



Community Living South Muskoka

*November
2024*

Vision

An inclusive
community
where all are
Valued,
Respected, and
Thrive.

Our Mission

Building
independence,
fostering
inclusion, and
empowering
people living with
a developmental
disability across
their lifespan

Values

Excellence

Trust

Respect

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A MESSAGE FROM YOUR CEO

Wow! What a fantastic newsletter we have for you this fall. There has been so much happening at CLSM it is difficult to capture it all in the few pages we have. A big thank you to the Ontario Trillium Fund for helping us to move forward with our strategic planning. We want to thank each of the families and staff who took the time to complete the online survey to help guide our approach to the next three years of work. Overall, we had 56 respondents to the survey, 50 focus group participants and 9 community partners engage in interviews. We also had a wonderful advisory team comprised of people supported, families, staff and Board. With this wonderful feedback, I am confident that the plan we have developed will ensure the success of the agency as we tackle the challenges ahead. The plan was introduced at our AGM, and is now available on our website if you are looking for more details.

August 25 marked our third annual outdoor music festival at Morrison Meadows. The weather was wonderful once again and the local talent was fabulous. This event needs a team of supporters to be successful, including our year-long planning team, volunteers, sponsors and musicians. A huge THANK YOU to all for making it such a wonderful event

Our AGM and staff awards night September 24, 2024 was a great success. We switched it up a bit this year, starting with dinner and moving on to the awards. Congratulations to all of the winners you see in the article later in the newsletter. A special mention to our two 35-year-of-service recipients Shelley and Rachelle! We are so fortunate to have such dedicated and talented long-term employees here at CLSM.

Speaking of our staff, I would like to give a big shout out to our Employee Wellness Team. They have tackled some challenging topics over the last few months, including social wellness through bringing teams together for fun events such as our CLSM corn hole competition and group Thanksgiving Flower arrangement and a special paint night. The team identified World Mental Health Day by looking at workplace wellness and concentrating on burnout in the workplace, and coming up in November, a Kindness conspiracy. These are only a small sample of the great things this team does for our employees. Thank you so much team for your efforts to help everyone in our workplace!

I would like to end by thanking each and every person who supports the work we do here at CLSM; from our staff, families, volunteer Board of Directors, community partners and donors; we could not continue to operate without you. Please consider our agency this Giving Tuesday. You make an incredible contribution to the lives of people with disabilities.

Respectfully submitted
Krista Haiduk-Collier CEO



SUMMER CAMP AT MORRISON MEADOW



*Camp is a
place where
friends are
made,
memories
are created,
and dreams
take flight*

This summer Community Living South Muskoka was able to access the Canada Summer Job Grant. With these funds, the agency was able to hire two summer students who successfully facilitated four weeks of youth summer camp. A total of 11 children participated in various weeks throughout the duration of camp. Each child was given the opportunity to partake in a series of camp games and activities. Some children demonstrated their inner artist during papier mâché, tie dye, clay sculpture construction, and rock painting. Others were quick to show their athletic side, flourishing in sports like soccer, volleyball, and frisbee golf. Regardless of the many unique interests, one of the goals of the Community Living summer camp was to ensure everyone found something fun and exciting.

Over the duration of camp, children and counsellors were able to take advantage of the resources the Morrison Meadows farm had to offer. Activities like tag, camouflage, and other made-up games were taken to new levels on the fully accessible playground. Additionally, children got to go on nature walks and find animals along the trails. Though, the most popular thing to do was to go adventuring through the farms 35 acres via wagon rides. The bumps, bugs, and mud could not stop the campers from containing their excitement when they heard that wagon rides were on the list of activities for the day.

All in all, the success of these summer camps was not only beneficial to the families who participated, but also for the development of future camps. Staff were able to gather helpful insight as to what activities went smoothly as well as identify areas of change or improvement. In summary, the Community Living summer camp program was a triumph for families, campers, and counsellors alike!

Submitted by Kimberley Irons





UPCOMING EVENTS

FALL/WINTER

NOV REMEMBRANCE DAY

11 TUNE IN TO TEAMS LINK OR ATTEND GRAVENHURST
LEGION, BRACEBRIDGE MEMORIAL PARK @11AM

NOV GRAVENHURST SANTA CLAUS PARADE

23 SIGN UP TO VOLUNTEER/ BE A PART TO ERIN GILBART
EGILBART@CLSM.ON.CA

NOV SILENT AUCTION BEGINS

25 CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE FOR THIS YEARS AUCTION!!
* ENDING DEC 6

DEC GIVING TUESDAY

03 SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT CLSM AS
CHARITY OF CHOICE

DEC CHRISTMAS DANCE

05 BMLSS- INFO TO COME!

DEC BRACEBRIDGE SANTA CLAUS PARADE

06 SIGN UP TO VOLUNTEER/ BE A PART TO ERIN GILBART
EGILBART@CLSM.ON.CA

DEC STAFF HOLIDAY BINGO

09 BRACEBRIDGE LEGION, 7PM FLYER TO COME

HOLIDAY DOOR DECORATING

FLYER TO COME

WOLSELEY LODGE CAMPING TRIP



This year marked the eighth yearly camping trip. Six individuals and two staff spent three nights at Wolseley Lodge located in the Wolseley Bay area of the French River. We rented a four-bedroom cabin that had a great deck to watch the sun rises over the bay.

During the day we kept busy enjoying the water. While some enjoyed a swim down at the beach others went out in the boat for a ride up the river. Thank you to Rob for towing his boat up for us all to enjoy. Ailene's favourite part of the trip was the ride on the boat, she was able to see rapids on the river and see a blue heron. Out on a fishing trip some of the guys were able to sit and watch a bald eagle. Laura did some fishing from the dock unfortunately nobody caught anything this trip. Nancy also enjoyed the trips out on the boat she also liked going for a long kayak down the narrow part of the bay.



It was all hands-on deck for meals. Everyone pitched in to either prep, cook or clean up. On our final evening, we had the most delicious steak dinner. Justin and Bailey helped cook at every meal. Bailey you sure make some good potatoes! We certainly have some excellent cooks among us.

Every evening, we enjoyed a fire while roasting marshmallows and spider dogs while watching the sunsets and stars and sharing many laughs. Thank you to Scott who made sure our fires kept going through the evening.

Sadly, the trip was over, we packed up and said goodbye to another wonderful time. Cheers to a great camping crew this year thanks for the fun, the laughs, and the memories. Can't wait to start planning next year's trip!!!!



Sumbitted by Rob Habel and Monica Marchand



DESTINEE'S STORY

Our team at Community Living South Muskoka are highly dedicated to finding solutions and resources for supported individuals health concerns and risks. The following story is a great example of a team working together to problem solve to gain a person's independence back.

Destinee came to the agency as an adult. It became apparent to staff that she enjoyed looking through her photo albums to reminisce. One day, while she and a staff member were flipping through the album, the staff noticed she had a Pacer in her childhood photos.

The team at the house inquired with an Occupational Therapist (OT), to see if there was a possibility to reintroduce this mobility device. The OT, Caryn Farnsworth, assisted with this by pursuing funding options as the device cost almost \$5000. In the end, Destinee paid 31% of the device – while 43% was covered by ODSP and the remaining 26% was covered by The McConnel Foundation.

Destinee received the Pacer in January 2024. She has been using it multiple times a week and is slowly building up her strength and stamina. Her CPS worker, Alana, stated “It allows her to access her community and neighborhood with independence. She waves and smiles at friends and dogs walking by. People in the neighborhood wave back at her and compliment her on how great of a job she is doing”. Destinee enjoys the warm weather in a different way than most – she is wanting to gain physical strength and endurance while having fun and getting to socialize at the same time.

Submitted by Kimberly Young





Welcome to my corner! I hope you like the things I have to say!



I want to say thank you to Community Living for really building up my confidence so that I can get on stage and sing. I love that Community Living allowed me to sing for the Talent Show, and then the finale at Gravenhurst high school where I placed 2nd! Then I was asked to sing at the Barrel House and Music at the Meadows. It was nerve racking, but I was able to do it because of the support I have gotten.

I started going to the Barrel house every Wednesday in the summer to play their music Bingo! My friend Dillon, who is the manager there, and Ashley who ran the Bingo, helped me every week! I even won! I now go to Trivia on Tuesday nights at the Barrel house where Dillon helps me too! I like that Dillon is my friend and we do a lot of things together now, like the fall fair!

Music at the Meadows was fun! I love volunteering and helping around the community whenever I can. I took tickets and gave out bracelets at Music at the Meadows. I like listening to the bands and even had my chance to sing!

I really love all the help and support I get from Community Living in all aspects of my life, like work, at home, and in the community! I am lucky! It is so much fun doing fun events like the 80s Prom, Elmvale Zoo and Sandhill Nursery. I really enjoyed the 80s prom because we get to dress up and I like dressing up in themes. Check out my cool outfit!

The Elmvale Zoo was fun. I got to take a lot of pictures of the animals. My favourite animals to see was the giraffe and the monkeys. The giraffe was fun to feed! Their tongues are very slimy and wet when they lick your hand. I like all the monkeys, but especially the Lemur that was putting on a show! The cougars were pacing which was very nerve racking. We definitely didn't want to make them madder. We missed the peacocks, but hopefully we will see them next year!

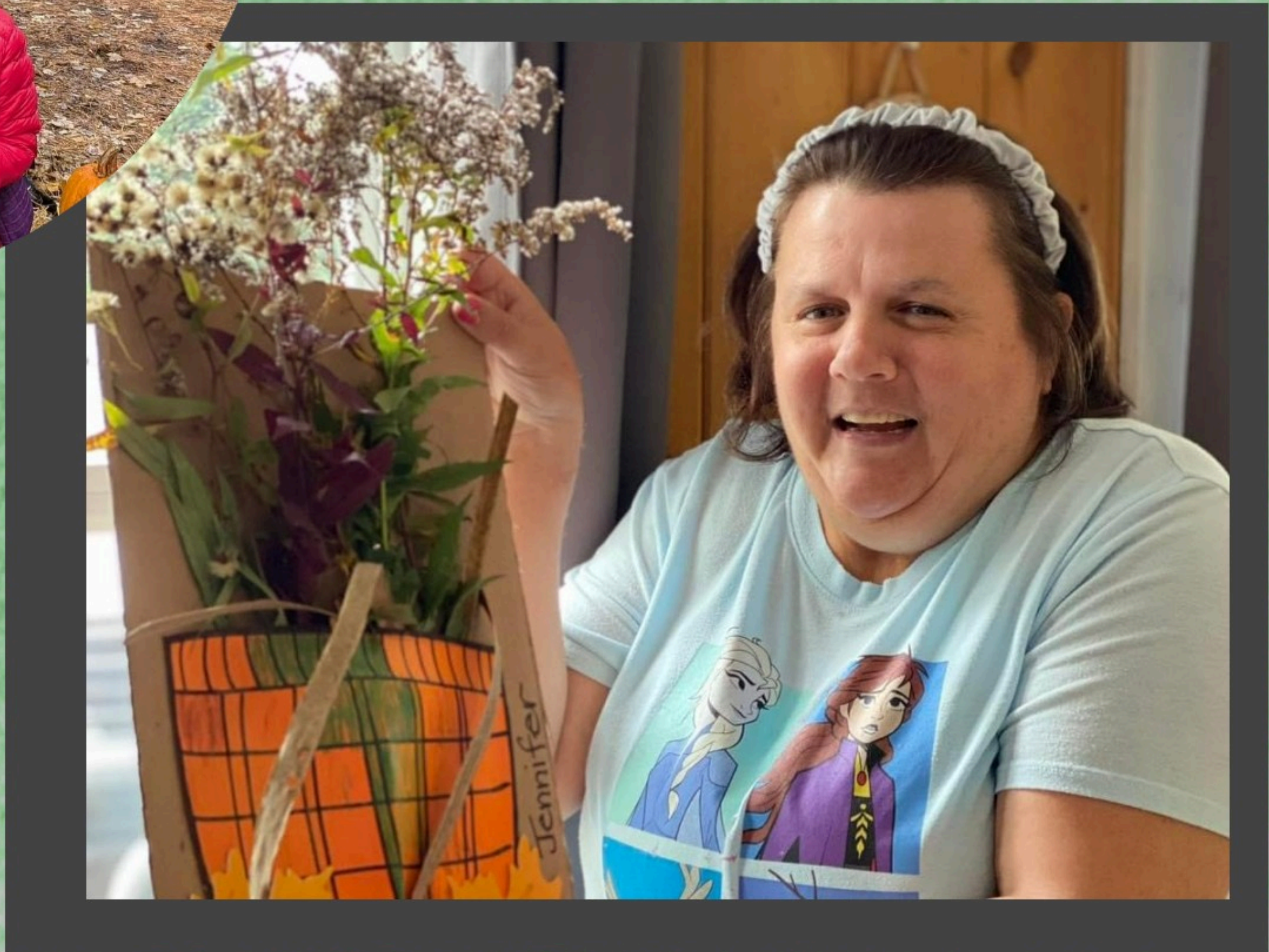
I went to Sandhill Nursery last week and it was beautiful! I loved everything! The large paintings were beautiful. I liked doing the maze, but I got worried we weren't going to make it out, even though I could see over top. It still made me worried. I really loved the picture of the butterfly and the umbrellas in the driveway!

This summer I also grew Monarch butterflies from the eggs to the chrysalis. I have done this for many years in memory of my mom who passed away. In total I have grown and released 111 monarchs. I know how to tell if they are boys or girls, and I keep track! If you see me, ask me how I know!

Well, that is it for this edition of Amy's Corner! Catch ya next time!







ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) took place on Monday, September 23rd of this year. The weather was gloomy, and the rain made the setup challenging. The rain fortunately did not occur during the meeting, which was beneficial given the attendance of over 100 individuals. It is encouraging to see such a strong attendance and a diverse group of people come together.

During the meeting, not only do the Board of Directors review the organization's financial and general performance with the people in attendance, but they also celebrate the hardworking staff members at the agency. This year staff were encouraged to submit nominations based on core values for individuals and teams to receive these awards, recognizing their achievements over their fiscal year. Community Partners are also acknowledged through three awards designated for the public. This year's selection process was particularly challenging due to the numerous deserving nominees.

The following list comprises all of the award recipients:

Individual Awards:

Nadine Brown - Building Relationships

Peggy Jeffrey - Valuing Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Rachelle Lawrence - Problem Solving and Decision Making

Keifen McQueen - Facilitating Growth and Development

Taylor Fry - Resilience

Team Awards:

Spencer Street - Building Relationships

Douglas Drive - Valuing Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Manitoba Street - Problem Solving and Decision Making

Administration - Facilitating Growth and Development

845 Muskoka Beach Road - Resilience

Community Awards

Carol-Ann Chapman - Volunteer of the Year

RBC Royal Bank - Community Partner of the Year

Monsignor Michael O'Leary / Simcoe Muskoka Catholic

District School Board - Employer of the Year



Congratulations to all the employees who were recognized for their 5, 10, 15, 30, and 35 years of service. We especially commend the two staff members who have each dedicated an impressive 35 years to the company.



YOUR FUNDRAISING DOLLARS AT WORK



Over the past few months, the Events Committee has been diligently engaged in efforts to secure fundraising contributions to provide meals for those in need.

The following is what your dollars have done to support the agency.

*At the beginning of the school season, a total of 160 backpacks were distributed to children in need, with funds raised in collaborating with the South Muskoka Golf and Curling Club as part of a program now in its third year. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Adam, Jacklynn, and the club members for their support.

*During Thanksgiving, the agency provided 140 meals to individuals we assist, ensuring that those who may not have access to a home-cooked meal receive nourishment. These meal packages were generously donated by Boston Pizza in Bracebridge. Additionally, our ten community homes received supplementary financial resources to facilitate the preparation of home-cooked meals.

*This Holiday Season marks our fifth collaboration to deliver 150 home-cooked meals to families served by children's services and individuals living independently within our community.

*Furthermore, the agency has distributed grocery store gift cards and additional grocery funds to supported independent living (SIL) residents and the homes. This assists with speciality or restricted diets but most importantly gives all of the individuals in our community the food security that they deserve.





THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR DONATION TO THE SILENT AUCTION. YOUR GENEROSITY MEANS EVERYTHING TO THE COMMUNITY WE SERVE



EMPLOYMENT INCLUSION

This year has been incredibly successful in providing employment opportunities for our individuals. Notably, a local community school board has hired six individuals from our program, showcasing their dedication to inclusivity and diversity in the workplace. Additionally, we are proud to have an exceptional volunteer from our supported employment initiative lending their skills and time to this noble cause. Our efforts to promote equal opportunities and empower individuals with employment have undoubtedly yielded remarkable results.

Laura, Tamica, Greg, and Nel have all taken on the important responsibility of being lunch-hour monitors. Their duties include ensuring that students are seated while they eat and supervising their outdoor play to make sure they are safe. The monitors also step in and call for a teacher's assistance when necessary. All four of them have expressed their enjoyment in these roles, mentioning the warm and kind atmosphere created by both the staff and the students.

MP helps in the kitchen by assembling lunch bags that include ice packs and snacks. She ensures that the baskets in each classroom are restocked, guaranteeing that every student has access to a healthy meal. This extra support is highly valued by the school community.

Ryan has decided to take an additional step in his career and has decided to do the custodian training initiative, leading to employment opportunities within the school board. He is becoming more self-assured in his position, as his supervisor offers positive reinforcement regarding his performance.

The agency would like to commend both Monsignor Michael O'Leary and the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board for the collaboration since the Spring of 2023. CLSM is beyond grateful for their support and has awarded both employers with the 2024 Employer of the Year Award.



MUSIC AT THE MEADOW

On Saturday August 24th 2024 CLSM hosted our 3rd annual music festival fundraiser "Music At The Meadows" at our Morrison Meadows property!

It was a wonderful day of great music, tasty food, and a beer garden hosted by our friends at Lake Of Bays Brewing! The weather was perfect, and we had over 300 people on site to watch our amazing performers; Grant Tingey & Hired Gun, Cache Creek, Dunning Butchers, Blue Moon, The Brudders and The Renaissance Band! A big thank you to all our performers for putting on such a spectacular show!

Through our sponsorships, donations, and ticket sales we were able to fundraise for individuals supported through CLSM to assist with housing and food security.

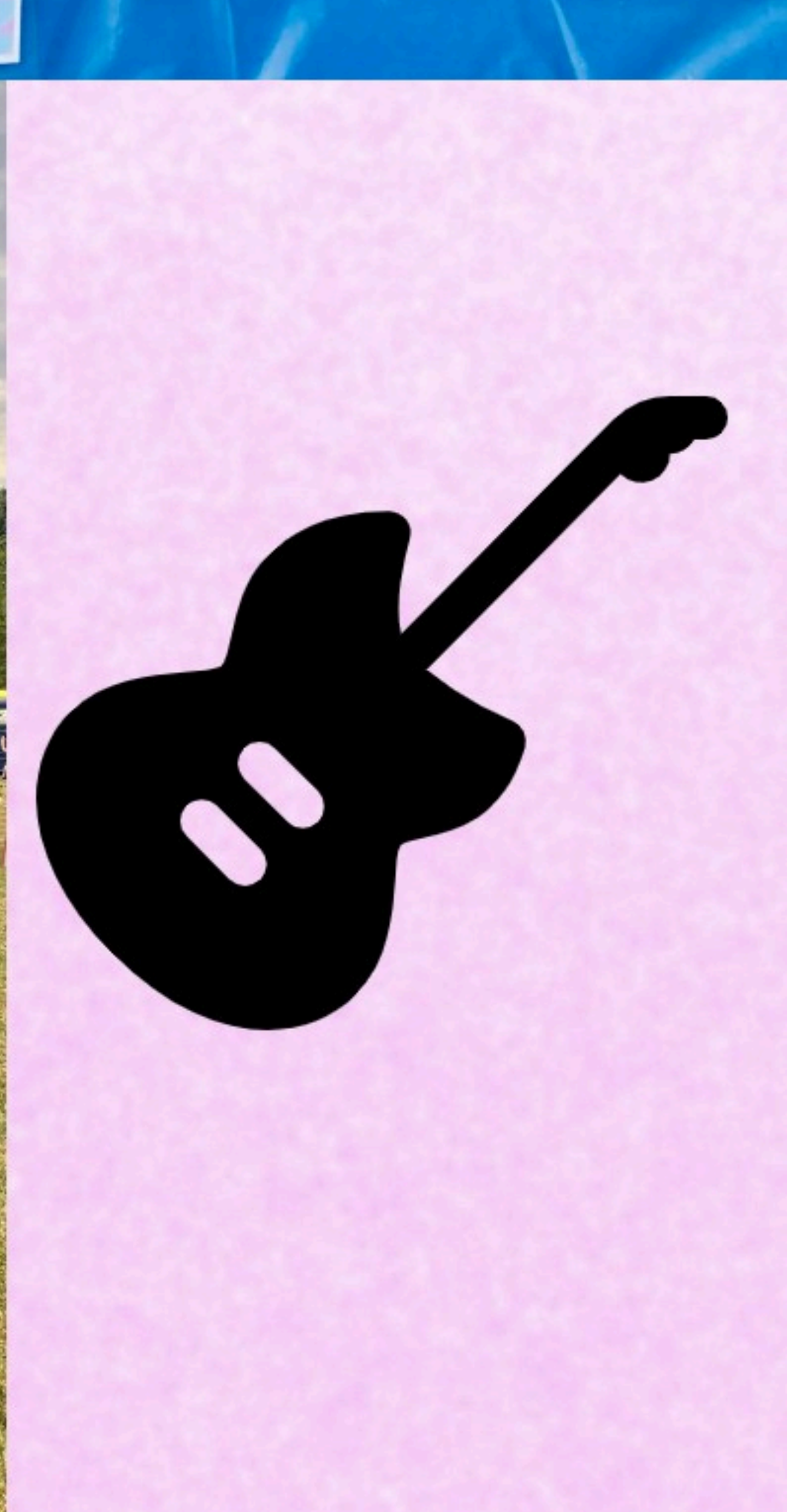
We could not have pulled off such a great fundraising event without the help from our generous community partners and sponsors. We also must thank our outstanding team of volunteers who worked so hard to make this event a success.

We are already making plans for our 2025 Music At The Meadows. Stay tuned for more details!

Submitted by Erin Gilbert

Third Annual Music Event





Volunteers Needed

**CLSM will be setting up our
booth at Fire and Ice on
January 25th.**

**Contact Erin at
events@clsm.on.ca for
more information and to
sign up**

Date: January 25th, 2025 11am-6pm

Location: Memorial Park, Main Street, Bracebridge

*Thank you for your
continuous support*



**Community Living
South Muskoka**