

ST. JOSEPH'S LIFECARE CENTRE BRANTFORD

# RESIDENT FAMILY NEWSLETTER



## Healing Through Nature: Bringing Horticultural Therapy to St. Joseph's Lifecare Centre



Spring is here, bringing longer days, warmer weather and the first signs of new life in our gardens. It's a season of renewal and hope—an opportunity to reconnect with nature and with one another. At St. Joseph's, we're looking forward to brighter days, more sunshine, and cherished moments outdoors with residents and their loved ones. As our gardens begin to come alive once again, we're especially excited to introduce horticultural therapy to our community. We look forward to a vibrant summer filled with growth, connection and the simple pleasures of nature.

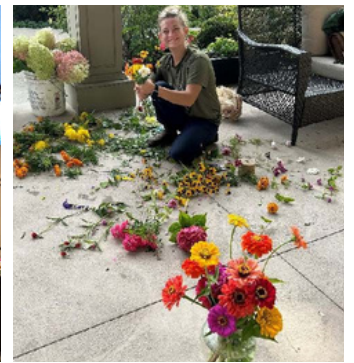
In a previous issue, we shared our plans to introduce a Horticultural Therapy (HT) program at St. Joseph's Lifecare Centre. We're pleased to announce that two of our team members, Karyn Roswell and Emily Birss, have recently completed their certification to help bring that vision to life. With their new expertise, we're ready to offer more meaningful experiences that support the emotional, physical and social well-being of our residents.

Karyn, an on-site recreation therapist, and Emily, a former volunteer who is now a recreation therapy assistant, earned their HT certification through our in-house education program held last fall. Both are excited to take the next step in incorporating nature-based programming into daily life.

"This training gave me a deeper understanding of the people-plant connection," said Karyn. "I'm excited to introduce new programs that enhance the overall well-being of everyone here."

Emily added: "Horticultural therapy uses gardening and plant care to reduce stress, improve mood and promote physical health. It helps people connect with nature and with one another. I'm excited to bring this to life at St. Joseph's—including plans for a therapeutic garden on the main floor patios."

The course was led by Lynn Leach, a landscape designer



*Karyn (left) creates moments of joy and connection for a resident, while Emily (right) brightens up the space with therapeutic flowers.*

and horticultural therapist who helped design our gardens years ago. She believes that simply being in a garden can have a positive impact.

"Individual creativity flourishes in nature," she said. "Whether planting, harvesting or just relaxing outdoors, these experiences support wellness at any stage of life."

Families have long appreciated the value of our outdoor spaces. Michelle MacInnis, chair of our Family Council, shared: "For many residents, even a short time in the garden can brighten their day. It's a peaceful and uplifting place for everyone."

This inaugural hands-on training program—approved by the Canadian Horticultural Therapy Association—is one of only two in Canada and the only one offered in-person in Ontario. Participants travelled from as far as Prince Edward Island and Florida to take part.

As our gardens continue to thrive, so too will the ways they help us care for residents—not just physically, but emotionally and spiritually as well. We look forward to seeing how Karyn and Emily help enrich the lives of our residents through this creative and meaningful new program.



## Somebunny Brought the Fun!

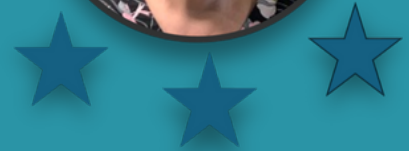
Residents and staff were all smiles during the Bunnygrams deliveries, a highlight of the WE Team Easter Smiles Initiative. These candy treat bags were thoughtful surprise gifts from fellow staff, family members, and loved ones. Dressed in a cheerful bunny costume, Susanne from our Recreational Therapy Team hopped through the halls, spreading joy with every delivery from her candy-filled basket.

🐰 See more heartwarming moments on our [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) pages!



## Star of the Month

Congratulations to  
**TAMMY SKILLINGS, RPN**



Nominated by Family  
Member Sarah Sager

*"Tammy was dedicated to my grandfather's care while he lived here and also took great care of his caregivers! Her compassion, warmth, hustle and smarts made all the difference in his end-of-life care. She helped us feel safe, prepared and supported at every step - not to mention making him exceptionally comfortable. Our whole family is so grateful!"*

Thank you, Tammy, for demonstrating St. Joe's values and being a great example for others.

### RESIDENT FAMILIES:

**Just like Sarah did, you too can nominate a deserving individual for Star of the Month!**

[Click here to download the nomination form.](#)



Scan code  
to learn more

## Grief & Bereavement SUPPORT PROGRAMS



# Family Council News

## You're Invited to Join the Family Council!

Family Council welcomes all family members and caregivers of St. Joseph's Lifecare Centre residents to join our meetings and activities.

We're a dedicated group focused on supporting the health, happiness, and overall well-being of our loved ones. Our meetings are friendly, informative, and a great way to stay updated on what's happening in our home.

If you have any questions, suggestions, or need more information, feel free to reach out to us at [sjlcfamilycouncil@gmail.com](mailto:sjlcfamilycouncil@gmail.com).



Residents and their families gathered for an afternoon of connection and community in McMillen Hall

### You're Invited: Family Council's "Did You Know" Hour

All family members at St. Joseph's Lifecare Centre are warmly invited to attend our upcoming "Did You Know" Hour—an informative and supportive session hosted by Family Council in partnership with the SJLC Administration team.

#### ★ What is the "Did You Know" Hour?

This special hour is designed to help you feel more connected, informed, and empowered in your role as a care partner.

Here's what you can expect:

- Helpful information to support your loved one's quality of life
- Tips on communicating and collaborating with the care team
- A chance to ask questions and receive support
- An opportunity to meet and connect with other families
- See "Upcoming Activities" below for the next session date.

#### ✓ RSVP Details

📞 Michelle MacInnis, Chair of Family Council – 519-802-2951

✉ [sjlcfamilycouncil@gmail.com](mailto:sjlcfamilycouncil@gmail.com)

We look forward to seeing you there!

## FAMILY COUNCIL

### Q & A

Q: I'm a Substitute Decision Maker (SDM) or Power of Attorney (POA). What should I do if I'm going away?

A: If you're planning to be away, please inform the regular RPN on your loved one's unit in advance. Let them know who should be contacted in your absence, how long you'll be away, and provide the alternate contact's details. This information will be added to your loved one's chart so the care team knows who to reach if needed.

## Upcoming Council Activities

Sunday, Apr 27, 1:30 p.m. McMillen Hall (Level 1)	<b>Resident/Family Social Get-Together</b> – Our monthly Sunday socials are growing! These gatherings offer a great way for residents and families to connect and enjoy time together. Join us for an afternoon of friendship, fun, refreshments, and live music featuring entertainer Jeff Dawdy.
Thursday, May 8, 4 p.m. at McMillen Hall OR 6 p.m. virtually	<b>Did You Know Hour</b> – Opening remarks will be delivered at 4:00 p.m. by Cindy Perrodou, SJLC Administrator. For the virtual meeting, please RSVP to Michelle MacInnis, who will send you the link.
Tuesday, May 20, 1:30 p.m. Boardroom (4 <sup>th</sup> Floor)	<b>Family Council Meeting</b> – The meetings aim to keep families and friends informed and empowered with helpful information.
Thursday, May 22, 1:30 p.m. McMillen Hall	<b>Educational Session on Dementia</b> – Join us for a talk by the Alzheimer Society on dementia, covering disease changes, communication tips, and meaningful visits. Open to all family and friends of our residents.



## Supporting Healing Through the Wind Phone



Kerri VanSickle, Director of Stedman Community Hospice (left), accepts a donation from Rotary Club of Brantford – Sunrise and The Rotary Foundation, represented by past-president Andrea Berestovenko and Glen Christensen, Club Chair – Rotary

Foundation Awareness and Education. Their support made possible the installation of a wind phone—a quiet space for grief support, where individuals can speak ‘into the wind’ to a departed loved one, offering therapeutic comfort to those coping with loss.

## Royal Canadian Legion Donation Supports Resident Care

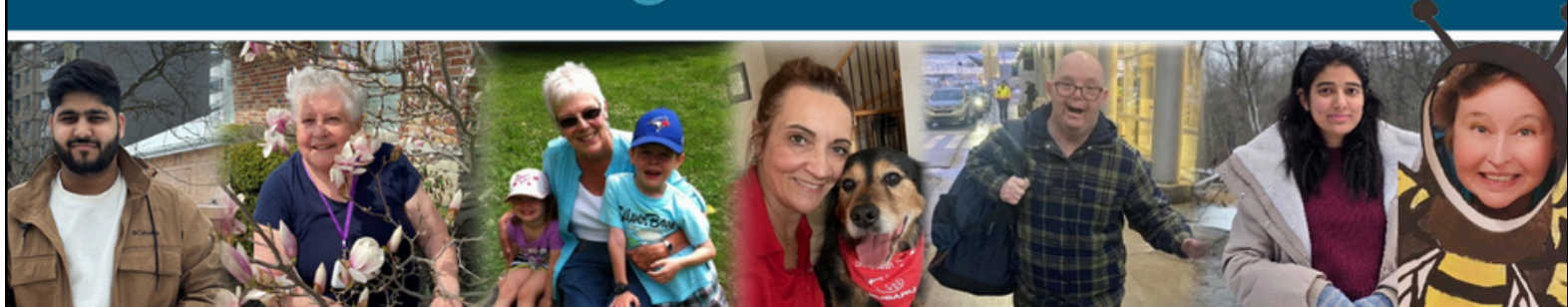


Julie Powell, President & CEO of St. Joseph's Lifecare Foundation (left), and Donna Douglas, Restorative Care Coach at St. Joseph's Lifecare Centre (right), accept a \$6,500 donation from the

Royal Canadian Legion, Ontario Command Branches and Ladies Auxiliaries Charitable Foundation. Raised through the Poppy Fund by Legion branches across Ontario, the donation supported the purchase of a height-adjustable bath chair to enhance resident care at SJLC. Representing Dunsdon Legion, Branch 461, are Sandy Wallace, Chair of the local RCL Poppy Fund, and Branch 461 President Ron Butcher.



# Thank you Volunteers!



**Sunday, May 4**

# Hike OR Bike

IN SUPPORT OF  
STEDMAN COMMUNITY HOSPICE

FOR HOSPICE

Register online at [stedmanhike.ca](http://stedmanhike.ca)

**\$25**  
registration fee  
includes  
commemorative  
t-shirt and  
Strodes lunch

## GREAT PRIZES FOR TOP FUNDRAISERS