



SPEAK OUT

A Newsletter for our Community

SUMMER 2020

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Have you been Ninja'd?

During this difficult time of quarantine, no visitors, and cancelled activities, a positive new trend has appeared throughout PHSS: NINJA-ing!

What is that, you ask?

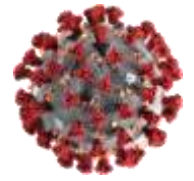
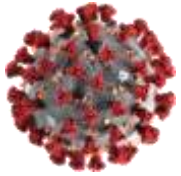
The trend of ninja-ing is leaving a gift at the door of someone's house, knocking /ringing the doorbell, and disappearing (like a ninja). It is supposed to be an anonymous gift, left to brighten someone's day, and hope fully they will pass it on.



It started at the end of May, when the ladies at Wistow decided to put together "Kindness Bags" to spread some love and kindness by ninja-ing 6 other PHSS locations. Then, it spread quickly and before we knew it, more than 25 locations had been ninja'd with kindness!

What a beautiful (and COVID-friendly) way to connect with others, brighten someone's day, and just spread some positivity in this world!

Check out page 6 for more pictures!



COVID CORNER

Birthdays... Baking... Video Chats... New Skills... NINJA-ing...
A lot has been happening over the last 4 months! #Quarantine Life





A BIG shout out to **All PHSS Staff!**

Being an essential employee comes with risk and exposure, and we appreciate the sacrifices you are making to do everything possible to maintain high quality supports for the people we serve.

Routines have changed, so staff have had to be extremely creative with activities in the persons' homes, and our staff have truly stepped up to the challenge.

Families have appreciated the pictures and video chats—thank you for everything you have been doing and continue to do!

WE ♥ OUR STAFF

We have said it time and time again, and will never stop! Thank you to all our staff for everything you do! Whether you work in a location, the office, or a family home, the work you do makes a difference in the lives of the people we support. Thank you for your hard work and dedication!



Staff Appreciation took place on July 8th with a TOTALLY 80's theme! Senior Coordinators visited their locations with appreciation gifts for their teams, dressed in their best 80's gear! Also to celebrate, the office hosted a fun drive-thru option for people to get an additional gift, enter to win a day off with pay, and enjoy some breakfast treats or cotton candy. Special thanks to Hannah for helping us that day, and for running a couple ZOOM-ba sessions!



People of PHSS—Barb Gillham

Inspired by the Humans of New York stories, we want to introduce the people we support in a new campaign called People of PHSS! Everyone has their own story, their own personality, and we want to share their unique perspectives. We're going to kick it off by introducing a fun and loveable lady:



Barb Gillham

If you think that Barb's got a little bit of a mischievous look in her eye, you might just be right! People who know her will tell you that she can be spontaneous and a little wild and crazy, in the best of ways!

Barb loves to dance, and getting out to socialize and help others out is really important to her. Those are the things she misses most and looks forward to getting back to: seeing her friends and family, helping out with her volunteer job at Anova, and dancing with her tribe.

Even in this time of COVID-19 distancing, she's the first to tell you: *"Life isn't about waiting for the storm to pass, but learning to dance in the rain!"*

Each week, we will post a "People of PHSS" story on our social media so you can get to know the people we support! Be sure to Like us on Facebook: **PHSS—Medical & Complex Care in Community** or **@PHSScommunity** on Instagram and Twitter. **#ValuedPeopleValuedLives**



Make a Green Choice!

Sign up at www.PHSScommunity.com to receive our newsletter straight to your inbox.



Make Every Day Awesome



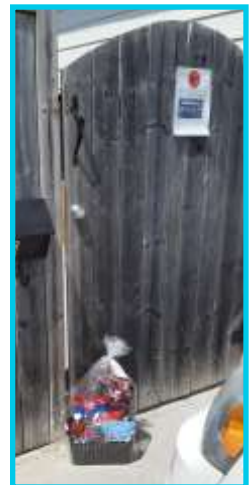
That's the mantra that our Creston team has!

By really diving into the interests of the people supported, the team is devoted to making every day awesome with meaningful moments.

Stormy day outside? They turned their living room into a movie theatre, and had a whole house movie night! Everybody curled up nice and cozy in their own recliners with popcorn and treats! Everyone also takes turns selecting the movie for their movie nights.

Angel likes to try new recipes, and is sharing that passion with the agency in the PHSS The Social Facebook group! Each week, she does a live video so that people can follow along with her and share her passion!

Pictured above is her Berry Bliss Cheesecake. **Delicious!!** Watch for more recipes!





DONOR SPOTLIGHT



Elizabeth Leighton

What is your connection to PHSS/ how did you come to be involved?

I have known Brian Dunne for fifty years—that should say it all for how I came to be involved! I remember when PHSS was just starting with visits to institutional settings to meet people who might be interested in living differently, in a home of one's own.

For a long time, I was a Board Member for PHSS and helped as I could, because this organization had become a group of people who found a great deal of camaraderie and satisfaction in just being and working together: a PHSS Family.

Eventually, the idea of a foundation was floated, and I became the first President of the Foundation. I also coined the "Laudable Londoners" title for the annual celebration of more believers and contributors to London's growing status as a place where good people gathered and cared for one another.

“Donating monthly and using my credit card is a painless and simple way to make a contribution. I enjoy the newsletters, and the stories of the people who are being helped by my small contribution.”

Why did you choose to become a monthly donor?

I moved to the Maritimes, which meant that I could no longer be such an active participant, and so a monetary contribution seemed appropriate for me.

I think of the Sunday bowling each year, as it seemed always to fall on my birthday - and was great fun, with something for everyone, creating a great family spirit for everyone involved. The continuous growth of PHSS has been great for those who, with their families, have found new life in the houses supported by PHSS. I am proud to help PHSS Foundation in my own small way, and a monthly donation is the best way for me to show my support.

BECOME A PHSS PARTNER!

Why consider donating monthly?

1. It's easier to budget a smaller amount given regularly
2. It's convenient—no need to continuously go online or send a cheque to donate
3. You won't forget—no need to set a reminder for your year end giving
4. You can make an ongoing impact on people's lives

**Simply visit our website at
www.PHSScommunity.com and click on “Donate”**

All donations help individuals with complex medical, physical, and/ or developmental needs to achieve their full potential in the community. On behalf of all the staff, families, friends, and more than 250 people we support – THANK YOU!



EVENT UPDATES



2020 Summer Games

When: August 17-21

Where: Online

The Bowl-a-thon looks a little different this year, but we want to keep the spirit of fun and competition. Register a team, collect pledges, and have fun! Details on the next page!



Annual General Meeting

When: August 13, 2020 2-4 PM

Where: Online via Zoom

Join us for the Annual General Meeting via Zoom! We will have karaoke with Ryan and friends, the board meeting, and trivia!

Meeting ID: 269 204 8903

Password: PHSS



21st Annual Salute to Laudable Londoners

When: October (date TBD)

Where: Online via Zoom

Join us for a lovely, relaxed evening as we honour Graham Porter and Marlene McGrath for their many contributions to the London community! Event and information about the honourees will be available on our website.



19th Annual Leo Kirwin Memorial Golf Tournament

Unfortunately due to the pandemic and its effects on individuals and businesses we work with, we have made the decision to cancel this year's event. We want to thank our past participants and East Park for their support, and will see you next year!

For more information about PHSS and Foundation events, please visit our website: www.PHSScommunity.com or contact Amanda Bartlett-Hindley at amandab@phsscommunity.com

Let's Get Social!

Get the latest updates and information on our social media!!





A Message to our Supporters

As you know, these are uncertain and challenging times, and we sincerely hope that you are safe and healthy, and continue to follow the recommendations set out by our public health and government leaders.

“Do not let us speak of darker days; let us speak rather of sterner days. These are not dark days: these are great days – the greatest days our country has ever lived.” – Winston Churchill

We are inspired by Winston Churchill’s words, who brought his people and country together in a time of crisis. Instead of focusing on the negative reality of the situation, he chose to focus on the strength of people banding together during times of need and supporting one another; this is exactly what our community is doing now, and we cannot thank you enough.

We are grateful to have:

- **Phenomenal frontline staff members**, who continue to make arrangements with their families so they can focus on the health and wellbeing of the people we support
- **Flexible administrative staff**, who adapt to the changing needs of the organization and ensure that our staff and leadership are supported
- **Strong leadership**, who manage and communicate the constant updates and changes with COVID-19, and ensure the safety of our staff and people supported
- **Supportive families**, who appreciate the precautions we are taking to protect their loved one’s safety
- **Dedicated donors**, many of whom strongly believe in our mission and want to see us continue to enrich the lives of the people we support

We cannot thank you enough.

At times like these, we realize the true impact that donor support has to bring people together. Your gift ensures that the people we support will have access to participate in community activities, and the ability to bring people together once the crisis subsides. Together, we will get through this.

Thank you for everything you do for us, the people we support, and the community. We wish you health and happiness! Please continue to follow our website and Facebook page for up-to-date information.

Would you consider an online donation to show your support?

Payments can be made by credit card, Interac or Paypal on CanadaHelps.org’s secure online system. Online donations can also be designated in honour or memory.

Simply visit our website at www.PHSScommunity.com and click on “Donate”

You will be given the option to give a one-time donation or to arrange monthly contributions.

Donations may also be made via cheque payable to:

PHSS Foundation
620 Colborne Street, Suite 101
London, Ontario N6B 3R9

Welcome to PHSS Foundation's
Summer Games
 August 17-21, 2020



Register your team and collect pledges to compete in daily challenges,
 and enter for the chance to win prizes!

<https://participationhouse.akaraisin.com/PHSSGames2020>

Complete daily challenges to win 1 of 3 \$100 gift cards!

How to get entries: Post your photo completing the challenge on
 Facebook and tag [@PHSScommunity](#)

OR Email your name, the challenge, and your photo to
amandab@phsscommunity.com

There will be prizes for:

- Highest \$ total pledges (individual & team)
- Most pledges collected (total # - individual)
- Most creative photo

**MONDAY
 BOWLING**

Mefe Kare

BOWLING—Monday, August 17

Make your own bowling lane with whatever you have! Wii Sports, outdoor set, or roll a watermelon into water bottles... anything goes!

**TUESDAY
 ZOOM-ERCISE**

LIVE EXERCISE VIA ZOOM—Tuesday, August 18

Join us LIVE at 10am and 2pm! Walk, dance, hula hoop, stretch - let's get moving! Join both for another chance to win! (*must join live to be entered*)

**WEDNESDAY
 SCAVENGER
 HUNT BINGO**

SCAVENGER HUNT BINGO—Wednesday, August 19

Find these items inside or outside—the more shapes you get, the more chances you have to win! (*BINGO card will be emailed out the day of*)

**THURSDAY
 NEW RECIPE**

NEW RECIPE—Thursday, August 20

Try out a new recipe today! Want more ways to win? You can share your recipe card, and/or try more recipes!

**FRIDAY
 3K CHALLENGE**

3K CHALLENGE—Friday, August 21

Go out for a stroll this weekend—enjoy the fresh air! Whether one team member does all 3, or multiple people do 1km each, it's a team effort!

Mefe Kare

Remembering Carmell Tait, COO

Carmell Tait was a driving force at PHSS, our one and only Chief Operating Officer since 1988 and she will be remembered in a multitude of ways.

She had many connections and relationships with people inside and outside of PHSS, but most importantly she made a point of getting to know the people who receive support - their welfare was always the foundation which guided her daily actions and decision-making. Her deep compassion and empathy for people and their quality of life is reflected in the culture of PHSS - she would educate, remind and inspire us to ask "how does that affect *the people* we are supporting?" She was a natural advocate for the marginalized, with a sense of fairness and justice at the core of her being. She was not content to rest on her or our laurels, but was concerned with continuous quality improvement in service provision.



You could always count on Carmell's integrity and she was well- respected within and outside of the organization. She was a visionary who brought wisdom and creativity to a variety of tables; she shared her unique perspective, asked questions, was not afraid to challenge the status quo and was willing to stand alone, if need be. She enjoyed collaboration with others if the outcome was beneficial in some way to people, families and/or the community. It was part of her nature to reach beyond the doors of PHSS and she encouraged us to be a responsive and flexible organization.

Within the organization, she was a leader, mentor and friend to many and an invaluable source of support. Her door was always open and her office continuously filled with people seeking her counsel; line ups, to be honest. She liked to plant seeds and see what happened. She was surprisingly intuitive. She was *very* good at knowing what other people were good at and delegated accordingly, the mark of an excellent leader. She never took credit for positive outcomes that were directly related to her, instead insisting it was a group effort. She was most excited when finding solutions to complex problems. She could also be *very funny* - if you knew her, she probably made you laugh at least once. We will really miss her unique brand of humour.

Carmell has left an indelible mark on us and will always be part of who we are. We will miss her more than words can say and look forward to an official celebration, at a later date, to recognize, appreciate and celebrate all her contributions over the years. - Cathy Smith



Remembering Carmell—a collection of memories and comments shared with us

Along with many condolences, we received many messages about how Carmell had impacted people's lives, and how much they will miss her. People also left heartfelt comments on our Facebook page, some of which are included here:

"She was always there when I needed her, whether it was to support me as I read a eulogy at a supported person's funeral or to celebrate that we were able to get someone out for a walk for the first time. She was an incredible leader, providing strength, encouragement, and dedication. She challenged me to think outside the box, and will always be the voice in my head that will continue to push and inspire me."

—Shannon Riley, PHSS Staff

"I am so very sorry for this loss. It was such a pleasure working with Carmell leading the system through very positive changes."

—Anne Campbell, Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance

"Our thoughts go out to her family. Carmell was extremely dedicated to helping families in need, I know she was most helpful for ours. We have lost a very special lady."

—Debbie Hodgkinson-Papple, PHSS Family

"I have no words. We will miss you Carmell, more than you will know." —Leslie Giesbrecht, PHSS Staff



Welcoming people to the opening of our Wistow location



Establishing the Chronic Mechanical Ventilation (CMV) program



Sharing her love of Sloan's Christmas Village with an annual PHSS Day

"A huge loss for many people. Carmell's influence, dedication and empowerment of many people will forever shine throughout PHSS."

—Denise Cattel, PHSS Staff

"COVID took a backseat as we mourned the loss of our mentor, leader and friend. Carmell, your legacy will live on as we continue to provide supports in a way that will forever make you proud. So very fortunate to have known you and to have learned from you over the past 11 years. You will be so deeply missed."

—Becky Johnson, PHSS Staff

"Legacies are pathways that guide people in decisions with what to do or what not to do". This beautiful soul, who will be dearly missed by so many, has left behind a legacy of her own which many of us have been blessed to have learned from. Let us remember her teachings and instill them in our daily work, showing her the respect that she gave everyone of us and the people we serve."

—Jeanette Fletcher, PHSS Staff

"I feel like she was a special lady. She would be there if you needed her, day or night. I remember one night, Desi's staff didn't show up; she phoned my house saying she was 3 blocks away. She told the staff to go over and put Desi to bed, as she would stay on the phone and for me to lock the door. She said if one of them got up to tell her, but she was just joking around because they couldn't get up on their own. About an hour later she came over to see my staff and everything was alright. I will keep her in my heart!"

—Judy Hartman



“When Bob went to the office to do the cheques, Carmell always chatted with him to see what was going on. Bob loves to collect interesting coins, and when Carmell returned from trips, she often gave him coins to add to his collection. Dominic always remembered Carmell’s birthday, as it was the same day as his mom’s. He says she did a really good job for PHSS. and she was very “cool”!! Carmell always made a point of saying “hi” to people when they came into the office. All at Riverside will miss her.” —PHSS Riverside Team

“So sorry to hear of Carmell’s passing. I met her many years ago when she worked for Community Living London and also when she moved over to Participation House. She was such a valuable asset to everyone we served as well as their families. She will be sorely missed. My condolences to all her family, her co-workers & the residents of PHSS.”

—Karen Hodgson, Friend of PHSS



“I know this is an added sorrow during an already challenging time. Carmell will be greatly missed. Holding all of you in our thoughts.”

—Lisa Malbrecht, St. Joseph’s Health Care

“We felt a little lost for a few minutes after hearing the news, but after sharing memories and some moments of silence, we pressed on and did as our fearless leader would have done. She was much more than any words I can possibly say. She will be fondly remembered and sadly missed.”

—Rose Godding, PHSS Staff

“My Aunt Carmell was so dedicated to PHSS and because of that, it was important to our family too. We learned so much about how important support services were and so much about your community and their needs. I am sure you will miss her as much as we do already.”

—Tammi, Carmell’s niece



“Carmell was a wonderful person—I am so glad that she and I became friends. I loved her sense of humour (once I figured it out) and she was a breath of fresh air every time we talked. I miss her.” —Liz Hewitt



“She made the dreams of many persons with disabilities to live in the community a reality. She was an advocate like no other and an inspiration to the rest of us to support all with dignity and respect. We will miss her wonderful sense of humour and wit and her never-ending questioning of the status quo. She was and is an inspiration to us all.” —Hutton House

Carmell was a fearless advocate and I hope this contribution to the fund helps ensure her life’s work will continue to benefit the people she sought to support.—Rachael Griffin, SW LHIN

“My mum, Mary Torok, worked alongside Carmell Tait for many years. I remember growing up, always talking to her at events. My deepest condolences.” — Stephanie Torok, Friend of PHSS

“Carmell was a true visionary, and believer in ‘doing the right thing.’ We formed an unusual partnership, but the benefits to our team is SO long lasting. The ripple effect of Carmell will be felt for years!”

“She was a pioneer with PHSS in creating a way for ventilated patients to live safely in the community. She was instrumental in creating some amazing partnerships. She left us much too early, but we must carry on her vision.”

“We know how much Carmell meant to the PH team. We share your sadness with her loss from our lives, but cherish knowing & working with her.”

—Cathy Mawdsley, Dr. Leasa & Joanne Smith, LHSC

“Carmell inspired everyone she touched. We are better people for having known her. She will be deeply missed.” —Kathleen Abley, PHSS Staff

“My deepest sympathies to the family and to all those at PHSS who worked alongside Carmell for all these years.

She was the soul of our agency, indeed of our PHSS family. Endless wisdom, the deepest well of compassion and an all embracing sense of humour. She will be terribly missed, but never forgotten.

Rest in eternal peace, Carmell, your work is done.”

—Ian Marchell, PHSS Staff

So sorry to hear of Carmell's passing and had hoped she would've been around to witness the work for the Virtual House Call program completed. She was obviously passionate about better care for marginalized populations. We at iTeled will miss her very much.

I am saddened by the loss of Carmell Tait, a wonderful and compassionate human being who did so much for so many. Lots of love.

—Ruth Armstrong, Vision Management

“Carmell was a woman of great passion—passion for life, her family, for those individuals and families supported, for those she worked with and for her broader community. Sincerest condolences to her family and friends. Carmell - you made such a significant commitment and we are forever grateful.” — Sandra Datars Bere, City of London

“She was such a great leader and a lot of us looked up to her. She was always smiling and would always say hello to everyone and make them feel special. Such sad news. —Nicolle Furanna, PHSS Staff

“She was a great leader that influenced us all. PHSS will never be the same without her. My thoughts and prayers are with her family, friends and PHSS community.” —Dawn Benoit, PHSS Staff

A Living Memorial

As we continue to mourn, we have been looking for ideas to find ways for the agency to collectively celebrate the life and impact that she left on all of us while respecting the current physical distancing and COVID-19 protocols.

Each location selected and planted something (shrub, plant, small tree) that represents their reflection of Carmell, her leadership, and her impact. On June 18, we hosted a virtual, agency-wide ceremony, where we each planted our selections and had the opportunity to stand together for a moment of silent reflection and remembrance.

If you wish to watch the virtual planting ceremony, you can view it on our YouTube channel!

A Very Special Bond



Our journey began when I shaved my hair off (among others) to support her in the Relay For Life. When I was diagnosed with thyroid cancer, she was also there to support me.

She shared her “worry stone” necklace with me, which meant so much and helped me to get through it. When we found out that she had lung cancer, I sent her back the worry stone necklace to show her my love and support.

She was always encouraging with my goals of living independently. She was an amazing woman who I will miss and always cherish. —Sandra Regalo



“Carmell”

Who was Carmell? Many things to many people
 Kind, understanding and fierce in her passions
 A planner, big picture, details didn't matter
 Planter of seeds for the leaders to sow
 It would all come together, she would watch it grow
 A vision, a passion, to build community for all
 Institutions the past, push hard they will fall
 Community with family, friends the path to take
 Nothing less will do, working together we will make
 A leader, a mentor, she taught us to challenge, to think
 To never stop believing the difference we could make
 No matter your position, she valued us all
 A Friend, Sister, Mother, Daughter, Aunt, Partner was she
 Loyal and dedicated to those she held dear
 Nothing was too much to ask for, she always had an ear
 Proud of her family, her boys her whole world
 The stories she shared, the pride could be heard
 Advice sometimes given, but her direction was clear
 Build your tribes around you, have more than one
 They will ground you when needed, and hopefully be fun
 Many things have we learned from the woman named Carmell
 A life cut too short, the teachings now done
 We will carry them forward, a legacy to remember and grow
 You will never be forgotten, let our appreciation show

- Laura Smith

**We want to
hear from
YOU!**

PHSS is always searching for innovative ways to support people with developmental and/or complex physical needs to live in their own homes, participate in community and enjoy life with family and friends. We do our best, but we're not always perfect. We want to hear from you about our services and supports. "You" could be a parent, an advocate, a member, a person we support or a concerned citizen.

However, first you should try speaking with the person with whom you normally communicate. If you're not satisfied, contact the Interim COO, Shannon Riley.

If you feel your problem remains unresolved, contact the President/ CEO. We will work to resolve your issue, and if need be, the President will raise it with the Board of Directors.

This procedure is intended to address issues that are within the power of PHSS. Issues such as insufficient government funding for services cannot be rectified through this route.

We are confident that if we all work together we can come up with solutions which will benefit all of us. We would also like to hear from you if you are pleased with our programs and services, and we will make sure your comments reach the staff and volunteers involved.

Key Contacts:

Brian Dunne

President/ Chief Executive Officer
(519) 660-6635 ext. 227
briand@phsscommunity.com

Shannon Riley

Interim Chief Operational Officer
(519) 660-6635 ext. 235
shannonr@phsscommunity.com

Work with Us!

Are you a highly skilled and dedicated person committed to providing a safe, caring and enriching environment? Do you have a passion for encouraging and creating an inclusive community where people with disabilities participate in a meaningful way?

**We are always accepting resumes for
PART-TIME SUPPORT WORKERS**

Developmental Services Worker (DSW) Apprenticeship programs are also available!

Please check out our website for opportunities and information about the DSW Apprenticeship program: www.PHSScommunity.com/contact/employment

Let's Get Social!

Connect with us



@PHSScommunity



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