



CANADA

# VON Oxford Update

Vol. 7 Issue #2 | Winter 2016

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Handbags for Hospice

7<sup>th</sup> Annual Handbags for Hospice will be held on Friday, January 20, 2017 at the Oxford Auditorium. Once again, it's a sold-out event with over 830 guests and 300 purses! All proceeds will support VON Sakura House. This year, a portion of the funds raised will help us purchase new sleeper sofas for patient rooms.

### Legacy Planning Event

**SAVE THE DATE!** May is Leave a Legacy Month. Please join us as experts provide an overview of financial and legal considerations when planning your estate. Stay tuned for details on this free event.

## Greetings from the Board of Directors

Submitted by John Goodbun, Chair, VON Oxford Community Corporation

Fall was a busy time for VON Oxford with Hike for Hospice. We saw over 400 hikers supporting Sakura House! Thank you to all the hikers, volunteers and corporate partners for making the event such a success.

To highlight the spirit of giving and volunteering locally and across Canada, VON Oxford celebrated National Philanthropy Day on November 15<sup>th</sup> and GivingTuesday on November 29<sup>th</sup>. Sincere thanks to our dedicated volunteers and generous donors.

We continue our work on some capital improvements to VON Sakura House. We have approved the installation of new lit signs at the entrance to make it easier for visitors to find the hospice, especially at night. In 2017, we will be exploring renovations to the house's front entrance to minimize the damage from rain and snow.

As a volunteer fundraising board, we financially support existing VON programs and work with VON Canada's national community corporation to collaborate on larger programs that impact Oxford County. It is a privilege to serve our community.

# The Importance of Family

Submitted by Alicia Sharrard, guest contributor

I experienced the support of Sakura House first hand when my father received a terminal prognosis and was there for a very brief stay. While it was, without a doubt, the most difficult time my family and I had ever experienced; the amazingly caring staff at Sakura and the house's amenities provided peace and comfort when that seemed impossible.

Thanks to Sakura House, my father received the most respectful and dignified end of life care and that lifted a burden from the family so that more quality time could be spent with him. Whether it was a comfortable place to rest, a dining table to share a meal, the

constant smell of freshly baked goods or the media room – there were so many aspects of Sakura House that made my family and I feel at home from morning to night.

After this experience, I felt compelled to give back. My family encouraged loved ones to donate to Sakura House in memory of my father and I'm committed to volunteering to help raise funds. I saw what an impact volunteers had on the daily operations of the house and I wanted to be a part of that. I hope that these fundraising efforts will help others so that they can focus on what's most important - their family.

## My VON Story

"Volunteering is a wonderful way to help others. Unfortunately, I also have a selfish motive...it helps me...I learn more from giving than from taking. Those I give my time to in volunteer hours give back to me 10 fold. Meeting people who need help have become lovely friends...friends that will be cherished for a lifetime. Volunteering gives meaning to life and a life full of meaning. Hopefully, I can volunteer for years to come...fulfilling my life and hopefully helping others fulfil their lives. Thank you, VON for giving me this opportunity."

Carol - SMART volunteer

To share your VON Story, email [catherine.dorais-plesko@von.ca](mailto:catherine.dorais-plesko@von.ca)

# The Fund Development Brief

Submitted by Catherine Dorais-Plesko, Manager, Fund Development

The Fund Development team is pleased to welcome Michelle Horwood as the Coordinator of Fund Development. Michelle joins us from the Canadian Cancer Society. Since her arrival, she has helped organize Hike for Hospice and Handbags for Hospice. We're thrilled to have her join our team!

In order to promote VON Oxford programs and services, we have

placed ads on the screens at the Woodstock General Hospital starting in December. It is an opportunity to reach individuals and families who might be actively seeking home care support that we offer.

We continue to be active on social media to promote upcoming events, thank donors and keep you informed.



Like us on Twitter and Facebook!

# A Hot Meal At Home

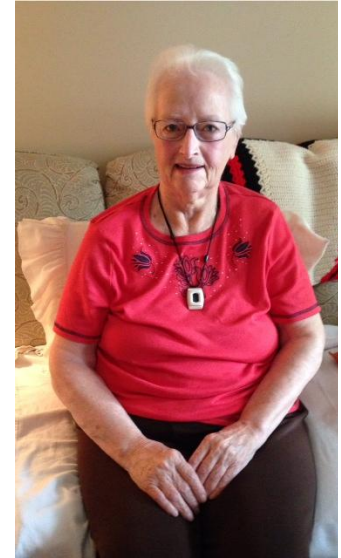
Submitted by Kimberley Anderson, Coordinator of Client Services, MOW & Home Help

Audrey and her husband Don decided to move from their family farm after his cancer diagnosis and moved into an apartment in Tavistock in October 2012. They decided they needed help from the Meals on Wheels® Program.

Audrey had been recently diagnosed with colitis and this caused her also be very weak. They both received two hot meals a week until Don's passing in 2014. Audrey continued with the program as she is unable to stand for any length of time over a stove and prepare meals, any standing cause's pain and discomfort for her. "They make a big difference, I can't even sit on a walker my legs are too weak. I can't cook any meals for myself, if there were

meals 7 days a week I would take them. The volunteers delivering the meals are great, everyone knows each other. I really enjoy seeing them. They are consistent and always here on time. It is nice that the meals are always hot and ready to eat. If anyone asks I tell them they are a good size, I get two meals out of them. I have even recommended them to my own sister."

Audrey has one child; her daughter Julie is her caregiver. "As a caregiver it makes life easier to know that my mom is getting a three course homemade meal and not eating a TV dinner. It gives me relief in knowing she has had lunch and I don't have to worry. Tavistock is



*Audrey Pitts relaxing at home*

lucky to have the Meals on Wheels Program; many seniors are staying in their own homes longer instead of nursing homes."

"If Tavistock didn't have the Meals on Wheels Program I don't know what I would do."

## Community Support Services News

Submitted by Robin Kish, Manager, Care and Service

I am very excited to announce the expansion of the Meals on Wheels™ program to include a hot meal delivery option in Embro in addition to the Frozen Meal program. Every Friday, residents in Embro will be able to have a hot meal delivered to their doorstep by a VON Volunteer. Thanks to The Highland Restaurant in Embro for partnering with us. We have had some changes in our SMART® Exercise and Falls

Prevention classes. Recently we relocated a class and added our newest location in Sally Creek in October. We had 25



participants in our first class and expect to see more. Our Children's Bereavement Program (Kids Circle) began the second group in October. We will be looking at creating more groups at other locations to expand to throughout Oxford County. Groups for parents will also be offered in tandem with Kid's Circle. For more information, please contact our office at 519-539-1231 or email us at [adminvonoxford@von.ca](mailto:adminvonoxford@von.ca)



## Local Philanthropist Supports VON Sakura House

Dr. Leonard Reeves Foundation has made a generous donation to support VON Sakura House residential hospice. In recognition of this gift, the patient wing has been named the Dr. Leonard Reeves Wing.

"I am proud to contribute to the operation at the Hospice" says Dr. Reeves. "We should all be thankful for the wonderful, attentive, caring staff and volunteers who make Sakura House such a success story!"

The Foundation was established by Dr. Leonard Reeves in 2006. The main focus of the Foundation is to assist with capital costs of facilities which contribute to the health and wellbeing of the residents of Oxford County. Annual donations are also granted to charitable organizations which rely on volunteers to make their program successful.

# One Year Snapshot

Meals on Wheels®:	11,388 deliveries
Home Help:	3,494 hours
Adult Day Program:	9,450 visits
Overnight Respite:	81 visits
SMART ® Exercise and Falls Prevention:	45,542 classes
Sakura House Residential Hospice:	250 patients

## Update from Sakura House

Submitted by Patrice Kean, Manager, Care and Services

I began my role at VON Sakura House over six months ago. I continue to be amazed at the high level of quality care and unyielding compassion that is provided to all who come through our doors. The *wordle* symbolizes just a few of the many elements that come together during the end of life journey and we are blessed to be touched by all of them.

From April 2015 to March 2016 Sakura House was able to welcome 171 new patients with the average stay being approximately 11 days. We are thankful that so many patients and families can benefit from the support that hospice care has to offer.



For more information or for a tour (8am -7pm Sunday through Saturday), please call me at 519-537-8515 x 2.

We want to make sure that our community knows and understands about hospice and palliative care and how to access Sakura House at no cost.

### VON Oxford

550 Ingersoll Ave, Woodstock ON N4S 4Y3

T. 519-539-1231 or 1-888-641-5197

www.von.ca

Charitable Registration #11928 4776 RR0001