

Roger Neilson House Chronicles

A MESSAGE FROM MEGAN AND HELEN

National Volunteer Week wrapped up in late April, and it is around this time every year that we take an extra moment to reflect upon and celebrate the tremendous impact that volunteers have on our community, and specifically at Roger Neilson House.

It is no secret that our 300+ strong Volunteer Care Team gives thousands of hours a year - over 18,600 actually - to the families, children and staff at Roger Neilson House. However, it is the intangible, the incalculable, and the subtle but abundant acts of generosity that make this place feel that much more special; you make a tremendous difference in the lives of so many. It is these instances that remind us of how lucky we are to have volunteers alongside us in our efforts to help families and kids make the most of every day.

Please join us in celebrating the invaluable work of our volunteers, and saying thank you!

Megan Wright. Helen Yoxon

Megan Wright & Helen Yoxon

UPCOMING EVENTS

May 7th - 13th: [National Hospice Palliative Care Week](#)

June 10th: [Barrhaven Run for Roger Neilson House](#)

June 10th - 11th: [CHEO Telethon](#)

July 17th - 20th: Summer Camp

July 31st - August 3rd: Summer Camp

August 28th - 31st: Summer Camp



WELCOMING SPRING AT ROGER NEILSON HOUSE

Springtime is finally here and Roger Neilson House has been bustling with many activities for our children, youth, and families. We have had exciting visits from Disney princesses, the League of Super Heroes, and the magician Chris Pilsworth. Roger Neilson House parents have been enjoying therapeutic yoga, which is being offered by Katt Brooks, Recreation Therapist, in conjunction with a registered yoga instructor from Ottawa Yoga Outreach. The yoga classes focus on relaxation and stress reduction. In addition, they offer parents a time to connect with each other in a relaxing atmosphere. Parents have also been taking part in monthly Coffee Chat Time, a new group that started this past fall. Coffee Chat Time is a non-facilitated time for Roger Neilson House families to connect and enjoy a warm cup of coffee.

With sunny days and warmer weather just around the corner, we look forward to spending a lot of time on our newly renovated patio, enjoying the sun, and playing our new musical instruments. We are also looking forward to our first ever summer day camp this year.
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Continued from page 1. We hope you are enjoying all of our posts on social media to keep you updated on the activities that are happening around the house. One of our summer projects will be to fix up our email distribution lists; we know some of you do not get all of our emails and we want to make sure that does not happen. Stay tuned for more information on that project.

Roger Neilson House recently marked its 10th anniversary of enriching the lives and providing services to children, youth, and families with progressive life-limiting illnesses. The Board and management of RNH are looking ahead so that we are well positioned as an organization to anticipate and understand the needs of the next decade. We have established a Strategic Planning Committee with representation from the RNH Board, Family Advisory Committee, staff, physicians, and volunteers, to lead a strategic planning process designed to identify core strategic directions to guide our work over the next five years. We will be engaging a full range of stakeholders to ensure that families, staff, and community partners are involved in the process.

We love hearing from our community. Please be in touch with us if ever you have any comments or suggestions.

Megan Wright.

Megan Wright

*Happy
Spring!*



NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK AWARDS

HPCO's June Callwood Circle of Outstanding Volunteers
Ann & Bill Gordon

David McGuinty's 13th Annual Volunteer Initiative

Mac Hiltz	Rachel Parent	Rachel Derks
Anne Donald	Ann & Bill Gordon	Carole Brulé
Cathy Auchinleck	Garry Cardiff	Ian Hendry
Tounekti Family – Aicha, Omar & Myriam		

Roger Neilson House Volunteer Pin Awards

3500 hours: John Buchanan

2500 hours: Mary Grainger & Rachel Derks

2000 hours: Cathy Auchinleck

1000 hours:

Anne Donald

Heather Speaker

Darlene Medaglia

Joan Cardiff

Erika Schneider

Ken Gordon

Garry Cardiff

Liz Kelly

500 hours:

Cass Medor

Danielle Morin

Liz Shanahan

Cathy Parker

Himali Silva

Maureen Clermont

Christine Jones

Jennifer Gilmore

Mireille Giroux

Andre Stuhlec-Leonard

Kat Likuski

Rachel Parent

1500 hours:

Ann Buchanan

Bill Gordon

Aurora Riveros

Ann Gordon



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FROM YOUR FAMILY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (FAC)

We are grateful to the staff and the leadership team for adjusting the admission and discharge times, for ensuring there are monthly daytime and evening support groups, and for recognizing the need to connect with all Roger Neilson House families, past and present, by offering a Coffee Chat Time that is open to everyone.

These and other events are found in the online calendar maintained by the Roger Neilson House staff. Save this link <http://rogerneilsonhouse.ca/events/> and check it often as a way to remain connected.

In January we recognized the years of service and commitment of our outgoing FAC alumni. Many thanks to Osama Abdali, Sharon Liff, and Aicha Mansir-Tounekti for your leadership.

Do you want to be a part of the FAC and are not sure how you can contribute? Please contact Nancy Graham, Quality Coordinator at ngraham@rogerneilsonhouse.ca for more information and to discuss joining the FAC!

Happy spring everyone!

- Mindy McHardy, FAC Chair



WELCOME BRUNO PERRIER

On behalf of our search committee, it gives us great pleasure to announce that Bruno Perrier is the successful candidate for the Manager of Community Engagement and Volunteer Relations position. The search committee included Mike Lupiano (Board Member), Helen Yoxon, Jane Spiteri (volunteer), Cathy Auchinleck (volunteer) and Megan Wright. Bruno will continue to focus on volunteer resources but will also play an important role in our community to ensure that we increase our presence.



Bruno has been a part of CHEO's management team since 2008 as a Manager in the Autism Program. Bruno started at CHEO as a Social Worker in the Emergency Department and PICU. We have been impressed with his compassionate style. Many will remember that Bruno came to Roger Neilson House in the spring of 2015 for a one-year term, and as part of the RNH management team led many projects with both staff and volunteers.



Over the years Bruno has demonstrated his ability to be a thoughtful and collaborative leader, and we know that his style will resonate very well with our team at RNH. Bruno will continue to build important liaisons with volunteers, the rest of our team, external partners, and stakeholders. Please join us in welcoming Bruno back to the CHEO Palliative Care Team and RNH! More details on his start date will be forthcoming.

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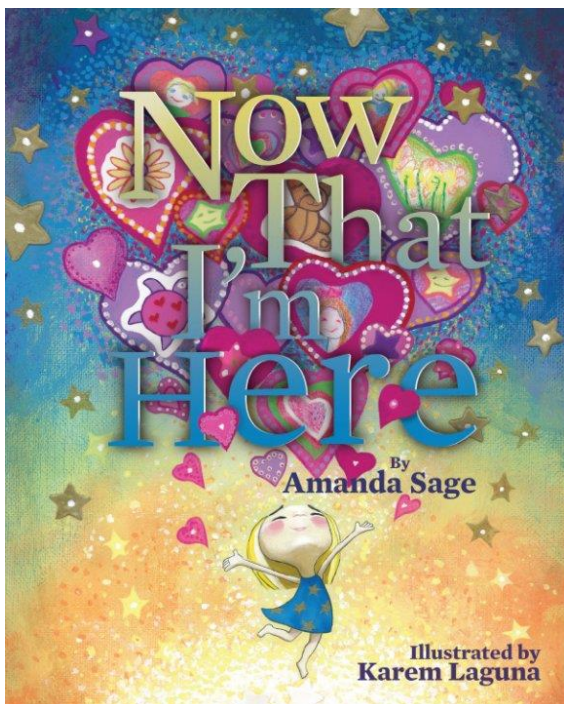
Now That I'm Here by Amanda Sage

"[Now That I'm Here](#)" is a beautiful gift to our family after losing our daughter Kate. Amanda Sage, the author, has captured Kate's spirit and her love of life while she was with us, and created a wonderful story about where she might be now. As I read "Now That I'm Here", I can imagine Kate's giggle and smiles. I can imagine her presence and energy with us every day. The beauty of "Now That I'm Here" is its simplicity and positive message about a child who lived with a rare disease and medical complexity, and how we might imagine her after she has passed. The beauty and peace that Kate might be enjoying now give us peace. The illustrations and carefully crafted narrative ensure this book is something that Kate's brother, and her friends can also understand. The message of Kate at peace, enjoying where she is now, and her continued presence in our life is a powerful message, and I believe important to share with all children who have tragically lost a sibling, young family member, or friend.

- Julie Drury



The parenting task of explaining the death of a sibling to surviving young children can be daunting and terrifying. Many parents worry that they may be causing their surviving children more harm with their words than help. "Now That I'm Here" is an essential resource for parents, as it allows them, through the eyes of eight year old Kate, an opportunity to answer the question "where are they now?"



This book instills hope, happiness and comfort to not only siblings, but parents alike, all while reassuring of the permanence that exists in the bonds between parent, family and child. I highly recommend this book to any parent struggling to find the way to best comfort living siblings, or to any professional providing support to bereaved families.

- Carol Chevalier, M.S.W., R.S.W.,
Palliative Care Social Worker, CHEO, Roger Neilson House



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PHOTOS FROM IN AND AROUND THE HOUSE

1. There is a princess in all of us! This was definitely true this winter when we had three beautiful princesses come and visit! Rapunzel, Snow White, and Belle were all here.
2. Come check out and play the new baby grand piano in the Roger Neilson House basement!
3. Volunteer Denise Bagnell presented Roger Neilson House with a \$10,000 donation from Rogers Communications. She was the recipient of a volunteer award.
4. Some of the incredible Perinatal Loss Group graduates enjoying the continued "community" that the group experience has brought them! Many of our group participants choose to continue to meet in an informal way once group concludes, enjoying the benefit of being around those who truly understand what they have been through.
5. Ann and Bill Gordon were inducted into the June Callwood Circle of Outstanding Volunteers at the HPCO awards luncheon.
6. We had a musical afternoon full of love when musician Craig Cardiff came to visit. Together we wrote a song, danced, and sang along to "Love Is Louder (Than All This Noise)".
7. Thank you to the beautiful wives, partners, and family members of the Ottawa Senators for spending a wonderful morning with us. Go-Sens-Go!

HOPE

A poem by Maddie, Katie, Carinne, and Buhle

My wish for you is to be in the moment, recognizing that you will experience the highs, the lows, the terrible, and the wonderful.

I will be there to help guide you and to listen to you, enjoying the days you have, not dwelling on the what-ifs.

Even in your darkest hour, my wish for you is to find light.

8. Did you know that Roger Neilson House has started offering therapeutic yoga classes to our parents on the last Saturday of each month, from 10:00-11:15am? Join us, let's breathe together.
9. We had a fun filled afternoon when the Ottawa Redblacks came to visit. We got to touch the Grey Cup and played some ball. Can you guess who had the longest throw?
10. Roger Neilson House is very excited to offer our first ever summer day camp. Look for some magical, musical, silly, and fun photos from camp this summer on our social media pages.