

THE SUNFLOWER

Christie Gardens News & Views • Fall 2010

a community you can have faith in

Christie Gardens Summer Fun Continues With A New Season To Discover And Explore



Christie Gardens residents and staff camping trip



Summer Camp at Geneva Park, Orillia

Fishing off the dock... painting crafts...silly songs at campfire...s'mores. Sounds like summer camp, doesn't it? It was, but this camp included 11 residents from Christie Gardens (with an average age of 90!) and 7 staff. From August 20-22, this group enjoyed a camping experience at Geneva Park YMCA Camp in Orillia.

For staff, the fun was watching residents have once-familiar experiences for the first time in many years. As two ladies approached the fire the first night, their faces filled with wonder, and they exclaimed, "We haven't seen a campfire in so long!" One resident summed it best when she said, "The whole weekend was my favourite part!"

Summer Highlights at Christie Gardens ...

“Looking at the lake, the unbelievable country side, and playing Scrabble together. We haven’t seen a campfire in so long!”



Christie Gardens Men’s Group

One afternoon per week, the men of Christie Gardens gather to partake in an activity or outing that suits their interests. This summer the highlight was the groups’ trip to Downsview Park’s Canadian Air and Space Museum. Here many men, both familiar to the group, as well as newer residents, connected over stories of their time serving in Canada’s military, and in land, air and seafaring forces of other countries. All relished in the sight of a full-scale model of the Avro Arrow, and were pleased to recall the details of Canada’s most famous flying machine. An opportunity to participate in and organize a social group of their own, allows our men the ability to connect in a residence where women outnumber men 5 to 1.



Christie Gardens Celebrates Canada Day

A delicious BBQ lunch, an exciting midway of games, fun balloon animals, the soothing sounds of jazz and more; that is how Christie Gardens residents, family and staff all joined in for Canada Day to celebrate Canada’s 143rd birthday.

This yearly tradition brings all our departments together to put on such a fun event for our residents. Young and old alike enjoyed the festivities, what better way to start summer holidays than with friends and family.



Taste of The Nations

The ‘Queen’ could not be more honoured than we residents of Christie Gardens are by the annual “Taste of the Nations” – hosted by the hard working staff who spend their spare time preparing the favourite food of their country for us – the folks they serve devotedly every day. Not only is it tasty and fun with their dancing and singing, it is the love and laughter they dispense along with it that is the icing on the cake. Heartfelt thanks to all, on behalf of the residents, and looking forward to next year’s event.



Seniors Helping Seniors at Christie Gardens

One of the most important phases of maturing is that of growth from self-centering to an understanding relationship to others. Albert Einstein said it best, “Only a life lived for others is a life worthwhile.” We understand that being a senior helping other seniors is tremendously rewarding. Who better to offer friendship and support than seniors who have similar life experiences that enables them to connect comfortably with each other? Christie is blessed with many compassionate residents offering their time, for this, we thank you. Our Life Enrichment programs offer many opportunities for residents to make a difference.

Christie Gardens beautiful landscaped grounds are the result of an extraordinary team

It's early on a Friday morning, and the grounds are overrun with staff chatting, laughing and enjoying themselves. Is this a party? No, the gardening team is at work, weeding and clipping. Where would you find administrative staff, service providers, the chaplain, the chef and even the CEO in gardening gloves working together? Only at Christie Gardens!

It began when our VP of Operations Catherine Belmore noticed that the landscaping company needed to be replaced, and weeds were taking over our front entrance. While looking for another company, she put out the call to staff to come one Friday morning to help. An enthusiastic group arrived, and when it was time to begin doing their regular jobs, they remarked, "There's still more work to be done!" Out of this grew the Gardening Team. Some residents have since joined the fun, as we all work together to keep the grounds looking beautiful.



The Smell of Summer at Christie Gardens

It's fresh produce from the garden in your salad at lunch, homemade jam on your toast, and the spicy tang of chilli sauce wafting through the halls. That's the taste and aroma of summer, and among the first floor residents at Christie Gardens, it's what we do. Grow it, make it, and don't waste a thing!

After Canada Day, residents used the leftover strawberries to make delicious jam that is being enjoyed in the dining rooms. Several varieties of lettuce are growing in the Courtyard garden, and residents harvest it for salads when they gather for garden luncheons. There is a prolific patch of herbs in the garden, also, that Chef visits regularly to enhance the taste of meals.

In August, residents made cucumber relish, chopping the ingredients with an antique grinder. They knew exactly how to make it work, as many of them owned one and used it in their own preparation of pickles and relishes. Another day, tomatoes and peppers from the garden cooked all day for chilli sauce, causing staff and visitors to ask, "What is that wonderful smell?" The residents knew- it's the smell of summer at Christie Gardens!

Christie Gardens Foundation

Music Touches Many Hearts at Christie Gardens



In June, Christie Gardens was awarded a grant from the Canadian Music Therapy Trust in order to provide our residents with a comprehensive music therapy program for 6 full months. The donation was made by a family who had personally experienced loss related to Alzheimer's disease and who had witnessed the positive outcome of this contemporary therapy. Our registered music therapist, Kathleen, has been visiting the house once a week in order to bring music to a group of residents in Melitaville. Residents and staff are noticing the positive impact of this program. For families, music therapy means less stressful visits, and an open forum for reminiscence and emotion sharing. Families are quick to inquire after the music therapist, and to see about this therapy becoming a possibility for their loved-ones. Spouses come to visit during and after sessions and have an easier time interacting with their loved-ones. The six-month grant covers most of the cost of the program; however additional funding is needed in order to ensure that specialty instruments are available to help extend the duration of this program and to expand the service to include the Memory Care group and offer individual sessions. Music therapy is making a difference on many levels and Christie Gardens graciously accepts any donations to this worthwhile program. Our funding for this program runs out November 2010.

Memory Care at Christie Gardens

Our Memory Care Unit is a special part of the House which focuses on residents who have memory loss and yet are able to participate in activities. Full-day programming began earlier this year, with all levels of staff participating in activities that the residents used to do in their homes; from preparing meals to setting the table for a family-style meal. Residents go for daily walks, play games, and work on puzzles, sing, watch movies, and gardening on the patio, which is a favourite among both residents and staff. Residents and family members have expressed appreciation for the program and the activities offered. Our staff are excited to be involved and one recently said "It just feels so different in here". We hope it feels like home.

Your opportunity to enhance the quality of life of Residents:

BENEVOLENT FUND: these monies will provide for residents who need care on our first floor but are unable to cover the whole cost.

ENHANCEMENT PROJECTS: Spa, Activity Studio, Memory Boxes, and Music Therapy

For information on how you can contribute contact us today at 416-530-1330. Tax receipts are provided.

