

The Friendly Focus

A Very Happy New Year to Everyone!

This time of year tends to encourage a certain amount of reflection and taking stock. Now that we have a full month of the New Year under our belts we can ask how we are doing with this year's resolutions. How did we do with last year's resolutions? What did we learn that we can use to improve our success this coming year?

A lot of people spend this time rededicating themselves to the task of living a healthier lifestyle and find a fresh or new way of making those goals seem less like a chore and more enjoyable.

Luckily, the Muskoka/Parry Sound Region has some of the best outdoor winter activities. If you have a disability, or mobility issues, you might want to look at some of the many assistive devices that can help you get the most out of your exercise pursuits.

For those of you not inclined toward outdoor activity, there are plenty of cozy, indoor activities taking place around the region that you can take part in as well. Check your local newspaper or online event schedule to see where the action is. We've also included a listing of just a few of these activities on page two.

So, regardless of ability, find something that you enjoy to do so that you can get out there and participate. Make this year great for yourself and best of luck achieving your personal goals!



Winter sunrise in Parry Sound

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Out & About in the Region

East Parry Sound & Muskoka Events

Family Day Activities February 20-21

The Rosseau in Minnett

Gravenhurst Winter Carnival February 25-27

Numerous events in various locations throughout the Gravenhurst area.

Community Medical Education Lecture Series

Renee M. Caisse theatre

Colds, Flus and pneumonias March 1, 2011

Immunizations March 15, 2011

Women's Health March 29, 2011



Tenants of our Forest Hill Apartments enjoying one of our monthly dinners

West Parry Sound Events

Carling Winter Carnival February 18-22

Various events over the weekend throughout the Carling area.

Movie Night at The Rosseau February 25

Rosseau Memorial Community Hall 7 pm

Harry Potter & the Deathly Hallows

Bowl for Kids Sake March 5

Support Big Brothers/Big Sisters at Georgian Lanes

McKellar Ice Fishing Derby March 5

Fish any inland lake in the Parry Sound District with almost \$2000 in prizes and a dinner at the McKellar Community Centre.

Historical Film Society March 24

The Art of the Steal 7pm

The West Parry Sound District Museum

Save The Date!

The Regional Disability Advisory Council is planning its Annual Health Expo for September 13th, 2011 from 10:00am – 4:00 pm at the Bobby Orr Community Centre in Parry Sound. If you would like for information, please contact Nancy Hall @ 1-888-746-5102 extension 228.



Although still in the heart of winter, our area has seemingly escaped being 'storm central', at least for now. One can only hope that we are in the home stretch and hopefully looking toward the month of March as being pleasant. Even now, the sun is becoming brighter by the day. In a few short weeks the Adult Day Programs will be looking forward to getting into the outdoors. Sheltered corners out of the wind make a great place to sit for a few minutes to hear the spring birds chirp. Believe it or not, some species are already quite lively.

The Seniors' Services staff have been working diligently organizing support groups in Parry Sound, Powassan and Huntsville with all going well. Soon, we will be ready to open one in South Muskoka as well.

Have a chronic condition? Want to learn how to self manage your condition? We have a suggestion. Please call us to learn more about six week group sessions designed to provide a variety of techniques to help you cope every day. Developed by Stanford University, some of the topics include: Physical Activity, Pain and Fatigue Management, Relaxation, Healthy Eating, Emotions, Problem Solving, Making Treatment Decisions, Working with your Health Care Professional, and many others.

Adult Day Programs are busier than ever. They are full of participants enjoying the various activities offered. Many programs have several volunteers who are entertaining us or demonstrating an interest of theirs which is a wonderful way to spend cold winter days. We are truly thankful to all those that brave the winter weather to share their craft with us. The support and respite offered to caregivers via the Day Program is imperative to the lives of caregivers and clients alike. Services offered such as foot/nail care in our Muskoka programs or the safe and stimulating environments enjoyed by the program participants as a whole while a caregiver works or is otherwise occupied, provide a vital service. Referrals for other services along with caregiver support and in – home respite round out the basket of services offered.

WINTER NEWSLETTER 2011 Seniors' Services



Ken Dunk (left) and Gord Rympel (right) entertaining an ADAP group at the Salvation Army at their regular once-a-month sessions.



Feature Article

Living a Quality Life Despite Disability

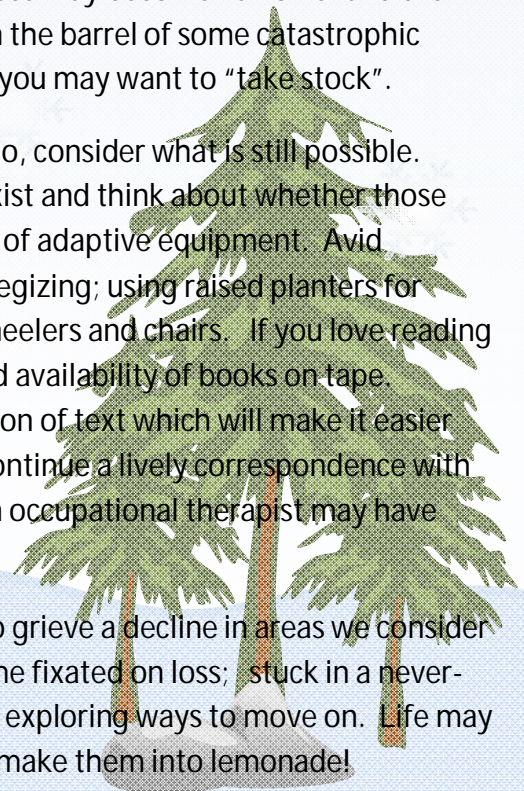
As Canadians get older, more and more of them are having to address serious challenges to the way they manage their daily lives. Individuals suffering from chronic conditions often find that the things they used to enjoy doing are no longer possible. Hobbies that require fine motor skills like knitting and embroidering; outdoor activities such as skiing and jogging; and sometimes, simply driving a vehicle, can all become casualties of disability and aging. How then to move forward when the things that brought enjoyment are no longer possible?

One of the keys to living a quality life lies in the ability to “re-invent oneself”. We tend to forget that we are constantly recreating ourselves over the course of our lives as we move through the roles of child, teenager, young working person, from single to a couple, mother or father, grandfather or grandmother, aunt or uncle. Each time we move from one transition to another we recreate the parameters of who we are in relation to others. Sometimes we change our appearance by losing weight or dying our hair. Sometimes we become more or less proactive in how we manage the circumstances of our daily living. Effectively responding to challenges throughout our lifespan is a critical factor in maintaining a sense of ‘well-being’ and enjoying a quality life.

For those suffering from disability or chronic conditions, choices may become narrower and the diversity of options distressingly few. If you are staring down the barrel of some catastrophic event that either has or will impact the way you live your life, you may want to “take stock”.

Instead of thinking about what you can't or won't be able to do, consider what is still possible. Make an inventory of things you enjoy. Note what barriers exist and think about whether those barriers are insurmountable or not. Consider the availability of adaptive equipment. Avid gardeners can often continue to enjoy themselves by re-strategizing; using raised planters for example, adaptive tools for weeding and planting, special kneelers and chairs. If you love reading but your eyesight is failing, check out the growing volume and availability of books on tape. Features on most computers will allow significant magnification of text which will make it easier not only to read material such as newspapers online, but to continue a lively correspondence with family and friends. Enlist the support and help of experts. An occupational therapist may have solutions that you had no idea existed.

Mourning loss of ability is natural. It would be inhuman not to grieve a decline in areas we consider important to our well being. The danger is that we can become fixated on loss; stuck in a never-ending grieving process instead of expanding our horizons by exploring ways to move on. Life may hand us lemons, but it is up to us to decide whether or not to make them into lemonade!



Executive Director's Report

As we move into 2011 *The Friends* Board of Directors are anxiously awaiting the outcome of a funding application to the Federal Government. Success would mean that work could finally get underway to create barrier free, accessible and affordable housing for seniors by renovating our building in Gravenhurst. Renovation of this old building will not only mean more safe housing for seniors, but will create more jobs, more services in the community while at the same time adding an attractive building to the business core of the town. A fundraising committee is being formed to support the project and the ultimate dream is to share our success with the community by holding our 2011 Annual General Meeting in this new space.

As a non-profit agency providing a broad basket of services to individuals with disabilities and seniors across the Districts of Parry Sound and Muskoka, we welcome community interest and involvement. Whether simply reading our newsletter or helping out as a volunteer, your support is much appreciated!

Although the Gravenhurst Building project will be a key project for 2011, *The Friends* continue to work with community partners to deliver programs and services to communities throughout the districts of Parry Sound and Muskoka.

Marliese Gause



Artistic rendering of the proposed Gravenhurst Project

Volunteering

If you are interested in volunteering for The Friends organization, please contact Nancy Hall @ 1-888-746-5102 extension 228.

Volunteer opportunities include:

- Assisting with the Adult Day Away Program
- Cooking for tenants
- Friendly visiting
- Assisting in special events and trips

This is a great opportunity to get to know your community members.

High school students – this is a great way to get your 40 hours that are due in June!



Friendly Feedback

If you would like to contact us please call 1-888-746-5102

Please fill out the following and return it to: *The Friends*

27 Forest Street

Parry Sound, ON

P2A 2R2

- ☐ 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) which includes Friendly Focus subscription.
- ☐ I would like to make a contribution in the amount of \$ _____ to support the ongoing work at *The Friends*

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/Town: _____

Postal Code: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

We truly look forward to hearing from you!

