



# OMNIway

Increased BSO Funding a  
Positive Step Forward . . . pg. 3

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## Two 'Cool' Dudes

From left to right, OMNI Health Care operations manager of nutrition and food service Chris Weber and Frost Manor nutritional care manager Neil MacDonald are seen here in protective gear preparing a citrus sorbet during the OLTCA/ORCA Together We Care convention and trade show in Toronto April 15. The pair used liquid nitrogen to freeze ingredients to make the recipe during a demonstration.

## A Physiotherapist's Question and Pam Brooks' Determination Lead to 131-lb Weight Loss

Country Terrace resident no longer classified diabetic, regains much of her mobility and independence

By Michelle Strutzenberger

When Pam Brooks moved to Country Terrace four years ago she was at one of the lowest points she'd ever been in her life.

Her husband of 38 years, her high-school sweetheart, had passed away three years before. They had started dating when she was 13. They were married when she was 18.

"He was my rock," Brooks says.

Hospitalized with

weakness in her limbs shortly after her husband's death, Brooks was moved to a long-term care home where she says the primary response to her health concerns was to increase her pain medication.

Not satisfied with the treatment at the other long-term care home and wanting to be closer to her daughter, Brooks chose to move to Country Terrace in Komoka.

"When I came here (to Country Terrace) I was a

full lift (meaning a machine had to transfer her to and from the bed, bath and so forth), 328 pounds and diabetic," Brooks recalls.

"I had lost my husband and I didn't care one way or another what happened."

And then came the question from Country Terrace's physiotherapist, Burton Moon.

"Burton came to me from physio and he said, 'Do you want to get better?'"

See 'Pam' page 2

## Almonte LEA's Drawings Proving to be Valuable Resident Engagement Tools

Mary O'Reilly's weekly whiteboard sketches bringing in crowds, inspiring residents to draw

By Deron Hamel

One day last May, Almonte Country Haven life enrichment aide (LEA) Mary O'Reilly decided on a whim to draw a picture of a pig on a whiteboard in the

Lanark County long-term care home. Residents suddenly began gravitating to O'Reilly as she drew, and she could see that she was on to something.

See 'Residents' page 4

## Resident Helps Redesign Forest Hill's Tub Room

'Every resident feels their opinions and wishes are given full consideration,' says Joan Leclaire

By Deron Hamel

When Joan Leclaire told Forest Hill's management that residents' quality of life would be enhanced if renovations were made to the aging tub room, administrator Susan Bell

agreed, then included her in the refurbishment process.

Leclaire, a resident at the Kanata, Ont. long-term care home, says before renovations were recently made, the tub room's décor was outdated.

See 'People' page 2

## Springdale to Launch Music of Your Life Program

Initiative uses iPods to enhance quality of life for residents

By Deron Hamel

Springdale Country Manor is the latest OMNI Health Care long-term care home to become involved with an iPod program to benefit residents living with cognitive impairment.

On March 16, Candice

Stewart, the Peterborough-area long-term care home's life enrichment co-ordinator (LEC), attended an in-service at Trent University in support of the Music of Your Life program, an initiative to create individualized playlists

See 'iPod' page 2



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## Bridging the Generations

Village Green resident June Walters is seen here chatting with students from Southview Public School's choir on Feb. 11. The student choir performed for residents at the Greater Napanee long-term care home with funding from the Retired Teachers of Ontario's Music Builds Community initiative.

## People Proud to say 'I Live at Forest Hill'

Continued from page 1

Fifteen-year-old wallpaper, an artificial tree, overhang curtains and no-longer-used equipment stored in the room were taking away the homey feeling.

Leclaire told Bell that the tub room, with its clutter and outdated furnishings, gave the home a "facility impression." With the right renovations, she told Bell, the tub room could have a "relaxing, spa-like feel."

Bell agreed and gave Leclaire free rein to make suggestions about the design process.

The resident 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.

Forest Hill's tub room now looks and feels completely different, Leclaire says.

"The impact of the updated changes made to the tub room is very

significant, I feel," Leclaire says. "Residents (now) have a calming, relaxing, spa-like experience while enjoying their bath and the amenities offered in this room."



The design to Forest Hill's refurbished tub room (pictured above) was largely based on input from resident Joan Leclaire.

Leclaire also credits Forest Hill management and staff for listening to the suggestions residents make and acting on those recommendations.

"Every resident feels their opinions and wishes are given full consideration when making important decisions affecting the home," she says. "It is indeed a home where everyone feels proud to say, 'I live at Forest Hill.'"

She also has kind words for the home's administrator.

"Forest Hill is indeed very fortunate to have Susan Bell as our administrator," Leclaire says. "Susan is very resident-focused and she places the resident first."

## Pam Brooks Keeps Looking Ahead

Continued from page 1

And I said, 'Why, can you help me get better?' And he said, 'Yeah, I can.'"

Brooks chokes up as she remembers that moment. She had already started believing what she'd been told before — that she was just going to keep on getting worse until she died.

"I had thought, 'Well, great, then there's no sense in me trying to fight.' But when Burton came and told me he could help me, then I had a reason to try," she says.

Brooks was also moved by a sliver of hope that maybe she could enjoy life with her daughter and two grandchildren again.

So began the two-year journey to this time.

From that day forward, Brooks began exercising five days a week, completing exercise routines as outlined by Moon.

"We started basically with me standing up against the machine, holding on, (working up to) being able to stand there by myself for a period of time. And as I got stronger he just increased what we did (and how we did it)," she says.

One of the key issues Brooks faced was a dominance of pain in her right side, which led her to avoid motion.

Having Moon create the exercise routines for her gave her the confidence that she wouldn't further harm herself by moving.

"I created the space where it was safe to do (these routines)," the physiotherapist says. "She has confidence in me, in that I make certain that no harm comes to her as she experiments."

"She has allowed her right side to build up and become

her walker throughout the entire building, including up and down ramps.

She is also mostly independent with her personal care. For instance, she can dress herself and take care of most of her activities of daily living.



Pam Brooks before and after her 131-lb weight loss.

strong and she is working very hard to see if she can recover skills with her left side," Moon adds. "Though her left side is still a very inefficient side, it too has gained strength."

Besides the exercises, Brooks became more mindful about what she eats.

"I don't eat any red meat of any kind. . . I very rarely eat sweets. Most of the time I eat fruit if I do want something sweet. The only thing I drink is water and green tea with lemon and ginseng," she says. She also likes to snack on a saltless trail mix that life enrichment staff pick up for her at Walmart.

So, what has all of this change made possible in Brooks' life?

For one, she no longer requires the full lift transfer. She can walk with

Besides her newfound mobility and independence, Brooks has lost 131 pounds. And for about a year and a half, she has required none of the medications for her former diabetes diagnosis.

Looking ahead, Brooks is determined to keep building her strength and independence. One goal she's considered is walking without a walker. This will require continuing to build up her strength in her left side.

Though she still misses her husband — next month it will be seven years since his passing — Brooks has clearly found reason to keep fighting and moving forward.

"I have always been a very determined person," she says. "Once I got over my depression about my husband, that determination took over."

## iPod Program Intended to Calm Residents

Continued from page 1

for people with cognitive impairment to help ease agitation and mitigate responsive behaviours.

The Rotary Club of Peterborough has donated money to Peterborough's Geriatric Health Services to buy 66 iPod shuffles to be donated to area long-term care homes, retirement communities and the Victoria Order of Nurses' adult day program.

Remaining iPods are being stored at the Peterborough Public Library. Springdale Country Manor received its four iPod shuffles through the library.

The focus of the Music of Your Life program is to create individualized playlists for residents with cognitive impairment to help ease agitation and mitigate responsive behaviours.

Stewart is aiming to launch the program in coming weeks.

The LEC says she plans to pilot the program with two residents and expand it from there.

While Springdale Country Manor has yet to use iPods with customized playlists for residents, people living at the home engage in frequent group and one-on-one music

programs, which have had a calming effect on people with cognitive impairment.

Stewart is in the process of speaking with residents and their families to discover what types of music they enjoy. Based on the feedback, she will create playlists for the iPods specific to each resident who will be in the program.

Other OMNI homes have been involved with iPod programs. Riverview Manor recently launched its Music of Your Life program after receiving four iPods. Streamway Villa in Cobourg has found success with its Music and Memory program.




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# Lindsay Church Ensures Area LTC Homes Have Access to Easter Service

*Frost Manor LEC Vi O'Leary commends St. Paul's Anglican Church for community support*

By Deron Hamel

Frost Manor life enrichment co-ordinator (LEC) Vi O'Leary is commending St. Paul's Anglican Church in Lindsay for once again supporting area long-term

care homes by hosting a wheelchair-accessible Easter service on March 30. For more than 10 years, St. Paul's has offered wheelchair-accessible services at Easter, Christmas and Thanksgiving to residents

at the five long-term care homes in the region: Frost Manor, Extendicare Kawartha Lakes, Victoria Manor, Caressant Care McLaughlin Road and Caressant Care Mary Street.

This ensures long-term care residents — many of whom require wheelchairs — have access to services. As with past services for long-term care residents, St. Paul's provided a lunch and free transportation to and from the church.

"This is big community support," O'Leary says of the church. "St. Paul's needs to be recognized for this."

O'Leary adds that Rev. Warren Leibovitch delivered "a beautiful sermon" focused on spring and new life.

Frost Manor residents always look forward to

attending services at St. Paul's, the LEC says.

"It doesn't matter what religion they are, if people have been to St. Paul's before, they want to go again," she says. "And St. Paul's encourages new residents to come, and we did have some new residents go."

The hospitality St. Paul's extends to the long-term care residents attending the services is top notch, O'Leary says, adding the church's ushers are there to greet residents and help porter them into the church.

"They go out of their way to make people welcome," she says. "It's wonderful what they do. ... These are people who care and who try to make a difference in the lives of long-term care residents."

*"It doesn't matter what religion they are. . . . St. Paul's encourages new residents to come." . . .*

— Vi O'Leary, life enrichment co-ordinator, Frost Manor

care homes by hosting a wheelchair-accessible Easter service on March 30.

For more than 10 years, St. Paul's has offered wheelchair-accessible services at Easter, Christmas and Thanksgiving to residents

## Increased BSO Funding a Positive Step Forward

The province's commitment in its 2016-17 budget to providing an additional \$10 million of Behavioural Supports Ontario (BSO) funding annually for the next three years is a step in the right direction to improving the lives of seniors living with Alzheimer's disease and dementia.

long-term care homes have seen the benefits from the BSO initiative. Homes have formed BSO teams which attend educational sessions. Staff members attending these sessions bring back knowledge they can then share with their co-workers to help alleviate agitation for residents living with cognitive impairment.

For instance, BSO team members will often host sessions at nurses' stations or during shift-to-shift reports when they know there are residents experiencing agitation or exhibiting aggressive behaviours. Staff members will then share with their colleagues the ideas they've learned at BSO meetings to address and prevent responsive behaviours.

When long-term care home staff members learn about preventing responsive behaviours and how to better work with residents who have cognitive impairment, the outcome is reduced aggression and a higher quality of life for people.

This has been the positive impact BSO has had on OMNI homes.

While OMNI and the province's long-term care sector have commended the Ontario government for its funding commitment to BSO, there is still work to do.

Looking ahead, BSO funding specifically aimed at increasing staffing within long-term care homes would go a long way in addressing responsive behaviours, given the increase of residents with complex-care issues.

OMNI will continue to advocate for changes that improve residents' quality of life.

*When long-term care home staff members learn about preventing responsive behaviours and how to better work with residents... the outcome is reduced aggression and a higher quality of life.*

BSO is a provincial initiative that's enhancing quality of life for seniors affected by dementia and other conditions that can cause agitation. The funding, which is provided to long-term care homes through the province's 14 Local Health Integration Networks, is largely put towards staff education.

The goal of BSO is to increase quality of life for people with cognitive impairment by providing individualized, evidence-based supports instead of using antipsychotic medications to reduce agitation.

Training provided through BSO includes Montessori, Gentle Persuasive Approaches and P.I.E.C.E.S. (physical, intellectual, emotional, capabilities, environment and social).

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## Skype Visually Connects Garden Terrace Resident with Sister for First Time in 30 Years

*'My dad was really overwhelmed to see his sister and hear her talk'*

By Deron Hamel

Edward Montague had not seen his sister, Margaret, in 30 years. But thanks to the wonders of modern technology, the siblings were reunited, even though they're separated by an ocean.

*"If you had been able to see them marvelling over being able to hear each other and see each other, it would have brought you to tears."*

— Lynn Montague, daughter of Garden Terrace resident

Edward lives at Garden Terrace in Kanata, Ont. Margaret lives in a long-term care home in Glasgow, Scotland. Both recently used Skype from their homes to have a video conversation. The reaction this

experience had on Edward is something his daughter, Lynn, will never forget.

"If you had been able to see them marvelling over being able to hear each other and see each other, it would have brought you to tears," Lynn says. "My dad was really overwhelmed to see his sister and hear her talk. . . . It was moving to see that."

Edward and Margaret have always been close, even when living on different sides of the Atlantic. With both Edward and Margaret now having access to Skype, the two will be able to stay in contact frequently.

"It's different when you can see each other," Lynn notes, adding a Skype meeting in February has already been arranged.

Believing Skype would have benefits for her father and other residents, Lynn persuaded the Garden

Terrace team to install a computer equipped with a webcam and the Skype program for people to use. OMNI Health Care IT manager Jeremy Stewart set the system up at the home.

Lynn also contacted a cousin in Scotland to inquire about a similar system being set up in Margaret's long-term care home.

Lynn says she's thankful to Garden Terrace staff members for their help providing her father with this special experience.

"It is a wonderful gift," she says.

Given this success, Garden Terrace is letting other residents and family members know the home has Skype.

"We brought it up at residents' council and family council so they know that we now have Skype," says life enrichment co-ordinator Sylvia Monette.

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Almonte Country Haven LEA Mary O'Reilly is seen here drawing pictures on a whiteboard.

## 'Residents Love Her Drawings'

Continued from page 1

Since then, O'Reilly has made a point of drawing cartoon characters and other images on the whiteboard once a week. The drawings are highly detailed and done with a felt-tip marker. Each drawing takes O'Reilly

*"I am excited to be doing this again."*

— Mary O'Reilly, life enrichment aide, Almonte Country Haven

about two hours, and she always snaps a photo of her creations, knowing the whiteboard will be wiped clean within days. She works on the drawings on her own time, after her shifts end.

O'Reilly's drawings have included famous cartoon characters such as Donald Duck, Snoopy and Bugs Bunny. She has also used photographs of tigers, lions, owls and other animals as models for her creations.

Not only are O'Reilly's drawings enjoyed by residents, some of those living at the

home have started creating their own pictures on sketchpads. Seeing how much residents enjoy looking at her drawings, O'Reilly is planning to turn her hobby into a program for residents.

"I haven't done drawings in years, and I am excited to be doing this again," O'Reilly tells The OMNIway. "I didn't think I would have the time or motivation to sit down and draw again, but this has been a lot of fun."

O'Reilly says she also enjoys the process of asking residents about drawings they would like her to do.

Almonte Country Haven administrator Carolyn Della Foresta has seen the benefit O'Reilly's drawings have brought to residents, adding the drawings exemplify how staff members do small things that make big differences to people living at the home.

"Mary's drawings are always a conversation piece in the home," she says. "Residents love her drawings, and they will flock to the board just to see what she is drawing on the board for that week. I think this is one of the neatest things."

# Resident Finds 'World of Joy' in Helping and Caring

*Joyce Edgeley seeks to ensure residents' concerns are addressed through Rosebridge Manor residents' council*

By Michelle Strutzenberger

Describing herself as fortunate to be as well as she is, Joyce Edgeley has been making her mark at Rosebridge Manor as a resident who constantly goes out of her way to help out and ensure her fellow residents are well cared for.

"I looked after my mother and two sisters until their deaths and then I was alone for quite some time, until it was necessary to come into the home," Edgeley tells The OMNIway. "And I found there was quite a need here."

"There was quite a bit of it being short-staffed and they couldn't get the time to help everyone the way they wanted, and I saw that I could do a bit of what they did — without taking over their jobs or anything."

Edgeley and the staff have figured out a few things she can do that both help the staff and make her feel fulfilled. For instance, she'll often help clear the breakfast things and wipe the tables.

Edgeley is also always on the lookout for ways to support her fellow residents.

For example, if someone in a wheelchair needs to get down to breakfast, and Edgeley is around, she'll push them to the dining room.

"I take them down and

they're just so happy that they didn't have to wait and wait. "It just brings me a world of joy," Edgeley says.

Edgeley is also president of the residents' council, where she has been focused for the year she's been in



Joyce Edgeley

that role in ensuring that residents are well cared for in the home. She presents concerns for those residents who can't speak for themselves.

In the past year, she says, a number of issues have been addressed as a result.

"I'm quite happy about quite a few of (the issues) that have been changed," she says, noting that if something doesn't get addressed one month, she'll keep bringing it up.

"I'm very stubborn that way," she notes with a chuckle. "If nobody gives me an answer I want to

hear, then I keep asking.

"Everybody just has to remember in the home that it's the residents that count," Edgeley adds. "That's what I believe and I go by the (residents') bill of rights."

Looking ahead, Edgeley says she's got a book in her that could be written about the humorous happenings in the home.

"There quite a few comedic things that take place in here, and I've been told I should write a book, so this is something I'd like to start," she says, noting she's quite the cut-up herself and is often the one contributing to the fun.

"We have quite a good time here and when people are low and depressed I like to get a smile and a laugh out of them and the whole bit and then I feel good."

Life enrichment co-ordinator Kathy Barr applauds Edgeley for all that she contributes to the home.

Besides helping with the breakfast cleanup, running the resident's council and spicing up the day with her humour, Edgeley will often assist with fundraisers, lend a listening ear to residents who are emotional and offer her support to families when a resident is in palliative care, Barr says.

"She's a wonderful lady all around."

## BSO Knowledge Sharing Attributed to Low Resident Agitation at Pleasant Meadow

*'When we find something that works, we just make sure that it keeps getting passed on'*

By Deron Hamel

When Pleasant Meadow Manor staff members attend Behavioural Supports Ontario (BSO) educational sessions, they always return with knowledge they can bring back to their colleagues, says Chris Garden.

Garden, the Norwood long-term care home's life enrichment co-ordinator and BSO lead, says staff members will host sessions at the nurses' station or on shift-to-shift report when they know there

is a resident experiencing agitation or exhibiting aggressive behaviours.

Staff members will then share with their colleagues the ideas they've learned at BSO meetings to address and prevent behaviours. Staff members will then try these interventions. Often, this knowledge sharing results in success, Garden says.

"We try to spread the education that we're coming back with amongst the other staff members and lead by

example and educate as we go along," Garden tells The OMNIway. "When we find something that works, we just make sure that it keeps getting passed on."

To date, 12 staff members have already received BSO education, including the five staff members and managers who make up the BSO team.

"We're going forward; more staff members are being educated, which also reflects on the fact that behaviours have decreased," Garden says.

BSO is a provincial 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 (LHINs), is largely put towards staff education.

In its 2016-17 budget, the Ontario government pledged an investment of \$10 million over the next three years to fund BSO.

Looking ahead, Garden says BSO funding specifically aimed at increasing staffing would go a long way in addressing behaviours in long-term care.

"I think (more BSO staffing) is highly needed in long-term care," she says. "We're just seeing so many more people with complex diagnoses and residents (with mental-health issues). To see BSO staffing in every home across the province would be fantastic."