

New Directions

FALL 2021

GUELPH
Independent **LIVING**

Quarterly Agency Newsletter

www.guelphindependentliving.org



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To celebrate the holiday season GIL will be delivering **festive meals** on **Thursday December 9** to all clients.

Please note the GIL Administration Office will be closed:
Friday December 24 and Friday December 31



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MESSAGE

People are often resistant to change, not realizing that change itself is constant.

Even if one resists or avoids it, it will enter our lives just the same. Are unplanned and unexpected changes always bad? What if one thought of change as good by default? Often when we look back, we realize that all the good things in our lives are the result of change.

Here are just few benefits of change:

Personal growth – one grows and learns new things every time something changes. We discover new insights and learn lessons even from changes that did not lead us to where we wanted to be.

Flexibility - frequent changes make it easier for one to adapt to new situations, environments, and people.

Life values – change often makes us re-evaluate our lives and look at certain things from a different perspective and it may also reinforce one's life values.

The Snowball effect - small changes can be extremely valuable. One shift at a time, small changes will eventually lead us to the desired big one.

Opportunities - one never knows what each change may bring. When we turn from our usual path, there will be different opportunities waiting. Changes will bring new choices for happiness and fulfillment.

Routine – doing the same things in exactly same way for years may lead to a dull, predictable, and uninteresting life. That is how our lives would be without

changes. So next time we get the temptation to avoid or resist the change, aim instead to initiate the ones that will lead us to where we want be.

And speaking of change, I want to share with all of you:

I have LOVED working for Guelph Independent Living, EVERY DAY.

My work has involved crazy hours, countless employees and clients, daily challenges, and then a global pandemic. I had planned to retire from GIL until the opportunity with Independent Living Waterloo Region presented itself.

Excitement. Trepidation. Responsibility ... all emotions that occupied my thoughts during the decision-making process.

Please know that I will always think of GIL as home.

I will miss my colleagues in Administration and consider myself fortunate to have made many lifelong friends. I will miss the frontline employees and hope they know how much I admire the care and compassion they provide every day. But most of all, I will miss the clients who have been my inspiration throughout my tenure. Supporting their fierce desire and perseverance for independence has made my work satisfying and rewarding.

Janet



GIL BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

The GIL Board of Directors met virtually on September 23, 2021; highlights include:

- Welcoming three new Board members: Lindsay Lennox, Chris Meilleur, and Eleanor Ross (returning);
- Willow Place building updates including approvals for 2022 market rent increase, engineering firm to oversee the generator project, replacement of the security camera system, and upgrades to the lighting in the upper parking deck and front entrance;
- Discussion about the strategic planning work to-date and next steps;
- Approval of the Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporations Act and the subsequent review required of GIL's by-laws to be compliant with the Act; and
- Executive Director's report with updates on the agency's COVID-19 Vaccination policy, reopening of client services based on the Pandemic Plan - Code Yellow, hiring of an 18-month Assisted Living Coordinator for Willow, temporary wage enhancement payment, and the Letter of Intent submitted for 2022-2024 United Way funding.

RETURNING BOARD MEMBER — ELEANOR ROSS

GIL is pleased to have Eleanor rejoin the Board of Directors; she previously served two 3-year terms from 2014-2020.

Eleanor has many different skills that will continue to assist with GIL Board initiatives. She is a financial advisor and is very attuned to how money is allocated. She served previously on her condo board and the Willow Place Property committee where she used and expanded her knowledge of contracts, maintenance requirements, and building systems. Eleanor also brings a passion for helping others, particularly attune to the need for services to support Independent Living now and in the future as our population ages.

Eleanor believes that her greatest accomplishment to date is her family. Her children and grandchildren provide many hours of fun, pride, worry and love. Her passions are reading, spending time at the local library, and interest in her city. Eleanor is always ready to help and can be counted on whenever there is need of an extra set of hands.

Welcome back to GIL!



MEET THE BOARD - LINDSAY LENNOX

GIL welcomes new Board member, Lindsay Lennox. She has a passion for working in the health care field and desire to give back. As a former employee, she has a unique perspective that will be a benefit to the organization. In addition, she has over five years' experience working in the Human Resources field.

Lindsay defines her greatest accomplishment as her career shift into Human Resources, which required additional schooling, networking, and volunteering to build the skills necessary to be successful in achieving her new career path.

Outside of work, Lindsay enjoys going on hikes, relaxing in nature, and loves spending time with a small

group of friends. She has two cats, a 14-year-old calico named Zoe, and a 10-year-old tabby named Lily.

Adding, she cross-stiches and crochets during her down time.

Her open personality, passion for learning and working with others, and the ability to understand various perspectives will be an asset to the Board.



MEET THE BOARD - CHRIS MEILLEUR

Chris has lived in Guelph for several years and was looking for a way to contribute and give back to the community. Although his grandparents live far away, he has seen the benefits they achieve by living independently and receiving assistance at home. He reached out to GIL as a way to support the same types of opportunities in the community that he lives in.

His work in municipal government, specifically real estate, and education in Commerce and Community Economic Development brings a diverse skillset to the Board table. He hopes to use his skills and experiences to help GIL continue innovating its client service offerings and making GIL a fantastic place to work.

Chris identifies travelling solo for nearly six weeks across Southeast Asia as his greatest personal accomplishment. This trip taught him to get out of his comfort zone, trust himself, and learn about other cultures.

Outside of work he enjoys tending to his vegetable garden, and occasionally brewing a new batch of beer at home. Saying, *"it tastes good; that's what friends say, but they might just be being polite."*



ATTENDANT SERVICES DAY CELEBRATED OCTOBER 26



As part of Community Support Month, Attendant Services Day is a day to express our appreciation for exceptional care our employees provide to GIL clients every day! Especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, when the need for their teamwork and dedication has been so vital.

GIL's Management team delivered soup packets from The Soup Girl to all our front-line workers on October 26 to personally thank them for the care and compassion provided, in client homes and in the community.

[Soupgirl \(localsoupgirl.ca\)](http://Soupgirl(localsoupgirl.ca))

CLIENT SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS

Thank you to everyone who completed this year's client satisfaction survey; we had a 51% response rate. The overall reported satisfaction rate was 77% 'very satisfied' and 21% 'somewhat satisfied' regarding the organization, its employees, and service delivery.

The results were quite positive with a couple of general reminders to the agency and its employees on how to improve services. Here are some of the comments:

- Staff have been awesome during COVID
- GIL is a wonderful organization
- Keep up the communication and client memos
- Keep up recruitment efforts and hire more staff
- Reduced services have been hard for the past 18 months

- Please be patient during bookings – masks, the ability to hear and, at times, language barriers between clients and staff can be difficult
- Please remember to confirm all tasks are completed before leaving each booking, don't rush

GIL continues to strive for excellence of care while following all applicable Public Health and government directives during the ongoing global pandemic. If you have additional comments or concerns, please contact your Program Coordinator.



UPDATE ON BOOSTER ELIGIBILITY

Canada's National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) is now recommending COVID-19 booster shots for an expanded list of adults.

A booster dose of the COVID-19 vaccination is being made available to the following groups, a minimum of six months following their second dose:

- Residents of long-term care homes, retirement homes, elder care lodges, and older adults living in other congregate settings
- Adults in the community 70 years of age and older
- Eligible [health care workers](#)
- People who received two doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine or one dose of the Janssen vaccine
- First Nations, Inuit, and Métis adults (including non-Indigenous household members)

“While booster shots are being targeted at those most at risk of developing severe outcomes if they get COVID-19 along with essential healthcare workers”, Dr. Nicola Mercer, Medical Officer of Health and CEO of Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health, said “people in those groups do not need to panic and are likely still well protected from their initial doses.”

WDG Public Health recently began calling seniors to book booster shot appointments. So far, over 900 people in the 70 plus age group have received their third dose, said the Director of Community Health for WDG Public Health. Their goal is to get everyone 80 years and older scheduled in for a booster shot be-

fore the snow falls.

As for healthcare workers, WDG Public Health will be distributing the vaccine to hospitals and all agencies with registered staff so that group can get their booster doses at work, Mercer said.

People eligible for booster doses can also book through a pharmacist, Public Health clinic, or in some cases, their family doctor.

Mercer added that first and second doses of the vaccine remain the priority, *“If people show up at our clinics unexpectedly, walk in and they have not had a first dose, we continue to welcome them with open arms and put them at the front of the queue,”* she said, explaining first and second doses are *“so important to ensure that we protect our population.”*

More information about how to access booster doses can be found at [WDG Public Health's website](#).

Source: Medical officer of health states case for booster doses rolling out in Guelph and Wellington - Guelph News ([guelphtoday.com](#))



15 SENIOR ACHIEVEMENT RECIPIENTS

The Ontario government celebrates 15 outstanding seniors for exceptional contributions to their communities and to the province. The recipients were recognized by the Honourable Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, and Raymond Cho, Minister for Seniors and Accessibility, at a virtual recognition ceremony.

The seniors being recognized are dedicated and compassionate individuals who are helping to improve the lives of older adults through community services and humanitarian activities. This includes fundraising, helping with Meals on Wheels programs, and volunteering in local churches, retirement homes, and long-term-care homes. These individuals support and empower other seniors by serving as mentors, environmental stewards, agricultural ambassadors, and educational, cultural, and artistic organizers.

“Congratulations to this year’s Ontario Senior Achievement Awards recipients,” said the Honourable Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario. *“Seniors across the province have felt most directly the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and it is a delight to be able to celebrate the positive difference seniors make to our communities. Today’s recipients are role models to Ontarians of all ages.”*

Quick Facts

- Older adults are the province’s fastest growing demographic. By 2023, there will be 3 million Ontarians over the age of 65.
- The Ontario Senior Achievement Award was created in 1987 to recognize outstanding seniors who, after the age of 65, have made significant contributions to their communities.
- The Ontario Senior Achievement Awards have recognized 660 outstanding seniors to-date.

UNITED WAY CAMPAIGN

GIL’s United Way Fundraising campaign for 2021 kicked off in mid-October with several exciting fundraising initiatives.

Events included our annual Employee Raffle with store gift cards as prizes. Further, we have two 50/50 draws in the month of November.

This year we tried something new and inspirational with a 21 Acts of Kindness chart distributed to employees who wished to participate. Gestures that touch those around us in the community as well as improve our own mental and physical wellbeing, are emphasized in this new challenge. Some of the ‘kindness acts’ included getting eight (8) hours of sleep, listening to music you love, opening a door for another person, and paying for coffee for the person behind you. One lucky participant will win a gift card prize.

To date, GIL has raised just over \$1000 for the Guelph-Wellington-Dufferin United Way campaign this year!

Finally, we are running a food drive to benefit the Chalmers Community Services Centre on behalf of the United Way. Boxes of donated food items are being collected from all staff offices to be delivered to Chalmers at the end of November. These items will help those experiencing food insecurity within our community.

Guelph Independent Living has been the recipient of United Way funding for many years to support our Leisure and Inclusion program.



SUPPORTS FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA

The Ontario government recently announced it will invest up to \$527,900 to expand the [Finding Your Way](#) program through Dementia Friendly Communities. This initiative is designed to support those living with dementia to participate in community life with respect, understanding, and compassion.

This funding will expand the Finding Your Way program to reach targeted populations such as Indigenous communities, newcomers, police, fire, and EMS first responders and local service providers so they can better understand the safety risks people with dementia may face.

The [Dementia Friendly Communities'](#) approach is part of a broader plan of the Finding Your Way program in partnership with the [Alzheimer Society of Ontario](#).

"People living with dementia have the right to access support to live as independently as possible and to be as engaged in their community," said Cathy Barrick, CEO of the Alzheimer Society of Ontario. *"Finding Your Way, as part of the Dementia Friendly Communities approach, helps to meet the physical, cognitive, social, and spiritual needs of our clients resulting in improved quality of life and the ability to live well."*

Finding Your Way helps people living with dementia, caregivers, first responders, and communities manage the risks faced by those with dementia-related memory loss who may go missing from their homes. The program also provides valuable tools and resources such as digital marketing campaigns, educational seminars, and a resource guide called Living Safely with Dementia. These will help older Ontarians living with dementia to stay in their community of choice longer and avoid crisis situations which can lead to hospitalization or accelerated admission to long-term care.



Celebrate International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) on December 3

The theme for IDPD this year is *"Leadership and participation of persons with disabilities toward an inclusive, accessible and sustainable post-COVID-19 world."*

2021 INDUCTEES TO CANADIAN DISABILITY HALL OF FAME ANNOUNCED

The Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled Persons (CFPDP) proudly announced the upcoming induction of three new members into the Canadian Disability Hall of Fame. Selected from a remarkable group of nominees, the three inductees for 2021 include world-class athlete Vivian Berkely, passionate advocate for the Deaf community Frank Folino, and exceptional achiever The Honourable Carla Qualtrough. They join the prestigious ranks of 117 others who have been inducted into the Hall of Fame over the past 28 years.

Vivian Berkeley (Athlete): Vivian is a Blind Lawn Bowling Champion who is recognized as the greatest Canadian athlete in her category. Berkeley's 21-year career has seen her win 60 medals in lawn bowling competitions that include both national and international competitions as well as the Paralympics and Commonwealth Games.

Frank Folino (Achiever): Frank has been an enduring leader and advocate for the Deaf community. Born Deaf himself, he has served as President for Canadian Association of the Deaf-Association des Sourds du Canada (CAD-ASC). Among his notable

successes, Folino was a passionate advocate to include a legal recognition of sign languages in the landmark 2020 Accessible Canada Act.

The Honourable Carla Qualtrough (Builder): Carla is a triple threat. Lawyer, Volunteer, and Paralympic swimmer, no wonder she is leading change and advancing issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion in Canada. Currently an MP, Qualtrough is serving as Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion.

Source: [Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled Persons](#)



Vivian Berkeley

Frank Folino

Hon. Carla Qualtrough

CLIENT MEMORIAL

Earl Freeman – was a client with GIL for a short period of time within the Outreach program, as well as a tenant at Willow Place. He will be missed by many family members and friends.

Earl spent much of his time outside Willow Place visiting with other tenants, weather permitting. As well as spending time with his family members who also live in the building.

We hope that the services provided by our employees brought him comfort and support.



ONPHA CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

The Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association (ONPHA) hosted their annual conference on November 10-12, again using a virtual platform.

This year's theme **Opening Doors through Housing** invited participants to consider excellence and innovation, through day-to-day operational practices and future planning. Ontario's affordable housing crisis did not occur overnight or as a side effect of the pandemic; however, we now have an opportunity to place affordable housing at the centre of the post-COVID economic recovery and to ensure that it stays at the top of the list of priorities for all levels of government in the years to come. ONPHA's vision is a future where every Ontarian has a home where they can fully participate in their community.

The conference was divided into three themes:

Day 1 brought stakeholders today to create systemic solutions to complex issues through **Cohesive Sector Leadership**.

Day 2 sessions focused on **People-Centered Services**; creating a system where people have more choice to determine what is best for them.

Day 3 concentrated on **A Sustainable Housing System** by increasing the housing system sustainability by improving financial stability and enhancing opportunities for new development, (re)development and repurposing existing buildings.

ONPHA KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Two keynote speakers at the ONPHA conference were: Waneek Horn-Miller and Michael 'Pinball' Clemons.



Waneek Horn-Miller, athlete, activist, broadcaster, spoke on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Specifically, how the Human Rights Code was developed as a set of rules based on how we should treat each other as human beings.

Horn-Miller is a Mohawk from Kahnawake, Quebec. She was co-captain of Canada's first Olympic women's water polo team and a gold medalist in water polo at the 1999 Pan American Games. She is a well-known activist for Indigenous rights and a prominent role model, mentor, and advocate for youth involvement in sports.

As one of Canada's few Indigenous Olympians, Waneek has used her unique experiences in life and sport combined with a passion for her culture to influence Indigenous and non-Indigenous leadership in sport and wellness, Indigenous business, women in business and community building. Waneek has been quoted: *"If we want reconciliation, for ourselves and our children, we need to have hard conversations, build common ground, and really listen to each other."* The Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport and Physical Recreation recently named her one of Canada's most influential women in sport.

[Home – WANE EK HORN-MILLER \(waneekhormmiller.com\)](http://www.waneekhormmiller.com)

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Michael 'Pinball' Clemons was the second speaker; he is remembered as a decorated Running Back for the Toronto Argonauts from 1989 to 2000. Clemons played with the Argonauts for twelve seasons where he was a two-

time All-Star and a three-time Grey Cup Champion, and twice served as their head coach before becoming an administrator, since winning three more Grey Cups.

Clemons spoke about growing up in social housing, thanking the audience for helping individuals like his own family. His philosophy is to focus on people, supporting the **who**, not the **what**. He introduces himself as the 'husband of Diane, father of 3 girls.' Reminding the audience that housing is ultimately designed to supports individuals and families, not buildings.

He also reminded us that it is important to look after ourselves in order to be able to look after others.

The BEST you helps others.

MOVING WITH MUSIC

Moving with Music is a movement program designed by Julia Beth Kowaleski, certified Neurologic Music Therapist. Julia started an online program last year to help individuals keep moving during the pandemic, especially during the lockdown.

Healthy older adults can benefit from this program as well as those dealing with, but not limited to Acquired Brain Injury, Stroke, and Parkinson's disease. The program has been approved by physiotherapists and chiropractors.

Julia and her team utilize music and rhythm exercises that help maintain balance and general movement. The video sessions are 45 minutes long; broken down into three 15-minute workouts. Session one is a warmup, next is designed to increase the participant's heart rate, and finally a cool down. No special equipment is required, and users can customize segments to meet their individual needs.

The website is user friendly, and a monthly subscription is available for a cost of \$21. The subscription can be cancelled at any time. Julia offers a free trial if you are interested in checking it out.

More information can be found at www.movingwithmusicprogram.com.

MOVING WITH MUSIC
online

Moving with Music is designed to help older adults keep moving in a way that's effective and fun. Follow the program independently or with support.

Start Your Free Trial Today!

www.movingwithmusicprogram.com

JULIA'S PLACE
Neurologic Music Therapy

STUDENT'S WORK ON WORLD WAR II VETERAN

Sgt. Joseph Harold Yemen, one of six brothers who fought in World War II, will be added to the Guelph Cenotaph roll of honour 74 years after his death.

According to Veteran Affairs Canada, Sgt. Yemen served in the Canadian Army in The Royal Canadian Corps of Signals. He was 32 years old when he died on February 16, 1947 and is buried at the Woodlawn Cemetery.

While searching through antique scrapbooks, Thomas Szabo, a Grade 11 student at GCVI, discovered a forgotten soldier from Guelph, one of six brothers who served in the Second World War.

The finding was discovered during Szabo's work with The Student TorchBearers Program, that works to reveal the stories of individuals listed on the Guelph Cenotaph. The Student TorchBearers Program, an initiative of The Canadian Remembrance Torch, is a registered charity that inspires year-round recognition of sacrifices made for peace and freedom.

The program is comprised of 15 students from schools located in Guelph and Ottawa. Students choose the position of detectives, influencers, or creators. The detectives work to uncover names and pictures of soldiers, the influencers are involved with social media and telling the stories, and the creators

write songs, poems, and design physical items for events.

Szabo worked as a Faces-to-Names Detective within the program, meaning he worked to uncover photographs through historical research to match with each name listed on the cenotaph. Cross-referencing names with known soldiers and their photos, Szabo said he learned about the Yemen family and the sacrifices one family gave to the war effort.

A clipping from the Toronto Star in May 1941 lists Yemen as one of six sons in active force, with a seventh eager to join. At the time of the article, Yemen along with three of his brothers were reported overseas, one brother stationed in Eastern Canada, another in Petawawa, and the seventh listed as 'in Canada.'

"It was super strange. I was reading about the Yemen's and one of their deaths was never acknowledged in the newspapers, but Karen, the founder of The Canadian Remembrance Torch, came to me one day and said she found a name of someone not on the cenotaph," said Szabo.

Hunter said she was thrilled for Szabo because she knew how meaningful it was for him to come across this discovery; however, she is not surprised that he



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came across it as records from that time are often incomplete.

Tammy Adkin, City of Guelph Manager of Museums and Culture, verified the information and the museum's subsequent research shows Yemen was tied

to Guelph and will be added to the roll of honour at the cenotaph.

An order has been placed for the scroll and the plaque will be installed as soon as it arrives.

Source: <https://www.guelphtoday.com>

THE ROOFTOP GARDEN

During this past summer, management at Stone Road Mall made efficient use of the parkade's top floor by creating a rooftop garden to provide fresh produce for residents in our community.

This new project involved building ten planters filled with nutrient-rich soil from the mall's existing composting program and the use of rainwater collected onsite. The rooftop garden produced a large supply of fresh food such as lettuce, tomatoes, and green beans. The SEED, which works with local organizations needing fresh produce for their meal services, distributed 160 pounds of fresh vegetables, all from this new initiative.

"There is an immense need right now in Guelph-Wellington for affordable, nutritious food. Innovative

solutions like this rooftop garden are important in growing our region's capacity to feed everyone well," said Madeline Barber, The SEED's Community Resource Coordinator, in a news release. *"We are grateful for this exciting partnership and the many others that make our work possible! It takes a community to feed a community."*

With a sustainable community connection growing fast, Stone Road Mall has set its sights on expanding the initiative for years to come.

Source: <https://www.guelphtoday.com>



Do your little bit of good where you are; it's those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world.

~Archbishop Desmond Tutu

BREAKING BARRIERS ON THE BIG SCREEN

A 10-year-old boy from Puslinch, born with Muscular Dystrophy, has made his acting debut and hopes more kids like him are represented on television and in the movies.

Nylan Parthipan uses a walker and a wheelchair, and requires help with daily acts of living; however, he does not let the disability define him. His goal is to increase representation of children just like him, a child with disabilities and a person of colour.

The child actor was recently featured in a Rogers commercial called Generation Possible. His mother, Thadshika Parthipan, said in the next two years, Nylan's work which includes voice animation, will be released by Disney, TVO Kids and Nickelodeon.

Nylan's acting journey began in 2019 when his physiotherapist's daughter came across an audition post searching for a child with a disability.

Nylan auditioned for the role but did not land the part. The casting director, however, was enamored by him and referred Nylan to an agent who encouraged him to continue to audition for various roles. In September 2020, Nylan landed a part in *Odd Squad*

which aired on TVO Kids and PBS Kids.

"It's fun," Nylan said. "I like it because you can be anything or anybody". Adding, "More kids with disabilities should try more things."

While acting is his passion now, Nylan's goal as he grows older is to be a scientist. "I want to be an actor and also I want to be a scientist to find a cure for Muscular Dystrophy," said Nylan.

Nylan's mom added that the support of his teachers and friends from his school in Guelph, École Arbour Vista, has been very encouraging. Also saying Guelph is a great community to raise a child with a disability.

Source: <https://www.guelphtoday.com>



Dare to dream big dreams. For those are the dreams that have the power to push your whole world forward.

Ralph Marston



JOIN OUR PATIENT AND FAMILY ADVISORY COUNCIL

If this is you, we would love to hear from you.

Contact Kali Garneau at kali.garneau@ontariohealth.ca by November 30 for more information.



Are you interested in improving health care in the West region?

Ontario Health West is looking for individuals who:

- Represent the diversity of patients, caregivers and community members in the West region;
- Have regularly used the health care system in the last two years and have some engagement experience;
- Are interested in improving the health of the communities and populations in the West region;
- Want to collaborate with other patient and family advisors within the health system and participate in ongoing training and educational opportunities.

