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A DAY ON THE SLOPES

When Dave Harder arrived at Sherbrooke in 2014, the idea of him speeding down a snow-covered hill on skis was simply a dream. He was restricted to a wheelchair and had challenges expressing his thoughts. But what our Sherbrooke staff quickly discovered was to never underestimate Dave Harder.

In March, thanks to a lot of hard work, creative thinking and caring hearts, Dave Harder returned to his favourite ski hill, Table Mountain, and flew down the slopes.

“When I saw Dave going down the hill, I was delighted that we helped him return to an environment not often associated with folks who live in long term care,” said Sherbrooke



Cal Schmulich, Deanna Harbridge and Dave Harder at Table Mountain.

Physiotherapist, Deanna Harbidge. Deanna was one of three staff who went with Dave to Table Mountain. Two Elders, Danny and Ron, also came along to cheer on their friend.

It took months of planning to get Dave to Table Mountain. Sherbrooke recreation staff, led by Carrie Hart, reached out to Table Mountain staff and discovered a device called a sit-ski. This piece of equipment allowed Dave to sit on a chair, mounted on skis, and be guided down the hill by an expert skier.

There was pressure on Dave to make the most of the opportunity. He worked extremely hard with our therapy team to get his body ready to sit for an extended period of time, crouched in the sit-ski position.

Dave also had to be fearless. Saskatchewan is not known for its tall mountains, but the Table Mountain hills are steep, and Dave’s descent down those hills would be nerve-racking because he would not be in control. That responsibility belonged to Cal Schmulich, a local farmer who has worked at Table Mountain for decades.

Cal and Dave hit it off right away and chatted all the way up the chairlift. When they started carving down the hill, Dave’s smile could be seen for miles! This scene played out over and over again down various hills until Dave said he was ready for a cheeseburger.

Sherbrooke prides itself on bringing the world to our Elders but even this day was hard to imagine for our staff. Dave’s physical recovery has been nothing short of incredible. He is walking now and reminding everyone he meets how tall he is! Deanna says Dave deserves all the credit.

“The success he achieved is because he chose to take the steps along that road to recovery. He maintains his sense of humour even in very challenging circumstances. Dave’s ability to stroll around the halls of Sherbrooke is an inspiration to many of the Elders who call Sherbrooke home.” 🍷



Sherbrooke CEO, Suellen Beatty.

“For decades, the only dementia story we’ve heard is one of loss and despair. But there is a new dementia story being told. It is a story of joy and growth. It is a story being told by people living with dementia, who want to disrupt the status quo and tell you they are still here and their lives have meaning.” Those are the words of Dr. Bill Thomas, the founder of the Eden Alternative®. In May, several Sherbrooke and Central Haven managers travelled to Atlanta, Georgia to attend the 9th International Eden Conference, Rise Up: Change Starts Here. We heard many powerful speakers and our own managers presented our innovations in the areas of leadership, culture change, intergenerational programming, care planning and the use of social media. At the conference Sherbrooke was awarded Eden’s highest honour, the 2018 Eden Master Gardener Award.

On the last day of the conference we experienced an exciting new event, Dr. Thomas’s worldwide *“Disrupting Aging Tour”* which is travelling across North America. The first show, in the tour, was called *“Disrupting Dementia”*. “This immersive and transformational non-fiction theatre experience weaves film, music and first-person stories with groundbreaking research turning convention on its head by focusing on what we can all learn from people living with dementia”. The show was inspirational, thought-provoking and really entertaining.

The second show in the *Disrupting Aging Tour* is “Aging: The most Dangerous Game” which focuses on the possibility of

growth late in life. As usual there were many gems shared in the formal program and in the chat Dr. Thomas had with the audience. Two of the most interesting things he talked about referred to the medicalization of aging; things that are a normal part of growing older are now viewed as health problems and treated with drugs. He said “Tonight when you wake up at 3 a.m. think of me”. Waking up at 3 a.m. is a normal occurrence as we get older, yet many of us believe that we have a sleeping problem if we wake up during the night. It is **normal to have frequent awakenings in the night as you age**. Many older people take sleep medications not knowing that wakeful periods in the night are a normal part of aging. Like most medications, sleep medications come with both short and long term effects on our health. The cost to our health, in my view, is probably not worth the experience of the uninterrupted sleep of a younger person. If you are entering your senior years, relax when you wake up in the middle of the night, this is normal at your age!

The second topic I found enlightening was about the annoying problem of not being able to recall a name or a fact as quickly as we could when we were younger. He explained that when we are young our filing system is pretty empty and has plenty of storage space for loads of facts and figures. As we age we continue to fill up that space year after year which means eventually there is a lot of information to sift through when we are trying to retrieve a piece of data. It can be like looking for something in a drawer that is full of stuff making it impossible to find anything. This simple explanation should help a few of you relax just a bit; however it gets even better!

Dr. Thomas taught us that older people have something that they gain over time which younger people have not yet had the opportunity to develop. While the young person can quickly remember a name or a date or a word, the older person has another skill that has developed over time. **It is called knowing the gist of something**. Thomas explained that recent research shows older people may be slower because they’re “developing the ability to extract more complex meanings out of situations and stories, and see narratives and stories at a deeper level than young people.”

This means that one can’t necessarily retrieve data as quickly from the filing system but the older person can sense enough about a situation to understand quickly what is going on or what is meant. They can figure out the **gist** of something very quickly. It is a wonderful skill that is developed by being exposed to many experiences over time. When asked whether the older person would trade away the “gist” of the situation for being able to quickly recall a word or fact, the answer is for most people, a resounding **“No”**.

So next time when you are trying to remember something that you just can’t seem to retrieve out of that filing system in your brain, relax and think of Dr. Thomas and remember that over the years you have developed an amazing gift to get the “gist” of most things. I think this is called wisdom and I for one sure wouldn’t trade it for faster recall. 🧠

A YEAR OF iGEN

The intergeneration program at Sherbrooke continues to be an incredible experience for our community. This year's group of 25 grade six students was the fourth class to spend their school year at Sherbrooke and they did an exceptional job of forming meaningful relationships with our Elders and staff while making a positive difference within Saskatoon!

Here are some moments from the 2017/18 school year highlighting the work of iGen students, their dedicated teachers and Sherbrooke Elders and staff.

In November, the We Day/Free The Children Committee raised money and gathered 124 kilograms of food for the Saskatoon Food Bank. Students and Elders delivered the food to the Food Bank and received a tour of its facilities. It was an eye-opening experience for everyone involved to learn how vital the Food Bank is for Saskatoon.

What better Canadian history resource for iGen students than our Veterans. To commemorate Remembrance Day, students learned about the medals our Veterans were awarded during their service and then used slabs of clay to create their own medals. These clay medals, which our Veterans also made, featured a word that students and veterans thought represented their character.

Did you know that Michael Bradford, Principal of Ecole College Park School in Saskatoon, is a published author? He was the perfect person to teach students and Elders about the writing process and why writing is so important. In April, students and Elders held an exhibition of their writing in Sherbrooke and inspired our community to put pen to paper!

This year's class was very active in the community, and their work with our Elders and the We Day/Free The Children Committee was highlighted in May in Saskatoon's Broadway neighbourhood. Students, Elders and staff took part in The Walk 'N Rollin' on Broadway event that raised awareness for wheelchair accessibility in Saskatoon. Groups of students and Elders were stationed at street corners along Broadway Avenue and spoke with people about why wheelchair accessibility is an important issue. The event made the six o'clock news on three local television stations!

The iGen class braved stormy weather to spend a night camping at Wanuskewin Heritage Park. During the day, students and Elders learned about Indigenous culture and the historical significance of Wanuskewin. They also saw a beautiful Jingle Dress Dance performance inside the Wanuskewin facility.

It's not every day an award-winning journalist comes do a radio documentary on your class, but that was the case in June when CBC Radio's David Gutnick spent two days at Sherbrooke learning about the iGen program. David also spoke with students and Elders about what makes a good story and why journalism is important. The documentary will air on CBC Radio's The Sunday Edition program this September. 🎧





May Abigania (right) with last year's winner, Carol Setchell



Melanie Walters (left) with last year's winner, Mary Boechler

SPRIT OF SHERBROOKE & CENTRAL HAVEN

People visiting Sherbrooke and Central Haven marvel at our staff's energy, enthusiasm and compassion. Each year, we celebrate those qualities by presenting the Spirit of Sherbrooke and Central Haven Awards to a staff member in each community. Staff are nominated by their peers. The award is given to a person who exemplifies the highest standards in the delivery of care to residents and commemorates the spirit and caring concern for both residents and co-workers.

This year's recipients were **May Abigania** from Sherbrooke and **Melanie Walters** from Central Haven. May was nominated by her peers for her positive energy and

great communication skills. Her peers also wrote that May, "lives the Eden Alternative philosophy every day as she helps to eliminate loneliness, helplessness and boredom. Residents and staff are blessed to have May in their lives. She enriches our entire community."

During her acceptance speech, May thanked her family for their love and support and showed great humility in her role at Sherbrooke.

"I didn't compete for this award. It's just how I live my life. I'm here to touch lives."

Melanie Walters was nominated by her Central Haven peers for her passion and love of the Elders. Her infectious energy

was displayed during her acceptance speech when she thanked her Central Haven family for thinking of her in this way.

Melanie's nomination letter described her as a great storyteller and someone for which, "Eden comes naturally. There is no other way. She is a role model staff can look up to. She supports residents to live full and abundant life. Melanie always has a smile on her face."

Congratulations to May and Melanie for receiving these awards. Thank you for modeling our values so well and so naturally. The lives of our Elders and our communities are the richer for it. 🌸

SHERBROOKE

RECEIVES INTERNATIONAL AWARDS

Sherbrooke staff work extremely hard ensuring our Elders live full and abundant lives, so it's always nice to be recognized for the work we are doing. This spring, Sherbrooke received two prestigious awards from international organizations.

In May, we were awarded the Master Gardener Award from the Eden Alternative at the Eden Alternative® conference in Atlanta, Georgia. The Master Gardener Award is not literally about gardening. It recognizes the unwavering commitment of a care community to bring the Eden Alternative® Principles to life in daily practice. We were fortunate to win this



Sherbrooke managers receiving the Master Gardener Award in Atlanta.

award in 2010 and are thrilled that our continued hard work and dedication was recognized this way.

In presenting the award to Sherbrooke, the Eden Alternative® wrote, "Sherbrooke is a shining example of true community. They exude excellence in living the Eden Alternative® Ten Principles and creating well-being for all that live and work there. They have been on the Eden Registry for 19 years, and they were the first Registry Member in the galaxy to achieve all four Milestones!"

Sherbrooke was also honoured to receive the first ever Pioneer Network and Rockport Healthcare Services Community Commitment Award. This North American award was given to Sherbrooke's We Day/Free The Children Committee for its extraordinary standard of community service.

This committee is made up of Elders, staff, and the iGen class. The focus of We Day/Free The Children is to make a difference in the community and ultimately change the world.

For years, We Day/Free The Children has raised money for the Saskatoon Food Bank, Saskatoon Crisis Nursery, The Lighthouse, Telemiracle and other organizations. The committee has also worked to raise awareness for wheelchair accessibility rights in the city, including a "Walk 'N Rollin'" event on Broadway Avenue this year that made the six o'clock news on all three local television stations.

Sherbrooke is sending a delegation to Denver, Colorado in August to receive the award and the wonderful part is that our Elders will be able to accept the award via Skype!

It is rewarding when the hard work, dedication and passion of our Elders, staff and volunteers are recognized and celebrated. We are truly humbled to be recognized in this way. 🌱



This is the second time Sherbrooke has received the Master Gardener Award.



CENTRAL HAVEN ACHIEVES MILESTONE 4

“It’s not about the bricks and mortar. It’s about the people and the human spirit.”

That’s how Central Haven’s Director of Care, Dolores Campbell, describes how her small community was able to achieve a big milestone.

In March, Central Haven achieved Milestone 4 status within the Eden Alternative® Path to Mastery and became the second home in the galaxy to achieve this status. There are four milestones within the Eden Alternative® Path to Mastery and they serve to guide long-term care homes in successfully implementing the Eden Alternative® philosophy to support well-being for our Elders, staff and whole community.

Central Haven’s climb up the Eden milestone ladder has been meteoric. It was only three years ago our home became registered as an Eden Home and a year since we achieved Milestone 3. It was a great achievement and served as motivation amongst the staff to do even more.

“It pushed us to grow and move forward,” Campbell explained in her Central Haven office. “For example, we were hesitant to start our neighbourhood meetings, but finally we just said, ‘let’s do it!’ We’re learning not to be afraid.”

One of the advantages of being a small care home (Central Haven has 60 Elders) is the tightly-knit community. Elders, staff, volunteers and families are comfortable raising ideas and following through with them.

Central Haven’s Manager of Support Services, Alex Colbon, offered an example of that comfort level.

“I think of one family member. He’s a son-in-law to one of our Elders. He just came in with his Bose speaker, set it up in the dining room, and played rock music! Everything from the 1920’s to today. It’s great to see that culture created at Central Haven and have families share that culture with other families.”

Elders and staff gathered in the Saal Room on the day of the call and spoke with Denise Hyde, Eden Alternative® Community Builder, via video conference. Hyde asked questions to Elders and staff about Central Haven’s culture, community events and how they worked together to achieve Milestone 4 status.

“Our goal now is spreading the word,” said Campbell. “We want to help others come along on the journey. When we talk about the Milestones, we’re very passionate about it because we believe it. It comes from the heart so it’s not hard to talk about.”

Sherbrooke is full of artists who love expressing themselves in creative and original ways. Kelly MacDougall, Paul Sisetski and Donna Taniskishayinew are just a few of the many Elders who find joy, meaning, growth and autonomy through their work in the Arts Studio.

We love celebrating Elders within our community, but sometimes it's fun to take the show on the road! That was the case in April at the St. Thomas More Gallery on the University of Saskatchewan campus.

A group exhibition called 'Spirit



SPIRIT OF SASKATCHEWAN AT ST. THOMAS MORE GALLERY

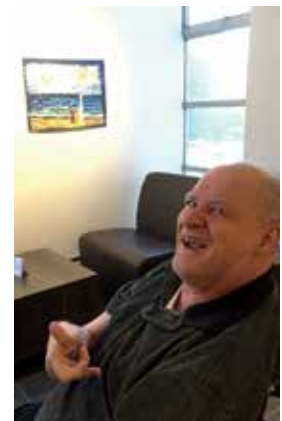
of Saskatchewan' featured the works of Sherbrooke Elders. The opening reception was held on a Friday night at the STM Gallery and it was a packed house!

Many of the Elders who were showcasing their work came to the reception, along with their families and friends. There was a strong sense of community as Elders guided people through the exhibition discussing their paintings, drawings and sculptures. It was fascinating to hear the motivation and inspiration behind many of the pieces.

Alana Moore is Sherbrooke's Artist-in-Residence and works closely with our Elders to help them achieve their artistic goals. She spoke at the opening reception about her unique role within our community.

"I'm still taken aback that this is my job and this is what I get to do. I am lucky that I get to know all of you Elders and spend every day with you making art. Thank you for all that you do and the art that you all have created is beautiful."

Our community would like to thank Linda Stark for curating the exhibition and to St. Thomas More College for giving our Elders a space to showcase their art. It was a special evening and one that our Elders will not soon forget. 🌟





Elder Neca Keith is enjoying the new kitchen in Vimy House.

HOME IS WHERE THE KITCHEN IS

Famous Hollywood director Alfred Hitchcock once wrote that, “Happiness is a small home, with a big kitchen.” The newly renovated kitchen in Vimy House (House 10) in Veterans Village certainly fits that description, and we promise it’s not as spooky as a Hitchcock film!

Vimy House is the first house to undergo a kitchen renovation in Sherbrooke. Elders, staff and families all agree that the new cupboards, appliances and bright lighting have given the home a fresh, new energy.

“The kitchen is more inviting,” said Holly Keeler. She is the manager of Veterans Village and understands a kitchen plays an important role within a home.

“It’s the first thing that family and Elders see when they enter the house and it’s a place where staff spends a lot of their day.”

Beyond the new appliances and lighting, the kitchen features innovative storage within the cupboards and cabinets that make for greater use of the space. Keeler notes that people are more excited to prepare meals in the new kitchen.

“There is more room and better organization to prepare meals so that staff will be able to cook more efficiently. Families love how nice the kitchen is. I had one Elder say to me, ‘it’s bright and modern and the grub is good too!’”

This is the first in a series of eleven kitchen renovations happening throughout our homes. We understand how important modern and functioning kitchens are to homes and we are delighted with the positive feedback so far in Vimy House. Only through financial support from the public are renovations like this made possible.

If you would like to help support these kitchen renovations or other projects to “**Renew Joy**” in our homes, please contact Rob Neufeld at the Sherbrooke Foundation (rob@sherbrookefoundation.ca). Your support will help ensure our Elders have happy and modern kitchens in their homes. 🌟