



# OMNIway

LTC Redevelopment Support Needs to Stay on Track to Ensure Resident Safety and Comfort . . . pg. 3

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## Going for Gold!

To get in the spirit of the Tokyo Summer Games, Streamway Villa residents competed in a variety of Olympic-themed events and activities July 26-30 that ranged from an egg-and-spoon relay to making Olympic crowns. See story at bottom right.

## ‘When We Walked Into Maplewood, We Could Smell Dinner Cooking’

By Deron Hamel

Patricia Brown recalls visiting Maplewood for the first time with her sister when they were looking for a new long-term care home for their mother.

*“I must say, I have absolute respect for Maplewood as a whole.”*

— Patricia Brown, daughter of Maplewood resident

When they stepped inside Maplewood, Patricia says it instantly felt “like home.”

“When we walked into Maplewood, we could smell dinner cooking,” Patricia

tells The OMNIway.

“There were people in the hallways — they weren’t in their rooms, they were walking around. . . . That was why we put Maplewood as No. 1 on our list.”

Located in Brighton, Ont., Maplewood is an older long-term care home. With 49 beds, it’s also a small home. Patricia says she and her family look at Maplewood’s size and age as attributes that give it the homey feel her mother wants.

Patricia’s mother moved into Maplewood eight years ago. Since then, Patricia says Maplewood has continued to feel like home for her mother.

When the COVID-19 pandemic was declared

in March 2020, family members could not visit their loved ones living in long-term care homes for safety reasons.

While this sudden change was challenging for residents and their families to adjust to, Patricia says Maplewood administrator Rachel Corkery kept families updated, and staff members continued providing residents with top-notch care.

“I must say, I have absolute respect for Maplewood as a whole,” Patricia says. “Their staff has gone way beyond trying to make things work and understanding the situation. I think a lot

See ‘The Staff’ page 2

## Carnival Day at Garden Terrace Sparks Fond Memories for Residents

Garden Terrace residents were treated to a carnival at the Kanata, Ont. long-term care home that embraced the OMNI Health Care value of fun and laughter and brought back lots of fond memories.

The July 9 carnival included a candy-floss

machine, a target game played with bean bags, a T-shirt painting contest (done with a water gun) and carnival music.

Residents even got to give staff members a few pies in the face.

“Residents had a really

See ‘They Got’ page 2

## Forest Hill Applauded for Keeping Residents and Families Connected Throughout Pandemic

If there’s one thing Karen Germundson says she has learned about Forest Hill since the COVID-19 pandemic began 17 months ago, it’s that staff members will do everything they can to support residents and their families during trying times.

Karen, whose father is a

resident at the Kanata, Ont. long-term care home, says this was clear from the moment the pandemic was declared by the World Health Organization in March 2020.

Due to safety restrictions that went into effect right away, family members could

See ‘Family Member’ page 4

## Spirit of Summer Olympics Comes to Streamway Villa

The 2020 Summer Olympics is in full swing in Tokyo, and the residents of Streamway Villa have also been in the spirit of the Games of the 32nd Olympiad.

Throughout the week of July 26-30, the Cobourg, Ont. long-term care home celebrated the Summer Games with a myriad of Olympic-themed events that engaged residents.

With many residents interested in the Summer Olympics, Streamway Villa team members have posted the schedule of events each day on the home’s activity board.

The activity board also features a new photo and information to spotlight individual members of the Canadian Olympic team.

See ‘Residents’ page 3



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Garden Terrace residents' council president Murray O'Byrne enjoys a laugh with environmental services manager Matthew Dewar after pieing him at a carnival the Kanata, Ont. long-term care home recently hosted.

## 'They Got to Be Kids Again, and They Loved That'

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And nothing says "great fun time," life enrichment co-ordinator Rachael King tells The OMNIway. "They got to have fun and not worry because it has been a tough year.

"Residents were able to reminisce from their childhood. ... It was really nice to see."

The carnival, which was held outdoors with pandemic safety protocols in effect, was the first large outdoor event for Garden Terrace residents this year.

Rachael says the residents enjoyed all the memories the carnival brought back for them.

Other events residents are looking forward to in the coming weeks include outdoor entertainment, a visit from a local chip truck and a dunk tank where residents will have a chance to soak Garden Terrace staff members.

"We're trying to do as much as we can to keep the morale high," Rachael says. — DH

— DH

## 'The Staff at Maplewood Rolls with the Punches'

Continued from page 1

of that is because they are a small home."

Patricia says one thing the pandemic has taught her about Maplewood is the lengths the home will go to for family members.

"They went beyond what I was expecting," she says. It wouldn't matter what it

would be, we could always approach Rachel."

Maplewood's front-line staff members, Patricia adds, have also "been fantastic" — both before and during the pandemic.

"The staff at Maplewood rolls with the punches," she says. "They have been fantastic."

# Frost Manor Residents 'Drumming Up' Some Fun in New Program

*DROM program combines music, exercise and meditation*

Frost Manor residents have been "drumming up" some fun and exercise in recent months.

In March, Amy Whitehead, who was then a life enrichment aide, participated in an online training session with then-life enrichment co-ordinator (LEC) Lyndsay Burton to learn about the DROM program and bring it back to the Lindsay, Ont. long-term care home's residents.

The name DROM is derived from merging drumming techniques with the meditation chant called the "om".

Each session starts with a focus on breathing to relax everyone and get participants ready. The second segment is the "energized portion" where multiple songs for the drumming session are performed by residents beating drumsticks on stability balls to the beat of songs Amy, who is now the Frost Manor LEC, plays for them. The final segment, the "calming portion", focuses on positive affirmation and meditation.

Amy says the program, which is held in small groups to adhere to protocols in place to keep everyone safe during the COVID-19 pandemic, has been a big hit with residents.

"Everyone goes away feeling good and can carry on with their day on a positive note," she tells The OMNIway.

Amy teaches residents



Pictured above, Frost Manor residents keep the beat to music by drumming on stability balls as part of a new program at the Lindsay, Ont. long-term care home called DROM. The DROM program combines drumming techniques with meditation.

different drumming patterns and techniques, and residents beat their drumsticks on the stability balls to the rhythm of songs.

"For one song, I got them to use their drumsticks (to the rhythm of) a song that had a trumpet session in it," Amy says. "You can really get creative with all the different ways that you can drum."

The timing of the program has been important, Amy says.

Before the pandemic was declared in March 2020, Frost Manor was hosting up to three live performances from local entertainers every week. Due to provincial restrictions, the home has not been able to have indoor entertainment since the pandemic began.

However, the music component of the DROM program is helping meet residents' musical needs, Amy says.

"We really wanted to get something that we could do for them that would incorporate music because they're really missing that," she says.

"It was really great to be able to bring back some type of musical program for them, as well as an exercise program to get everyone moving. Everybody can laugh and have fun and, of course, this really amps up the positivity as well."

The program is being held once every two weeks. Currently, Amy hosts the program, but two life enrichment aides have expressed interest in being trained to lead the activity. Once they are trained, Amy says she hopes to offer the program more often.

Given the DROM program's success, Amy says she would recommend it to other long-term care homes.

"If you love music and you're a fun and positive person, I absolutely recommend it to everybody." — DH

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## EDITORIAL



Country Terrace residents pose with new iPads they recently received from Gateway Church as part of the church's community outreach program.

## Local Church Donates 5 iPads to Country Terrace Residents

*Gateway Church members wanted to do something for residents to keep spirits high during the pandemic*

A local church recently donated five iPads to Country Terrace residents through its community outreach program, a kind gesture everyone at the Komoka, Ont. long-term care home is grateful for, says life enrichment co-ordinator Christie Patterson.

Country Terrace and Gateway Church have had a long-standing connection. As part of its Gateway Cares outreach program, the church recently contacted the home to offer support for residents and staff to help lift spirits during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Christie and Jesse MacMillan, one of the pastors at Gateway Church, had several conversations about ideas that would both thank staff members for their hard work during

the pandemic and lift residents' spirits.

In the end, it was decided the Gateway Cares team would donate five iPads to residents. The iPads are helping residents connect with family and friends as well as providing entertainment. Residents are also attending virtual church services by watching them on the iPads.

Each Country Terrace resident also received a personal letter from Gateway Church members and a small bag of treats.

Gateway Church also provided doughnuts, muffins and coffee for Country Terrace staff members on the day church members delivered the iPads.

Each staff member also received a Tim Hortons gift card to thank them for their hard work and

service to residents.

With vaccination rates increasing and businesses and services opening up in Ontario, there are signs of light at the end of the tunnel.

However, the greater health-care sector is still working hard to keep people safe, and it needs to be remembered that the pandemic is not over, Christie says.

The timing of Gateway Church's generosity is meaningful, she notes.

"As Jesse and I talked, we stated that we believe people forget we are still fighting this COVID battle," Christie says.

"The staff are still making sacrifices to protect the residents, and it has taken a toll. (The church's kind gesture shows) that people still care. It is truly a blessing." — DH

## Residents Participated in a Week-long Series of Events and Activities Focused on the Tokyo Games

*Continued from page 1*

There is also a space for the medal table to keep track of how many gold, silver and bronze medals Canadian athletes win.

The life enrichment team has led residents in programs about the history of the Olympics and they have been showing replays of all the medal wins for Canadian athletes, notes life

enrichment co-ordinator Laurie Kracht.

An Olympic quiz game has been played as well as "Olympic bingo," Laurie adds. For a crafts activity, residents made Olympic crowns.

On July 30, the events came to an end, with residents and team members playing more Olympic-themed games, including an

egg-and-spoon relay, and there was a parade for residents who had their walkers and wheelchairs decorated by team members.

Staff members were treated to a pizza party to thank them for their work decorating.

"We're calling it our very own Olympic closing ceremony," Laurie says. — DH

## LTC Redevelopment Support Needs to Stay on Track to Ensure Resident Safety and Comfort

When the World Health Organization declared the COVID-19 pandemic 17 months ago, those of us in the long-term care sector knew we had to brace ourselves.

It was evident early on that the sector would be put to the test. As with any serious virus, we knew COVID-19 had the potential to be especially devastating to the elder population and to those with complex health conditions.

While we had pandemic plans in place, there were many unknown factors surrounding COVID-19 we had to grapple with: How contagious was this virus? How can we protect residents without compromising their quality of life? How long would this last?

If there's one thing the pandemic has taught us as a sector, it's that as prepared as long-term care homes may be, as expertly trained and knowledgeable as home staff and managers are, the homes themselves must be spacious and equipped with modern features and amenities in order to offer maximum protection to residents.

The good news is the Ontario government has, since 2018, been investing in a capital redevelopment plan to upgrade the province's older Class B and C long-term care communities to meet new home standards.

OMNI Health Care is

grateful for the commitment the province has made to provide funding to support redevelopments that are underway at four of our long-term care homes — Almonte Country Haven, Pleasant Meadow Manor, Woodland Villa and Country Terrace.

The province has also committed redevelopment support for Riverview Manor, Streamway Villa and Village Green, which are currently in the design and planning process.

Amongst the many features that will come with these upgrades, perhaps the most important will be the improvement of personal space for residents through the elimination of three- and four-bed wards and the creation of home areas housing no more than 32 residents.

Not only will providing more space enhance residents' quality of life, it will also improve infection control by reducing the number of residents living in close proximity to one another.

While progress has been made and shovels are in the ground for many of these projects, the momentum of the capital redevelopment plan needs to continue at full throttle.

Investing in long-term care now not only improves the quality of life for the residents of today, it will offer an added layer of safety for future residents.



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## Being an Essential Caregiver ‘Makes You Feel Like You’re a Partner’

*Karen Zidenberg says being with her mother at Maplewood has benefited them both*

As an essential caregiver, Karen Zidenberg is at Maplewood with her mother, a resident of the Brighton, Ont. long-term care home, twice a week, spending one-to-one time with her mom.

This has had a positive impact on Karen’s mother as well as Karen, who, like other family members, could not be inside the home during much of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“It has been wonderful; it makes you feel like you’re a partner,” Karen says of being an essential caregiver.

Karen became an essential caregiver for her mother when she became eligible about a month ago.

Karen says she and her mother benefit from being able to see each other regularly. The essential caregiver role, she adds, is unique.

“What the essential caregiver role does is it gives recognition and it gives credence to people who can do as much as they can and be as active with their care as if they were in their own home,” Karen says.

Asked what she has learned about Maplewood throughout the pandemic,

Karen says the most important thing has been the reinforcement of knowing her mother is well cared for.

“It has taught me that I don’t have to be there, that I can take care of myself and not burn myself out, and it taught me that things are going to be OK,” she says.

“As an essential caregiver, I can balance my life without worrying because I am not there.”

Karen also says the entire Maplewood team does an outstanding job caring for her mother.

“I am so thankful for everyone at Maplewood; I am so grateful and so thankful for each and every team member because I truly appreciate them,” she says.

Karen adds she has a “great relationship” with Maplewood.

“I will tell you that, hands down, I love the team, and I do what I can to show that appreciation the best that I can because I really think people (working in long-term care homes) are not appreciated enough for what they’re going through and how they have endured,” she says. —DH



Woodland Villa resident Gerry Forgues stops by the home’s Tim Hortons drive-thru to pick up a coffee from life enrichment aide Melissa Cleary.

## In-house Drive-thru Window is Giving Woodland Residents Their Much-needed Timmies Treats

*Residents look forward to lining up to get their coffee and doughnuts*

One thing many Woodland Villa residents have been missing since the COVID-19 pandemic was declared 17 months ago is their regular trips to Tim Hortons for coffee and doughnuts.

To remedy this, life enrichment team members at the Long Sault, Ont. long-term care home have come up with a solution that’s making everyone happy.

Life enrichment team members Melissa Cleary, Liana Charbonneau and Kaitlynn Cotnam have made a Tim Hortons drive-thru window that

has been decorated to look like the real thing, and residents and team members alike are having fun with it, says Woodland Villa life enrichment co-ordinator Lisa Doran.

Once a month, the life enrichment team sets up the drive-thru window and waits for residents to come up and place their order for coffee, tea, hot chocolate and doughnuts.

“The residents will go up to the window and place their order and get their coffee and Timbits, and then the next person comes up,”

Lisa tells The OMNIway.

Recently, fancier drinks have been added to the menu, with the life enrichment team members making iced coffees topped with whipping cream, caramel or chocolate sauce.

While pandemic safety precautions remain in place, the Tim Hortons drive-thru window is bringing back some level of normality for residents, Lisa says.

And the life enrichment team members are having fun with it as well, she adds.

“They love doing it, so it’s great for everybody.” —DH

## Family Member Karen Germundson Says Regular Phone Calls LEC Craig Forrest Organized Between Her and Her Father Were a ‘Lifeline’

*Continued from page 1* not enter the home to visit their loved ones.

Communication between residents and family members was going to be crucial, and Karen says Forest Hill life enrichment co-ordinator (LEC) Craig Forrest immediately began organizing phone calls for her dad — something that made a major difference.

“Craig was a huge help; he arranged so many phone calls so that I could keep in

touch with my dad,” Karen tells The OMNIway.

“My dad can’t use the phone himself. We didn’t have a phone for him, and that was my big concern: how on Earth are we going to keep in touch?”

But Craig continued to organize regular phone calls for Karen and her dad. Craig would call Karen and hand her dad the phone. Karen was able to talk to her dad almost every day, and that made

the situation easier for both her and her father to handle, she says.

There was a lot of uncertainty in the early days of the pandemic. No one knew how long it would last or when residents and family members would be able to see each other, so phone calls between residents and their families became a “lifeline,” Karen says.

“Those phone calls were super important to us and

to my dad, of course,” she says. “It was hard for him to understand the whole COVID situation. I think it was an anchor for him because he really needed those phone calls every day.”

Karen also says the pandemic taught her how resilient Forest Hill team members are. With restrictions changing throughout the duration of the pandemic, Forest Hill staff members, she says, have always adjusted

and put the residents first, no matter what.

“I don’t know how much more work (the pandemic has) created for them, but I know it created a lot more work for them, and they just took it on — they just did it,” she says.

“I think it’s their adaptability. They had to keep changing and changing, every time. They just did it, and it must have been really hard for them, but they did it.” —DH