

# Spring Issue

St. Paddy's Day  
Celebrating  
March 17

All of our locations were in  
a Paddy's Day mood!

Our Staff  
Service Awards  
Melville Lodge recognizes staff  
milestones.

Yarmouth Heights  
Now Open!!  
An inside look at GEM Health Care  
Group's newest location.



A Retiree's Send-off  
Valued Pharmacist  
Retires

See how various locations celebrated him.

Our Volunteers  
We Celebrate You  
Special events for our Volunteer Appreciation

Interview

## Jillian Saulnier

*"Bloom where you are planted"*



# Happy

## St. Patrick's Day

### MELVILLE GARDENS

**Melville Gardens** in Halifax, NS, celebrated St Patrick's Day with trivia and themed coloring. There was also a pub party with entertainment by Mort. Residents were encouraged to dress in green and enjoyed green snacks and "beer". It was an afternoon filled with dancing and fun!



# HEART O' THE VALLEY

In celebration of St. Patrick's Day, **Heart of the Valley** in Middleton, NS, enjoyed entertainment from the Bridgetown Fiddlers, as well as dance lessons from **DanceTime** in Port Williams.

DanceTime at Port Williams is a social dance club comprised of people interested in both Standard and Latin ballroom dancing. They meet to dance Sunday afternoons from 3 to 5 p.m. at the Port Williams Community Centre, 1045 Main Street, Port Williams.

The club has been in existence since 2003, with members coming from all over with different levels of dance experience. They are a club, not a school, but do occasionally have certified guest instructors offering workshops for club members and club members are always willing to share expertise. Pre-existing knowledge of ballroom dancing is a requirement to join the club.

In addition to their regular practice sessions, they also host several dances throughout the year: a Christmas and Spring Dance, and some other Theme dances in between.

DanceTime invites you and your dance partner to drop by and see what they are all about. The regular season runs from September to May. If you would like further information, please email [DanceTime.PortWilliams@gmail.com](mailto:DanceTime.PortWilliams@gmail.com).



# Top 'O the Melville to you!

**Melville Heights** in Halifax, NS held a St. Patrick's Day Social Hour from 4-5pm on March 17.

**Melville Lodge**, also in Halifax, NS, had a fun time with a St. Patrick's day photobooth!

## MELVILLE HEIGHTS



**Melville Lodge**

# Staff Service Awards

On February 23, 2018, **Melville Lodge** in Halifax, NS, recognized staff members for their years of service.

10 employees from various departments were recognized for their dedication to GEM Health Care Group and Melville Lodge.

**The Honourable Lena M. Diab**, MLA for Halifax Armdale, attended the ceremony and had wonderful things to say about the staff and residents of Melville Lodge.

**GEM's COO, Gloria Hussain**, was also a special guest and got up to say a few words in appreciation.

There was cake and other goodies available to all who attended, and each recipient was awarded a certificate and a gift from management at Melville Lodge and GEM Health Care Group.



Thank you for your dedication  
and service!

Genelyn Rose-Ulip: 10 years

Rosanne MacDonald: 10 years

Phyllis MacConnell: 10 years

Angela Bennett: 15 years

Heather Dodge Irons: 15 years

Colleen Landry: 15 years

Kim Myles: 15 years

Catherine MacIassac: 25 years

Virginia Saxton: 25 years

Shelly Mac Lean: 30 years

## A Special Moment

### Real Talk from Real People

During the ceremony for the Staff Service Awards, Joan Penny was visibly emotional as she listened to the guests speak. So much so that she got up and asked if she could say a few words.

Her mother-in-law, Nina Conrad, is a resident of Melville Lodge.

“What makes these places work – it’s not the

wonderful facilities, it’s the wonderful people, who every day, take care of these people, on our behalf.

So thank you, to each and every one of you...she loves the meals, she loves the recreation programs, she loves everything about this facility... and we’re so blessed that people like you, every day, take care of our mother-in-law.”

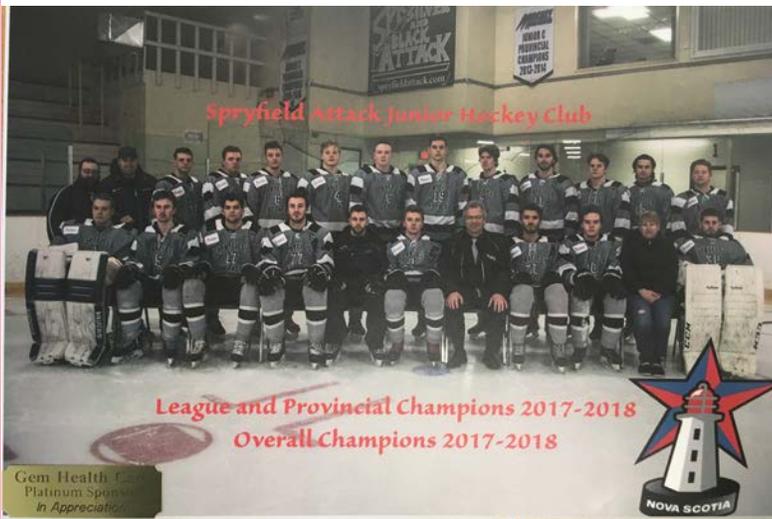
# GEM Gives Back

Sponsored hockey teams win titles with GEM's support

The **Cumberland Peewee AA hockey team** came to **Centennial Villa** in Amherst, NS to thank the clients for their sponsorship. The team won every tournament throughout the year and the last tournament the team and coaches won the title of Mainland Champions.

James Carr # 8 defense is the son of Jennifer Carr DOC, and Ethan Rose #12 forward is the son of Jennifer Rose LPN. The team wanted to come and say thank you, shake hands and talk about their year. The clients of Centennial Villa were very excited to see the kids, they entered the building with loud cheers and applause. Snacks and beverages were enjoyed as they chatted and had many laughs about how hockey has evolved.

Ron Hastings was quick to share a laugh with Sammi Maddison #2 about how Ron was a dangerous hockey player, as his first game on the ice, he scored on his own net. He stated "I don't think I ever played again, they wouldn't let me." The kids enjoyed being able to visit and learn about the clients, they will definitely be back again to volunteer.



As Platinum Sponsor for the **Spryfield Junior Attack Hockey Club**, GEM Health Care Group helped the team win the title of League and Provincial Champions 2017-2018 AND Overall Champions 2017-2018.

In appreciation, the team gifted GEM with a plaque-mounted picture of the team and a thank you card.

We wish the team best of luck defending their titles next season!



Thank you GEM Health Care for your support. Without this dedication, these kids may not have achieved their goal of Mainland Champions!

# Feline Friends at Downsview!

In March, a new therapeutic program was created at **Downsview Long Term Care Centre** in Toronto, ON called "Feline Friends". Four cute fluffy kitties have been purchased for all units, the residents and yes, even the staff cannot seem to get enough of our cuddly friends.

For those not familiar with these Feline Friends, they are life like cats, very soft to the touch, they lick their paws, roll over to receive belly rubs , blink, meow and purr.

"Feline Friends" are used during our Travelling Cart/Sensory program. When the residents see the cats coming their faces light up! Currently we are awaiting to name one of our friends...the residents have not made up their minds just quite yet.

So for now, we would like to introduce you to ... Mittens Mew Mew, Fluffy and Kooshka!!

Welcome to the Downsview Family!



## Did you know?

An adult cat can help ease loneliness for an older person. Studies indicate that living with a

pet can help lower both blood pressure and cholesterol.

# An Olympic Day at Melville Heights

A very cool thing happened at **Melville Heights** in Halifax on March 6! Recent 2018 Olympics Silver medalist, Jillian Saulnier, of Canada's Women's Ice Hockey team, visited Melville Heights for a question and answer with residents, staff and friends. She was joined by **Christina Brien**, education and special events coordinator at the **Nova Scotia Sports Hall of Fame**. She brought along her medal and spoke about her experience at the 2018 PyeongChang Winter Olympics. Jillian is a very humble, well-spoken woman, and we were inspired and honoured to welcome her into one of our homes!

TUESDAY, MAR. 20, 2018

FREE

## Halifax Citizen

A HERALD COMMUNITY WEEKLY PUBLICATION

halifaxcitizen.ca

@HRMCommunities f/HalifaxCitizen

### Olympic medallist visits Melville Heights

EMMA TAYLOR  
communities@herald.ca

Residents of Melville Heights Retirement Residence had a visit on Tuesday, March 6, from a very special guest, Olympic silver medalist Jillian Saulnier.

Saulnier, a member of the Canadian women's national ice hockey team, met with staff and residents to answer some questions and share her story of the how the team brought home a silver medal from Pyeongchang 2018. She was joined by Christina Brien, education and special events coordinator for the Nova Scotia Sport Hall of Fame.

Saulnier's love affair with hockey started almost as soon as she put on her first pair of skates. And by the time she was old enough to play, she never looked back.

"I never came off the ice, ever since I was five years old, so this dream started 21 years ago," she said.

Born and raised in Halifax, Saulnier's parents, Darren Saulnier and Christine Brennan, have always been behind their daughter's passion and even built a backyard rink, where Saulnier and her brother Brennan, who plays hockey for the University of Alabama, spent a lot of their time.

There were not a lot of girls who played hockey when she was younger, so she played on the boys' teams — something she continued to do so she could stay at the competitive level she needed.

"The goal of making the Olympic team and representing the country on the international stage was what I wanted to do



Olympic medallist Jillian Saulnier shows residents at Melville Heights Retirement Residence her silver medal. Part of the Canadian women's national ice hockey team, Saulnier and her teammates participated in the 2018 Olympics in Pyeongchang from Feb. 9 to 25. Emma Taylor

and there has always been a team behind me to get me there," she said, as she expressed how grateful she was for the unwavering support from her family and friends.

Saulnier said she knows how difficult it was for her parents to let her leave home at such a young age to be able to continue to play at the level she needed to pursue her dream, which led her to attend Cornell University in New York.

They have been with her every step of the way as she moved her way ever closer to the Olympics and the experience of achieving that lifelong dream has brought

them even closer together.

"You move your way up the ranking while improving your skill and development, and the more rapidly you develop, the quicker you get to the Olympic stage," she said.

That rise was almost stopped dead in its tracks when last year, for the first time, she was left off the roster for the national team, which she has been on every year since she was 16. Saulnier said everything had been looking so promising and to be left off the team the year before the Olympics was demoralizing.

"It was a huge test to character and it made me question

whether I should step away from the sport or try and prove some people wrong," she said.

Luckily, she chose the latter. Saulnier found it a very emotional and surreal experience the first time she stepped on the ice in Pyeongchang and saw the Olympic rings and flags, saying it is a memory she will cherish forever.

When asked how she felt when the team won silver instead of the anticipated gold medal, Saulnier said she knew that everyone could see the disappointment on their faces.

"Our emotions and thoughts were that we had let down the



When asked how she felt when the team won silver instead of the anticipated gold medal, Saulnier said she knew that everyone could see the disappointment on their faces. "Our emotions and thoughts were that we had let down the country, but there hasn't been a single sign of disappointment. That was such a relief and it is the proudest I've ever felt. This medal represents a lifetime of hard work and support from this country and I can't thank everyone enough," she said.

It's because of this that Saulnier feels the medal does not just belong to her; she credits much of her success to all the support she has gotten at home and across the country. When asked if she would go back to the Olympics, Saulnier answered that she would most definitely go again.



Saulnier and Brien speak to the crowd.

*"I still have a gold medal to win."*

*-Jillian Saulnier*





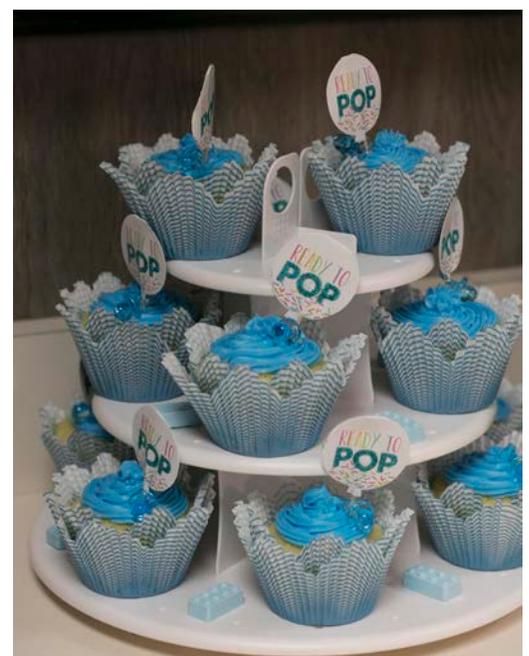
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Sylvia Yang, staff accountant at GEM's Head Office in Halifax, NS had no idea that her colleagues were planning her a surprise baby shower. She was very surprised when she walked into the boardroom and everyone yelled "Surprise!"

There was an abundance of food for a potluck and decorations put up to celebrate. Sylvia also received a gift from GEM and her colleagues.



Congrats on your baby boy Sylvia!



The residents at **Whitehills** in Hammonds Plains, NS felt like getting creative, so we started an "Art Club" painting group. Some residents were interested in trying a new activity and others were excited to renew a favourite hobby. Everyone has been enjoying showing off their paintings!



# What's up at Whitehills?

Our fabulous Recreation Therapy intern, Stacy, hosted a Whitehills Winter Carnival. The residents had a great time playing different games like "Falling Snow Plinko", "Hit the Hot Chocolate", "Snow-No", "Snowman Ring Toss", and more. We also enjoyed cream soda ice cream floats, festive tunes, and prizes!



# A Proper Send-Off

Valued pharmacist retires after 16 years

**Shelley Noonan**, Administrator at Melville Lodge, says that **Doug Ross** has been GEM Health Care Group's pharmacist with Lawtons for 16 years. Residents at **Melville Lodge** in Halifax, NS made art and set up a silent auction to raise funds for a donation to the MS Society in Doug Ross's name.

The goal was \$250 and the total raised was \$350!



Shelley Noonan and Doug Ross hold some of the paintings created by residents at Melville Lodge.

You have such professionalism and dedicated compassion for all; including our staff, residents and their family members; and we are glad we could thank you. May your retirement journey be full of such grace and gratitude as well.

**-The Admiral team**



# Lights, Camera, Action !

Residents at Melville Lodge enjoyed a play put on by Two Houses Theatre Company.

On February 22, **Melville Lodge** in Halifax, NS was treated to a performance by **Two Houses Theatre Company**. The play, titled "Would You Believe It?", was performed by 8 cast members under director/writer Mark Dewolf.

The residents and staff enjoyed the performance, and **CTV News** was also present to interview one of the cast. Two Houses Theatre Company is based out of Spencer House.

For more information on Spencer House, visit [www.spencerhouse.ca](http://www.spencerhouse.ca).



Two Houses Theatre Company



Judy Bonnell  
Marilyn MacDonald  
Jim Clancey  
Ellen Pottie  
Mary Upton  
Glen Amirault  
Sharon Yetman  
Jeannette Rogers

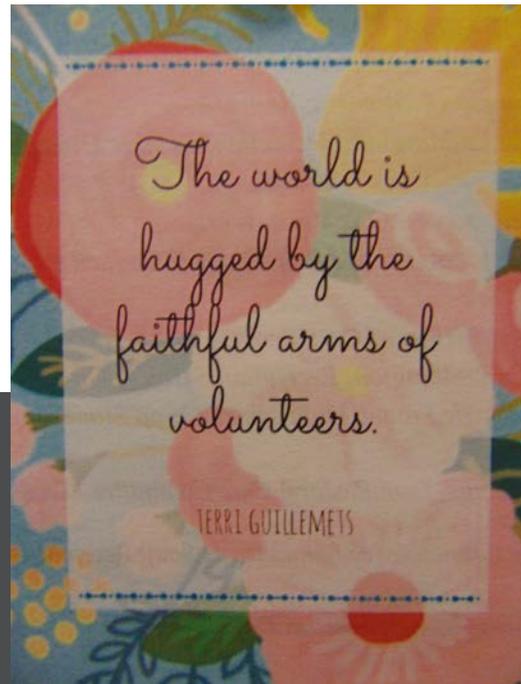
The plays are written by Mark Dewolf, who also directs the play. The actors practice for months.

Spencer House is a drop-in centre for seniors, located on Morris Street.

# Volunteers are the GEMs of our homes!

Every year, our facilities celebrate their volunteers with a special event to recognize their time and dedication to GEM Health Care Group. This year, each volunteer received a tumbler in the GEM green colour with the quote, "Volunteers are the GEMs of our homes". We thank each and every one of our volunteers for all that they do!

## Admiral Dartmouth, NS



# Melville Gardens

For their Volunteer Appreciation Celebration, **Melville Gardens** in Halifax, NS recognized volunteers for all their hard work and dedication by hosting a buffet lunch. There was lunch music by Alex Vaughan.

There were around 55 community and resident volunteers that took part. Staff asked residents for quotes about the volunteers and they came up with: “Thank you for making life interesting”, “Thank you for bringing us laughter”, “Thank you for keeping us company so we do not get lonely” just to name a few. The management team, staff and residents greatly appreciate everything our volunteers do for us! All volunteers received a gift as a token of our appreciation and a certificate for their volunteer accomplishments.

Volunteers are truly the GEMS of our homes.



# Downsview

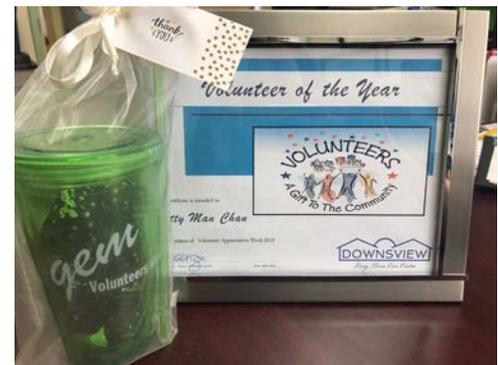
Staff and residents at **Downsview** in Toronto, ON recognized three very special individuals:

**James Davies** - Tuck shop Volunteer

**Kitty Man Chan** –Dietary Volunteer and

**M.Salvatori** – Helping Hands Volunteer (Assists with Bird and Fish Care).

These residents not only call Downsview their home, but they play a vital role in making The Home ..”FEEL” Like HOME!!!



# Whitehills

At our **Whitehills** Volunteer Appreciation event in Hammonds Plains, NS, we thanked our many volunteers for everything they do with an award ceremony and luncheon. We played a “left-right game” with prizes using a story about the many ways our volunteers help us and bring joy to our residents. Each volunteer was given a certificate of appreciation and a gift. Our staff served our volunteers lunch and a cake and we spent time socializing together. Our volunteers had a great time and really appreciated the gesture of thanks.



# Welcome to the GEM family of homes, Yarmouth Heights!



Yarmouth Heights in Yarmouth, NS



**Yarmouth Heights** opened its doors at the very end of January, 2018. Since then, the residence, which is a combination of Retirement Living and Assisted Living, has gotten rave reviews!

New residents are enjoying the incredible view of the Yarmouth Harbour, exquisite meals and a Recreation program that keeps them busy!

h a p p y  
e a s t e r



## Heart of the Valley

Every year at **Heart of the Valley**, in Middleton, NS the residents create new center-pieces for all the dining room tables to celebrate Easter. The children at the local daycare make 50 place mats for the residents Easter dinner. There is a Easter coloring contest every year as well, for family and staff's children and the residents judge and and make up Easter baskets for prizes.



h a p p y  
e a s t e r



## Centennial Villa

Residents at **Centennial Villa** in Amherst, NS celebrated with Easter Tea and Easter Bonnet making!



## Yarmouth Heights

At **Yarmouth Heights**, in Yarmouth, NS, Administrator Joy Sison placed a basket on each resident's door knobs prior to lunch. When they were leaving their rooms for lunch, they got to take part in an Easter Egg Hunt!

They all had fun and enjoyed the hunting at Sidney Crosby lounge and Recreation room. Resident's daughters were there and had fun as well assisting their moms to find the eggs.

They got (6) cupcakes, (3) cookies, (6) candies and some chocolates for prizes.



hAPPY  
eASTER



## Gables Lodge

In celebration of Spring's arrival, residents at **Gables Lodge** in Amherst, NS took a visit to the YMCA of Cumberland. Gables Lodge and the Childcare Program at the YMCA are working towards creating an inter-generational program to take place at least one time per month. Children bring such joy, especially to the geriatric population.

Residents engaged with the young children through conversation and fun activities. We dyed Easter eggs, shared a snack, and even had a visit from the Easter bunny!



Arthritis  
SOCIETY  
**Walk FOR Arthritis**  
walkforarthritis.ca



*Sunday June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2018  
9:15am*

*Walk for Arthritis  
Outdoors at the Emera Oval.  
Pledges can be made at the Front  
Desk at Melville Heights.  
Our goal is \$1000.00!*

*Please email  
[lori.cormier@melvilleheightsltc.com](mailto:lori.cormier@melvilleheightsltc.com)*

*if you are interested  
in walking with Lori & Team Melville Heights!*

*Grandma Knows Best!*



**I DONT CARE WHAT  
MOM SAID**

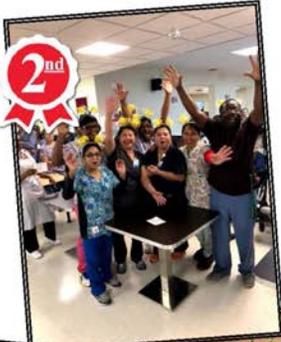


**GRANDMA SAID I  
CAN HAVE IT**

## Amazing Race - Recreation Week Fun!!

On March 9th in honour of Recreation Awareness Week, we at Downsview Long Term Care Centre, celebrated with our very first Amazing Race Theme Day! This

was an amazing way to promote Team work in the facility and show our residents how effective each Department can all work together!!! This was truly team work at its finest!! Kudos goes to **The Environmental Department** for coming in FIRST PLACE!!



*Bloom  
where  
you are  
planted*

**Have something you want  
featured in the next  
Newsletter?**

**Email your ideas and  
photos to  
samantha.smith@gemhc.com**



@gemhealthcare



samantha.smith@gemhc.com



www.gemhealth.com