

Consider Yourself At Home

This season, at the Stratford Shakespearean Festival of Canada, thousands have enjoyed the inspiring music of “Oliver” and the stage story which is based on Charles Dickens’ novel, “Oliver Twist”. One of the songs which seems to set everyone’s toes to tapping is Lionel Bart’s wonderful composition, “Consider Yourself at Home”. This song surely shares feelings similar to those which are often expressed by the Board and administration of Tri-County Mennonite Homes as they welcome new residents and individuals they will support and as they continue to engage those who have been with us for many months and even many years.

The Province of Ontario wants our facilities to be “home-like”. We all know that there is only one way that this can truly happen within Aldaview Services’ Residences, Greenwood Court or Nithview Community. We believe that a home is much more than bricks and administrative mortar; more than food in the fridge and more than fine furniture. A home is created by a caring community created by conscientious careful compassion and commitment and plain old hard work. It’s a place where people share another. And none of this is easy.



Coffee in the Greenwood Café

The reality is that making a facility a “home” can only happen when the people who work on the front lines make it happen. This is why the mission statement of Tri-County Mennonite Homes states the belief that staff members are integral to the services we provide. As staff members share their lives with residents and supported individuals, our various facilities in fact become homes.

But sharing one’s life is no easy task. It’s tough to be a real person for each resident and each supported individual, day in and day out. It’s difficult to share others’ sorrows and frustrations. It’s draining to ride the emotional roller-coasters of great joy and deep depression which occur on a daily basis. Staff often have their own roller-coasters which they must try to override and set aside in order to serve others.

(Continued on page 2)

Inside this issue:

Consider Yourself at Home <i>Submitted by:</i> John Patterson Pastoral Care Coordinator Greenwood Court	1
Nithview’s Snoezelen Room <i>Submitted By:</i> Brent Martin Administrator Nithview Community	2
When One Door Closes, Another One Opens <i>Submitted By:</i> Sherry Kerr Administrator Aldaview Services	3
Tavistock Update <i>Submitted By:</i> Glenn Zehr Board Member Tri-County Mennonite Homes	4
New Faces	4

Up-Coming Events

Aldaview’s Annual Pork BBQ September 10 th , 11:30 to 1:30 New Hamburg Community Centre
Annual General Meeting September 26 th at 7:30 pm East Zorra Mennonite Church

Contact Us

Tri-County Mennonite Homes
(519)662-2718
200 Boullee Street
New Hamburg, ON N3A 2K4

Visit us on the WEB at
www.tcmhomes.com

Nithview's Snoezelen Room

Imagine being in a room with coloured lights and images dancing across the wall, the sounds of the sea playing in the background and the smell of lavender in the air. Nithview residents are now able to enjoy these experiences in our new Snoezelen Room.



A resident enjoying Nithview's Snoezelen room

"Snoezelen" is the term used to describe an environmental intervention, designed to stimulate the primary senses of touch, hearing, sight, smell and taste. Nithview's Snoezelen Room features a bubble tube, fibre optic lights, a water fountain, a rotating projector, aromatherapy and music.

Snoezelen therapy can be both stimulating and soothing for people who suffer from Alzheimer's disease, related dementias or other limiting conditions. Intellectual reasoning is not necessary to benefit from the room.

Participants experience self-control, autonomous discovery and exploration. These achievements overcome inhibitions, enhance self-esteem and reduce tension. When residents are free from the

pressure to perform, they have no limitations and are able to react and respond in their own way, giving them a sense of self, once again.

To truly understand Snoezelen, we must place ourselves in the world of the sensory impaired. They may be unable to see, speak, move, comprehend, relate, control, or make choices. Their world can be narrow and confined.

It is difficult to perceive the extraordinary amount of stimulation bombarding our every pore. Recent studies have noted that the average person touches 300 surfaces every thirty minutes, compared to a person with dementia who may only touch 1-3 surfaces in the same period of time

Research has shown that multi-sensory environments offer a wealth of benefits, often affording the participant and caregiver an opportunity to improve communication, enhance their understanding of each other and build trust.

Snoezelen Therapy can be beneficial to everyone, providing a place to de-stress and relax! It is a wonderful experience to enjoy and share....a place that replenishes the spirit!

We sincerely thank the Nithview Auxiliary for sponsoring this exciting project.

(Continued from page 1)

In a home, people want to be treated with dignity and respect. Each day our staff demonstrate what this looks like as they provide speedy responses to calls for assistance, as they work with residents and people they support using a pleasant tone of voice, with clearly spoken phrases and a warm smile and as they take time to listen. Whether it's personal care that is being offered, food that is being prepared and served, medication that is being administered, living space that is being kept spotless or an activity that is being provided, staff are striving to bring healing peace, positive feelings and helpful comfort, because that's what happens in a home.

Our staff work hard to be compassionate to our residents and supported individuals and also to those people who are important to them, their families and friends. Our staff show a great deal of creativity sharing their personal interests as they apply their professional skills. Why do they do this? Why not simply provide basic care? The answer surely lies in their belief that a home must include generous measures of friendliness and love. Our staff work hard to help our residents and supported individuals "do" for themselves, as much as is possible. That includes allowing residents and clients to participate in making decisions about their own welfare, with appropriate encouragement and assistance, because that's what happens in a home.

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

Our staff strive to promote wellness, to prevent illness and to encourage self-care. Our staff give the highest priority to the health, safety and well-being of the people they watch over and care for. A home must first of all be a place of safety but a home must also be a place of comfort and refreshment, of relaxation and enjoyment. This, too, is part of the challenge which our staff address on an hourly basis. Our staff do not hesitate to communicate on behalf of our residents and clients. They communicate confidentially with colleagues to ensure that no need goes unmet. They advocate on behalf of residents and clients, with team leaders, families, home church pastors and volunteers because that's what happens in a home.

Rooted in faith, Tri-County Mennonite Homes provides leadership in service to seniors and developmentally disabled individuals by dedicated staff and volunteers.

This is our mission statement. It arises from a number of teachings of Jesus Christ, including the following:

“I am among you as one who serves.” (Luke 22:27)

“Whatever you did for one of the least of these, you did for me.” (Matt. 25:40)

Our staff members are integral to the services we provide and they live out the mission of Tri-County Mennonite Homes, in practical terms. Hour by hour and day by day, our staff members share their lives with residents and clients. As they carry out the task of creating a caring community, they continually demonstrate their dedication, commitment and skill. Perhaps some of them are quietly humming that tune from “Oliver” - “Consider Yourself At Home”.

When One Door Closes, Another Opens!

Aldaview continues to work at its redevelopment plan which, when complete will provide three new purpose-built accessible homes to match the physical needs of the individuals currently supported. Fulfilling this dream has brought many challenges as well as created new opportunities.

While the Riehl Home, completed in 2005, is meeting the needs of its residents very well, building the other two homes has been more challenging. Lack of funding and affordable building lots and aging buildings has forced Aldaview to deviate from its original plan. Instead of building its second new home to replace the aging house on Waterloo St., a nine-year old home on 70 Ritz Crescent was purchased. Even though this is seen as an interim measure, having this newer home provides the opportunity to better support the current people and to welcome another young man into Aldaview's program.

Just as the ‘for sale’ sign was going up at 140 Waterloo Street, the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) approached Aldaview to assist with a crisis situation. Through negotiation, MCSS agreed to provide capital funds to pay for the necessary upgrades at 140 Waterloo St. so that Aldaview can offer a much needed home to four new young adults requiring placement. The upgrades will create pleasant surroundings for the new residents but will not eliminate the narrow stairs, doors and hallways. These changes necessitated moving 8 of our current people with four of them now claiming they live at the “Ritz”.

For the long term, Aldaview must continue on with its plan to build more new homes that are totally accessible and meet the ever changing needs of the people it supports. Together, we can make the dream of appropriate accommodation for these individuals a reality. Thank you for your continued support through the Commitment to Care Campaign and other fundraising events.



New Home on Ritz Crescent

Tavistock Update

Tri-County Mennonite Homes' (TCMH) Tavistock Project received a rude jolt in May when the consultant estimated that the total cost for the new facility would be close to \$18 million - \$3.5 million higher than the projected costs that TCMH was working with. Construction costs were now estimated at \$1 million higher and the site costs were estimated at \$2 million over budget.

At a specially-called meeting on June 6th, the Board discussed the dilemma and appointed an Ad Hoc Committee to ensure the project's success. The Ad Hoc Committee, in quick succession, met with the key stakeholders. Their first meeting was with a representative from the Ministry of Health & Long Term Care, which resulted in the prompt receipt of a letter from David Clarke, Director of Long Term Care Planning and Renewal, promising a one-year extension for the project. Next, the Ad Hoc Committee met with the representative of the present Bonnie Brae owners and was assured of their cooperation. Their third meeting was with the Project Partners (YMCA, Oxford County Library and VON Oxford) who agreed to continue to work at finding a common solution. Following this, a meeting was held with the Bonnie Brae management team and project committee volunteers to inform them of the situation and to seek their counsel on the strategies and plans that the Ad Hoc Committee was proposing.

The Project Design Team met on July 13th to consider all options for moving this project forward. At the July 20th TCMH Board meeting, the Ad Hoc Committee was affirmed and encouraged to proceed with their strategy. The Board approved a Vision Statement and Plan for the Tavistock Project and took action, asking for more detailed architectural drawings to obtain clearer construction and site plan costs.

The Ad Hoc Committee plans to meet with the local Members of Provincial Parliament, the councils and staff of the Township of East Zorra Tavistock and Oxford County, to seek their support in getting this project back on track.

Robert Veitch, TCMH Executive Director, reports that, in spite of the detour, everyone remains optimistic the project will go ahead. "Never did we expect this venture to be easy, but I remain confident that, with the community's continued support, the project will move forward."

Bonnie Brae Administrator, Joyce Penney, reports that although everyone at Bonnie Brae is disappointed, the staff and residents are managing an optimistic outlook for the future. "I know Tri-County is doing everything they can," she said, "and there is such a need in Oxford County. We all have long waiting lists."



Sandra Wallage,
Administrative Assistant

Aldaview Services is pleased to introduce **Sandra Wallage** as Aldaview's new Administrative Assistant. Sandra has been hired on a part time basis. Her office is located at the Peel Street location and can be reached at 519-662-3297. Sandra's past work experience has been with Challenger Motor Freight, Colonial Cookies, and Toyota. Sandra is married, has 2 children, 5 grandchildren and will be moving from New Dundee to Kitchener in the near future.

Sandra is a wonderful addition to the Aldaview team. She basically had to jump right in as she joined us at a time when several new changes and challenges were underway. Welcome Sandra!!

Keith Heimpel, CFO

Tri-County Mennonite Homes is pleased to introduce **Keith Heimpel** as TCMH's Director of Finance. Keith is a Certified Management Accountant who has served as CFO in the manufacturing sector and for the last 7 years as the Director of Corporate Services for Notre Dame of St. Agatha. Notre Dame is a not-for-profit service agency serving children with mental health issues. He also has some experience with the Ministry of Housing through a volunteer position he held. Keith began his work here on April 17th. Welcome Keith!!

