

Vet Gazette

In touch with Veterans Care



Volume 14, Issue 2

Spring 2019



I want to croon...

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By the light of the Silvery Moon.....

And so we did! On Feb. 15 the Veterans Care program was treated to some of the best music of their time! "Link Theatre" brought in a team of professional musicians and performers and provided us with a magical experience.

After the show many of the Veterans told us just how much they enjoyed the show! One stated, "I felt like I was at a Las Vegas performance. This was something, really something!"

What an amazing gift to be able to provide our residents with the chance to feel a part of something magical. It was evident that they felt a special connection to the performers.

From the moment Rick Kish got down on one knee to serenade someone, to the time a chorus of Veteran voices joined in the singing of White Cliffs of Dover. Hearing a chorus of seasoned voices come together

and join the singer on stage in her final song was simply breathtaking! If you were in the room, you'd recognize that it was a moment that transcended the years and gave us a glimpse of something intimate and special to our Veterans.



Cont'd' ... I want to croon...



Guests entering the auditorium were greeted by black table cloths, silvery moons and amazing silhouettes that created an atmosphere of sophistication. Staff and volunteers worked the floor as if it were a Vegas Show, balancing trays of delectable appetizers and fancy drinks. Many thanks to everyone for your commitment to go above and beyond the daily routine and be part of something amazing. Our Veterans left the event completely satisfied.

We are so thankful, to the family who donated the funds that allowed us to provide such a spectacular event. This would not have been possible, without your generosity. Thank you!

A message from the Veterans Care Program Director

*Heather Tales,
Director,
Veterans Care Program*



We have had a very busy winter season and are happy to welcome spring over the next few weeks. Many special events and activities were held to kick off 2019. These include the Crooner Event sponsored by generous donors, pet therapy and special anniversary celebrations.

Created and inspired by George Browning, one of our Veterans, was the 2nd Annual Food Drive. Through his inspiration the St. Joseph's organization got behind the food drive and exceeded the goal. Sadly, a short time after this years food drive, George passed away. He will always be remembered for his advocacy and contagious smile. In his memory, we will continue the annual food drive, knowing he will be keeping watch and smiling down on us as we continue his advocacy.

I am excited to share that in early March the Operational Stress Injury Clinic (OSI) -GTA satellite site moved to its new newly renovated and expanded home. The clinic is about 7000 square feet and will accommodate an expanded team. More details will be shared in the next few months as we settle into our new space.

On Apr.8, Roy Butler, Vice President Patient Care and Risk Management and I had the pleasure of touring the Deputy Minister of Veterans Affairs Canada, General (Retired) Walter Natynczyk. His focus was on visiting the Veterans who make their home at Parkwood Institute. He spent time on 2 Perth, 3Kent/Essex and toured the recreation areas (Greenhouse, Pub, Auditorium) and concluded his tour in the Veterans Art Studios.

Thank you to our Veterans Care Program staff for everything they do! They truly make a difference (and I am confident the Deputy Minister left our facility knowing how exceptional everyone is!).



Remembering your Comrades

January

*James McDonald
John Tuckett
Keith Lefler
Harold Dennis*

February

*John Baker
Murray Simpson
Orvil Rowe
James Wakefield
James Currah*

March

*Nathaniel Davidson
John McArthur
Lorne Spicer
George Browning*

We will remember them

3rd annual George Browning food drive



We reached our goal of 1001 pounds! The 3rd Annual George Browning Food Drive collected 1079 pounds of food for the London Food Bank.

Together we made this big hearted Veteran realize his goal to continually give back and inspire others to help. On behalf of George Browning, I would like to thank you for your generosity and support.

In the spirit of the joy giving back brings, the Veterans created a trophy for the area/team who made the greatest contribution. The "Can Cup" was shared with Pharmacy teams for their incredible contributions. Thank you so much for all of your support! You CAN make a difference!

Sadly, George passed away in March, but not without seeing the incredible re-

sults or his efforts. A note from George's daughter reads, "Thank you all so much for making this a success for Dad! My siblings and I got a chuckle at the picture as Dad worked at Kellogg's for 30 years and he's holding Post cereal.... we weren't allowed to eat Post cereal! On behalf of our family I would like to thank everyone who have been on this journey with us.

~ Marie Finkbeiner, Therapeutic Recreation Specialist ~



75 Years together!

On Mar.18, Iris and Bill Thomson celebrated their 75th wedding anniversary at Parkwood Institute with family and friends. A beautiful bouquet of flowers was presented to Mr. and Mrs. Thomson by the Dreams and Wishes committee.

Bill was born and raised in Montreal where he enlisted in the 7th Canadian Reconnaissance Regiment, 3rd Division - 17th Duke of York's Royal Canadian Hussars in 1940. He left Canada to go overseas in 1941.

Iris was born in Croyden, England, but the family eventually moved to Sussex to get away from the bombings. Iris was with the British Army in Intelligence and worked as a Decoder at Bletchley. Iris and Bill met at a dance in Brighton shortly after Bill arrived in England.

On Mar. 18, 1944 they married in Cuckfield, Sussex. After the war ended, they settled in Rimouski Gaspé, Quebec where they had 3 children; Penny, Jill and Keith, 4 grandchildren and 4 great grandchildren.

Iris and Bill moved to London, Ontario in 1957 and Bill began his career as National Sales Manager for 3M. Iris enjoyed being a stay at home mother raising 3 children and running the household while Bill travelled a great deal throughout Canada with his job. Bill retired in 1985.

They lived mostly in London throughout the years and remained in their home until April 2017 when they came to live together at Parkwood Institute.

Iris will celebrate her 97th birthday on June 24 and Bill will celebrate his 99th birthday on June 21.

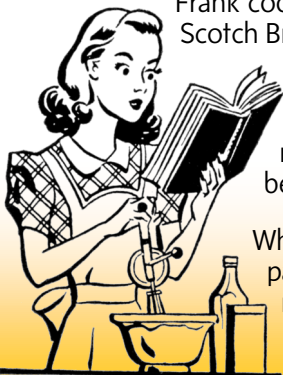
On behalf of the Dreams and Wishes Committee a beautiful flower arrangement was presented to Mr. and Mrs. Thomson. The family wishes to "thank the committee for the stunning and unique flower arrangement."



Happy Anniversary

Just like Mother used to make

On Feb.14, if you didn't have a date for Valentine's Day, that was fine because we had a date with the Chef. Chef Frank cooked up a beautiful roast chicken dinner, sweet potato tarts, seasonal vegetables and a beautiful Scotch Broth Soup, recipe courtesy of one of our residents.

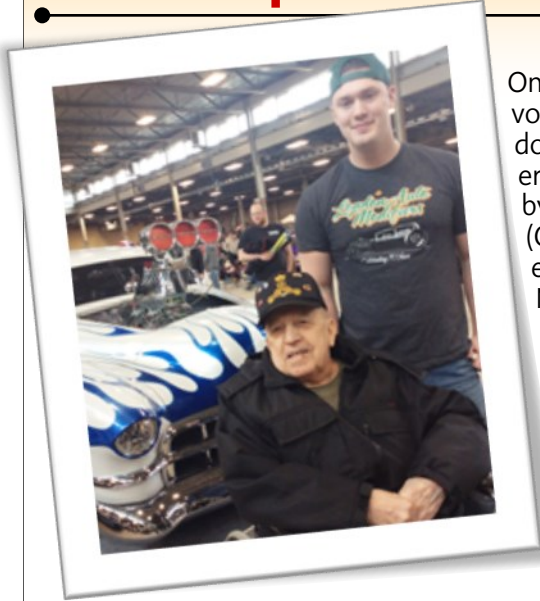


One of the ways staff are working to meet the interests and needs of our Veterans through this program is to hear what they have to say about favorite foods and recipes from the past and recreate them. "Just like Mother used to make." This is not just resident input; this is working beside the residents to re-create that special recipe.

When the Royal Canadian Legion Tri District (ABC) Committee agreed to support this program as part of the "Diners Delight" initiative, they agreed to not only improve the opportunities for enjoyment through food, but also increase the opportunity to build community and a sense of belonging on our units.

~ Marie Finkbeiner, Therapeutic Recreation Specialist ~

London Speed & Custom Show



On Apr. 24, Veterans Care Program staff and volunteers accompanied 13 resident to the London Speed and Custom Car Show at the Western Fair District. The veterans were welcomed by members of the Canadian Army Veterans (CAV), then escorted throughout the venue by enthusiastic volunteers from London Auto Modifiers.



Everyone had a fun filled afternoon viewing customs, hot rods, rat rods, and race cars and especially enjoyed looking at the classic cars while reminiscing about ones they once owned back in the day.

Thanks to all who made this event a success, as well as the Western Fair District for covering our admission costs!

Pet therapy

The Veteran's Care Program would like to welcome Barb Schust-Lawrence and Finn, her spunky and fun loving rescue dog, to our team. The dynamic duo has recently started Pet Therapy for the residents on 4 Bruce/Elgin veterans - who eagerly await their weekly visits!

"Petting, scratching, and cuddling a dog could be as soothing to the mind and heart as deep meditation and almost as good for the soul as prayer." – Dean Koontz (Author)

~ Alexis More, Therapeutic Recreation Specialist ~



The Toronto site

of the OSI Clinic gets a new home!



On Mar. 8, a long-awaited dream was realized. The Operational Stress Injury (OSI) Clinic's Greater Toronto Area (GTA) work was first initiated in the Fall of 2011 by Psychologists Dr. Maya Roth and Dr. Alex McIntyre-Smith – with the support of OSI and Veterans Care Leadership. Since these early days, the clinic has demonstrated consistent growth in referral volumes for services in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) with similar increase in OSI staffing. The GTA site currently has a staff of 10, with funding approval for additional positions

Cont'd ... Moving on up!

in order to meet the demand for mental health services for Veterans, serving members of the Canadian Forces and RCMP members in the GTA area.

The new clinic space is very meaningful in that the needs of the clients have been forefront throughout the design and construction phases. The space is located in a modern building that is easily accessible from major highways and public transit systems alike. Large windows allow sunlight to shine in, and a calming colour palette brings a sense of tranquility to the space. There is ample space to allow for group therapy, clinical case conferences, and training events. Cutting-edge video technology has been installed to ensure optimal communication with our London counterparts. The space will feature artwork by Veterans participating in the Veterans Arts program at the Parkwood site.

A big thank you to St. Joseph's Health Care, for ensuring that Veterans in the GTA have a clinic space that reflects respect, compassion, and excellence in care - of which these Veterans so deserve.

~Amanda R. Levine, Ph.D., C. Psych., Operational Stress Injury Clinic (Greater Toronto Site)~

Annual Tartan Gala

On Apr. 6, Sim School of Highland Dance hosted 7 Parkwood Institute Veterans as their guests of honour at the annual Tartan Gala at the Jet Aircraft Museum. Everyone in attendance enjoyed an evening complete with a three-course meal, musical entertainment from the Stratford Police Pipes and Drums, and performances from the Sim School of Highland Dance.

We thoroughly enjoyed the Static Aircraft displays as well as exhibitions from the Lest We Forget Military Museum. We thank them all for honouring us and wish the young dancers all the best at their upcoming competition in Scotland.

Thank you to LDS Consultants and Better Financial for sponsoring our table at the event.

~ Alexis More, Therapeutic Recreation Specialist ~



Intergenerational activities

On Apr. 11th, a grade seven class from Princess Elizabeth School came to Parkwood Institute to spend the morning with our Veterans. The morning was spent sanding, painting and assembling wooden poppies with the assistance of individual Veterans.

Following the poppy-making, everyone participated in a fun game of bocce ball before it was time to return to the school. A grade five class from the same school came to visit in February (Valentines for Veterans.) On both occasions, the Royal Canadian Legion subsidized a school bus to make the trips possible.

~ Doreen Campbell, Veterans Arts Instructor ~



A visit from the Deputy Minister

On Apr. 8th Deputy Minister of Veterans Affairs Canada, General (Retired) Walter Natynczyk, came to visit the Veterans who make their home at Parkwood Institute.

General Natynczyk went to 2 Perth, 3 Kent/Essex toured the recreation areas (Greenhouse, Iron Duke Pub, auditorium) and concluded his tour spending time in the Veterans Arts Studios.



Throughout his visit the General spent time speaking with the Veterans and their families and asked about the care they received. The Veterans and families told the Deputy Minister how well they are cared for and about the wonderful staff.



General Natynczyk expressed his gratitude and thanks for the work our staff do to serve and care for our Veterans.



Due to limited time, we were unable to visit the Operational Stress Injury (OSI) clinic. However throughout the tour we shared information and highlighted the key work of the clinic including: the Zero Suicide initiative, Primary Care Physician pilot, and expansion of services in the Greater Toronto Area.

The General presented a coin of excellence to Roy Butler, Vice President, Patient Care and Risk Management and Heather Tales (Director, Veterans Care Program) to acknowledge the wonderful work staff do in providing care to our Veterans, Canadian Armed Forces members and RCMP.

Vet Gazette is produced quarterly by the
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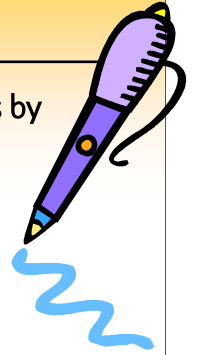


Comments?

Please feel free to send your comments by e-mail to:

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or fax at 519-685-4031, or drop off in writing to room. E2-117 in the Western Counties Wing.



How sweet it is...

The morning of Mar. 29 was looking to be very promising as we boarded the bus for our country drive. We were on our way to shake off the winter blahs and sink our teeth into flap jacks soaked in maple syrup.

Fort Rose Maple Company has been a favorite destination for many of our Veterans prior to coming to Parkwood Institute. On this particular day, the weather was warm and the air was full of the rich earthy smells of the country side. But nothing beats the smell of that sugar shack! Fort Rose Maple Company provides an all you can eat buffet of flap jacks, coleslaw, sausages, ham, fruit salad, muffins with maple butter and the best maple baked beans! The staff are friendly and accommodating, always willing to answer questions about the process of making syrup or about farm life in general.

Many of our Veterans were either raised on a farm or were farmers themselves. Being able to get to a farm at this time of year makes the outing all that much more meaningful. Thank you to the Royal Canadian Legion Tri District (ABC) Committee for supporting this initiative. As part of our Diners Delight program, this is one of our dining out destinations. Eighteen residents enjoying a very sweet adventure!

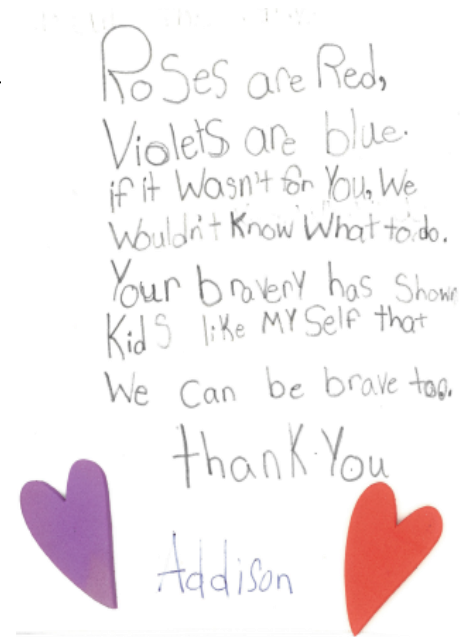


~Marie Finkbeiner, Therapeutic Recreation Specialist ~

Mandarin Restaurant

To celebrate the Chinese New Year, 13 residents from 3Kent/Essex braved the cold on Jan. 30, in hopes of enjoying a delicious meal at the Mandarin. This year we celebrate the year of the pig. According to Chinese Zodiac, in order to be a "Pig" you need to have been born in 1923. There weren't many on this particular trip that fit that birthdate. However, I don't think it takes a special date and zodiac sign to determine "Pig" status when at a buffet. I believe in this situation, we were all honorary "Pigs". We were blessed with good fortune, enjoyed each other's company, filled our bellies with the many wonderful choices the Mandarin had to offer and came home to nap. This fun treat was made possible by Royal Canadian Legion Tri District (ABC) Committee as part of the Diners Delight Program initiative. Thank you for your generosity and support.

~Marie Finkbeiner, Therapeutic Recreation Specialist ~



A card from "Addison" to thank and honour all of the Veterans at Parkwood Institute and remember Canada's veterans and the people who work and volunteer with these heroes.

