

?Paint for a Purpose? CLD fundraiser for accessible van

By Constance Scrafield

You may be surprised to learn that there is no government funding on any level for the transportation needs of Community Living Dufferin (CLD).

?Transportation is essential,? Karen Murphy-Fritz, CLD's Executive Assistant, told us. ?Some of our people live in Grand Valley or Horning's Mills but even in town, transportation for people in wheelchairs has to be with a wheelchair-accessible van and they cost \$80,000.

?With no funding, we have to fund raise for all the purchase and maintenance for our vehicles. Last week, the transmission went in our van that we use to pick up people to go to work. We've had to scramble to get the money to fix it.?

She said, ?People work here [where they operate a packaging business] or they have jobs elsewhere.

?I have no idea why there is no government funding for this aspect of our work, as we cannot do without it,? Ms. Murphy-Fritz admitted.

As a new fundraiser to be directed exclusively to transportation costs, Paint for a Purpose is a program open to anyone to attend. For a fee, people come to the CLD building, which it shares in partnership with Theatre Orangeville, on County Road 3, to spend a few hours in a relaxed atmosphere, exercising their creativity to paint a theme for the day.

To be sure, CLD is always on the lookout for ways to fundraise to support the programs they provide for people with developmental disabilities. Over the years, there has been photography, woodworking and clay sculpture.

For the first time, though, where the others were showings of the art work of the CLD members, this fundraiser invites the participation of the donors ? members of the public not necessarily involved in the organization.

She explained that this new idea is employed in some bars and restaurants where patrons pay one price for refreshments and painting. Presumably, it works even better at CLD where the room is calmer and more focused on the projects.

?People are welcomed to bring their own non-alcoholic drinks and I do provide little snacks,? she remarked.

She explained how pleasant an experience this is: ?We just sit and paint. This time, it's not a canvas but a pine board that can be hung inside or out. It's already been primed with white and people can paint their own snowman on the one side. I've already stencilled the snowman.

?On the other side, the word summer is stencilled on and the U is a watermelon they can paint that.?

This is the second of the Paint for Purpose paint events. The first one was done on a simple canvas. Everyone is welcomed to these, although the numbers are fairly limited. In addition to the resulting work, the time is a relaxed one, away from the hurly burly of life outside, with a chance to ?reduce your stress with art, as Ms. Murphy-Fritz said.

It is an interesting collection of people who attend the Paint for Purpose events. Ladies with or without one of their children, a few gentlemen, some connected with CLD; a mixed bag as is usual for any event that is art-centred.

Ms. Murphy-Fritz gave the impression that she particularly enjoys this style of fund raising. Creative activity ? in this case, painting ? is such a personal time and so lovely to share in a place that is away from pressure. The money raised through this program helps with the very important transportation costs but it may help with a good deal more.

While this event is fully booked, she was happy to inform us that there will be others and, when asked, she confirmed that donations can be made through their website.

To make a donation to CLD, whether specifically directed to the transportation element or generally; to learn about CLD and find out about the upcoming Paint for a Purpose, the website is www.communitylivingdufferin.ca