



OMNIway

OMNI's People Truly Create an Atmosphere of Hope, Purpose and Belonging . . . pg. 3

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Remembrance Day Tradition

Jim and Mildred Bell participated in Rosebridge Manor's Remembrance Day ceremony on Nov. 11. Mildred has recited *In Flanders Fields* every Remembrance Day for 25 years. See story at right.

Maplewood Takes a Resident-led Approach to Infection Prevention

Corina Dempsey is reminding everyone to keep their hands clean

By Deron Hamel
Maplewood resident Corina Dempsey is playing an important part in the Brighton long-term care home's infection prevention and control program.

With flu season underway, Dempsey is seated at the entrance of the home's dining room before meals holding a sign that reads, "Please Wash Your Hands".

It's an intervention that's proving to be successful, says administrator Rachel Corkery, noting that she's noticing more people going to the hand sanitizers before meals.

Keeping everyone's hands clean, after all, is the most important step long-term care homes can take in preventing the transmission and spread of germs, Corkery adds.

Last year Maplewood had six outbreaks during flu season. Outbreaks have a negative impact on residents' quality of life. Not only are people at risk of falling ill, but programming and family visits stop during outbreaks.

During a recent residents' council meeting, residents and staff members discussed how they do not want to see a repeat of last year's

flu season. At the meeting, staff members went through proper hand-washing techniques with residents, followed by a question-and-answer session about infection prevention and control that covered everything from why it's important to keep hands clean to how to sneeze without spreading germs.

It was during the meeting the group decided that having a dining-room greeter would be effective at keeping hand hygiene top of mind. Dempsey volunteered for the role of dining-room

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Members of Local First Nation Perform Ceremony for West Lake Residents

'Our residents and staff really enjoyed the experience,' says LEC

By Deron Hamel
West Lake Terrace recently had a visit from residents of Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory that proved to be an enriching experience for the Prince Edward County long-term care

home's residents. Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory spiritual guide Barb Brant and one of her students came to the home to perform a "dance of healing" for the residents.

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Linda Glover Retires After 30-plus Years of Making Maplewood Residents Laugh

'For 30 years, somewhere, at some time during my shift, I got somebody to laugh to make them feel better'

By Deron Hamel
When personal support worker (PSW) Linda Glover began working at Maplewood more than 30 years ago, she had one goal: to make at least one resident laugh every day.

When she retired from

the Brighton long-term care home on Oct. 25, she had fulfilled that mission — not one day passed without her putting a smile on a resident's face.

"I made myself that promise and I stuck to that,"

See 'Retiree' page 2

Rosebridge Manor Honours Resident's Remembrance Day Tradition

Rosebridge resident recites *In Flanders Fields*

By Natalie Hamilton
Mildred Bell becomes choked up as she recites *In Flanders Fields*, bringing tears to the eyes of those listening to the 85-year-old woman deliver the poem.

Mildred, a resident of Rosebridge Manor, read aloud the famous piece by

John McCrae during the Jasper, Ont. long-term care home's Remembrance Day ceremony Nov. 11.

Sharing the poem with staff, family members and fellow residents, including her husband, Jim, carries on a tradition for Mildred.

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Pleasant Meadow Manor residents Grace Hamblin and Gerry Farrow prepare baked goods for the Norwood Fall Fair.

Pleasant Meadow Residents Contribute to Norwood Fall Fair

Resident-made crafts, woodwork receive prizes

By Deron Hamel

Pleasant Meadow Manor residents once again were contributors to the annual Norwood Fall Fair, a major flagship event for both the town and the 61-bed long-term care home.

Starting in late August, several Pleasant Meadow Manor residents began making wares that were put on display at the event, which was held over the Thanksgiving weekend. Residents brought an array of crafts, woodworking and baked goods they created.

“(The fall fair) really helps get the home’s name out in the community,” Pleasant Meadow Manor life enrichment co-ordinator Chris Garden tells The OMNIway. “The fair is also a huge community event for the residents.”

Gentlemen from the

home’s woodworking group made several items that were entered in the fair’s home arts competition, including a ladder and a bookshelf. Both items won third place in the contest.

Residents also won prizes for crafts entered in the contest. Resident entries included magnets, a decorated hat, a flower pot and a potpourri sachet.

Money the residents won from their entries is being donated to the home’s residents’ council, Garden says.

Many Pleasant Meadow Manor residents have lived their whole lives in the Norwood area, so the fair, which was first held in 1868, has always been a major part of their lives, Garden says.

“It’s a biggest weekend of the year in Norwood — it’s probably bigger than Christmas here,” she says.

Country Terrace the Scene of a ‘Murder Mystery’

Life enrichment department organizes Halloween event with high resident engagement

By Deron Hamel

The Country Terrace team created an innovative, engaging program to help residents celebrate

“Everybody had a lot of fun. ... The residents were really excited about getting to dress up and play a character.”

— Alysha Verhoeven, life enrichment aide, Country Terrace

Halloween this year: a murder mystery reminiscent of the board game Clue.

Residents and staff members received invitations to the event last week that included information about

the character they would play as well as a script and a description of the costume they should wear, explains life enrichment aide (LEA) Alysha Verhoeven, one of the event organizers.

The setting for the activity was a will reading. Verhoeven was the host and LEA Rachael LeBlanc played the butler.

The game was divided into three rounds. The first round saw participants introduce their characters and provide bits of information about the murder mystery. Verhoeven provided more information in the second round.

The third round was the “accusation round” where participants explained who they thought the

“murderer” was.

It turns out there was no murder — it was a suicide, which was a bit of a curveball for everyone, Verhoeven says.

“Everyone really got into it and they were really into their characters,” she says. “Everybody had a lot of fun. ... The residents were really excited about getting to dress up and play a character.”

Betty Hodge, whose son Alan is a resident at Country Terrace, wrote an e-mail to staff members to express her enjoyment of the activity.

“Alan was quite thrilled as he had a good visit and watched all the clamour,” she says. “Staff should be delighted. They put their heart into it.”

Retiree Plans to Volunteer in Palliative Care

Continued from page 1

Glover tells The OMNIway. “For 30 years, somewhere, at some time during my shift, I got somebody to laugh to make them feel better.”

Maplewood was not an OMNI Health Care home when Glover started her career. However, she was more than happy when OMNI bought the home because one of the organization’s core values resonated with her.

“When OMNI came on board, one of their values was fun and laughter in the workplace, so it was a perfect fit for me,” she says.

Glover also recalls how she and a resident once played a joke on her husband that lasted more than a year. The resident faithfully watched the game show Let’s Make a Deal every day, and before Glover went home the resident would tell her which curtain the best prize was behind.

When Glover and her husband watched each episode’s rerun later in the evening, she always made the correct guess.

“He couldn’t believe how lucky I was,” Glover chuckles. Maplewood hosted a

party on Glover’s last day to wish her a happy retirement. While she is retiring from the home, she plans to continue using the skills she has acquired over

important piece of advice for PSWs entering the field.

“I’ve done lot of mentoring over the years, and I would always tell new PSWs to give themselves



Linda Glover is seen here cutting the cake at her retirement party on Oct. 25. Glover retired after more than 30 years as a PSW at Maplewood.

the years to volunteer in a palliative-care environment.

“Palliative care is where you’re at your best to help everybody — and that is my passion,” she says. “You want the person to transition to the next life as comfortably as possible and you’re there for the family.”

After more than 30 years of working in long-term care, Glover also has an

a chance, don’t be hard on yourself, because it’s a hard field,” she says.

“People come out of college where they’re working with one resident every day and then they come on to the floor (of a long-term care home) and they could have 10 to 12 people. They’re expected to keep up the pace. Give yourself time to learn the ropes.”



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EDITORIAL

OMNI's People Truly Create an Atmosphere of Hope, Purpose and Belonging

We have reached the end of 2015. It's that time to reflect on the past year. While OMNI Health Care has continued its focus on enhancing quality across the organization from a corporate level, it's truly the people working in each of the 18 long-term care homes that have made the greatest difference.

One example of a staff member living the OMNIway is Maplewood administrator Rachel Corkery. In August, she invited a group of residents from the Brighton long-term care home to her new house to enjoy a barbecue and meet her family.

Residents enjoyed the atmosphere and spent time with the horses and other animals Corkery and her husband, Pat, have on their property.

Corkery explained why this event was important.

"I work in their home every single day. I'm there as a guest. This is a chance for them to be a guest in our home — to repay the favour," she said.

Pleasant Meadow Manor staff members were also thinking outside the box this year when they helped make a difference to a resident.

In February, resident Gerry Farrow's granddaughter was married in Mexico. While he couldn't attend the wedding in person, staff members wanted to ensure he didn't miss out on this special day.

Team members put their heads together and, working with the resident's family and OMNI IT manager Jeremy Stewart, a webcam was set up at the resort

where the wedding was held and on a computer at Pleasant Meadow Manor.

"I'm in a wheelchair, so I wasn't able to go (to the wedding), but it was certainly a wonderful day," Farrow said. "Watching the wedding on the computer made it seem just like I was there."

Understanding the importance of food to long-term care residents, Country Terrace's dietary and life enrichment departments collaborated to create a unique program earlier this year that sees residents' favourite recipes appear on the menu.

Before the program began, residents often approached dietary staff to request their favourite meals. This sparked the idea for the team to work with the life enrichment department to gather recipes and make residents feel even more at home.

Since then, a resident's recipe — followed to the letter — makes an appearance on the home's menu in one-month cycles. Each recipe is also printed and displayed on the home's bulletin board along with the name of the resident who submitted the recipe and the story behind the dish.

These are examples of stories that happen every day in OMNI long-term care homes. People working in OMNI's homes bring their creativity, ingenuity and resident focus to the table every day to ensure that hope, purpose and belonging are truly a way of life for the more than 1,400 residents.

The OMNIway is looking forward to seeing more great stories like these in 2016.



Residents and staff members from Willows Estate celebrated Western Day on Oct. 9.

Willows Estate's Western Day Brings Residents Together, Promotes Collaboration

Program underscores value of theme days in LTC homes, says LEC

By Deron Hamel

A spur-of-the-moment decision brought a western-themed event to Willows Estate residents that proved to be a valuable engagement tool.

When staff members at the Aurora long-term care home noticed small hay bales in the activity room that were being used as props for Halloween, they were inspired to use them as a backdrop for a day to celebrate cowboy culture.

So, on Oct. 9 the home hosted Western Day to bring a bit of the Wild West home. Residents could enjoy western-themed entertainment, food and programs.

The dietary department

played a large part in the day's success, notes life enrichment co-ordinator (LEC) Teddy Mazzuca. Residents were served a lunch of hamburgers, hot dogs and baked beans, and for dinner nutritional care manager Gary Rose barbecued steaks.

"The food was amazing," Mazzuca says.

One of the activities the life enrichment team created for the day was "musical hats," a take on musical chairs, except it involved a cowboy hat being passed around.

This was the first time the home hosted a western-themed activity

day, but it likely will not be the last, Mazzuca says.

Because a large number of the home's 84 residents attended, the program also underscored the value theme days have for people, she adds.

"I think we're going to expand on our theme days because it gets all departments involved," she says. "The residents like (theme days), and they are a lot of fun."

Western-themed activities have been successful at another OMNI Health Care home. In June, Riverview Manor in Peterborough hosted Western Week, which featured seven days of music, activities and food.

Resident Has Recited Poem for 25 Years

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"It's something I have in my system that makes me want to do it," Mildred tells The OMNIway. "It's such a beautiful poem it almost makes me cry. I'm always glad to do it."

Prior to moving into Rosebridge Manor in 2014, Mildred read the poem each Nov. 11 for 25 years at the community of Toledo's cenotaph. Meanwhile, Jim was bequeathed the honour of laying Toledo's wreath for Canada.

Jim, 95, a member of the Toledo Royal Canadian Legion Branch 475, enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) in July 1941 and was discharged

in May 1946.

The decorated veteran served in Canada, the United Kingdom and India during the Second World War.

Jim was a fabric worker and safety inspector for the parachute division of the RCAF.

After the war, he returned home to the family farm in Jasper. Jim and Mildred, now married 65 years, have three children.

The couple is still very much in love, notes Kathy Barr, Rosebridge Manor's life enrichment co-ordinator.

For Jim, Mildred and the long-term care home's other residents, Nov. 11 is a significant day, Barr says.

Rosebridge Manor's service honoured its

six veterans.

"Every year Remembrance Day is getting more important," Barr says. "We think it's important because our veterans are dying. There are not going to be too many more opportunities to tribute them and show our thanks to them. We want to make the most out of the time we have."

Following Rosebridge's service, residents and staff gathered to watch Remembrance Day coverage from Ottawa and observe a minute of silence.

Members of the local legion branch also honoured Rosebridge's veterans Nov. 3 during another ceremony at the home.

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Streamway Villa residents (left to right) Mabel Goode and Betty Grinnell peruse the menu at Cobourg's Buttermilk Café during a recent outing.

Outing to Café Provides Streamway Residents with Local Warmth

Home's central location a plus, says LEC

By Deron Hamel

What can a long-term care home do to keep people warm as colder weather approaches? The folks at Streamway Villa recently solved this by taking a short trip to a local café for a warm lunch.

"At Streamway, we are very fortunate to live in the core of downtown Cobourg."

— Christina Verleysen, Life enrichment co-ordinator, Streamway Villa

On Oct. 16, life enrichment staff members and nine residents walked down to the Buttermilk Café in downtown Cobourg to enjoy some comfort food, including such favourites as potato-leek soup and fish and chips.

Life enrichment co-ordinator (LEC)

Christina Verleysen says the home is lucky to have a central location that's close to good restaurants.

"This allows us to participate in community monthly events and to eat at local restaurants without spending money on transportation," she tells The OMNIway.

She adds: "With the cold weather approaching us very quickly, we thought we should get some more community outings in before we are shut in for the brisk winter months. At Streamway, we are very fortunate to live in the core of downtown Cobourg."

Residents unable to participate in the outing were not left out, Verleysen notes. Instead of going to the café they were treated to a special, made-from-scratch plate of jambalaya, the famous Louisiana rice dish, created by cook Sadie Mininni.

Improving Hand Hygiene

Continued from page 1

greeter and then made the sign. Since then, she has been reminding everyone to wash their hands.

"It's never too soon or too late to remind people to wash their hands," Corkery says, adding that what she likes best about

this initiative is that it's "resident-led compliance."

"The residents themselves stop to wash their hands and motion for other residents and staff to stop (to wash their hands)," the administrator says. "Even if we think we are doing a great job, we can always do better."

Making a Difference Energizes Inspired Leader

Garden Terrace administrator will continue her inspiring leadership at Almonte Country Haven in the new year

By Michelle Strutzenberger
Carolyn Della Foresta is committed to providing the leadership she does because she loves to see the ripple effect of positive results with residents as well as happy families and staff.

"You don't do the job you do looking for recognition," the Garden Terrace administrator tells The OMNIway. "What energizes me on a daily basis is knowing that I can make a difference."

Della Foresta has been bringing this approach to her work throughout her 24 years with OMNI Health Care, beginning as a nurse's aide at Almonte Country Haven for 10 years, followed by six years as a life enrichment co-ordinator at Forest Hill and most recently as administrator at Garden Terrace.

She emphasizes that her approach is focusing on how she can make a difference

while also realizing that one person alone can never "be the difference."

"I can be the leader that says we need to make a difference, but I need that team that's proud to work at Garden Terrace and has that personal commitment to make a difference," she says.

Della Foresta has certainly found these qualities in the Garden Terrace team, which makes a big decision she's made recently even more difficult.

Della Foresta will be transferring to Almonte Country Haven in the new year. The home is near her house which will allow her more time for her family.

"I'm very emotional because I love Garden Terrace and I love my residents and my staff and families," Della Foresta says.

At the same time, there's a sense of coming full circle as

Almonte Country Haven is where she started her career. There's also a warm sense of family ties; her mother retired as administrator of Almonte Country Haven in 2001 and several of Della Foresta's elderly loved ones have lived at the home.

She also appreciates that she will still be working for OMNI.

"I believe in OMNI's mission vision and values," Della Foresta says. "Now I'm just moving to a different branch on the family tree."

Della Foresta is one of the recipients of OMNI's Inspired Leaders award, which is presented to staff members from each of the organization's 18 long-term care homes.

"To receive that, it's like, 'Wow, somebody noticed'," Della Foresta says. "And now it's like, 'We're going to continue; what else can we do?'"

More Collaboration Opportunities on Horizon

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The ceremony began with Brant smudging the dining room. This is a practice of burning sage or sweet grass to purify and bless places.

Brant's student explained the significance of her traditional dress to the residents and then began the dance of healing.

This was the first time a First Nations ceremony had been hosted at West Lake Terrace, says life enrichment co-ordinator (LEC) Janie Denard, adding the event was well received by everyone.

"Our residents and staff really enjoyed the experience," she tells The OMNIway.

"We had incredible attendance. It was really nice to see how many residents were keen and interested."

While the experience was new to many of the residents, Denard has a connection to the people of Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory that goes back to when she was a teenager.

"I used to go to their powwows every year with one of my friends from the area," she says.

This past summer, Denard was driving through Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory and this sparked her memory of attending the powwows, which are traditional First Nations social gatherings that include dancing, singing and feasting.

"I knew I couldn't necessarily bring the residents to a powwow, but I thought that maybe I could bring a little bit of the experience of what it's like to them," Denard says, adding she then reached out to Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory and was connected with Brant.

Now that West Lake Terrace has a community connection with Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory, Denard says she will continue to seek collaboration opportunities. This is good news for the residents, who have already been asking for Brant to return to the home.



A member of Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory performs a dance of healing for West Lake Terrace residents.

"I think it's important for the residents to realize how diverse our community is," Denard says. "Even though we are a small, rural community in southeastern Ontario, we are very diverse and we have lots to offer."