

# The SOCIETY Scoop

## Message from President & CEO

*While January is almost gone, there is always time to extend warm wishes for a Happy New Year!*

2024 has already started taking shape to be a year of bold directions that will help shape the future plan for Unionville Home Society. As a community of care we are always looking for ways to improve our delivery of services, support our staff and ensure that we are providing the best care and service to our residents, members, and families, not just in the immediate sense, but with a view for our future stakeholders. Recently, the UHS Board of Directors met for a visioning session to explore ideas, share perspectives, and identify opportunities that will define the future of our campus, both in the short, and long-term.

**There is much to look forward to this year including:**

- Our partnerships with both Seneca Polytechnic and York University, bringing innovation to our organization and undertaking research to support new ideas and initiatives;
- Updating Union Villa's main lobby reception area to improve customer service and safety for all who visit;
- Embracing new dementia-friendly programming to better serve our most vulnerable residents.



I continue to be grateful for the passion and dedication of our Board, staff, volunteers and donors who work so hard to make Unionville Home Society the leading provider of seniors' services in our region. Together we have created an environment where seniors can thrive and live life to its fullest.

From the bottom of my heart, I hope that 2024 will be a canvas of new opportunities, friendships, and achievements for all of you.

– Abby Katz Starr



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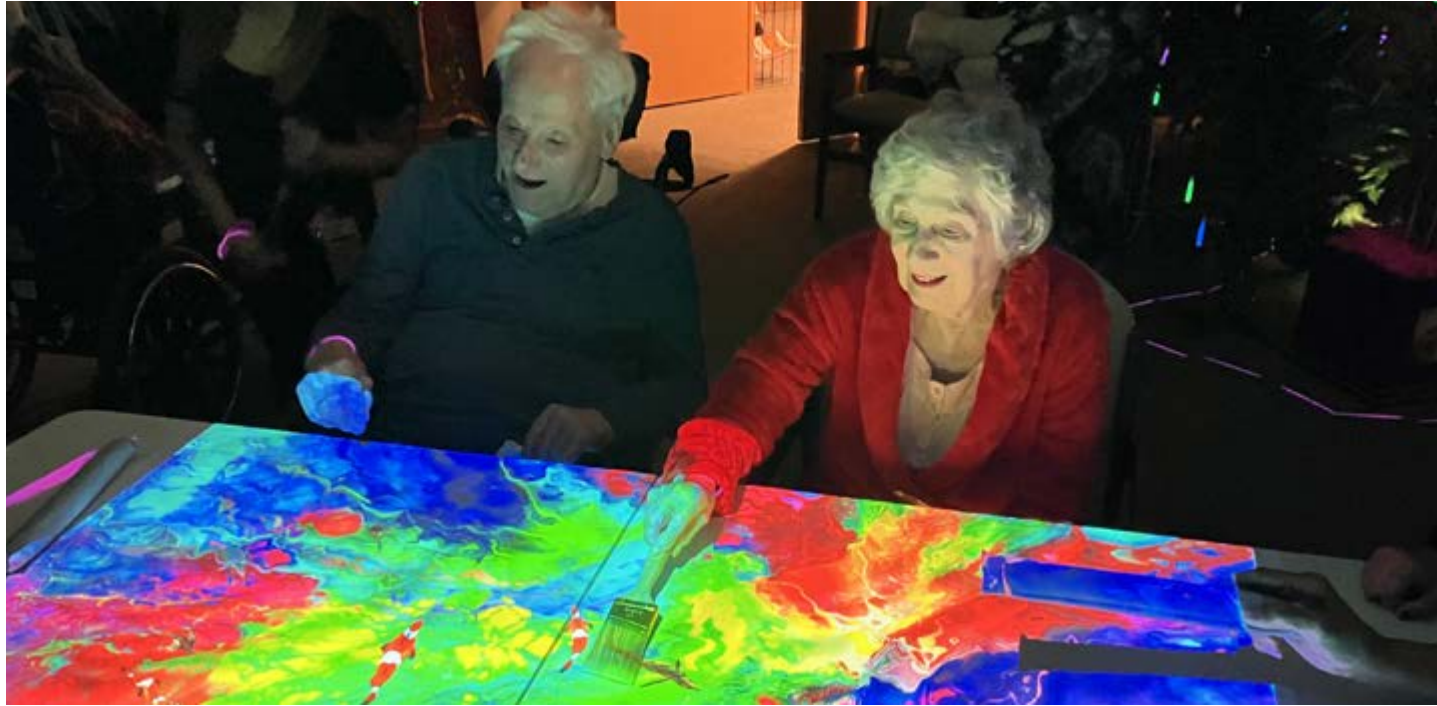
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## Innovative and Immersive Technology Arrives at Union Villa

### Welcome BUDII



*Imagine looking down at a table, but instead of the surface, you see a rainbow coloured pond with swimming fish. The water ripples and splashes as you reach out to touch it.*

This is the experience residents had with Budii, Union Villa's new interactive projection system designed to encourage multi-sensory interaction in people with age-related, mental or physical health challenges. The rainbow pond is only one of 120 activities in the newly launched Budii suite, and our Recreation Team is so excited about the variety of stimulating experiences it will create for residents.

Lindsay, Union Villa's Recreation Manager, says the response to the technology was overwhelmingly positive. "Some residents didn't want to give up their spot at the table! The rich colours and sounds made them light up and intuitively start to interact with the images." With Budii, Recreation staff have a versatile tool to enhance therapeutic activities. "We were so excited to see such strong engagement with an activity, especially from residents who are not as expressive."

Mr. Seth, a resident, enjoyed both learning about the projections and participating in a 'whack a mole' style game, something he had never played before. He liked

exploding colourful spheres as fast as possible. "I do not enjoy passive activities, I just fall asleep! I liked trying to get to the fish and the bubbles, they looked so real. I look forward to playing again."

Kaitlyn, our Behaviour Support Ontario (BSO) nurse, is trained to assist residents who are demonstrating responsive behavior. She says that when residents are engaged and stimulated with activities, there is a significant decrease in responsive behaviours such as outbursts. "Engagement looks different to everyone – some residents may get enjoyment from watching, others may love squashing coconuts or playing competitive games, but regardless of where they fall on the cognitive spectrum, these interactive activities will help improve brain health." Budii, like other recreation therapy activities, is designed to enhance the cognitive, social and emotional experience of residents. It can be for residents who enjoy group activities or for those who are more independent. In the hands of our experienced and passionate staff, the Budii system has something for everyone.

A special thanks to the J.P. Bickell Foundation and our donors for funding the Budii system and giving our residents the opportunity to experience therapeutic 'fun', one projection at a time.

## Volunteer Spotlight

### Meet Emer Barnes-Chow

*I have been volunteering since the spring of 2017. Volunteering has a special place in my life.*

I suffer from bipolar disorder which has been prominent for most of my life, making working full time difficult. I receive ongoing support from my family, and they suggested I get a volunteer position as they knew that it would be good for me to interact with people. I have a background in Customer Service so I started looking to find a good role.

I chose Unionville Home Society (UHS) because of my daughter. There was a fashion show at the Unionville Community Centre for Seniors (UCCS), and she was one of the volunteers. I accompanied her to UCCS and then later to Union Villa for one of her shifts. When I went in with her I was struck by the feeling that this is a good, calming place and I could definitely see myself volunteering here.

I applied and started in Customer Service. I liked getting to meet new people, feeling connected with others, and just being around people who care about the community. I wanted to give back in a small way, and I could do it with the skills I have.

I started volunteering at UCCS last September. The biggest difference between Customer Service and UCCS is that you get to interact with clients longer both as a group and 1:1. There is always a buzz and a happiness around the place that lifts my mood. Everyone knows everyone. I remember I was nervous the first time going down the stairs to the program, but they were so warm and welcoming. I will never forget their kindness from that first moment of introduction.

My main duty at UCCS is assisting in any way I can. I help with the regular Dessert Cafés and special events, helping setup and cleanup, and socializing with the members.



What I love about volunteering is that I am helping people. I'm the type of person who doesn't like to let people down, so I like having that accountability and structure. Being a part of the community, and feeling like I am able to give back, is a healing experience. The work is helping me on my journey and I am also gaining experience and confidence so I can be in a good position to perhaps, return to work one day.

Unionville Home Society has so many volunteer opportunities and I would encourage prospective volunteers to contact Volunteer Services so they can experience the joy that I feel each time I support a resident, their family, or a seniors program. I was nervous at first but the staff made me feel so welcome. Knowing that I am making a difference for others has also made a difference for me.

## My Life: A Resident Profile

### Sharing Antonetta's Story

*Antonetta was born in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, May 24, 1936.*

She was the 'caboose baby', the youngest of two siblings, a brother and sister. Their father died when they were only babies. Her resourceful mother had to take a dime and stretch it.

Antonetta knew she loved animals when she was 6 years old. There were stray cats in the neighborhood. She says, "We didn't have much but we would let them come in and warm by the fireplace." She loved the cats and wanted to give them food, but her family was living on welfare, only 4 dollars. Antonetta would pick up coins on the ground on the way home from school. Even a nickel would help buy an extra potato.

Antonetta went to what they call in the Netherlands a 'Household School' where they teach you everything to do with the family, daily life, and running a household. She also learned sewing skills, and this helped her later on when she not only made clothes for the family, but also sold items for money.

One of the things she loved doing was visiting the Rotterdam Zoo, because of her affection for animals. But WW2 had started when she was only four years old, and eventually the zoo was flattened by bombs. Happily, it was rebuilt years later, bigger and better than before.

She was 20 when she came to Canada in 1957. Thanks again to the Household School, she was working as a nanny. At the time, she was working for a young couple with two young boys. The wife convinced her to immigrate and start a new life.

She ended up coming to Canada alone on a boat. She says she thinks it was a battleship that was used to transport the soldiers from the Netherlands. She roomed with her aunt's family and started working at a pet store.



She met her husband when she was 21. "The neighbor boy was 15 and was after me, and I said no! I could be your mother! He went home and brought out his older brother George, who became my husband." They married in Toronto. Everybody called him Joe.

She is a mother to two girls and one boy, born in 1958, 1963, and 1976 respectively. She ran a home daycare for many years. "The kids, they love me. I keep them busy, tell them stories, read to them, we colour, paint, go to the park, go on the swings. When the 6:30 pm happens, they see their parents, down come the tears!"

George passed in October 2014. After that she moved to Wyndham Gardens, an independent seniors housing on the UHS campus. Eventually when health demands required it, she came to Union Villa. In her room she has pictures of her three great-grandchildren (2 girls 1 boy), her grandchildren (2 boys and 3 girls), her children, and her husband, including family pets: a 20lbs cat and a dog named after Reba McIntyre, the country singer.

## UHS Employee Highlight

### Union Villa's Housekeeping Team

*Our Housekeeping Team works behind the scenes to provide a safe and well-maintained environment for everyone at Union Villa LTC.*

With 13 full and part-time staff, working between 7:00 am – 11:00 pm every day, the team is responsible for both general and deep cleaning of every space in the Home including the delivery of laundry and the replenishment of supplies to each resident room.

Housekeeping also plays a crucial role in limiting the spread of virulent respiratory illnesses and Covid-19. The team works closely with the Infection, Prevention and Control (IPAC) lead to ensure all surfaces are consistently sanitized and disinfected, adhering to IPAC protocols to keep residents, staff and visitors healthy.

Each Housekeeping staff member is trained and adheres to the standards set by Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) to ensure a safe environment for all.

"We take pride creating a sense of home and overall wellbeing for residents," says Shushilata, Environmental Services Supervisor at Union Villa.

"Whether faced with outbreaks or incidents, our team

works tirelessly to contribute to a high quality of life for everyone at UHS."

Cecilia has worked as a Housekeeping Aide at UHS for three decades. "What has kept me committed all these years is not just the work itself, but the exceptional individuals I encounter daily, from supportive management to colleagues, everyone is dedicated to the shared vision of creating a welcoming home for the residents. To me, this is why I continue to find fulfilment in my role."

Editha, who works evening shifts, has been with the organization for 10 years. "Although I don't get to interact with residents as often as my day colleagues, I am focused on ensuring the residents have a clean and comfortable environment that is as reminiscent of their own homes."

Nyasha, is one of the newest Housekeeping Aides on the team. "What I enjoy most about my job is the opportunity to interact with residents, bringing smiles to their faces and listening to their stories."

The work of our Housekeeping Aides can appear invisible at times, but their tremendous efforts support all who live, work, and visit Union Villa.



Thank you to our incredible Housekeeping Team

**Pictured above (L-R):** Shushilata Sapkota, Dorothy Kalla, Lilia Palatan, Nyasha Bailey Shallow, Catherine Arancon, Cecilia Dotimas and Editha Janiola.

**Absent in photo:** Arlene Dean, Kalpana Selvananthan, Susan Soonath, Pauline Burke, Magnolia Madamba, Maria Tiangco, Taramati Tulsie

## Kicking off 2024 with Sparkle, Paint and Fun!

Union Villa residents started the New Year with a 'bang', making sparkling fireworks from paint and paper, tie dying, and painting ceramics for firing in a kiln. Our Recreation Team keeps coming up with unique and exciting ideas to keep residents engaged and thriving.



Self-expression is a great way to beat the winter blues!

# SAVE THE DATE: 2024 Fundraising Events

Did you know that your love of **Gardens** and your passion for **Golf** could enhance the comfort and overall living experience of those entrusted to our care?

Join us in an upcoming fundraiser and help us raise funds to expand our dementia-friendly program throughout our home and improve the physical environment of our dementia care unit. Research has shown that the design of the physical environment and specialized programming can calm the common stressors caused by dementia and enhance the well-being and independence of our residents.



**TOGETHER  
WE BLOOM**

Thursday, April 25, 2024

## ANGUS GLEN GOLF CLUB

**10:00 am** Garden Marketplace  
**11:30 am** Floral demo by event host, Kate Seaver  
**12:00 noon** Lunch and Presentation

### TICKETS

**Early Bird** (until March 28)... \$80  
**Regular price** (after March 28)... \$100



**2024  
UNIONVILLE  
CHARITY GOLF CLASSIC**

Tuesday, June 11, 2024

## ANGUS GLEN GOLF CLUB SOUTH COURSE

**7:00 am** Registration | **8:00 am** Shotgun start

### TICKETS

**Per Golfer...** \$300  
**Early Foursome** (until May 17)... \$1,100  
**Foursome** (after May 17)... \$1,200

Includes: 18 holes of golf/cart, Continental Breakfast, Lunch, Passport & Activities



For tickets, more information on these events or sponsorship, please contact us at 905.477.2822 ext 4270 or at [mdimson@uhs.on.ca](mailto:mdimson@uhs.on.ca).

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

## *Our Mission*

Engaging our communities through a continuum of services that enhances the experience of aging.

## *Our Vision*

A progressive community where older adults thrive, age well and live better.