

THE FRIENDS

DIGNITY • TEAMWORK • INNOVATION • EMPOWERMENT



Friendly Focus

Winter 2020 - 21

Banishing Winter “Blues”

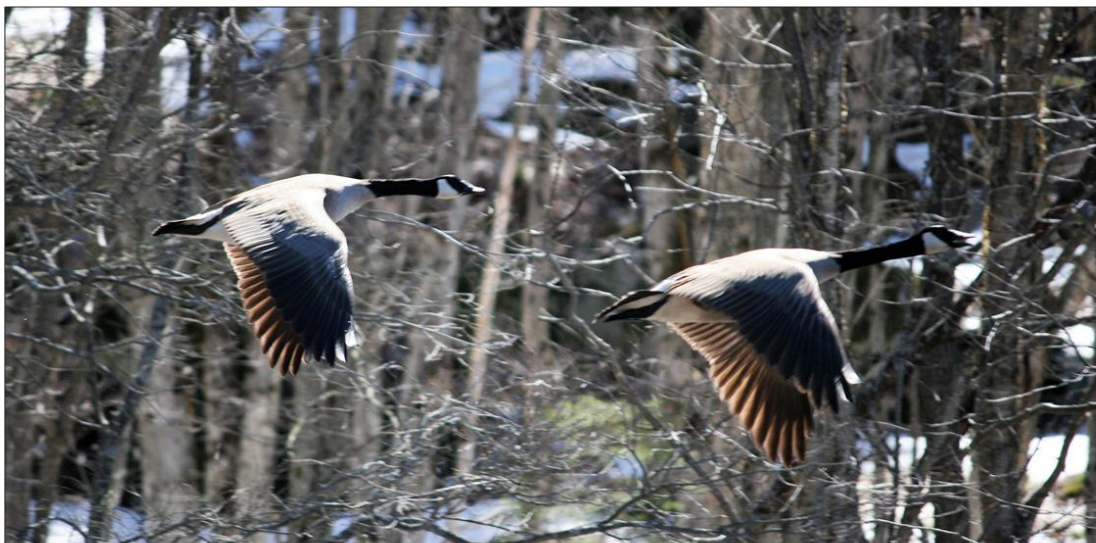
2021 hasn’t exactly put its best foot forward. With surging COVID-19 cases and the attendant lock-downs, we have all had to find ways to cope. The Friendly Focus Winter 2021 issue hopes to provide you with some lighter moments, suggestions for coping and as always a page of resources you can access.

We are delving into the way the digital world can better support you while remembering that real-world hands-on care cannot be replaced by a computer. This is certainly a time to innovate, creating hybrid models of care that will withstand the test of time.

Despite COVID-19 fatigue, look forward to the New Year with a positive outlook. Taking the time to reflect.

On a personal level, perhaps it’s also a time to find

ways to bring innovation to your life. If you’ve been holding back from engaging in the digital universe, maybe now is the time to put your toe into the water. Perhaps a friend or family member living in your “bubble” can help you master new skills, widening your horizons. Whether it’s getting more comfortable with a “Zoom” get together or an online bridge game, increasing competence with new ways to engage is sure to help quell feelings of isolation. Fight COVID-19 fatigue by taking the time to learn new skills and expand your personal universe. Although the start of 2021 has not exactly been the New Year we were hoping for, we can all expect a much better time as the days wind into spring and vaccines become more readily available. In the meantime, best wishes for a safe and happy start to 2021 from all of us at *The Friends*!



www.thefriends.on.ca

1



INSIDE

- 4 *From the CEO's Desk*
Celebrate the Unusual
- 5 *Feeling Lonely?*
Happy Valentine's Day
- 6 *Decking the Halls*
- 7 *How to be a Good Friend*
Friendship Week
- 8 *St Patrick's Day Fun*
Irish Cream
- 9 *Let's Talk About*
Supportive Housing
- 10 *New Initiative*
Bill of Rights
- 11 *Irish Soda Bread*
Resources
- 12 *Please Provide us with*
your Friendly Feedback



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

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

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From the CEO's Desk

As we step into a New Year, front line health care workers across the province are being challenged with growing concerns surrounding COVID-19. Perhaps you have been brushing off concerns, feel that mask wearing is an imposition, and frankly don't care much about social distancing because COVID-19 hasn't affected you personally. Believe me, we are all weary of the restrictions placed on our lives as we live through this pandemic, but most of us want to support each other. Most of us want to take the right precautions not only to protect ourselves, but to protect others. It's the right thing to do, not only for the

ones you care about, but for the people who care for you. Shortages of front line workers have meant that spreading COVID-19 through thoughtlessness and carelessness can have significant impacts on service delivery. Be kind, protect service delivery by following precautions outlined by Public Health authorities and the province.

In December both the District of Muskoka and the Parry Sound District Social Services Administration Board provided funding to *The Friends* agency to support us with managing costs/acquisition of much needed PPE's as well as supporting clients in need. A very special thank you for helping us make the lives of vulnerable individuals just a little easier at this difficult time.

The agency is launching a fascinating new initiative over the next few weeks aimed at engaging seniors. If you are a member of a seniors' group, church, Royal Canadian Legion or other community group we would be interested in hearing from you. A very brief description is at the top of page 10. **If this is of interest to you, send us an email and we will get you on the email list for further information and updates.**

Finally a very big Thank You to all staff who have worked tirelessly despite the challenges that 2020 threw our way. Let's make 2021 the best, most productive year ever.

**Sincerely,
Marliese Gause, CEO**

Celebrate the

Don't let Winter Doldrums get you down. Celebrate the Weird and Wacky!

Did you know that February is officially "Potato lovers month"? If you too adore spuds, make a special effort to enjoy them this month – mashed, boiled, fried or baked, enjoy them on a cold January day.

February is International Twit Award month. Post a picture of your favourite "twit" on your calendar and send them a gift certificate for coffee.

For those of you who love all things Scots, February just happens to be National Scottish Culture month so get out a kilt or listen to your all time



bag pipe favourites.

Chocoholics need look no further than February, because, guess what? February just happens to be Celebration of Chocolate Month.

When March rolls around get

Unusual

ready to: Celebrate Youth Art month by posting works of art created by young people, including grandkids – make an online gallery of their work and post for friends and family.

Find a new hobby to celebrate National Hobby Month, learn a new skill or re-discover a hobby you've let vanish from your life.

Enjoy spectacular pasta to celebrate National Noodle Month, so many noodles, so little time.

Explore ways to celebrate flour for National Flour month – a baking extravaganza comes to mind.

Feeling Lonely? COVID 19 Got You Down?

COVID-19 isolation has had a profound affect on everyone, but especially on seniors, those with physical disabilities and children. How can one maintain a “sunny” outlook when friends and family are restricted from visiting, from hugging one another? When weekly outings to a favourite coffee shop or shopping trip have become out-of-bounds?

Nothing will ever replace a hug or a face-to-face get together, but there are some things you can do to minimize feelings of aloneness and depression. Here are some tips:

- Use the time to develop and think about your life circumstances. What changes would you like to see? What are your goals? How would you go about achieving them? Time alone or in more isolated settings sometimes allows us to see things more clearly. Looking forward instead of focussing on what you are missing now, can help. Keep your goals simple, manageable and something that gives you joy
- Engage in a hobby, learn something new, plant seeds for your spring garden,
- organize your photo albums, play bridge or chess online, borrow digital books from your local library
- Remember to exercise! Take a walk, engage in chair exercises, do stretches to keep muscles soft and limber
- Start a journal and document your experiences
- Take pictures....
- Care about others by sending a card or note, maintaining contact through regular telephone calls, emails or text messages, use Facetime, Zoom or other virtual resources to keep in touch with family and friends
- When the opportunity to get vaccinated for COVID-19 comes your way, make sure you take advantage, in the mean time maintain social distance and use your mask both for your health and for those around you
- Remember to smile. Just the act of smiling sends a positive burst of endorphins through your system making everything feel just a little bit better.

Happy Valentines Day!

Valentine's Day is the second most popular day of the year for sending cards. Christmas is the first most popular.

About 1 billion Valentine's Day cards are exchanged each year.

The heart is associated with Valentine's Day as it is considered the source of all human emotions.

Red rose is a favorite flower of Venus. For this reason red rose is also the symbol of Valentine's Day. All over the world, over 50 million roses are given for Valentine's Day each year.

The symbol of the ribbon, which often adorns modern-day Valentines, is rooted in the Middle Ages. When knights competed in tournaments, their sweethearts often gave them ribbons for good luck.

Girls of medieval times ate bizarre foods on St. Valentine's Day to make them dream of their future husband.

In 1537, England's King Henry VII officially declared Feb. 14 the holiday of St. Valentine's Day.

Lace is often used on Valentine decorations. The word “lace” comes from the Latin laques, meaning “to snare or net,” as in to catch a person's heart.

In Shakespeare's play Romeo and Juliet it is said that they lived in Verona Italy. Every year thousands of Valentine's Day cards are sent to Verona addressed to Juliet.

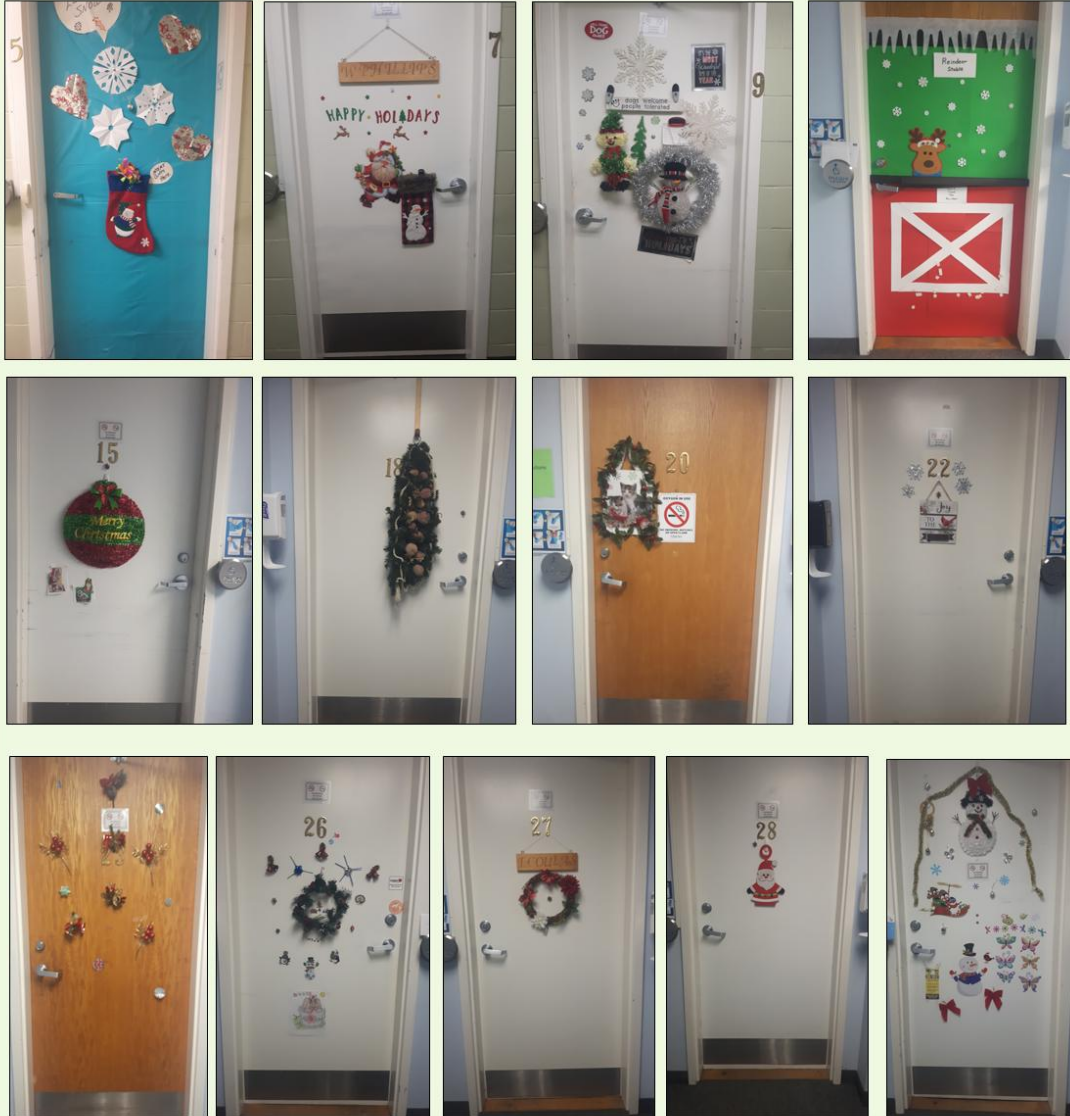


Decking the Hallways

Forest Hill Christmas door decorating contest kept everyone winning all season long! A hearty HO HO and thank you for the efforts of all participants making this Christmas that much the more wondrous for staff and visitors.

"Laughter is the shortest distance between two people." ~ Victor Borge

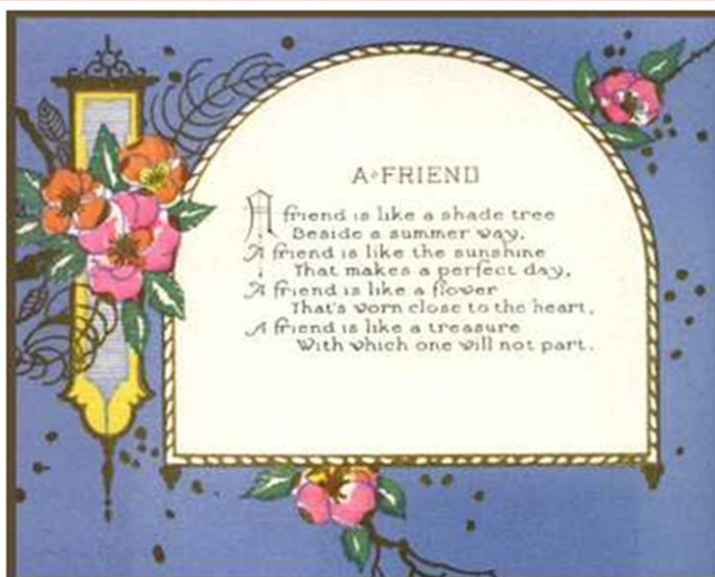
"A friend is someone who knows the song in your heart and can sing it back to you when you have forgotten the words." ~ Anonymous



How To Be a Good Friend

Just like a marriage, friendships take time, effort and the willingness to put aside your personal differences. Here are some tips to enrich existing friendships or create new ones:

- Talk with each other. An important aspect of friendship is not only sharing information but the act of listening. Make sure you do not constantly dominate the discussion, listen carefully and give your friend your undivided attention.
- When in doubt, do the friendliest thing. Always err on the side of kindness. When we have the choice of doing more or less for someone else, do more. When we have the chance to encourage or support, do it. Show appreciation openly. Readily acknowledge the worth and value of others
- To have a friend, you must be a friend. Sometimes friendships place demands on us at inopportune times. Given that the demand is reasonable and doable, why not rise to the occasion?
- If you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all. Enough said.
- Be yourself



Friendship Week

February is "Have a Heart" month and while the focus is on heart health, it's important to remember to nourish our friendships. Make a resolution to put into practice some of these strategies during International Friendship Week:

Make a new friend

Exercise your "kindness muscle" by doing something

special for someone on Random Acts of Kindness day

Send a special valentine to someone in your life on Valentine's Day

Did you know that Nabisco's "Oreos" are the world's best selling cookie at a rate of 6 billion sold each year? The first Oreo was sold in 1912.

St Patrick's Day Fun

You don't have to be Irish to enjoy St. Patrick's Day. Remember to check for COVID-19 cancellations and/or policies. Here are some ideas for making March 17th just a little "greener":

Whether it's shamrock-shaped cookies or green cupcakes, satisfy your sweet tooth this St. Paddy's Day with a selection of sweet, festive treats.

Queue up some of the best flicks to come out of the Emerald Isle, such as the musical movie, *Once*. You could also watch films that center around Irish characters and themes, such as the 2015 drama, *Brooklyn*.

You could join the sober St. Patrick's Day movement and take part in one of the many events thrown around the country that aim to celebrate Irish culture and St. Patrick's legacy. You might listen to traditional instruments like the fiddle and accordion, watch Irish dancing, and more.

Lace up your sneakers and get ready to sweat before your big St. Patrick's Day party with a festive fun run. There are several races

around the country you can participate in that allow for some friendly competition and charitable donations before the



day's festivities. Make sure you check with respect to COVID-19 cancellations or policies.

You haven't celebrated like the Irish if you don't devour food for which Ireland is famous. A classic dish of Ireland, corned beef and cabbage is hearty and delicious.

A treat on St. Patrick's Day is to catch Irish stepdancers as they glide, leap, and jump across the floor. Be on the lookout for Irish specialty shows featuring traditional dancing and music.

Listen to Irish music and, no, you don't have to listen to bagpipes to check this off the list. Think more along the lines of U2, Flogging Molly, or the Cranberries. Listening to Irish folk music is also a great St. Patrick's Day tradition.

It turns out that the Irish loaf is actually one of the easiest types of bread to make, as it uses baking soda instead of yeast and doesn't need time for rising. Serve it with a hearty spread of Irish butter.²

Say 'Erin go Bragh' The Gaelic phrase is best translated as "Ireland Forever" in English, and is basically a way of showing affection and support for the country. You can also incorporate some other Irish terms during the day, like saying "Sláinte" when you cheers.

The thick, rich Irish dry stout is a must-have on St. Patrick's Day. It's estimated that nearly 13 million pints of Guinness are consumed on St. Patrick's Day across the world.



Irish Coffee

- 2 teaspoons sugar
- 2 ounces Irish whiskey
- 2 cups hot strong brewed coffee (French or other dark roast)
- 1/4 cup heavy whipping cream

- 1 teaspoon green creme de menthe

Divide sugar and whiskey between two mugs; stir in coffee. In a small bowl, beat cream and creme de menthe until thickened. Gently spoon onto tops of drinks, allowing cream to float. Serve immediately.



Let's Talk About Supportive Housing

The word "supportive" can mean many things in "government speak" but what does it actually mean when applied to the real world that you and I live in?

Supportive housing was originally

developed in the 1980's when it became evident that a physical disability did not automatically mean that disability rendered a person unable to manage his or her affairs.

This recognition sank into the hearts and minds of community members who had loved ones struggling to maintain some level of independence in a world where the only options were to live at home or in an institution.

A mini building boom ensued as families and communities rallied to raise funds and cajole reluctant governments into supporting initiatives that would allow individuals with physical disabilities to live independently by providing accessible space and the kind of physical help needed to maintain their dignity and autonomy. The creation of *The Friends* agency grew out of such community interest and, since 1983, has been one of the very few fully accessible, supportive housing options between Barrie and Sudbury.

At some point, it became clear to communities that the same attributes that had sheltered and supported persons with disabilities were also applicable to the seniors' population; those suffering from disabling conditions like MS, Stroke, Parkinson's disease, Rheumatoid Arthritis and so on.

Accessible, supportive housing provided an



opportunity for people to live in their own space, continue to make decisions and direct their life while at the same time accessing the level of care needed on a 24/7 basis.

Unfortunately, the brief interest from governments and

communities faded during the 90's. In the meantime, the gray tsunami struck.

Hospitals struggle with how to place elderly patients who could live independently but don't have the support they need leading to a crisis in bed availability.

Over the years, successive governments have invested in more services in the community which has helped many seniors maintain their independence, however, for the most vulnerable, relying on home visits is not always the solution.

Many models of accessible housing provide on-site support; staff who work out of an office space in the building and who can respond very quickly to issues that may arise.

Accessible, supportive housing is about quality of life. It's not the answer to everything, but it's an intermediate option for people who are able to direct their care but are too frail and/or vulnerable to live alone in their home. For them, an accessible apartment with 24/7 support is the ideal solution.

More variety in the kinds of housing available to communities would support hospitals and Long Term Care facilities by providing safe environments while at the same time respecting the dignity and independence of both seniors and those with physical disabilities.

New Initiative

The *Friends* is launching a project to engage seniors through history projects throughout the region we serve. Whether a calendar, booklet or digital

content, we want to hear from you. Send us your email information and we will provide you with details and regular updates.

Send your query to mgause@thefriends.on.ca

Resources

Eastholme Community Support Services

(Congregate Dining/Meals on Wheels/Volunteer Transportation) epsccsp@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



Super Easy Irish Soda Bread

I love making easy Irish soda bread when we're having corned beef and cabbage. Who doesn't love butter on warm bread fresh out of the oven?

Ingredients

- 4 cups flour
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 3/4 cups milk

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 425F.
2. Add flour, salt, and baking soda into a bowl and combine thoroughly. Stir in milk and mix well. It will be a little sticky.
3. Knead using a little flour and form into a disc shape.
4. Add dough to a greased

cake pan.

5. Bake for approximately 45 minutes.



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 Gravenhurst 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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info@thefriends.on.ca**