



Creating Community

VOLUME 14, ISSUE 1

WINTER 2016

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also be exploring conservation programs available through various utilities, government, and government agencies, including the Ontario Electricity Support Program mentioned above.

Stay tuned for more information!

A Penny Saved is a Penny Earned

Ontario Electricity Support Program

The Ontario Energy Board is offering a new initiative to help low-income households save money on their electricity bills. Depending on your household income and size, you may be eligible for monthly credits directly applied to your bill.

Household Income	Household Size (# of people living in household)					
	1-2	3	4	5	6	7+
\$28,000 or less	\$30	\$34	\$38	\$42	\$50	\$50
\$28,001 - \$39,000		\$30	\$34	\$38	\$42	\$50
\$39,001 - \$48,000				\$30	\$34	\$38
\$48,001 - \$52,000						\$30

Visit OntarioElectricitySupport.ca for more information.

Rent Increase Guideline

Each year, the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing sets out a rent increase guideline, allowing landlords to raise rent on their properties by a specific percentage. The guideline for 2016 is 2.0%.

However, we are sensitive to the financial pressures facing people we support and *we will not be increasing the rent at this time.*

Energy Conservation Project

In response to rising utility costs, we are undertaking an Energy Conservation Project which will coordinate efforts at all of our locations to better manage energy consumption and costs. We will

Mission: Participation House supports individuals with developmental disabilities and/or complex physical needs to live in their own homes, participate in community and enjoy life with family and friends.



SHOUT OUT CORNER

"Wistow would like to send a shout out to **Laykin** for doing an amazing job ordering all supplies, meds, etc. She keeps things organized and is always on top of it! She also helps plan so many fun things for the ladies to do and they appreciate it so much!"

"I would like to welcome and thank **the staff who work at Eula White** for all their help welcoming Kelly and Britt to their new home!"

"To **Donna Froese** for organizing a Rheo Thompson mint smoothie fundraiser which raised \$570, all proceeds to PH - thanks Donna for your initiative, determination and gift of connecting with others!"

"I'd like to send a Shout Out to **Mark Farrow**, the Youth Pastor at Stoney Creek Baptist Church and the Young Adult group. This group visited homes in early December and put up Christmas lights to help get people and their families in the Christmas spirit. Thank you, Mark!"

"Shout Out to **Pete** for being the best paper shredder ever! Great job Pete!"

"I'd like to recognize **Emily** on the Diversity team for her endless creativity! She is always willing to help out with quarterly Diversity newsletters, the Speak Out newsletter, and was so helpful creating the CELEBRATE puzzle for the Christmas Party. Thank you for all your hard work, Emily!"

"A HUGE shout out goes to the **staff at Eden** for going above and beyond. All year they do a fantastic job of providing care and doing extra things with all the residents, but on December 23, they prepared a Christmas dinner with "all the fixings", not only for the residents, but also their parents! What a delicious dinner it was: turkey, stuffing, gravy, potatoes, veggies, and pie for dessert. The parents were seated at a table adorned with a tablecloth and cloth napkins, and we were waited on by the staff. What an absolute treat! Kudos and a big thank you go to all the chefs, wait staff, and the preparation and clean-up crews for a wonderful and delightful evening! It really was a nice way to come into the Christmas season and we thank all of you for your hard work and dedication. Thanks for a great night!!!"

Do you know someone who deserves a Shout Out?

Is there someone in your life who has gone above and beyond?
Do you want to Shout Out to someone for just being fabulous all the time?

LET ME KNOW!

Contact Amanda at amandab@participationhouse.com or 519-660-6635 x254!

Notes from the Meaningful Moments Board



Chelsey became an aunt to "Helena"



Mike & Matthew working at St. Thomas Raceway



Dean doing Christmas kettles



Wayne performing at Hutton House concert

To add your posting, feel free to come into the office or fax it to (519) 660-1654.

Rest in Peace, Krista



Krista McEllistrum, our angel, passed away on November 21, 2015 at age 25. We would like to thank Participation House for their support and the beautiful flowers. Many thanks to all of the staff from Beechmount, Bluebell, and Project Hope. Participation House did an amazing job taking care of Krista, and your love and dedication will always be remembered.

- Rick and Rosemary McEllistrum

Working with Tetra



The Tetra Society of North America is a non-profit organization that recruits skilled volunteers to create customized assistive devices for people with physical disabilities.

Caroline Wideman, Coordinator of Tetra's London Chapter, along with volunteer engineers Joe Ruitenbeek



and Violet Tan, visited Possibilities in Paint to meet our artists and observe them paint to see first-hand the need for a multi-function easel. They had lots of questions and were chatting up a storm to determine how to make this happen. Joe Ruitenbeek is pictured above with the prototype in order to make minor adjustments and have an artist test out the easel.

Participation House

FOUNDATION - LONDON



Mark Your Calendar!



Laudable Londoners

17th Annual Salute to Laudable Londoners

When: April 13, 2016 **Where:** London Hunt Club

Watch www.participationhouse.com for more details as they become available!



Eat Wings, Raise Funds!

When: February 24, 2016 **Where:** Buffalo Wild Wings

Eat between 11 a.m.-11 p.m., tell your server that you are supporting Participation House, and 15% of your bill is donated back!



Hudson's Bay Spring Giving Day

When: March 24, 2016 **Where:** Any Hudson's Bay location

All ticket proceeds go to Participation House! Tickets are available at the Participation House Main Office.



16th Annual Bowl-A-Thon

When: June 5, 2016 **Where:** Fleetway
Team registration forms will be coming soon! Stay tuned!

Do you have Canadian Tire money just lying around in a drawer? Donate it to us, and we will use it towards prizes for the Bowl-A-Thon. What a great way to clear out that drawer and put it to good use!

Would you like to get involved? There are several different committees that would love to have your expertise. We are in the planning stages of the Bowl-A-Thon, Golf Tournament, and the Support Services Annual General Meeting. Please contact David Wighton at davidw@participationhouse.com to get more information.

For more information about Participation House Foundation events, check out our website at: www.participationhouse.com or contact amandab@participationhouse.com

Join Participation House Foundation's Board of Directors!!

The Participation House Foundation was created in 1994 with two main purposes:

- 1) To **fundraise** as a way to complement government funding—all money raised by the Foundation directly benefits people needing supports and services
- 2) To **engage** with community members and share our vision and mission

The Foundation is an integral part of the organization and the Board of Directors is looking for new members!

Are you interested and/or experienced in fundraising and event planning?

By joining, you will be able to:

Guide the Foundation's strategic plan

Do you have ideas for how to raise our profile in the community?

Raise the organization's profile in the community

Want to have your say in the future of the Foundation?

Have fun and meet new people

Help to coordinate our signature events



Salute to Laudable Londoners



Bowl-A-Thon



Leo Kirwin Golf Tournament



The Foundation's Board of Directors generally meets once a month for two hours in our main office boardroom at 620 Colborne St. If you are interested and/or would like more information, please email Amanda Bartlett at amandab@participationhouse.com



Make a Green Choice!

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

That Naughty Little Elf!



Evergreen once again stopped by the office to keep an eye on us, but she sure was a handful! Wall climbing, cutting snowflakes, singing on the Voice... These were only a few of her antics. What will she get up to next year?

Ugly Christmas Outfits... Look Away!!



We had some amazingly tough competition for the **Ugly Christmas Outfit Contest**

From Granny's Christmas sweater with awful shoulder pads to SUPER creative homemade disasters, everyone did a fantastic job! Thanks to everyone who participated!

This year, we crown a new winner (sorry, Stacey!!)

Congratulations to Leslie Giesbrecht and her roaring iPad fireplace sweater! Thank you to the Diversity Committee for putting on such a fun contest!

Celebrating the Holidays with Participation House



Thank you to all our staff for your hard work and dedication. We are so grateful for your tremendous efforts. Barb volunteers at Women's Community House, and was happy to deliver a donation on behalf of all Participation House staff!

Staff Anniversaries 2015

25 Years

Betty Bannerman
Mark Crossley
David Wighton
Shelley Anderson
Garry Webb
Connie MacMillan

20 Years

Angela Blais
Jennifer MacMillan
Kim Harrisgreen

15 Years

Sheri De Melo
Clara Grass
Milena Sahic
Dragica Kresovic
Susan Baker
Erin Shea
Kristine Wachowiak
Dawn Benoit
Debbie Slaats
Karen S. McCormick
Heather Lenhardt
Keri-Sue Rowley

10 Years

Fainier Quesada Araya
Draga Trapara
Ashley Wright
Jessica Lucas
Brandon Dunster
Kimberly Matches
Shirley Coyea

5 Years

Stephanie Kruk
Alicia Soos
Jennifer Arsenault
Sandra Carter
Kristine Kobler
Kari Davidson
Nichole Harvey
Jeffrey Brown
Lorna McKenzie
Jessica Burgon
Abigail Atsriku
Olivia Groeneweg
Kimberly Frieburger
Terry Axford

Donors of Distinction

Participation House would like to extend a special **Thank You** to the following for their generous support in 2015:

The Mitchell & Kathryn Baran Family Foundation

Estate of Annie Eva Downey

Jack and Barbara Hay Foundation

Richard and Beryl Ivey Fund—a fund within London Community Foundation

Willoughby Family Fund—a fund within London Community Foundation

Thank you to all our 2015 financial donors!
Your support makes all the difference!

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Carey, Greg & Bethany

CARLOS BARBOSA CONCRETE

thank
you!

DID YOU KNOW?

In 2012, 1 in 7 Canadians aged 15 or older reported having a disability

At Participation House, we have developed a unique combination of residential living, home supports, day programs and recreation to meet the needs of people who have significant disabilities but also have much to offer our community – people who are good neighbours and great citizens. To meet the ongoing and future requirements of the people we support and those who could benefit from our services, Participation House Foundation has identified four areas of need:

Equipment

More than 8 out of 10 persons with disabilities use aids and assistive devices, having the appropriate aids can enable an individual to participate more fully in society.* For people meeting the challenge of multiple disabilities, up-to-date and well-maintained equipment is essential to maintain health and support independence and community involvement. The items range from something as simple as a shower commode to sophisticated communications devices or a \$25,000 air bed that helps prevent pressure ulcers.

Housing and Accessibility

Participation House homes are very special places. From the outside they look like any other warm and comfortable family home. Inside, modifications are made to ensure they are ideal for the people we support. Each person has a private bedroom that is a reflection of his or her personality. These houses quickly become homes, much loved by those who live there. While government funding is available to assist with the acquisition, renovation or building it does not cover all cost. Participation House Support Services understands its responsibility as a good neighbour to properly maintain our homes, both inside and out. Private funding and/or gifts-in-kind are welcome to create new homes when operational funds are available from the government.

Transportation and Travel

Many of the people we support face significant mobility challenges, and are unable to get around without a wheelchair. When they want to leave their homes to participate in community activities, a van equipped with a wheelchair lift is essential. The goal is to pair each location with their own van, but many are still relying on ParaTransit.

The spontaneity of activity such as going to see a movie, window-shopping at the mall or grabbing a coffee with friends at Tim Horton's is not an option when Paratransit must be booked days in advance. **An accessible van costs approximately \$58,000, with annual maintenance, gas and insurance costs of about \$15,000.**

Like anyone else, the people we support sometimes need a chance to unwind, have new experiences, see the world and visit distant family and friends. But travel, whether for a holiday or to compete in a bocce ball tournament, is difficult because of the additional costs for a full-time attendant. Private funding would allow more people to take holidays – a pleasure most of us take for granted.

Education, Training and Therapy

Education, support and advocacy are ongoing needs for the people we support and their families. Additional funding would allow more people to participate in conferences and other educational activities.

Our staff members, too, have ongoing education needs to ensure they can provide the best possible care and support. Government funding covers basic required training in areas such as first aid and CPR. It is more difficult to find funds for leadership, values training or training in specialized computer skills.

Please help us meet our goal of independence for our neighbours and friends by making a financial contribution to Participation House Foundation – London.

*According to the 2012 Canadian Survey on Disability (CSD), conducted by Statistics Canada

DID YOU KNOW?

Participation House Foundation is a registered charity! You will receive a tax receipt for any donation of \$10 or more!

Charitable Registration Number: 89172 2043 RR0001

Give a Monthly Gift to Show Your Ongoing 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.participationhouse.com and click on "Donate Now"
You will be given the option to give a one-time donation or to arrange monthly contributions.

Your donations help individuals with severe physical, developmental and/or multiple disabilities to achieve their full potential in the community. On behalf of all the staff, families, friends, and more than 200 people we support – **THANK YOU!**



We also welcome your cheques:

Please make your cheque payable to:

Enclosed is my contribution of \$_____.

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

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Postal Code: _____ Telephone: () _____



Please direct my donation to the
Brian Dunne Housing & Accessibility Fund*

Please direct my donation to
the **highest priority needs of Participation House**



Please direct my donation to the
Elizabeth Leighton Training & Education Fund*

**Note: The Board of Directors has established endowment funds so they will provide a lasting legacy of support. Donations are prudently invested and the income earned by these investments of the capital is used to support the work of Participation House Support Services as outlined by the fund terms of reference.*

Participation House Foundation – London respects your privacy. We use your personal information to provide services and keep you informed and up-to-date on the activities of Participation House Foundation – London and Participation House Support Services, including programs, services, special events, funding needs, opportunities to volunteer or to give, open houses and more through periodic contacts from Participation House Foundation – London. If at any time you wish to be removed from our contact list, simply contact us by email at info@participationhouse.com and we will gladly accommodate your request.

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Stone, Jeff & Jessica	VOYAGEUR TRANSPORTATION	Zsemer Sr., Elizabeth
Stone, Terry	SERVICES	
Stover, Donna	Wachowiak, Kristine	
Strachan, Brittany	Wagner, Manfred & Rose	

Working with PHSS—Student Reflection

We want to share with you a remarkable opportunity we were given within the 'Gerontology in Practice' course at Western University. Our group has had the pleasure of working with community partners, Ann Marie and Stacey, from Participation House to investigate 'aging with a disability'. The individuals at Participation House have guided us throughout this journey and have given us tremendous support to answer our question effectively. We want to share with you what we have learned over these past three months.



In total, we conducted eighteen interviews with staff, persons served, and their families. Each of these interviews has impacted us greatly and has opened our eyes to a different perspective on the topic of aging with a disability. Through these interviews, we recognized that each person is unique and everyone has their challenges in life. However, those with a disability have heightened needs as they age compared to the general aging population. Therefore, greater support in health and social services is essential to create equity among all individuals aging. Participation House has made an immense impact on the lives of the people they serve and their families. We admire and respect them for their role in caring for individuals aging with complex needs by providing individualized care. We met such beautiful people with enormous hearts who courageously opened up their homes and told us their stories. Each of these individuals interviewed left a mark on our lives that we will never forget.

Through Participation House, we had the fortune of participating in a workshop entitled "Possibilities in Paint". This program enables individuals living with disabilities to participate in art projects that are tailored to their needs. This was an incredible opportunity because we were able to participate in the class and gain hands on experience working with individuals who experience disability. We have learned how simple activities like this can have a huge impact on an individual's life. We found this workshop to not only be beneficial for the individuals with disabilities but also for everyone else involved in the process of the class.

Overall, our group as a whole can agree that this has been one of the greatest experiences that we have had during our years at Western University. We have met so many people that we will never forget and we are so grateful that they shared their knowledge and wisdom with us.



"As we completed this project, we gained a greater understanding of those aging with a disability and ourselves"

Shara Arasaratnam, Andrew Agyemang-Duah, Brianna Croft,
Jessica Hogle, Aliya Jadavji, Anusha Kalaichelvan

Planning Facilitators Written by Kathleen Abley

Reading the Autumn 2015 Issue of Speak Out was such a pleasure. It is filled with stories of people realizing dreams, exploring creative expression, and making meaningful connections. All these things lead to being able to live a rich and purposeful life, which is part of our mission statement. In this issue, people are so magnificently celebrated that it leaves us with a sense of hope and gratitude for those we serve and the community we are part of.

Behind the scenes there are many individuals and teams who plan, create opportunities and just plain move things out of the way so that a person can move forward with their life. One such team is the dedicated, creative and brave group of Planning Facilitators. They are invited to come into a person's home and assist them to dare to dream and set goals that will enrich their life, bringing them closer to their community. This process creates opportunity for natural friendships and connections to happen. Who among us does not want friends, great memories and pleasure in our lives?

Each person who is supported by Participation House is offered the opportunity to work with a Planning Facilitator who is specifically trained to develop a "Who is the Person" profile. This is an important step toward creating an atmosphere where life planning can take place. The "Who Is The Person" profile asks specific questions that help us understand things about the person: What they are passionate about; what do they love to do; who are the people in their life; amongst other things.

The profile is reviewed and expanded on at a planning meeting with staff, family, friends and always with the person being served at the centre. Dreams or goals are explored and identified and an action plan is set up. The action plan and the process of completing it evolves as people accept responsibility to assist and make sure certain steps are taken. Throughout this process the focus is on getting to know the person and finding ways to interpret what it is they want and how to get it for them. Sometimes, this can take some really creative thinking and collaborating on behalf of the Facilitator.

The planning process has helped to identify and make many dreams come true. Planning has started a conversation that has now grown into a strong voice about what people we support really want: What do they value that brings joy and richness into their life? Planning has been a wonderful success for many people and the teams who support them.

Planning Facilitators need to be able to listen, observe, gather, and disseminate all the information in service of peoples' dreams and goals. Working with family and staff, being sensitive to differing views and ideas, flexibility, and a strong belief in the individual they assist, are among their strongest gifts. Planning Facilitators are there to encourage and inspire others to trust the process. We educate each other and grow as human beings by sharing our gifts and passions, and Planning Facilitators can help us identify those gifts and passions and act on them to find purpose and satisfaction. When we work together, the result is always a life enriched and changed for the better.

Partners
For Life

Participation House is a *Partner for Life!*

If you donate blood please consider a one time registration under our
Partnership Number—**PART 013329**

Help us give the gift of life!

Partners
For Life

Ode to Matt Owen

Written by Greg Horton

When we think of him
 Years from now
 We will describe him as a portrait
 Painted in vivid
 Greens and blues and reds
 Smiles drawn carefully
 To capture its true size
 Movement and excitement
 Done free hand to recreate
 An energy that will be long in
 Our memory
 And the hope
 That we've properly portrayed
 All the things
 That he was constructed of
 Like music
 And good fortune
 Like laughter
 And a compassionate heart

We'll paint him proud
 And alive
 And we, the artists,
 Are left behind
 To make sure we make him a
 Masterpiece
 All of us have added details
 Some of us added those
 Perfect strokes that make him
 So unique
 And a precious few of us
 Who labored tirelessly over his canvas
 Since it was blank.
 One more stroke of the brush
 One more line in just the right place
 And together we'll capture
 All he is
 All he could've been
 And all he was.

Congratulations, Brandy!!



Congratulations to Brandy and her support staff Denise at the Fanshawe location. Brandy won a Tim Horton's gift card with her **Community Connections** photo submission for January, with this shot of them at Johnny's Restaurant. The draw is all about celebrating positive experiences with community businesses and other places where Participation House folks feel accepted and welcomed. Keep the photos coming because we hope to pick one per month! Send submissions to connectors@participationhouse.com

So, what's so great about Johnny's? First, Brandy feels at home there. Brandy has been a regular customer for almost four years and is welcomed by the waitresses and a few other regulars every Wednesday morning. It's also possible that Johnny's Restaurant chocolate chip pancakes are magical. REALLY! Normally, Brandy doesn't speak, but when she sees Denise walk in she says "pancakes?!" And, although Brandy usually uses a manual wheelchair when out in the community, Denise says she now walks in to Johnny's on her own with no problem. Great food, great staff and great customers are all part of what makes Johnny's worth visiting. Denise says that when the waitresses see the van pull up, they get Brandy's favourite booth ready and have a glass of apple juice on the table waiting for her. Even better, the last time they went and a few times over the years, an anonymous customer paid for Brandy's meal because they thought she looked like a nice person. How awesome is that?! So, if you look like a nice person, you should go to Johnny's. Who knows what might happen?

Johnny's Restaurant at Highbury and Fanshawe. 519-951-0292



Participation House Support Services 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 Chief Operational Officer, Carmell Tait.

If you feel your problem remains unsolved, 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 Participation House Support Services. Issues such as insufficient government funding for services cannot be rectified through this route.

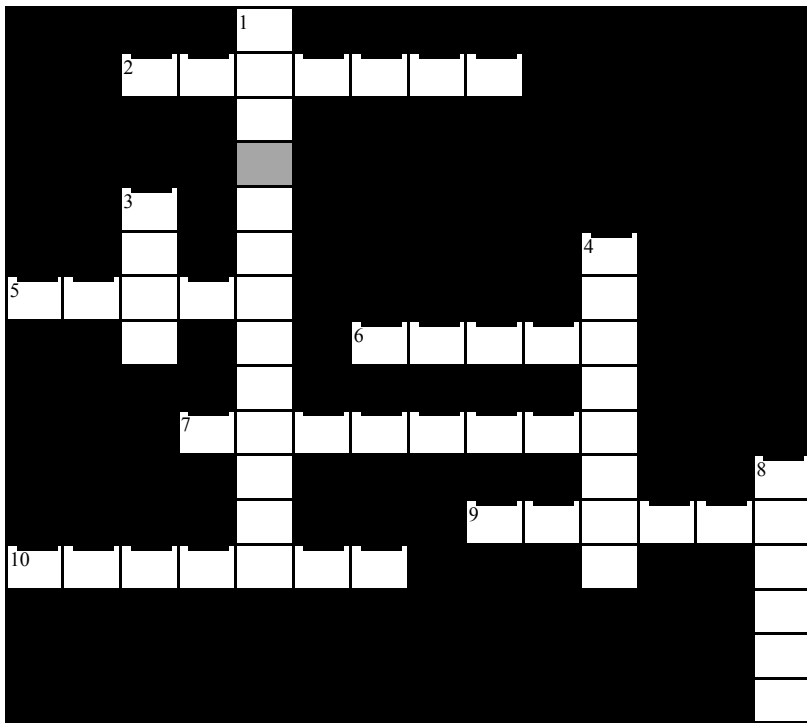
We are confident that if we all work together we can come up with solutions which will benefit all of us. We would also like to hear from you if you are pleased with our programs and services, and we will make sure your comments reach the staff and volunteers involved.

Key Contacts:

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 briand@participationhouse.com

Carmell Tait
 Chief Operational Officer
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Winter Wonderland Activity from the Diversity Team!



Across

- 2. a person made of snow
- 5. a domed structure made of ice
- 6. to glide or slide smoothly on ice
- 7. white out; storm
- 9. season between Fall and Spring
- 10. hand warmers

Down

- 1. warm winter drink
- 3. baby, it's ____ outside
- 4. down-hill fun
- 8. frigid; very cold; Disney Movie

ANSWERS:
 Across
 2. snowman
 5. igloo
 6. skate
 7. blizzard
 9. winter
 10. mittens
 Down
 1. hot chocolate
 3. cold
 4. sledding
 8. frozen



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