



IN THE NEWS

February 2017

Did We Say Snoezelen? (snooz-e-len)

The participants are very curious about what has been happening in a small space in the back of the Wipers area. Some have seen lights or heard music. Some have been invited in for a closer look and to experience it first-hand.

Snoezelen originated in the Netherlands in the 1970s as relaxation therapy for people with autism or other developmental disabilities, as well as brain injury and dementia.

Snoezelen's multi-sensory products and environments calm and reduce agitation through the use of gentle light, soothing sound, relaxing smell and touch.

Lori Davis, our vocational instructor in the Wipers Program and the area where participants transition from school to work, has been advocating for a Snoezelen room for a number of years. However, covering the cost of equipment and finding a suitable space have been an issue.

Last fall, Lori looked at a storage room in her work area with new eyes and set about clearing it out. And, thanks to the Halifax Youth Foundation, whose funds have helped to purchase equipment, and the ever resourceful Doug Morash the space has been converted from closet to calming sanctuary.

The room can be used to either relax or stimulate and is furnished with foam flooring, a comfortable reclining chair (designed by Doug), weighted blanket and shoulder wrap (similar in weight to the aprons worn for x-rays), a fibre-optic spray that changes colours, speakers with water jets that glow in different colours and jump high or low depending on the volume of music, balls of different sizes and textures that can be touched and squeezed, and even some that light up, chalk boards for drawing, and much more that can be used depending on the needs of each participant.

We are thrilled to be able to offer this therapy.

"You can really see the participants relax and enjoy this space. Joel just loves it."

Lori Davis, Vocational Instructor



Joel Bezanson is one of the participants who has used the Snoezelen room. He particularly likes the lights and different textures.

Sweet Successes & Smiles that Brighten Your Soul

Supporting participants in achieving success in mastering some of the skills many take for granted is what Megan Tobin loves most about her job. That, and "smiles that brighten your soul."

Megan, who is originally from Cape Breton, joined Bonny Lea Farm as a participant support worker last fall. With two bachelor degrees, including one in social work, and years of hands on experience working with marginalized populations in the not for profit sector in Halifax, she is finding Bonny Lea Farm to be very rewarding.

We're glad you chose Bonny Lea Farm, Megan!



Megan Tobin, shown here enjoying a hike, joined the staff at Bonny Lea Farm last fall, as a participant support worker.

From the Beginning and Across Generations

You can tell who they are because they refer to the participants fondly as “the kids”. That’s because for them, many of the participants were children when Bonny Lea Farm began back in 1973. But as times changed we began supporting adults, and many of those original children are now in their fifties.

One of them is Bonita Church, whose family sold their home to the Bakers to construct Bonny Lea Farm in 1973. She was offered a job, which she thought she would do for a short time, and has been here ever since.



Bonita and Sharon Church form part of the backbone of Bonny Lea Farm.

First, she peeled vegetables with chef Guy LePage, for the 97 participants who were bussed in each day. She then worked to obtain her chef certificate and later managed “Thirsty Thinkers” tea room where participants served up scrumptious lunches. Over the years she trained to work in all areas of Bonny Lea Farm. Now forty-four years later she fills in where ever she is needed. “As Bonny Lea grew, I learned and grew.” She is a mother figure for many of the participants and staff alike.

“Participants do and say things that come from the heart. Bonny Lea has done so much for me. There isn’t a thing I wouldn’t do for them. This is my family. They’re going to have to drag me out of here one day.” - Bonita Church

Sharon, her daughter, is the Office Manager. Bonny Lea Farm was her neighbor throughout her life and she has worked here since 2009. While originally she was looking for an opportunity closer to home so that she would not need to commute to work, being able to give back as part of a team that makes a difference in the lives of others and experiencing the genuine appreciation of the participants are what have kept her here.

Paul, Bonita’s son, also worked with South Shore Community Service Association at the South Shore Work Activity Program. For nearly 20 years he drove the van. After driving 1 million accident free miles he decided it was time to move on.

Blue Nose Marathon Team Bonny Lea Farm is Ready. Are you?



Team Bonny Lea Farm is gearing up for this year’s Blue Nose Marathon Charity Challenge.

Team Bonny Lea Farm has set their sites on May 20. So far the Team has 25 registered members and is looking for more people to join them. For those who do not think walking 5km sounds like a good time, please consider sponsoring your favourite team member or the entire team.

The Blue Nose Marathon has become one of Bonny Lea Farm’s larger fund raising events. Our goal is to raise \$10,000 this year towards Phase II of our “Smoothin’ for Cruisin’ Mobility Project” to resurface the driveway from residence to Church House. For more visit: www.bonnyleafarm.ca or call us at 902-275-5622 ext 224.

Good Times Gallery



Top to bottom:
Bridgewater King Lion, Peter Wagner on the right, presents a cheque to Valerie Roode towards “Joanne’s Wish - A wheelchair accessible van”. Also present were Philippe (Residential Manager) and Liz (Fund Development Director); Floyd, Nancy and Tom found a new friend in Nancy Hatch; Lynne enjoys a trip to Ross Farm Museum; Debbie, the horse whisperer, at the Horse Social hosted by Hinchinbrook Farm.