

COMMUNITY LIVING Owen Sound and District Perspectives



Chasing Her Dreams

Submitted by
Penny Brueckman-Stephens
and Colleen McNabb

For as long as Penny can remember, she has been surrounded by horses and has always had an interest in them. From the time she was a young child, Penny can remember going to her uncle's farm where he had racehorses.

Penny distinctly remembers becoming more involved with horses around the year 2001 when she started her riding lessons and volunteering at GRACE (Georgian Riding Association for Challenged Riders) near Owen Sound. When Penny volunteered, she would help with other individual's lessons by being a side walker, leading the horse, brushing/grooming the horse, tacking up, and cleaning the barn.

After a few years of riding

and volunteering at GRACE, Penny then started to ride at Windsong Carriage and Ranch where she spent several years helping around the farm and attending lessons. Penny played a huge role helping Windsong go to weddings, funerals, and parades with the horses.

Penny and the horses have traveled all over Ontario including Toronto, Niagara Falls, London, Kitchener and Oakville where she accompanied a horse into a mall. You may remember also seeing Penny at the Festival of Northern Lights helping to organize the horse-drawn carriage rides around Owen Sound or at the Salmon Spectacular.

More recently, Penny has connected with Dream Chasers Equestrian Centre (DCEC) in Kilsyth. With

the help of Passport, Penny's journey with DCEC started in September of 2020. When Penny started her weekly lessons at DCEC, her coach started by assessing Penny's skills and knowledge around horses. Penny's coach was amazed with the amount of experience, knowledge, and talent Penny had when it came to working with the horses.

Starting with Gator, Penny started to showcase her skills around brushing and tacking up, to asking Gator to walk and jog around the arena. It wasn't too long before Arthur then caught her eye and Penny started to ride him during her lessons. With Arthur, Penny focused on loping, groundwork (lunging), and even jumping! Since then, Penny has had the opportunity to ride several other horses including Bailey,

See 'Penny' on Page 4

Not to Brag ... But ...

Cindy

Cindy painted a beautiful Christmas tree. Thank you for sharing your art with us Cindy.



Deb

Deb worked hard doing some canning for her family and friends for Christmas. She made strawberry jam, relish, apple butter, peaches, tomato butter, apple pie filling, brownie mix, chicken noodle soup mix and two kinds of hot chocolate mixes. What lovely gifts to share with people.

Peg and Patty

Peg and Patty purchased some kits to make their own bath bombs. They both enjoyed themselves as they made them to share as Christmas gifts.



Not An Ounce of Regret...

I did not plan for a career in developmental services. The only opportunities way back in the 1970s were institutional jobs, but here I am looking back in wonder and pride at all, we together, have accomplished in the last 38 years.

I spent 21 years with my home town association in Warton before moving over to Community Living Owen Sound and District in 2004. In 1983 I was one of four employees of WDAMR. People supported were being served through ARC in Owen Sound or were in Bluewater or Midwestern Regional Services. Community Living



Owen Sound looked after our finances and payroll, this of course before desktop computers were available and the internet wasn't even a concept the Jetsons had contemplated.

Eventually staff were hired,
See 'I Cannot' on Page 3



A Man and His Music

Submitted by Vicki Reevey
Glen Eden has been playing music for over 50 years. He started playing at the age of four and now plays for his own enjoyment, but he especially enjoys playing for others.

Glen plays a variety of music, all by heart, with no music in front of him. Proficient on the keyboard, fiddle, and accordion, Glen is a natural performer. He has played here in Ontario as well as Florida at many different venues including theatres, churches, seniors' homes, festivals, on the CFOS Christmas Fund Broadcast as well as Facebook live concerts.



Glen is an avid listener of 560 CFOS and has been a part of the live CFOS Christmas Fund Broadcast from the Roxy Theatre in Owen Sound for many years. Due to COVID restrictions Glen did not participate in 2020 but was pleased to return to the broadcast this past December, the 82nd annual broadcast on 560 CFOS. Glen recorded two songs on the keyboard that were submitted and played during the broadcast.

According to Shawn Turner, Country brand manager with Bayshore Broadcasting, "the broadcast assists over 20 local charities and every year, we rely on two things to keep the broadcast going — financial

pledges and also talented local musicians, like Glen. Those musicians send in some of their best work, which we use to entertain people who are listening to the broadcast." Glen was able to be a part of this event that, according to Shawn, "was another huge success with over \$27,000 raised for 23 local charities."

Glen is also sharing his music on Facebook. With the assistance of Jackie Ralph, youth awareness and education supervisor with the Canadian Mental Health Association Grey Bruce, Glen is able to put his music out into the virtual world for others to enjoy. Jackie says it was Glen who reached out to her after hearing of the outdoor concerts she was doing at local nursing homes. She says he tracked her down and asked about doing a concert from his home. Jackie said it took her a minute to realize, "that he wanted to be the performer of that concert." Jackie has helped Glen with three concert dates on Facebook live, all of which have gotten very positive feedback from those who viewed them.

With Jackie's help, Glen has performed on his front porch and in his living room showing off his musical talents and sharing his musical journey. Jackie is hopeful that when the weather warms up Glen might be able to invite friends and neighbours around for a "true concert" on his front lawn.

When Glen plays his music for others he hopes to brighten their day just a little bit and put a smile on their faces. So, if you are lucky you might just get to see or hear an original Glen Eden concert sometime soon.

Celebrating Christmas!



From decorating the tree and canning jams and vegetables, to making their own bath bombs and visiting family, the magic of the Holiday Season was shared by many!



River House

River House is a new location in Owen Sound focusing on promoting independence, skill building, confidence building and security.

We are geared to supporting one individual at a time to reach their goal of living a

more independent lifestyle.

Participants are assisted with building skills in areas such as personal hygiene and daily household responsibilities. Activities such as cleaning, cooking, personal safety, socialization, employment and much more are focused on.

We work together with the individuals to find activities and services within Owen Sound to meet their personal needs and to connect with the many resources that they may draw upon as they move forward. Individuals are assisted to set up services such

as local banking and health care to be easily accessible.

Each individual is unique in their strengths and support needs and take an active part in not only setting goals but planning for themselves to reach their goal.



Leah, staff.



Betty Ann, staff.



Jordan, resident.



Laura, staff.



Anna, staff.



Leone Mitchell has been loving her guitar lessons that she has been taking from Long & McQuade, and is enjoying attending our local Ontario Hockey League; The Owen Sound Attack.

Passport Funding

Jan Walker and Darlene Grimoldby headed to the Roxy at Christmas time to see "A Rock'n Elvis Christmas" show.

Janet Campbell and Emily Jerome went on several adventures these past few months, including African Lion Safari and Winterfest at Canada's Wonderland!



Dan Minard getting ready to enjoy "Beckett Family New Years" at the local live theatre.



Passport Shout Out

Did you know there is an in-house Passport facilitator available to help guide you through the Passport program and answer any questions you may have?

It's true! Jackie McCartney, the Passport facilitator at Community Living Owen Sound and District, is available to assist you in learning about ways you can utilize your Passport funding to the fullest.

Don't have Passport funding yet? No problem! Connect with Jackie to learn about how you can apply!

Although this certainly hasn't been a typical year for events and activities, many people have benefited this year from their Passport funding. Some have purchased items to keep themselves busy indoors while the world around us became limited. Others have purchased sanitizers and masks to keep themselves safe while venturing out to social settings that are now opening. And recently, people have started to rejoin groups and activities they once loved prior to COVID-19.



If you have questions or would like more information, please connect with Jackie McCartney, jmccartney@comlivos.on.ca, 519-371-9251 ext. 222

'I Cannot Say Enough About the Friendships and Relationships I Have Made Over the Years'

Continued from front programs opened, people moved from institutions and I was given the job of overseeing things along with the task of managing community participation supports. That's when my formal DS education began. Fortunately for me I had good teachers in the people we supported, their families and the community as a whole.

This good fortune carried on with the executive director position with Community Living Owen Sound and District. There I learned of the benefits of having a robust, integrated set of core values ingrained in the day-to-day work along with the underlying principle of person-centred approaches. How unique and rewarding the organization's commitment to self-directed teams was, allowing staff at all levels and roles the authority to take initiative to support people and families to attain personal goals in whatever manner made sense, without someone looking over their shoulder. I also was grateful that our association offered supports not just to adults but also to families, infants and children. Building these foundational links with people at an early age is so much better than being introduced at graduation day.

When I arrived in 2004 the association was still feeling its way around the organizational changes undertaken during the

previous decade. The switch from programs to person-centered supports, adoption of self-directed teams, the creation of The Support Pool (dedicated staff group supporting people across multiple program lines). The closure of the sheltered workshop and large group home settings. We were struggling with how to ensure supports were fairly distributed throughout our large geography. I am pleased that we managed to come through all of these indecisions and questioning and came out the other side standing strong and proud.

I am confident we are over the hump on this journey to inclusion, the really hard slugging is over and now we can look forward to the momentum carrying us forward. I am confident in saying this just by watching recent graduates come to us today with the expectation of inclusion built in. This is the world our children and grandchildren grew up experiencing and the world they will expect to see in the future.

I cannot say enough about the friendships and relationships I have made over the years; supportive board members, an all-star leadership team, amazingly talented and caring group of staff, the honest and appreciative individuals we support — thank you to one and all.
Sincerely,
Rick Hill

Grey Bruce Play

Submitted by Whitney Bennett
There is a new playgroup in the area that, for now, is called Grey Bruce Play. The organizers are hoping they can create something catchier in the future. Please find to follow some information about the group as submitted by Whitney Bennett.

If you would like more information on the group, you can follow their Facebook Page at Grey Bruce Playgroup for Children with Disabilities. If you have questions for the organizers directly, they can be reached by email at greybruceplay@gmail.com.

The goal of this playgroup is to create a community of friendship and support centering around accessible and inclusive play for children with disabilities and

their families, caregivers and friends. We have managed to get together once as a group so far in October at the accessible playground, Jubilee Park, in Southampton. We had a wonderful time!

We plan to discuss future playgroup date possibilities on the Facebook group. We hope to remain outdoors if at all possible due to COVID-19. Our goal is to have a playgroup date every few months while we are just starting out. This could certainly increase in frequency if there is interest from our group members.

If playgroup numbers increase and there is interest in this development, we hope to introduce an adaptive sports league in Grey Bruce. One of the organizers of our playgroup, Jeff Virgo,

has a lot of experience with adaptive sports. He has competed in the Invictus Games, has participated in many adaptive sports events, and also sits on the board of ParaSport Ontario. We hope that children with disabilities as well as their family members and friends would enjoy trying out different adaptive sports in the area since no leagues are currently available in Grey Bruce.

At this point, the playgroup is for children and youth in Grey Bruce with all types of disabilities and neurodivergence and their families/caregivers. We have encouraged the participation of siblings and friends in the playgroup to facilitate inclusion and increase connections amongst the young participants.

PLAYGROUP

For Children and Youth with all Disabilities Living in Grey-Bruce



Come play and connect with peers, families and caregivers. This playgroup is an opportunity to develop new friendships as well as play games and sports in an inclusive and accessible environment.

Please contact Whitney to RSVP and for more info at GreyBrucePlay@gmail.com

Kindness Equality Love Inclusion Diversity

Penny Recommends Riding

Continued from front Elliot, and Misty.

Elliot is the horse that Penny mainly rides now. He is a young (seven years old) and vibrant black Percheron Cross thoroughbred horse that is 17 hands high (a hand equals 4 inches) and weighs about 1800 lbs! Together, Elliot and Penny have worked hard at skills such as barrel racing, riding both Western and English, riding bareback, navigating natural and man-made obstacles, leg yielding, posting, side passing, turning on forehand and haunches, synchronized riding, trimming hooves, and even riding bareback with no hands!

All these skills that Penny has learned has helped her to increase her knowledge



around horses and has helped her to compete recently in the Dream Chaser's Barn Show. At the show, Penny placed 2nd and 3rd twice (Elliot was the best at bobbing for apples!).

Penny is thankful for all she has been able to accomplish with her riding, including helping to train Elliot to be a lesson horse (he is still learning). Penny says riding has made her more confident and pushed her out of her comfort zone. She is always learning new things and is happy to share her knowledge with anyone who is interested. Penny recommends horseback riding to everyone. For her it is a chance to focus on the horse and forget what is going on in the outside world.

With all the skills Penny has acquired over the years, she is thrilled to be working hard with Elliot towards her goal of competing in the 2022 Equestrian Paralympics! Stay tuned... Penny hopes there is much more to come.



Pictured from left to right: Evangeline, Jacob, Andrew and Norm.

Owen Sound Self Advocates

By Evangeline Stallbohm

In the last year I have had the opportunity to join a great group of people called Sound Advocates. Sound Advocates is a group that gives a voice to people who need help finding their voice.

In December 2021 the Sound Advocates did a Christmas fundraiser event through the offices of Community Living Owen Sound and District. The fundraiser was for Chapman House, the local Hospice in Grey-Bruce. The members of the Sound Advocates made signs, donation containers, and ballots for our fundraiser. We

then distributed the donation containers around to each of the Community Living Owen Sound and District locations.

Each time a Community Living staff member made a donation they could fill out a ballot with their name and Community Living phone number. The ballots were for a gift basket that had items to make a Christmas dinner.

All the members of the Sound Advocates helped to make this fundraiser a success, from making signs and decorating donation containers, taking donation containers around to each Community

Living location, putting together the gift basket, going to the bank or collecting all the donations and helping to count them up.

At our last meeting in December, we counted up the donations and picked a winner of the gift basket. In total we raised \$115 for Chapman House. The winner of the Christmas dinner gift basket was Community Living staff member Stephanie.

The Sound Advocates Christmas Fundraiser 2021 for The Chapman House was a success. Thank you to all who took part and donated to a great cause.

From the Desks of the Family Support Team —Transitioning to Adult Services

Transitioning to adult services is a process that benefits greatly from advanced planning and preparation. It is important to consider that your child is essentially moving from a system of entitlement (the public education system) to a system of limited and finite resources (adult developmental services).

Upon turning 18, children's services such as Special Services at Home, Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities or services through the Ontario Autism Program end.

There are different supports and services available to a person over the age of 18 such as the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) and services through Developmental Services Ontario (DSO) including Passport funding. To be considered for adult

developmental services you must apply to DSO to determine eligibility. ODSP also requires an application process to determine eligibility.

When can I apply? To reduce the service gap between children and adult services, you should start the DSO application process early and apply at age 16. With all of the correct documents, you can be confirmed eligible for adult developmental services at age 16, however, the services will not start until age 18 (at the earliest). While your son or daughter might be eligible for service in the adult system, they may be on a waiting list for some time.

In order to help make these application processes go more smoothly some foundational work or documentation will be required. A recommended timeline is provided below.

KEY TIMELINES:

By Age 11

- Apply for your dependant's Canadian Passport. (It's easier as a child's signature is not required until age 12).

Age 12-16

- Open a bank account for your child, if you haven't already done so.
- Ensure legal documentation for identification is in place (birth certificate, health card, Social Insurance Number (your child needs a SIN if you plan to open an RDSP).
- Explore having a psychological assessment completed or whether an updated assessment may be required for your child.
- Start your planning processes to exit from secondary school. Involve your family support worker and others helpful to this process.

- Encourage community-based job training (co-op programs) and life skills if these are appropriate activities for your child. Involve your child in all decision-making.

- Apply for an Ontario Photo Card at Service Ontario. This is a government-issued photo identification card for Ontarians who do not drive.
- Contact DSO Southwest Region at 1-855-437-6797 for intake and confirmation of eligibility — you will need documentation confirming age, Ontario residency, and a psychological assessment. Your family support worker can assist you with this process.

Age 17-21

- Begin thinking about health care services that need to change as your child reaches adulthood, i.e., changing from pediatrician to family doctor.

- Contact ODSP to apply for Income Support before age 18 (six to three months before turning 18).

The adult developmental service system is complex with many people accessing the services that are currently available and many waiting for supports. The most successful transitions occur when planning starts early and when the youth, their family, the school and service providers work together to develop a plan for the future. It's never too early to start planning.

Transition planning is not an easy task and it is likely to be overwhelming at times, but you do not have to face it alone.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to your family support worker with any questions or if you require assistance in navigating all that is involved in transitioning to adult services.

PERSPECTIVES PURPOSE:

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

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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.



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Association Membership applications are available from our office.