



LET'S CHAT



Easter 2024

Labdara residents' news is published quarterly.

5 Resurrection Rd., Toronto, ON M9A 5G1

Happy Easter!



Dear Families, Community Members, Residents, Volunteers and Staff.

With Spring come changes and we are happy to share with everyone that Masks are no longer mandatory in Long Term Care (LTC) Homes. The reasoning for this decision from the Minister of Health and Long Term Care is found in this message sent to LTC homes:

"Recent trends have shown continued decreases in community level transmission of COVID-19, flu and RSV, as well as decreases in outbreaks in LTCHs, with lower risk of severe illness and hospitalization amongst residents, and increased vaccination rates. While outbreaks can still be expected, we anticipate entering a lower risk period of

respiratory illness than we have experienced over the past three months. Based on the recent trends and projections, and the advice of OCMOH, MLTC is ending the enhanced masking measures effective immediately."

Please note that Labdara is a mask friendly environment. In some situations, wearing a mask is still required based on point-of-care risk assessment, return-to-work protocol, outbreak areas, or as directed by the Public Health Unit.

Masks are recommended for visitors and essential caregivers in all areas of the home.

I hope everyone is able to enjoy some of the nicer weather. We are preparing the outdoor areas for programs and enjoyment. We remind families and friends to come and take opportunities to go outside with the residents on nice days and enjoy the outdoor spaces.

Laura Puteris, Administrator

Message from Zita Bersenas-Cers, President of the Labdara Foundation Board of Directors

Labdara's administration and our Board of Directors continue to be concerned about the current admissions process and criteria for long-term care. We strongly believe that all residents must be placed into the home that is best for them – a home where language, food, traditions, religion, celebrations, and music are familiar and comforting. The absence of familiar culture can have a negative impact on physical and mental health.

Cultural long-term care homes, such as Labdara, have seen a decline in the number of residents from their own cultural groups. There has also been a decrease in the number of people from the community moving into long-term care homes when priority is given to hospital patients without consideration of their cultural and/or religious needs.

In February, Mr. James Maloney, MP for Etobicoke-Lakeshore, visited Labdara. He met with several residents, board members and our administrator, Laura Puteris. The residents talked about how declining cultural admissions were affecting them. One resident said that her sister has been waiting to get into Labdara for two years. Another resident said she volunteered at Labdara for many years hoping to preserve its Lithuanian heritage. A resident stated that she, like many others in the Lithuanian community, had been a strong supporter of the establishment of a Lithuanian nursing home so that they could live out their lives in a Lithuanian environment. Mr. Maloney said he understood the issues raised. He encouraged us to keep fighting for changes to the admissions criteria, so that people get placed into the most suitable homes. He said he would share our concerns with his colleagues.

Bill 7, More Beds, Better Care Act, 2022 remains in effect. People are being placed into a nursing home that is not of their choosing.



James Maloney, MP for Etobicoke-Lakeshore (centre, back row) visits Labdara in February 2024. Administrator Laura Puteris is to the left and Labdara Foundation President, Zita Bersenas-Cers and Vice-President, Daina Kalendra are to the right of Mr. Maloney. Residents Birutė Matulaitienė, Irena Žemaitienė, Birutė Stanulienė and Vilma Gaputienė are in the front row.

SPEAKER OF THE SEIMAS OF LITHUANIA VISITS LABDARA

On Sunday, January 28th, 2024, the Speaker of the Parliament (Seimas) of the Republic of Lithuania, Viktorija Čmilytė-Nielsen visited our Lithuanian nursing home LABDARA. Following the visit, she posted the following on her Facebook page:

"We spent the day in Toronto hosted by a very active Lithuanian Canadian community. The support of the diaspora provided to Lithuania during the days of re-establishment of its independence was invaluable in establishing our diplomatic corps overseas as well as on the road to our re-integration into the European and Transatlantic world communities. Your support is needed and essential to us to this day. I thank the Canadian Lithuanians for their efforts in maintaining their Lithuanian identity, for maintaining ties with Lithuania and for your ongoing support of Ukraine."



Labdara resident Birutė Matulaitienė speaks with the Speaker of Lithuania's Parliament Viktorija Čmilytė-Nielsen and President of the Lithuanian-Canadian Community Kazimieras Deksnys during their visit to Labdara Lithuanian Nursing Home.

Speaker of the Parliament (Seimas) of the Republic of Lithuania Viktorija Čmilytė-Nielsen visits with residents of Labdara: from L to R: resident Birutė Matulaitienė, Viktorija Čmilytė-Nielsen residents Vilma Gaputienė and Birutė Stanulienė, Ambassador of the Republic of Lithuania to Canada Darius Skusevičius, President of the Lithuanian-Canadian Community Kazimieras Deksnys and President of the Board of Directors, Labdara Foundation Zita Bersėnas-Cers.



The next day, on January 29th the delegation went to Ottawa where the Speakers of the Parliaments of the Baltic States (Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia) met with the Speaker of the House of Commons of Canada Greg Fergus, other parliamentarians and the Canadian Press.

This picture was a gift to LABDARA from the Speaker of the Seimas of Lithuania

IN MEMORIAM OF OUR VERY OWN SAINT ANNE***Over 20 years of service as a nurse at LABDARA - Anne LARKIN***

On Sunday, January 28, 2024, we lost our angel, Anne. After a sudden and brief illness, Anne died peacefully surrounded by members of her family. Though only 66 years old, she lived many lifetimes of impact on all those around her. Anne would want to be remembered for how she made people feel rather than for her accomplishments. She was the most caring, loving, selfless, generous person in addition to being an exceptional sister, aunt, friend and care giver.

Anne was awarded the 2022 Order of the Diocese of Toronto in recognition of her lifetime of compassionate service to Christ Church Deer Park and their community breakfast program, the Churches on-the-Hill Food Bank and Yorkminster Park Meals on Wheels. In 2013 Christ Church Deer Park created the annual "Anne Larkin Award" to honour those who have given extraordinary service to the life and community of the Church. In addition, she donated blood and platelets hundreds of times. She did all this on her "days off", all the time working full-time as a registered practical nurse at Labdara Lithuanian Nursing Home for over 20 years.

While we lost Anne too early, she lived a very fulfilling and hugely impactful life. She was the best 'Auntie Anne' ever and was always attentive to the needs of so many. She was ever present and loving to all who had the extraordinarily good fortune of knowing her. She knew her mission early and lived her life fulfilling it. She was loved by all who knew her and referred to her as St. Anne.



Memories of Anne Larkin Shared on LABDARA's Facebook

Ed Kurak

Ann was extremely dedicated to the residents of Labdara. She ensured attentive care to our residents and much comfort to families. She will be missed. Rose and I both had our mothers receive her care.

Donna Brickus

Anne was lovely. Funny, sympathetic, professional. Took great care with my mom. A great loss for Labdara, her church and her friends, family, and colleagues. My deepest condolences.

Virginia Gutaszkas

Anne was a wonderful nurse to my mother-in-law, Nijole, and a great source of strength and comfort to me. I will remember her always for her kindness and her happy demeanor. God bless you, Anne.

Loretta Falco

God bless Anne and her family. Truly an Angel on earth

Ruth Jaglowitz

Anne was a nurse angel. Loved by all. She will be missed. We are grateful to have known her and watched her incredible caring nature. Rest in peace.

Violetta Poskus

May she rest in the arms of the angels.

Aida Batten

I don't think I ever met her during mama's time there but I'm sure I heard her laughing!

Nijole Slivinskas

Anne was a wonderful, compassionate, and caring nurse. She worked on the third floor during my husband and stepfather's time at the home. Sometimes putting a loved one in a nursing home causes guilt and anxiety for the family. Anne, bless her, was so supportive and comforting to me. Not only did she care about the residents, but she also cared about their families. My condolences to all her family and staff at Labdara. May her memory be a blessing.

Mikas Valadka, MD

A terrible piece of news and what a loss to Labdara and her clan. I remember her fondly: funny and caring and straight forward. Regrets and condolences

Vida Siauciulis

May she rest in peace

Aldona Sergautis

Saddened by the loss of this nurse angel. Such a caring individual.

Rasa LK Lukoševičius Kuras

May she rest in peace... She will stay in our hearts forever... Sincere condolences to Anne's family...

Life at Labdara

BAKING WITH ZITA: Every second Tuesday, the halls of the common areas on the ground floor are filled with the most delicious aromas that come from the ground floor kitchen. They are the result of a wonderful activity led by our volunteer and Board of Directors President, Zita Bersenas-Cers and the handiwork of our residents – time spent baking the most delicious treats that are then enjoyed by the group.



Life at Labdara continued

Our new resident Maria Teresa enjoys a laugh.



97 YEARS YOUNG AND STILL SINGING: Mr. Douglas Peck (first on the left) and his Holy Family Angels singers bring so much joy to our residents. On the last Saturday of every month the singers come to Labdara, and Mr. Peck plays the piano and leads the group in song. Although he is 97 years of age, music keeps him young. The Holy Family Angels will be performing an Easter concert for us on Saturday, April 6th. We look forward to it.



Life at Labdara continued

LITHUANIA'S INDEPENDENCE DAY was commemorated on Feb. 16th at Labdara. In the morning, before starting morning exercises, we sang the Lithuanian National Anthem on every floor and Activation staff Nerijus visited each floor and read the poem LITHUANIA by Jonas Strielkūnas. To mark the special day, the afternoon Happy Hour featured special treats for the residents: rye bread smoked meat sandwiches with pickles, a special torte and champagne. We watched a recording of the celebrations at the Presidential Palace from Vilnius. Everyone was in a celebratory mood. Special thanks to our Recreation Department staff: Ljiljana, Janina, Irena and Gagan for organizing this special event for our residents. May Lithuania be free for a very long time!



(Photo: Niagara Falls lit up in the colours of Lithuania's flag)



Birute wears patriotic colours.



Happy Times



Musician John Fertado is rocking.

Life at Labdara continued

BURLINGTON YOUTH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA performs at Labdara: At the end of 2023, on December 29th the 15 person youth orchestra, at the invitation of Dr. Robert Lam (who served at Labdara) and whose son plays the clarinet in the orchestra, performed for our residents. It was an impressive and wonderful experience enjoyed by all. Sincere thanks go out to the orchestra!!!



ON ST. PATRICK'S DAY we searched for the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.



Life at Labdara continued

SOME IMAGES OF OUR LIFE AT LABDARA



REFLECTIONS

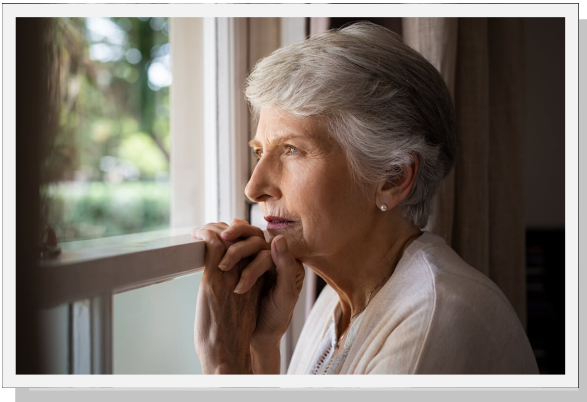
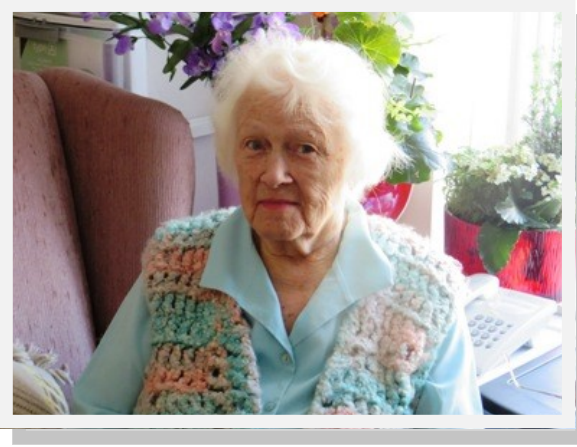
by our resident Irena Žemaitis

How will I greet you –
When you are – Death.

How will I reach you –
When you are – a Journey.

How will I embrace you –
When you are - a Dream.

How will I catch you –
When you are – a Thought.



Mom, you stood by the window
And wondered at the evening's
beauty.

On many a sleepless night
You sang your kids to sleep.
Tonight the evening is so boring,
No joy nor songs

And no more wayward kids

LABDARA FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIPS

The 'Labdara Foundation / Lithuanian Community Association of Toronto Scholarship' was established by Toronto Lietuvių Namai (Lithuanian Community Association of Toronto) to be administered by the Labdara Foundation. It is intended to financially assist students of Lithuanian heritage to pursue their goals in post-secondary education. This year, scholarships were awarded to: \$2,500 Danius Verbyla, \$2,000 Aleksia Vadauskaitė, \$2,000 Jacintha Dirmantaitė-Groen in 't Woud, \$1,000 Aleksa Dirmantaitė Groen In 't Woud, \$1,000 Joris Meiklejohn.

The Selection Committee was made up of the current Labdara Foundation Board President Zita Bersėnas-Cers, former Labdara Foundation Board member Rauda Dickinson and Internal Audit committee members: Genė Kobelskienė and Ed Stravinskis.

Congratulations to all the scholarship winners and best of luck in your studies—*Labdara Foundation Board of Directors*



Danius Verbyla is in his first year Medical Science at the University of Western Ontario.



Aleksia Vadauskaitė is in her first year Performing Arts (music) and Concurrent Education at York University.



Jacintha Dirmantaitė-Groen in 't Woud is in her 2nd year Bachelor of Applied Science in Mechanical Engineering at Queen's University.



Jacintha Dirmantaitė-Groen in 't Woud is in her 4th year Honours Bachelor of Science, Life Sciences at Queen's University.



Joris Meiklejohn is in 3rd year Mechanical Engineering at U of Toronto.

Word Puzzle

1. I run day and night and never stop. What am I?
2. A leaky barrel, but full of water. What am I?
3. I was always holy, but I'll never get to heaven. What am I?
4. I am not a flower, but am from flowers. I am not a leaf, but am from leaves. What am I?
5. Here comes a lady wrapped in nine scarves. Whoever touches her weeps. What is she?
6. I weave without a loom. What am I?
7. I am without arms but I build homes. What am I?
8. Many little brothers share the same bed. What are we?
9. I am beautiful when I am young, and delicious when I'm old. What am I?
10. I have wings but am not a bird. I have fur but am not an animal. What am I?

| | |
|-------------------|----|
| a bumble bee | 10 |
| a poppy | 9 |
| peas | 8 |
| a bird | 7 |
| a spider | 6 |
| an onion | 5 |
| a wreath | 4 |
| a crucifix | 3 |
| a spring of water | 2 |
| a river | 1 |



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Deacon Dr. Kazys Ambrozaitis

THE EASTER SPIRIT OF HOPE IN OUR HEARTS



For early Christians, the Book of Revelation was "A Book of Hope." It was a source of hope, because they believed in God's power to overcome evil and make all things new.

When they read Revelation, it brought Christ into their presence. Reading it can be seen as a preparation for the Lord's Supper. Our early Christians would read Revelation prior to Mass, as preparation for the Liturgy they were about to celebrate.

Their belief that God and His kingdom ruled their lives was their consolation and renewal of the spirit that sustained their hope during those difficult times of early Christianity. The Book of Revelation brought them hope. Here is a quote:

And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying: "See, the home of God is among humans. He will dwell with them as their God; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes.

Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away."

And the one who was seated on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new."

Rev 21.1-5a

Our risen Lord is the one seated on the throne. He will wipe away our tears, heal our desolation and restore our lives, because he is our hope for all things new.

May the Body and Blood of Christ renew the "Easter Spirit of Hope" in our hearts.