

COMMUNITY LIVING
Owen Sound and District

Perspectives



The One Who Got Away

Submitted by Jessie Sinclair

While everyone has been cooped up in their homes during COVID, Joseph reignited his love for fishing! Joseph used his Passport funds to purchase new fishing equipment and he was ready to go out to catch his big catch.

Weekly he sat at the wall with staff enjoying what the Owen Sound harbour had to offer, but never having much luck in the way of bringing home the big one. He has gotten to speak with many new people on the wall and has had people join him while social distancing.

While out on the wall Joseph talked about going away on a fishing trip and talked about everything he wished to do while away. And that's when the wish turned into an idea and then a plan. Joseph had to think about what type of fish he wanted to catch and what type of experience he wanted to have, staff encouraged him

to let his mind go crazy!

Joseph decided he wanted to go fishing on Lake Simcoe for pickerel so the foundation for the trip was set! Joseph saved up his money and Airbnbs were searched until the perfect fit was found one block from the beach in Innisfil. Joseph couldn't have been any more excited. The next thing he needed to do was settle on his menu for his trip so he could brush off his cooking skills. With his menu flip flopping up until the day before the trip and his enthusiasm growing the best plan was to let Joseph loose at the grocery store once we arrived at our destination.

The morning of the trip staff met him at his residence and Joseph was waiting at the front door ready to hit the road for the drive! He was in awe of the Airbnb and we made ourselves right at home! With a quick trip to the grocery store to pick up all of

his cravings and a splurge of fish and chips from "the best place in town" for dinner we headed back to the Airbnb to make our game plan for the rest of the weekend. We spent the evening walking the beach and watching Netflix before heading to our rooms to get a good sleep before a day of fishing at the pier.

After breakfast and loading up the car we drove around looking for the best pier to fish off of. Man oh man, did we ever get a great one! Joseph got his wish of catching his fish, not just one, but four! While on the pier he chatted with the other local fishermen and listened to the music and was just in his element and it was truly wonderful to get to watch.

When on the car ride home staff asked Joseph if he could do anything different about the trip what would it be? "Longer. I would want to be gone two to three more days of this!"

Not to Brag ... But ...

Robyn Abra

Robyn Abra has gotten crafty thanks to COVID. Not being able to go out and purchase gifts has lead her to make Christmas and birthday gifts at home. Here she shows off a few of her creations for Christmas that will be filled with hot chocolate, cider and other treats.



Jennifer

Jennifer is very excited about her latest art project. She worked on it for a few weeks and loved creating the design of the butterfly.



Karen Aspinall

Karen Aspinall created this yummy meal of southern style fried shrimp with lemon, asparagus and a baked potato. Karen had previously taken part in 'Around the World' cooking classes and wanted to practice her skills.



Charlie Cottrell

Our Perspectives photographer, Charlie Cottrell, has been out and about in Owen Sound capturing images of our community. Here is his latest photograph of Inglis Falls.



Youth Engagement Project Summer 2021

Submitted by Marissa Walker
Youth Engagement Project (YEP) was a success this summer! Participants between the ages of 12 and 21 were able to connect via online sessions within four themed modules —

All About Inspiration, All About Wellness, All About Nature, and All About Games, Arts & Crafts.

Each week, kits containing all necessary materials for the activities were put together and delivered to

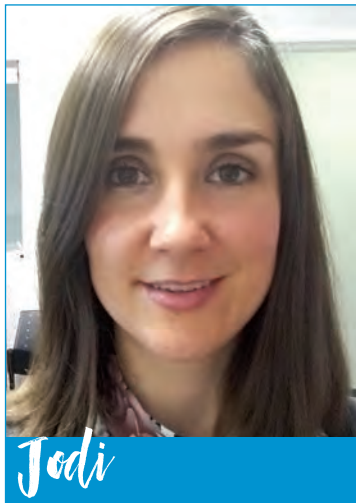
the participants. Some participated in Discovery Challenges which were outings to explore their communities in Owen Sound, Southampton, and Port Elgin.

From making slime, baking granola bars, creating bird

houses, to mini golf, swimming, and everything in between, we sure kept busy this summer.

Thanks to everyone who helped make YEP the fun filled, successful program that is was!

Let's "Shine a Light"



Jodi

In this edition of Perspectives, we would like to highlight the wonderful work of the Communication Strategy Committee. This dynamic committee has been around for more than 20 years and meets on a monthly basis to work on goals and provide education and awareness. The committee keeps the pulse on province-wide initiatives from Community Living Ontario as well as our other sister organizations from other communities. However, the primary focus is on things that involve or impact our local community.



Fely

There are 12-14 members on this committee which include representation from self-advocates, various staff teams and the leadership team.

The goals of the Communication Strategy Committee include educating the community about the work and values of the agency, championing inclusion, sharing messages of anti-bullying and freedom from harm, community building, and increasing community capacity. Their work occurs both within the agency and in our community with many different groups such as schools, work places, businesses, faith and service groups.

This committee has been critical in organizing several successful events and campaigns every year. For example, during the month of May, we celebrate Community

Living Month. Coordinating activities at this time such as "Shine a Light" and the usual barbecue at Harrison Park (pre-Covid) help to celebrate the work we do within our association as well as within our community. Chalk Your Walk with Kindness has been the most popular event initiated by this committee and it has now become an annual campaign that has

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been highlighted in the media. This event saw the community encouraged to write positive, kind and uplifting messages in chalk on their sidewalks. The goal was to demonstrate what a welcoming, inclusive and accepting community we live in and it was met with enthusiasm.

The Inspiring Possibilities Award is another very popular initiative of this committee. These awards are presented to local Grade 8 students who are chosen by their teacher and/or principal for showing leadership in promoting inclusion within their schools. They are presented each year during graduation ceremonies in local schools.

Historically, the committee has also had booths at various community events such as the PRIDE parade, Keystone Family Fun Day and the One World Festival to keep

spreading their message and continuing their work. Although COVID-19 saw some of those events paused for a time, the committee is presently preparing to participate in Pumpkinfest! Here they will be handing out kits to participants that contain supplies to make two bracelets: one to keep and one to share. The initiative is called "Bead Kind to Others!"

This committee has a lot more planned for the remainder of the year including a hopeful return to the virtual reading of inclusion themed story

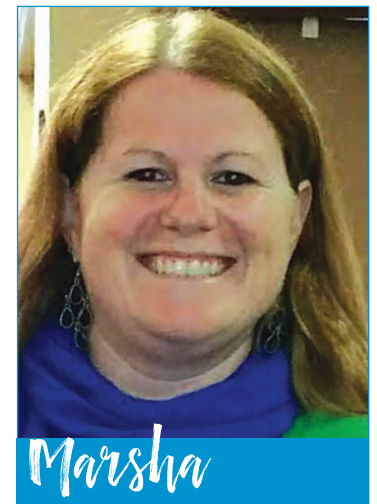
books to elementary school children. They are also working with a youth engagement group to see what ideas local youth have to promote inclusion and influence change. The Committee also plans to continue the very popular Random Acts of Kindness events. In the past, these have included collecting needed donations for community partners, issuing challenges to encourage people to be kind to others, giving out packets of wildflower seeds to "Spread the Community with Kindness" and monitoring geocache tokens. We look forward to all of the wonderful activities to come.

Thank you for all the amazing work you do!

To stay up to date with this very busy committee, follow our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/communitylivingowensound.



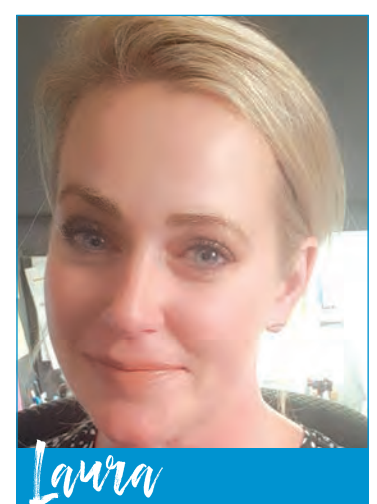
Natasha



Marsha

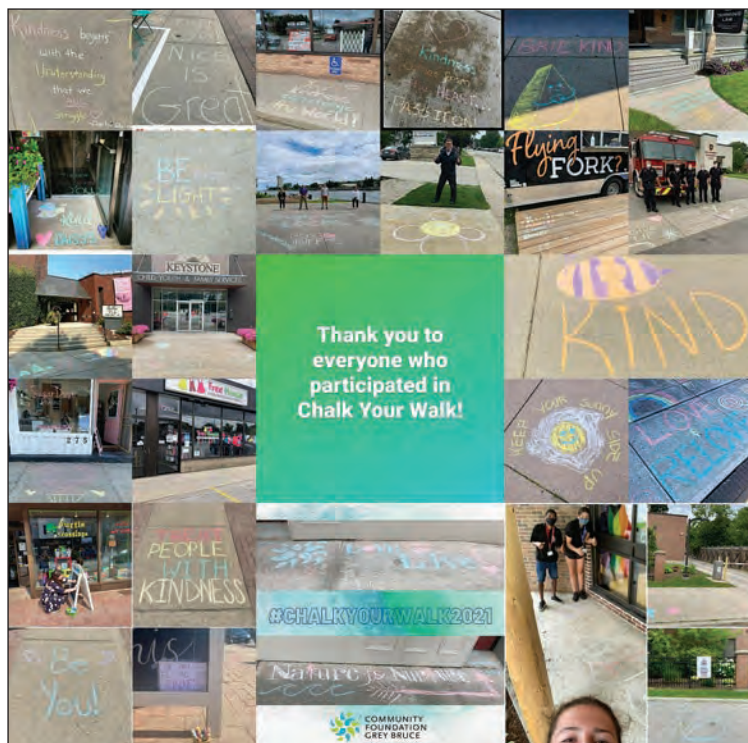


Lori



Laura

Chalk Your Walk



This July we saw the return of the Chalk Your Walk campaign. It's a week when the community is encouraged to write or draw positive messages on the sidewalk in front of their home or business.

This year Community Living gave out hundreds of chalk bundles throughout Southampton, Port Elgin, Owen Sound and the surrounding areas. Many community members expressed their excitement for the opportunity to participate in the event again which first ran in 2019. Everyone shared their appreciation for how the event brings people together to support each other in a positive and creative way.

Photos were shared to social

media using the hashtag #chalkyourwalk2021 to further the reach of each design. It is amazing how a simple act of kindness can have a profound effect on so many people.

Youth Inclusion Workshop

In August, Community Living held a virtual youth inclusion workshop to facilitate a conversation about inclusion and diversity in our community. The two-part workshop focused on five core topics: leadership, advocacy, inclusion, civic engagement, and community development.

The purpose of the workshop was to help youth find their voice and gain the skills to create positive change in their schools and

community. As a facilitator, I was amazed to hear the complex conversations between the youth and the courage of those who shared their struggles, challenges, and lived experience. The youth, which ranged from Grades 7 to 12, had some powerful observations about our community and ideas to further the inclusion narrative. It shows that youth are a very powerful and important part of our community and our future.

If you would like to be a part of any future youth inclusion initiatives, or if you would like someone to talk about inclusion with your youth group, please contact info@comlivos.on.ca.



May Murgelas



Zoey Ducharme



Angeli De Villa

Inspiring Possibilities Award — 2021 Recipients

Submitted by Fely Clarke

It has been a very challenging time for the graduating Grade 8 students to have their actual graduation ceremonies. However, the schools managed to put on these ceremonies and as a part of those ceremonies our Inspiring Possibilities

Awards were presented to a chosen student in each school. The awards were presented as follows:

- **East Ridge Community School — Sarah Yeo**
- **Alexandra Community School — Zoey Ducharme**
- **Hillcrest Elementary School — Samantha Dedrick**

- **Timothy Christian School — Maya Murgelas**
- **Notre Dame Catholic School — Angeli De Villa**

Big congratulations to all these students! Our Inspiring Possibilities Award is awarded each year to a graduating Grade 8 student who has shown respect, honesty,

empathy, competence, acceptance, appreciation, inclusion; who sees the worth of every person and who advocates for all. Each student received a \$25 cheque and 5-inch by 7-inch plaque from Community Living Owen Sound and District. Our plaques were made locally by

Barb of Trophies Two. Our Communication Strategy Committee is committed to presenting our Inspiring Possibilities Award each year and to continue to acknowledge the dedicated graduating students at our local elementary schools in Grey Bruce.

May is Community Living Month: A Celebration of Community

Submitted by Jodi Klerks

This May was a vision in blue and green as we took the time to appreciate the Community Living movement, its values, and accomplishments.

We kicked off the festivities on May 6 when Community Living Owen Sound and District offices as well as buildings across Ontario were lit up blue and green for “Shine a Light” in a unified celebration of the work we do.

The week of May 17, we gave back to the community and promoted the idea of

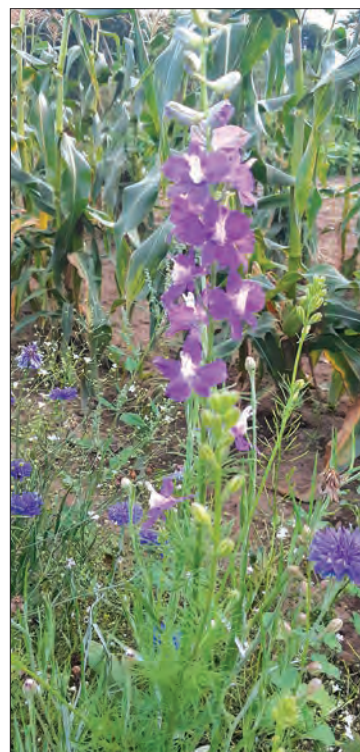
“Sprinkling Kindness like Wildflowers”, when local small businesses were given packages of wildflower seeds to include in their curbside pick-up orders. Staff of the businesses were provided with Bee Kind masks to help keep them safe while they promoted our message. On social media, the community took this opportunity to share their appreciation for connection, unity, and support for our area.

All month long, we promoted our message of inclusion to school-aged

children by joining in virtual classrooms to read books, play Spinclusion, and have discussions about kindness, friendship, and diversity.

While May is Community Living month, we continue to share our message and work with the community all year long. We look forward to more events that are planned going forward.

Thank you to the Communication Strategy Committee for all their hard work and planning to make these unique and fun events a success.



ODSP — Employment Services

We can provide support to assist adults in service with securing employment, job training, coaching, and employee/employer relations. This service is in partnership with the Ontario Disability Employment Support Program.

For more information, please contact Kim McCorkindale at (519) 371-9251 extension 415 or kmccorkindale@comlivos.on.ca.



The Link Sensory Room

By Marsha Blum

Beginning November 1, 2021, “The Link” program, formerly known as Second Avenue, will be open for business. It will be a place that provides many new and wonderful opportunities for people. One new feature we have is our own Sensory Room!

So, what is a Sensory Room? A Sensory Room is designed to provide individuals with an atmosphere that is calming, relaxing, and a safe haven to de-stress from the noise and chaos of everyday life. Individuals can exercise control over this environment by selecting items that provide them with the most peace, like relaxing music or complete quietness, sitting in a comfy chair, dimmed lights, soft projector

lights, scented aromas, and other sensory items.

In short, our Sensory Room will provide individuals with relief from anxiety, depression and over stimulation.

The Link staff are grateful to Melanie Middlebro, owner of the Rocking Horse store, who generously donated items to make our Sensory Room possible.

The room can be booked for half hour increments at no cost throughout the week. The room will be sanitized after each use.

Come and enjoy the Sensory experience! We look forward to meeting you!

Do you support someone who will benefit from a Sensory Room? Contact The Link staff at (519) 371-3644.

CANCELLATION NOTICE

Ensuring the health, safety and well-being of others, Community Living Owen Sound and District will be cancelling the Christmas Dinner and Dance again for 2021.



The Link: Change is Coming

Change — a word a lot of us don’t like, but by now are probably used to. Between redeployments, the way we shop and how we interact with people, there has been a substantial amount of change over the last 18 months.

While some of the changes haven’t been the most pleasant, we are so excited to share some of the changes happening down here at The Link, formerly referred to as Second Avenue. With our doors closed to our group activities due to COVID-19,

we decided it was the perfect time to update our program — in more ways than one!

First, we have changed our name! The Link represents what the staff here will be doing — linking participants to community resources and activities. We have also updated our space. Marty has spent many hours painting our walls to give us a fresh and updated look. We have been able to donate many items, and you will notice new decorative touches around our space.

Over the last year, since we have been unable to do group activities, we have been doing Zoom activities. Another change we were able to make is to start offering some movie nights where we head to the Galaxy Cinemas to check out a new movie! It was amazing to see everyone so excited to finally see people in person and not just a computer screen!

We are so looking forward to being able to offer more in-person opportunities. This is just the beginning!

Good News

Submitted by Stephanie McGregor

During an online visit, we were practicing movement with a little one who had made some great big changes in how he moved recently. We were working on him standing at a table, and how to pull up to standing from being on his knees. This was not something he could do yet, but was the next step in these big movements.

Our visit ended, and I

suggested they keep practicing and someday soon it will click. Not a day later I received this email:

“I just have to tell you that not even half an hour after our call, my son pulled up on the coffee table by himself.”

My response? OF COURSE HE DID!

It’s like waving a magic wand!

As well, a lot of my smiles this month have come from the responses I get from teachers and principals from

the school where we have transitioned little ones. After doing a check-in a week or two after starting, I smile getting messages about how smoothly it has gone, how well they are doing, and, “he does bring joy to our school.”

How lucky we are to have schools in our area that welcome little ones with challenges and embrace them for their spirit and the joy they bring to the school community.

Community Living Associations Consolidate Management and Administration Services

Respectfully submitted by Rosalind Brooks, president, Community Living Owen Sound and District

For the past decade, Community Living Owen Sound and District, Bruce Peninsula Association for Community Living and Community Living Walkerton and District have worked together under a Shared Executive Services partnership. Now, the boards of all three organizations are excited to announce they are expanding the partnership further.

Together they have created a new non-profit organization officially called Grey Bruce Management and

Administrative Services, but operating as Tri-Alliance Shared Services.

Initially this new not-for-profit organization will consolidate the current executive and management services of the three associations — including program management, administrative services, financial and human resources, property management, IT and communication systems services — under the new organization. At some point in the future Grey Bruce Management and Administrative Services may also offer similar services to other not-for-profit

organizations or groups.

This move will not impact front line services which each association for Community Living provides. Membership services and the board of directors functions also remain in place as they were before. The goal is to have Grey Bruce Management and Administrative Services up and running by early 2022 with Michele Bell, currently executive director of Community Living Walkerton and District and Bruce Peninsula Association for Community Living, as C.E.O.

If you have any questions you can contact me by email at President@comlivos.on.ca.

PERSPECTIVES PURPOSE:

Perspectives promotes acceptance of people with different abilities in our community. We celebrate successes and embrace new ideas, approaches and opportunities.

Editorial Team:

Lorraine St. Germain, Cathy Foster, Vicki Reevey and Heather Thomson

Photographer: Charles Cottrell **Executive Director:** Rick Hill

We encourage readers to use the newsletter for new ideas, contacts, websites and resources. Perspectives welcomes comments, contributions of articles or questions.

www.communitylivingowensound.com

When you make a financial contribution to the Foundation for Community Living Owen Sound and District, you will support the Association in achieving their mission. Consider making your donation today.

For more information and/or to make a donation, please contact the Foundation of Community Living Owen Sound and District at 519-371-9251.



COMMUNITY LIVING OWEN SOUND AND DISTRICT 2021 – 2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

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Association Membership applications are available from our office.