

# Speak Out

## Fall 2025



EMPLOYER  
PARTNER



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# 2026 Dates to Remember



## PHSS Foundation Laudables

Date: April/May, 2026

*\*More details coming early 2026*

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## PHSS Foundation Bowl-a-Thon

Date: June 7, 2026

Location: Fleetway London

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## Paddles for Paint

Date: June 20, 2026

Location: Eco Park

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## PHSS Annual General Meeting

Date: August 6, 2026

Location: Fanshawe Conservation Area

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## PHSS Foundation Annual Leo Kirwin Memorial Golf Tournament

Date: August 14, 2026

Location: River Valley Golf Club

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## Annual Carmell Tait Memorial

Date: October 2026

*\*More details coming summer 2026*

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## Possibilities in Paint Art Show

Date: November 21, 2026

Location: PHSS Community Place  
North building

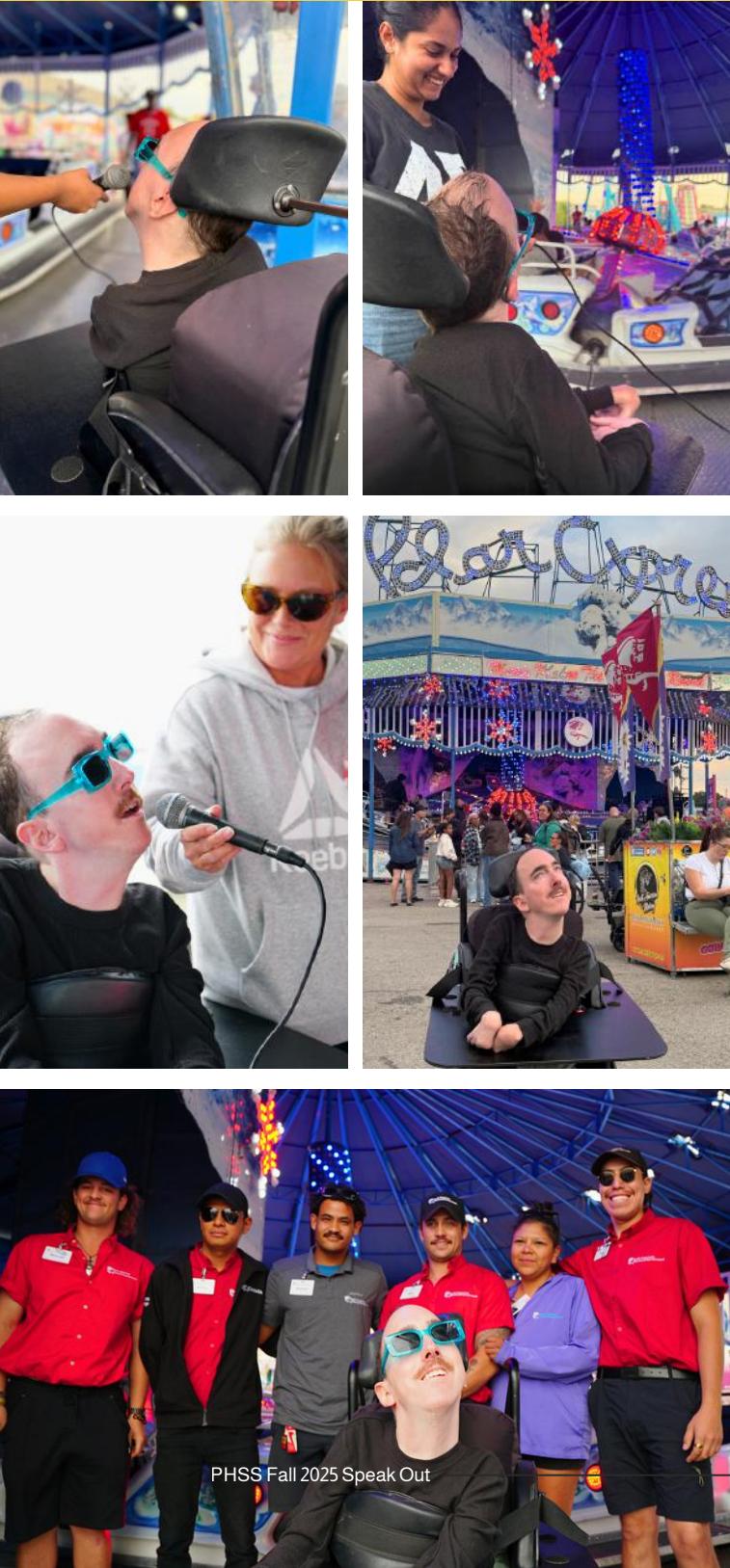
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## Annual Holiday Party

Date: December 10, 2026

Location: Hellenic Community Centre

# Justin at the Western Fair



Justin has always loved the Western Fair, especially the Polar Express ride. Every year he talks about the music, the energy, the announcer's voice, and how one day he wanted to be the person on the mic.

This year, after a few emails and calls, the Fair agreed to let him try. When Justin arrived, the staff at the fair brought him behind the ride, helped him into the booth, and handed him the microphone.

For an hour, Justin was the DJ of the Polar Express. He used his own playlist, worked alongside Keaton from the ride crew, and even called out the famous line: "Do you wanna go faster?"

A huge thank-you goes to the Western Fair and especially the Polar Express team working that day, who welcomed Justin, supported him, and made the experience natural, fun, and genuinely meaningful. It was a simple moment, but a big one for Justin, finally getting to be the voice of the ride he's loved since he was a kid.



# CIO Awards

PHSS was the winner of the 2025 CIO Canada Award for our Digital by Design project.

The CIO Awards, presented by IDC Canada, celebrate Canadian organizations that are using IT in innovative ways to deliver business value. IDC is a premier global provider of market intelligence, advisory services, and events for information technology, telecommunications, and consumer technology markets. The CIO Awards are widely recognized as a mark of enterprise excellence and a source of pride for all winning organizations.

Digital by Design, developed in partnership with INVORG, is a purpose-built platform designed to meet the unique needs of PHSS. It integrates scheduling, payroll, timesheet management, incident reporting, and communication into a single system, with mobile access that allows staff to access critical tools anytime, anywhere. While some phases of the project are still being rolled out and refined, the platform is already helping our teams work more efficiently and stay connected. This project is a true reflection of collaboration, innovation, and the dedication of everyone involved.



Prior to the ceremony, we were thrilled to welcome MPP Terence Kernaghan to our office, where he stopped by to acknowledge our achievement and the impact of Digital by Design on our teams and the supports and services we provide.

# Staff Appreciation Week 2025

## September 22 - 26



## Celebrating Our Incredible Staff and Volunteers

From September 22–26, 2025, PHSS came together to celebrate Staff Appreciation Week. A time to recognize the dedication, passion, and heart of our staff.

Throughout the week, our Senior Team stopped by all of our locations to connect and celebrate our staff, highlighting all the ways they make a difference.

Our Staff Appreciation Team also visited locations with fun activities and treats. Staff were able to enjoy moments of connection, laughter, and appreciation

We wrapped up the week at the office with a scavenger hunt and a potluck lunch. People shared their favorite dishes, enjoyed lots of laughs, and had the chance to relax and connect with others.

Thank you to all our staff and volunteers for the compassion, commitment, and energy you bring to PHSS every day. Your contributions make a difference, not just during Staff Appreciation Week, but all year long.





## Our 2025 Staff Appreciation Award Recipients

### Rookie Award - Jody Howlett

This award recognizes a new staff member who has excelled in their role with professionalism, compassion, and a positive presence.



### Mission Impossible Award - Adam Milyard

This award celebrates a staff who is known for their creative problem-solving, innovation, and "out of the box" thinking.



### Night Owl Award - Rob Pinkerton

This award honours a night-shift staff member who consistently promotes safety, security, and goes the extra mile.



### Team Spirit Award - The Belgrave Team

This award celebrates outstanding teamwork, collaboration, and dedication that furthers the goals of the organization.



### Volunteer Award - Sheila Piggot

This award recognizes a volunteer who has made a meaningful and lasting impact on the people they support.



# Annual Carmell Tait Memorial Walk

October 1, 2025

Every year, we come together with friends, colleagues, and community members to honor and remember those we have lost.

Once again, our Annual Carmell Tait Memorial walk provided a meaningful space to reflect, share stories, and celebrate the lives of loved ones who are no longer with us. This gathering allows us to connect with one another, find comfort in shared memories, and recognize the lasting impact each person leaves behind. It's a powerful reminder of the importance of community, remembrance, and the bonds that continue to unite us.



## Honouring Carmell Tait: A Living Tribute

In 2020, after the passing of Carmell Tait, each PHSS location planted a tree or plant in her memory. One team chose an apple tree, and this year it burst with ripe, red apples.

Apples from this very tree were used to bake treats for this year's Memorial Walk, a beautiful symbol of growth, life, and Carmell's enduring impact.

A special thank you to Corrie, Ryan, John, Amy, and the entire team for nurturing the tree and keeping Carmell's memory alive. Her spirit continues to grow in the communities she touched.



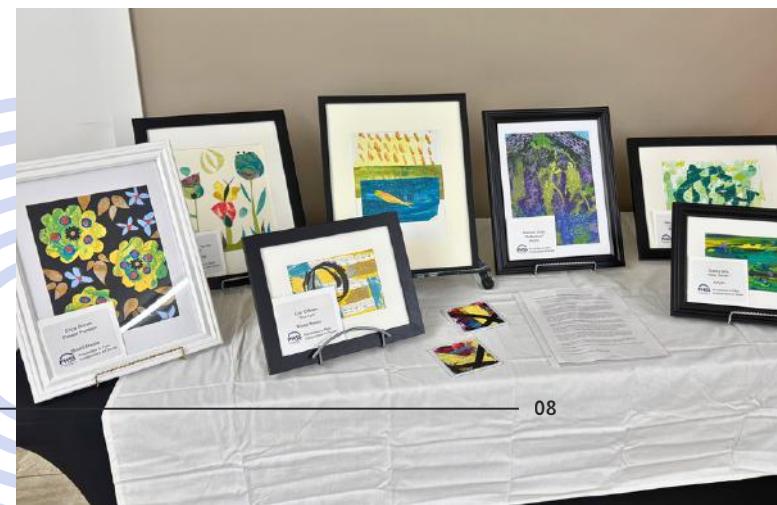
# Possibilities In Paint Art Show

On Saturday, November 22, Community Place North hosted the Possibilities in Paint Art Show, showcasing the work of talented artists who spent months exploring collage and creative expression.

Artists drew inspiration from a wide range of themes, from animals and gardens to movement, texture, and abstract forms. Each piece was created using papers painted, stamped, and crafted by the artists themselves, including Japanese Kozo, brown paper, and tissue. Techniques were adapted to ensure everyone could fully participate, while collaboration and experimentation shaped each work.

Throughout the year, artists explored professional art, developed personal themes, and practiced composition, color, and texture. Some pieces took weeks to complete, reflecting both dedication and creativity.

Visitors had the chance to meet the artists, learn about their process, and purchase original pieces or the 2026 Possibilities in Paint Calendar. The show is a reminder that art is for everyone, and creativity thrives when people are encouraged to explore and express themselves.





## A Day in the Orchard at Apple Land

PHSS hosted a Friends and Family Day at Apple Land Station, and it was a day full of fun, laughter, and fresh air! Around 60 people came out to enjoy the crisp autumn weather, pick apples, and take scenic wagon rides through the orchard. There were smiles all around as families, friends, and staff spent time together connecting and enjoying the outdoors.

We're grateful to Apple Land for providing such an accessible and inclusive space where everyone could fully participate. Thank you to everyone who joined us and helped make the day so memorable, nothing beats a day in the orchard surrounded by good company, nature, and the vibrant colors of fall!

## SUPERVISING IN STYLE

This fall, VA Contracting worked at one of our locations pouring concrete, and Steven kept a close eye on the work from his front window. His sharp "supervisory" skills even earned him a VA Contracting sweater as a special thank-you!

We're thankful to VA Contracting for their ongoing partnership in keeping our locations safe, accessible, and looking their best. Moments like these show how teamwork makes a big difference.



## NIAGARA FALLS ADVENTURE

Dominic, Jay, and Bob had a great time in Niagara Falls. They explored the wax museum, enjoyed the scenery at the Rainforest Café, and tried their skills at glow-in-the-dark mini putt.

The part they enjoyed most was playing arcade games, including shooting zombies and competing with each other.

## Mushu Visits the Tuesday Drop-In!

The You at Home Tuesday Drop-In group had a special visitor when Mushu the lizard stopped by! Everyone who wanted to had a great time petting Mushu, spending time with him, and enjoying the relaxed, fun energy he brought to the group. It was a lighthearted visit that sparked conversation, and some great pictures!



## Vancouver with Jim & Dean

Jim and Dean enjoyed a getaway in Vancouver. They stayed at the River Rock Casino Resort, the perfect base for exploring the city. Their trip included visiting the Vancouver Aquarium, strolling along the waterfront, taking a sightseeing cruise on the Burrard Inlet, and exploring the lush Bloedel Conservatory.

# Country Hoedown



**On Sunday, September 21st, Community Place North and the Ladies Group hosted their much-loved Country Hoedown at The Beer Kitchen, and it was an afternoon to remember!** Everyone kicked up their boots, enjoyed great music, and shared in the joy of community.

The live performances by DJ Brady, Justin Plet, and Connor Wilson brought the perfect mix of energy and fun. The atmosphere

was full of laughter, connection, and good vibes, a true celebration of friendship and community spirit.

A huge thank-you to everyone who came out and joined the fun. Your enthusiasm made the day a wonderful success!

From toe-tapping tunes to great raffle prizes, the Country Hoedown was a fantastic way to celebrate community and make lasting memories.



# Halloween 2025



# Engagement Survey

Our Net Promoter Score at PHSS is

**8/10**

an increase of 2 points  
from our 2021  
engagement survey

This year, engagement surveys were completed by employees, families, and the people we support, organized by an external third party. The feedback provided valuable insight into what's working well and where we can continue to grow, reinforcing our commitment to listening, learning, and strengthening the quality of our supports and relationships.



**74%**  
of employees stated pride and alignment to mission as key strengths.

**89%**  
of Persons Supported overwhelmingly feel safe, respected, included, and cared for in their day-to-day experiences.

**88%**  
of families express high satisfaction and confidence in the organization's care, communication, and alignment with their values.

# Community Involvement

**Since launching the Community Involvement pilot project in August, we've focused on creating meaningful opportunities for connection, creativity, and participation in the community.**

People supported took part in a wide range of activities planned by our community involvement coordinator, including monthly pet therapy, music and fitness classes, coffee talk groups, and creative workshops like Cricut classes, hand-stamped jewelry, and hat burning.

Community activities were a key part of the pilot, with trips to the aquarium, Bubble Planet, and the Titanic Experience, along with roller skating, a Blue Jays watch party, and shared meals like Joey's Italian Night.

Together, these experiences show how this initiative is supporting people to explore interests, build relationships, and be active members of their community.



# Donate Today!

## Your donation matters!

Our donors help enhance the ability for individuals we support to achieve independence and be part of their communities.



## Contact Us

### Office - London

620 Colborne St., Suite 101  
London, ON N6B 3R9  
t: 519-660-6635  
f: 519-660-1654  
e. [info@phsscommunity.com](mailto:info@phsscommunity.com)



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