

The SOCIETY Scoop

Greetings from our President and CEO, Abby Katz Starr

Autumn is a time of change, we enjoy the last remnants of warmth, and reach for our sweaters in the evening. We are fortunate here at Unionville Home Society to have a beautiful campus where we can enjoy the temperate weather and the rich colours of the season.

I did a little research and learned that according to the Journal of Aging Research, autumn babies live longer! Researchers found that 30% of US centenarians born during 1880-1895 were born in the fall. One of the theories for this is because autumn marks a change in temperature, babies born in colder months develop a greater immunity to colds and the flu. Some also believe simply that cold, crisp air is good for the constitution, resulting in the child growing up with strong health, although this may be an old wives' tale!

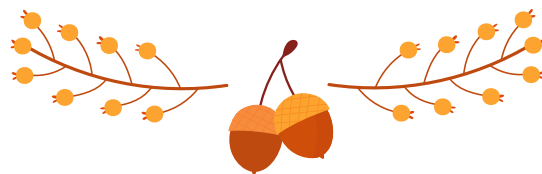
With summer programming behind us, we are preparing for a busy fall and winter season:

- Organizing for enhancements to the campus, such as improving Wi-Fi across the Villa
- Engaging in research with our Seneca College partners to review long-term care models from across the world to see what might work for UHS
- Starting to plan for holiday events



I was delighted to be a part of the VIP reception kicking off Residents' Council Week (Sept 11 – 17). Residents' Councils were mandated by the Ontario government's Fixing Long-Term Care Act in 2021, UHS celebrated the collective voices of all residents who provide advice and recommendations that contribute to the quality of life in our Home.

As always, I must acknowledge the dedicated staff who keep this campus humming with activity and quality care. We are blessed! I hope you enjoy reading this edition of the Scoop highlighting the perspectives and experiences of the residents, staff, clients and volunteers who make our campus so vibrant.



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Highlighting a Union Villa Initiative:



Bringing Gentle Persuasive Approaches Training In-House

Understanding dementia and how it affects behavior helps front-line staff provide the best care possible to Union Villa residents. That is why for the first time this year, our specialized dementia-care training was led by our in-house coaches Nurse Manager Janet and Behavioural Support Ontario (BSO) Nurse Kaitlyn.

Gentle Persuasive Approaches (GPA), is a dementia-specific certification designed to equip long-term care staff with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to support residents with dementia. GPA represents a culture change in dementia care in the last 20 years that centers the personhood of the resident, not the responsive behavior itself.

Says Kaitlyn, "We are teaching staff how to recognize the person behind the diagnosis. The brain-changes from dementia have affected the person's behavior and ability to communicate. To address the behavior, we validate the person's emotions, join in their reality, and then redirect their focus to something that is not the trigger. If you know them well, you can use their personhood to redirect them to something they enjoy and that you can do together."

By teaching in-house, our GPA Coaches can use specific cases to illustrate examples of responsive behavior and solutions, connecting the content with day-to-day interactions with residents.

The three main takeaways from GPA are:

1. The importance of understanding the personhood of each resident
2. Understanding the brain changes that lead to responsive behaviours.
3. Teaching redirection techniques so that staff have the tools to manage physically responsive behaviours with confidence in themselves and their teammates

Dementia causes pathways in the brain to become disconnected, causing disrupted speech, misunderstanding of social cues, decreased motor function, and confusion about common objects. Someone with dementia could use a fork for hairbrush or try to eat things that are not edible because the meaning attached to those concepts has altered or been lost. They may exhibit reactive behavior verbally or physically, presenting a danger to themselves, other residents, and staff.

"We have been successful at Union Villa because we have good, knowledgeable staff who know the residents and their personalities well. They see what causes reactive behavior and with GPA training, they can take steps right away," says Janet. "If you understand the behavior before it happens, it diminishes the number of incidents and creates a happier environment for the residents."

Both coaches emphasize the impact of GPA training on the quality of life of both residents and staff. Feeling prepared and supported helps the direct-care team respond more effectively when responsive behaviours arise. Thank you to the entire front-line team for your dedication to building a safer Home environment where residents can age well, and live better.

Sharing a Volunteer Testimonial

Meet Pam and Tofu

“Volunteering can be an incredibly rewarding experience, and for me, it was the desire to share the joy I experienced as the handler and owner of Tofu that drew me to it. Tofu, my furry companion, has a special gift for bringing comfort and happiness to others. Seeing the positive impact Tofu had on people's lives inspired me to extend that impact beyond our immediate circle. Volunteering allows us to spread that joy to individuals who may be in need of emotional support or simply a warm and friendly interaction.”

As a certified therapy dog, Tofu has undergone specialized training to ensure he is well-behaved, gentle, and attuned to the needs of the individuals we visit. When we enter Union Villa, we are greeted with smiles and anticipation from the residents, which is incredibly heartwarming. Watching Tofu's presence ignite a sense of joy and excitement among the residents is a gratifying experience.

What I particularly enjoy about this volunteer work is witnessing the transformative power of the human-animal bond. The seniors often share stories about their own pets or reminisce about animals they've had in the past. These conversations spark a sense of connection and nostalgia that brings a genuine light to their eyes. It's evident that the moments we spend with them have a positive impact on their emotional well-being, and that sense of purpose and fulfillment is truly priceless.

Volunteering in this capacity holds a special place in my heart because it allows me to contribute to the happiness and comfort of the elderly in a unique way. The simple act of spending time with Tofu and offering a listening ear can make a significant difference in their lives. It's a privilege to be able to share Tofu's gifts with those who need them the most, and I find great



fulfillment in being part of an initiative that promotes the well-being of our seniors. For those considering volunteering, I encourage you to embrace the opportunity wholeheartedly. Volunteering at UHS, Therapeutic Paws of Canada, or any organization that focuses on bringing comfort and joy to others offers you the chance to be a source of light in someone else's day. So, to all prospective volunteers, I encourage you to embark on this incredible journey of compassion and connection. The joy you give and receive will undoubtedly enrich your life in ways you never imagined.”

– Pam

**For more information
about volunteering at
UHS, contact
volunteer@uhs.on.ca.**



Nursing Spotlight – RNs and RPNs

Our Nurses: A critical part of the Care Team



It goes without saying that our Nurses are a crucial component of Union Villa's direct care team. We have 39 nurses at Union Villa including 12 Registered Nurses (RNs) and 27 Registered Practical Nurses (RPNs).

Their goal above all is to keep our residents healthy and safe, and they help do this by providing medication, performing medical assessments, and collaborating with UHS's interdisciplinary team of doctors, physiotherapists and nutritionists to ensure residents receive the support they need. They also perform clinical assessments that include blood sugar, behavior changes, weight changes, and methods for managing diabetes.

We asked three of our nurses to reflect on their profession. Here are their responses:

Why choose LTC?

Maria Krumov, Director of Care: "I have always wanted to provide good quality care to people. I started in obstetrics gynecology and pediatrics in 1993 before moving into long-term care. The main difference between LTC and working at a hospital is the continuity of care. Instead of seeing clients for a few days, you see them every day, for years at a time. It's a privilege to be serving our seniors and working in LTC. When you see your residents smiling, well dressed, enjoying their meal, you feel good. You know the staff are providing high quality care. Being a unit nurse is very challenging, but ensuring residents receive the care that they need makes it worth it. When I came to UHS, I felt like I had found a place where everyone is aiming to provide the best for our seniors, and I am grateful to be a part of that."



What are the special skills you need to be a good nurse in LTC?

Anku Rani, Nurse Manager: “A good nurse who works in long-term care should be an active listener with good observation skills who knows how to communicate empathetically, work in a team, and genuinely cares about the residents. They should also be organized and have great time management skills so they can successfully juggle the many tasks that come up during a shift. I feel that a good LTC nurse knows they are doing a good job when they are appreciated by the residents, not just by management and teammates.”

What experience have you had as an LTC nurse at Union Villa?

Naveed Noori, Nurse Manager: “I started working with seniors after taking care of my Dad, who was diagnosed with cancer when he was in his late 70s. I found that I really enjoyed it. They have so much

wisdom, they are funny, I really fell in love with it. The team at Union Villa is amazing. The whole team, senior management, housekeeping, dietary, maintenance, everyone helps take care of each other. Some staff have been working here for 10-30 years, so we really get to know each other and their past stories here! During the pandemic, I was so grateful that I was working here! The whole crisis was dealt with successfully because of the people! It really felt like an extended family handling a crisis together. It shows that the people you work with matters. They could be your motivator, supporter and sometimes, the extra hand that you need to go through a difficult day. A challenge becomes so much smaller when everyone works together, playing their roles at their best, no matter what that role is. That's Union Villa, on every layer of its organization.”

Thank you for your unwavering dedication to Union Villa residents and your fellow colleagues.

IN RECOGNITION OF ALL OUR RN'S AND RPN'S – PICTURED AND NOT PICTURED

Ai Chan (Tracy) Z.	Cindy P.	Jenelyn D.	Leh Gay W.	Mei L.	Susanna S.
Alicia L.	Gajani G.	Jingya (Mia) L.	Leila L.	Melissa F.	Veronica E.
Amy L.	Hodan A.	Joanne P.	Leonid P.	Ming-Lin C.	Vivien C.
Anku R.	Iren B.	Juliana D.	Lili G.	Naveed N.	Zheng (Angela) Z.
Arvin B.	Ivy (Bi Fang) L.	Kaitlyn C.	Man Yan T.	Nelita D.	
Chantal D.	Jane P.	Kenneth Paul A.	Maria K.	Olga G.	
Choedon L.	Janet T.	Kevin M.	Maria B.	Rona P.	

Resident Profile

Meet Lila Eaton

Lila was born in London in 1926 as the second eldest of six.

Her father ran a family business that had been passed down through generations. As Master Grainer, he transformed ordinary surfaces such as plain wood or plastic into grained wood or marble. She loved dancing and performing with her sister. Her mother tragically died when she was only 7, and as the eldest girl, she put herself in the role of caring for her four younger siblings. Then came World War II and the Blitz. Lila's younger siblings were evacuated along with other children, but at 14, she was too old. When the air raid sirens went off, she would go with her Dad to count people taking shelter underground, which was his wartime job. Meanwhile her beloved younger siblings were put on trains with name tags, a gas mask, and rations and sent away to farms outside of London, far away from the danger of dropped bombs. The experience of being cut off from her siblings during the Blitz, especially after the loss of her mother, no doubt shaped Lila into the fearless matriarch she would become later in life.

She was 17 when she signed up for the Women's Land Army and was sent to Maesllwch Castle in Wales. The women would gather potatoes, hunt, and do farm work to help with the war effort. But she couldn't stand killing the animals, mostly rabbits, so she quit the volunteer position and came back home. She crossed all the way from Wales to London alone while the war raged on, determined to live by her own terms.

At the end of the war, the family was happily reunited. Like many Londoners, they moved out to the suburbs while London was rebuilt. In a moment worthy of a romantic comedy movie, Lila and her sister met two handsome brothers on Canvey Island at The Monico nightclub and they fell in love. A joyous double wedding followed soon after. During this time, the family worked at a butcher shop in London and lived on Canvey Island. Two of Lila's daughters were born there, Susan and Pam. In 1957, the family immigrated to Canada, settling in Don Mills, a thriving new community. In 1960 Lila's third daughter, Diane, was born.

With such a large, tight-knit family, they would have family picnics in Pickering, which was all parks at that time. Lila



had grown into the family matriarch, running the home and ensuring the family stayed close. Her daughters say she has always been a leader in the family, strong-willed, organized, and a little bossy, but in a good way. She always told her children, if you put your mind to it, you can do anything. To this day she always makes sure her girls have their food and tea before she will have her own.

Lila's journey to Union Villa came after the passing of her beloved husband. She was living in independent seniors apartments for several years and doing well, but then COVID hit. The isolation caused a significant deterioration in her wellbeing. Her daughters were very worried about her, but she was determined to continue living alone. After she suffered a bad fall, the time had come to pursue options with greater support. They were overjoyed when she was accepted at Union Villa, the family's first choice of long-term care home.

When Lila first moved in to Union Villa, she thought she was in a hotel. She would say, 'what great service they have here!'. Two years later, Lila feels at home in Union Villa and she is thriving. She is more social. She loves her room, she loves the staff, she loves the events. She has her independence, but also has people around to look after her. Lila now has seven grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren, and her family visits her often. Her daughters feel it has added years to her life and it gives them great piece of mind to know she is happy and in good hands.

Coming Soon



UNIONVILLE COMMUNITY CENTRE FOR SENIORS (UCCS)

SENIORS ACTIVE LIVING FAIR

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2023

More Details to follow on Time and Location

Join us for:

- An in-person health fair featuring agencies serving seniors in our community
- Presentations on seniors' wellness relevant to seniors and caregivers
- Live demos of exercise classes
- Healthy snacks and refreshments
- Giveaways and raffles

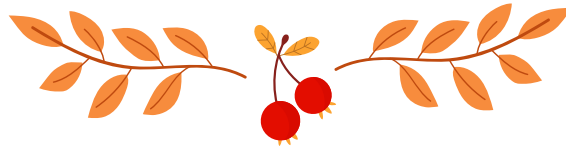
This event is free of charge for seniors, caregivers, and practitioners in our community. Pre-registration is strongly encouraged.

To register, please get in touch with us:

Tel.: (437) 431-2831
Email: uccs@uhs.on.ca



Funding provided by:



UNION VILLA AUXILIARY

Holiday Bazaar

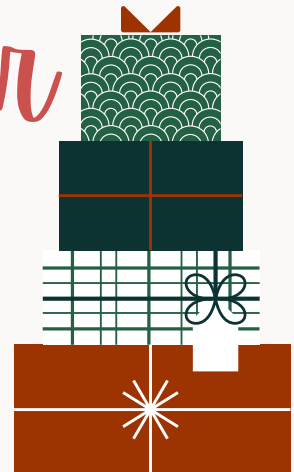
Saturday, November 25, 2023

9:30 am to 2 pm

Central United Church

131 Main Street, Unionville. ON

Shop for holiday stocking stuffers, NEW and gently used housewares, décor, seasonal items and more



Net proceeds from the Bazaar will support Union Villa long-term care resident programs.
For more information, please call (905) 477-2822 ext. 4270

UNIONVILLE HOME SOCIETY
FOUNDATION PROUDLY PRESENTS:

Our Spirit Never Ages

2023 UNION VILLA DINNER PARTY
ANGUS GLEN GOLF CLUB



November 3, 2023 • Cocktails: 6:00 p.m. | **Dinner:** 7:00 p.m. • **Tickets:** Before Sept 30...\$225 • As of Oct 1...\$250

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Proceeds to support resident programs, nursing equipment and technology advancements, all crucial to ensuring the best long-term care experience for those entrusted to our care.

**portion of ticket fees may be eligible for a tax receipt, subject to CRA guidelines*