



# OMNIway

Many Advantages to Having Small Homes  
in Small Communities . . . pg. 3

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## Picnic in the Park

Pleasant Meadow Manor residents Essie Reid (left) and Vivian Welton (right) are seen here enjoying a picnic. The Norwood long-term care home has been taking advantage of favourable weather this summer by hosting a variety of outdoor activities for residents. See story page 3.

## Garden Terrace Eliminates 28 Restraints for 15 Residents in 10 Days

Engaging front-line staff and families fosters success

By Deron Hamel

A higher-than-average number of residents with restraints prompted Garden Terrace to create a quality improvement plan which resulted in 28 restraints being eliminated from 15 residents during a recent 10-day period.

The secret to this success was simply to engage families and staff members, says administrator Carolyn Della Foresta.

Most residents are fitted with restraints at the insistence of their family members. But these devices, which include wheelchair seat belts, bed rails and table tops, do

not necessarily keep people safe. In fact, they can pose danger. They also impede on people's quality of life.

In an effort to reduce restraints, Garden Terrace staff members have been speaking one-to-one with the families of residents using restraints. Staff members explain the risks these devices pose and outline better options, such as floor mats, high-low beds and hip protectors, which residents can use to avoid injury if they step out of their beds or wheelchairs.

Management looked at each resident using a restraint and met with their personal support workers (PSWs).

PSWs, Della Foresta notes, "know the residents best." PSWs see residents every day and are aware of any risks posed in terms of falls or injuries, she adds.

Once risks were assessed, team members looked at which restraints could be eliminated, and discussions were held with family members to educate them about the risks restraints pose.

The effort paid off, and 14 wheelchair seat belts, 13 bed rails and one table top have been removed. Some residents were using more than one restraint.

Della Foresta says Garden  
See 'Restraint' page 4

## Experiencing OMNI's Quality Commitment Early On Comforted Family Member

Ankiné Babcock says Village Green's helpfulness and caring from Day 1 confirms she made the right decision

By Deron Hamel

Even before her mother moved into Village Green, Ankiné Babcock says she was sure she was making the right decision for her.

True to OMNI Health Care's mission to bring the

quality experience to residents and family members from Day 1, Babcock says Village Green's staff members and management were helpful and caring before her mother

See 'Friendly' page 3

## Interest in Country Terrace Music Program Blossoms

Java Music Club proving to be valuable engagement resource

Since Country Terrace became involved with the Java Music Club in May, resident participation in the program has blossomed to seven times its initial size.

At first there were nine residents involved with the Java Music Club, a researched-based mutual

support activity program aimed at engaging people living in long-term care homes through music, photography and literature. Today, there are 63 residents involved in the program, more than half the Komoka long-term care home's population.

See 'Program' page 2

## Administrator Underscores Importance of Bringing Quality to Front Lines

'You can have a culture by design or by default — either way you will have a culture'

Quality focus has been at the forefront of OMNI Health Care's home office and home management teams, but it's crucial that front-line staff members working in the organization's 18 long-term care homes are also quality-focused, says Carolyn Della Foresta.

Della Foresta, the

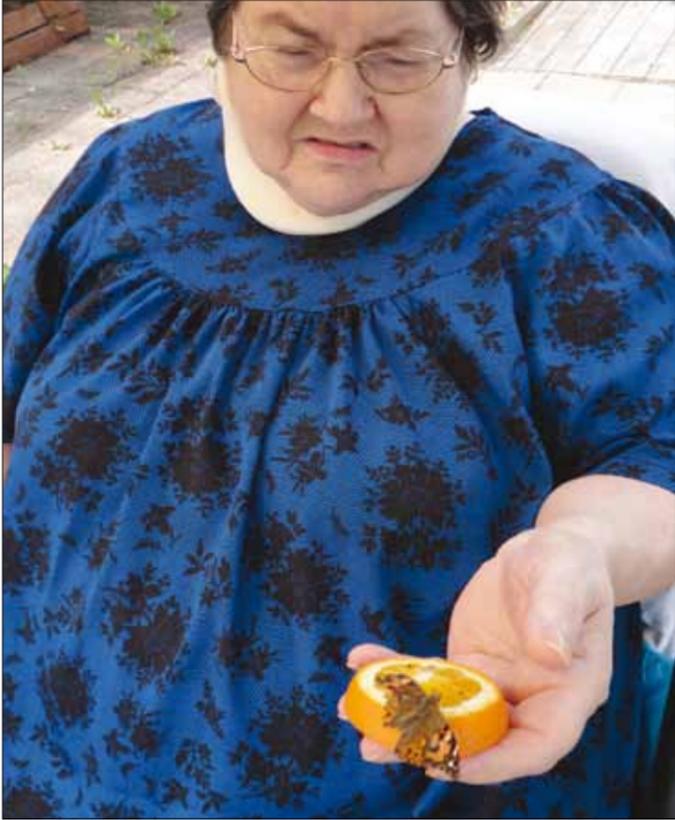
administrator at Garden Terrace, adds that before front-line staff can be expected to be quality-focused, all managers need to lead by example. This means managers must always be showing their ownership of and investment in quality initiatives.

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Woodland Villa resident Lucille Mabeu is seen here with one of the butterflies that recently hatched at the Cornwall-area long-term care home.

## Innovative Program Sees Woodland Villa Residents Raise Butterflies

*'There was so much benefit to this program,' LEC says*

By Deron Hamel

Woodland Villa residents recently had an up-close-and-personal experience of nature by spending several weeks caring for butterfly chrysalises, watching the butterflies hatch and then releasing them.

*"It was such a wonderful all-around experience for (the residents)."*

— Lisa Doran, life enrichment co-ordinator, Woodland Villa

"We have always wanted to do a science experiment with the residents, so during one of our residents' council meetings the idea of ordering a monarch butterfly habitat was mentioned and right away the residents agreed that this would be exciting," explains Woodland Villa life enrichment co-ordinator (LEC) Lisa Doran.

The Cornwall-area long-term care home placed an order in May with Boreal Science, a St. Catharines-based provider of scientific education materials, for a butterfly habitat, which

consists of larvae and netting.

Soon after the kit arrived at the home and was set up, the chrysalises, the hard shells that protect larvae, had formed around the 12 butterfly larvae. On the morning of June 4, three hatched and residents helped care for the newborn butterflies by feeding them with cotton balls soaked in sugar water. The others hatched soon after.

For two weeks, residents continued to care for the butterflies in the home's fireplace room.

Residents spent two more weeks caring for the butterflies before releasing them June 18. Doran says releasing the butterflies was a bittersweet moment because residents were sad to see them fly away but, at the same time, they were happy to have lent Mother Nature a hand.

"There was so much benefit to this program," Doran says. "Every day the residents would go into the room to make sure the butterflies had enough food and to see how they were doing. It was such a wonderful all-around experience for them."

## Working at Wildwood Providing Valuable Experience, Students Say

*Ashley Horenberg and Kelsey Murray reflect on benefits to working in LTC*

By Deron Hamel

Two students enrolled in Western University's registered nursing program say their summer employment at Wildwood Care Centre is providing valuable experience and helping them bolster their skill sets.

*"I've really grown fond of the residents who live here. . . . This is a really enjoyable place to work."*

— Ashley Horenberg, nursing student, Western University

Ashley Horenberg says she found her first summer working full time as a personal support worker (PSW) at Wildwood Care Centre to be so enriching she came back to the St. Marys, Ont. long-term care home again this year.

"I've really grown fond of the residents who live here, and even when I go back to school I always like coming back here," says Horenberg, who will be entering her third year of the nursing program in September.

"This is a really enjoyable place to work."

Horenberg says practising nursing in long-term care and hospitals both appeal to her, and she is not yet sure which discipline she will pursue when she graduates.

"I would like to work in both (long-term care and acute care) if I could," she says.

Horenberg says staff members at Wildwood Care Centre "empower" residents and help improve their quality of life, and this is the aspect of long-term care she likes best.

When students enter their third year of nursing at Western University they do their first job placement as part of the academic program. For many students, their placement can be challenging because they are working with patients for the first time, Horenberg says.

Working at Wildwood Care Centre has given Horenberg an added edge, she says.

"I've really gotten over that hurdle by working here," Horenberg says. "I have the confidence to approach residents and really have some therapeutic conversations with them because I've had to do that here, and I feel confident doing that now."

Like Horenberg, Kelsey Murray says she's learning

a lot about nursing and the wide range of skills that come with the profession through her summer job.

Murray, a second-year student, has been working at the home since April 29.

"It has been a really good learning experience; I really like it here," she says. "I'm learning a lot about resident care."

Murray has been helping the home's PSWs with their duties, and she says a major benefit about working at Wildwood Care Centre has been seeing some of the work registered nurses do up close.

Working in a long-term care home has opened Murray's eyes to the various conditions residents are living with, she says. She is also seeing first-hand how front-line staff members perform palliative care and wound care duties.

She says working at Wildwood Care Centre has been surprising in "a lot of good ways."

"I've really gotten to know the residents well, and that has been great," Murray says, adding she would like to do further placements at the home. "I definitely want to come back next summer."

## Program Funded by Behavioural Supports Ontario

*Continued from page 1*

Life enrichment co-ordinator Christie Patterson attributes this surge in participation to the activation department creating separate interest groups for residents to join.

There are groups designed for couples, men and women.

"We just find that they will comment and talk a little more if they have a focus and a common ground," Patterson says.

The program centres on playing tunes residents enjoy and then encouraging them to engage in discussions about the music. Residents will choose a theme for each session and music related

to the theme will be played. Photographs are included with each musical theme and discussions related to the music and photographs are hosted afterwards.

"The residents can talk about the songs and what they meant to them; what they liked, what they didn't like, so (the program) is great that way," Patterson says.

The first time Patterson led the program was for a women's group. The theme was focused on celebrations. After the music was played, residents reflected on fond memories of birthdays and anniversaries.

"It was almost like therapy for them," Patterson says.

Activation department staff members have received Java Music Club training, and the program is available to residents of all cognitive abilities.

Country Terrace has put funding from the Behavioural Supports Ontario program towards joining the Java Music Club and training staff members.

BSO is a \$40-million initiative to help enhance quality of life for seniors affected by dementia and other conditions that cause agitation. The funding, which is provided to long-term care homes through Ontario's 14 Local Health Integration Networks, is largely put towards staff education. — DH

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## EDITORIAL



Pleasant Meadow Manor residents Shirley Ainey and Florence Dainard are seen here engaging life enrichment aide Victoria Zimmer in a water fight.

## Pleasant Meadow Manor Making the Most of Summer with a Variety of Activities

*Water fights, lake cruises and barbecues have marked the season so far*

By Deron Hamel

It was a seemingly normal, warm, summer day recently at Pleasant Meadow Manor when residents

*“We always end activities with a freezie or a Popsicle to increase the fluid levels . . . residents are getting a treat but they’re also getting more fluids.”*

— Chris Garden, life enrichment co-ordinator, Pleasant Meadow Manor

Shirley Ainey and Florence Dainard picked up water pistols and began soaking life enrichment aide (LEA) Victoria Zimmer.

Soon after, the LEA squirted back and a water fight was underway at the Norwood long-term care home.

This is one example of some of the fun folks at Pleasant Meadow Manor have been having lately as the weather has become warmer.

With temperatures surpassing the 30-degree mark, life enrichment staff members have also been organizing fun events to help residents enjoy the sunny weather. Barbecues, picnics and day trips are some of the things residents and staff members have been doing together.

While it’s important to have fun in the warm weather, it’s also crucial to keep everyone hydrated, so

staff members have been using creative ways to ensure everyone is getting their needed fluids.

“We always end activities with a freezie or a Popsicle to increase the fluid levels — and that’s been working out well, because residents are getting a treat but they’re also getting more fluids,” says life enrichment co-ordinator Chris Garden.

Outings have included activities near the home as well as short road trips. On July 28, residents and staff went on a cruise on Stony Lake, but they have also been taking advantage of watching baseball games at a nearby park, Garden notes.

“We’ve been having a lot of fun in this nice weather,” she says.

## Friendly Staff Makes a Difference

*Continued from page 1*

even moved into the home.

“The reason why I picked (Village Green) was because I was corresponding with the staff (to learn about the home) and I found them so helpful and friendly, so I thought, “This would be the best place for my mom.”

Babcock says staff members at Village Green have done an “excellent” job providing care and a home for her mother for the past 18 months.

Babcock says her mother moved from Montreal to the Greater Napanee long-term care home on April 14, 2014,

and both she and her mother have been happy since.

“It has been just great (for her),” Babcock says. “When I come into the home the staff are always very friendly and they do a great job of caring for my mother.”

Babcock says she is also impressed with how staff members go the extra mile for her mother in other areas, such as doing her hair and providing her and other residents with foot clinics.

Babcock says she is also impressed with Village Green’s environmental services department, noting that her mother’s room is

tidy and set up the way she likes it.

While Babcock can’t be at the home all the time, she says she takes comfort in the fact that her mother is surrounded with caring staff members who go above and beyond.

When she comes to Village Green to visit her mother, Babcock says staff members are thorough with any updates about her mom’s care and provide well-rounded information related to all aspects of her care.

“They are great with all the little details — right down to what she likes to eat,” Babcock says.

## Many Advantages to Having Small Homes in Small Communities

A wonderful thing about many of OMNI Health Care’s 18 long-term care homes is that they are located in smaller, rural communities.

*These long-term care homes help continue to foster the community atmosphere and slower pace of life residents who spent their lives in these areas have always been familiar with.*

A key advantage to having long-term care homes in small towns and villages is that they often become centre points in the communities they serve — and this is beneficial in several ways.

Firstly, many residents living in OMNI’s long-term care homes have spent their lives in these communities. Their families and lifelong friends often remain in these towns and villages as well and, in many cases, residents’ acquaintances also move into the homes.

So, these long-term care homes help continue to foster the community atmosphere and slower pace of life residents who spent their lives in these areas have always been familiar with.

Being located in smaller communities also means long-term care homes position themselves as hubs where people come together for activities, such as barbecues and even car shows.

These types of events, which are fixtures at OMNI homes in the summer months, bring new faces into the homes and showcase the family environment that’s so important to residents and staff members.

Another factor is that most OMNI homes are small, many with fewer than 70 residents. Having smaller homes in quiet towns and villages energizes these tight community environments because the relationships that develop are deeper and stronger.

And people living near OMNI long-term care homes have been seeing the value they deliver to residents. Two homes — Frost Manor in Lindsay and West Lake Terrace, near Picton — recently received pianos donated by generous people in their communities who wish to remain anonymous.

“This is another way that we feel a part of the community; it’s so important to know that we’re supported,” West Lake Terrace life enrichment co-ordinator Janie Butler recently told The OMNIway.

What is your long-term care home doing to engage people living in the town it serves? What has your home done in the past that was successful at creating the sense of community you want? What have you experienced that you would like to see more of?

These are questions we can all ask ourselves as we strive to enhance the quality experience for residents and family members.



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## Village Green BBQ Combines Food, Fun and Caribbean Flair

*'We had a great time — it was just awesome,' says family member*

By Deron Hamel

This year's family barbecue at Village Green had a Caribbean theme and drew a crowd of 119 people to the Greater Napanee long-term care home.

An "excellent" Caribbean band, complete with steel drums, entertained residents, families and staff members during the July 18 event, which garnered a lot of compliments from attendees, says life enrichment co-ordinator Karen Coulter.

"Some family members even took the time to write us e-mails about how much they enjoyed the barbecue," Coulter says.

The barbecue included activities everyone could play, including water games and a fish pond with magnetic toy fish for children to catch.

There was also a non-alcoholic bar set up that served frozen drinks,

including pina colodas, margaritas and slushies.

"Families used to have barbecues, which was a big thing for people, and these events bring back memories for people with the family environment that's created," Coulter says, adding that the event was made possible through a collaborative effort from all departments.

"These events are also fun for the staff — you've got the fun and laughter which is part of OMNI's (core values)."

Ankiné Babcock was one of the family members who attended the event with her husband, two daughters and three grandchildren.

"We had a great time — it was just awesome," says Babcock, whose mother is a Village Green resident. "(The barbecue) was well organized, the food was great and the Caribbean music was just fantastic."



Willows Estate resident Cheryl Roy (left) and her sister, Evie Roy, a resident at another long-term care home, are seen here with Elvis impersonator Dave Robinson during the home's annual family barbecue.

## Willows Estate's Annual BBQ Strengthens Ties with Families

*Almost 100 people attend this year's event*

By Deron Hamel

Willows Estate's annual family barbecue on June 24 was once again an opportunity to strengthen bonds with residents and their family members.

Teddy Mazzuca, the Aurora long-term care home's life enrichment co-ordinator, says the atmosphere of good food, fun and people makes the family barbecue one of Willows Estate's flagship events and one

that everyone eagerly looks forward to each year.

This year saw 98 people attend the barbecue, which featured hamburgers, hot dogs and a variety of salads.

"We always have a good turnout of families and residents," Mazzuca tells The OMNIway. "For a lot of families, they can't get their loved ones out because of residents' situations, so it gives them an opportunity to come in and spend a social evening with their

family members."

Mazzuca adds: "It's also great for staff because we're building strong relationships with the families."

As with past family barbecues, Elvis Presley impersonator Dave Robinson was on hand to belt out a few songs while dressed in the King of Rock 'n' Roll's famous white jumpsuit.

"He is a big hit with the families and the residents," Mazzuca says.



Village Green life enrichment aides Vicki Hartin and Brenda Clarke are seen here making margaritas during the home's July 18 family barbecue.

## Restraint Education Starts on Day 1

Continued from page 1

Terrace is continuing the process of staff and family engagement to try to reduce restraint usage even further. That process, she adds, needs to start from Day 1.

"It's a matter of educating the families from the day the residents arrive at the

home," she says.

Additionally, RAI co-ordinator Vanessa Labrecque has created an educational presentation called Restraint Reduction which will be rolled out to Garden Terrace staff members in July. The presentation will also be available to family members.

## Keeping the Quality Standard High

Continued from page 1

When this happens, others follow suit. Eventually, this pattern creates a culture that resonates.

"You can have a culture by design or by default — either way you will have a culture," Della Foresta says.

"Not a single one of us can be the difference. We can be the leader of the difference, but we can't do the job all by ourselves."

The word "quality" at OMNI refers to the high standard of every aspect of life inside the homes that must be upheld at all times,

from care delivery and meals to programming and the home environment.

To keep the quality standard high at OMNI, each home needs to have teams of people that are "proud" of their workplace, Della Foresta says. Taking time to do little extra things for residents and their families — something staff members already do well — is one way front-line staff members are always contributing to quality.

Della Foresta says the quality experience begins the moment a family calls

the home to inquire about a tour. Should a resident move out of the home or pass away, the quality experience must continue. For example, if a Garden Terrace resident passes away, sympathy cards signed by all staff members are sent to the resident's family.

"We truly hold people's lives in the palm of our hands and, at the end of the day, we don't just have impact on 160 residents, but we have impact on 160 extended families and about 180 staff," Della Foresta says. — DH

## Become a Dementia Friend . . .

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