



Champlain Enhancing care Newsletter

Winter 2009

For Day Programs, Homes and Residences Serving People with Dementia in the Champlain Region

Champlain wide...

The purpose of this newsletter is to highlight the many goals that Enhancing Care teams throughout the Champlain region have accomplished as well as share information and resources related to dementia care.

Enhancing Care

This is an Assessment Tool to help you evaluate your programs and services and develop a plan that serves to improve the quality of life of the person with dementia.

For More Info...

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Painting Together



Joanne Atkinson, Recreation Technician, Elisabeth Bruyère Residence (Formerly known as Villa Marguerite)

One of the many activities that bring out the creative side of people is painting. Even those who have never held a paintbrush in their hand can experience a level of satisfaction from the act of creating something. Doing water colours with my residents has been a

learning curve for all of us as I had never tried to use this medium before starting "One Stroke at a Time". It is an activity that runs once a week for one hour. The group remains small at this time to allow me to be involved with each person at the time of the activity.

Being a novice along with my residents has allowed each of us to learn a variety of styles and techniques from one another. I might go with more props for the group to work with should there be a specific theme related to the time of year. Going into an activity of this nature with fewer expectations and/or expected outcomes from the group has put me on the same playing field as the participants. I do not claim to be an artist but I do dabble in many crafty things. Subsequently, I have many "how to" books on techniques and styles related to doing water colours should I or anyone else in the group need them.

Some hidden talents have popped out of the woodwork from this activity. A good example would be the time I said "I think I will paint a tree today". Someone else in the group thought this was a good idea and by the end of the activity had painted the most beautiful tree by using only one shade of green paint and only using memory as a guide to create it. It was titled *Remembering....* On another occasion it was raining outside and I said I was going to paint a rainbow. At the end of the activity I looked over to a resident's easel and she too had done a rainbow - it was of kisses to her children.

Not everyone I have painted with can communicate verbally. One resident is deaf and when we have worked together we have shared the canvas and passed the

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Painting Together (...continued from page 1)

brush back and forth to create the finished piece. With another resident, I sing out her name and together we hold onto the brush. As we spread the colours onto the paper we sing, dance and laugh with the moment. One other resident who is very tactile and often does large sweeping motions when sitting at a table continued these same motions when I handed her the paints and brush. By the end of the session the canvas along with the easel and tabletop were all an intricate part of the finished masterpiece and entitled *Everything & MudPie in the Park* because this phrase was repeated over and over again during the activity.

I have kept a portfolio with some of the creations while many others have been hung on the walls of the



residents' rooms or in other living spaces in our Home. For the ones I have kept I have written a background story of that painting and the artist. This allows me to reminisce with the person who created the piece and tell the stories to others when I encourage them to come and create in the group.

An activity of this nature provides the residents with positive feedback from staff and visitors regarding their creativity at the time of the activity and later on when the works are viewed on the walls. The smiles on the faces of the residents when people admire their works of art are priceless. Who knows, perhaps one day we will have an exhibit of our own at The National Art Gallery - a place right next door to us.

Alzheimer Society of Cornwall and District



(L to R): Jeanne Poirier Theoret, Day Support Activity Coordinator, Alzheimer Society of Cornwall and District; Secret Santa from Vankleek Hill; Susan Ratté, Activity Assistant Day Support, Alzheimer Society of Cornwall and District.

A special Thank You to our "Secret Santa" from Vankleek Hill on December 18th, 2008 at our Hawkesbury Adult Support Program. The clients had a wonderful afternoon of recalling precious Christmas memories and opening Christmas presents.

By Jeanne Poirier Theoret, Day Support Activity Coordinator

Christmas Memories

Also, a big thank you to Mr. Louis Leblanc, an excellent musician from Hawkesbury. He played the keyboard during our Christmas Lunch on December 18th, 2008 for all our clients at the Hawkesbury Adult Support Program. We are all anxious to have him back in the near future.

For the Love of Music



The Adult Day Support Program in Forest Park had a special guest on December 19th, 2008. Tammy Johnson volunteers each year during the holiday season and shares her musical talents with all the clients. Her many songs played on the piano, were sung by all with smiles and memories of Christmas past. Clients were also visited by Santa (Raoul Johnson) to ensure that all were ready for Christmas.

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Bring and Brag

By Laurie Sullivan, Family Support Caseworker



“Bring and Brag” was on the agenda at the Alzheimer Society of Cornwall and District’s mixed support group held at McConnell Manor in Cornwall.

“This is a unique opportunity to share some of their greatest life achievements at a time when their self-esteem may be taking a beating”. Support group members were enthralled with a newspaper clipping featuring one of our longest standing members unselfishly saving a family from their burning home. Who knew we had a local hero in our midst?!

Another member proudly circulated a photo of a beautiful wedding dress, which she had hand-stitched for her daughter’s wedding. How does she stay so humble?

Our retired school teacher and shops instructor eagerly passed around an amazing metal candle-holder he painstakingly handcrafted.

Tactile objects definitely assisted staff and members to enter into a frenzy of reminiscing. From a black and white photo of a childhood pet bear being walked on a leash in the town parade to an album depicting the move from Holland to Canada with merely the clothes on their back, this exercise was found to help members get to know one another better and forge the bond they already enjoy as members of the Alzheimer Support Group. This was a definite celebration of their skills and accomplishments, we can’t wait to do it again!

Snoezelen®

Tracey Siegel, Recreation Department, St. Joseph Continuing Care, Cornwall

Here at St. Joseph’s Complex Care our population has many different challenges. We all live on one floor with different noises, pressures and routines. At times these external situations can cause behaviours and tensions to rise.

Our Recreation Therapist who was trained in Toronto about Snoezelen® launched a Snoezelen® area and portable items that can go into different areas. With the help of trained recreational staff, students, volunteers, family members and our Behavioural Councilor we are experiencing exciting results.

After giving the residents who have challenging behaviours the Snoezelen® experience, they became more relaxed, quieter and happier. One of our residents reminisced and enjoyed the time to remember. Other residents calmed down so much they fell asleep.

We have developed a charting system so all who are using the area are aware of each resident’s likes and dislikes and how the equipment works best to achieve the desired outcome. By offering this area, our residents are experiencing a positive program that benefits them holistically.

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At your Home, are you . . .

- Thinking of starting a Support Group for Families?
- Wanting to offer information sessions about dementia and coping for family members?
- Interested in learning about Enhancing Care Program and what it can do for you?

For more information or to meet with a program staff, contact Joanne Dyson in Ottawa at 613-523-4004 or jdyson@asorc.org or Heidi Martin in Renfrew at 613-732-1159 or 613-433-5896 or Toll Free: 1-888-411-2067 or hmartin@asorc.org or Tammie Menard in Cornwall at 613-932-4914 or alzheimeredcoord@onemail.on.ca.