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## Christmas Smiles

Country Terrace residents had special Christmas photos taken this year. The residents sent their Christmas photos to their families as part of a project created by staff. Pictured above are Ken McKaig, Harriet Clayton (left inset) and Helen Harloff (right inset). See story at right.

## Construction Begins on Pleasant Meadow Manor Redevelopment Project

By Deron Hamel  
NORWOOD, Ont. – Construction has begun on a \$25-million redevelopment and expansion project at Pleasant Meadow Manor that will increase the size of the Norwood long-term care home from 61 beds to 96, eliminate three- and four-bed wards and provide a wide range of amenities to enhance quality of life for residents.

The redevelopment project, which will add 34,000 square feet to Pleasant Meadow Manor, is expected to be complete by December 2022.

At a Nov. 16 ground-breaking ceremony at the home, OMNI Health Care president and CEO Patrick

McCarthy, Pleasant Meadow Manor administrator Sandra Tucker and Pleasant Meadow Manor residents' council president Gord Holliday were joined by Asphodel-Norwood Township Mayor Rodger Bonneau and Northumberland-Peterborough South MPP David Piccini to celebrate the start of the project.

"We are really happy to be underway and we are looking forward to the new Pleasant Meadow Manor meeting the needs of residents in accommodations that offer greater privacy and meet updated design standards," McCarthy said.

"We acknowledge and express appreciation for

the support of the Province of Ontario and the Township of Asphodel-Norwood in moving this redevelopment forward."

Once redeveloped, Pleasant Meadow Manor will have a two-storey addition on the south side of the existing 61-bed home that will house 35 more residents. Residents will live in three spacious neighbourhoods, each housing dining, lounge and activity spaces.

The new design will enhance privacy by eliminating three- and four-bed rooms. Once complete, 60 per cent of Pleasant Meadow Manor's

See 'The Timing' page 2

## Province Approves Village Green Rebuild that Will Add 62 Beds

The Ontario government announced Nov. 20 that approval has been granted to build a new 128-bed Village Green in Greater Napanee, a move the home's administrator, Linda Pierce, says will benefit residents, staff members and the community.

Once completed, the new

Village Green will have an additional 62 beds, nearly twice as many as the current home, which has 66.

"We are really excited about it," Pierce tells The OMNIway. "This is such a complement to everybody: the team, the community

See 'New Village' page 4

## Province Approves 32 Additional Beds for the New Riverview Manor

The news keeps getting better for Riverview Manor residents — both present and future.

The province recently announced it has approved funding for another 32 beds to add to the 36 new beds that were promised in December 2018 for the rebuilt Peterborough long-term care home.

Riverview Manor's current

location on Water Street has 124 beds. Construction on the new Riverview Manor, which will be nearby on Langton Street in Peterborough's north end, will likely start in 2021 and will take about two years to build.

During a virtual press conference on Nov. 20, Peterborough-Kawartha

See 'New Funding' page 3

## Country Terrace Residents Sending Special Christmas Photos to Their Families

Thanks to some creative thinking from the life enrichment team, Country Terrace residents each have a special gift to send their loved ones this holiday season.

Team members recently came up with the idea for every resident of the Komoka, Ont. long-term care home to have their photo taken in front of a Christmas backdrop.

The photos are being sent to residents' family members with accompanying Christmas cards residents have made.

The idea came about when life enrichment staff members asked life enrichment co-ordinator Christie Patterson if residents could have a "picture day" at the home. Christie

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Avery Smith Kargus is pictured here celebrating her fourth birthday outside Maplewood with her mother, Paula Smith Kargus, who is a PSW at the Brighton long-term care home.

## Four-year-old Gets Birthday Wish of Spending the Day With ‘Her People’ at Maplewood

Avery Smith Kargus celebrated her birthday outside the home with residents watching on

Four-year-old Avery Smith Kargus considers the people living at Maplewood as “her people.”

For the past two years when Avery’s birthday has rolled around she has requested her party be held at the Brighton, Ont. long-term care home where her mother, Paula Smith Kargus, works as a personal support worker.

However, due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, Avery has not been able to visit “her people” for the past nine months.

Still, Avery wanted her birthday plans to include Maplewood, so she and Paula had to think of a different way of celebrating her special day.

Last year, Avery’s birthday party was held at Maplewood. Maplewood administrator and life enrichment co-ordinator Rachel Corkery recalls the day being “so much fun for everyone.”

Although they couldn’t have Avery’s party inside Maplewood this year, they could, Avery and Paula discovered, have a celebration

outside the home.

So that’s what they did. On Dec. 5, Paula brought a birthday cake to Maplewood for residents to enjoy, and Avery visited residents from outside their windows.

“Although Avery was disappointed that she couldn’t come inside to visit her friends, she was happy that ‘her people’ got birthday cake, and her friends were so happy to sing Happy Birthday for Avery,” Rachel tells The OMNIway.

Rachel notes that the community also stepped in to help Avery celebrate her special day.

When Paula mentioned that Avery wanted a police car for her birthday, a Maplewood team member contacted the local OPP detachment and arranged for police to drive by her home with their sirens sounding.

Rachel says the kindness shown towards Avery is part and parcel of what Maplewood is all about.

“We truly are the Maplewood family here,” she says. — DH



## ‘The Timing Is Perfect’

Continued from page 1  
rooms will be private and 40 per cent semi-private.

Pleasant Meadow Manor’s new design will also accommodate a courtyard, gardens and outdoor space, and include a whole-home gathering area and chapel space.

During the design phases, Toronto-based G Architects presented preliminary plans to residents, families and staff to obtain feedback.

Addressing media at the ceremony, Piccini underscored the value long-term care homes bring to the residents they serve, adding the redeveloped Pleasant Meadow Manor will increase that value.

“I’d like to thank OMNI for the great work that you’re doing, and I’d like to thank the staff here for the



From left to right, OMNI president and CEO Patrick McCarthy, Northumberland-Peterborough South MPP David Piccini, Pleasant Meadow Manor residents’ council president Gord Holliday, Asphodel-Norwood Township Mayor Rodger Bonneau and Pleasant Meadow Manor administrator Sandra Tucker pose with shovels at a Nov. 16 ground-breaking ceremony marking the start of Pleasant Meadow Manor’s redevelopment project.

work they’re doing to care for our loved ones,” he said.

In addition to providing great value to residents, Bonneau said the redeveloped Pleasant Meadow Manor will help the community economically.

“The timing is perfect; there’s lots of building going on around town, so ... (for) the people looking for jobs, this will be the place to come,” he said.

“Long-term care is where it’s going to be at.”

## Frost Manor Family Council Connects for the First Time Since Pandemic Began

Council discusses pandemic and Christmas fundraiser ideas via Zoom

For the first time since February, members of Frost Manor’s family council had a meeting on Oct. 29 when they connected during a video conferencing session.

Lyndsay Burton, the Lindsay, Ont. long-term care home’s life enrichment co-ordinator, also attended the meeting which focused on several topics, including the global COVID-19 pandemic and how to create a safe Christmas fundraiser.

For many of the council members, this was a time to reconnect with one another and discuss how the pandemic has affected them and their loved ones, Lyndsay tells The OMNIway.

“Some of the meeting focused on emotional topics about how they are separated from their loved ones and how it has impacted them having a loved one living in a long-term care home and how they have had to adapt to the changes that have happened,” Lyndsay says.

Lyndsay says the atmosphere was “exciting” and upbeat for family members. Simply having a chance to see each other and chat was important to them, she adds.



Frost Manor family council members are seen here during their first virtual meeting on Oct. 29.

“It was nice to be able to see everybody in a group setting again, and we were laughing and joking as we got tours of everyone’s home and updates about what everyone was doing because they hadn’t seen each other in so long, so it was good for them to catch up and hear about what everybody has been up to for the past several months,” Lyndsay says.

One of the topics of discussion was the annual Christmas crafts sale and fundraiser, which Frost Manor will not be able to host this year due to the pandemic.

Instead, family council

discussed the possibility of having a gift-card fundraiser by contacting local businesses to donate gift cards and selling raffle tickets for gift-card prizes.

“We discussed the logistics of doing that, so that will be the question to ponder for next meeting,” Lyndsay says.

Lyndsay says the Zoom-call meeting went so well the family council will continue to connect virtually during the pandemic.

“We are going to stick to the normal days where we have council meetings, but they will just be online,” she says. — DH

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# Almonte Country Haven Hosts Surprise Ceremony for Two PSW Graduates

*Home honours graduates after celebration cancelled due to pandemic*

When Almonte Country Haven administrator Carolyn Della Foresta learned that two graduates of a personal support worker (PSW) program the home is involved with were unable to have a graduation ceremony due to the COVID-19 pandemic, she and the rest of the home's staff made sure their accomplishments were honoured.

In October, Debbie Burke and Rebecca Smith became the first team members at the Lanark County long-term care home to complete training through a PSW program offered by the Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario (CDSBEO) and supported by the Canadian Career Academy (CCA).

Almonte Country Haven is a long-term care home in the region partnering with this CDSBEO-CCA collaboration.

Given that Debbie and Rebecca graduating from the program was an important milestone, Carolyn wanted to ensure their achievement was celebrated at Almonte Country Haven, so she planned a surprise ceremony for the two PSWs.

"I went on Amazon and



*Almonte Country Haven PSWs Debbie Burke (left) and Rebecca Smith (right) pose in their caps and gowns at a ceremony their colleagues at the home organized for them.*

found graduation gowns and caps, as well as some fun and affordable decorations, (and) we quietly planned a surprise, safe graduation ceremony — everyone wore masks and we all social-distanced," Carolyn tells The OMNIway.

Debbie and Rebecca joined the Almonte Country Haven team in early 2020. Carolyn characterizes Debbie and Rebecca as "truly amazing PSWs — we are blessed to have them as part of our team."

Carolyn adds that Debbie and Rebecca worked full time during the COVID-19 outbreak that impacted Almonte Country Haven in the spring, while taking classes and managing their family lives.

"I am amazed by what they

have accomplished," she says.

On the day of their graduation ceremony, Debbie and Rebecca were called to a "staff meeting" and were "completely surprised" when they walked into the meeting last (Carolyn had made sure of this) and were met with lots of fanfare from their co-workers.

There was music playing and staff members handed Debbie and Rebecca their caps and gowns to wear.

"All the staff cheered them on and congratulated them," Carolyn says. "We are so proud of them, as they both are amazingly kind and compassionate PSWs, and they embody OMNI's mission, vision and values." — DH

## EDITORIAL

### 2020 Hasn't Been Easy, But We've Learned a Lot

There's no softer way to say it, 2020 has been a challenging year.

For the first time in a century, the world has been dealing with a large-scale pandemic that has changed the way we live, work and spend our free time.

For those working in the greater health-care sector, 2020 has been especially challenging. Front-line workers have had to adapt like no one else in the workforce to keep the coronavirus in check.

Work life and family life have been greatly impacted for health-care workers, who have had to adapt to the changing circumstances the COVID-19 pandemic has brought.

We have seen this first-hand at OMNI Health Care's 18 long-term care homes, and we are grateful for the sacrifices team members have made — both personal and professional.

But for all the challenges and anxieties this year has brought, there has also been a lot we have learned as a collective team.

When the pandemic was declared in March, we learned how much local communities value our long-term care homes when

kind letters, cards and complimentary meals began showing up for our teams.

Being physically distanced from those we care about is never easy, but we learned how supportive and understanding family members were when they could not visit their loved ones due to safety restrictions in place at long-term care homes for the first three months of the pandemic.

Providing residents in our long-term care homes with a high quality of life is the most important part of our work. Throughout 2020, we learned how creative and innovative our team members are — even under the most challenging of circumstances — when it came to providing residents meaningful

programs, meals they enjoy and the care they expect. And despite the staffing shortages affecting the Ontario long-term care sector at large, we learned how well we come together when our residents need us most.

We are still living through the pandemic, and there will be more challenges ahead. The good news is we are on the right path. We have proven that time and time again throughout 2020.

### New Funding Will Increase Beds at Riverview Manor from 160 to 192

*Continued from page 1* MPP Dave Smith said the additional 32 beds Riverview Manor will receive will improve access for people in the region who require long-term care.

"Our seniors deserve quality care in the communities they live in," he said.

"This is why today's announcement of more new beds is so important. We are

working to reduce wait times and meet the needs of our aging population now and in the future."

Once completed, the new Riverview Manor will be a state-of-the-art long-term care home offering residents a wide range of modern amenities.

Some of the new Riverview Manor's features will include wider hallways,

more home-like dining and lounge spaces, and privacy for residents will be improved by having only one- and two-bed rooms.

The new Class A home will surround a spacious courtyard, complete with a walking loop paved with an "elder-friendly surface," patio seating and a sandbox for visiting children to enjoy. — DH

### A Strong Team Effort

*Continued from page 1* was on board, and the team ordered a Christmassy backdrop from Amazon.

The backdrop features a white brick fireplace — with Christmas stockings hung above it — and a mantel covered with candles. The backdrop also includes a Christmas wreath and, of course, a Christmas tree in the foreground.

And it so happens the team has a talented photographer to capture residents' Christmas cheer.

Country Terrace administrator Karen Dann has a knack for picture taking — along with a professional camera and tripod — so her

services were called in.

Christie says a strong team effort from across the home helped make this project successful.

"We have designated a wing of the home every morning (for residents' portraits), and the PSWs (personal support workers) help get the residents ready, and we provide the backdrop and some props and away we go," Christie tells The OMNIway, adding residents have been "excited" about having their pictures taken.

"We have even had some staff jumping in to do candid photos, so that was kind of a nice way to lift their spirits in December." — DH



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Village Green residents line up for coffee and doughnuts at a makeshift Tim Hortons shop the home's life enrichment team created in October.

## Staff Build Tim Hortons at Village Green

*The creative life enrichment team built a Tim's drive-thru in the home's garden. Residents loved it*

Challenging times often call for creative measures, and Village Green life enrichment team members really came through for residents when they heard how much people living at the Greater Napanee long-term care home were missing outings to Tim Hortons.

Before short-stay visits for Ontario long-term-care home residents were reinstated in late August by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, residents expressed to life enrichment co-ordinator Ulana Orrick that they were missing trips to Tim Hortons.

Many residents had not had Tim Hortons coffee and doughnuts since the global COVID-19 pandemic began in March.

So on Oct. 6, the life enrichment team set up a Tim Hortons drive-thru

in the Village Green garden. Life enrichment aide Jess Boot, a new team member, designed a Tim Hortons storefront facade that was placed on the front of the gazebo.

The Tim Hortons store on Centre Street in Napanee donated coffee, doughnuts and Tim Hortons staff shirts for the life enrichment team to wear.

The nursing team then assisted residents outside to the garden where they queued on the walking path as they would at a Tim Hortons drive-thru.

The residents loved it, Ulana says.

"We had music playing and lots of fun was had," she tells The OMNIway. "At one point, one of the residents exclaimed, 'you can tell this is a real Tim Hortons because the lineup is so long!'" — DH

## DOC Laurie Gibson Retires After Serving Burnbrae Gardens Residents for 11 Years

*'It's a new chapter in my life; I'm closing one but opening another'*

Asked how she was feeling about retiring from Burnbrae Gardens after working at the Campbellford long-term care home for 11 years, Laurie Gibson said "it's bittersweet."

"It's a new chapter in my life; I'm closing one but opening another," Laurie, who has served as Burnbrae Gardens' director of care (DOC) for the past three years, told The OMNIway on Nov. 10.

*"There are many friendships one makes when you're working in a small home in a small community... it's not just a job, it's part of your life."*

— Laurie Gibson, recent retiree of Burnbrae Gardens

"It's hard to say goodbye to a lot of people you have worked with for 11 years. I'm sure we will see each other from time to time, but it's not the same as seeing each other every day, so that's a change for sure."

On her final day on the job, Laurie's colleagues hosted a potluck lunch for her, and she received lots of cards and well-wishes from everyone. Head office sent her a bouquet of flowers and a gift. Laurie said she was thankful and touched by the

kindness she received.

"I'm just over the moon; it has been so special today."

It's this type of kindness Laurie said she will miss about Burnbrae Gardens. A small home like 43-bed Burnbrae Gardens, she said, is a fertile environment for friendships to blossom.

exhibits kindness and caring in everything he or she does.

Asked about her retirement plans, Laurie said the first thing she will be doing is working on completing some home renovations. She is also looking forward to lots of travelling once the COVID-19 restrictions



Burnbrae Gardens director of care Laurie Gibson (centre) is pictured here holding her Elisabeth Hinton Memorial Award alongside OMNI director of western operations Aimee Merkley (left) and administrator April Faux (right) during an Oct. 25, 2019 ceremony at the Campbellford long-term care home.

"There are many friendships one makes when you're working in a small home in a small community, and that's a really important aspect of your life — it's not just a job, it's part of your life," she said.

Laurie began her career at Burnbrae Gardens in 2009 as the night charge RN. In 2019, Laurie was presented with OMNI Health Care's Elisabeth Hinton Memorial Award, which is given out annually to a nurse working in an OMNI long-term care home who demonstrates excellence in nursing and

relax, as well as spending time reading.

While she is looking forward to her retirement, Laurie also said she will miss working at Burnbrae Gardens.

"I will miss the residents because they are here for a long time, and you get to know them and their families, and that's a lovely connection," she said.

"I will also miss the staff because they're so supportive and wonderful, and it's nice to come to work every day and be greeted so kindly and warmly." — DH

## New Village Green will Benefit Residents, Staff and Community

*Continued from page 1* (and) the people we serve."

While there is no confirmation on when construction on the new Village Green will start or be completed, Pierce says a tentative site for the home is being considered on the west side of Lennox and Addington County Road 41.

Once completed, the rebuilt Village Green will be a Class A long-term care home with modern

amenities, such as wider hallways and more home-like dining areas, and privacy will be enhanced by limiting all rooms to no more than one or two beds.

Pierce says eliminating three- and four-bed wards is crucial to ensuring high quality of life for people living in long-term care homes because lack of privacy can agitate residents.

By limiting rooms to no more than two beds, Pierce

says residents will have increased privacy and a more home-like living experience.

"From bathing to dining experiences, everything will be enhanced," Pierce says.

"Everything, in my opinion, will be more favourable to resident care and to the quality of life of the resident and the quality of life of the worker."

Pierce also says the redeveloped Village Green will be a community asset

because the additional 62 beds will help minimize waiting times for people in the region requiring long-term care.

Village Green is the latest OMNI Health Care long-term care home to receive approval for redevelopment. In 2018, approval was granted to build a new 160-bed Riverview Manor in Peterborough. The province recently announced approval for an additional

32 beds to be added to Riverview Manor, bringing the total to 192 beds.

Pleasant Meadow Manor, Almonte Country Haven, Woodland Villa and Country Terrace received approvals in 2018 for redevelopment projects to expand those homes.

Construction has started on the expansions to Pleasant Meadow Manor, Almonte Country Haven and Woodland Villa. — DH

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