



# OMNIway

Treating Residents Like  
Restaurant Customers Enhances  
Quality Meal Services . . . pg. 3

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## Say Cheese!

Riverview Manor resident Carmen “Jake” Jaquith poses at a photo booth for life enrichment aide Lyndsay Irwin, during the Peterborough long-term care home’s carnival Aug. 12.

## Frost Manor Wins Prize in OLTCA Letter-writing Campaign

Home collects 535 messages in support of more funding for LTC sector

By Natalie Hamilton

In its quest to raise awareness about the need for “Better Seniors’ Care,” Frost Manor has netted a prize for its residents’ council from the Ontario Long Term Care Association (OLTCA). The Lindsay long-term care home and its community generated 535 letters, calls and tweets in support of increased funding for the long-term care sector.

The OLTCA has been publicly campaigning to make long-term care a priority in the Ontario legislature. As part of this advocacy work, the organization asked its members to engage staff, residents, families and community members in writing letters, calling and tweeting MPPs through BetterSeniorsCare.ca.

Vi O’Leary, Frost Manor’s life enrichment co-ordinator (LEC), tells The OMNIway

she’s surprised the home won a prize but isn’t shocked by the level of support the campaign received from staff, family members and residents.

“We need more help, more staff and more funding for long-term care,” O’Leary says.

“It is a crisis and that’s why I was pushing it.”

O’Leary contacted the OLTCA to receive hard copies of the letters to sign and with the help of family council, residents’ council and community members, she and others widely distributed the information. The LEC says there was a real community effort behind the collection of so many signatures.

“Everybody felt the same way — (residents) are the backbone of the community. They’ve worked all of their lives. When they come into long-term care (they deserve better),” O’Leary says.

Frost Manor’s residents’ council will receive \$250 from the OLTCA and OMNI Health Care will match that amount, O’Leary notes. It will be up to the residents’ council to determine how residents wish to spend the money.

In the announcement of the winners, the OLTCA says it witnessed “a great level of engagement from our homes and are pleased to say that more than 25,850 letters, calls and tweets were sent during the contest period.

“That’s more than double what was sent through the campaign last year, thanks to your support.”

Frost placed third in its category of 1-79 beds.

In another category for homes with 133 beds or more, Garden Terrace in Kanata took the lead with 1,720 actions.

## iPod Program Effectively Calming Residents with Agitation at Springdale

By Deron Hamel

Springdale Country Manor’s Music of Your Life program is curbing agitation for residents affected by cognitive impairment, and all of the home’s staff members have contributed to this success, says Candice Stewart, the home’s life enrichment co-ordinator (LEC).

In March, the Peterborough long-term care home received four iPod shuffles through the Music of Your Life program, an initiative to create individualized playlists for people with cognitive impairment to help ease agitation and mitigate responsive behaviours.

See ‘LEC Says’ page 3

## Maplewood Ceremony Recognizes Exceptional Staff

By Natalie Hamilton

OMNI Health Care president and CEO Patrick McCarthy was at Maplewood July 13 to honour and celebrate two special staff members who personify the long-term care provider’s values.

Maplewood in Brighton saluted personal support worker (PSW) Cindy Davis and chef Tracy Morewood for their contributions to

the home that enhance quality of life for residents and improve workplace culture for staff.

Davis received the Everyday Hero award.

The PSW says she was “shocked” to learn she was the recipient of this annual OMNI award, bestowed to one person at each of its 18 long-term care homes.

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## Living at Country Terrace Inspires Resident Poet

By Deron Hamel

Gloria Marks has been writing poetry for most of her life, and one of her recent poems caught the eye of Country Terrace life enrichment co-ordinator Christie Patterson, who sent it to The OMNIway.

Gloria says the inspiration for her poem, entitled Please Don’t Forget Us, was inspired by living at the Komoka

long-term care home. The poem is a reflection on aging and the fact that the “older generation” should never be forgotten.

Raised in an orphanage, Gloria says she began writing poetry at around age 16. With the help of a niece, Gloria’s poetry has been published in a book, and her poems have been

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Chris Weber (left) and Brian MacPherson smiling despite the heat.

## Grilling Fun in the (Very Hot) Sun

OMNI operations manager Chris Weber shares grilling skills at Village Green barbecue

By Michelle Strutzenberger

While the July sun beat down temperatures close to 40C Chris Weber and Brian MacPherson worked the Village Green barbecue July 7.

*“The home was lovely... They had decorated and set it up so that both staff and residents could all eat together, and the managers would do the serving.”*

— Chris Weber, operations manager for nutrition and food services, OMNI Health Care

MacPherson, the Selby long-term care home’s maintenance manager, and Weber, OMNI Health Care operations manager for nutrition and food services, turned out a feast of grilled steaks, hot dogs, sausages and hamburgers.

Inside the home, managers

dished up salads and strawberries and served up cool drinks for residents and staff to enjoy.

“The home was lovely,” Weber says. “They had decorated and set it up so that both staff and residents could all eat together, and the managers would do the serving.”

And what was the occasion?

“It was just a barbecue,” Weber says. “You don’t need to have much of a reason to have a barbecue.”

“It was just a fun day for everybody.”

Life enrichment co-ordinator Karen Coulter says having Weber join the home for the meal was a real treat.

“It was awesome. We are so appreciative of Chris,” Coulter says.

Weber says he’d been invited by several residents months earlier to join the annual event. He looked forward to joining and was happy to take them up on the invitation when the time came.

## 103-year-old Burnbrae Gardens Resident Helps Trim Branches Outside Her Room

*‘I can see outside better now,’ says Madeline McCarthy*

By Deron Hamel

Madeline McCarthy can see much better out of the window in her room at Burnbrae Gardens, now that she has helped trim bushes in the Campbellford long-term care home’s yard that were obstructing her view.

The 103-year-old resident of the Campbellford long-term care home approached staff members recently and told them about the offending branches

and offered to help maintenance manager Harrison Montgomery prune them.

So, that’s what the two did last Thursday morning. Madeline told staff they’d need a wheelbarrow and hedge clippers to do the job, so everything was organized for them. The pair went outside, and Madeline held the branches while Harrison cut them with hedge clippers.



Burnbrae Gardens resident Madeline McCarthy helps maintenance manager Harrison Montgomery trim branches.

“She was really excited to be able to go outside and help Harrison,” administrator and life enrichment co-ordinator April Faux tells The OMNIway.

“Madeline is always in her room, reading her books and looking out the window, so it’s important for her to be able to see outside.”

Madeline, an avid gardener all her life, was more than happy to help.

And she enjoys being active and doing things for herself — she once fixed the roof of her house when she was in her 80s.

“She is a determined lady,” April says.

Madeline says she was glad to help trim the hedges and is once again enjoying the view.

“I can see outside better now — and (the trimmed branches) look good,” she says.

## West Lake Terrace Appreciates Amber Andrus’ Positive Outlook

*PSW’s bubbly spirit, willingness to go the extra mile makes her an ‘Everyday Hero’ to residents, staff*

By Michelle Strutzenberger

No matter what circumstances are unfolding, West Lake Terrace personal support worker (PSW) Amber Andrus somehow always manages to maintain a positive outlook.

That’s the characteristic about Andrus that Jackie Maxwell noticed when she joined West Lake Terrace as director of nursing.

“Amber was someone who stood out to me because every day, it didn’t matter whether it was a good day or a bad day, she was always bubbly, she was always positive,” Maxwell says.

“It didn’t matter whether it was with residents or co-workers, or if they were working short.”

Other team members also attest to the PSW’s unflinchingly positive spirit.

“The staff have said she’s like this no matter the

circumstance. We could be having the worst day — a power outage or something — and she would be this way,” Maxwell says.

Andrus’ positive outlook surfaces in a gentle and quiet way.

“You know she’s there, but you don’t,” says Maxwell. In tense situations, she remains calm.

Andrus is also someone who’s appreciated in the home for being willing to go the extra mile. She demonstrates this through her willingness to pick up shifts when there’s a staffing shortage.

She also shows this through adding little touches to the care of the residents — like making sure they are looking their best.

West Lake Terrace team members nominated Andrus for the OMNI Health Care

2016 Everyday Hero award.

“The team said she’s an Everyday Hero because she sets an example... Day to day she demonstrates how a professional PSW should be — caring and committed,” Maxwell says.

“With the bubbly positive attitude that she brings to her interactions with co-workers and residents alike she continues to enhance the lives of those around her,” the team stated in their nomination form for the award.

“From her gentle approach to being the voice of reason in escalated situations, she continues to demonstrate a commitment to professionalism and compassion for the work she does.”

Andrus formally received the Everyday Hero award Aug. 11 at a staff and family picnic at West Lake Terrace.

### MAKE YOUR COFFEE COUNT

The 21st Annual Alzheimer Coffee Break® kicks off Thurs., Sept. 15, 2016, and continues into October.

Participants make a donation to the Alzheimer Society in exchange for a cup of coffee.

To find a Coffee Break in your area, or for more on how to host a Coffee Break, visit: [alzheimer.ca](http://alzheimer.ca)



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## EDITORIAL



Maplewood personal support worker Cindy Davis, second from right, is the long-term care home's Everyday Hero for 2016. From left, OMNI eastern region operations director Sarah Ferguson-McLaren, PSW Nicole Lafée and OMNI president and CEO Pat McCarthy offer congratulations.

## PSW Receives Everyday Hero, Chef Named Inspired Leader

*Continued from page 1*

"It was pretty amazing and very nice," Davis tells The OMNIway.

Her peers who nominated her say Davis is "a true definition of a PSW that individualizes each of our residents. She looks at each resident to see what we could do to better the (long-term care) home experience for the residents.

"It is a blessing having the honour to work with (Davis)."

Meanwhile, chef Morewood is a born leader, says Nancy Stillman, Maplewood's environmental

services/nutritional care manager, who nominated Morewood for the Inspired Leader award.

An employee of the home since 1992, Morewood gets to know the residents well, particularly their nutritional needs as well as likes and dislikes.

"Tracy is truly an inspired leader," Maplewood administrator Rachel Corkery recently told The OMNIway.

"Her dedication to the home, residents, staff and management is evident in her commitment to labour management and health and

safety committees. She is a leader who is well respected for all that she is and does for the home."

Each year, OMNI presents a leader from each of its homes with the Inspired Leader award — an accolade for those who demonstrate OMNI's mission, vision and values and outstanding leadership and dedication to their work.

The Maplewood ceremony was an intimate gathering, well-attended by 20 or so of the home's residents.

"It really went well," Corkery says.

## LEC Says Staff Support Has Helped Make Music of Your Life Successful

*Continued from page 1*

Since then, the iPods have been kept in Stewart's office and they have been "coming and going all the time."

Nurses, the LEC says, spot residents experiencing agitation and get the iPods and offer them to the residents.

More often than not, residents who wish to try the iPods have found them a source of comfort when the music starts playing, Stewart says.

"The music is working wonderfully," she tells The OMNIway. "When someone is really upset about something and you start singing a song that's on the iPod, everything turns around — the headphones go on and there's a smile on their face. It's amazing."

While several residents

have tried the iPods, there are two residents in particular who use them often. As soon as the music starts playing, they're no longer agitated, Stewart says.

For example, one of the residents is often anxious and looking for her daughter. But when the resident puts on the headphones and starts listening to one of her favourite songs, she starts singing and clapping her hands and two-steps down the hallway.

Another resident who sometimes wanders will become calm and start whistling and snapping fingers when Brown Eyed Girl by Van Morrison is played for him.

"It takes him to a happy, familiar place, somewhere that he can connect to," Stewart says, adding residents'

family members have been helpful working with staff to create iPod playlists.

Stewart says all staff members — especially front-line staff — have been helpful making the program successful. People will see that a resident is agitated and come to her office to get an iPod.

"It has been a team effort from everyone," she says.

Earlier this year, the Rotary Club of Peterborough 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.

## Treating Residents Like Restaurant Customers Enhances Quality Meal Services

Food is an important part of life in long-term care homes. Aside from the obvious nutritional benefits, food also fosters enjoyment and social activity. Perhaps most importantly, food provides choice, something residents hold dear.

Think of dining in a high-end restaurant. When dining out, we expect to be served meals made from high-quality ingredients. We want the food to look good, too. That's what OMNI Health Care's 18 long-term care homes strive to accomplish at mealtimes.

Cooking fresh food from scratch with fresh ingredients, plating meals in a way one would expect from a top-notch restaurant and ensuring food is served at optimal temperature are some of the ways OMNI kitchens keep meal quality high.

Serving food that looks and tastes good is important, given the high value residents place on meals.

In keeping with this idea, kitchens in OMNI homes are encouraged to use their creativity to produce plates that have colourful garnishes, and many meals are plated the way food is served in five-star restaurants.

For example, a typical meat-and-potatoes dish might see sautéed beef "plated high" on a bed of mashed potato.

If food looks good, people eat.

"People eat with their eyes first," says Frost Manor nutritional care manager Neil

MacDonald. "If we can make the food look good, smell good and especially taste good, with the encouragement of good service, the meal intake is going to be that much better. And we're seeing that people are satisfied. That's what we're aiming for."

While serving food that looks and tastes good is an important part of the dining experience for long-term care residents, there are other ways to enhance quality. A recent trend in the long-term care sector is seeing homes working towards creating a more social aspect at mealtimes.

Using this model, some long-term care homes are now seeing success by giving their dining rooms a more homey appearance. Something as simple as adding curtains or hanging more paintings on walls can have a positive impact on dining experiences, says Heather Keller, research chair in nutrition and aging at the Schlegel-UW Research Institute for Aging.

Keller also suggests homes try to group residents with similar needs together during meals and include, if possible, residents who can be supportive of other residents at the table.

Many homes using this approach report seeing an increase in quality of life for residents, Keller says.

"I think people experience an increased sense of belonging, which is, perhaps, one of the most important things a meal can do," she says.



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Pictured above, Country Terrace resident Gloria Marks holds a copy of her poetry book.

## Poem is Composition About the Importance of Being Remembered

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read across North America.

"I have written poetry my whole life and it has been published in Canada and the States, too," Gloria tells The OMNIway. "My niece has been a big help — she always liked my poetry and she (published) my poetry in a book and wrote my life story at the front of (the book)."

Gloria lives at Country Terrace with her husband, Fred. She and Fred did volunteer work for Meals on Wheels when they lived in Kitchener, and the organization has published Gloria's poetry in its newsletter.

"Everyone at Meals on Wheels got that poem," she says with pride.

Here is the poem Gloria wrote for Country Terrace:

### Please Don't Forget Us

Here we are at last amid the older generation

Where did all the years go when

we were so young and full of Pride.

Have you forgotten us?

We deserve to be known and not set aside.

To be ignored is not right.

Treat us as we deserve — not like children.

A smile and a Hello would be nice instead of passing us by.

This could happen to you someday.

Look Back Look Back into the crowd

and make yourself Proud

That you helped so many people who needed You!

## Glen Boyd Toasted as OMNI's 'Go-to Guy'

OMNI's CFO retires after 20 years of service

By Deron Hamel

Working as an accountant for a long-term care operator can be complicated. There is a complex administrative structure to work through when it comes to reporting to the ministry and controlling budgets, but Glen Boyd always made it look easy, say his colleagues.

Boyd recently retired as OMNI Health Care's chief financial officer after nearly 20 years with the organization. OMNI president and CEO Patrick McCarthy worked with him in Owen Sound for another long-term care operator in the early 1990s and notes Boyd is as good as they come at his profession.

"Glen has a lot of experience in the long-term care sector. The pressure on the accounting department is often underestimated

and Glen brought a lot of knowledge to that area and really helped us move ahead," McCarthy says, adding Boyd's strengths extended beyond working with numbers. "Glen has always demonstrated a lot of caring for both the residents and staff and has always been looking out for them."

Pleasant Meadow Manor office manager Sylvia Sanders worked with Boyd for many years. Sanders says Boyd's knowledge was often called upon by office managers at OMNI's 18 long-term care homes and he was always there to help meet any challenge that arose.

"He has been one of the greatest guys to work with," Sanders says. "Glen is always there for you if you need him, he always has an answer for you, and he always has your

back. I don't know what more I can say, except that he is going to be greatly missed. He has always been a go-to guy for us office managers."

Boyd's career at OMNI began in September 1996. While he looks forward to spending time with his family and travelling in his retirement, he says there are many things he will miss about his time at OMNI, particularly the people.

"There has always been a very friendly family culture here," he says. "Accounting has been good to me and people here have always been great to work with."

To celebrate Boyd's career, OMNI hosted a party for him at the Peterborough Lawn Bowling Club on July 14. The event was attended by OMNI team members throughout the organization.

## Campfire Program Spawns High Engagement for Residents of All Abilities

West Lake Terrace LEC recommends activity to other LTC homes

By Deron Hamel

A makeshift campfire in the activity room at West Lake Terrace on Aug. 17 proved to be the perfect tool for engaging residents of all cognitive abilities and garnering a lot of participation, says life enrichment co-ordinator Janie Denard.

Denard got the idea for the program after seeing photos on Pinterest of an indoor campfire someone had made from household items.

"I thought, 'you know what? We can do that,'" she tells The OMNIway, adding some residents have requested camping programs in the past.

So, gathering fire-red tissue paper, toilet paper rolls, a puck light and sticks, Denard and life enrichment aide Josh Thompson made a mock campfire. The life enrichment team kept hush-hush about what they were up to because they wanted to surprise residents.

The suspense built up all day and about half of the Prince Edward County



West Lake Terrace residents are seen here gathering around the "campfire" during an Aug. 17 program at the home.

long-term care home's 47 residents turned up. Most importantly, almost all of them participated once the program got underway.

Denard took requests for songs to be played on her iPad and everyone sang and residents were encouraged to tell their favourite camping stories, as everyone enjoyed s'mores that were baked in the kitchen.

"The residents really loved this," she says. "Camping is an activity many of the residents did with their own kids in the past, or something they did when they were kids. It was a familiar activity, and

that made a difference."

As a testament to the program's success, Denard notes that one resident who is nonverbal began to mime the words to every one of the songs that were played.

"It was so nice to see (the resident) smiling and happy and actually being able to engage in an activity," Denard says. "This was an activity that every single one of our residents could participate in."

Denard says the program was so successful she is hoping other OMNI long-term care homes will try this program. For more information, call Denard at 1-613-393-2055.

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