

THE FRIENDS

DIGNITY • TEAMWORK • INNOVATION • EMPOWERMENT



Friendly Focus

Summer 2022

Positively Summer

As our communities emerge from COVID stress and isolation, it's important to do something positive that will remind us what a beautiful world we live in. You don't have to be a gardener to nurture a few plants on a window sill, or to put a planter filled with flowers on your front porch. You don't have to be a gardener to buy a small bouquet for your dining

room table or to pick a posy of wildflowers. Even dandelions can add a cheerful note and the tender greens can be tossed into a salad for some bonus vitamins.

The therapeutic value of growing things was reflected in *The Friends'* creation of a wheelchair accessible garden at its Forest Hill Apartments in Parry Sound.

Pictured below is former resident Rowena who loved visiting her accessible garden box. Although Rowena has passed away, her passion and care for green and lovely things is immortalized in this photo. Audrey Hepburn, a gardening enthusiast herself, famously said "to plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow." I can't think of a better affirmation.



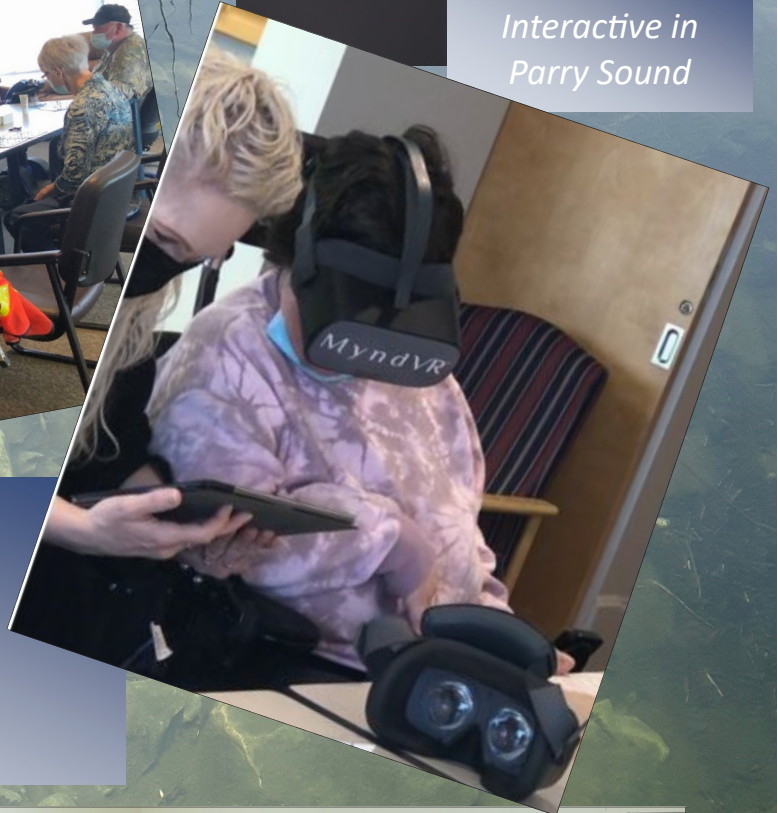
It's Been a Busy Season at *The Friends*!



In person gatherings return to *The Friends* Adult Day Away Programs in Parry Sound and Muskoka, and Heather Becker takes the new Mynd VR Virtual Reality Head Set, available at both locations, for a spin!



Ask about Obie Interactive in Parry Sound



Thank you and much gratitude for your years of service, Laura

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What We Do

The Friends is a non-profit charitable organization providing services to individuals with physical Disabilities, and seniors. In Muskoka and Parry Sound the organization has been serving the community for over 30 years. Some of the programs and services the agency provides: attendant care, adult day programs, caregiver support, respite, alzheimer overnight respite, P.A.T.H (Priority Assistance to Transition Home) from the hospital, post stroke, supportive housing, and 24/7 assisted living.

Contact us

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info@thefriends.on.ca www.thefriends.on.ca

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The Friends newsletter can also be read online at
www.thefriends.on.ca

Send content or comments to
info@thefriends.on.ca

Supported by:



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North East Local Health
Integration Network

From the CEO's Desk

Recently, *The Friends* organization celebrated front line workers. Turn to pages 7 & 8 to enjoy some of the moments shared. Although the agency is deeply grateful for the continued loyalty, terrific teams and generally the kind, compassionate services provided, the struggle to recruit staff is an ongoing nightmare. Without a larger body of frontline workers, it will be

difficult to meet the needs of vulnerable people in communities we serve.

With this issue at the top of mind, I am reaching out to communities in Parry Sound and Muskoka to encourage early retirees, moms looking to return to work after caring for children or new graduates to think about working with Community Service agencies like ours. *The Friends* offers meaningful work that supports people in the community

where you live. Please check out page 5 for details of the campaign.

In the meantime, the organization continues to focus on creative ways to meet the needs of our clients.

A truly big thank you to frontline staff who have stuck with us through thick and thin, despite COVID fears and all of the uncertainty that followed.

Thank you!

Marliese Gause,
CEO

Spotlight on Fundraising

The Friends Fundraising Committee has been busy planning events for the year ahead. Here are some of the projects the committee is working on:

The District of Muskoka has programs to ameliorate Muskoka's ongoing housing shortage by providing funds that can be accessed to create "Secondary Suites" suitable for elderly relatives, regular rental, etc.

In coordination with the District of Muskoka, *The Friends* will be providing a **"how to" series of seminars in the fall**, leading interested individuals through the process. The fee to participate will be treated as a donation to *The Friends* agency. If this is something you are interested in or thinking about, sign up now by sending an email to mgause@thefriends.on.ca. Please put "Secondary Suites" in the subject line of your email. Seminars will be starting in the fall.

The Fundraising committee is exploring an online auction....keep checking your social engagement pages, ie Facebook, Instagram etc. for upcoming

information. For updated information or to provide a donated article for the auction, contact

shazzard@thefriends.on.ca

Update via a visit the Boston Pizza fundraiser – we are thrilled to announce that Boston Pizza and the Parry Sound Kinsmen Club raised \$972 for *The Friends*.

Thank you to Boston

Pizza, the Parry Sound Kinsmen Club and all of you lovely pizza enthusiasts! *The Friends* raises funds to support transportation costs, building/housing projects and initiatives that improve accessibility and quality of life for vulnerable individuals in the Districts of Parry Sound and Muskoka. P.S. You can also donate by filling out and sending in your donation with the back page of *The Friendly Focus*.

A very big *Thank You* to our generous community donors.

Respect your elders and the world will respect you.
~ unknown



Photo source : Ontario.ca

Making a Meaningful Contribution to Your Community

Over the past two years, staffing shortages have had a serious impact on the availability of services. Whether it's a contractor, a restaurant, an airport or basic health services, getting the help you need has become a serious challenge. As an agency that provides direct care to hundreds of people across the Districts of Parry Sound and Muskoka (Powassan south to Gravenhurst and French River to MacTier and everywhere in between) we join colleagues in the health care field in struggling to manage care. Here are some things to think about:

- If you are a health care worker and have abandoned the field, consider returning for fewer hours. If enough health care workers returned to the field to provide even one day's work per week, there would be a noticeable uptick in service delivery
- If you've never considered working in healthcare, perhaps this is the time to explore your options
- If you've always wanted to volunteer, now may be the time to get your toes wet.

There are a myriad of agencies starving for staff; hospitals, long term care homes, charities like *The Friends*, Alzheimers Society, Community Mental Health and Meals on Wheels just to name a few. Don't assume you're not qualified, contact the agencies you're interested in and discuss your options. Many agencies are willing to train and cultivate staff.....you just have to commit to showing up.

Working in health care means making a real, tangible difference in people's lives. I won't sugar coat it, the work can be challenging, but it is also deeply important and can bring the kind of satisfaction that few other jobs can provide.

The Friends' agency is currently looking for:

Homemakers – Parry Sound and Muskoka, but especially in Muskoka where we have long waitlists



for services.

Homemakers provide light housekeeping for vulnerable seniors and persons with physical disabilities. This service helps people stay safely in their homes. If you can offer even one day per week, it would make a difference in people's lives.

Personal Support Workers/Attendants

– To assist people with physical disabilities manage the day to day activities of daily living. *The Friends* has an in-house training program and anyone interested can access education funding to achieve their Personal Support Worker designation. If health care is your jam, consider your PSW certificate as the first step. PSW's in our agency have gone on to become RNAs, RNs and in one or two cases, physicians. This position offers a window into health services at the community level. Try it, you'll like it.

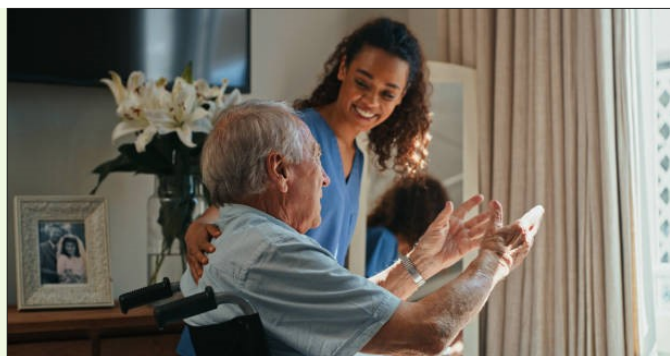
For those interested in volunteering, consider what elements in homemaking that appeal to you. Do you love to cook? Perhaps you could volunteer to help clients with making meals in advance for freezing. Are you a gardener? Perhaps volunteering to assist in helping plant or maintain a small garden would be something you are interested in. Love to shop? Consider *The Friends'* shopping program and help us get groceries to clients who have difficulty getting to and from grocery stores. Love recreational activities? Volunteer for *The Friends'* Adult Day Programs. The possibilities are endless.

The bottom line? Agencies across Parry Sound and Muskoka need your help. Check out page 10 for agencies across our districts that could use your help and/or support.

For more information about opportunities at *The Friends'* organization, contact us at ltiido@thefriends.on.ca (Parry Sound) or tmichell@thefriends.on.ca (Muskoka).

Thank you!

In Their Own Words...Stories from the Frontline



Source: istockphotos

Dear Reader, please note that names of clients and staff are not revealed to protect their privacy.

Homemaker Staff “A” shares the following experience:

As a homemaker with *The Friends* for over 3 years, I have had the opportunity to meet many of our clients. Each client is as unique as their service plans. Homemaking goes beyond light housekeeping. Our goals are to help keep our clients living in their homes with independence, dignity and security.

I have many stories that I could tell. Here are a few that I thought would perhaps give a wider scope of homemaking with *The Friends*.

Client A has issues with standing for any length of time and is unsteady. This has led to very simple meals not requiring the use of their stove or oven. Client A has mentioned she wished she could expand her menu. Through conversation, I was able to assist with a varied menu and teach Client A how to cook many foods in her microwave. Over a short period of time, Client A was cooking up a storm and very excited to share with me the meals she prepared. She has always made a point of telling me she appreciates all that I and *The Friends* do for her.

Client B unfortunately is housebound. He has family that calls a couple times a week and visits monthly, but he needs in-person social contact. That's where I come in. Client B has weekly visits with me. He looks forward to these visits and usually has quite a bit to say. Client B is an

immigrant, and has been in Canada for many decades. Each week I hear a story about his home country and what life was like for him there. I jokingly tell him, he gives me a history and geography lesson each week. He takes great pride in telling me his memories of home. Occasionally I will admit, I have shed a tear or two listening to what his life was like. I often reflect about his stories and can't believe the man sitting with me survived that. Many times I have said to him “I can't imagine going through that.” Before I leave each week he tells me to behave, be safe and enjoy my family. He also tells me that I do a good job for him and he is already looking forward to the next visit.

My perspective about homemaking. What I give to the clients, they give back to me 100%. Each day is rewarding for me. It's not a job. It is an opportunity to grow and experience along with our clients.

A Proud Team Member of The Friends

Homemaker Staff “B”

All the little things add up to a better quality of life for the client. Organizing a cupboard for a client that is visually impaired helps them know what is in their cupboards, and what items to put on their grocery list which empowers them and allows them to keep the independence they are used to. A simple peanut butter and jam sandwich can bring back a happy memory of family picnics that may have faded out in time, but that first taste brings it all back. To be able to give such joy out of a simple task like that is the reason we do this job. A happy memory brings a better quality of life.



Source: istockphotos

“We were the people who were not in the papers. We lived in the blank white spaces at the edges of print. It gave us more freedom. We lived in the gaps between the stories.” ~ **Margaret Atwood**, *The Handmaid's Tale*

Post Stroke Rehabilitation Team's Back in Action

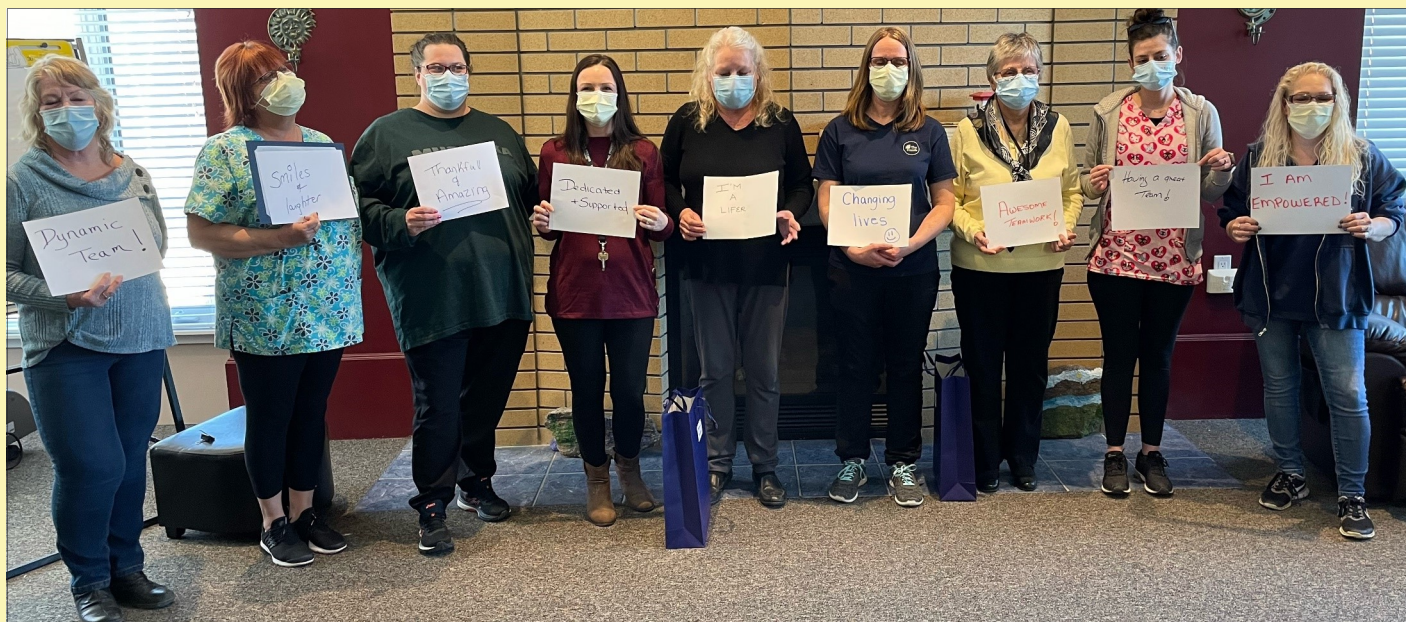


The Friends' is a partner with five other agencies across the north to provide comprehensive post-stroke rehabilitation. COVID had put a damper on what could be delivered, however, as the virus wanes (we hope) services are being ramped up. We continue to use safety protocols including masks to keep everyone healthy, however, it's a treat to see post-stroke clients working towards improving their quality of life. Special thank you to Post-Stroke staff for their patience, kindness and support.

Parry Sound Staff Long Service Awards

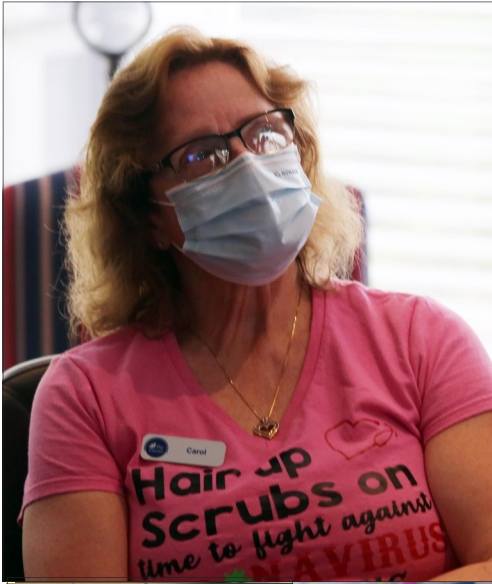
Celebrating our Team

In this time of staffing shortages, we are especially grateful for the team who have been with us for so long. A shout out to recipients of *The Friends'* Long Service Awards. Thank you for your dedication and support!

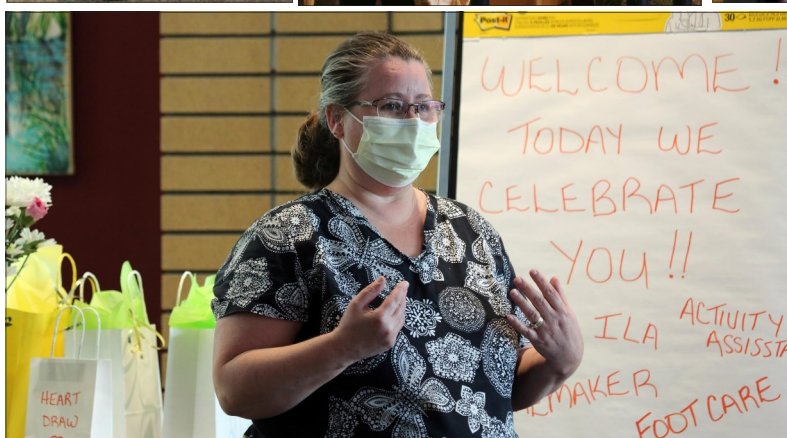


Shown from left to right: Kathy Chard; 5 years, Tonya Gagnon, Christine Gauvreau, Stephanie Bordeleau; 5 years, Crystal Bushey; 15 years, Robin Stainton; 3 years, Judy Forth; 5 years, Alison Romney; Shelley Lacosse; 3 years. Missing from photo: Penny Knapp; 3 years, Melodee Arnold; 5 years

Shining a Spotlight on Frontline Workers



On Thursday May 19th *The Friends* celebrated frontline staff who have managed to continue to provide support and service to vulnerable individuals in areas the agency serves!



SAVE MONEY. HELP SAVE THE PLANET!

Did you know:

Food waste costs Canadians approximately \$1,100 annually

Over 200kg of food waste annually is thrown out by single-family Canadian households.

58% of food produced in Canada annually is wasted or lost.

35.5 million tonnes of food waste is produced annually in Canada.

Fruit and vegetables account for most of the food waste produced in Canada.

Food loss and waste creates about 8% of global greenhouse gas emissions.

2,400,000 potatoes are wasted in Canada every day.

- The average Canadian household accumulates around 79 kilograms of food waste annually.
- Almost 50% of food waste produced in Canada is created at the household level.
- Fruits and vegetables are the most common forms of household food waste.
- Sixty-three percent of household food waste in Canada could have been avoided.
- Canada's annual avoidable food waste has the environmental impact of 2.1 million cars and 9.8 million tonnes of CO₂.

In these times of spiralling food and energy costs, lowering food wastage is one way to save money while at the same time, helping the environment. Here are some tips to reduce the amount of food that ends up in landfill.

- Plan ahead, create a weekly menu based on foods your family enjoys and purchase your weekly groceries accordingly. This is one of the most important steps in preventing food waste.
- Build in some flexibility so that you can respond to meals that take into account things like the weather. I mean, who eats a stew on



a mid-July super hot day when all you're craving is a crispy salad and a BBQ?

- Use left-overs. It's surprising the number of creative combinations that can be created with some vegetables, rice, pasta and eggs
- You can toss almost anything into a frittata, ie vegetables, rice or pasta mixed with a stirred egg and fried as a pancake. Delicious with some condiments
- Don't be afraid to use frozen fruits and vegetables, they are a bargain and can be used a little at a time which is a serious benefit for very small households
- Stock up on non-perishables, but keep purchases of perishables to manageable amounts so that they can be used quickly
- Learn about food storage and how best to manage fruits and vegetables
- Start a compost system
- Check out social media for hints, fellowship and education. Try #FoodWasteFridays

Books you might find useful:

Cook More, Waste Less: Zero-Waste Recipes to Use Up Groceries, Tackle Food Scraps, and Transform Leftovers

by Christine Tizzard

Now & Again: Go-To Recipes, Inspired Menus + Endless Ideas for Reinventing Leftovers (Meal Planning Cookbook, Easy Recipes Cookbook, Fun Recipe Cookbook) by Julia Turshen and David Loftus

Love Your Leftovers: Through Savvy Meal Planning Turn Classic Main Dishes Into More Than 100 Delicious Recipes Paperback – Illustrated, April 1 2014 by Nick Evans

Fun Facts

Did you know that August 2nd celebrates Lady Godiva's famous ride? The 11th century noblewoman was upset with

the crippling taxes being levied by her husband, the powerful Earl of Mercia. When she asked him to ease the burden, he quipped that he would only lower taxes if she

rode naked on horseback through the center of town. Hence the famous August 2nd ride by Lady Godiva! P.S. Leofric kept his word and lowered taxes.

Resources

Eastholme Community Support Services

(Congregate Dining/Meals on Wheels/Volunteer Transportation) epscssp@ontera.net
705.724.6028 1.888.521.0000 www.eastholme.ca

West Parry Sound District

Community Support Services (Congregate Dining/Meals on Wheels/Volunteer Transportation)
705.746.5602 1.800.883.0058 belvedereheights.com
aholloway@belvedereheights.com

NE Home & Community Care

705.746.4602 1.800.440.6762
www.healthcareathome.ca/northeast

North Simcoe Muskoka

Home & Community Care

705.721.8010 Ext. 6100 Toll Free: 1.888.721.2222 Ex 6100 www.healthcareathome.ca/nsm

Alzheimer Society

1.800.605.2075

Port Loring (Meals on Wheels & Volunteer Transport)
705.757.2530

Muskoka/Parry Sound Mental Health Services

www.mpscmhs.on.ca
Bracebridge: 705.645.2262 Fax 705.645.7473
Huntsville: 705.789.8891 Fax: 705.789.3002
Parry Sound: 705.746.4264; Fax: 705.746.1537 Toll Free: 1.866.829.7049

Crisis Lines:

Muskoka and area: 1.888.893.8333

Parry Sound and area, incl. Sundridge: 1.800.461.5424

Ontario Renovates, District of Muskoka – Assistance for Accessibility Modifications 1.800.461.4210

Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit – flu clinics/health information 1.877.721.7520

Walk in Clinic Bracebridge Medical Ctr. 705.646.7634

Scams and Frauds – Crime Stoppers – 1.800.222.8477

Senior's Programs & Services Muskoka
705.645.2100 ext.199

McConnell Foundation Muskoka – Financial Assistance for eye glasses/assistive devices/dentures/dental
705.645.2412

Muskoka Senior's (Meals on Wheels, Transportation (Huntsville and area), Congregate dining) 705.789.6676

Red Cross - Transportation (South Muskoka) 705.721.3313 ext. 5602

Elder Abuse – Senior's Safety Line – call if you are being mistreated, bullied or neglected 1.888.299.1011

Assistive Device Exchange A.D.E. – Data base of devices for sale or free www.Assistivedeviceexchange.com



Interested in On-Line Auctions?

The Friends' Fundraising Committee is exploring the development of an on-line auction. It's early days, but, if you have expertise to share or donations towards the auction we would love to hear from you. You can contact us at shazzard@thefriends.on.ca. Please put On-line Auction in the subject line of your email. With respect to donations, think gift certificates for a

mani-pedi, a massage, a meal, plants, a show, a gift certificate for a trip on one of the many waterways in Parry Sound and Muskoka.

If you're an old hand at running on-line silent auctions and are willing to share your expertise with the committee, contact mgause@thefriends.on.ca



Bill of Rights

Courtesy, Respect and Freedom from Abuse. A person receiving a community service has the right to be dealt with by the service provider in a courteous and respectful manner and to be free from mental, physical and financial abuse by the service provider.

Privacy and Freedom to Make Your Own Decisions. A person receiving community service has a right to be dealt with by the service provider in a manner that respects the person's dignity and privacy and that promotes the person's autonomy.

Being an Individual. A person receiving community service has a right to be dealt with by the service provider in a manner that recognizes that persons' needs and preferences, including preference based on ethnic, spiritual, linguistic, familial and cultural factors.

Information and Answers. A person receiving community service has a right to information about the community services provided to him or her and to be told who will be providing the community services.

Participation in Their Care Decisions. A person applying to community services has a right to participate in the service provider's assessment of his or her requirements and a person who is determined under this Act to be eligible for a community service has the right to participate in the service provider's development of the person's plan of service, the service provider's review of the person's requirements and the service provider's evaluation and revision of the person's plan of service.

Control and Consent. A person has the right to refuse consent to provision of any community service.

Freedom to Speak Out. A person receiving community service has a right to raise concerns or recommend changes in connection with the community service provided to him or her in connection with policies and decisions that affect his or her interests to the service provider, government officials or any other person without fear of interference, coercion, discrimination or reprisal.

Knowing the Rules. A person receiving community service has the right to be informed of the laws, rules and policies affecting the operation of the service provider and to be informed in writing of the procedures for initiating complaints about the service provider.

Confidentiality. A person receiving community service has the right to have his or her records kept confidential in accordance with the law.

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FRIENDLY FEEDBACK

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

- ☐ I would like to receive a copy of *The Friends*' newsletter.
- annual subscription fee \$7
- ☐ I would like to receive more information about *The Friends*' programs.
- ☐ I am interested in becoming a volunteer.
- ☐ I would like to make a contribution in the amount of \$
to support the ongoing work of *The Friends*.
- ☐ I would like to make a donation to the Huntsville Building project.

You can now donate online. Click on the Canada Helps logo on our website
www.thefriends.on.ca

Name:

Mailing address:

Telephone number: Email:

Return to:

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Ontario • P2A 2R2 • 1.888.746.5102
info@thefriends.on.ca