



Inclusion Matters

Community Living Parry Sound
Annual Report 2022/2023

Community Living Parry Sound acknowledges that we are settlers on this land which is the traditional and rightful territory of the Ojibway, Odawa, and Potawatomi people. We also acknowledge that we continue to benefit from colonization and the displacement of the original inhabitants of the ceded land covered by the Robinson-Huron Treaty of 1850.

We honour the people of the Three Fires Confederacy and their sacred relationship with the land and all creation. We are grateful to the generations of Anishinaabek people who are the caretakers of this land, protectors of water, and sustainers of life.

We solemnly remember the innumerable atrocities inflicted upon the Indigenous people of Turtle Island, as well as the tragic legacies of injustice that will continue to cause harm for generations.

We acknowledge the resilience of Indigenous peoples who have been stewards of the land and sharers of truth since time immemorial.

Though we recognize that this statement does not repair the harm inflicted upon Indigenous peoples and lands, we continue to seek the truth and share this acknowledgement in the spirit of ongoing allyship and reconciliation. We invite all to hear this acknowledgement and share in our commitment to relationship building with Indigenous Peoples, knowledge, and ways of being.



All my relations.

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OPENING REMARKS

As we reflect on another remarkable year at Community Living Parry Sound, I want to express my gratitude for the support, dedication, and commitment that have made our accomplishments possible.

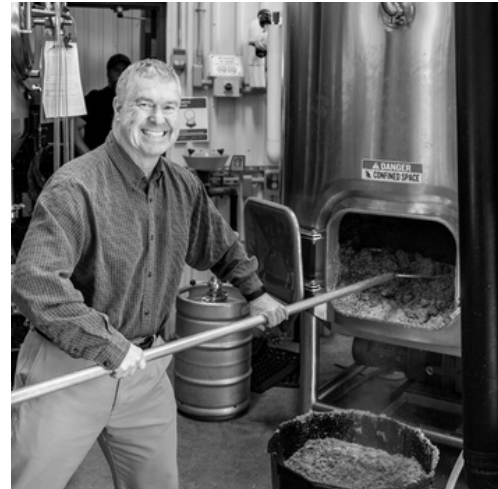
First and foremost, I want to extend my deepest appreciation to our exceptional staff. Each day, you bring boundless passion and empathy to your work, enriching the lives of the people we support. Your tireless commitment to fostering a nurturing and inclusive environment is truly commendable. Through your expertise and compassionate care, you support people to realize their full potential and lead lives filled with dignity and purpose. I am continually inspired by your unwavering dedication, and I am honored to work alongside such remarkable team.

Furthermore, I would like to express my gratitude to the esteemed members of our Board of Directors. Your visionary leadership and strategic guidance have been instrumental in driving our agency forward. Your commitment to our mission and values ensures that we remain focused on our ultimate goal of building an inclusive community where everyone is valued and respected. Your steadfast support has been the cornerstone of our success, and I am grateful for your wisdom and guidance.

I would also like to acknowledge and extend my appreciation to our invaluable community partners. Your collaboration and support have been instrumental in expanding our reach and impact. Together, we have achieved remarkable milestones, whether through joint initiatives, advocacy efforts, or financial support. Your belief in our cause and your willingness to work together have transformed the lives of countless people and families in our community. We are truly fortunate to have partners like you, who share our vision of an inclusive society.

Lastly, I want to express my gratitude to the people and families we serve. Your trust and belief in our organization have been the driving force behind our work. Your resilience, courage, and spirits continue to inspire us daily. It is a privilege to support

you on your journey towards independence and self-advocacy, and we are committed to ensuring that your voices are heard and valued.



As we look towards the future, I am filled with optimism and enthusiasm. Together, we have achieved incredible milestones, but there is still much work to be done. With your continued support, we will strive to break down barriers, disrupt antiquated ways of thinking, and create a society that celebrates diversity and inclusion. As we embark on another year of growth and progress, let us continue to stand together, united in our pursuit of a brighter and more inclusive future.

Brad Horne, Executive Director
Community Living Parry Sound

ABOUT US

Community Living Parry Sound (CLPS) is a grassroots non-profit agency in Parry Sound, Ontario. Our staff of about 60 supports hundreds of children, youth, adults, and families in the Parry Sound area. In 2022, we released a [video](#) in celebration of our 60th anniversary, which provides a good overview of the agency's past, present, and future.

What we do

We support people with developmental disabilities and their families.

With a strong focus on promoting inclusion, independence, and quality of life, we offer a range of services and programs that are directed by the unique needs of each person.

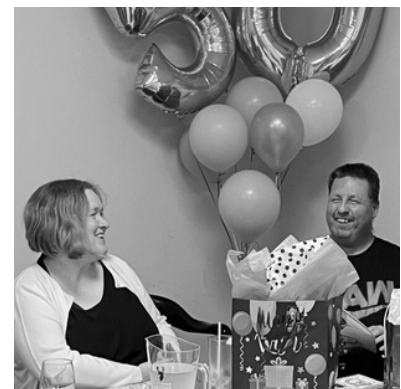
We also play a role in educating the public about developmental disabilities, promoting understanding and acceptance within the community.

We advocate for the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities, collaborating with other agencies and stakeholders to bring about positive change.

Ultimately, we are working toward an inclusive community where people are recognized for their contributions, welcomed in community life, and have the power and freedom to lead the lives they choose to.

Individualized Services

Our Individualized Services Team supports people to develop personalized budgets and plans that help them get the most out of the individualized funding they receive from the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services. We coordinate services for people looking to spend their Passport dollars, connecting people with services in the community and making sure we are providing *just the right amount of support*. Our planning and facilitation services think big and long-term: helping people to identify goals, aspirations, and the necessary supports to achieve them.



Residential Services

We operate two group homes that are equipped to provide 24/7 support. The people supported by our Residential Team receive personalized assistance, support with daily living activities, and opportunities for community engagement.

Supported Independent Living

We respect everyone's right to live where they choose to – and through the services offered by our Supported Independent Living program, we provide the necessary supports for adults who choose to live independently in their community, outside of congregate settings.

Community Participation

We support people to actively participate and become a part of community life by connecting them with social and recreational activities such as sports, arts and culture, and other community events. A common goal across our services is to facilitate social connections, skill development, and belonging within the community.

Family & Youth Services

Recognizing the importance of family involvement, we offer support and resources to families of people with disabilities. Our Family & Youth Services (FYS) Team provides guidance, information, direct support, and advocacy to ensure families have access to the necessary services, funding, and opportunities for their loved ones. We also offer respite to parents whose children have a developmental disability.

Employment Services

Leading into new careers (LINC) supports people to secure and maintain meaningful employment. Services can include job coaching, skills training, and support throughout the entire employment process –from resume building to job retention. In addition to supporting job seekers, we work closely with local businesses to embed Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) values in hiring practices and in work environments.



Our mission is to support people with disabilities to build better lives in their communities. We do this through partnerships, innovation, and education.

We envision a community where all people have the power and freedom to determine the life they want.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Cathy Barker, Director

Cathy's outstanding achievements as the owner of Kate's Kart are a testament to her exceptional ability to build and maintain customer relationships, resulting in an impressive 30% yearly increase in sales for seven consecutive years. Along with her steadfast organizational, planning, and problem-solving skills, Cathy's professionalism, discretion, and judgement in handling confidential information make her a valuable asset to any organization. As she begins a new marketing career, her entrepreneurial experience will be advantageous. Beyond her professional life, Cathy is a dedicated volunteer who has worked with organizations such as Girl Guides of Canada, West London Soccer Club, and London's Bike to Work Week, demonstrating her commitment to positively impacting her community. Finally, Cathy is most proud of her family and their achievements.

Rose Bailey, Director

Rose was born and has lived in Parry Sound all her life. She and her husband of 40 years have two sons and three grandchildren. Her son James has received support from Community Living for 30 years. Rose retired from full-time employment at the West Parry Sound Health Centre after 27 years and is currently working part-time in a surgeon's office. She has been on the Board of The Friends and is active in her faith community, volunteering in leadership roles and serving at monthly community dinners. Rose hopes to bring a parent perspective to the Board along with her community and healthcare experience.

Matt Fisher, Director

Born and raised in Parry Sound, Matt practiced as a lawyer in Toronto with Borden Ladner Gervais LLP before joining the Metrontario Group of Companies as its Chief Legal Officer. He has volunteered with community youth baseball and hockey organizations and served for many years on the Board of the Canadian Council on Africa.

Catherine Lapierre, Director

Catherine moved to Parry Sound summer of 2014 leaving behind fourteen years of teaching software and computer studies in Southern Ontario. Transitioning her skills to administration, Catherine worked in the business district for six years and is currently working with the Parry Sound Area Chamber of Commerce. Catherine is involved with Curlers Care and enjoys the wonderful outdoors, hiking, biking, swimming, and having family time.



Lianne Piddington, Treasurer

Lianne is a wife, mother, and grandmother. She and her husband Tom have owned Bay Area Electrical since 1993 and she has worked full-time within the business since 2006. She was previously employed at the Parry Sound Muskoka Credit Union as well as the Parry Sound District General Hospital.

Julie Thorogood, Vice President

Julie is a self-employed bookkeeper. She has been involved in her children's school programs, class trips, curling tournaments and fundraising.

David Williams, President

David moved to Parry Sound in September 2015. A lawyer with a background in public service law, he has transitioned to the private sector and worked at Oldham Law Firm since moving to this area. He joined the CLPS Board of Directors in 2017, before being elected President in 2019, and is committed to helping the organization work towards its goals.



We are recruiting!

Continue the tradition of inspiring possibilities, promoting inclusion, and making a difference by serving on our Board of Directors.

All abilities are welcome.

**[linktr.ee/
clpsboard](https://linktr.ee/clpsboard)**

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Thank you to everyone involved with our 60th AGM, and all the employees, people we support, and Board members for another great year since – my fourth in the role of President.

Community Living Month was once again held in May, beginning with a flag-raising ceremony at the Town Hall. We were quite pleased to be able to hold our annual fundraising golf tournament at Rocky Crest. Thanks to everyone involved with the May 24th event as well as other fundraising initiatives such as auctions and raffles.

It was our great pleasure to partner with Trestle Brewing Company, Community Living South Muskoka, and Sawdust City Brewing Company for the creation of the *Inclusion IPA* beer in support of our organizations, with a launch party on May 5th. Our Executive Director was able to attend the Community Living day at the legislature, and the idea of expanding that fundraising effort was discussed there, along with some of the pressing concerns in our sector.

We were pleased to be able to approve an agreement reached through collective bargaining, which went smoothly by all accounts, following a period in which it could not be conducted. We also continued this year with ongoing By-Law and Governance Policy revisions in consultation with legal counsel.

2022-2023, unfortunately, saw the passing of Richard Heynes and Helen Brook, who will not soon be forgotten by the CLPS team.

CLPS received significant and generous donations this year for which we are very grateful, including as a significant beneficiary of the Estate of Terry Brenn, from the Cunningham family (in memory of Han Hyun-Joo), the Harry Foster Foundation, Lianna Marila, the Nathan and Lily Silver Family Foundation, and the Muskoka Community Foundation. The Ontario Trillium Foundation recognition event on March 3rd at Canadore College was a success, and we are grateful for their support. We were able to replace the accessible Dolphin Tub at our Addie St. residence, and look forward to additional infrastructure and other ideas we should now be able to fund.



We were proud to appoint Brad Horne as Executive Director, effective January 1, 2023. Thank you for your great work in the role to date.

Thank you very much as well to our departing Board member, Treasurer Lianne Piddington. Your dedication over the past seven years is much appreciated!

Cathy Barker was a welcome addition to our Board of Directors during this year. We are always happy to get referrals for suitable candidates who may wish to join our Board of Directors, if anyone reading this may have personal interest or someone in mind.

Respectfully submitted,

David Williams, Board President
Community Living Parry Sound

NOMINATING & MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Directors with terms expiring in 2023/2023 are:

Cathy Barker, who was appointed to the Board in March 2023 to fill a vacant position.

Matt Fisher, who completed a one-year term to fill a vacant position.

Lianne Piddington, who completed her second term in 2021/2022 and served an addition one-year term due fill a vacant position.

Julie Thorogood, who has completed her second term.

David Williams, who has completed his second term.

Directors standing for re-election are:

Cathy Barker, who seeks election for a three-year term.

Matt Fisher, who seeks re-election for a one-year term to fill a vacant position.

Julie Thorogood, who seeks re-election for a one-year term to fill a vacant position.

David Williams, who seeks re-election for a one-year term to fill a vacant position.

Nominating & Membership Committee recommends:

THAT Cathy Barker be elected to the Board of Directors for a three-year term from 2023-2026.

THAT Matt Fisher be elected to the Board of Directors for a one-year term from 2023-2024.

THAT Julie Thorogood be elected to he Board of Directors for a one-year term from 2023-2024.

THAT David Williams be elected to he Board of Directors for a one-year term from 2023-2024.

THAT the Board of Directors of Community Living Parry Sound for 2023/2024 be: Rose Bailey (term 2022-2025), Cathy Barker (term 2023-2026), Matt Fisher (term 2023-2024), Catherine Lapierre (term 2021-2024), Julie Thorogood (term 2023-2024), David Williams (term 2023-2024).

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Our strategic plan has guided us since 2021. Amidst turbulent pandemic times and (often) grave uncertainty, our agency and teams have remained resilient, purposeful, and strong. Our strategic priorities are:

- Excellence in community experiences
- Purposeful use of technology
- Robust network of community connections & partners
- Consistent staffing & healthy workplace culture
- Agency of choice

The following are two stories of major projects we undertook this year and how they exemplify our strategic growth.

Noticed, Known and Missed

"Book club" was a professional development initiative in which teams across the agency read *Noticed, Known and Missed* by Cara Milne and held rich discussion circles on how to better incorporate person-directed practices into our work.

Excellence in community experiences - *Noticed, Known and Missed* is chock full of strategies that our team members are using to provide excellent service in helping people connect with what's out there in our community. Participants looked deeply at their roles as connectors to the community.

Robust network of community connections & partners - Through the book club, participants also reflected on the importance of building the agency's connections in the community. Having community allies and resources is essential when supporting people to build their own connections. One strategic goal within this priority sums it up well: "keep forming relationships to connect people with their community, to provide the organization and its employees with additional resources, and to be a resource to others."



Purposeful use of technology - *Noticed, Known and Missed* challenges participants to see the community that exists online and to be purposeful in extending their roles into the virtual world.

The book club was our first recurring hybrid event, which saw employees meeting in person and author Cara Milne facilitating discussions remotely. This was excellent practice of the strategic goal to balance in-person and virtual supports.

“ 'Community' is as much online as it is a physical space, now. ”

- Community Living Parry Sound

Consistent staffing & healthy workplace culture - part of this strategic priority involves finding a balance in scheduling. We are a person-directed service agency, which means that we provide support *when* and *where* people need it. On the other hand, it is important to all of us that team members have the opportunity to lead whole lives outside of work. Striking a balance between these two values (being person-directed and a wellness-minded employer) can be deceptively complex.

The book club provided a space for conversation on how to reconcile what can be conflicting priorities. True, participants spent time reflecting on the support professional's role, but the book culminates in how to reduce paid supports over time by facilitating genuine, lasting connections in the community. Ideally this means that employees who are working during peak family time (like evenings and weekends) won't be doing so for long as they support people to have companions and connections in the community.



“ [Book club] was refreshing and gave me motivation to get back to pre-COVID practices. It allowed us to reflect on how the pandemic has affected us all in having people involved in their communities .

- Book Club Participant

Another branch of this strategic priority is rooted in professional development. It calls for professional development focused on:

- Person-directed planning & supports
- Being community connectors and advancing the "community first" approach
- Valuing and applying professional development

We polled the participants to measure the impact of the training. Here's what we found:

The employees who participated appreciated the training and have plans to apply the strategies and philosophies they learned to benefit the people we support.

Participants want to share their knowledge and insights with their teams, and it's important to them that teammates espouse similar (person-directed) values.

Participants think that what they learned in the book club can make a real difference across the agency (*talk about shifting culture!*).

Participants also said that they found the conversations they had in book club to be engaging.

Fun fact: the book club was one of our first in-house events without masks since the "before times!" Not only did employees enjoy getting together, it was a huge morale boost to see things starting to look like the normal we once knew.



Inclusion: A Community Beer

In May we launched *Inclusion: A Community Beer* (but we are partial to its nickname, *Inclusion IPA*) in partnership with Trestle Brewing Company.

In a meeting about how we'd work together during the annual fundraising golf tournament, an off-the-cuff question launched an epic project: "What if we did a beer to celebrate Community Living Month?"

... And that's how an impromptu question led to one of our largest strategic initiatives of the year.

Excellence in community experiences - this priority tasks us to "keep supporting people to find employment, volunteer, and engage in other purposeful pursuits." A busy facet of bringing *Inclusion IPA* to life was engaging the people we support to express themselves as artists and enter the *Taste of Inclusion Contest* for a chance to have their art featured on the beer can. Artistic expression - a purposeful pursuit indeed!

The *Taste of Inclusion* contest was especially impactful for Rebecca Jones who is a burgeoning local artist.

The contest gave Rebecca and her business, Open Minded Art Studios, tremendous exposure. Her contest submission not only sold at the auction, but it also became the featured artwork of the agency's 61st year, appearing in our annual fundraising golf tournament, in our annual *Summer in the Sound* raffle, as the AGM logo, and on the cover of this report!

When we began the *Inclusion IPA* project, we had no idea it would be a jumping-off point to support someone in her career as an artist.

More on Rebecca's story as an artist in CLPS in the News on page 19.

Robust network of community connections and partners - *Inclusion IPA* took a lot of strategic partnership to get off the ground. Our team worked hard to get community members involved at every step.



The project was only possible thanks to a strong collaborative relationship with Trestle Brewing Company. As CLPS team member and project co-lead Sarah Cassidy liked to say, "they could launch a beer without us, but we couldn't do it without them."

Credit also goes to Trestle for bringing Community Living South Muskoka and Sawdust City Brewing Company into the mix; their lead helped us expand our idea of community and include others in our work.

We strategically involved community partners in the project who have been tremendous allies in the past and who represent various sectors in our community; these advocates served as the judges in our *Taste of Inclusion* contest.

Now that Community Living Month 2023 is behind us and *Inclusion IPA* is long sold out, we continue working with Trestle Brewing Company on the project. Our teams are working together on a rollout program that will allow agencies across the province (*heck, maybe across the country!*) to run similar projects.

A beer for inclusion?

"During Community Living Month we celebrate the advancements of the community living movement throughout the year. We shine a light on the people we serve who make our community vibrant and strong. And, we reflect on *our* work and how it's making Parry Sound more inclusive. It's projects like these that check all of our strategic and philosophical boxes:

We got to work with the people we support and give them a platform to share their remarkable skills with the community;

We took our already strong partnership with Trestle Brewing Company and made it stronger;

We used our capacity to develop a project of this magnitude to enrich other communities, and I want to extend my thanks to Sam from Sawdust City Brewing Company and Krista Haiduk-Collier from Community Living South Muskoka for being all-in with this inclusion project;

And, we got to share our vision--a Parry Sound where everyone has the power and freedom to lead the lives they want to lead--with our entire community.

This vision is implicit in everything we do, but we don't often get chances to be explicit in sharing it and calling our neighbours to reflect on whether they want the same for our community; it's a potent call-to-action, even at 3% [ABV]. We are a community that cares about inclusion and belonging."

- Brad Horne, Executive Director
Community Living Parry Sound

Inclusion IPA: the label says it best

This beer was brewed as a collaboration between two breweries with a vision to connect, not only as breweries but as forces that can do good within our communities. We partnered with *Community Living Parry Sound* and *Community Living South Muskoka* to join our communities with purpose over a larger geography.

- *Trestle Brewing Company*
(copy by Brian Pettinger)

This limited-edition release celebrates our friends and neighbours who have developmental disabilities -- people whose wisdom, skills, and experiences are essential to the fabric of our community. **Good things happen when everyone is included in community life.** We stand together in the belief that everyone belongs.

Join us in raising a cold one if you think so, too. Cheers to Community Living Month!!!

- *Community Living Parry Sound*
(copy by Sarah Cassidy)

Agency of choice - *Inclusion IPA* generated a lot of buzz (pun intended) in the region, among dignitaries, and in the Developmental Services (DS) sector.

As mentioned earlier in this segment, *Inclusion IPA* sold out at Trestle Brewing Company and Sawdust City Brewing Company. That's a lot of locals and visitors learning why we're here and what we do!

MPP Graydon Smith and MP Scott Aitchison engaged with us about the beer and the agency's other work.

Inclusion IPA made a splash at the return of Community Living Ontario's day at the legislature. Politicians and DS agencies from across Ontario were floored by our innovative project and want to follow our lead with similar initiatives next year.

Within our strategic priority to be an agency of choice, some of our strategic goals are:

- Make marketing a central business function
- Publicize and promote CLPS activities and successes in ways that capture the attention and engage a wide range of stakeholders
- Raise overall understanding and awareness of CLPS' work and achievements, and how to access support

Check, check, *and* check!



COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

Building a robust network of connections requires ongoing attention to people and their circumstances. Recognizing opportunities to create innovative possibilities for people we support is the key to being intentional and impactful with our partnerships. We want to acknowledge the partners that have lifted up our agency, the people we support, and our community members in their work with us and for us.

Employers

Employers in our community recognize that hiring employees with diverse abilities makes good business sense. Predominantly this is because people with disabilities want to contribute to their communities as much as anyone; their skills enrich our communities and workplaces--all they need is an opportunity to be included.

LINC Employment Services also plays a significant role in the inclusive hiring practices we enjoy in Parry Sound. For over 15 years, LINC has supported job seekers, employees, and employers alike to produce fantastic results. Our robust network of employers continues to grow to the benefit of the entire community.

Donors & Funders

Our services are largely funded by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services. How we are funded will look very different over the next few years as Journey to Belonging comes into effect. Calling upon our community for support will be more important than ever.

Major funders (over \$1,000):

Government of Canada
Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation
Ontario Trillium Foundation
Ministry for Seniors & Accessibility
Muskoka Community Foundation

Employers:

Aramark
The Beer Store
Binx Professional Cleaning
Boston Pizza
Dollar Tree
Gardens of Parry Sound
Harvey's
McDonald's
Muskoka Woods
Rocky Crest Golf Resort
Sobeys
Town of Parry Sound
Trestle Brewing Company
Turtle Jack's

Major donors (over \$1,000):

Cedarvue Foundation
Advocates: David & Brenda Pasiaka
Crofter's Organic
Advocate: Gabi Latka
Knights of Columbus
Advocate: James Sim
Nathan & Lily Silver Foundation
Advocate: Matt Fisher
Parry Sound Fuels
Advocates: James & Shari Cox
Parry Sound Insurance
Advocate: Dave Garagan

CLPS IN THE NEWS

Community Living Parry Sound on track to recover, reconnect, rebuild after pandemic

The organization received a grant of \$142,000 from the Ontario Trillium Foundation in 2022

By **Taylor Clark** Parry Sound North Star
April 11, 2023



Community Living Parry Sound celebrated the progress of its Recover, Reconnect and Rebuild project with local MPP Graydon Smith, key stakeholders and community members on March 3 at Canadore College.

“Our government appreciates that COVID presented serious challenges to critical community organizations like (Community Living Parry Sound) and I’m pleased that these funds have been put to such great use,” said Smith. “The provincial government is committed to helping small towns and rural communities grow and become stronger and more resilient.”

Last year, the organization received a \$142,000 Resilient Communities Fund grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation to support efforts to improve service delivery following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Through the support of the grant, Community Living Parry Sound hired a consultant to take a tailored approach to skill development and capacity-building training. As staff and leaders build resiliency and capacity to effectively navigate change, the organization’s ability to deliver the best possible support to people with intellectual disabilities improves exponentially.

The project takes a multi-pillared approach to the organization’s pandemic recovery efforts: reconnect and rebuild focus on the hybridization of support services, and continue to integrate technology and virtual support into the services provided to people with intellectual disabilities.

Recover is where most of the effort and resources have been directed to understand why resistance to service hybridization was initially experienced across the organization. Uncovering the answer to widespread change fatigue and staff burnout led to the realization that the vision for the organization’s future was merely a pipe dream without an energized workforce. The project shifts the organization’s pandemic recovery efforts to focus on the well-being of staff.

“The impact of this Ontario Trillium Foundation grant cannot be overstated,” said Tricia Bain, director of Community Living Parry Sound. “The Resilient Communities Fund has allowed for (the organization) to not only transform and improve its service delivery, but as well to eliminate the barriers that were hindering this progress, and help the workforce heal from the traumatic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. We are thankful to the OTF for supporting our organization through our pandemic recovery efforts.”

Brewing up inclusion: Community Living Parry Sound launching limited-edition beer

Check out Community Living's launch party for the beer's debut

By **Taylor Clark** Parry Sound North Star
April 15, 2023

Come May, beer drinkers will be able to raise a can in support of inclusion.

“Whether they're an individual or a corporation, Parry Sound cares if people are included or not,” said Sarah Cassidy, executive assistant at Community Living Parry Sound.

With Community Living Month around the corner in May, Community Living Parry Sound has partnered with Trestle Brewing Company to create a limited-edition beer that recognizes the talents of people with developmental disabilities in the community.

“We decided that if it's a beer celebrating people in our community with developmental disabilities, the art should represent those people,” said Cassidy. “A slogan in developmental services or a philosophy is nothing about us without us.”

The organization launched *Taste of Inclusion*, where work from physical pieces like knitwear and wooden blocks to drawings and paintings were submitted. From there, a panel of judges whittled down the entries to five for the public to vote on.

Six hundred votes later, ‘CP Rail’ by Peter Snow was selected to be featured on the label. Submitted by his nephew, Rob, Snow passed away in 2022 but was fondly remembered as a beloved friend, community member, and large-engine enthusiast.

“Peter absolutely adored trains. Everything was trains,” said Cassidy.

She said the artwork couldn't be any more perfect to represent Trestle and honour a train lover's legacy like Snow.

You can look at it and immediately know what it is and bring your own memories to it.”



The final label design and naming of the beer will be left to Trestle and Sawdust City Brewing Company who have partnered on creating the recipe.

Head brewer at Trestle, Matt Lyons, said the micro-IPA will fare on the tropical side with notes of passion fruit and vanilla.

“Kind of different than a lot of our Trestle beers. We tend to be more dry and bitter,” said Lyons. Cassidy said she hopes the beer will ignite a larger conversation about inclusivity not only in our communities but across Ontario.

“I'd really like to see that if we get the word out, maybe next year Community Living Toronto will do it,” she said.

Community Living will be debuting the beer at its launch party at Trestle on May 5.

Putting the unity in community: Community Living Parry Sound celebrates Community Living Month

All proceeds collected this month will go toward services at the Burritt Street Group Home

By **Taylor Clark** Parry Sound North Star
May 15, 2023

Held annually in May, Community Living Month is not only a time to celebrate the progress of the Community Living movement but also a time to shine a light on the people who make our communities vibrant.

“When (people with developmental disabilities are) included, they do work, they do thrive, they do engage in hobbies and recreation with people,” said Community Living Parry Sound executive assistant Sarah Cassidy.

This includes people like accessibility consultant Rebecca Jones who has been working away at her business Open Minded Studios and establishing herself as a professional digital artist.

This is Jones’s first year creating art professionally, but she said she’s been interested in art forever.

“There’s no boundaries,” said Jones. “You can do whatever.”

Digital art has been a freeing experience that allows her to express herself.

“When I do art, I forget that I’m sitting in a chair.”

Along with no boundaries, Jones said art has no labels.

“I like taking the labels off of people that have physical challenges because everybody has some form of challenge.”

Through her artwork, Jones hopes to showcase the potential in everyone.

Her first piece, “Sunset Over Georgian Bay,” was among the five finalists for Community Living Parry Sound’s Taste of Inclusion Contest.

Community Living clients were offered the chance to have their artwork featured on a limited-edition beer to celebrate the month. Although her work wasn’t selected, “Sunset Over Georgian Bay” was showcased with the other finalists at the community beer launch party at Trestle Brewing Company on May 5.

“It’s projects like these that check all our mission values and strategic boxes,” said Community Living Parry Sound executive director Brad Horne. “We got to work with the people we support to give them a platform to share their remarkable skills with our community.”



Parry Sound Mayor Jamie McGarvey raised a glass to the goal of being an inclusive community that supports residents who have a developmental disability.

“They work in the community. They volunteer in the community and they’re there to help when possible,” said McGarvey. “It’s taken a little while, but the inclusion has been seamless and it’s something that we all need to be extremely proud of.”



“ I like taking the labels off of people that have physical challenges because everybody has some form of challenge

- Rebecca Jones

Sheltered workshops and day programs have become a thing of the past as people direct their own service delivery and determine the best support for themselves.

“It's just incredible to see how far we've come in such a long time, but also such a short amount of time, and to see

also how much work still needs to be done,” said Emma Monk, Community Living Parry Sound’s communications and IT co-ordinator.

Monk said there is still progress to be made in how the general population sees the involvement of people with developmental disabilities in their lives and community.

“It's about inclusive employment. It's about making meaningful connections and creating opportunities for everyone to belong,” said Monk. “Until this advocacy, inclusion and support (are) just innate to humankind, there is work to be done.”

All the money raised throughout Community Living Month will go toward supporting the services at the Burritt Street Group Home.

Jones and the other finalists’ artwork are being auctioned until May 31 with all proceeds going to the artist.

STORY BEHIND THE STORY: It's important to celebrate the advancements made in the Community Living movement and to highlight the individuals with developmental disabilities who make our communities whole.

Visit Rebecca's
online shop at
**bit.ly/
openmindedstudios**

As Parry Sound celebrates Community Living Month, it's important to remember there is more work to be done

We seek to help the greater community, and sometimes there is a cost to individuals

By Parry Sound North Star
May 15, 2023

May is Community Living Month.

In our Page 1 story this week, we meet Parry Sound artist Rebecca Jones who is thriving and “taking the labels off of people that have physical challenges because everybody has some form of challenge.” Her first piece, “Sunset Over Georgian Bay,” was among the five finalists for Community Living Parry Sound’s Taste of Inclusion Contest.

Community Living clients were offered the chance to have their artwork featured on a limited-edition beer to celebrate the month.

We applaud Trestle Brewing Company for taking such a tasty step toward inclusion, and Mayor Jamie McGarvey for his commitment to an inclusive community.

But, it's important to hear loud and clear what Emma Monk of Community Living Parry Sound has to say.

Monk said there is still progress to be made in how we see the involvement of people with developmental disabilities in our lives and community.

“It's about inclusive employment. It's about making meaningful connections and creating opportunities for everyone to belong,” said Monk. “Until this advocacy, inclusion and support (are) just innate to humankind, there is work to be done.”

Community Living Parry Sound's “purpose is to support people with disabilities to build better lives in their community. We do this through partnerships, innovation and education.”

Its vision? “A community where all people have the power and freedom to determine the life they want.”

These goals are important for our friends, neighbours and family members who have disabilities, and for those who love them for their gifts, their unique talents and for the rich texture they bring to our lives. But the goals of Community Living are also important to our society — to who we are as people.

Inclusion is a worthwhile goal and it needs to include financial security.

“In Canada, more than one in five people live with a disability. While almost everyone knows someone impacted, most people aren't aware that government support doesn't scratch the surface when it comes to covering even the most basic needs. Canadians with disabilities are more than twice as likely to live in poverty than the rest of the population,” wrote Rabia Khedr, national director of Disability Without Poverty.

“People with disabilities have higher costs of living because they face costs other Canadians have never had to consider. There's a misconception that things like accessible home adaptations and essential mobility aids are covered by public programs. Yet coverage across a patchwork of federal, provincial and territorial funding is partial at best, forcing people living with disabilities to choose between buying food and accessing the internet or even fundraising to meet their basic needs.”

We urge government at all levels to listen closely to Community Living and community groups and to take action on their recommendations.

MILESTONES



Milestones demonstrate the collective efforts and individual brilliance that drive us forward. Behind each lies significant moments of growth, collaboration, and accomplishment.

Our teammates celebrating milestones this year have demonstrated exceptional skills, embraced challenges with courage, and remained steadfast in their dedication to our shared mission.

These milestones are a source of inspiration, a reminder of our shared triumphs, and proof of the incredible potential that lies within each and every one of us.

Congratulations!

- Dawn Cox** 35 years
- Belinda Crawford-Poytress** 25 years
- Leigh Armstrong** 15 years
- Phil Allard** 5 years
- Alex Burden** 5 years
- Sarah Cassidy** 5 years
- Buffie Gracie** 5 years
- Nicole Hughes** 5 years
- Deanna McEwen** 5 years



CONNECTION



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to the many people who contributed to this report and to everyone who did the work all year long. And thank you to our tireless leaders Brad Horne--who never takes a day off (even in golf season)--and David Williams--who *also* never takes a day off (even in hunting season). We are fortunate to have a team full of leaders; thank you for giving *us* days off!

Newspaper articles originally appearing in the Parry Sound North Star were reproduced with permission from author Taylor Clark. We extend our thanks to Taylor for seeing the value in our stories and amplifying the voices of the people in our community.

Pictures by page number | 4. Brad Horne 5. Rose Fraser, Sue Matthews, George Bechard, Jennifer Jarick, Cory Jarick 6. Brenda Lovsin, Liz Desmasdon 7. Cathy Barker, Julie Thorogood, Chris McDonald, Lianne Piddington, David Williams, Brad Horne, Mayor Jamie McGarvey 8. Brad Horne, Tricia Bain, Lynn DeCaro, David Williams, Lianne Piddington, Jo-Anne Demick 9. David Williams, Kevin Grechulk, Jason Stewart, James Walsh 11. Megan Karwaski, Leigh Armstrong 12. Sue Matthews 13. Chris Beesley, Jo-Anne Demick, Krista Haiduk-Collier, Brad Horne, Suzanne Willett, Chris Pettinger 14. Emma Latka, Sarah Cassidy, Matt Lyons, Doris Muckenheim, Curtis Derosiers, Cheryl Bissonette, Jessica Vergeer, Julie Thorogood, and friends from Sawdust and Brew Culture, [on the stairs] David Williams, Sam Corbeil, unknown, Brad Horne , Brad Horne 15. MPP Graydon Smith, Brad Horne, MPP Monique Taylor, Brad Horne, MPP Sandy Shaw 17. David Williams, MPP Graydon Smith, Jo-Anne Demick, Lee-Ann Turner, Tricia Bain, Brad Horne, Mayor Jamie McGarvey 18. Rob Donald, Peter Snow 19. Mayor Jamie McGarvey 20. Rebecca Jones 22. Dawn Cox, Sharon David, Leigh Armstrong, Belinda Crawford-Poytress, Jo-Anne Demick, Tim Vancoughnett, Buffie Gracie 23. Emma Latka, Tim Vancoughnett, George Roy, Rebecca Jones, Sue Matthews, Shirley Ross, Liz Desmasdon, Liz Desmasdon, Deanna McEwen, Rick Harrington, Cathy Todd, Alex Burden, Elyse Spencer, Wendy Dunk

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