

Kristus Darzs Latvian Home

'The Scoop'

Fall/Winter
2008

Volume 3
Second Edition

Kristus Darzs Family Council Report, September 2008.

Where has the time gone? I hope you all had a happy, healthy and safe summer. Welcome to all our new residents and families. As my association with our Family Council will be ending soon, I wanted to report to you on the work of the KD Family Council and to encourage you to participate in our mission.

In keeping with our goals to inform and educate, share ideas, facilitate communication, advocate for the residents, and provide support for each other, our council has:

- Organized educational sessions for families, residents, staff (CNIB, Palliative Care, Naturopathic Medicine, Social Services at KD, KD board Operations, etc)
- Participated in meetings with the Ontario Family Council Network, and various Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care assemblies.
- Printed welcome cards and letters for new residents/families.
- Distributed flowers to new residents (Thank you Mrs. Logins) on behalf of the board, staff and family council.
- Organized an annual Spring Family Gardening Day at KD.
- Sent out surveys and shared comments with administration
- Assisted residents in their quest for improved meals, laundry services, etc.
- Distributed the Scoop (A family Council Initiative - Many thanks to Jaime Vacca, our chief writer and editor)
- Volunteered (Library, music, gardening, this year, our residents enjoyed fresh organically grown vegetables from their 'backyard')
- A special thank you to Imants Karklins for all of his hard work.

We have been raising funds by collecting used stamps (Thank you Renate) and Canadian Tire dollars. This has been sufficient for honoraria for guest speakers, printing supplies for our secretary, and some mailing costs. We thank Lauma Stikuts for giving us the use of the KD photocopier and postage machine for the distribution of The Scoop. Thank you too to Sandra and Denise for their very patient assistance with my fumbings and requests.

At recent meetings, we have been discussing an exciting project we would like to accomplish at KD - a video-cam and computer so that 'long distance' families and friends could visit more often with their loved one(s) at KD. This would be a real benefit during an illness outbreak at KD, when no

visitors are allowed. Also, grandchildren would be more likely to visit via this medium. But, we need to raise serious funds to purchase the equipment. One possibility is a silent auction. If you have any ideas or can help in any way, please contact either myself or Anna Kanavins, or leave your comments in the Family Council Folder in the KD office.

I will be resigning from the Family Council in November this year. I have been acting Chair and Treasurer for the past two years. My mother passed away in 2006. Anna, our acting Secretary, has also lost her loved one at KD. She will not continue meetings if she has to take on all of the responsibilities of Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. We both feel very strongly that the running of the Family Council should be in the hands of people who have relative(s) or friends residing at KD - you are in closer touch with their needs and concerns!

The Family Council has lost several loyal members this past year, and, unfortunately, our membership has not grown proportionately. We have not had enough attendees to hold elections for officers. If you want your Family Council to continue, and to remain a viable voice for advocating for KD residents (and also residents in all Ontario Long-term Care homes, because of our link with the Family Council network) and supporting their families, I urge you to get involved. Please do not assume that someone else will do the job. There is so much more that could be done for our residents through the Family Council - we need you!

In closing, I would like to thank everyone who participated in our meetings - you made them worthwhile. A special thank you to Anna, our secretary, whose detailed minutes are the best, and whose compassion for all seniors is truly amazing. Finally, thank you to the administration and staff of KD who have helped with meetings and dealt with our concerns.

Eva McLaughlin, Acting Chair and Treasurer (416) 484-4817
Anna Kanavins, Acting Secretary anna.kanavins@utoronto.ca

What's happening in the coming months? Check the bulletin board for up coming events and sign-up sheets!

- October 11, 2008 - Jaime Vacca, DOC is getting married and will be celebrating this joyous occasion with the residents on October 11, 2008 at approximately 2:00pm. A memo has been mailed out to the families asking permission to have the residents filmed and shown on T.V as Jaime's wedding will be featured on an upcoming episode of 'Rich Bride, Poor Bride'.

