

2021 Year End Newsletter

December is often a time to reflect on the past year but it is also an opportunity to look ahead. With over 6,000 households on the waiting list for affordable housing in Waterloo Region, there remains much work yet to do.

Our efforts are only successful because of the strength of partnerships with government funders, other agencies and organizations in our community, and people like you. Your financial support and ongoing engagement in our work inspire us to do more. Thank you!



Dan Driedger
Executive Director

We want to go beyond providing basic affordable housing and create homes where people can thrive. This newsletter shares just a sample of how that occurs. The art exhibit recently hosted at 544 Bridgeport is a wonderful example of how affordable housing with supports can create a sense of community. And our merger with Sprucelawn is another example of how we can do more by working together.

Thank you for your ongoing interest in our efforts to respond to the need for affordable housing. We can't do it alone. Your support makes a real difference in the lives of people in our community.

Merger with Sprucelawn

We have some exciting news to share. On November 30th, after much discussion and planning, Sprucelawn Apartments for Seniors merged with MennoHomes.

Sprucelawn is a non-profit that has been providing affordable housing for seniors in the village of St. Jacobs for almost 40 years. Started by the three village churches (Lutheran, Mennonite, and United) they saw the need for affordable housing for seniors and built a 30 unit apartment building that backs onto the mill race in St. Jacobs. Over the past five years, they acquired some adjacent land and have been working through various planning and design activities to build a 28 unit addition. It will consist of 20 one-bedroom apartments and 8 two-bedroom ones.

Earlier this year, Sprucelawn submitted a proposal to The Region of Waterloo and was successful in securing funding support for the one-bedroom apartments. MennoHomes was identified as a project partner that could ultimately merge with Sprucelawn. This was seen as a way for MennoHomes to contribute our experience to the success of the new addition while also providing long-term operational expertise to Sprucelawn.

On November 30th, MennoHomes became the sole steward of Sprucelawn and also assumed the various director roles on the board. The majority of the previous Sprucelawn board will continue to be actively involved as committee members for Sprucelawn.

More details about this new project will be available in the coming months. We anticipate the start of construction in the spring of 2022. We will also be launching a public capital campaign in the new year. If you are interested in knowing more in advance, please contact Dan Driedger at 226-476-2535 or ddriedger@mennohomes.com.

MennoHomes wishes to express our sincere thanks to the retiring board of Sprucelawn. They have provided quality housing for seniors for almost 40 years. They have overcome many obstacles to lead the redevelopment to this stage. We are humbled by their confidence in MennoHomes to continue to be good caretakers of this property. It is a responsibility we take seriously and will do our utmost to honour.

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Bridgeport Art Exhibit

Four tenants at 544 Bridgeport recently hosted an Art Exhibit. The tenants displayed their various talents. The exhibit featured fabric art by a quilter, paintings by 2 painters with very different styles, and an imaginative army base made from recycled items.

Tenants were invited to come and see their neighbour's work. You can view some of the art that was displayed at our online gallery.

[View Gallery](#)



Christmas Party

A huge "Thank You" to Parents for Community Living for helping to host a Christmas Party at 544 Bridgeport. We had another amazing night of connections. Grace Cameron is a tenant across the hall from Ler Ler, a PCL-supported tenant. They have become good friends and Grace wanted to cook a Christmas meal for all of PCL's supported people at Bridgeport as well as the staff.

Along with 2 other tenants, she cooked a massive delicious Christmas meal. She even bought mini poinsettias for the centerpieces and personally made each person's place setting, sewing them by hand. PCL staff wore their Christmas sweaters and even had a surprise visit by Santa. A great night was had by all. You can view more pictures here: [Christmas Party Photo Gallery](#)

Farewell and Hello

Ester Neufeldt Retires

Ester joined our team in November 2017 as our bookkeeper. Over the past four years, she has worked hard to ensure the financial details of MennoHomes were properly and accurately recorded.

Thank you Ester for your dedication and commitment. Your deep knowledge of the charitable sector has strengthened our work. Congratulations on a well-deserved retirement.



Robin Near - Senior Bookkeeper

We are happy to welcome Robin Near as our new senior bookkeeper. Robin is responsible for managing the accounting records at MennoHomes. She has 25 years of experience working in a family business in the construction industry and has a strong foundation in financial management.

Robin is looking forward to bringing her skills to the non-profit sector and building relationships with the MennoHomes team and property management partners to ensure our projects remain financially healthy.



MENNOHOMES | ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH | PARENTS FOR COMMUNITY LIVING

WATCH IT AGAIN BRIDGEPORT AT LANCASTER "VIRTUAL" GRAND OPENING

Event Lead Sponsors



SAVE The DATE

Annual General Meeting

We will be hosting our AGM on Wednesday, January 26th at 2:00 pm.

Details related to whether this will be a strictly online event or a hybrid one will be announced once we are closer to the actual date in January.



Effective August 18, 2021

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