



connected

SPRING 2020

What is Connected?

A Celebration of the CLH Community

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welcome

We are delighted to share with you this inaugural issue of *Connected*. With stories that highlight the positive impact of your support, we hope you will enjoy learning more about current initiatives which are providing enriching opportunities for the individuals served by CLH Developmental Support Services. Thank you for being part of our CLH community!



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

I am writing to you during a remarkably different time, and I hope this finds you well. These unusual times are challenging for us all, and for CLH Developmental Support Services and the individuals they serve. Everyday routines, leisure activities, work, community programs, visits with family and friends have all changed drastically, and these changes can be difficult to adjust to – and that impact is certainly felt by the people supported by CLH.

Yet among so many changes, so much remains the same: the need to provide high quality, continuous care for the people supported, even in the most challenging times. This has required a creative and innovative approach to identify opportunities to design and deliver programming in the residential locations that would typically exist outside of those homes, in addition to the continued provision of personal care. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the dedicated work of the direct support professionals who continue to provide the gold standard of care during this crisis:

your caring commitment is remarkable – and inspiring. We thank you for all you do, and we are proud to be your partners in enhancing the daily activities for the people you support.

We've not yet seen the end of these changes, and so it informs the way we continue to move forward. In the short term, CLH Foundation remains focused on supporting inclusive, inspiring (and fun!) opportunities for supported individuals in their homes – ways to stay engaged and connected to the people, places, and activities that are most loved.

In the longer term, we will continue to remain focused on identifying partnerships and directing critical funds to support the broader programming and the important work of CLH Developmental Support Services.

In closing, I would like to thank our donors and partners for their generous support. As always, our supporters have pulled together as a vast and diverse collective, with a common goal for good. You have demonstrated the power of 'community', and your support means everything to us.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sarah Kitchen'.

Sarah Kitchen
President
CLH Foundation Board of Directors

staying connected:

VIRTUAL DAY PROGRAM



above & beyond

When the individuals we support need help in some way, this community never hesitates. While we battle the additional challenges presented by the pandemic, this has never been more true. Thank you!

Maurice's Valu-Mart
Civitan Club of Midland
Silver Bridge Vapes | Chrissy Robertson
Gail Dumais
Whitney Faragher
Huron Historical Parks | Mary Mandley
Upper Grand District School Board
Pauline Loo | Simcoe District Health Unit
Service Master of Midland/Ontario
Cameron's Renovations
First for Safety
Motion Specialties | Jody Snider
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Sue Charlebois and Frances Fuller
Theresa Trace
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Fresh by Leanne | Leanne George
Dr. Rasmussen
Michelle LaFraugh
Dr. McCann
Jennifer Pauzé
Janine Jones

Early on, to minimize the impact of COVID-19 on the CLH community, CLH Developmental Support Services closed programs at our Olive Street location and eliminated non-essential visits at CLH residential locations. The effect on those we serve is significant: not being able to see friends and family in person or attend much-loved programs and workplaces has been a difficult adjustment for many. Direct support staff quickly adapted to the "new normal", going above and beyond in their service to CLH-supported individuals.

One impactful new initiative created in immediate response to the changes is the "Virtual Day Program", with daily scheduled "group activities", online workshops, virtual museum visits, yoga class, lockdown dance parties, online bingo, special guest instructors and more. To ensure connectivity, iPads were sourced and supplied to each house to help individuals engage in the virtual program, as well as visually communicate and connect with family and friends. Individuals who live at home with family were also invited to participate and included in the weekly program schedule emails and updates. Quickly embraced by all, the program is successfully keeping supported individuals engaged while safely at home. We use CLH Facebook pages to share outcomes and updates, and the response to the posts and photographs

there from the extended CLH community are positively uplifting.

CLH Foundation saw an opportunity to further support this virtual program, and assembled supplies for weekly activities that everyone could enjoy together, including arts and crafts, cupcake baking, window decorating, and mini greenhouse planting. Six bags of goodies were delivered to the doorstep of every one of our CLH residential and host family homes, and these have added greatly to the program's success. A #CommunityStrong window-decorating challenge was made by one of our residential locations to all the others, leading to a demonstration of creativity and community spirit – and a Papa's Pizza dinner for every participating home, sponsored by CLH Foundation. At Easter, with CLH Foundation support, Grounded Coffee Company cookie decorating kits made their way to all of the residences as well as to our Host Family homes.



Support Our Virtual Program

Help keep our supported individuals engaged through special programs like this one. Your financial support of CLH Foundation will be put to work right away, and make a positive impact every day. Please consider making a donation today.

Online: www.clhmidland.on.ca/donate or by phone:

Sue-Ellen Boyes at 705-526-4253 x 225

In line with our mandate to provide enriched opportunities for supported individuals, CLH Foundation will continue to actively gather resources and find ways to support this virtually wonderful program for as long as it is needed. As donors, sponsors and community partners, thank you for your part in making this support possible.



A SOCIAL, LEARNING + GATHERING PLACE FOR TAY YOUTH

RBC FUTURE LAUNCH + HURONIA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION PROVIDE \$5000 COMMUNITY CHALLENGE GRANT

One area of special focus for CLH Developmental Support Services is the Transitional Aged Youth (TAY) program. It serves young people ages 14 to 21 who have developmental support needs and are attending high school. We work closely with them as well as their families and teachers to support their successful progression to graduation. For TAY youth, these are important and exciting years, but they can be hard to navigate, too.

A new initiative made possible by financial support from RBC Future Launch and Huronia Community Foundation will provide a gathering place for TAY youth, combining a social outlet with a non-school environment in which to learn, gain skills and strengthen social connection.

“I’ve learned about equal rights for people with disabilities and how everyone should be included” - Elizabeth

“The Social, Gathering and Learning Place” at our Olive St. location, with space especially set aside, designed and furnished to be youth-friendly, will draw on the expertise of local health, education, employment, business and other partners for programming. By providing these learning opportunities we can help develop self-confidence, self-esteem, healthy habits, understanding of the value of working, how to budget, how to keep safe online and in the community. In other

words, help prepare TAY youth to go forward confidently into adulthood with a plan and the tools to succeed.

To support TAY leadership development, CLH Foundation provided funding for members of the TAY Youth Council to attend two-day training workshops late last fall. Organized by Community Living Ontario, *Re: Action4Inclusion* made a big impact on each participant. Their goal now as leaders is to inspire others like them to prepare for the future, to learn what it takes and what they need to be successful in their lives.

We are grateful to RBC Future Launch and Huronia Community Foundation for helping us set a positive direction and make a difference in the lives of TAY youth. With the establishment of “The Social, Gathering and Learning Place”, these terrific young people will be well supported in their journey to successful adulthood.



TRULY A COMMUNITY GARDEN



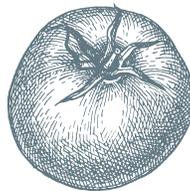
Carole and Rick Coutts' farm is a much-loved destination for supported members of the CLH community. Visits to the farm first began when David Coutts, a CLH staff member, asked his parents if he could bring people out for a visit – to feed the horses, pick rhubarb and apples, work in the garden and walk the property. From those visits, interest grew in creating and tending their own "CLH" garden. Rick very kindly rototilled a sizeable garden plot and the gardeners got to work! This summer will be the 4th year of the CLH garden. Typical crops include carrots, tomatoes, bell peppers and onions, with space set aside for beautiful sunflowers.

With the help of CLH staff member Carol Cadeau, who is so committed to this project's success, the gardeners learn how to plant and care for the produce they work with, and at harvest time, work on developing their cooking skills. They use their produce and share with everyone.

Rick enjoys providing a place for people to be able to enjoy fresh air and see everything growing. And he loves to see the property being so well utilized and enjoyed. Carole sees the positive impact of the CLH gardeners through her grandchildren who sometimes come and work alongside: "It enhances my grandchildren's lives, because they and we live in such a narrow world. No matter who we are, and where we are from, we all need to be part of a community – if we have it, life is so much better."

Thoughts from "Head Gardener" Carol Cadeau

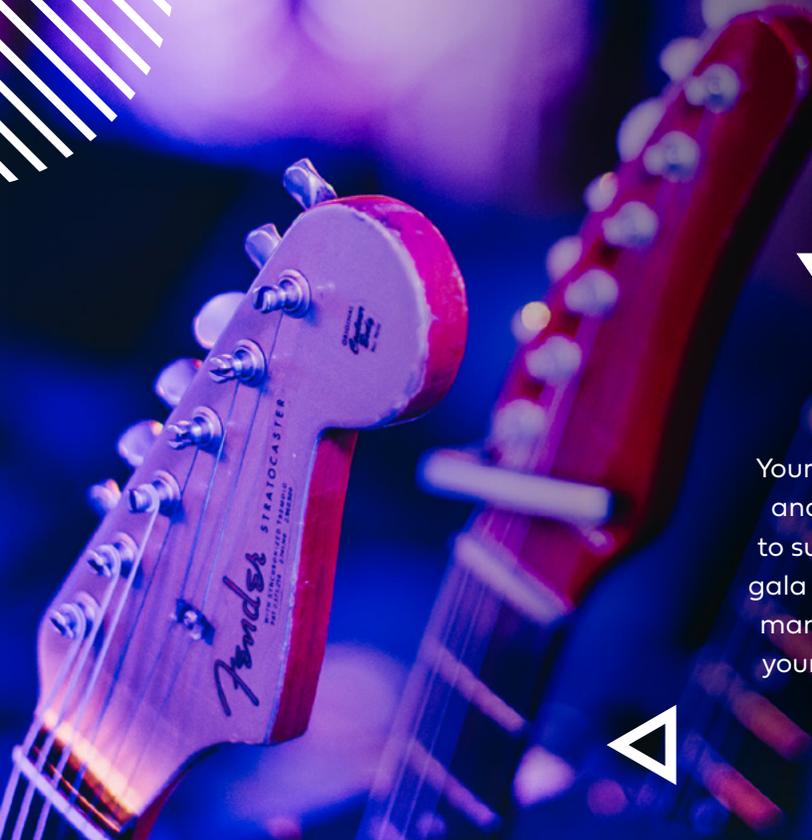
To have the opportunity to participate in growing vegetables at a local farm goes beyond words. I believe it is very important to have a relationship with the earth and the food we consume. There were many aspects of farm life that we enjoyed, whether it was packing carrots to feed Katie and Burt the horses, or stopping off to bring Smudge the dog along. Dr. and Mrs. Coutts fondly welcomed all and offered their personal touch and expertise. Our primary focus was to grow a salsa garden. It was successful, with sampling done at the "CLH Hoe Down" in November. We learned many lessons: the work was hard but we enjoyed the eating and sharing of our crops.



A Greenhouse at Olive Street

With generous support from a CLH community parent and "Tay Men Give", a companion project is underway to build a greenhouse and bring the benefits of gardening to youth who participate in our TAY (Transitional Aged Youth) program. The Greenhouse will be a hands-on space for skill-building, teaching the benefits of gardening and the joy of nurturing a plant from seed to harvest. Working with soil, seeds, plants and each other builds well-being, advances social skills, creativity and reduces stress! The greenhouse will extend the growing season and engage those who may not venture to Coutts Farm or prefer to stay close to "home". Our future goals include being able to supply food to other members of the CLH community. The Greenhouse will be installed and put to use this summer.





the impact of **YOUR GALA SUPPORT**

Your generosity as gala guests, sponsors, auction bidders and donors raised more than **\$54,000** and is helping to sustain an engaging community of support. This year's gala theme of "Community" has been demonstrated in so many meaningful ways over these past few weeks – with your help, CLH's supported individuals continue to thrive.



A Red Carpet Evening

THANK YOU!

Thank you to each one of our sponsors, donors and guests for making *A Red Carpet Evening* a success! Your generous support will enrich programs for hundreds of children, youth, families and adults across Simcoe County who are supported by **CLH Developmental Support Services**. Thank you for your partnership in our mission to *Support, Include, Empower*.



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Thank you to our generous auction donors

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Thank you also to these "Shining Lights" of A Red Carpet Evening

Master of Ceremonies Scott Warnock, Auctioneer Graydon Oldfield, Kevin and Cathy York, The Library Restaurant, Quality Inn and Conference Centre, North Simcoe Signs, Event Partners Casamigos + Feast Catering & Events, Collaborative Haus Marketing, Ashen White Audio/Visual Executives, Colin James and team, The Feldman Agency, Kevin Cascagnette Photography, Blacklight Security, Clara's Creations, Walkers Electric, CLH Coat Check Team: Alex Moreau, Francois Desroches, Jennifer Simms and Cody Simpson, Bourgeois Nissan Shuttle, Midland Copy Shoppe, Move Mobility

A Red Carpet Evening Gala Committee 2020

Sarah Kitchen (Chair) • Sarah Wilcox • Sue Charlebois • Amanda Rouleau • Colleen Kelly • Vanessa Dorion • Dave Sibley • Leanne George





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Cover: Thank you to (L to R) Nicholas, Aaron, Stephanie and Amanda for agreeing to be photographed for the first-ever issue of *Connected*. Photo by Kevin Cascagnette.