunteering with Community Living Oakville and presented her with the Bruce-Lynn Award for Excellence in Volunteering.

We also welcomed a presentation from Katherine Thompson and Kate Matos from the Halton Social Capital Committee. Katherine and Kate shared their goals for the committee with all of us and wish to educate local businesses and partners within Halton to ensure that all people 'experience an equal sense of belonging in the community.'

FUNDRAISING BBQ



The smell of summer usually includes a hint of BBQ, so we hosted a summer kick off with our Annual Fundraising BBQ held at 301 Wycroft Road.

Neighbouring businesses, passers-by, people supported and employees joined together for a \$5 BBQ lunch cooked up by our on site Chef's in waiting Ivan and Pierre- who operated the BBQs all day!

A major THANK YOU goes out to our closest neighbours- Mercedes-Benz Oakville Autohaus. It is safe to say the majority of their employees attended to support us. They went beyond and sent a mini bus to pick up their employees from their remote locations to ensure they were able to join us!

We are so thankful to everyone who came out to support us. \$500 was raised and all proceeds from this event went towards costs of our Annual Picnic in the Park and because of everyone's contributions Community Living Oakville was able to host people we support, families and employees at Coronation Park for an afternoon of games, Caricature Drawings, Laughter Yoga, and more food.

Again, Thank You to all neighbouring businesses and others who stopped by, we greatly appreciate your support!

TAKING ACCESSIBILITY TO NEW HEIGHTS

Community Living Oakville, powered by their very own media team 'In The Loop Media' are challenging others to promote and expand people's views in regards to accessibility.



Over the past year, the In The Loop Media team; comprised of talented reporters who have a developmental disability, have been meeting with local businesses, community partners and public attractions. The team has been putting accessibility to the test as the province is working towards the goal of an accessible Ontario by 2025. Via social media, we educate the public by encouraging others to come on board and make Ontario Accessible.

On September 16th, 2019, Community Living Oakville's Executive Director Janet Lorimer, along with members from the In The Loop Media Team took accessibility to new heights as they

experienced the CN Tower Edgewalk. This is the world's highest full-circle hands-free walk - 116 storeys above ground. For those interested, the CN Tower Edgewalk also offers the Accessible Wheelchair EdgeWalk Experience, providing full accessibility to all of their customers.

We cannot do this alone; we need your help ensuring we have an Accessible Ontario by 2025 therefore:

The In The Loop Media Team, challenges ALL OF YOU to become leaders and to

'Take Accessibility To New Heights', Hope to see you there!





It's safe to say our In The Loop Media teams have had a busy and exciting few months. Over the last while, we have interviewed some amazing people about accessibility and inclusion and have taken on new experiences.

To start, we met with Tim Park; Manager of Long & McQuade Musical Instruments in Burlington who with Yorkville Sound have agreed to loan Community Living Oakville some amazing music and sound equipment! Our team went to the Burlington location and were amazed by how many instruments and gear they had waiting for us! The team took lots of photos and celebrated this generosity on our social media pages.

Social Media is our way of getting our voices heard, therefore we reached out to Digital Marketing Specialists Ally and Lindsay from The Happy Place (www.thehappyplace.com) to learn a few tips and tricks to enhance our social media game. They both brought forward a lot of information and useful ideas. We are very grateful to have had them present and teach us how to create better social media. Ally enjoyed her visit so much she has agreed to join us on our adventures as a volunteer and will continue to support and teach us. We couldn't be happier to have her on board.

Accessibility is also important to us. We have teamed up with Justin Moy from Green Pink & Yellow Productions who has provided us with experience behind the camera and in the editing suite to create some professional video content. Over the past few months, we have gone on some extreme adventures that are all accessible and captured some thrilling moments to share with our followers.

In September, the media team had an opportunity to take flight over Niagara Falls with Niagara Helicopter tours. Katherine was hesitant to give it a try but decided she would use the opportunity to overcome her fear. We had an excited crew who were ready to show how accessible and how scenic the tour is. After takeoff, the helicopter did a spin and we were off! It was a beautiful day with clear skies and sunshine so the views were clear and excitement level was high. In the end, Katherine was very proud of herself as she overcame her fear. By following us on social media, you can get a glimpse of this amazing shot and experience, edited by Justin Moy.

On July 30th, we had the pleasure to meet an amazing man named Michael Jacques who wrote the book 'Can't read, Can't write, Here's my book.' Michael is a compassionate and determined young adult with autism and an intellectual disability. His book—which is written by using speech to text, is a down-to-earth collection of compelling life stories and discoveries that teach us how to embrace and celebrate our differences. Michael, who never surrenders to the idea of 'can't' speaks about topics such as: learning, inclusion, advocating, independence and the power of perseverance. If you are interested in purchasing his book, copies can be found at Sobeys locations in Ontario and the Atlantic Provinces.



IN THE LOOP MEDIA (CONT'D)

Our teams get extra excited for the end of August when Canada's largest annual community event takes place over the 18 days leading up to and including Labour Day. The Canadian National Exhibition is Canada's largest community event, attracting more than 1.5 million visitors every summer. Over the past three years, they have worked diligently with a number of accessibility experts to improve accessibility and inclusivity at the CNE at all levels, from employment through to admission and customer service. We were fortunate to meet with the Accessibility Initiatives Assistant, Florence Roudbarani who spoke with us about inclusive hiring and the importance of accessibility at the CNE.

Our thrill seeking reporters were looking for another challenge, therefore when Whirlpool Jet Boat Tours were mentioned everyone was 'in.' This was another opportunity to share something with our followers that anyone could do. We also made sure to mention a few tips for people considering this tour as YOU WILL GET WET! Most importantly, however, you will have a lot of fun.

One of the most accessible places to our surprise, was the Niagara Parks Butterfly Conservatory. We learnt a lot on this tour and as Joseph B. Wirthlin puts it "as with the butterfly, adversity is necessary to build character in people." This quote was a great reminder for all of us on our visit. At the Butterfly Conservatory, we felt as if we were transported to a tropical paradise full of lush vegetation, trickling waterfalls and thousands of vibrantly coloured butterflies. Over 2,000 butterflies, made up of 45 different species. It was a great place to relax and also take photos of the many gentle and beautiful varieties. If you are lucky you might even have one land on you.

On September 11th, we visited the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF). This festival has become one of the most beloved cinematic events in the world, universally regarded as an ideal platform for filmmakers to launch their careers and to premiere their new work. The festival has been described as "the most important film festival in the world — the largest, the most influential, the most inclusive." (Liam Lacey - The Globe and Mail) We found this to be true as we have had members of our teams volunteer with TIFF in the past. When we visited TIFF Bell Lightbox we also interviewed a talented young man with autism volunteering there. They are definitely inclusive and with more people with disabilities having roles in major motion pictures, we are certain the world is seeing how being inclusive and embracing diversity makes everything (including film and tv) better.

We would also like to congratulate Erinn Burse; In The Loop Reporter, for her award at the Star Awards Gala. Erinn won an award for her amazing work and skills she has developed with In The Loop Media. We couldn't be more proud. We would also like to extend a special thank you to James Montague for inviting In The Loop Media to cover the Star Awards Gala this year. We were happy to be a part of such a positive event with so many wonderful people. Well done James and all that were involved in making your event a success. We further would like to congratulate our good friend Matteo Esposito for receiving an award for his production 'Sorting It Out.'

As always we will continue to deliver positive content following our 'GOOD NEWS For A Change' motto. Our followers can rest assure that they will continue to find uplifting stories to brighten their day. So stay 'in the loop' and follow us on Instagram, Facebook, Youtube, Twitter, and now TikTok!

 /intheloopmedia

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 /inthelooper



A VACATION TO REMEMBER



I can't remember the last time I took a vacation; but this summer was a blast when I took a trip to Kingston and Ottawa. I stayed in a beautiful hotel and saw many memorable sights. I had so much fun, that I did not feel like going home and wished my vacation lasted another week!

In the historical city of Ottawa, I visited many old buildings and enjoyed the sights. I visited the Parliament Buildings, Warship Museum, National Library and saw many statues of national leaders and former soldiers. Not only did I enjoy the view on land, but on the water as I took a one-hour tour on the Lady Dive Amphibus. This bus was amazing as it can travel both on land as a bus and transforms into a boat. We passed by many popular landmarks such as the Byward Market, Rideau Hall and the official residence of Justin Trudeau. This experience was very exciting.

One of my other favourite memories on this trip was visiting Kingston. Here, I toured around the city on a bus tour, taking in all of the busy streets and famous landmarks. I also had the opportunity to go on a 1000 Island sunset dinner cruise. We boarded at the Crawford Wharf Dock at Confederation Park which was an amazing view of the water and landscape. This three hour cruise also had live music and a delicious four course meal. It was a wonderful experience cruising down the St. Lawrence River and was a great way to end my summer vacation.

UNITED WAY HALTON & HAMILTON 4TH ANNUAL PLANE PULL



On Saturday September 7th, Community Living Oakville pulled together for their community and raised money for the United Way Halton & Hamilton. At the other end of the rope was a 200,000 pound airplane; weighing the equivalent of five buses.

The UPS 'Browntail' Airbus A300 is one of the workhorses in UPS' massive fleet. Pulling this 200,000 pound plane helped change more than 200,000 lives of those most in need across our community.

Our team CLO Chargers, won 2nd place with a time of 23 seconds! This was the 4th annual plane pull organized by the United Way of Halton & Hamilton and UPS Canada, held at John C. Munro Hamilton International Airport.



CLO SUMMER PICNIC



There is just something about being out in nature, hanging out with friends and family and eating some delicious food –that is what having a picnic is all about.

Community Living Oakville had their annual picnic at the Coronation Park (our favourite spot) this year. The weather worked with us, a gentle breeze off the lake made for a comfortable time to enjoy each other's company in an informal setting. Thanks to the organizing committee, the Chef's in charge of the grill, Ivan and Pierre, and volunteers who pulled off attending to over 160 amazing people.

Moreover, for entertainment we had laughter yoga. A certified laughter yoga teacher Kathryn Kimmins from 'Laugh yourself Healthy' conducted short workshops. She took partici-

pants through inclusive exercises and explained the benefits of laughter both in physical and emotional wellbeing. Laughter, even deliberately induced laughter, not only provides emotional satisfaction, but also significant physiological benefits and relaxation. So I guess, we had extremely relaxed and happy people at the end of the sessions.

The success of this event goes out to the generous donations from Maple Lodge Farms and the proceeds of the BBQ lunch event that took place earlier in the summer at 301 Wyecroft. We thank each and everyone who helped us raise the funds and cooked some delicious meals. Everyone was in a good mood and seemed to be having a great time!

See you next summer!



CODY'S CIGAR GOALS

'He who is not courageous enough to take risks will accomplish nothing in life....' Mohammad Ali

Winston Churchill acquired a love of cigars while stationed in Cuba, a pleasure carried later into life where he would carefully insert a paperclip into the length of the cigar to keep ash from falling. A practice causing anxiety in foreign dignitaries negotiating international agreements, as the ash grew longer and longer and much to everyone's consternation, did not drop.

Cody's annual meeting works best over dinner where he would review his past year and set the course for the next. This year Cody wanted to try something different, a meeting over a leisurely cigar to support creative discussion about the coming year. The formula worked for Churchill.

We reviewed the surgeon general's warning about smoking and hazards – good information. We are aware of the risks of cigar smoke, balanced the evidence, and after informing Cody of potential perils of smoking the cigar, accept his informed choice. Always up for a little nonconventional thinking he decides we will proceed and experience doing things differently.

As we research, we learn Cuban Cigars are being eclipsed by Nicaraguan products. Cody initially opted for the 'hyped up' Cuban cigar but becomes curious about this new place Nicaragua. As we learn and talk a bit about geography, perhaps a new interest that fits with one of Cody's goals, to get his passport and travel. Things are starting to align.

When we meet, Cody inspects the cigar, carefully clips off the end with a cutter he bought explicitly for the occasion. We toast the end, inspect the wrapper and blaze away. 'Remember Cody, do not inhale. That will be bad for sure'. All goes well.

First third, the smoke is mild and enjoyable. Cody cannot hold back the smile and a look of mischief in his eye. The kind of disconnect from linear thinking and a move to lateral creative planning he was hoping for. We're heading in the right direction for planning and we are eager to see where our discussion will go.

Next third, the aftertaste of fruitiness becomes a point of discussion. I am impressed and Cody seems to enjoy the experience. He is looking serious, probably like Churchill at a meeting discussing complex international agreements. His Individual Support Plan is no less important. A veteran smoker who chooses to abstain, Raymond looks on with curious anticipation. In his years of experience, this is definitely different.

Half-hour later, the final third, Cody looks me in the eye and says 'it's Oakey and a taste of leathery'. I am stumped almost thinking he is toying with me, but I agree. I too can taste the stronger flavor in the cigar I am smoking as well. However,

thinking I detect a hint of Big Mac sauce but what do I know...

The cigars definitely helped the discussion, there was seriousness to the plan...

'Where do we want to see Cody go, as well as, celebrate the tremendous strides he is making as a young man?' This was the last meeting for the homes I oversee and taking an interesting personalized twist with Cody's choice.

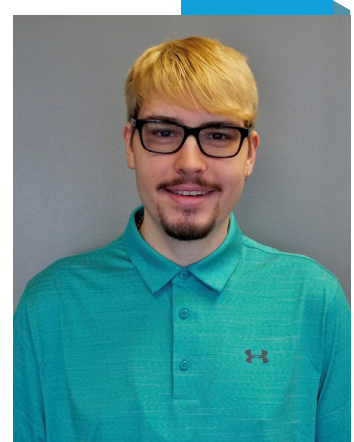
When I arrive at the restaurant, I search frantically and am summoned by text to the back parking lot. I carefully pass by a confrontational Canada goose taking charge of the lot, hissing and coming very close to attacking. Cody is not well. Bounding into a van and driving was not the shrewdest choice for a novice smoker, he is slightly pale and will definitely not make dinner.

I find myself reflexively feeling we took the wrong direction agreeing to the cigars. I rush wildly through the matrix in my mind – did we fail to keep him safe? Was this too reckless? Should we have stayed close to shore like ancient mariners playing it safe? Why did we need to be innovative or take a different approach! We would have been safer had we followed the status quo!

We quickly collectively realize dinner will be rescheduled as Cody opts for going home. He is not feeling well but oddly, there is a triumphant confidence in him and a whole lot of 'never again'. Never again will he look at a Hollywood movie like the Godfather and wonder what it's like to smoke a cigar. Never will he sit at his TV screen; eyes glazed pretending mentally to be the actor on screen with the cigar rolling between his teeth. Never again will he have to live vicariously, like so many do, when it comes to this experience. He knows what it is like and has a better understanding of what he likes, the essence of informed choice.

When Cody passes a cigar shop and sees fellow citizens deep in thought savoring the smoke, he knows. If the discussion ever comes up, he can be included in the elite group of people who can intelligently discuss an experience as opposed to have to live through others. Even though he did not adopt the practice into his life, he made a choice based on experience. His own.

Informed choice and trying new things makes life worth living and life is worth living.



MAKING SWEET MUSIC

As the weather cools down, and the fall season rolls in you can again hear music throughout the halls. Ryan Switzer from Massive Tank Studios (MTS) continues to support people in creating their own magic in the studio.

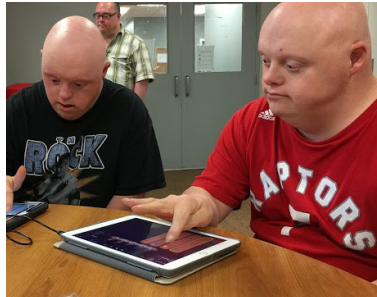
This past spring, we hosted our first iPad Band performance which was a great success. RaeAnn, Chris, and Josh performed with Sammy on vocals. This was a new concept to explore, where people who loved music could be part of a performance, regardless of physical challenges and create music using GarageBand on the iPads. The iPad band was a huge hit, and has returned this October with a new group. Stay tuned for the big performance in December.

In the summer, we hosted our 2nd songwriting camp. Four people came together and with help from Ryan (and his assistant Leelan from MTS) each were able to write, sing and record their own song which was showcased on the last day in front of an audience. It was such a success! We are creating a song-writing course that will extend the timeline of this process and we can't wait to hear the results – more details to come! It will run for 10 weeks with four participants with a recording of their song to take home.

Michel aka. Survivor, Lou, Vince, Katherine, Annie, Erin, Chris, John and Sue continue take private lessons to improve their skills for either a band, or for their own enjoyment. Each person has grown insurmountably as a person and artist. "I learned a long time ago to abandon the idea that I had any capacity to predict what I could expect from the amazing people at Community Living Oakville. With the incredible support from the staff and management, we are able to comprehensively realize the goals of each person. CLO has given me an incredible opportunity to work with awesome people who surprise and delight me every day I walk into the studio." - Ryan Switzer

This Fall, we will see the return of band lessons, private lessons, the iPad band, our new songwriting course and our creative version of what is often known as 'music therapy.' It will be a busy season, but as Plato says "music gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination and life to everything." With this in mind, drum beats, guitar chords and singing will continue to fill the halls straight into December.

Stay tuned for dates for performances!



ROBIN'S ADVENTURE

'Ambition is a Dream with a V8 Engine'

Elvis Presley



Summer is the most loved season, full of warmth, ambition and anticipation about what lies ahead. It is a perfect time for vacations, the great outdoors, and spending time with family and friends. This summer Robin decided to make it special for herself.

She was determined to get away from the city, for some time alone, to make new friends and meet new people. After careful research, she decided to combine her two favorite things -

Elvis and a vacation. Robin packed her bags and went away to Collingwood for her first solo trip to attend the Collingwood Elvis Music Festival - the largest of its kind!

Everything looked very promising, she had a plan, including making some new friends. The bus trip there was a long one; however, this is when she met Andrew and Lilian. Three strangers who quickly became close friends.

Her week long vacation was set at the Tyrolean Village, with a breathtaking cabin located on Georgian Bay. Together Robin and her crew managed to spend time at the beach and did a lot of swimming (in spite of the water being cold); she went out for dinners and visited the sites. She spent most of her evenings around the campfire singing and making s'mores.

The crown jewel of the trip was the Elvis festival, where she connected with other Elvis followers, sang and danced. Robin had a meet and greet with Elvis himself "he was an Elvis look alike but who cares," says Robin. "This is a trip to remember, I recommend everyone experience the Elvis Festival at least once in their life, I hope to go back in 2020!"

She returned from the music festival with many souvenirs, stories and memories to last a lifetime. Robin sure has ambition; she will not set a goal for herself without a V8 engine attached to it!

PERSONAL OUTCOME MEASURES & ACCREDITATION

The process of conducting Personal Outcome Measure interviews are well underway. The valuable insight gained during these interviews have been used to further develop person-centered plans for people we support. Although we are still in the early stages, people have started to see changes in the way support is offered and staff, both front line and management have realized that asking questions we have not asked in the past, assist with determining how people want to live their lives. This feedback and robust view is changing the way in which we provide support to people. In upcoming newsletters, we will be showcasing how Personal Outcomes have been changing people's lives.

In order for changes to be made, not only do staff and management have to examine how they provide support to people, but the organization as a whole needs to challenge itself to broaden it's way of thinking in regards to how we provide support to people. As a result, Community Living Oakville has embarked on a three-year journey with The Counsel on Quality and Leadership (CQL) to seek accreditation. Through an open, honest, and unbiased evaluation by outside experts, accreditation will equip the organization with valuable information and action steps for improvement. When organizations rely on their own internal review of operations, they may unintentionally allow the investment they have in their organization to influence their outlook.

On October 1st to the 4th, 2019, three staff from CQL visited Community Living Oakville and visited many different service areas. They further reviewed files and conducted Personal Outcome Measure interviews. As an agency, we also had the opportunity to showcase all of the innovative and amazing things that we are doing through an opening presentation and tour. The staff from CQL also conducted focus groups with the people we support, front line staff and also families. Thank you to everyone who participated in these important focus groups. We are excited to report that at the end of the week, CQL provided us with our official accreditation, along with a final report and feedback including opportunities for further growth. In 18 months' time, a staff person from CQL will be returning to check in with us and further support us in our journey towards excellence in services and supports.

This initiative is a driving force in our upcoming strategic plan and further embraces our mission to be the service provider of choice. If you would like further information on The Counsel on Quality and Leadership please visit their website at www.c-q-l.org or feel free to contact Jennifer Dance for further information jennifer.dance@oakcl.org





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