

# The SOCIETY Scoop

## Greetings from our CEO, Abby Katz Starr



As we move from the end of summer into the Fall season, we thankfully have been able to connect once again with friends and family, enjoy time socializing and appreciating the warmth of the

season. Although COVID has not yet disappeared, we have found ways to manage and hold it at bay and return to some semblance of normalcy! What this looks like as we go forward will undoubtedly change. Still, I am continually impressed by the strength of our staff, the support of our families and the community, and the resilience of our residents and members.

So, what can we do to welcome the change of seasons? Well, first, did you know that September is National Happy Cat Month as well as on the 8th it is National Hug Your Hound Day? For some additional fun, on September 19th it is International

Talk Like a Pirate Day...AARGH! And on the 24th it is National Punctuation Day, so be proud of your commas and exclamation marks. This is also an important time for students as they gear up for school, and certainly, COVID has made that experience one for the books. For our residents and community members, September and October are when we start thinking of fall colours and preparing for the impending holidays starting with of course, Thanksgiving and Halloween! Let's make sure that we embrace the last warm touches of the sun before we have to think about grabbing that sweater or shawl for the unexpected cooler temperatures.

Whatever the next few months bring as the pandemic continues to make itself at home in our community, we will together face the future, support each other, be grateful to every day that the sun shines and find ways to bring the fall colours into our lives.



## Message from our Board Chair, Christine Joe

I would like to introduce myself as the new Chair, NUHS Board of Directors, taking over from Glenn Crosby as of the June 21, Annual General Meeting. I am

both honoured and excited to play a pivotal role in continuing the strong legacy and reputation of Unionville Home Society in delivering innovative and leading edge services for Seniors.

I joined the NUHS Board in 2018 on the recommendation of a former colleague and am so impressed by the dedication of the staff, volunteers and donors to our residents, clients, one another

and the community at large . I am also amazed at the willingness of residents and their families to let us know what is going well, what we could be doing better and how they can help. I know that COVID has been very taxing on everyone, so on behalf of the Boards I want to thank you for your flexibility and adaptation to the frequently changing government requirements related to working at and visiting the Home and our screening and testing requirements.

As I begin my time as Chair I am excited for what lies ahead for us and to sharing the great things we achieve at NUHS.

## Resident Profile: Meet Mrs. Tehmi Billimoria

I was born on November 2, 1929 in Bombay, (Mumbai) India and grew up with a brother in a joint family with both parents and maternal grandparents, a priestly family following the Zoroastrian Principles: "Good Words, Good Thoughts, Good Deeds".

I went to a local All Girls' High School where cooking, embroidery, and sewing were part of the curriculum. My love of cooking garnered a first prize in a couple of cooking contests.

At the age of 17 years, I considered myself the envy of all when I fell in love with "prince charming", a handsome man 11 years older and a Captain in the Indian Army.

We were married in January 1947 and continued to live with my extended family. Our first child, a daughter named Roshan, was born and together we travelled throughout India for a few years in Army postings. We had another daughter and a son and I became a stay-at-home mom. After retirement

from the Army, my husband worked in a travel agency and he had an opportunity to travel to U.S., Europe and Japan conducting tours.

By 1972, our three children immigrated to Toronto for a better life. I missed them terribly when they left India but we decided to visit then in Toronto from July to October 1980. This gave us a wonderful taste of Canadian life. Now parting again was a deep sorrow as I wondered if I would ever see my children again.

Then in 1985, our daughter Roshan came to Bombay and arrangements were made for us to travel with her to visit Toronto again from

March 1985 to January 1986. During this visit back to Canada, we celebrated my second daughter's baby's first Birthday party and wrote cooking books for both my daughters.

Leaving my children and grandchildren for the second time was very painful but after much thought and coaxing, my husband and I decided to immigrate to Canada sponsored by my children. I was 59 years of age, we when entered Canada for good on September 23, 1988, sacrificing our life, friends and belongings in Bombay so that we could be close to our children. We lived with one of our daughters for approximately 4 years; after which time we became Canadian citizens and felt confident to move into a Seniors Apartment Building in Brampton.

As we grew older my husband started showing signs of Alzheimer. When I could no longer take care of him at home, we sadly had to admit him into a long-term care home in

Brampton. Thankfully the location was only a 5 minute walk from our apartment, so I visited my husband daily and spent a lot of time with him, until he passed away about 8 years later.

I continued living on my own in the apartment for many years but eventually required private care due to my arthritis. Eventually I needed even more help so for 2-3 years, my daughter Roshan would be travel from Markham to Brampton almost daily to take care of me. With my consent, my daughter began looking into long-term care options closer to her house in



Markham. After visiting 33 Homes in the area, she decided to move me to Union Villa in June 2016, a convenient and best match for my care. I am glad and thankful of her decision. With sacrifice and support from her husband, she visits me daily, ensuring that my comfort and care is a priority.

This November 2nd, will be my 92nd birthday and I can say I have been blessed with a long life and wonderful children who have taken good care me. God Bless my 3 children who are happily married and well settled in life. What more can a mother ask for?

*Thank you for letting me share my story, Tehmi*

## Social Work Wrap Around Support Program: A Joint Partnership

We have had an active Adult Day Program for many years, and through the pandemic, like the rest of our amazing organization, it re-emerged as a virtual platform. In addition, this period of change also provided the opportunity to look for additional supports that could be offered to its current and future users. So, in June 2021, the Alzheimer Society of York Region partnered with New Unionville Home Society Adult Day Program to pilot a 7 month 'Social Work Wrap Around Support Program' for clients and their caregivers as part of COVID funding extended from the Ontario Health Team.

A mutual respect and referral connection has always existed between our two agencies and we continue to share wonderful clients and families. What we saw through this past year and a half was the negative impact of COVID-19 on our clients and their loved ones, and it has never been more apparent the need for support, resource and linkages to assist in navigating the stress/impact and the "how to" move forward from COVID-19.

This exciting partnership is providing numerous benefits:

- The Alzheimer Society is bringing all of its expertise and conducting all of ADP re-entry assessments for in-person programming for admitted clients when the ADP re-opens
- In addition to participating in our program, this partnership introduces those clients and their family to the Alzheimer Society that may not be linked and receiving their support. Our clients will have access to more information and gain a better understanding of the needs and impacts that our older adults and their caregivers had and are facing both because of their health issues as well as the underlying burden of COVID.
- By working closely with the Alzheimer Society, our Adult Day Program staff are able to ensure the care received/required by the client and any identified concerns are mutually shared, discussed and planned for. The client and their caregiver is, always, central to their care plan.

This project will be closely monitored, tracked and communicated between agencies to ensure a seamless and partnered experience for everyone involved.

## A Campus Showcase of Blooming Flowers and Growing Gardens



Union Villa front courtyard



Union Villa resident gardens



Adult Day Program



Wyndham Gardens gardens

## North Campus Connections

As summer comes to an end and we prepare to enjoy the last weeks of warmth before the fall chill sets in, we want to highlight the exciting moments of the summer. During June, July, and August, our centre saw the introduction of in-person, outdoor programming. Our clients were able to enjoy the warm and sunny weather in each other's company with small-group programs such as Outdoor Cafe Coffee Hour, Bingo and a Beverage, Art Classes, and Ice Cream Social hosted under a tent outdoors. We also continued to offer at least one virtual program a day for those who are not comfortable with returning to the centre at this time. Following public health guidelines, our centre slowly reintroduced in-person, indoor, physically distanced programs such as Tai Chi and art classes.

This summer also saw the launch of several special events. In June, our centre hosted a virtual afternoon trivia event to celebrate Seniors' Month with our CEO, Abby Katz Starr, the Hon. Minister Raymond Cho, PA Daisy Wai, and MPP Billy Pang. Thank you to Abby, Minister Cho, and MPP Pang for their special remarks, making it a truly phenomenal event. In July, staff organized an outdoor barbecue event, and in August, the UCCS brought back the popular Supper Club indoors featuring live music and games. Watch the monthly calendars for more exciting experiences.

The pandemic slowed the offering of programs at the centre, allowing UCCS staff an opportunity to reassess the course of the centre's performance. We solicited feedback from current and former members on what programs they would like to see this year and where they feel most at ease in terms of Covid-19. This helped staff introduce new programs while also bringing back old favourites!

This summer was the beginning of the launch of our new registration software, MySeniorCentre. MySeniorCentre allows residents to register themselves in programs from the comfort of their own homes. The software also will enable UCCS to keep meticulous records of participants, which



is extremely helpful for contact tracing. We look forward to getting everyone acquainted with this new technology, and we're happy to provide any assistance along the way!

As the restrictions ease and we continue to develop more new ideas, we hope to launch more special events and in-person programming. This summer has been a whirlwind of incorporating new ideas and piloting new methods of program delivery to engage with as many members of our community as possible, and we look forward to connecting with our community physically distanced, in-person, and virtually as we continue down this path into the bright and golden days of autumn.



## A New HR Initiative: The C.R.E.W.

The C.R.E.W. stands for Campus Representatives for Engagement and Wellness and has employee representation from all departments who meet to organize activities to strengthen staff engagement and contribute to employee wellness.

While the official Summer Olympics took place, the C.R.E.W. launched their version with a walking challenge with staff split into teams representing different countries. For two weeks, staff walked solo and in groups around the Villa before, during or after their shift. Each walk earned points. At the end of the competition, Team Russia, represented by Victoria Square staff, won with a grand total of 948 walks. That's 475 kilometres!

This activity aimed to reinforce the importance of regular exercise and its positive impact on mental health. Walking outdoors and taking in the fresh air were a definite mood booster and stress reliever, not to mention a huge success with 1,307 kilometres logged by participating staff. Many have shared that this initiative helped them get on track and have now vowed to continue this healthy lifestyle choice.

Stay tuned for more updates on C.R.E.W. activities in the Fall.



# THE HOMEFRONT

## INVESTING IN OUR RESIDENTS' CARE

*Unionville Home Society Foundation is a registered charity founded in 1991. The foundation is dedicated to a single mission: to fund amenities and initiatives that enhance the lives of our residents. The foundation believes quality seniors care is a priority and endeavours to provide a variety of "giving" opportunities ranging from special events, to personal and corporate giving campaigns.*

## The Power of Giving and Impacting the Lives of Those Entrusted in Our Care

As we transition from Summer to Fall and trade in our shorts for sweaters, it's the perfect time to share updates from our Foundation.

Always seeking new ideas for fundraising and cultivating community relationships, we have applied for several grants to other foundations and government related agencies. To date, three of our submissions have been approved with almost \$14,000 in funding. We will keep you posted as we receive news on future grant submissions.

- **McCall MacBain Foundation**  
*Investing in people and ideas to build a better tomorrow.*  
Funding directed towards staff and residents' initiatives.
- **Celebrate Markham Grant Program,**  
*City of Markham grant program that gives funding for not-for-profit organizations in Markham.*  
Funding directed to supporting seniors' wellness at Unionville Community Centre for Seniors.

- **J.P. Bickell Foundation:**  
*Supports health, medical research, arts and culture, social services, the environment and education in Ontario.*  
Funding directed to purchase two residents' lifts.



Thank you to Peter and Donna Miasek for donating bird feeders for our Union Villa courtyards. The residents are enjoying the company of their new feathered friends.

## Thank you for Supporting our Staff!

While the pandemic brought much needed attention to our frontline and healthcare workers, the community reacted with gifts of snacks, meals, and funds to support staff appreciation efforts. We are grateful that this generous philanthropy has not stopped. Below are a few examples of recent giving activities:



Pop-up snack shack showing appreciation for our front line and health care workers thanks to the Marrelli family and Cornerstone Community Church.



Robbie's BBQ & Catering treated staff to a lovely BBQ lunch. Thank you Heather and Robert for appreciating our staff.



John Street and Apple Creek Tim Hortons stores set up a pop up shop outside the Villa serving coffee and treats to our staff to recognize their valuable contribution.



Thank you Kate's Garden for donating fresh bouquets weekly for our nurses stations.



Staff engaging in a diverse celebration through food and culture. The event was made possible thanks to Minto Communities.

## UPCOMING EVENTS – SAVE THE DATE

In November 2020, the Foundation's signature event, the 2020 Union Villa Golden Celebration Dinner Party went totally virtual for the first time and what a great success it was with over \$108,000 in net proceeds. Our community came together to reinforce that we are "better together" and so we embark on our next adventure with the launch of our upcoming 2021 Virtual Hybrid Dinner Party - **Better Together**, to be held virtually and at Angus Glen Golf Club.

Celebrations will start on October 25 and run to November 5 and will include opportunities to participate in an online silent auction, sponsorships and giving, and a gourmet meal to enjoy at the beautiful Angus Glen or catered to your home.

This year's proceeds will be directed to refreshing the resident's rooms, including the purchase of comfort chairs and other ongoing important resident initiatives. We thank all our past donors and sponsors and look forward to another successful event.

SAVE THE DATE



2021 UNION VILLA HYBRID DINNER PARTY

# better together

VIRTUAL EVENT OCTOBER 25 - NOVEMBER 5, 2021  
DINNER PARTY THURSDAY NOVEMBER 4, 2021 • 6:30PM  
ANGUS GLEN GOLF CLUB

To register or for sponsorship opportunities, Contact (905) 477-2822 ext. 4270



### In Memory of a True Wonder Woman with a Golden Heart

JOAN ROSSI



The Unionville Home Society (UHS) community will always celebrate the dedication and kindness of Joan Rossi whose spirit left us on June 21, 2021.

Joan was a devoted event committee volunteer for over 15 years who generously gifted our organization with her time, talent and treasures.

Joan was a skilled business woman in the promotional

product industry and later spent the majority of her retirement supporting the seniors community.

Joan championed every fundraising event at UHS and now her memory and contributions will endure for many years to come.

For Joan, volunteering was not a way of giving, it was a way of living. Thank you, Joan, for inspiring us. We miss you.

**Our Mission:** Enhancing the experience of aging, one person at a time.

**Our Vision:** A progressive community where older adults thrive; aging well and living better.