



Winter 2003

Issue 4



The Patchwork

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Another Great Success!

by: Amy Bridge

The Elmira & District Association for Community Living celebrated its 29th Annual Charity Quilt Auction and Country Market on November 30th, 2002.

This years Auction was another great success! We drew more people out to our venue this year than ever before. Over 130 handmade quilts, rugs, and wall hangings were donated to be auctioned off in the early afternoon but that wasn't it! Other donated items included new handmade furniture, used furniture as well as a large baking table.

EDACL is so fortunate to be a part of such a generous commu-

nity. The Auction Sale committee asks businesses in our community to help us by donating something to our auction and we always have such a generous response. Without the help of all of these people our Auction wouldn't be as big as it is today.

The auction sale committee would like to thank Quilted Heirlooms for displaying and selling raffle tickets before the sale. The first prize winner Kitty Lapington of Hamilton won the beautiful log cabin quilt. The second prize was a wall hanging which went to Judy Parker in Rockwood. The third prize was a woven

carpet strip and was won by Joan Roy of Kirkland Lake. Congratulations !

For the past two years the Auction has been held on Elmira Raceway property and as everyone probably knows we are unsure whether these facilities will be available for next year's Auction. If anyone has suggestions for a new location please feel free to call the EDACL office at 669-3205.

Thank you to all volunteers, donators, and buyers for the support you have once again shown to E.D.A.C.L. and the people which we support.

Please watch for next years

Upcoming Events

- January 24th Talent Night at the Legion
- February Annual Valentine's Dinner & Dance
- April 5th Come out and Taste The Tradition at the Elmira Maple Syrup Festival

Christmas Came Early

by: Rodger Hanna

Christmas came early to the staff and clients at Reid Woods this year. A sparkling new van arrived on the scene in December to the delight of passengers and drivers alike. A beautiful dark blue Ford Econoline van with state of the art wheelchair lift and tie downs, light grey upholstery and nifty little storage compartments and cup holders is now transporting the residents of Reid Woods to and from their day programs and appointments as well as several individuals

from the Drayton and surrounding area on their morning drive into Elmira. Staff driving the vehicle have nothing but praise for its performance on some of the secondary roads that must be navigated on the early morning run. The new on board wheelchair tie-down system has also received the thumbs up from the staff, who rate it highly for its easy to use roller belts and overall improved security. The new van fits perfectly into the garage at

Reid Woods and from all accounts has been a welcome addition to the daily life of the transportation consumers of the EDACL.



Our Day at the Parade

by: Cheryl McTaggart



Picture By: Jim Plein

On December 7th, Jim Plein and Katie Hesch were honoured to be chosen to assist Sgt. Knechtel of the Elmira Police Force in driving the lead car for the Elmira Santa Claus Parade.

They met Sgt. Knechtel at 9:30 on the parade route line-up. It was especially exciting to ride in Car 477 "Blue", the 1973 Pace car used only for community events.

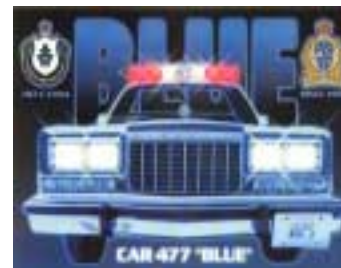
During the drive through main street, all of Jim's friends recognized him and he certainly was a celebrity.

The real excitement was when a 911 call was radioed in to the police and Sgt. Knechtel along with his passengers Jim and Katie had to respond to the emergency. While Sgt. Knechtel was investigating the call, Jim listened for radio calls in the squad car.

After the parade, Jim shook hands with the Sergeant and thanked him for this wonderful experience. He was pleased to receive pamphlets with the picture and information about "Blue" which he could hand out to his friends. One is be-

ing framed as a keep sake for the memories of this great adventure.

Both Jim and Katie are proud citizens to have Sgt. Knechtel as their new friend.



Spotlight on Jane Roth

by: Laurie Thomson



Jane Roth

Jane Roth, more affectionately known as "Janie", has been a valued employee at A.R.C. Industries since 1982. At the age of 6 she already had ties to this organization, as she was a student at, what was then known as, The New Dawn School.

Jane is a social butterfly at ARC as in the community. She has friends and acquaintances every where she goes. And no wonder! Her entire face lights up whenever she smiles...and she smiles a lot. She has the most wonderful laugh and you can't help but laugh along with her, and when she hugs you...your entire day suddenly

becomes so much better!

For many years Jane lived in St. Jacobs with her sister Marg and brother-in-law Jack, but Jane always talked about someday having her own apartment. In December of 1999, the opportunity came for her to move into a beautiful new group home on Raising Mill Gate in Elmira. She is very proud of her home and loves to invite friends over for coffee.

At ARC Industries, Jane is very skilled at a number of contracts. She works on headsets for Air Canada, puts stickers on pet food bags for Heinz, labeling candle lids, assembles screws and washers, puts in-

serts in dishwasher wheels as well as assisting in the bridal area with the wedding orders.

When not working hard, Jane enjoys playing Yahtzee, gin rummy or doing rug hooking. She loves to go on any of the outings arranged through the recreation committee and can dance for hours at the parties at the Legion, particularly if it is to the country music that she loves! Janie's favourite thing to do after work everyday, is to hurry home, make her coffee, and watch "The Young and the Restless." She surely is their number one fan!

Keep smiling Janie, you've made the world a better place!

Autism from a Different Perspective

by: Michael Tormey

From time to time, members of our Association visit family and friends at various gatherings such where people unfamiliar to their world have difficulty in accepting or understanding attitudes and behaviors that are different than their own. For a moment then, let us try to enter one of these worlds and reflect on how different and possibly painful other's attitudes towards challenged people can be.

Dear family and friends,

I have been invited to visit you on the holidays soon to come. Although these visits are difficult for me, I offer you a little insight to my world that may make my visit successful. I am considered by your world to be "challenged". I have a hidden disability called Autism. This makes it hard for me to understand the world around me as I have a hidden barrier around my brain which makes it difficult for me to adapt to the surroundings.

Many of you think I am rude and troublesome. But you don't understand that this is because I am trying so hard to understand you and make myself understood. People with Autism have different abilities. Some of us may not speak, but some write beautiful poetry. Some have difficulty in making friends, while others are whizzes in math, but we all need various degrees of support. If you can imagine for a moment, when I am touched unexpectedly, sometimes it is painful and makes me want to run away. Being in a crowd to me is like standing next to a moving freight train, not knowing if I

should jump on or off. I am frightened and confused a lot of the time because I cannot communicate your way. This is why I have to have every thing the same as much as possible. When I learn how things happen, I can get by. But if you change anything, I must relearn the whole thing all over again. Holidays and parties are so hard, so many different people, places, and things going on that is out of my usual realm. It is very stressful.

To help me in this situation, I wish you had a private place set up for me where I could retreat to every now and then when things get too much for me. You might think I cannot behave at the meal-table. You must even think that my parents or caregiver have no control over me. But for me to sit in one place for more than five-minutes is so difficult; I am nervous and overwhelmed by the many smells, sounds and people, so I just have to move about. Even eating is hard for me. Remember that Autism is a sensory processing disorder, so no wonder eating is difficult! Think about it. It involves sight, smell, touch and taste, not to mention the mechanics of just chewing and swallowing.

No! I am not being picky, There are lots of foods that I just cannot eat as my sensory system, and/or motor coordination is impaired.

Please don't be disappointed if I am not dressed as nice and fancy as the rest of you are. I must be comfortable in my

clothes or I will be miserable and agitated. If I wear stiff clothes, it would be like rubbing sandpaper against my skin. I may seem to you to be bossy and controlling and in a way I am. This is the only way I try to fit into your world. Things have to be done in a very familiar way for me or I get confused. But I am not asking you to change anything for me, just be patient with me. I am not even asking you to understand me but at least accept that I am indeed different than you and accept me as I am.

I, and the other's with Autism, do what is called "stimming"; I might rock, hum, flick my fingers in my face or flap my arms. I am not trying to be weird; I am trying in my way for my brain to adapt to your world. Sometimes I cannot help talking or singing this is called "perseverating". It is actually self-regulating or stimming and I do it because it comforts me and calms me down.

Also, be understanding with my Mom and Dad or my caregiver if they let me 'stim', as they know what is best for me. It hurts their feelings to be criticized for not controlling me. Remember again, that I, (we Autistics) do not possess the neurological system that is required to follow your rules. I will find my place in your festivity as long as you will try to view the world through my eyes.

Your Autistic guest

*For More
Information on
Autism check out
these web sites:*

www.lepresources.com

www.autism.org

www.autism.net

Or Contact the:

Geneva Centre

(416) 322-7877

Staff Recognition Awards

by: Amy Bridge

5 Years

Bonnie Martin
Wendy Vandenberg
Buffy Goring
Tami Phillips
Karen Brubacher
Debra Draper
Rachel Winslade

10 Years

Julie Martin-Jansen

15 Years

Trudy Allen
Cheryl Heimpel
Sandy Evans
Kim Detweiler

The Elmira & District Association for Community Living would like to recognize our dedicated staff who have hit the milestones of 5 years, 10 years, and 15 years with us.

This year we had seven employees celebrating 5 years with EDACL. Bonnie Martin, Wendy Vandenberg, Buffy Goring, Tami Phillips, Karen Brubacher, Debra Draper, and Rachel Winslade. These seven people work in different programs but are a large part in making the ones we serve feel good.

We had one 10 year employee this year. Julie Martin-Jansen has worked many different positions in her 10 years including her position now as a Residential Manager.

EDACL is very lucky to have had the next four employees working here for 15 years. Trudy Allen is an Instructor at Life Skills. Cheryl Heimpel has taken over as Services Director. Kim Detweiler is a Primary Counsellor at our Flamingo Residence. Sandy Evans is our longest standing

Primary Counsellor and she is also working out of our Flamingo residence.

These individuals have all made their mark in the Association. They each show caring and dedication in the work that they do.

Thank you all for the hard work and time you have so generously shared with The Elmira & District Association for Community Living.

Orientation Training

by: Laurie Thomson

Quotes from staff:

"The History of this Association is fascinating"

"The community support of EDACL is incredible."

"As a new staff I was glad I had the chance to learn so much about where I work."

On two separate days in November, Elmira & District Association for Community Living held its premier presentation of our orientation training. This is a rather unique idea, and during our research we found that out of all the other associations contacted, no one else has anything quite like this in place.

The day was divided into two segments. Greg Bechard, who began with an explanation of the orientation process and how the idea had come about, hosted the morning session.

Throughout the remainder of the morning he touched on the history, purpose and goals of the association as well as the board and committee structures. Other very important topics covered were; funding

and fundraising, professional standards, policies and procedures, code of ethics and staff retention. A slide presentation depicting the residential programs and the clients who live there, as well as A.R.C Industries and Life Skills highlighted an overview of all of our programs. During the lunch break, it was great to hear people talking about all of the information discussed so far.

The afternoon session was presented by Mr. Tom Little, a community services consultant, who gave us a history of the field of social services, current situations in Ontario and an observation of Elmira and how we relate to other organizations in the province. Of special note was his recognition of the vast amount of community

support which our association receives. His session was punctuated with video clips of the classic movie, "To Kill a Mockingbird", which pointed out just how far society has come in their acceptance and understanding of the sector for which we provide services.

Questions were welcomed throughout the entire day, and according to the feedback sheets handed out at the end of the afternoon, it was a very informative and enjoyable day.

Thanks to all who came out! Another Orientation Training is being planned. We encourage the staff who couldn't make it in November and Board & Committee members to attend.

Recreation Update

By: Louise Ellis

As with every season the Recreation Committee organizes functions and outings that are fun for everyone! This September a large group of volunteers, staff and clients took a cruise on The Grand. It was a themed dinner cruise with "pirates" aboard actively participating in a scavenger hunt. The weather was great and everyone had a fabulous time.

In October it was time to get out the costumes again for our Annual Halloween Dinner and Dance. As always, the food was awesome and then everyone spent the evening dancing. Scary music, spot dances, door prizes and "Best costume" prizes awarded to everyone. It was a BOO Radley good time. The beginning of the Christmas season brought lots of fundraising. The Recreation Committee continued with the

monthly noon lunches served at Life Skills and A.R.C. Industries raising the price from \$5 to \$6. This increase was met positively by all who participate. We sold Christmas Cards, pepperettes, cheese trays and raffle tickets. All in an effort to raise funds for the upcoming 2003 Recreational year. Looking back at 2002 the EDACL Recreation committee managed to provide a wide variety of functions and events with everyone participating in eagerness.

With 2003 upon us, the Recreation committee has several ideas for upcoming events. Continued monthly lunches are a must on the menu.

In January, we will be hosting our first ever Talent Night for staff and clients complemented by a coffee café. The date for this extraordinary event is still

to be announced but plan to attend. Who knows what hidden "talents" we have in this agency.

February will bring our Annual Valentine's Dinner & Dance hosted at the Legion. As always "red" and "hearts a glow" will be our theme and we'll be delighted by the talents of our DJ, John Bish.

March & April bring spring and we hope to look at planning one of our famous trips to a show in Toronto. Yes we are planning that far ahead. Just because winter is upon us does not mean the Recreation Committee wants to hibernate. We stay active all year through and anxiously await providing fabulous events and recreational outings throughout 2003.



Pirates on the Dinner Cruise



***Doris Oakes
Halloween Dance***

Client Christmas Party

by Louise Ellis

Oh My! Santa's come and gone again for another year! HO-HOHOpe he was good to you. He made the day for many of us at the Annual Day Program Christmas Party. On Monday December 23rd, A.R.C. Industries and Life Skills closed for the day so that we could move to our party at the festively decorated Carriage hall. As with years in the past the wonderfully talented

Beirdo Brothers dropped in to entertain us with their musical genius. Of course singing, laughing and dancing ensued creating huge appetites. The Stone Crock Restaurant arrived just in time to serve us a Christmas feast with all the trimmings. The meaning of Christmas was apparent all day long as people opened their gifts from Santa,

fellowship with one another and anticipated the coming of December 25th - Christmas Day. Here's hoping your Christmas season was full of friends, family, warmth & relaxation.

See you in the New Year.



***Melissa McTaggart
&
Ray Dietrich***



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for Community Living

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Our Mission

“The members of the association recognize and support all persons in need of our care living within the townships of Woolwich, Wellesley, Peel, and Mapleton in order that they may live in a state of dignity, share in all elements of living in the community and have the opportunity to participate effectively.”

If we can help don't hesitate to call



We're on the Web!
www.elmiracl.com

Board & Executive Committee Members

Executive Committee:

Larry Biesinger - President

Wayne Turpel

Henry Weber

Gordon Bauman

Osiyah Bauman

George Pfanner

Wayne Martin

Greg Bechard - Executive Director

Board Members:

Larry Biesinger

Osiyah Bauman

Elmer Brubacher

Colin Brubacher

Monika Landoni

Alvin Martin

Wayne Martin

George Pfanner

Wayne Turpel

Ken Walter

Henry Weber

Sam Martin

Greg Bechard