



OMNIway

2010 a Year of Change.... pg. 3

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Walking the Walk

The OMNI Walkers, consisting of 29 managers, staff and friends representing Forest Hill, Garden Terrace and Almonte Country Haven, participated in the Jan. 31 Manulife Walk for Memories. The team raised about \$3,000 for the Alzheimer Society of Ottawa and Renfrew County.

OMNI Rallying to Support Haiti Relief Effort

Support pours in from staff members, head office

By Deron Hamel

OMNI Health Care and three of the organization's eastern Ontario long-term care homes — Garden Terrace, Forest Hill and Woodland Villa — are rallying to support the relief effort in Haiti following the Jan. 12 earthquake, which has claimed thousands of lives.

Eastern Ontario has a significant Haitian community and the earthquake has affected the families of some staff members working in the eastern homes, says

Garden Terrace administrator Carolyn Della Foresta.

Della Foresta notes that one of the Kanata long-term care home's Haitian staff members has been personally affected by the earthquake, having lost family members in the tragedy.

In the days following the earthquake Della Foresta contacted OMNI president and CEO Patrick McCarthy to keep him up to date on how the home's Haitian staff members were dealing with the tragedy and to

inform him that eastern homes are raising money for the relief effort.

McCarthy responded via e-mail by offering OMNI's support by offering to match contributions up to \$2,000. The federal government, in turn, will match that amount.

In other words, if a home raises \$1,000, this will translate into \$4,000 in funds going to the relief effort.

Della Foresta says this type of camaraderie is part and parcel of what

belonging to the OMNI family is all about.

"This has reminded me of the heart we all have, the fact that we all care and we all want to give something, and that we are a family," she says.

If you would like to contribute to the Haiti relief fund please call Garden Terrace at 613-254-9702, Forest Hill at 613-599-1991, Woodland Villa at 613-534-2276, or OMNI head office at 705-748-6631.

Woodland Launches Pen-Pal Partnership with Home Down Under

Canadian and Australian residents learning about each other

By Deron Hamel

Woodland Villa life enrichment aide Brenda McLaren has launched a pen-pal program connecting the Cornwall-area long-term care home's residents

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Burnbrae Gardens Introducing In-House Peritoneal Dialysis

Campbellford home looks forward to educational opportunities in 2010

By Michelle Strutzenberger

Burnbrae Gardens is in the process of introducing peritoneal dialysis as an in-home service, an initiative that is a primary activity area for the start of

See 'Health-Care' page 3

Self-Care Plans Help People Avoid Compassion Fatigue

Initiating self-care plans at work can be effective, says David Kennedy

By Deron Hamel

PETERBOROUGH, Ont. - Creating a self-care plan to ensure personal needs are being met can be an effective way for caregivers working

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A Musical Day

Maplewood resident Barry Lasage and Gail Burrell, a member of singing group Brighton by the Bay, pose for a photo Feb. 9. The group visited the Brighton long-term care home "to bring cheer and a good singalong" to residents, says life enrichment co-ordinator Linda Sheppard. The event also saw resident George May take to the stage to perform with Brighton by the Bay.

'Just Being Here Together is the Best Part'

Riverview celebrates couples

Emery Alsop and Marilyn Thistlewaite say the best part of the Feb. 11 Valentine's luncheon at Riverview Manor was spending time with each other over a nice meal.

As part of an annual tradition at the Peterborough long-term care home, staff members prepared a special lunch for residents and their spouses to celebrate Valentine's Day.

For Alsop, a resident at Riverview Manor, and Thistlewaite, it was a chance to spend time together and chat with other couples celebrating the occasion.

"We're here to remember good times and enjoy ourselves," Thistlewaite tells the OMNIway. "Just being

here together is the best part."

This year's Valentine's celebrations were held Feb. 11 and 12. The Feb. 11 event celebrated six couples and the Feb. 12 luncheon toasted seven husbands and wives.

The Feb. 11 meal included chicken cordon bleu, potatoes, vegetables, soup, salad and dessert.

Thistlewaite says she applauds the home's staff members for putting forth the effort to ensure couples enjoyed the day.

"I think they're all fantastic," she says. "You couldn't find any better people anywhere. They work hard to make sure everything is extra special. You wouldn't find any better service in a hotel." —DH

Setting Goals and Staying Positive Improves Resident

Barry Foster says 3 months at Country Terrace has made a major difference

By Deron Hamel

Country Terrace resident Barry Foster attributes his improved mobility to setting goals, participating in programming and keeping a positive attitude.

Less than three months after moving into the London-area long-term care home Foster is moving around with the help of a walker and has decreased his falls, he says.

When he moved into Country Terrace Oct. 19 Foster needed mechanical assistance for mobility and transfers, but today he has improved to the point that he's walking to all his meals and getting around the home assisted only by a walker.

"I'm better (now) than I was (when I was living) in an apartment on my own,

and I think there's still going to be some improvement," Foster tells the OMNIway.

"Ultimately, I would like to be able to walk around without anything. I also have a bunch of goals, in terms of re-educating myself."

John Fragis, the home's physiotherapist, notes that Foster came to him with simple goals. One was to walk independently down the home's hallways. Another was to transfer into a car.

"He said, 'John, here's what I want to do,' and he has done that and gone beyond that," says Fragis.

"Encouragement and staying in the positive have been big pluses for him. Barry has climbed a huge mountain. He has felt inspired by other residents and I've felt inspired by him."

Foster also attributes his participation in the home's exercise programs to helping him achieve his goals.

He adds that he enjoys watching other residents improve their mobility through programming and providing encouragement.

To illustrate the success of the home's programming, Foster points to one resident who is involved with an activity involving residents passing a balloon back and forth.

At first the resident could only hold the balloon, he says. But her continuous efforts and encouragement from others has led to a major improvement.

"Now she bats it back with deadly accuracy, and she's in her 90s," says Foster. "It's nice to see things like that."

Caring For Your Own Needs is Essential

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in long-term care to avoid compassion fatigue, while helping them provide the best possible care to residents, says David Kennedy, the bereavement co-ordinator at Hospice Peterborough.

Compassion fatigue, also called secondary traumatic stress disorder, refers to a condition where people who provide care to others experience decreased compassion over time, caused by stress and anxiety.

Self-care plans, which help ensure personal needs are tended to while caring for others, can help stave off compassion fatigue, Kennedy told attendees at a Jan. 21 Four Counties Long-Term Care Palliative Network meeting.

Developing care teams at work, maintaining a healthy personal life and identifying healing activities are some of the ways people can help develop a self-care plan.

Exercise, meditation and finding "alone time" are some of the successful ways attendees at the meeting said

they use to eliminate stress.

Staff members at long-term care homes all attend daily morning meetings, and this is an excellent forum for self-care plans to develop, says Kennedy.

"Start off staff meetings by saying, 'Before we get started, what do you do when you're feeling stressed?'" Kennedy told the audience.

This, he adds, will provide an opportunity for team members to network about their successful practices for coping with stress.

Staff members can then network about their successful practices for staying stress-free.

To help foster ideas, Kennedy recommends every team member explain their preferred way of alleviating stress and how it is helping them care for themselves.

The end result of creating strong self-care plans, says Kennedy, is that caregivers will be able to enhance care to others because they're making sure their own needs are being met.

Mary Anne Greco, the

administrator at Riverview Manor, says this is a concept she would consider bringing to morning meetings at the Peterborough long-term care home.

"I loved his idea of commencing a staff meeting with self care, and what people can do to cope with stress," she says. "There is stress that is on caregivers every day and we need to step back and look at it objectively and from each perspective."

The Four Counties Long-Term Care Palliative Network holds several workshops annually to discuss best practices in palliative care in long-term care homes. The network consists of representatives from long-term care homes in Peterborough, Haliburton and Northumberland counties, as well as the City of Kawartha Lakes.

Frost Manor, Streamway Villa, Burnbrae Gardens, Springdale Country Manor, Pleasant Meadow Manor and Riverview Manor are OMNI Health Care-owned homes belonging to the network.

MARCH IS National Nutrition Month

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Many Pleasant Meadow Residents Can Participate in Outings, Thanks in Large Part to Falls-Prevention Program

Program changes include greater emphasis on balancing

By Michelle Strutzenberger
Many Pleasant Meadow Manor residents are able to go out to eat, shop and take part in other community activities, thanks in large part to the falls-prevention program at the Norwood home, says restorative-care aide Kathy Herron.

"We do a lot of standing, dynamic balance and sitting balance (exercises)."
—Khosrow Yazdai of Achieva Health, rehabilitation services provider

"Because of this program, (the residents') ability to walk a further distance (and) to step up into a doorway (is improved), which makes it more possible for them to go out to restaurants or back to their homes," says Herron.

The home recently had an OMNI Health Care van for two weeks. In that time frame, trips were made on 10 of the 12 days, with one-third of the home's residents able to participate.

Herron highlights four residents who typically use

wheelchairs who were able to get in and out of the van, as well as the locale they visited, with the help of only a walker.

She notes there have been changes in the falls-prevention program, including more movement exercises and, in particular, more balance training for people who use some mobility device like a wheelchair or walker, which are likely factors in the increased levels of confidence and strength of residents.

Staff at the home has also been working on helping residents remember to use the brakes on their wheelchairs and walkers when moving from a sit to stand position.

Using the brakes can be a significant factor in reducing falls, says Herron, as the devices can slide away when a person leaves or tries to return to them, which, particularly if the resident's balance is unsteady, can contribute to a fall.

Physiotherapist Khosrow Yazdai of Achieva Health, a rehabilitation services provider, visits Pleasant Meadow once a week to oversee the home's physiotherapy program.

He employs a physiotherapy assistant who works with residents four days a week on a variety of one-to-one and group exercises.

"We do a lot of standing, dynamic balance and sitting balance (exercises)," says Yazdai, adding that a physiotherapy assistant continues work in the home between his visits.

Yazdai notes this is especially important during outbreaks at the home, when most visitors and outside service providers are asked to avoid entering the home, to prevent the transfer of illness.

Because he provides physiotherapy programming at a number of long-term care homes, Yazdai cannot visit those in outbreak. However, because his assistants only provide services at one long-term care home each, they are able to continue serving residents throughout that time.

"My assistant is here (at Pleasant Meadow) all the time, which makes a big impact," on helping residents maintain what they've gained through the ongoing exercise and rehabilitation program, says Yazdai.

Health-Care Stakeholders Supporting Initiative

Continued from page 1
the new year, says administrator Susan Cymbaluk.

"We are taking on residents that have more complex health issues, such as (requiring) peritoneal dialysis," says Cymbaluk.

The Campbellford home has forged a partnership with Peterborough Regional Health Centre and the local branch of the Victorian Order of Nurses in order to be able to offer the dialysis in the home.

"Dialysis nurses come and do on-site training and then staff here are able to do the dialysis in-house, which allows the

residents to not have to go to hospital for (the treatment)," says Cymbaluk.

Peritoneal dialysis is an intervention for people who have serious kidney problems to ensure the function that healthy kidneys perform is continued.

The Central East Local Health Integration Network supports providing dialysis in long-term care to reduce hospital visits.

Other areas Burnbrae Gardens will target in 2010 include continuing initiatives from the previous year, such as reducing falls and increasing rehab for residents, with an

overarching goal of encouraging independence and minimizing injury.

Cymbaluk also says the home is looking forward to the educational options offered by OMNI Health Care.

"The education that has been brought forward from corporate looks excellent," she says, adding the global wound academy will be available again this year.

The fact that less travel will be required to take part in many of the educational opportunities in 2010 is a bonus, she adds, noting this means more staff can participate.

2010 a Year of Change

We have now entered a new decade and, fittingly, 2010 will be a year of change for the long-term care sector.

Change. The word can conjure up anxieties about uncertainties that we sometimes face in our lives and careers. However, change also signifies evolution, development and progress.

... some OMNI homes are already forming partnerships with other health-care providers to learn about best practices in areas such as mental health, to help create seamless service delivery and take on new challenges the future will bring.

Change is also about opportunities. Often, it's about identifying challenges and addressing them head-on through practical and creative measures.

When OMNI Health Care embraces change the No. 1 aim will always be to enhance quality of life for residents. There are added benefits of embracing change, too. Change can enhance the meaningfulness of the work we are doing. Change can help us discover ways to improve our communities through our work.

One of the biggest changes for OMNI — and indeed Ontario's long-term care sector — in 2010 is the full implementation of the Resident Assessment Instrument Minimum Data Set (RAI-MDS 2.0).

Team members from across OMNI's 17 long-term care homes have already shown their enthusiasm by embracing the comprehensive assessment tool, which is designed to enhance resident care. Staff members have been educated and are training each other to ensure the implementation process is smooth.

As we move further into the new decade there will be other areas of change. Of note, the long-term care sector is already seeing a trend towards increased service integration.

In fact, some OMNI homes are already forming partnerships with other health-care providers to learn about best practices in areas such as mental health to help create seamless service delivery and take on new challenges the future will bring.

Education, a mainstay of OMNI's culture, will continue to be a top priority in coming years. Education will continue to help team members make seamless transitions in a changing environment.

We should never allow ourselves to become overwhelmed in the face of changing circumstances. Ask yourself these questions: What changes have I had to face in the past? How did I address these changes? What solutions worked most successfully? What was the best outcome of having embraced this change?

Upon reflection, you'll likely find you've experienced many successes when it came time to live or work in a changing environment. Utilize these concepts and, most importantly, share your successes with others.



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Frost Manor resident Margaret Bonis (centre), who turned 108 on Jan. 14., poses with staff members Susan Cardona (left) and Rhonda Hughes (right).

Frost Manor Celebrates Resident's 108th Birthday

Birthday party and media coverage mark Margaret Bonis' special day

By Deron Hamel

The team at Frost Manor celebrated resident Margaret Bonis' 108th birthday Jan. 14 with a cake, balloons and a trip to the Lindsay long-term care home's hair salon.

"We had a nice little gathering and the two local newspapers came in and the day went well."

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

"We had a nice little gathering and the two local newspapers came in and the day went well," says life enrichment co-ordinator Vi O'Leary.

Early in the day one of the nurses at the home paid Bonis a visit and asked her what day it was, O'Leary explains.

"I'm 108 today," Bonis, who has lived at

Frost Manor since 1995, proudly stated.

O'Leary notes that it's not every day you meet someone who has reached the century mark. So, when a resident surpasses 100 years, O'Leary says it's important to make the day memorable.

Born on Jan. 14, 1902, Bonis worked as a teacher in Ontario for more than 40 years, before relocating to the Caribbean island of St. Vincent at age 67.

A lifelong believer in education, Bonis combined her love of learning with her love of travel and moved to Heidelberg, Germany, when she was 73 so she could learn German. Three years later, she travelled to Banff, Alta. to take a photography course.

In November, the OMNIway featured a story about Bonis, who had been the subject of an article in *Renaissance*, a magazine published by the Retired Teachers of Ontario.

With files from Camille Jensen

Resident, Family Member Applaud Life at Springdale

'My mother is more busy now than she has ever been'

By Deron Hamel

PETERBOROUGH, Ont.

- Springdale Country Manor resident Eileen Armstrong and her son say staff members at Springdale Country Manor are doing an excellent job of enhancing quality of life for residents at the Peterborough long-term care home.

Robert Armstrong notes that his mother Eileen has been busy running the home's tuck shop, working with Springdale's residents' council and organizing events since moving into the home five months ago.

Keeping busy with all this work has had a positive impact on his mother, Robert says.

"My mother is more busy now than she has ever been," he says. "She's really motivated."

Eileen is also active in the home's renowned bell choir, a small orchestra comprising residents that performs musical numbers with bells, cymbals, chimes and sticks. In fact, Eileen and the rest of the group recently performed a show at the home's annual Christmas party in December.

Eileen is also active in helping in the kitchen through the home's programming, noting that she especially enjoys baking. During the Christmas season she helped prepare some of the goodies enjoyed

by residents, staff members and families.

Eileen has also noticed the difference living at Springdale Country Manor has made in her life. She says that having a positive attitude and participating in programs have been the keys to her happiness at the home.

"I enjoy it here," she says. "I made up my mind that I would (like it here) and it just kind of grew from there. I'm involved with a lot of things here."

Enhancing quality of life is a major objective for caregivers in long-term care homes, and OMNI Health Care-owned homes strive to provide as many opportunities for residents as possible.

Looking to Expand Pen-Pal Program to Other Countries

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with those living at St. Andrew's Village, a home in Canberra, Australia.

McLaren says the greatest benefit she hopes to see result from this initiative is a better understanding amongst residents in both countries about life on the other side of the world.

"I hope that they get to understand how similar nursing homes are, as well how different we are," McLaren tells the OMNIway.

For example, McLaren says residents can e-mail each other about the different seasons in the two countries — while it's winter in Canada and the rest of the Northern Hemisphere, it's summer on the south side of the equator.

Residents in both countries

have been chatting about their lives and there has been interest in learning about each other's homes, says McLaren.

One resident at Woodland Villa e-mailed residents at St. Andrew's Village, asking the age of the home's oldest resident.

"This afternoon, when we go online, we'll get our answer, so I'm very anxious," says McLaren.

Life enrichment co-ordinator Rita Tremblay says the program has been an excellent engagement tool for residents.

"So far, we have three or four residents that are interested and hopefully we will be extending (the program) to a larger group," she says.

McLaren was on holiday in eastern Europe, taking a boat cruise down the

Danube, when she and an Australian couple struck up a conversation.

As it turned out, the Australian visitors are involved with that country's long-term care sector — the gentleman works with a home accreditation body and his wife is the administrator at St. Andrew's Village.

Because the recently launched program is becoming a hit with residents, McLaren says she's looking to initiate contacts at long-term care homes in other countries.

The idea, says Tremblay, is to "explore the world through the Internet."

There are already plans in the works for a partnership with a home in England, McLaren adds.

SHARE YOUR STORY

Do you have a story, newstip or photo you'd like to share?

Contact the OMNIway newsroom at 1-800-294-0051

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