

**2023-24**



***Quinte Vitality  
and Social  
Supports 66<sup>th</sup>  
Annual General  
Meeting***

***Mission Statement-*** Our mission is to enhance the lives of adults with developmental challenges by providing a safe environment, meaningful programs and positive relationships which promote social inclusion in the community.

***QVSS Vision Statement-*** That all people enjoy a quality of life as accepted members of their chosen community.

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# Agenda

**Welcome – Chair**

**Adoption of Previous AGM 2023/2024 Minutes and Matters Arising.**

- 1. Audited Financial Report – Linda Goldrick**
  - a) Audited accounts for the previous year Linda Goldrick**
  - b) Appointment of auditors – Board of Directors**
- 2. Annual Reports from Chair Report**
- 3. Annual Reports from the Executive Director**
- 4. Annual Report from the Program Manager**
- 5. Review of Membership fees – (I. Membership Dues)**

**The Corporation's members will be required to pay dues or fees as determined by the Board of Directors from time to time to maintain their membership in good standing. Dues or fees for the next membership year will be announced at the Corporation's Annual General Meeting. Once announced, members have sixty (60) days to pay the dues or fees to remain members in good standing.**

**Any other business**

**Closure**



# *QVSS's Board of Directors 2023-24*

## **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**Dwayne Atkinson- Chair**  
**Nicholas deVries- Vice-Chair**  
**Scott Lambden- Treasurer**  
**Sarah Stein- Secretary**

## **BOARD MEMBERS**

**Aptie Sookoo**  
**John Mark Robertson**  
**David Globe**



## **QVSS STAFF**

**Mike Vajda- Executive Director**  
**Linda Goldrick- Finance Officer**  
**Shannon Arbic- Program Manager**  
**Charlotte Davison- FT Direct Care Worker**  
**Angela Walsh- FT Direct Care Worker**  
**Allie Pope- FT Direct Care Worker**  
**Renee Ratusznyk- FT Direct Care Worker**  
**Yvonne Kent- FT Direct Care Worker**  
**Alyssa Ross- FT Direct Care Worker**  
**Nadezda Nelson- RPT Direct Care Worker**

**Paul St. Pierre- Call-In Direct Care Worker**  
**Linda Bosley- Call-In Direct Care Worker**  
**Bobby-Jo Armstrong- Call-In Direct Care**

JUST SOME OF "THE  
FINEST" QVSS STAFF



# *Annual General Meeting Minutes 2022-23*

The following is the minutes of the annual general meeting of **Quinte Vitality and Social Support (QVSS)** that was held at 1 Greenleaf Court, Belleville, ON, K8N 5T5 on September 25, 2023. The meeting was called to order at 05:35 p.m. by the chairman.

## **Quorum:**

**Present were:** Dwayne Atkinson (Chairman), Nick DeVries (Vice-chairman), Aptie Sookoo (Secretary), and Scott Lambden.

**Board members absent were:** Norm Fieldhouse (Treasurer) and Sara Stein

**Prospective board members:** David Globe and John Mark

## **Staff present:**

Mike Vajda (Executive Director), Shannon Arbic (Manager) and 6 others.

**Staff absent was:** Linda Goldrick (Finance Officer).

## **Welcome:**

The chairman thanked everyone for attending the meeting and read the mission statement.

## **Adoption of previous AGM 2021/2022 Minutes and Matters Arising:**

A motion to approve the minutes of the annual general meeting of Quinte Vitality and Social Support of October 24, 2022 (as circulated), was moved by Nick Fieldhouse and seconded by Scott Lambden.

Motion: carried

## **Audited accounts for previous year- Linda Goldrick:**

Mike Vajda presented the auditor's report (in the absence of Linda), for fiscal year ended March 31, 2023, that was prepared by **Reynolds & Cantelo CPA** and circulated. Scott made reference to Linda's summary financial report as well as the following **qualified opinion** of **Reynolds & Cantelo CPA**.

The document on **INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT** page 3 states:  
***In my opinion, except for the effect of any adjustments, if any, which I might have determined to be necessary had I been able to satisfy myself concerning the completeness of the donations and fundraisers referred to in the Basis for qualified opinion paragraphs, these financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of QUINTE VITALITY AND SOCIAL SUPPORT as of March 31, 2023, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian standards for not-for-profit organizations.***

A motion to accept the auditor's report as presented was moved by Scott Lambden and seconded by Nick DeVries.  
Motion carried.

#### **Appointment of Auditors Board of Directors-:**

A motion to appoint **Reynolds & Cantelo CPA** as the auditor for the next fiscal year (2023-2024) was moved by Scott Lambden and seconded by Nick DeVries.  
Motion carried

#### **Annual Report from Chair Report:**

The chairman in his report welcomed the new staff and encouraged them to share their unique insights and experiences to make QVSS the best. Also, he mentioned the **Centre for Life** as a facility in which QVSS will be able to continue to deliver programs within a modern facility. Additionally, he expressed happiness and best of luck (on behalf of the board), to Steve Halloran (past board chairman) for his new adventures. In addition, he thanked the dedicated board members- Nick DeVries, Norm Fieldhouse, Aptie Sookoo, Sara Stein and Scott Lambden for their continued commitment and support to QVSS.

A motion to accept the Chair report was moved by Nick DeVries and seconded by Shannon Arbic.  
Motion carried.

#### **Annual Report from Executive Director:**

Mike expressed thanks to his dedicated team for implementing COVID-19 protocols and their adaptation to evolving circumstances. Also, he has filled all the direct care positions that were vacant for a while. In addition, he made mention of the **Centre for Life** and transitioning from vocational programs to recreation and leisure in it. Additionally, he expressed thanks to the Bord of Directors for their ***unwavering dedication and guidance, strategic insights and valuable advice.***

A motion to accept the Executive Director report was moved by Alysa Ross and seconded by Yvonne Kent.  
Motion carried.

### **Annual Report from Program Manager:**

The program manager - Shannon in her report mentioned the various activities that were introduced such as ***Fishing, Cruise & A Coffee, Bayshore Walks, Art In The Park*** etc. Also, the talent show had tremendous success.

A motion to accept the Program Manager report was moved by Scott Lambden Renee Ratusznyk and seconded by Yvonne Kent.  
Motion carried.

### **Confirmation of Board Members:**

Dwayne Atkinson indicated that he will be staying on the board and would like to continue as its Chairman, Nick DeVries as the Vice-chairman, Aptie Sookoo as a member, Scott Lambden would be the secretary once Norm Fieldhouse continues in the role as treasurer. Also, Scott's position will be confirmed at the October 2023 board meeting.

### **Review of Membership fees- (1. Membership Dues):**

The Members of the Corporation will be required to pay dues or fees as determined by the Board of Directors from time to time in order to maintain their membership in good standing. Dues or fees for the next membership year will be announced at the Annual General Meeting of the Corporation. Once announced, members have sixty (60) days to pay the dues or fees to remain a member in good standing.

This matter was not discussed at the meeting.

### **Any Other Business:**

The vacation trip to Jamaica at the Sea Star Inn will be from October 31<sup>st</sup> to November 7<sup>th</sup>. There will be 15 clients and 3 staff on the trip.

### **Closure:**

There being no other business the meeting was adjourned by a motion moved by Nick de Vries and seconded by Linda Bosley.  
Motion carried

The meeting ended at 06:25 p.m. Minutes compiled by Aptie Sookoo- Secretary on 09/26/23.

## *Board Chair Report- Dwayne Atkinson*

Welcome to the 2024-2025 Annual General Meeting of Quinte Vitality and Social Support.

Our Mission remains “to enhance the lives of adults with developmental challenges by providing a safe environment, meaningful programs and positive relationships, which promote social inclusion in the community”.

Our Vision continues to be “that all people will enjoy a quality of life as an accepted member of their chosen community”.

To our amazing clients, you are the very idea of Vitality by remaining strong, compassionate and welcoming no matter the situation. You are an example to all.

QVSS would not be the resounding success that it is without the dedication and commitment of the staff and management of the agency. Through and because of your extraordinary efforts, QVSS has been able to effectively return to our pre-pandemic state. This very dedication of the Staff and Management of QVSS has continually defined the meaning of Vitality, which is ‘the capacity for survival and to live or grow’.

To our retired staff members, enjoy your next adventure. Know that you will always be welcome at QVSS.

To our newest staff members, welcome to the team. You are encouraged to share your unique insights and experiences to help make QVSS the best it can be. That said, I also ask that you be mindful of the need of our clients for stability and structure.

I salute you all.

To our staff that are struggling with illness or are overwhelmed by the magnitude of the world, we are all here for you. Do not suffer in silence. Reach out and you will be helped.

This past year has been another filled with change. Whether it is the loss of staff and volunteers, welcoming new staff and volunteers resource challenges or the everyday stresses of life, QVSS has met these challenges with strength and resilience. It is a source of pride to acknowledge that our QVSS family is strong and supportive of one another. It is inspiring to know how well QVSS is regarded in the community. This was reaffirmed when the Honorable Michael Parsa, the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services chose QVSS as a place he wished to visit this past summer. He walked away impressed and committed to helping QVSS remain the success that it is.

A major development of this past year is QVSS' decision, as difficult as it was, to withdraw from the Center for Life project. While it is a wonderful benefit for the local community, we determined that it was not the best option for QVSS now or in the future. The Board of Directors and Management will continue to explore every option to provide the best for QVSS to thrive and grow while always keeping our people at the forefront.

I wish to applaud the efforts of the United Way Day of Caring that benefitted QVSS. This diverse team of volunteers from United Way of Quinte, Task Force Engineering, Welch LLP and St. Theresa Catholic Secondary School did amazing work in restoring our pergolas in the front and back.

I feel the need to acknowledge the actions of the QVSS "Giving Back" group. These exemplary folks, clients and staff, are outstanding ambassadors to the community and an inspiration to all. Well done to each of you.

As a dedicated and committed group of volunteers, the Board of Directors continues to assist the staff and management in governance of the Agency to ensure that we continue to provide the necessary programming and support to all our QVSS family.

I need to acknowledge the retirement of Norman Fieldhouse from the Board of Directors. Norm has faithfully served QVSS as a Board member, in every capacity, for more than 22 years. He has donated many of his artworks to QVSS, which can be seen hanging throughout the facility. Best wishes Norm. You are always welcome at QVSS.

To the dedicated Board Members of QVSS, our Vice Chair: Nick Devries, our Secretary: Sara Stein, our Treasurer: Scott Lambden as well as Aptie Sookoo and our newest Board Members; John Mark Robertson and David Globe, I thank you for your continued commitment and support to QVSS as we strive to provide the very best oversight, guidance and support the agency through the everchanging current events and requirements as well as the exciting changes to our future.

I have been both humbled and inspired to be allowed to serve as Board Chairperson of Quinte Vitality and Social Support. I remain amazed and inspired by the dedication, compassion and sense of inclusion exhibited by everyone who makes up the QVSS community. I am steadfast in my belief that QVSS is resilient and absolutely convinced that our QVSS community will be here for many years to come, ever advancing the place of our clients within the community.

Thank you to every supporter of QVSS and I look forward with excitement to another great year with QVSS.

*Dwayne Atkinson- Board Chair*

## *Executive Director Report- Mike Vajda*

Approaching September 2024, my 40th anniversary with QVSS provides a unique vantage point for reflecting on what constitutes a successful year. While this milestone doesn't align with the fiscal year of my report, it offers a distinct perspective for evaluating our progress and achievements.

QVSS—a remarkable 66 years of history. The fact that we, an agency deeply rooted in excellence, have been able to adapt, evolve, and deliver significance over such a long period is a testament to our sustained success that has positively impacted the lives of those we serve.

Our journey began at ARC Industries, also known as the Adult Resource Centre, where we laid the foundation for a supportive environment dedicated to empowering individuals. As we evolved into Quinte Vocational Support Services, our focus sharpened on providing vocational training and employment opportunities that nurtured growth and independence. Today, under the banner of Quinte Vitality and Social Support, we continue to honour our legacy while embracing a broader spectrum of services that holistically enhance the well-being of those we serve.

Our journey reflects more than just a name shift; it signifies our evolving mission. At every stage of our development, we've expanded our services and refined our approaches to better meet the needs of our community participants. Each transformation has allowed us to introduce new programs, enhance support systems, and create opportunities that empower individuals.

Our dedicated staff is the heart of our agency's continued success and evolution. With their unwavering loyalty, unique skills, experiences, perspectives, and invaluable insights, each team member is a driving force that pushes the boundaries of what more we can achieve. Their dedication and contribution are the pillars of our success, and we are deeply grateful for their unwavering support.



In comparison, QVSS services remained open during the COVID-19 pandemic, which was undoubtedly challenging and frightening. Despite our uncertainties and fears, QVSS rose to the occasion with determination and commitment. Our primary focus was ensuring participants' safety. As we navigated that crisis, our collective efforts protected lives and reinforced the

importance of community and solidarity. We emerged stronger and more united than ever, and I am incredibly proud.

At QVSS, we pride ourselves on our team's exceptional dedication and expertise, and no one embodies this spirit more than our Program Manager, Shannon Arbic. Shannon has been a cornerstone in orchestrating and implementing our diverse programs, ensuring that each initiative is executed with precision and care. But Shannon's role extends far beyond mere management. She works tirelessly to understand and meet the unique needs and personal desires of the people we serve. Her commitment to fostering a supportive environment is evident in every interaction with clients and staff, and we are very fortunate to have her on our team.



Equally vital is the role of our Board members. Their strategic vision and steadfast support are the guiding stars that provide the framework within which we operate. Their invaluable insights help us navigate challenges and confidently seize opportunities. The Board's dedication ensures we remain true to our mission while continuously seeking ways to evolve and grow. This synergy between a passionate team and a visionary Board propels us forward. They are in relentless pursuit of excellence that will continue to define who we are as an agency for years to come.

In addition, we are also immensely grateful to the Foster Foundation for their generous support. Their contributions have enabled us to expand our services and reach even more individuals. Our partnership with the United Way of Quinte has further amplified our impact, allowing us to continue offering our Collective Kitchens Program.

Special thanks to MCCSS and our Program Supervisor, who deserve special mention for their tireless efforts in overseeing programs that deliver essential services to our community. Your dedication to our community participants has been instrumental in our success.

So, you see, many vantages have created our wonderful organization, which I am proud to play a part in. From my vantage point, QVSS stands as a beacon of excellence, and it's no surprise why.

*Mike Vajda- Executive Director*



# *Finance Officer Report- Linda Goldrick*

**2023-2024**

## **Financial Highlights**

### **Quinte Vitality & Social Support**

We have had a very busy and fun-filled year at Q.V.S.S.

Finances continue to be challenging, with increased costs across the board, but we were able to complete the financial year with a very small surplus.

Generous donations from United Way of Quinte and The Harry E. Foster Foundation have continued to enable us to reduce costs for our participants in recreation programs.



*With Regards*

*Linda Goldrick  
Finance Officer*

# *Program Manager Report- Shannon Arbic*

## **Highlights and Updates**

### **General Summary-**

In the summer of 2023, we slowly moved out of cohorts and implemented regular programs with precautions in place. This change was needed after dealing with COVID restrictions for so long.

This went so well that we started regular fall programs one month earlier, in September, without any safeguards. This transition was seamless and welcomed by all.

Our newest staff member, Alyssa Ross, presented many new or improved programs, which were enjoyed very much. She facilitated the QVSS Ambassadors, Media Makers, Melody Maestros, and Movin' and Groovin' programs.

She implemented a schedule where the clients from the QVSS Ambassadors group do various tasks throughout the week. Some of these duties included cleaning the diner to lighten Brandon's load, calling for clients on the walkie-talkies during pick-up times, getting the mail, changing the outdoor sign, and taking out the garbage and recycling.

These experiences have empowered the members and taught them new work skills, especially teamwork and responsibility. They feel excited and proud when fulfilling their duties. This program has been a huge success and has been highlighted over the past fall and winter sessions. It has aided the agency in many ways, and we all appreciate their hard work.

Renee reimplemented our ASL program in the fall, which was welcomed by all as our deaf community continues to grow. The members of this group learn sign language with the help of Renee and their peer, Alex Wellbanks. There have been times when Alex runs this class independently, with Renee's supervision. Seeing the joy it brings him in this role and the benefits of his teaching is amazing.

Angie and Charlotte began a new program where they take groups to Axes and Allies in Trenton for the morning. There, they hang out in the clubhouse in teams and throw axes at the bullseyes. Much like darts, this activity has taught and helped them with hand-eye coordination, focus, relaxation, balance, and strength. They have had an amazing time together. Due to its popularity and outcomes, we will now offer this as a regular program going forward.

Yvonne officially announced her retirement last spring, with her last day being May 31<sup>st</sup>. We had a lovely send-off with gifts, speeches, tears and cake. It was extra special having our Board Chair present and speaking on behalf of all of us, thanking Yvonne for almost two decades of service to QVSS.

### **Family Planning-**

Those not attached to a specific agency were called, and conversations took place to determine whether a succession plan was in place. The feedback and outcome of this process were extremely positive and appreciated.

Allie and I documented the information gathered from these calls and will keep it in their files for future reference. Knowing that no one who attends QVSS will be in a major crisis down the road has eased everyone's minds.

### **Intake/Students/P&P-**

Allie has excelled in her role, demonstrating exceptional competence in managing our Intake, ISPs and students and attending monthly Pressures and Priorities meetings. Her organizational skills and quick learning have been instrumental in completely sorting out our agency in DSCIS. Since taking on this new role, she has successfully brought on 11 new individuals, all paying with Passport funding, thereby generating extra revenue for our agency.

### **Diner-**

Brandon has an amazing work ethic and has excelled at managing the changes to his workday, making it all work with few issues.

He now spends his mornings cleaning bathrooms, doing general cleaning of the dining room, sweeping and mopping floors as needed, cooking, serving customers at break and lunch, restocking fridges and shelves, creating shopping lists, dishwashing and much more.

He heads to his NEP area for the afternoon once clients have dispersed to their programs. He spends the rest of the day making kits for the Health Unit who picks up his orders Friday mornings.

The diner continues to generate revenue, his cleaning is thorough, and HPEPH is pleased with his orders. We all knew he could do the job, but we're beyond impressed on how his work is done so expeditiously and efficiently.

### **Linda G/Training-**

My training sessions with Linda over the year were effective and productive. She was a great teacher! As the weeks passed, I became more comfortable and confident doing her daily tasks. I learned how to do our payroll, passport billings, bill payments, sales invoices, bank reconciliation, and filing. She continued to do the brokerage of Passport

for a select few and works on back-end business. Linda was always a text or call away, helping me at any point with problems or questions that would arise.

### **Closing Remarks-**

This past year has had many bumps, but a lesson was learned every step of the way. Thank you Mike for the tireless hours you devote to myself, our team and our clients. Surviving the harder times has undoubtedly built strength in us, which will help us face new challenges with resilience. I'm excited to keep learning and for what positive impacts we have within the agency and in our community.

*Shannon Arbic- Program Manager*

## *2023-24 Highlights*

### **Continuing Professional Staff Development**

This highlights the educational training our entire staff, including management, has undergone to enhance our ability to support the individuals we serve.

- 1. Leadership Training:** Staff members have completed the prestigious Leadership Training program at Loyalist College, equipping them with advanced management skills.
- 2. American Sign Language:** Three staff members have completed level one ASL, improving our ability to communicate with hearing-impaired individuals.
- 3. Food Handlers Certification:** All staff members are now certified food handlers, ensuring the highest hygiene and safety standards in meal preparation and service.
- 4. Labour Relations:** Our team has received training in labour relations, fostering a harmonious and productive work environment.
- 5. Conscious Care Training:** This specialized course has equipped our staff to identify primary causes, implement optimal prevention strategies, and utilize awareness-based calming techniques for de-escalation, particularly beneficial for individuals prone to self-injurious behaviours or aggression.
- 6. Medication Administration:** Every staff member has completed comprehensive training in medication administration, ensuring the safe and accurate dispensing of prescribed medications.

These educational initiatives demonstrate our dedication to working together toward a common goal: providing exceptional support services to the individuals in our care.

## Facebook Review

"I just wanted to say thank you!! Someone I love just started coming to QVSS after a lifetime of being (lovingly protected at home) for over 50 years...he is now a completely new man! He absolutely LOVES the program and practically jumps out of the car to get inside the building.... it's been a beautiful, amazing thing to watch... He has new friends, a sense of purpose, independence & belonging... and already has a bunch of new stories to share! Thank you to everyone at QVSS who welcomes him, respects him and introduces him to new adventures. This program has literally been life-changing...INCREDIBLE! 🥰"



skills and knowledge. This directly translates to improved client service and satisfaction.

**3. Quality Assurance and Family Feedback:** Our solid commitment to maintaining high standards and actively seeking client input has resulted in measurable improvements in our service delivery.

**Upon reviewing** our agency's highlights, I'm thrilled to share that we have much to be grateful for, particularly in several key areas.

What truly defines an agency's highlights? This year, we're focusing on three key areas that demonstrate our commitment to progress:

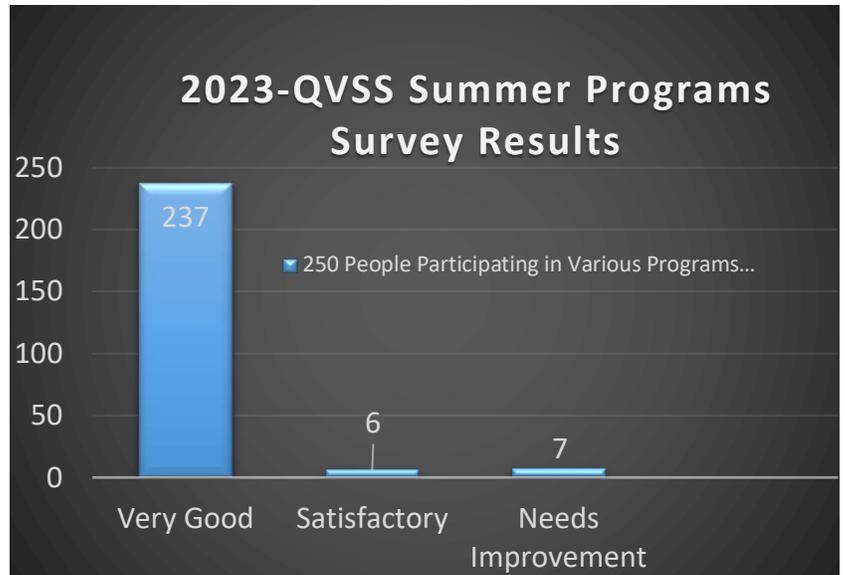
**1.Foundation Grants:** Our successful grant acquisitions have significantly bolstered our resources, enabling us to expand our reach and enhance our services.

**2. Staff Development:** We've invested heavily in our team's professional growth, equipping them with new

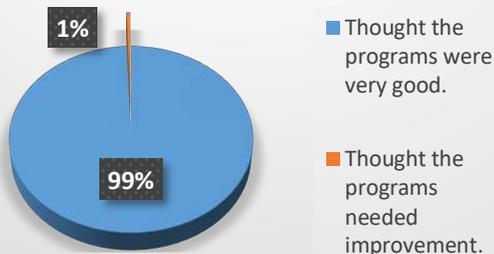


# 2023-2024 Program Achievement Survey Results

On behalf of QVSS, from the Board of Directors, management, staff, and self-evidently, the participants, we could not be more pleased and are grateful for the valuable feedback provided by our surveyed participants. It helps us continuously improve and refine our offerings. Rest assured that at QVSS, participant satisfaction is always at the forefront of everything we do, as you can see from the survey results.



## 2023-24 Fall and Winter Programs Participants Surveyed



At QVSS, we believe that the journey to belonging is a continuous and evolving experience. Our commitment to fostering a sense of community, providing exceptional support, and offering programs that promote

inclusivity is at the core of everything we do. We understand that true happiness comes from feeling connected and valued, so our initiatives are designed to create fun-filled experiences for everyone.

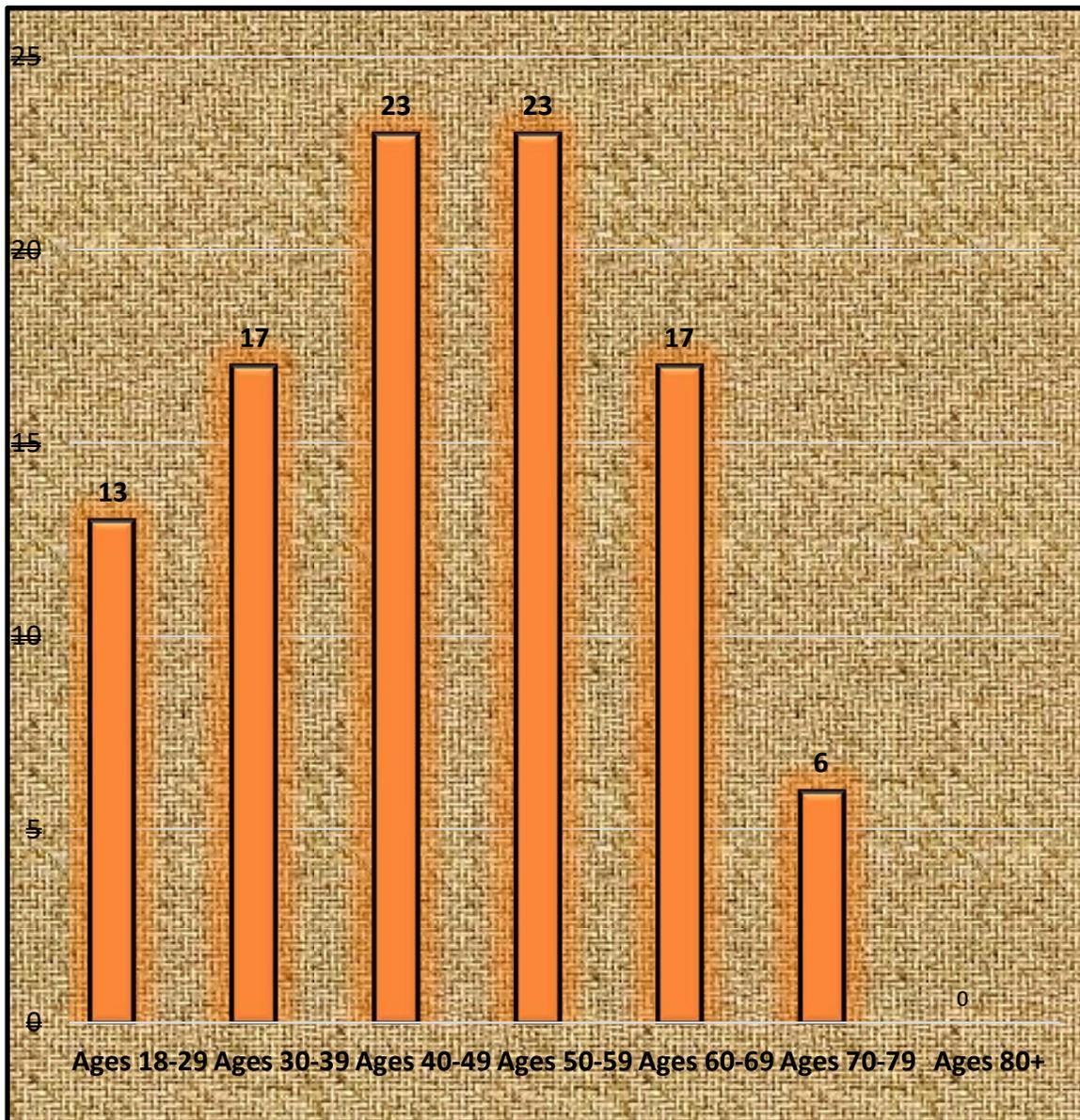


**QVSS's Quality Assurance Measures (QAM) Audit** lasted from November 28th to December 1st, 2023. This QAM Audit was not just another routine check; it was significant as it was more detailed than usual. Since our last QAM audit was conducted in 2019, the upcoming audit covered an extended period, making thoroughness and accuracy more crucial than ever. The unprecedented circumstances brought about by the pandemic necessitated a hiatus, which means this year's audit encompassed multiple years of data and processes. We could not be more pleased that QVSS had a successful QAM audit, with no non-compliances, maintaining our reputation for excellence and ensuring continuous improvement within our organization.



*Thriving with  
Diversity and  
Inclusion*

# Demographic Analysis of 99 QVSS People Ages 18-80



## *The Harry E. Foster Foundation*



Thank you, Harry E. Foster Foundation, for supporting our initiative to continue offering **Cost-Reduced Meals** that satisfy hunger and contribute to building a more inclusive and compassionate community at QVSS. Operating a kitchen comes with challenges; rising expenses are one of our biggest hurdles. From the mounting prices of groceries to the maintenance and repairs of our equipment, these costs have become more challenging to manage. We are very grateful for your contribution to ease all these hurdles.

Thank you for the new **QVSS freezer**, which ensures our food remains fresh, safe, and readily available whenever needed. Also, thank you for helping QVSS sustain Brandon's employment at the diner. He is happy and over the moon with a stable and fulfilling job within our agency.

As a diner serving meals to diverse individuals, we must adhere to the health unit's guidelines. They require us to have an industrial dishwasher to ensure the highest standards of cleanliness and sanitation are maintained. Thank you for the new **Replacement Dishwasher** and for being so helpful.

QVSS's mission is to ensure that everyone at the agency can enjoy inclusive and engaging experiences regardless of their financial situation. **The Cost Assistance Program** is valuable to us and the people we serve, and we could not provide it without the Harry E. Foster Foundation. Thank you.





The program supplies, including **Tablets and Laptops**, are a windfall and a welcome addition to the participating adults' lives. These devices enable them to stay socially connected with friends and family outside the agency and offer endless possibilities for personal growth, education, creativity, and empowerment. Thank you.

**QVSS's Social Scene Committee** plans special events or day trips every month.

They plan seasonal day trips and organize dances and parties for the QVSS participants. They make decorations for special events and celebrations. They research and plan day trips compiled of wishes from their peers at the agency, making them as exciting as possible. Thank you for helping spread the joy.



We are truly grateful for your support and unwavering commitment to improving the lives of people with developmental disabilities. Your generosity will directly contribute to their well-being and help us continue providing essential programs and services.



## *The United Way of Quinte*

At Collective Kitchens, each participant takes home three meals weekly, carefully curated to meet their dietary needs and preferences. These meals provide a convenient solution for their daily nutrition and a learning opportunity. Through our program, participants gain valuable skills in making grocery lists, budgeting effectively, mastering general kitchen techniques, understanding portion control, and accessing nutritional information.

We aim to reduce poverty's human, social, and economic costs within our community by ensuring access to sustainable food options. By equipping individuals with the ability to prepare their meals cost-effectively, we empower them to take control of their health and well-being.

Together, we have achieved remarkable milestones in promoting healthier lifestyles for all. We could only have accomplished what we have today with your invaluable assistance. Your support and dedication have been instrumental in creating lasting change within our communities.

So today, we want to say a heartfelt thank you. Your belief in our mission and your willingness to lend a helping hand have made all the difference. Together, let us continue striving towards a future where everyone can enjoy the benefits of a healthy lifestyle.

Once again, from the bottom of our hearts, thank you for being an integral part of this journey towards positive change and for your funding support as we work together to build stronger communities through food empowerment.



## *Thank you to our Charitable Supporters*

We are incredibly grateful to have once again received funding from both the Harry E. Foster Foundation and the United Way of Quinte. Your generosity has significantly improved our ability to serve our community effectively.

I'm pleased to report that 100% of your funds have been directly allocated to our client programs and services. This financial support has allowed us to:

1. Enhance the quality of our existing programs
2. Purchase essential equipment and supplies
3. Reduce costs for our clients, making our services more accessible

Your contributions have truly elevated our standard of care and support. Without these monetary grants, we could not provide the same level of service to those who rely on us.



## *Our Time-Honoured Friends Sharing Their Memories of QVSS*

In any successful agency, triumph lies in the strength and loyalty of its team members.



These devoted, longtime friends of the agency are not just clients; they are the heart and soul and our friends that drive our mission forward.

### **Don Rogers-QVSS Participant Since 1983**

Don Rogers is 75 years old, and today, I chatted with him to learn more about his time at QVSS. Don said he has been here for as long as he can remember, but he is unsure how many years. He said he enjoys his time at the agency.

Don told me about his work over the past years, his work in the shop building

distributor caps, and his time in the diner. He enjoyed working in the diner and learning new skills to use at home. He really enjoys his time spent at the agency visiting with his friends and all the fun programs we offer. He did mention a close friend Naomi, and how he misses seeing her. Don says he will continue coming to QVSS for as long as possible.



### **David Dickey- QVSS Participant Since 1990**

David is 60 years old. He worked in the Shop under the supervision of Al Colden, working on distributor caps for FORD.

As time passed, the Lamination Department supervisor, Duane Lessard, asked if he'd like to work with his crew. This is where David would remain until the work programs were phased out. He was a cutter and laminator and loved his job and coworkers.

Although he misses it, he's happy he still comes to QVSS, as it keeps him busy for half of his week. He loves his friends and the staff who run programs. He doesn't see himself retiring any time soon!



**Kate Lapp- QVSS Participant Since 1996**

Kate Lapp is 68 years old and started her journey at COED school and still does some programs there. She is unsure when she began at QVSS, but she says she has been here for a very long time.

While at QVSS she worked in the shop program with Charlotte making distributor caps and, in a program where they crocheted lawn chairs with Brenda, a staff at QVSS. Kate says she loves being here and

very much enjoys her programs. She likes bingo as she can sometimes win a \$1 so she can buy coffee. She also enjoys jewelry making but she is not in that program anymore. Kate says she will be here forever.

**John Bruce- QVSS Participant Since 2000**

John is 67 years old and was born in Belleville and lived with Mom and Dad for many years. He worked at Arc Industry and talked about the sewing department and how they sewed items for the hospital. He also worked for some time in housekeeping with a support staff at the BGH. His girlfriend told him about QVSS, and that was how he came to be a part of our agency. He talked about some other volunteer work he did at Giant Tiger and how Linda B used to take him there.



While at QVSS he worked in the granola program with Elaine and in the diner with Angie. He enjoyed those jobs and the money he would make from his hours working.

He said he was sad when the job programs were not running anymore. He is enjoying all the programs available and loves time spent with friends. He said he plans to be here for a very long time as its such a fun place to be.

## **Julia Murray**

### **A QVSS participant since 1990**



Julia is 68 years old and was born in Peterborough and moved to Belleville around 1960. She lived with Mom and Dad and attended William R Kirk. After graduating, she began work programs at Arc Industries when she was 21 years old. Julia said they changed locations 4 times, from Station Street to the Bayview Mall, to Hanna court and now at 1 Greenleaf. Julia talked about how much she enjoyed working in the sewing program and the printing shop at Arc Industries and making herself a little “cashola”, she said.

Julia left Arc Industry and began at QVSS where she joined in some of the work and rec programs. Julia said she worked in the shop making distributor caps with Al C and Elaine A as her supervisors and she also worked in the Lamination department with Duane. She also worked in the diner, her favorite job Julia mentioned, with Angie W as her mentor. Julia said she learned a lot of skills in cooking from Angie and Kelly who often helped as well. She talked about how sad she was when all work programs finished as it made her feel useful having a job and gave her some extra money.

Despite all the changes Julia has remained at QVSS, she says that many of her friends are here, and it is a big part of her life. She enjoys all the social time, loves the staff and all the fun programs we offer, and this is what keeps her here. Julia says she will be here forever.



### **Jeff Dawson- QVSS Participant Since 1978**

Jeff Dawson is a 67-year-old man. After leaving William R. Kirk school at age 21, he began working at the Station Street location, in the shop, doing a distributor cap job for FORD. Al C was his supervisor, and he loved working with him on all their different contracts.

From there, he was asked to work at Red's Diner, cooking, cleaning and serving customers under Angie W. At the same time, he worked days in the Lamination department as a cutter under Duane L.

Although the work programs have finished, he still loves coming to QVSS.

His favourite things to do are fishing, working on puzzles, and listening to country music with his

headphones in our Internet Café.

Jeff loves the staff at QVSS and enjoys joking around and picking on them. He's made many new friends and loves to sit, have coffee, and chat with them. He said these things are why he continues coming to QVSS and hasn't retired yet.



**Phil French**, who will be 59 in November, started with **QVSS in 1995** at the Station Street location. Mike Vajda, whose parents knew Phil's father, was instrumental in getting him on board. Mike also helped Phill access ODSP.

Phil has worked in many departments over the years, assembling distributor caps for FORD in the shop, laminating and boxing up SEARS catalogues, working on the lawn maintenance crew, and eventually overseeing shipping and receiving on Hannah Court and Greenleaf Court.

After COVID, Phil decided to rejoin QVSS and enjoy some of the recreational programs offered. He said he was sick of staying home, bored and wanted to connect with friends again. He comes a few days a week and enjoys axe throwing, bingo, and DJing at our virtual radio station. We are happy to have him back!

# *Community Connections and Recreational Fun*

## **Go Golf**



The golf program has become a beloved activity among the clients! They love the friendly, inclusive atmosphere that makes every session enjoyable. The combination of skill development and fun has made this

program stand out. After a great time at the driving range, they love to unwind and share stories over a cup of Tim Horton's coffee, adding a perfect social touch to their experience. The positive feedback and enthusiastic participation clearly indicate how much they enjoy the golf program. Keep up the great work, everyone!

## **Rally 2.0**

This brand-new program we introduced over the winter covered all things dance! Rally 2.0 was an absolute hit among the clients! They loved the high energy, learning choreography, and the welcoming environment that made every class a joy to attend. The variety of dance styles kept things exciting and allowed everyone to join in. They frequently praised how each session left them happy and accomplished. The smiles on their faces were clear indicators of just how much they enjoyed this program. Keep on dancing!



## Coffee Talk

Coffee Talk has always been a cherished weekly ritual for the clients! They love gathering to enjoy a delicious cup of coffee while engaging in conversations on various topics. The relaxed and friendly atmosphere makes it easy for everyone to connect and share their thoughts. Each



week brings a new theme or discussion point, keeping things fresh and exciting. The group has expressed how much they look forward to this program, giving them the opportunity to socialize, learn, and unwind. The enthusiastic participation are clear signs of how much they enjoy their coffee talk program. Keep brewing! **Allie Pope- QVSS Direct Care Worker**



Glanmore House- National Historic Site in Belleville

**Direct Care Worker- Angela Walsh says- The Out and About Program-** offers our individuals enriching experiences by exploring local museums and charming small towns. We immerse ourselves in the history and culture of each destination,

fostering a sense of community and connection. These excursions not only provide educational opportunities but also create lasting memories and strengthen bonds among our participants.



## Wondrous Walkers

The walking programs have become a cherished routine for our clients, who eagerly look forward to each session. The combination of fresh air, gentle exercise, and the company we



share makes it a highlight of their week. One of the most beloved aspects of our walks is our regular stop at Tim Hortons. Whether it's for a steaming cup of coffee, a refreshing iced beverage, or a tasty treat, Tim Hortons adds a delightful touch to our outings. My clients often express how much they love this part of the program, making our walks even more special and enjoyable.

## Games Galore



Our summer games program has been a hit with our clients, who thoroughly enjoy the various options.



From classic favourites like Jenga and Yahtzee to engaging activities such as horse races and Left-Right Center, there's something for everyone to enjoy. It's great to see our clients having fun and staying active through our diverse games program.



**Puzzle Peace** The **Puzzle Program** is a fantastic mix of people who love a good challenge. They bring unique problem-solving skills and perspectives, making every puzzle session exciting and fun. They enjoy working together, building a strong sense of accomplishment while sharpening their minds. Their enthusiasm and dedication make the Puzzle Program a vibrant and successful initiative.



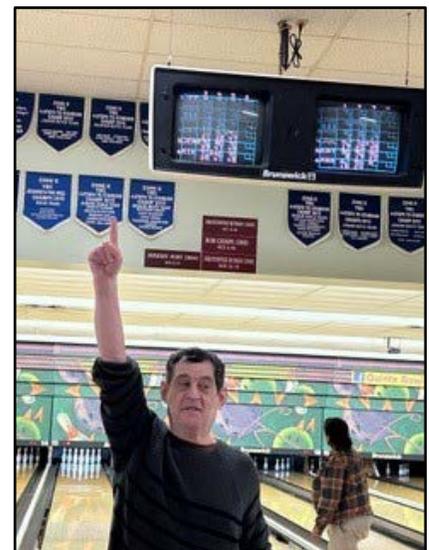
### **Movies**

Our assorted movie program has become a favorite among our clients, offering a diverse selection of films that cater to all tastes and preferences. Participants appreciate the thoughtful variety and the opportunity to discover new genres and hidden gems. Paired with delicious popcorn and a drink, it creates the ultimate movie-watching

experience. It's no wonder our clients love this program and eagerly look forward to each new selection!

### **Bowling**

Our weekly bowling outings are a hit with our group! Every week, we spend a couple of hours at the bowling alley, where everyone enjoys a few games, snacks, and coffee. It's a fantastic way to stay active and have fun, especially on those cold, wintry days. These outings not only provide great exercise but also offer a wonderful opportunity for socializing and bonding.



**Charlotte Davison, QVSS's Direct Care Worker, says that-**

**Brown Baggin** It is a great program where we all gather in the kitchen to make three well-balanced healthy lunches for everyone to take home. We talk about what we enjoy eating for lunch and plan what we make each week. We also talk about what people are making at home for lunch.



**Soup's On** teaches people that we can make soup with the ingredients we have in our kitchen. We opened the fridge and cupboard and made delicious soups, which everyone got to sample. They got a thermos full to take home and enjoy for supper or lunch the next day.

**Collective Kitchens** is a vital program that helps people learn the skills they need to prepare healthy, nutritious meals at home. Each week, we

prepare three meals together, which people take home to enjoy. Everyone also learns about safe food handling and safe food storage.





**Fishing** is an exciting sport, and it is a wonderful way to be involved in your community. It is great when people stop by to talk with us to find out if we are having any luck and to share fishing stories of their own.

**Bingo** is a fun game that everyone enjoys playing, especially when trying to win the jackpot. The bingo caller program we use to draw the numbers is great, and it helps people play independently because they can both see and hear the numbers as they are called. We also connect with people who play from home via Facebook.



### **Renee Ratusznyk- Direct Care Worker American Sign Language**

Many participants enjoy learning ASL, a gateway to understanding and embracing an entire culture. By learning ASL, hearing individuals can bridge the gap between themselves and the deaf community, fostering a more inclusive society.

By investing in ASL education, we're taking a significant step towards a more inclusive world. It sends a powerful message of respect and acknowledgment to the deaf community, showing that their language and culture are valued and worth learning. This increased understanding and easier communication ultimately contribute to a more diverse, accepting, and united society.

## Yoga



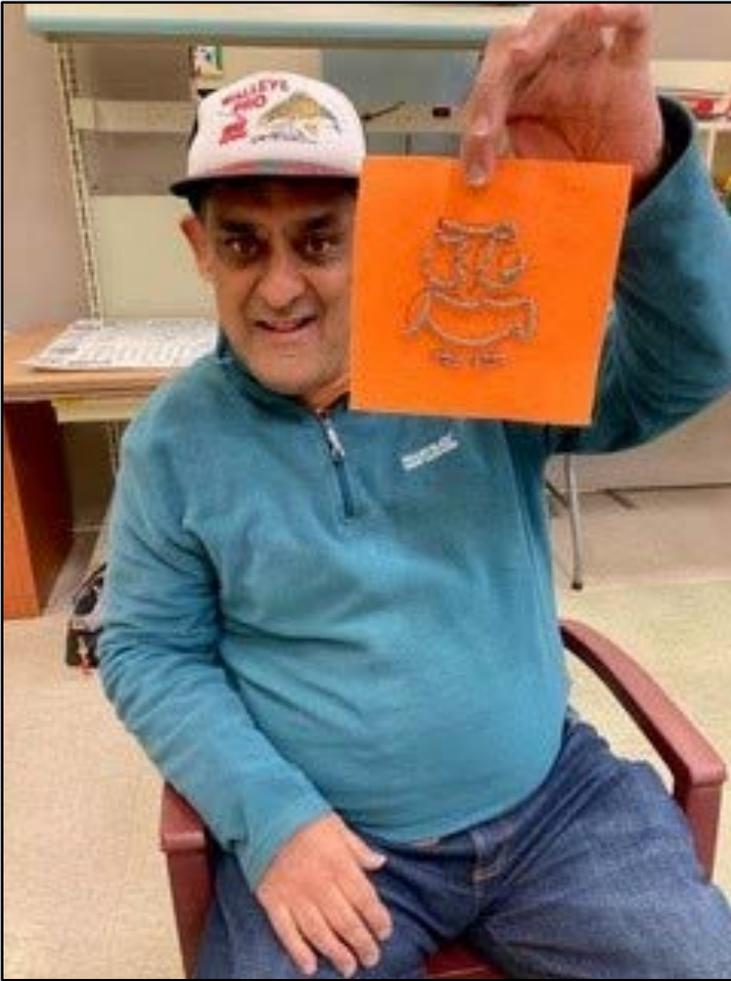
Chair or mat yoga isn't about contorting yourself into impossible shapes; it's about reconnecting the participants with their body, breath, and mind in a way that's accessible to everyone. This gentle practice offers a powerful antidote to the stress and tension of modern life, helping our team members find balance and inner calm.

## Bowling/Golf

Participants enjoy this innovative new program that combines these two beloved pastimes into one QVSS program.



## Joy of Gems



The participants in this program enjoyed creating stunning pieces of jewelry that reflected their unique style or bringing life to fabric with shimmering beads sewn in intricate patterns. Engrossed in the meditative process of diamond art, watching as tiny sparkling gems come together to form breathtaking images makes this a fun and creative program.

## Sports Central

This program offers a perfect blend of entertainment and active participation, ensuring every sports fan finds their niche. Participants immerse themselves in the thrill of watching game highlights and reliving those heart-stopping moments that define athletic greatness. They also enjoy connecting and communicating with program members who share their passion.



## The Wellness Centre

This group enjoys a fun-filled, all-day fitness plan that involves participants who want more than a one-dimensional fitness routine. They embrace the power of walking, swimming, and weightlifting to create an all-day, once-a-week fitness plan. It is great to see people connecting with the community healthily.



## Yvonne Kent-2023-24 AGM Report

### Sew Much More

The sewing program has always been very popular and a great way to end the week. It is a quiet

and relaxing day for them to work on different projects and chit-chat with each other.



Not only do they sew but now they do many other things, gem art, some artwork, puzzles and also embroidery, basically whatever makes them happy. We are constantly learning new techniques which helps us to broaden our creativity. Brooke, our student was a

wonderful addition to the sewing program as she is a sewer, so we learned many things from her. Thank you, Brooke. As always wonderful work sewers.



## Darts of Hazard

The Dart program continues to be very popular with everyone. They all enjoy the competitive part of darts, but it is wonderful to see how they help each other with tips on how to improve their game.



It is wonderful to see how happy they are during program and how great they interact with each other during the game. I see the different friendships growing and love to hear them cheer each other on, especially when they get a bullseye.

## Jamaica Trip



It was a few years before we were able to do a group trip due to Covid, but luckily, we were able to in October. Linda G, Linda B, Janet and I took 14 individuals on an amazing trip.

As always everyone had a fantastic time and enjoyed the beautiful weather. Aaron T was able to join us for the first time and was so excited to go. This was on his bucket list of things he wanted to do. He said it was the best time ever. **Longtime Friends of QVSS**

We cannot express enough gratitude and appreciation to our long-standing participants for your unwavering dedication. Some of you have been with us for so many years that it's hard to recall when you weren't part of the QVSS family. Your loyalty has been the bedrock of our success, and we want you to know that it hasn't gone unnoticed.



Your commitment to QVSS has shaped our agency into what it is today. Each of you brings a unique perspective, a wealth of experience, and irreplaceable value to our organization. It's your continued support and involvement that make QVSS truly special and set us apart in our field.

Thank you for being an integral part of our story. We look forward to more years of collaboration, growth, and shared success. Your dedication is the heart of QVSS, and we are truly honoured to have you with us.

**Rally One Dance**



**Canada Day Fun**



*Welcome to QVSS- Your New  
Adventures Await*

**To all our new participants,  
welcome to QVSS! We could not  
be happier that you are here to  
enjoy all our day programs,  
whether at the agency or in the  
community. This is your chance to  
dive into a world of excitement,  
camaraderie, and endless  
opportunities.**

**1. AMOS O**

**2. JIM G**

**3. SHIRLEY B**

**4. MICHELLE F**

**5. PAM R**

**6. JORDAN C**

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**7. GARY M**

**8. KALEE L**

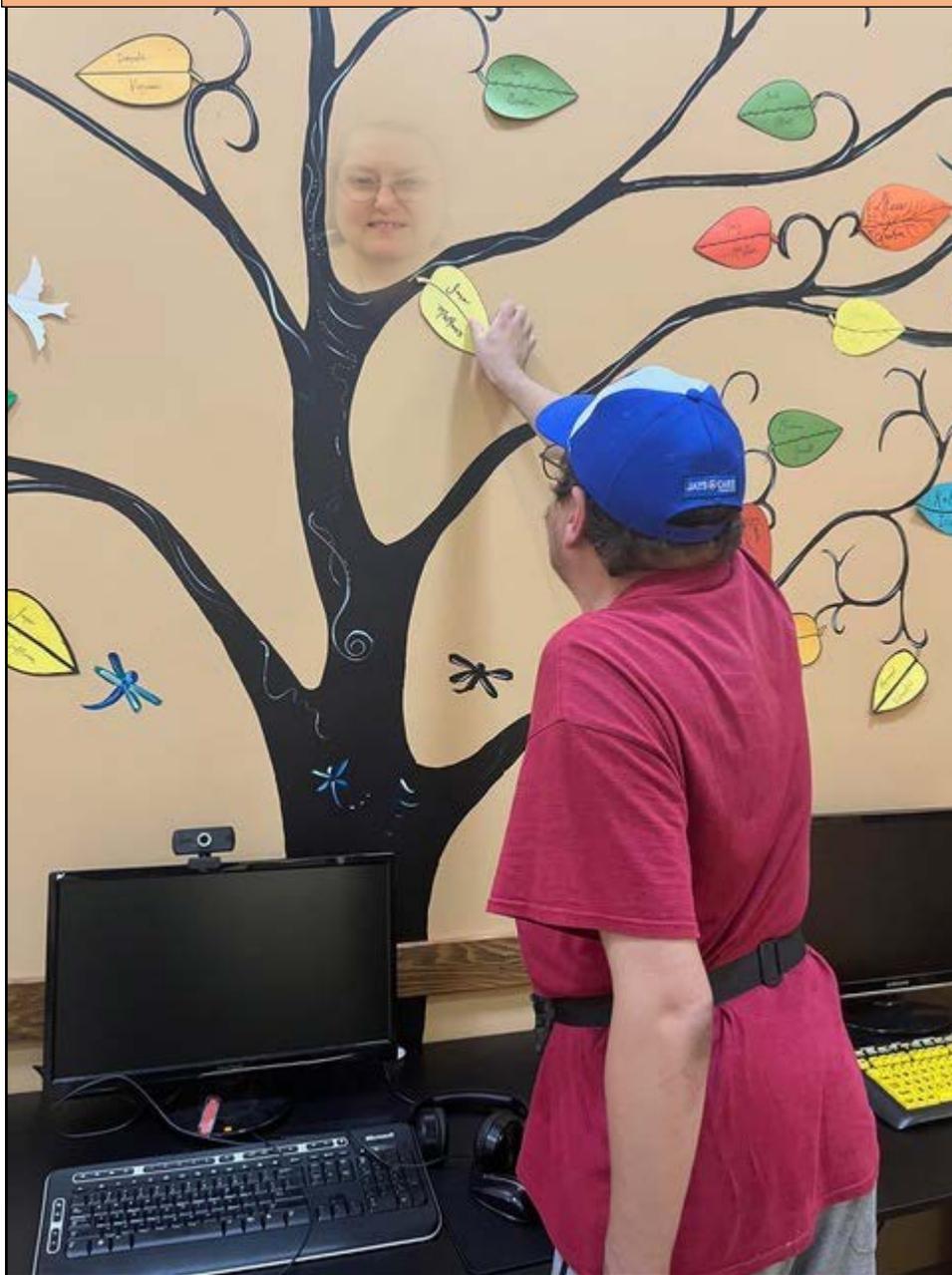
**9. NATHAN W**

**10. SHANE H**

**11. SIMO**

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## *Remembering our Dear Friends*



### **Jane Mathews**

Jane was a lovely quiet woman who enjoyed seeing her friends and socializing by chatting over a cup of coffee. Jane enjoyed getting her nails done and being pampered in our spa program. Jane was creative and crocheted a scarf while participating in our Nifty Knitters program. While here with us, she also enjoyed listening to music and sharing her beautiful voice by singing in karaoke. Jane was very artistic and enjoyed making things in

our craft class and painting works of art in our art class.

Jane was a huge part of QVSS for so many years that we were surprised when she decided to retire and then further saddened to hear of her passing. RIP, sweet Jane.

**Stephen Underhill** was a very happy man who enjoyed socializing with his friends, hanging out, and drinking coffee. Stephen loved to dance and did so every chance he got. When it came to bingo, he was just as happy for someone else to win as if he won

himself. Stephen would take pleasure in playing cards with a friend and always thought it quite funny when he won, but whether he won or not, he loved the opportunity to do something together. RIP Stephen. We miss you!

