



# FRIENDLY FOCUS

The last week of April is designated as *Forest Week*, a time to appreciate the value of trees in our environment.

Although ecological awareness is often considered a pre-occupation unique to the 21<sup>st</sup> century, early pioneers were more than aware of the damage done to the environment by unsound practices.

Early logging activities in Ontario often left huge tracts of land without forest cover. As a consequence, good soil was quickly eroded and “blown away” by the wind. Pictures of the Parry Sound and Muskoka area taken during the turn-of-the-century show a denuded landscape; rocks and more rocks with the odd spindly tree too pathetic to be logged. Just to the south of us, Simcoe County was so devastated by logging that sand dunes threatened to engulf fledgling farms.

In an effort to save the soil (and the farms), trees were imported from Europe and serious efforts at re-foresting the area were made. Due to these far-sighted (and dare I say “ecologically conscious” pioneers, Simcoe County recovered its rich farming soil and continues to be a

productive agricultural area to this day.

What can you do to celebrate Canada’s forests? Here are a few ideas:

- Use less paper
- Start a tree seed in a cup, or a seedling in a pot; plant a tree
- Provide a donation to your favourite park
- When using recreational trails, be respectful, don’t leave garbage, don’t damage trees in any way.

***“Each generation takes the Earth as trustees. We ought to bequeath to posterity as many forests and orchards as we have exhausted or consumed.***

J. Sterling Morton, founder of Arbour Day

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## Executive Director's Report

In February, *The Friends'* undertook a comprehensive satisfaction survey with respect to the services it provides to the community. Feedback will assist the senior management team and the agency's Board of Directors in formulating a Quality Improvement plan. Such a plan will highlight service needs that we may not be meeting and create a concrete set of steps to improve care. On behalf of the Board of Directors, **thank you** to everyone who filled out and returned their survey to us. Dr. Kate Pautler will be reviewing the results and preparing a report to the Board a copy of which will be available on our website in May.

*The Friends* received funding to provide a "Transitions to Home" program in the two-bedroom respite unit at Forest Hill Apartments in Parry Sound. This program will provide respite space for the community as well as supporting the West Parry Sound Health Centre by providing an accessible, supportive environment for patients who no longer need round-the-clock nursing care but are not quite ready to live completely independently. Thanks to the **North East Local Health Integration Network** this

service is now available to the greater Parry Sound community. We were honoured to host the North East Local Health Integration Network C.E.O. **Louise Pacquette** and NE LHIN Board member **Leah Welk** for the opening of the unit on March 26<sup>th</sup>. *The Friends'* Board President, **Linda Jones** was also on hand to welcome Mme Pacquette to Forest Hill Apartments and to thank her for the NE LHIN's confidence in *The Friends'* organization.



*North East LHIN CEO Louise Pacquette and  
The Friends Board President Linda Jones*

## Executive Director's Report Continued

Guests were provided with a tour of Forest Hill Apartments - a big thank you to PSW and Range of Motion specialist, **Tamara Good** who led the tour!



*Tamara Good leading a tour.*

In our next issue, there will be exciting news with respect to our long delayed Gravenhurst building project and I look forward to sharing this with all of our clients and community partners in Muskoka. Please stay tuned!



*Past Board President John Lee and Supervisor Nancy Hall share a laugh during the Open House.*

## Keeping the Car Keys Longer

When you drive you use your whole body: your shoulders and arms, head and neck, legs and feet, back and chest. Your muscles need to be strong and your joints flexible so that your body will be able to do what you want when driving. Studies of older drivers have shown a possible link between health and a sense of independence with the ability to drive. Loss of a means to get around can lead to depression, reduced life satisfaction, health problems, isolation and loneliness.

Exercises can help you to increase your strength, flexibility, balance and endurance. Yes, physical activity is good and not harmful for a large portion of older adults. Not being physically active is much less safe. Typically older adults who have arthritis, diabetes or osteoporosis can safely do physical activity to improve their health and fitness. Physical activity will make your joints work better and can reduce the pain of arthritis.

Why get stronger? Strong arms and legs will help you drive, lift bags of groceries and walk around. If you are strong, you can stay active.

Why stretch? The more you stretch, the easier it will be for your neck, shoulder, elbow, wrist, hip, knee and ankle joints to move. To drive and stay active you need your joints to move freely without pain or stiffness. Stretching also helps

with coordination and lowers stress.

Why improve balance? Improving your balance and coordination lets you be more active and can help prevent falls when walking or standing.

Why build endurance? You need energy to get in your car and drive. Doing more physical activity can build stamina, which helps you keep going when you're behind the wheel.

You don't have to spend hours every day being physically active to get health benefits. Whether you are 65 or 95, about 30 minutes of physical activity a day will help you be more active so you can do the things you want to do. You don't need any special equipment or clothing to start.

See your doctor before starting an exercise program if you have a heart condition, high blood pressure, chest pain, arthritis, diabetes or other chronic conditions. If you have had a hip or knee replacement, check with your health care provider before doing lower-body exercises.

Tips for exercising:

- Do 30 minutes of moderate activity every day
- Moderate activity would be briskly walking 1 kilometer in 20 minutes
- You don't have to do the activity all at once; try doing 10 minutes in the

morning, afternoon and evening.

- Wear loose comfortable clothing and shoes with good support
- Use a sturdy chair with no arms and a high back to steady yourself
- Drink water before, during and after you exercise
- Make sure to keep breathing!
- When you start each exercise, squeeze your stomach muscles as you breath out to support your back
- Stop and rest 1-2 minutes if you get too tired while exercising
- Begin slowly and gradually to build up endurance; don't push yourself too hard
- Stop and see your health care provider if the exercise hurts, if you have chest pain, pain that does not get better or a feeling of 'pins & needles'
- A little bit of soreness a day or two after you start exercising is ok. Taking a warm shower or bath may help.
- Listen to your body; respect that it knows when you've had enough

Get fit, stay active and keep the car keys longer!



## Seniors' Services

We have had a busy winter with many new clients in our Muskoka programs. The staff has been busy getting to know everyone. Late last fall, the staff were able to attend workshops on healthy eating and have been putting this knowledge to use by serving lunch with healthier foods and being conscious of fat and sugar content served to clients in all the programs. Menu planning has provided staff with a new creative outlet while at the same time introducing new food choices to clients. We are happy to receive feedback about this new venture or receive ideas about menu choices from caregivers and clients.

Although already offered in our Muskoka Programs, the Parry Sound programs will now also be offering foot care free of charge. Similar to Muskoka, the foot care component of the program will be scheduled by staff on a rotation and is meant to be a maintenance program. The Parry Sound staff are just partaking in the training this month and by May, we should be ready to go!



Program clients will likely be getting outdoors in the near future and therefore we ask that on days that spring weather is favourable, clients please come prepared with a hat, jacket or sweater, proper footwear and sunglasses if needed. This is the season we like to get outdoors as much as we can because it is often too hot in the summer to go outside. I suppose that, however remains to be seen but at least we can hope for a good summer season.



*Adult Day Program participants enjoy a game of Crokinole at the Forest Hill site.*

## *The Friends Events*

April 15<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> is Volunteer Appreciate Week and we will be celebrating the hard work and selflessness of our volunteers. On April 20<sup>th</sup> we will be holding our annual Volunteer Appreciation Day celebration complete with cake and gifts.

If you are interested in volunteering with The Friends, please contact Nancy Hall 1-888-746-5102 ext. 228.



In May we will be wrapping up our monthly Party Sound event for the summer. Party Sound (which is an acronym that stands for Preventing Alcohol and Risk related Trauma in Youth - Students Out to Undermine Nonsense Drinking) meets once a month and is a joint effort by community partners to introduce grade 11 students to the inherent dangers and possible outcomes associated with high risk behaviour (ie. alcohol, drug abuse, operating vehicles).

Spring planning has already begun for the Regional Disability Advisory Council's Health & Wellness Expo held annually in the fall. Please stay tuned for more details as they are available.

On October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2011 a whole day workshop was held entitled Mobilizing our community to Prevent Elder Abuse at Faith Baptist in Huntsville. Over thirty participants came from the Districts of Parry Sound and Muskoka to hear speakers from law, banking, Crimestoppers, the Ontario Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse and a new program, Neighbours, Friends and Families for Older Adults. Each presentation was followed by lively discussions.

This workshop was organised by the Friends and the Muskoka and Parry Sound Elder Abuse Prevention Network and was financially supported by the Government of Canada, New Horizons for Seniors Program Grant. The evaluations of this workshop were very positive.



*Organizers Stephen Hedér and Karen Boyer.*

## Round and About Parry Sound and Muskoka

### Huntsville

May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2012

Pine Glen Public School Craft  
Sale/Farmer's Market

May 26<sup>th</sup> – May 27<sup>th</sup> 2012

Huntsville Home Show  
Summit Centre

### Gravenhurst

Wednesday May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2012 7:00pm

BIA Fashion Show  
Muskoka Boat & Heritage Centre

June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2012

Antique & Classic Car Show  
Downtown Gravenhurst

### Bracebridge

April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2012 9:00am – 1:00pm

Annual Spring Flea Market  
Bracebridge Sportsplex

June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2012

Father's Day Car Show  
Downtown Bracebridge

### Parry Sound

Saturday April 28<sup>th</sup> 2012 9:30am – 3:00pm

Ribbed Basket Weaving  
McKellar Pioneer College

Sunday May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2012 9:00 am

10<sup>th</sup> Annual Hike for Hospice  
Waubuno Beach

### Burks Falls

Tuesday April 24<sup>th</sup>, 11:30-12:30

Cyber-bullying lunch & learn  
Land of lakes public school

July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012

Canada Day Activities  
Stan Darling Park

### Port Loring

First Tuesday of every month

Congregate Dining

Royal Canadian Legion Branch 415



**Friendly Feedback**

Please fill out the following and return it to the address below

- I would like to receive a copy of the newsletter Friendly Focus  
(Subscription fee of \$7.00 annually)
- I would like to receive more information about The Friends' programs
- I am interested in becoming a volunteer
- I am interested in becoming a member of *The Friends*  
(\$7.00 annual fee that includes Friendly Focus subscription)
- I would like to make a contribution in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to support the ongoing work at *The Friends*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

27 Forest Street  
Parry Sound, ON P2A 2R2