



# OMNIway

First Step to Ending Alzheimer's Stigma is Talking About It . . . pg. 3

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## A Clean Shave

Resident Bernedette Lefleche (right) joins in removing RPN Jake Hulse's beard as part of a fundraiser at the Woodland Villa Fair on Aug. 17. See story at right.

## Joan Leclaire's Dedication to her Fellow Residents Earns Her a Lifetime Achievement Award

Forest Hill resident is a vocal advocate for others

By Deron Hamel

Since Joan Leclaire moved into Forest Hill in January 2015 she has been active in the Kanata long-term care home's residents' council and a vocal advocate for quality improvement in the long-term care sector.

For her dedication to her fellow residents, Leclaire is the recipient of Forest Hill's 2016 Lifetime Achievement Award.

Not long after Leclaire moved into Forest Hill she was unanimously elected as residents' council president. Since then, she has used her position to offer suggestions to the home to enhance

quality of life for residents.

For instance, Leclaire played a large part in the remodelling of the tub room in her unit earlier this year. She told administrator Susan Bell that the tub room, with its clutter and outdated furnishings, gave the home a "facility impression."

With her suggestions and input, the room was transformed into a bathing area that promotes relaxation and has elevated residents' bathing experience, says Craig Forrest, the home's life enrichment co-ordinator, in his letter nominating Leclaire for the award.

Leclaire chose paint colours. She suggested new photographs for the tub room's walls. The sink and cabinets were changed. A new clock was brought in. Three silver plant pots were placed on the window sill with succulent plants and cacti added. A wicker blind hung from a black iron curtain rod and white sheer linen curtains flanking the window were the final touch.

During the Ontario Long Term Care Association's Better Seniors' Care letter-writing campaign, Leclaire penned a "very strongly

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## OMNI Wants to See First \$10M BSO Investment Put Towards Staffing

By Deron Hamel

OMNI Health Care wants to see the first \$10-million Behavioural Supports Ontario (BSO) investment from the 2016-17 budget put towards increasing staffing levels in the province's long-term care homes to help meet residents' needs and provide supports for

those living with dementia.

The Ontario government on Aug. 18 announced its first of three annual \$10-million instalments for the initiative.

While there is no indication as to how the funding will be allocated, OMNI president and CEO

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## Staff Enthusiasm Lights Up Woodland Villa Fair

By Michelle Strutzenberger

The annual Woodland Villa Fair had a bright energy this year as staff members enthusiastically participated and residents from three other long-term care homes joined the Aug. 17 festivities.

"The energy was fantastic," says Lisa Doran, life enrichment co-ordinator for the Long Sault long-term

care home.

"The staff were really involved, more so than previous years, which was fantastic for the residents to see.

"And we had a lot more long-term care homes here this year, which made it great."

Asked what colour she'd imagine the energy of the day to be, Doran suggests yellow. "It was a bright day.

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## Forest Hill Resident Reunited with WW2 Tank

By Deron Hamel

A Sept. 29 outing to the Canadian War Museum in Ottawa was a trip back in time for Marcel "Marty" Joiner, the Forest Hill resident says.

At the museum, Marty, who served as a gunner in the Canadian Army during the Second World War, got to see the M4A4 Sherman tank he trained in and

fought in during the army's advance from France into Germany in 1944 and 1945.

The tank, called Forceful III, was literally his home for part of his six-year service in the war, Marty says.

"We lived in that tank," he tells The OMNIway. "Everything from sleeping to eating we did in that tank. That was our home."

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Above: Marty Joiner, top row, second from right, is pictured with his company and their tank, Forceful III, during the Second World War. Left: Marty with Forceful III at the Canadian War Museum.

## Veteran Marty Joiner says Outing 'Brought Back a Lot of Memories'

*Continued from page 1*

Marty, who's now 95, is the last surviving member of his regiment. He recalls how days spent in the tank could be tense. The sound of gunfire was nearly constant some days as the tank made its way across northwestern Europe, he says.

"It brought back a lot of memories, of course, we fought from the Normandy beaches, right across France, then Belgium and Holland, and into Germany."

The Forceful III, which was operated by the Governor General's Foot Guards, was the regiment's only tank issued before D-Day — June 6, 1944 — to fight through France, Belgium,

the Netherlands and Germany without being put out of action, according to Preservedtanks.com, a website providing information about historic armoured vehicles.

Marty has lived at Forest Hill for about four months. When Craig Forrest, the Kanata long-term care home's life enrichment co-ordinator, learned the same tank Marty had fought in during the war was at the museum, he got the idea to organize a day trip for Marty and other residents.

"After he moved in I was talking to Marty and he had told me that the tank he rode in was at the war museum, so right away I just thought that would make a perfect outing," Craig says.

## Joan Leclaire a Vocal Advocate

*Continued from page 1*

written letter" explaining the need for increased funding for more front-line staff in the province's long-term care homes, Forrest notes.

Leclaire is also the resident member of Forest Hill's quality team, a position she takes seriously. She attends all meetings and is always asking questions and making suggestions to benefit her fellow residents.

Leclaire also works hard to improve her own quality of life, Forrest says. She participates in the home's nursing rehabilitation program and physiotherapy.

"Joan has set a goal to, in the future, rehabilitate to the point that she can once again live independently in the community," Forrest says.

"To help reach this goal she is relentless in her rehabilitation exercises and physio. I know that her persistence and unmatched work ethic will allow her to someday reach this goal."

Leclaire says she was honoured to receive the Lifetime Achievement Award and is thankful to Forrest for his nomination.

"To Craig, I want to give you a big thank-you for this nomination and for sending it up to head office for consideration," she says. "Time and time again, I say thank you to my lucky stars for selecting this particular home, Forest Hill, and for the wonderful caring staff that they have here — the administrator, the managers, the RPNs, the PSWs, kitchen



Forest Hill resident Joan Leclaire with the Lifetime Achievement Award she recently received from the home.

staff and the maintenance staff. Every one of these caring individuals provides each individual resident with the quality of life, respect and dignity they want and deserve."

## Attendees From Three Other Long-term Care Homes Also Lifts Spirits

*Continued from page 1*

Yellow reminds me of being happy and smiling. And there were a lot of smiles, a lot of cheerfulness."

Among the highlights of the day was the shaving of RPN Jake Hulse's beard by resident Bernedette Lefleche as part of a fundraiser.

"He's been growing it for over a year, so everyone was excited to see that go," Doran says.

The various raffles and auctions also sparked energy. "People always want to win something."

Woodland staff member

Kadie Hulse went above and beyond to ensure the children were having fun as well. She had activities on the go from face-painting to potato-sack races. "There were a lot more children involved this year, which was fantastic," Doran says.

Even the weather seemed to be in good spirits as a storm the previous day gave way to bright but not-too-hot sunshine. "It was a beautiful day," Doran says.

The fact that three other long-term care homes took up the invitation to join the fair was also encouraging.

In the past typically only one has done so.

"I think (residents from other homes) are just getting more comfortable with the whole idea of coming," Doran says.

Mingling between the homes can be rewarding for the residents, who may meet friends and acquaintances they aren't able to connect with as much as they used to.

"A lot of them know each other," Doran says, adding the opportunity for staff from the various homes to interact is also a plus.

## Riverview Manor Hopes Snoezelen Room Further Decreases Psychotropic Usage

*Sensory room is already helping residents affected by dementia*

*By Deron Hamel*

Staff members at Riverview Manor are hoping the Peterborough long-term care home's Snoezelen room will help further reduce the use of psychotropic medications for residents affected by dementia.

Built earlier this year, the Snoezelen room, which contains a variety of sensory objects to provide stimulation, will also be hosting a program that will help reduce the effects of sundowning, a

phenomenon that occurs during sunsets when some people with dementia become increasingly agitated.

So far, the Snoezelen room has had positive results for residents living with dementia, says life enrichment aide (LEA) Lyndsay Irwin.

"Sometimes people just need that quiet spot, that little oasis for people to get away to, so it has been really helpful for that," she tells The OMNIway. "Anyone can use it. We keep the door open to make it an

inviting atmosphere, and the lights are always on so residents are drawn to it."

Irwin says the Snoezelen room has been especially beneficial to people who are experiencing agitation. When residents become agitated, they can be guided to the Snoezelen room. Inside, there are items like the bubble light tube, a tall, narrow sensory stimulation lamp filled with liquid with bubbles. The lamp changes colour when buttons are pushed.

The Snoezelen room also has fibre-optic strings with LED lights that change colours. The strings have some weight to them, which provides a sense of security for people with dementia when handling them, Irwin says.

"(The Snoezelen room) has been great for when people have behaviours, and we have used it for that, when we need to get people to a quiet area," she tells The OMNIway.

"This has been really helpful for people with dementia.

Studies have come out (showing the benefits) of Snoezelen rooms. People can interact with their environment; everything is touchable and interactive."

Riverview Manor is also considering bringing aroma therapy and a music therapy program to the Snoezelen room.

"We are going to try as much as we can in this room," Irwin says. "This is definitely a place for us to explore and use our creativity."

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## EDITORIAL



Pictured above, Frost Manor residents and staff on a bus heading to Camp Cherokee on Rice Lake.

## Frost Manor Residents Live it Up at Camp Cherokee

*Collaboration with Extendicare Kawartha Lakes provides a 3-day outing full of fun and laughter*

By Deron Hamel

Frost Manor resident Grace Leslie says her first trip to Rice Lake with seven other residents of the Lindsay long-term care home was memorable.

She is especially happy to report that although she didn't think she was going to be able to take a pontoon-boat ride during Frost Manor's annual trip to Camp Cherokee, staff at the camp made sure she got on board.

Leslie, who uses a wheelchair, didn't think she'd be able to get on the boat, even though she wanted to take the trip.

"I said, 'park me in the shade and I will wait until you come back. But (the camp staff member) said, no I'd like to take you,' so they got me on the boat. I got to sit at the front," Leslie says. "It was a lot of fun — that was my first time to Rice Lake."

For 12 years, Frost Manor and other long-term care homes in the region have collaborated to create outings for residents that are both meaningful and cost-effective. This year the Frost Manor group was joined by seven residents as well as staff members from

Extendicare Kawartha Lakes.

Some years Frost Manor has collaborated with as many as four other long-term care homes in the region to make the outing possible.

This year's outing, which was from Aug. 30 to Sept. 1, included two barbecues and a dance night.

Life enrichment co-ordinator Vi O'Leary says the residents always had something to do during their three-day stay.

"They played cards, they had happy hour two days in a row. There was lovely weather and there was no agenda," she says.

## First Step to Ending Alzheimer's Stigma is Talking About It

Renowned actor Gene Wilder passed away Aug. 29 at age 83 after what initial media reports described as a "long illness." Many around the world expressed shock when it was soon revealed Wilder had succumbed to Alzheimer's disease, a condition he had lived with for several years.

*The more people understand cognitive impairment, the better positioned society is as a whole to help those affected by the condition live better lives.*

Wilder, his family said in a statement, did not want his condition made public until after his death because he was afraid children would see him in public and become upset if they knew the star of the 1971 children's movie *Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory* had — quote — "an adult referencing illness."

"He simply couldn't bear the idea of one less smile in the world," the statement said.

Wilder's story is a reminder of the stigma surrounding Alzheimer's disease and dementia.

As of June 2016, the Alzheimer Society of Canada estimates 564,000 Canadians are living with some form of dementia. Alzheimer's disease and dementia robs people of their cognitive abilities, but that does not mean it robs them of their dignity. The person remains.

The problem is that by

not talking about dementia, we're keeping its stigma alive. When we shelter people from the realities of dementia, the lack of understanding about the condition continues. Ultimately, this negatively impacts those who have the condition.

People working in the long-term care sector are among those who understand dementia best. They work with people who have Alzheimer's and dementia every day. They discover the strengths people with cognitive impairment have and create programming and interventions to help enhance their quality of life.

Families of those impacted by dementia also understand its realities. And so do those living with the condition.

By openly and publicly discussing Alzheimer's disease and dementia we can understand the condition better. The more people understand cognitive impairment, the better positioned society is as a whole to help those affected by the condition live better lives.

Incidentally, Wilder was also a cancer survivor, having beaten the odds of overcoming non-Hodgkin's lymphoma in the 2000s. His former wife, comedienne Gilda Radner, died of ovarian cancer in 1989. Media outlets have noted that Wilder worked hard raising awareness of ovarian cancer and the importance of early detection.

But his struggle with Alzheimer's disease was something he just couldn't talk about.

## BSO Positively Impacting Residents

*Continued from page 1*

Patrick McCarthy says an investment into more long-term care staffing to directly enhance care would optimize the funding.

"The existing investment has had great impact, but we do feel there is a need for direct investment in staffing at the homes to address the issue of the preponderance of people suffering from Alzheimer's or related dementia and aggressive behaviours," he says.

"There is a significant number of people with dementia in our long-term care homes and we're trying our best to provide services that accommodate those residents and also provide for

a safer, more secure setting for other residents as well."

According to the Ontario Long Term Care Association, more than 60 per cent of residents living in Ontario long-term care homes are affected by dementia.

The BSO initiative, which was launched in 2011, has provided education to long-term-care home staff members that has helped reduce responsive behaviours in residents affected by cognitive impairment.

McCarthy says OMNI homes have benefited from BSO funding, which is allocated through the province's 14 Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs).

"We have seen the use of

antipsychotic drugs being lowered in those homes (whose staff members have received BSO training), we have seen the number of incidents of aggressive behaviours being decreased and the number of critical incidents all being lowered, so (the BSO initiative) has had a measurable impact," McCarthy says.

In its 2016-17 budget, the Ontario government promised a yearly two-per-cent increase to level-of-care funding in the province's long-term care homes over the next three years. The budget also includes an annual \$10-million investment over the next three years to fund BSO.

# Heart of the Haven Program Provides Everlasting Messages of Staff Appreciation

*Staff recognition initiative having a positive impact at Almonte Country Haven*

By Deron Hamel

When Almonte Country Haven personal support worker Debbie Boal recently received a message of appreciation from a resident at the Lanark County long-term care home, she was “deeply touched.”

*“I felt very happy — and wanted — when I read that (message).”*

*— Debbie Boal, personal support worker, Almonte Country Haven*

The resident had simply written on a “Heart of the Haven” card that she missed Boal while she was working in another unit.

“I’m so happy you’re back,” the resident wrote.

Almonte Country Haven launched the Heart of the Haven program in February to recognize staff members’ hard work and ensure they have everlasting reminders of the positive impact they have on residents and their colleagues.

Since then, residents, families and staff members have been encouraged to write short notes of appreciation to outstanding staff members to recognize their hard work and dedication to people living at the home.

Boal says the program is making a difference.

“I felt very happy — and wanted — when I read that (message),” she tells

The OMNIway.

Special Heart of the Haven cards have been printed and notices about the program are sent out internally as well as to family members.

The idea came from administrator Carolyn Della Foresta, who saw a similar program work well when she worked at another OMNI Health Care home, Garden Terrace.

While everyone appreciates being complimented for their hard work, it means even more if people have something they can keep as a reminder that others are thinking about them, Della Foresta says of the initiative, which is tied into OMNI’s Everyday Hero program.

“We know staff members do great work and they need to be recognized for that great work,” she says. “Sometimes we need that pat on the back, so, to me, this is a great program.”

When someone wants to recognize a staff member for their hard work, they can pick up a card, write a short note of appreciation and drop it off in a mailbox specially created for the program. Della Foresta empties the mailbox at the end of each week and hand delivers the cards to their recipients.

“(The Heart of the Haven program) has been very well-received; the staff, families and residents have certainly done a fantastic job of thanking people,” Della Foresta says.



## A Corny Gathering

*Pictured above are scenes from Forest Hill’s corn roast on Aug. 26. Residents, their families and the Kanata long-term care home’s staff enjoyed fresh corn on the cob at the annual event, which has been a fan favourite for more than a decade.*

## Country Terrace Residents Request Reubens, Staff Exceed Expectations

*Kitchen team makes fresh-baked bread and homemade sauerkraut*

By Deron Hamel

When Country Terrace residents told the Komoka long-term care home’s nutritional care department recently they’d like to have reuben sandwiches on the menu, staff listened — and then exceeded their expectations.

Instead of assembling the sandwiches with only items from the pantry, the kitchen team got to work making fresh-baked rye bread and homemade sauerkraut to add to the corned beef, melted Swiss cheese and Thousand Island dressing needed to complete the sandwiches.

The effort took some work — shredded cabbage needs to ferment a few days in brine before it becomes sauerkraut — but nutritional care manager Alex Achillini says it was worth it. Staff let the cabbage ferment for only two days, which gave the sandwiches an added crunch when they were served.



*Country Terrace’s nutritional care department recently served residents reuben sandwiches made with fresh-baked rye bread and homemade sauerkraut.*

“It was a little crunchy and the cabbage had a really nice taste,” Achillini says. “And we had a lot of compliments. The residents really loved the sandwiches.”

The reuben sandwiches were served with a side of pasta salad and a dill pickle. Country Terrace serves non-alcoholic beer on Fridays, so residents could have a cold glass of suds to accompany their sandwiches if they wanted.

Achillini says because the sandwiches were so

well-received by residents, the kitchen team is going to offer more menu items made with an added touch. Later this month, the team is planning to make a special dessert for residents made from scratch.

Achillini says the kitchen team wants to make sure at least once or twice a month they’re given something made extra special.

“The reuben sandwiches were a good way to get this started,” he says. “We want to give the residents more treats like this.”



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