

FOCUS

SPRING/SUMMER 2019



In this issue...

A tenant & volunteer wins award	2
Why one family supports Belmont	2
How technology is improving care	3
Donors make our House a home	4

Better than medicine

Intergenerational program makes meaningful connections

“Amazing” is the word most often used to describe a monthly art program at Belmont House that brings together our Residents with Grade 9 students from Upper Canada College (UCC).

This program was developed by the Seniors' Wish Foundation, whose goal is to alleviate the loneliness and invisibility that seniors experience in our society.

Since 2015, when Seniors' Wish first linked Belmont with UCC, they have used art to bridge generational gaps and bring joy to young and old alike.

UCC sends about 18 boys to Belmont for an enjoyable hour of painting and comfortable conversation. Seniors' Wish donates painting supplies and sends an artist to inspire the flow of creative juices.

“While focusing on their art, the pressure to talk evaporates and conversation flows easily.”

“The result is remarkable,” says Gail Walker, Belmont's Director of Retirement and Recreation Services.

“We are so thankful to these young men for all the love and care they pour into our Residents' lives. As they make art together and share stories, they truly revitalize our Residents.”

Fiona Marshall, the Assistant Head of Student Affairs at UCC, says, “We encourage our boys to participate in community services. This is the program they most remember and talk about.”

The words of UCC student volunteer Christopher reflect comments we hear from so many of his



Upper Canada College Grade 9 student Benjamin Rutherford is happy to help Resident Mrs. Pamela Mackenzie with her art project while they share pleasant conversation.

peers: “It's really fun. I learned a lot about the people I was painting with and it was really interesting. I think we make them happy and I had a great time. I can see myself doing this more!”

Resident Mrs. Alma Vose cherishes this program and often asks the boys for their artwork.

“We love when the boys come to see us. I've put up so many of their paintings in my room. They are precious to me.”

A true ambassador of retirement living

Humble is a good way to describe 97-year-old Belmont House Tenant Joyce Fearnside. When told she won the Ontario-wide Retirement Champion Award from the Retirement Homes Regulatory Authority, she replied, "Are you sure?"



Belmont Tenant Mrs. Joyce Fearnside (centre) humbly receives the Retirement Champion Award from Retirement Homes Regulatory Authority's CEO Jay O'Neill and Esther Goldstein, Chair of RHRA's Stakeholder Advisory Council.

We certainly were. Mrs. Fearnside is the perfect example of how volunteer efforts at Belmont House play a vital role in making Belmont a warm and welcoming home for seniors.

Mrs. Fearnside had enjoyed a career as an administrator in retirement and long-term care homes. After retiring, in 1991 she began volunteering at Belmont House. She helped us raise funds to build our long-term care wing. After moving in as a Tenant in 2012 she continued to volunteer, serving on Tenant Council for 5 years, acting as the Chair for two.

Personable and kind, Mrs. Fearnside was a Greeter on the Tenant's Welcoming Committee, meeting every new Tenant and giving a tour that immediately took away their stress of moving into their new home. She is also a very active volunteer in our long-term care home, reading to Residents, and helping to organizing movie nights and bridge games. In addition, she has been a monthly donor to our Foundation since moving to Belmont.

Thanks, Mrs. Fearnside, for playing a key role in Belmont's welcoming culture that distinguishes us the seniors' home of choice!

Congratulations on your Retirement Champion Award!

"You'd be surprised by the number of people who live very active lives here"

Mrs. Phyllis Pringle, 95, lives in Belmont House's Retirement Residence, but she is hardly "retiring."

During a typical week, she participates in a daily exercise class, a Music Appreciation program, the Book Club and current events discussions, a church service, two musical performances and a movie. She plays bridge four times a week. In the summer, she enjoys walking in the Stillman and rose gardens, where she also enjoys concerts and festivals.

A regular visitor of her aunts who lived at Belmont House, Mrs. Pringle came to learn how

Belmont would be the right place for her, and as it turns out, for many lifelong friends of hers as well. "I got to see how well Belmont ran, and how very kind, considerate and efficient the staff were."

Today, she loves her life at Belmont, and its amiable community. "Dinner is a chance to get to know more people because Tenants can sit with anyone. And everyone is so friendly and welcoming!"

The Pringle family greatly appreciates Belmont and its high quality of care; several members give regularly. Her son Tony also chaired the Foundation's Board. They know how important

Embracing technology to provide the best care

Health, happiness, and to remain active for as long as possible — these are lifelong goals that most of us hope to achieve.

At Belmont House, we try our best to help everyone who lives here to achieve these goals. In our long-term care home, this requires careful monitoring of each Resident, noting every sign of decline in health and the Resident's response to medical treatment and recreational activities. By catching problems right away, our staff do everything possible to help Residents improve or maintain their health, or be as comfortable as possible.

Our Personal Support Workers (PSWs) are often the staff most aware of daily changes, since they help Residents getting in and out of bed, dressing, at mealtime, and with personal care. PSWs track their observations throughout each day, to ensure our team always has a current snapshot of each Resident's wellbeing.

To ensure these notes can be viewed from anywhere, PSWs use a computer on their floor to enter them into a secure medical tracking program. And of course if anything is urgent, the appropriate staff person is also immediately notified.

Today, we are turning to you to help us make this tracking process even more effective.

Because Belmont House is committed to a higher level of one-on-one care, we use donor dollars to employ more PSWs. At any time on each floor there are 3 or 4 PSWs yet only 2 computers. When both computers are in use, PSWs must note their observations on paper, then duplicate this effort to enter their updates when a computer comes free. This means that the most current information isn't always immediately accessible online to all of our staff. Would you consider making a donation to help Belmont buy 17 new laptop computers to make sure the monitoring of all of our Residents is always as current as possible?

It takes a village to ensure the health and happiness of our Residents, and they would be so grateful for your help! Feel free to use the enclosed postage-paid envelope to make a caring gift, or make a secure online gift at www.belmonthouse.com and click Donate Now. Thank you!



Personal Support Worker Blenda Carsdola inputs data on a shared computer to ensure all changes in Resident health are available to all staff, at all times.

giving is to ensure everyone who lives at Belmont House can continue to benefit from and enjoy the activities and care available. Mrs. Pringle donates to the Belmont House Foundation annually, giving appreciated stock. "Two of my sons are in the financial business, and they advised that I give through stock. Belmont benefits, as do I since I don't have to pay the capital gains tax on donations of stock.

"I highly recommend Belmont House. I wouldn't want to live anywhere else!"



Out of gratitude for the care Belmont offers to seniors, Mrs. Phyllis Pringle, a Belmont Tenant for the last six years, gives an annual gift of stock to Belmont House Foundation.

Making our House a home

By Mary Kardos Burton
Chair, Board of Directors, Belmont House

It's been my privilege to serve as Belmont House's Board Chair for three years. Every time I walk through the front doors of Belmont House, I truly feel that it is a home. In 2018, we built on that feeling.

Thanks to the more than \$580,000 our donors generously gave to our Foundation, every Resident's room received attractive and sturdy new dressers, bedside tables and electric beds. Our new bathtubs and showers treat each Resident to a relaxing and safe bathing time.

Donor dollars also let us hire more nursing staff to give each Resident more focused one-on-one

time. We invest in our incredible staff by paying for their continuing education programs. A new Behavioural Support Nurse provides additional therapeutic support for our Residents. We also expanded Recreational Therapy.

Clearly our efforts are appreciated. On our recent Satisfaction Survey, 97 percent of Residents and their families gave Belmont top marks, as did 100 percent of our Tenants!

We've built, maintained and grew this remarkable home because of ongoing generous support from our caring community. To every donor, I thank you for your compassionate support and investing in the comfort and happiness of our Residents.

Walking...rolling...giving!

Belmont's 2018 Walk-a-Thon raised more than ever before

Thanks to the great enthusiasm of Belmont Residents, Tenants, family members, staff, volunteers and generous sponsors Achieva Health and Home Instead Senior Care, last year's Walk-a-Thon raised \$31,816 — almost \$10,000 more than the goal we set!

These funds make the lives of those who live at Belmont better by covering some costs of recreational and therapeutic programs, new beds, and medical and physiotherapy equipment. These things aren't covered by government funding and fees, so we are very grateful for every contribution to this special event.

Our next fun Walk-a-Thon is June 7th

We'd love for you to join us in our 2019 Walk-a-Thon fundraiser. The gentle course — once around the block Belmont House is on —



is open to all walkers, runners, and persons using wheelchairs and mobility aids.

If you want to participate and walk or roll with our Residents and

Tenants, you can easily invite your friends and colleagues to sponsor you by setting up your own fundraising page. Go to www.bit.ly/bhwalkathon.

If you have a business and want to become a sponsor with a minimum gift of \$1,000, we will happily offer you public recognition for your generosity.

Questions? Contact Deanna Codner, Belmont House Foundation at (416) 964-9231 ext. 238 or dcodner@belmonthouse.com. Come on, join us. It'll be fun!

FOCUS

A newsletter for
donors and friends
of Belmont House

Editor: Deanna Codner
foundation@belmonthouse.com

Writer:
Done Write Communications

Design: JPD Design

Belmont House is operated by a volunteer Board of Directors licensed by the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, the Retirement Home Authority, and operates under a service agreement with the Toronto Central LHIN.

Belmont House Foundation 55 Belmont Street, Toronto ON M5R 1R1
Phone: (416) 964-9231 Ext. 238 Fax: (416) 964-3617
E-mail: foundation@belmonthouse.com
www.belmonthouse.com © Belmont House, 2019