



A COMMUNITY OF
Kindness



2024-25 REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

Message from the *Board Chair*

The past year has been pivotal for Craigwiel, with the Board intently focused on securing approval for our new home and creating a unification plan with Fairview Mennonite Homes and Parkwood Mennonite Home Inc.



Securing Ministry approval to construct a new Craigholme long-term care home this past December was a monumental milestone and truly exhilarating. We extend our sincere gratitude to Elaine Shantz, President and CEO; Brent Martin, CFO; the Resource Team; SRM Architects; and D. Grant Construction for their tireless work in meeting every critical deadline.

We also deeply appreciate the proactive support of the Municipality of North Middlesex. Mayor Ropp, the planning department, and the entire Council demonstrated a clear understanding of this project's vital importance to Ailsa Craig and the wider community – thank you.

Our groundbreaking ceremony quickly followed Ministry approval, bringing together past and present Board members, politicians, residents, staff, community members, and donors. This groundbreaking, covered extensively by CTV, marks an historic milestone for Craigwiel and an unforgettable moment that ranks among my proudest. I'll never forget the joy on everyone's faces.

We are grateful to Brent Horst from Fairview Parkwood Communities for joining our Board. His presence ensured we met a key mortgage requirement and strengthened our governance.

I'm pleased to report the Shared Services Committee, comprised of Bev Shipley, Brent Horst, Bob Shantz and me, has worked diligently over the past year to develop a unification plan that will strengthen all campuses.

The start of 2025 brought a tangible sense of excitement as the old house was taken down and the construction fencing went up. The buzz around town is growing – the new Craigholme is a landmark project that promises so much for our community.

Looking ahead to a bright future, I want to thank my fellow Board members, as well as Elaine and Brent, for their deep commitment to meeting our community's needs. In today's landscape, a standalone small home is no longer sustainable. Seeing the vision of a new home rise from the initial concerns about closure is incredibly fulfilling. The Board is proud to be part of this pivotal moment in our town's history.

Finally, we want to express our gratitude to the community members whose vital support helped us raise \$1.25 million for the new Craigholme. As we move towards completion, our Capital Campaign Committee is dedicated to raising additional funds as costs have risen.

We are fortunate to be surrounded and embraced with kindness at Craigwiel. Thank you for your enduring support.

Message from the *Executive Director*

The future of Craigwiel is visible to everyone in the community. We are growing! What may not be apparent are the changes inside as well.



We continue to learn and grow through our Shared Services Agreement with Fairview. We have launched 'Kindness Lives Here' initiatives, continue to offer education opportunities, including the Gentle Persuasive Approach to support residents experiencing dementia, and are preparing to launch our new Seniors Active Living Centre. As our

partnership with Fairview deepens, Craigwiel Gardens has joined in their annual Legacy Awards for the first time. Congratulations to all winners!

Thank you to the leadership team and staff for embracing change and demonstrating kindness to self, each other and the community.

Message from the *President and CEO*

The energy of possibility now shines at the site of the new Craigholme, a powerful example of what a community can achieve when it unites for what it cherishes. Watching the new home rise, it's impossible not to reflect on the journey that brought us here.



In Ontario, several small homes have closed and many are still at risk of closing. Facing a similar challenge, our Board, partners, community and municipality resolved to find a solution.

It was only last April 2024 when we engaged in a flurry of activity to present a revised and sustainable plan of a new Craigholme to the Ministry of Long-Term Care (LTC) following the renewal of a special LTC capital development funding model.

On August 23, 2024, we received a letter advising us that the Ministry approved our revised application to develop a 96-bed LTC home, based on our new plan, with a few conditions. We met those conditions and, on November 27, the Ontario government granted the Approval to Construct.

We lost no time in getting the shovel in the ground just 14 days later. We were ready!

This was an enormous achievement over many barriers and challenges and a historic milestone that speaks to the faith and tenacity of an incredible community.

Thank you to the Board of Directors for your foresight and unwavering courage to champion this community's needs. Thank you to the residents, families, staff and volunteers who walked this journey with us.

To our partners – SRM Architects, D. Grant Construction and CMLS Financial – your responsiveness to every request and your ability to meet seemingly impossible deadlines were essential. We extend our sincere gratitude to the organization who shared their Ministry-approved LTC home plan. Your selfless act allowed us to respond to the Ministry quickly and efficiently.

Mayor Brian Ropp, Carolyn Tripp, Arnie Marsman and Ashley Sawyer, your collaborative spirit and unwavering support were integral to the success of this project.

The dedication of our Capital Campaign Committee and the extraordinary generosity of our community members, who raised \$1.25 million during a global pandemic, is truly inspiring. The stories of families like the Twynstras, individuals like Ernie and Jan Harris, and community organizations like the Lucan Lions Club, found in this report, exemplify this incredible spirit. Thank you to every donor who stayed with us and those who committed to supporting the project once it was underway.

The new Craigholme is underway, thanks to a vast community of kindness who joined together to make the extraordinary possible. What a wonderful way to celebrate our 75th Anniversary.

In kindness, Elaine Shantz, President and CEO

“*There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about.*”

~ MARGARET J. WHEATLEY



Cover Photo: Groundbreaking December 11, 2024.

I-r: Rebecca Carr, Director of Data Strategy and Analytics at OLTCA; Sarah Campbell, Executive Director, Craigwiell Gardens; Jennifer Gillies, Board Chair, Board of Directors, Craigwiell Gardens; Brian Ropp, Mayor of North Middlesex; Steve Pinsonneault, MPP, Lambton-Kent Middlesex; Jennifer Haliburton, Partner, SRM Architects; Darrell Gerrits, VP Construction, D. Grant Construction; Jocelyn Reid, VP, Real Estate Finance, CMLS Financial, London Office; and Elaine Shantz, President and CEO, Craigwiell Gardens.

The Secret to a Happy Life: *Be Kind*

At 105 years young, Mabel McEwen continues to live life with grace, energy and a heart full of kindness.

A cherished resident of Craigholme at Craigwiell Gardens, Mabel is an active and caring presence in the community, always looking out for her neighbours, making sure everyone has company at mealtimes and sharing her wisdom with a warm smile.

Mabel was born in Ailsa Craig in May 1920. Raised on a busy mixed farm, her childhood was filled with the rhythms of farm life: caring for animals, tending crops and learning the value of hard work. That strong foundation helped shape the resilient, compassionate woman she is today.

In 1942, Mabel married George McEwen, a kind-hearted Air Force mechanic from Clandeboye. Together, they moved 15 times across Ontario before settling back on George's family farm, where they raised four children: Marion, Sheryl, Arlene and Ross. Their home overflowed with love, laughter and delicious food.

Mabel's cooking is legendary. "No one ever left Mom's hungry," her daughters fondly recall. "If there were 13 people, Mom wouldn't sit – she said it was bad luck!" Mabel's homemade pies, tarts, scalloped potatoes and famous chocolate-date cake were crowd favourites.

The farm was a place of bounty and beauty. Mabel's garden flourished and her pantry was filled with jars of preserves – pickles, jams and even canned fish. Her days were full, but never too full for fun. Board games, euchre, puzzles and fishing trips created memories that live on in family stories.

Even in chores, there was joy. Arlene once received praise for her straight ploughing, while Sheryl, instructed to "keep your eye on something straight," followed a wandering cow – her row swerving with the cow's path!



Sheryl, Mabel and Arlene.

Mabel remains involved and connected since moving to Craigholme in 2015. Even at 105, her warmth and care continue to inspire. Though the family has faced loss, Mabel's spirit and strength have kept everyone anchored.

With her daughters living nearby and an extended family of grandchildren and great-grandchildren who cherish her deeply, Mabel stands as the heart of the family.

Mabel's life is not only long but also rich and generous. It's about the lasting impact of a gracious heart, beautifully illustrating that kindness, love and connection endure.

Her message for a long, happy life is simple but profound: "Just be real kind to each other."



Cultivating a Kindness Culture

At Craigwiell Gardens, we take our commitment to kindness to heart, cultivating kindness to self, to each other and to the community.

The enthusiastic **Kindness Committee** actively nurtures this culture. Over the past year, their focus on 'Kindness to Self' brought awareness through several thoughtful events, including a wellness basket, self-care bingo, Christmas celebrations and a tasty cultural potluck.

Thank you to the committee and team members for embracing a culture of kindness.

2024 Legacy Award *Winners*

Our Shared Services partner, Fairview Parkwood Communities, launched its Legacy Awards program in 2021, recognizing five key leaders who laid the foundations for the organization. The strength of each leader is highlighted through each of the five values: *Kindness, Faith, Truth, Excellence and Accountability*.

We are pleased to announce the 2024 Legacy Awards recipients, including, for the first time, team members from Craigwiel Gardens. Winners were nominated by their peers and selected by a third-party Selection Committee comprised of community representative, Miriam Turnbull, President, ProResp, and Fairview Board Members Eleanor Groh and Jennifer Gleeson.



Congratulations to the 2024 Legacy Award winners. Front row, l-r: Alex Normandeau, Diane McCance, Leena Ganouri, Mora Haidari, Tammy Martin-Sachs, Millie Appiah, Albin Matthew, Simarjit Kaur, and Dan Dowsling. Back row, l-r: Bianca Klymson, Sarah Campbell, Erin Bordman, Stephanie Toushan, Laura Salton, Sylvia Tsandelis, and Joyce Arrand.

The Accountability Legacy Award is named after Tim Kennel, the former Executive Director of Fairview Parkwood Communities, who created two campuses that provide quality and compassionate care.

Erin Bordman, Scheduling Coordinator, Parkwood
Diane McCance, Community Engagement Coordinator, Parkwood
Dan Dowsling, Maintenance Coordinator, Fairview
Albin Mathew, RN, Craigwiel

The Excellence Legacy Award is named for Elmer Shantz, who embodied the values of hard work, trust, and dedication.

Leena Ganouri, RPN, Parkwood
Millie Appiah, PSW, Fairview
Sylvia Tsandelis, Director Food Services, Fairview
Laura Salton, Administrative Coordinator, Craigwiel

The Faith Legacy Award is named for Rufus Jutzi, who dedicated his life to nurturing the mind, body, and spirit.

Mora Haidari, Assistant Director of Care, Parkwood
Simarjit Kaur, RN, Fairview
Joyce Arrand, Admission Coordinator/Day Program, RPN, Craigwiel

The Kindness Legacy Award is named for David Rudy, the first Director of Fairview Mennonite Home, who believed in caring for others with compassion.

Bianca Klymson, PSW, Parkwood
Caroline Casselman, PSW, Fairview
Joana Ochoa, Scheduling Coordinator, Fairview
John Henderson, PSW, Craigwiel

The Truth Legacy Award is named for Lydia Ann Bauman, who embraced the values of caring, respect, humility, commitment, dedication, humour, honesty, empathy, transparency and love for family and community.

Tammy Martin-Sachs, Retirement Care Coordinator, Parkwood
Stephanie Toushan, RPN, Parkwood
Linsey Schultz, PSW, Fairview
Sarah Campbell, Executive Director, Craigwiel
Alex Normandeau, Executive Assistant, Resource Team

Building on a Legacy of Care: *The New Craigholme*



Street View of the New Craigholme

A groundbreaking ceremony held on December 11, 2024 (see cover photo), kicked off the construction of the new Craigholme: a state-of-the-art two-storey, 96-bed home, with three 32-bed Resident Home Areas (RHAs). When we welcome residents, we will have more beds, a large secure interior courtyard, dedicated spaces and amenities for programs, dining and administration to support quality care. Having construction on this \$38.5-million project underway is a major achievement and a testament to our shared commitment.

With a growing sense of anticipation, residents are watching the exciting progress of the new Craigholme. Whether from the comfort of the patio on pleasant days or through the dining room windows, the transformation is fascinating to see.

D. Grant Construction crews have already leveled the land and built the foundations. Now the walls are rising. While construction required the removal of the Top Lounge in the existing home, residents

adapted quickly to the new lounge created in the dining room.

With every passing day, we move closer to welcoming residents, a journey underpinned by strong fiscal management. We are profoundly grateful for the community's extraordinary support, having donated nearly \$1,375,000 to our capital campaign since its launch in August 2020. Thank you!

Rising construction costs and material expenses are realities we have faced since achieving our capital campaign goal of \$1,250,000. We are grateful that donors, like the Lucan Lions Club, founded in 1948, have continued to donate funds to help us bridge that gap.

The Club had previously donated \$25,000. In 2025, they topped it up with a \$75,000 gift, bringing the total to \$100,000! This is in addition to the funds they raise for many other causes in the community.





Courtyard View

“Craigwiell is a huge part of our community,” says Pat Ryan, Lucan Lions membership chair. “Like many members of our club and the community, I’ve had family members who have lived there. We know a lot of people who work there. That’s why we selected it as the major project we would support. It’s very satisfying to see Craigholme making great headway. Our community is certainly going to benefit from it.”

Gifts like these will transform the bricks and mortar into a warm, welcoming home by equipping spaces – inside and out – for physical, social, emotional and spiritual care.

We invite everyone to join community-minded partners like the Lucan Lions Club, the Twynstra family and Ernie and Jan Harris (their stories are shared in this report) to expand our 75-year legacy at Craigwiell Gardens with a donation of any size.

If you are considering a special gift, there are many distinctive naming opportunities. We would be happy to talk about a way to honour your gift with a dedication opportunity that is meaningful to you. For more information about opportunities to support the new Craigholme, please call (519) 293-3215 or email: info@craigwiellgardens.on.ca.



l-r: Capital campaign member Glen Phillips; Craigwiell Board Chair and campaign member Jennifer Gillies; Lucan Lion Larry Hotson; campaign member Jackie Wells; Lucan Lion president Shawn Smith; Lucan Lion Pat Ryan; and Craigwiell Board member and campaign member Bev Shipley.

Peter and Dini Twynstra's connection to the Ailsa Craig community runs deep, rooted in the hope for a new beginning that brought their families from a war-torn Holland.

"Our parents' decision to leave wasn't easy. Holland was shot up, bankrupt and had no land to expand farming at that time," says Peter. "Our families came for more opportunity as we couldn't envision a promising future in a struggling Europe. We had the choice to go to several countries: South Africa, New Zealand, Australia and Brazil. However, our parents chose Canada because they were deeply moved by the liberation of Holland by the Canadian military, all volunteers."

"The farewell party was worse than a wake," Dini recalls. "Our parents had large families. No one expected to see each other again."

Dini's family arrived in 1948 and Peter's followed in 1951. The bittersweet journey took two weeks by steamboat. At that time, the families had to be sponsored by a Canadian family and were thoroughly inspected medically, financially and criminally.

Though Dini and Peter are from different regions of Holland, fate and farming brought their families together in Ailsa Craig. They married in 1962 and had a son, who now runs the farm, and two daughters.

Peter's early years saw him working at International Harvester before taking over his father's farm and building a thriving international export business, a venture that not only provided for his family but also injected prosperity and jobs into the community. Dini was integral to the office operations and states, "Our employees were our greatest assets."

In the early 1970s, they purchased a local farm from Lyle and Isabelle (Quigg) Stokes. Within a year, the Twynstras were approached by Reverend Wilfred Schlegel representing Nairn Mennonite Church, who wished to purchase a portion of the farm to build a new long-term care home. Craigholme welcomed residents in 1972.

Years later, the Twynstra's deep-seated connection to the area and a profound sense of gratitude for the opportunities Canada offered spurred a significant act of generosity.



Linda, Steve, Dini, Peter and Sharon Twynstra.

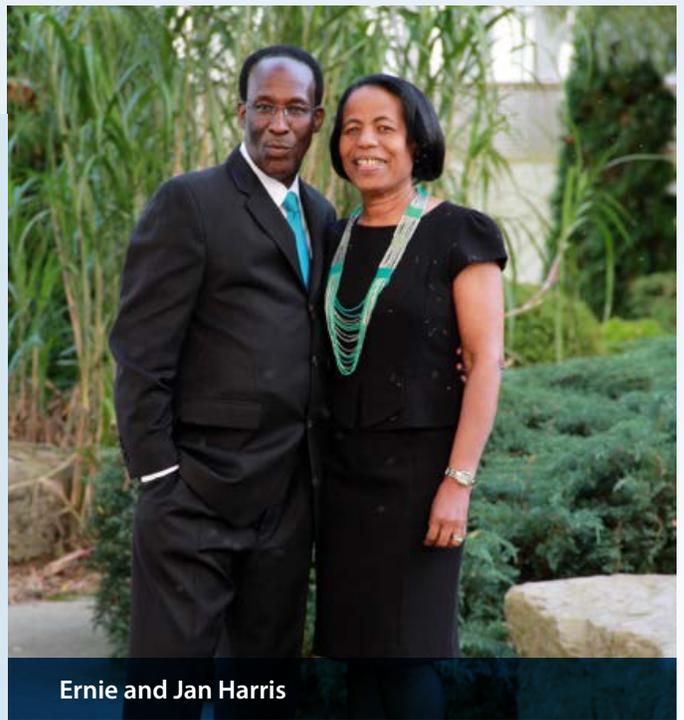
"We felt a strong pull to support the building of a new Craigholme," says Peter. "My sister worked at the original rest home. Then my dad resided in the current LTC home and my stepmother lived in the apartments."

"We see this donation as a natural extension of our values and it marked a special birthday," says Dini. "We are the first generation who have the capacity to give back in a significant way. Everybody does what they can in their own way. We just felt this was the right thing to do, together with our children, and it will improve the community's future."

This act of generosity is one of many that have improved lives locally and internationally.

"We feel good about this donation," says Dini. "We are proud to see the drawings. Isn't it amazing that a little town like Ailsa Craig can have a beautiful LTC home like that? And who knows? We or someone we know may need this new home. It's important for employment and it lets people stay in the community. We hope other people are inspired to support this wonderful project."

Ernie and Jan Harris' journey is a testament to a life lived in service and partnership. Originally educators in Grenada, their move to Canada led to careers dedicated to nurturing minds and building communities. Their strong family values and deep faith, rooted in loving ties to their respective aging grandmothers, built a foundation of giving back through their time, musical talents and donations.



Ernie and Jan Harris

Following his 'retirement' in 2013, Ernie's call to pastoral ministry at the Nairn church deepened his community involvement, leading to a role on Craigwiell's Board. Ernie stepped in as acting CEO in 2018, responding to a need for leadership and stability. Over the next six months, he stabilized operations, improved staff morale and helped lay the groundwork for future growth. Stepping aside when a new CEO was hired, Ernie returned in 2020 to once again take on the leadership role until his retirement in 2023. During his tenure, he viewed his work as a ministry, fostering a spirit of collaboration and service, culminating in the establishment of a financial Shared Services Agreement with Fairview Mennonite Homes in Cambridge.

Ernie expresses immense pride in the Craigwiell team, acknowledging the extraordinary dedication of the staff and the resilience and cooperation of the residents and their families, particularly during challenging times.

As CEO, Ernie recognized the potential of what a new, modern LTC home would offer residents, staff and the community. "I am immensely proud of the Craigwiell team, the residents and their families," says Ernie. "They showed extraordinary dedication and resilience during the pandemic." Ernie and Jan's experience with their aging grandmothers underscored their desire to help residents thrive. They recognized the limitations of the existing infrastructure and the immense potential a new home would offer to both residents and the dedicated staff.

Their decision to contribute significantly to the new Craigholme is a natural extension of their lifelong

commitment to service and their deeply held faith.

"When we were growing up in a Baptist Church in Grenada, every January we had to make a faith pledge," says Ernie. "In addition to what you knew you were going to give, you made an additional pledge to God above the tithe and trusted God would provide to make that happen. We believe our material possessions are loans from God. If others need what we have, we share. We are giving back from a place of abundance."

This principle has guided Ernie and Jan's philanthropy throughout their lives, from sponsoring children's education to supporting various community initiatives. They saw the urgent need for improved facilities at Craigwiell and felt compelled to respond generously as an act of faith and a way to tangibly express their values.

"We hope to make it possible for seniors to enjoy a beautiful, contemporary environment to complement the excellent care the staff provides," Ernie explains. "We also hope the home will attract and encourage qualified people to join the team, instilled with a sense of pride. We are impressed with the collective effort to build a new Craigholme that will ultimately strengthen the entire community."

Reflecting on their significant contribution, Ernie shares, "We are blessed and privileged that we were able to contribute in this way. God has blessed us so we can bless others. For the past 54 years, Jan and I have been able to serve people, regardless of context or situation." Their life's mission is beautifully summarized in Jan's embrace of Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy: "We live simply so others may simply live."



New! Seniors Active Living Centre

In early 2025, we proudly became one of Ontario's newest **Seniors Active Living Centres** (SALC). The provincial funding allows us to add new, engaging programs and amenities designed for those aged 55 and over.

Accessible and affordable opportunities – like gentle yoga classes, stimulating games and special guest speakers – will add to the vibrancy of our campus to foster connection, build a strong community, boost fitness and enhance overall well-being for a nominal fee. In addition, we will expand programs and bus outings.

We are also creating a new mini-gym featuring state-of-the-art TRX (total body resistance) exercise equipment in the apartments, slated for completion in June 2025. Two staff members will be trained to lead the TRX program, promising effective workouts that are also a lot of fun.

The program is expected to be up and running this summer. If you're ready to try something new and fun, email info@craigwieltgardens.on.ca.



A Delicious Success

Craigwiel's **Adult Day Programs** serve North Middlesex, Middlesex Centre, Lucan-Biddulph, Strathroy and Komoka-Kilworth. Its daily programs support those experiencing Alzheimer's and individuals with special needs, including vital services like hair care, foot care and whirlpool baths.

Ensuring clients have access to the quality amenities they deserve requires ongoing community support. That's why we raise funds through special events like our second annual Spaghetti Dinner held in January 2025. This tasty success, organized by our dedicated staff and a volunteer, raised \$1,700 for the Adult Day Programs.

Thank you to the organizers and the apartment tenants, clients, families and community members who came out to support the essential work of the Adult Day Programs.



Long Service Awards

Celebrating Remarkable Dedication

In 2024, we had the pleasure of recognizing seven staff at our Long Service Awards:

- 45 years:** John Henderson, PSW
Donna Stokkermans, PSW
- 25 years:** Cheri Leyten, PSW
- 10 years:** Megan Hutchinson, Dietary Aide
- 5 years:** Brandon Coll, PSW
Jennifer Ede, PSW
Betsy Horton, RN

Thank you all for the care and dedication that has made a difference to countless residents and families.



Join our Family of Volunteers at Craigwiel Gardens!

Do you have a few hours a week or month to share? At Craigwiel Gardens, our volunteers are truly the heart of our community, bringing warmth, companionship and joy to residents in Craigholme and clients in our Adult Day Programs.

Your time can make an incredible difference. Whether you're helping a resident enjoy a quiet afternoon with a friendly visit, sharing a story, assisting with activities, or supporting our vibrant Adult Day Programs, you'll see the direct impact of your kindness. We believe in the power of connection, and your presence helps us build a thriving community where everyone feels valued.

We'd love to hear from you! To learn how your unique talents can enrich lives and become part of our caring team, please call (519) 293-3215 or email info@craigwieltgardens.on.ca.

Craigwiel Gardens is a not-for-profit, faith-based campus. Our annual budget operates on a business model supported by strong financial management through our Shared Services Agreement with Fairview Mennonite Homes, ensuring our sustainability. This partnership completed its first full year in 2024-25 and generated significant progress toward strengthening our long-term sustainability.

Philanthropy

Craigwiel Gardens’ strong philanthropic roots continue to grow. Gifts in memory of loved ones and funds raised through the community continue to enhance our programs and services.

With the new Craigholme’s construction underway, donors have enthusiastically confirmed their interest in supporting the capital campaign.

Thank you to all who thoughtfully expressed their support through donations. We are deeply grateful for your kind generosity.

2024-2025 HIGHLIGHTS



Construction of the new Craigholme began in December 2024 after many years of planning.



We incurred significant expenses to meet the Ministry of Long-Term Care’s requirements of the existing LTC Home.



Annual funding for the Adult Day Programs increased in 2024-2025.



We are undertaking apartment retrofits as units change over. Occupancy remains steady.



Revenue	\$10.3M
● Residents	27%
● Government	69%
● Other revenue sources	4%



Expenses	\$9.8M
● Salaries & wages	71%
● Maintenance & supplies	17%
● Utilities	3%
● Administration	7%
● Amortization	1%
● Property taxes	1%



Donations	\$111,871.00
● In memory	4%
● Undesignated	5%
Special projects:	
● Capital Campaign	91%



Jennifer Gillies



Irene Howarth



David Dryburgh



Samantha Cornelissen



Rebecca Bender



Marilyn Gingerich



Brent Horst



Bev Shipley



Jane Zoeger



Elaine Shantz, President & CEO



Brent Martin, CFO

Thank you to the committed members of Craigwiel Gardens' Board of Directors whose guidance, expertise and commitment are charting a sustainable course for the future.

2024-2025 *Board of Directors*

- Chair** Jennifer Gillies
- Vice-Chair** Irene Howarth
- Treasurer** David Dryburgh
- Secretary** Samantha Cornelissen
- Directors**
 - Rebecca Bender
 - Marilyn Gingerich
 - Brent Horst
 - Bev Shipley
 - Jane Zoeger
 - Elaine Shantz, *President and CEO*
 - Brent Martin, *CFO*



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Registered Charitable # 10699 1078 RR0001