

COMMUNITY VISION

The Newsletter for Community Living Walkerton & District



REMEMBERING DEREK: A LIFE FULL OF LAUGHTER, INDEPENDENCE, FAMILY BONDS, AND GOOD HAMBURGERS.

By Heather Travis

Welcome, friends! Welcome to the refresh and relaunch of our Community Vision newsletter. Our goal is to share stories from the Walkerton and District community, highlight our wins, and celebrate our community successes. If you have ideas for future issues, please reach out to our editorial team.

In the heart of every community, there are individuals who leave an indelible mark, and for the Walkerton & District community Derek Bell was undoubtedly one of them. His vibrant personality, love for simple pleasures, and unwavering determination made him a cherished member of this community. This tribute combines insights from Derek's support worker, Lisa, and his sisters, Ruth and Heather, to paint a vivid picture of the man who brought joy to those around him.

"Derek was born in 1969 and raised in Durham," share his sisters, Heather and Ruth. "He was fortunate to grow up in a community that embraced him for who he was." The phrase "it takes a village to raise a child" resonates profoundly in Derek's story. Surrounded and accepted by family, relatives, friends, educational advocates, and the Durham community, Derek experienced a life filled with support and acceptance.

continued...



REMEMBERING DEREK: CONTINUED...

By Heather Travis

Derek's support worker, Lisa, fondly recalls Derek's larger-than-life personality. "If you had the pleasure of knowing Derek, you would say he had a big personality!" she exclaims. Derek had a unique way of brightening the room with his infectious laughter and playful banter. His love for WWE and his signature catchphrases, such as "I want a hamburger" and "ah, come on," added a touch of humor to his interactions, making him a joy to be around.

Lisa also shares insights into Derek's daily life, revealing his love for pop and burgers. Derek frequently expressed his cravings for these simple pleasures, making outings to indulge in them a regular part of his routine. Despite his enjoyment of these treats, Derek also cherished the simpler things in life, finding joy in activities like swimming and taking leisurely walks. His weekly swims were a testament to his aquatic prowess, as he could navigate the waters with the finesse of a fish.

Independence was a cornerstone of Derek's identity. Living on his own allowed him to shape his life on his terms, yet he always made time for his family. Derek's sisters, Ruth and Heather, provide a glimpse into the duality of his character—stubborn and determined, yet humorous and full of warmth. Ruth and Heather emphasize Derek's love for spending quality time with family, creating lasting memories that will forever be cherished.

"Derek always had a way of putting a smile on your face and will be dearly missed," Lisa reflects. The sentiment is echoed by Ruth and Heather, who express their gratitude for the joy Derek brought into their lives. While Derek's physical presence may no longer grace the community, his laughter, determination, and love for life will be remembered by all who had the privilege of knowing him.

In honoring Derek's memory, let us celebrate the unique blend of humour, independence, and family bonds that made him a cherished individual in the tapestry of our community.

In memory of Derek, his family has generously donated \$50,000 to Community Living Walkerton & District area. The funds were used towards the purchase of a new home.





ADVOCATING FOR CHANGE

By Heather Travis



On December 15th (2023), Community Living Walkerton & District CEO Michele Bell and Board President Dan Sullivan sat down with MPP Lisa Thompson, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. As part of our continued efforts to advocate for our industry, our staff, and our community members the meeting was to address the current housing crisis and insufficient funding in our industry. As a result of the meeting, further communications were sent to both the Honorable Michael Parsa, Minister of Children, Community and Social Services and the Honorable Peter Bethlenfalvy, Minister of Finance.

On February 5th, 2024 the meetings continued with Parliamentary Assistant to the Honorable Michael Parsa, Logan Kanapathi. This is one more step in ensuring our voices are heard and advocating for our industry.



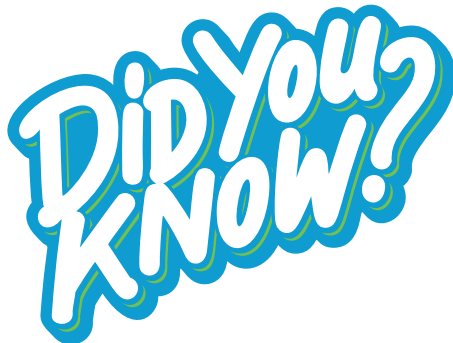
ACTION COMMITTEE

...IN ACTION!

By Karen Clarke



The Walkerton Action committee got into action in December collecting donations for the Walkerton food bank. Our team was delighted to make the drop just before Christmas.

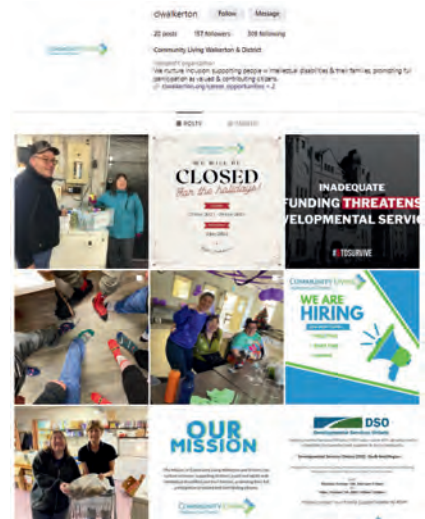


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A BRIGHT TOMORROW!

By Rachael Fritsch

The Community Living Walkerton and District Family Scholarship is awarded to three students each year.

This year, the CLWD Family Scholarship was awarded to:

- Avery McCutcheon (Seneca College for Veterinary Technician)
- Jana Kreager (Wilfred Laurier University for Honours Bachelor of Arts, Majoring in Youth and Children Studies, Minor in Psychology)
- Ashlyn Beninger (University of Guelph for Honours Science Program, Majoring in Biological Science, Minor in Business)

Wishing them all the best in their future education!



EDITORIAL TEAM

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