

Inside THE CUPBOARD

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Ladies'
Luncheon
2023



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THAT'S A WRAP ON ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL LADIES' LUNCHEON

On May 11th, the Cenovus Energy Learning Common at Red Deer Polytechnic was bustling with women of all ages for the 12th Annual Ladies' Luncheon. With over 250 guests in attendance, it was bound to be a magnificent event.



"The annual Ladies' Luncheon, originally started by TLC volunteers Eileen Cole and Marlis McPherson, is always a great time, with plenty of prizes, laughter, and fundraising," said our Executive Director, Lori Shatto.

With a venue change this year, we were pleased to see many of our friends and supporters coming together in one beautiful room to celebrate our collective strength while raising money for a great cause.

The fashion show, always a highlight of the event, was stunning - with fashions provided by our great friends at Side Street Fashion and Accessories and Great Strides Fine Shoes. We must say that the women who modelled for us this year were beautiful—a huge thank you to the students from MC College for styling the models' hair.

"We were so excited with the theme this year – together, we are stronger than diamonds. Not only was it fun connecting the theme to the event decor and raffle, but it resonates with our work," said Kristin Mountain, our Fundraising/Donor Relations Coordinator.



Lois Moen (left) with Ladies' Luncheon guest speaker Val Jensen (right).

This year, the event raised over \$10,000. Thanks to Red Deer Goldsmith, who designed a stunning 14K diamond ring specifically for this event. Lois Moen was beyond excited when she heard her number being announced. Congratulations Lois!



This annual event takes place on the Thursday before Mother's Day. So, if this is your first time hearing about it, we hope to see you there next year on May 9.

THANK YOU TO OUR AMAZING SPONSORS

<i>Joan Donald</i>	<i>Red Deer Goldsmith</i>				
<i>Kathy Lacey</i>	<i>The Bra Lounge</i>				
	<i>MC College</i>		<i>Wildlife Discovery Park</i>	<i>Stride Physiotherapy</i>	<i>Red Deer Polytechnic</i>
	<i>Executive Mats</i>		<i>Mountman Press</i>	<i>Revera Retirement Living</i>	<i>Parkland Nurseries</i>
			<i>The Bliss Boutique</i>	<i>Bliss Designs</i>	

GROWING STRONG: HOW GARDENING CAN IMPROVE MOBILITY & BOOST WELL-BEING



Gardening is a beautiful way to stay active and improve mobility. Whether you have limited mobility or are recovering from an injury or illness, gardening can provide a low-impact way to exercise and work on your strength, balance, and coordination.

One of the great things about gardening is that it can be adapted to your mobility level. For example, if you cannot kneel or bend down for extended periods, you may wish to use raised garden beds or containers. These can be easily accessed from a seated or standing position with less bending.

Similarly, if you have trouble gripping or using tools, there are adaptive garden tools available that can help you weed, plant, and prune easily. Some of these tools have larger handles or require less force to use, making them ideal for people with arthritis or other conditions that affect the hands or wrists.

In addition to the physical benefits of gardening, it can positively impact mental health and well-being. Being surrounded by nature and caring for plants can be a calming and meditative experience and reduce stress and anxiety.

If you are new to gardening or have limited mobility, starting slowly and listening to your body is essential. Begin with small tasks like watering, weeding, or deadheading flowers, and gradually work up to more strenuous activities like digging and lifting.

It is also important to be aware of your surroundings and to take steps to minimize the risk of falls or other injuries. Wear sturdy shoes with a good grip, avoid slippery or uneven surfaces, and use a tool belt or apron to keep your tools within reach.



Gardening is a terrific way to stay active, maintain mobility, and connect with nature. With a few adaptations and modifications, anyone can enjoy this rewarding hobby's physical and mental benefits.

NUMBER NUGGETS

January - March 2023

3,380 Clients Served

4,127 Equipment on Loan

3,917 Equipment Returns

454 Equipment Donated

201 Recycled



CELEBRATING OUR VOLUNTEERS

NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK

This year's theme for National Volunteer Week (April 16-22) was 'volunteering weaves us together' - a sentiment shared here at TLC.

"That is what our volunteers do," said TLC's Volunteer Coordinator, Brenda Radu. "They do everything to support the community and us. Without them, the equipment wouldn't get repaired, cleaned or loaned out," she added. "They bring compassion and empathy to those who come through our doors - I have seen them give hugs many times; I've seen them pass out tissues to someone who is suffering or has just lost someone or to someone who has just been diagnosed with a life-changing illness."

"On an average day, we have at least 20 volunteers here - it would be a huge number of staff for this non-profit to have," she said. "We couldn't do it. They do it with a smile, grace and dignity. They are the fabric that weaves us together."

To show our appreciation during National Volunteer Week, we treated our volunteers to special lunches, including a turkey meal with all the fixings. We are incredibly grateful to Central Alberta Co-op for helping us provide these tasty meals. "They believe in us, so it is our chance to say, 'thank you' for all of the hard work they do."

Meanwhile, another upcoming event is the Red Deer Mayor's Awards, which could see nominated volunteers from TLC officially recognized by the City of Red Deer.

Last year, our entire group won the Community Builders' Award! "It was huge! It was like 55 volunteers winning that one award - it is a testament to how this team works and how they all care for the community," said Brenda. "Every team member does go above and beyond."

"The amount of equipment they put through our doors daily is amazing - and you never hear them complain. Everyone who is here - wants to be here, and they believe in what we do," she said.

With National Volunteer Week in mind, it is always an ideal time to spread the word that we can always use more help.

"If they can help someone in their time of need, it fills their cup. And it fills our cup, too; I love to watch them take a new volunteer under their wing, welcome them in, train them, and help them along. You watch them become friends."

For Brenda, her role here at TLC never stops inspiring. "I love to be able to help. It fills my heart when a client says, how much do I owe you for this and I say, nothing! Just a donation if you can afford it. I also love working with our volunteers - they have taught me a lot. They've also taught me about giving back. They are committed to us, and it shows me that throughout life, you have to do this and give back."

OUR VOLUNTEER FAMILY KEEPS GROWING



Meet our volunteers John (left) and Rod (right)

We would like to introduce you to the latest additions to our fantastic team!

After learning about TLC from his wife, John joined us recently in our maintenance department. "I thought, I need to go talk to those guys because I do have a bit of a mechanical background," he said with a smile. "The Lending Cupboard™ has been very accommodating, and everyone is easy to get along with!"

John said he would certainly recommend TLC as a super place to volunteer. For one thing, it's a very supportive environment, he said. "They don't hesitate to spend an afternoon training you."

John also noted how it's terrific to have a new opportunity where he can help make a difference. "I enjoy the people. Volunteering is very important because it helps you feel like you are part of a team. And it keeps you active! Also, I've always

believed in helping people out," he said.

Rod also recently signed on to help us in our cleaning and sanitization department. His wife had toured the facility and told Rod how impressed she was with the operation. "It's a very friendly place," he noted of the experience so far. "And it's a worthwhile project - a good place!"

Rod and his wife also volunteer at the local Christmas Bureau, so lending a helping hand is undoubtedly a priority for the couple. "I think that people should be giving back!"

You can learn more about volunteering on our website - www.lendingcupboard.ca/volunteer-opportunities

Sharing Comfort

Meet Donna – who came in recently as she's preparing for knee-replacement surgery.

"They were saying these are the items that you need, and you need to go to The Lending Cupboard™. Everyone here was very kind, and so organized – it was lovely! Everyone is here to help," she said, adding our friendly community of volunteers made her think this is something she might like to do one day, too.

Donna also pointed out how her family has utilized our services in the past to help her mom. "She lived in her own home for over 50 years, and she just recently

moved into West Park Lodge, which is really, really nice."

But as Donna mentioned, TLC's medical equipment was key to enabling her mom to 'age in place' for so long and with much greater comfort and security.

"We came here, and you guys were just so awesome! It's so nice to have all of this in the community," she added. "It truly is. Otherwise, you would have to purchase it. And for some people, that isn't feasible," she said. "All of these aids are available to help you stay in your home."



FRIENDLY FACES HERE AT TLC



Meet our outstanding and highly dedicated volunteer Connie, who has been with TLC for seven years now.

Connie knew that after retiring, she wanted to be involved within the community - and TLC proved an ideal fit. "I was familiar with The Lending Cupboard™, so I came here and offered to volunteer - and I've never looked back," she explained. "I find it very fulfilling because, first of all, I've got quite a few of my own health issues. You realize that everybody has their own 'bag of rocks' to carry and that's humbling," she added.

Connie enjoyed a long and successful career in customer service, so she has a genuine ability to connect with people. "I've always dealt with people, so it's just natural for me to talk to others - I like to make people feel comfortable and help them know that someone cares about them," she said. "Many people come here and are broken - they don't know what to do. And so, I am not afraid to give hugs!"

For those nearing retirement and looking for something fun, fulfilling, and meaningful to 'retire to,' - Connie recommends checking out The Lending Cupboard™ as a worthwhile venture. "You need to have a plan - and giving back to the community is a perfect way to wrap up your career," she said. "So, what I tell people about The Lending Cupboard™, which I'm always advocating for, is that if they have empathy for people and want to be in a community that is 'within a community', then this is where they should come."

Besides assisting our clients directly here at TLC, Connie has also been involved with many fundraising events, such as our annual Ladies' Luncheon each May. "You are not going to get a better community than here at The Lending Cupboard™."



Meet Genene, our friendly receptionist who can field upwards of 100 calls each day - always with grace, lots of humour and compassion.

"I'm Genene, the cheery voice at the other end of the phone when you call The Lending Cupboard™. My priority is you! And I will do my best to explain our available equipment and services," she explained.

"My goal is to make our conversation stress-free so that you will have the confidence and trust that we'll help to support your medical equipment needs. We receive various calls from folks - some are nervous after receiving news that they are booked for a long-awaited surgery," she said. "There are also the calls from grieving families trying to organize equipment returns, and my heart hurts for them."

Genene is often asked how she manages the continually changing types of calls she receives. "I put myself in their shoes," she explained. "There is just not enough personal attention in our rushed world. Here at TLC, we embrace our mission, vision and values and look forward to hearing from you."

In the meantime, she also believes that awareness about the services of TLC is only continuing to gain momentum. "I'm getting a lot more calls from Calgary and Edmonton asking if a similar service is available in their area. "We are non-judgmental - we are open, and that is part of our mission," she added of what also sets TLC apart. "We are very accepting of people and their conditions. People need to know that they will feel comfortable when they are here."

For further information about TLC, call us at 403-356-1678 or email contact@lendingcupboard.ca.

NEW VAN MAINTAINS VITAL SUPPORT



We have a BRAND-NEW VAN, so our convenient delivery service can continue across Red Deer and Central Alberta. "It's a unique service to us - we can provide our clients with the ability to access medical equipment, even when they cannot come to us," explained Executive Director Lori Shatto.

Deliveries go out Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, and our dedicated volunteer team can be flexible with planning drop-off and pick-up times. The delivery service is a great feature as volunteers bring equipment to the client's door and provide a pick-up service. We recognize that life presents various situations, and so we are always there to help.

However, having a new van involves expenses, which is where our community can lend support. The costs include the initial purchase, maintenance, and fuel since we offer free deliveries within city limits. Additionally, we provide deliveries outside of town, across Central Alberta, for a nominal fee.

To help with the costs, we are looking for sponsorships! We are letting local businesses know they can have a prime spot for their logo on our van. It goes all around Central Alberta, so for \$2,000, you can have that spot each year. "We

are also open to other partnerships. If \$2,000 seems like too much, then please have a conversation with us. The end goal is to ensure we can continue providing this service to our clients. Together, we can do this! It's also a unique advertising opportunity for any business that is willing to come on board," explained Lori. "I encourage anyone looking for sponsorship opportunities to give me a call at 403-356-1678 or to send me an email at ED@lendingcupboard.ca.

Our client Joe is undoubtedly happy that TLC offers a delivery service. He's been able to borrow several pieces of equipment that have made a massive difference in his day-to-day life, including a wheelchair, walker, and a shower chair. "It's fantastic! I'm not sure that many seniors have an automobile anymore," he said, adding that this makes the delivery service not just a convenience but an absolute necessity for so many. "It's a lifesaver," he said. "And the volunteers were just great. They showed me how things work and explained it all to me. We are blessed!"

Meanwhile, our driver Ron is undoubtedly thrilled with the spiffy new van. "It's a beautiful van," he said. "It's quiet, smooth – and the back is much higher, making a difference when loading equipment. And the front-wheel drive (is great). In the spring, where you get the wet, heavy snow in the residential areas, we would almost get stuck with the other van. So,

with the front-wheel drive, it makes a difference," he said.

"You are helping people out, making their lives easier. You may not know to what extent but people are happy to see you – you are providing a much-needed service," said Ron, again emphasizing the uniqueness of the delivery service to our region. "For me, I like to serve. I like to be active; I like to be busy. I enjoy life and being outside, so volunteering here fits."

Our volunteer Noreen, who also helps with deliveries, said the joy comes with seeing the folks you are helping. "You get to smile at them and get one in return. That's what it's all about – you get to interact with them. With both delivery and equipment pick-up, our clients are so grateful you have come to them," she said. "They are so thankful, and it just fills your heart."

Noreen said that the social aspect is unique, too, as some clients don't have family nearby to assist them. The friendly visits and the ability to offer a hand with the equipment (should they need it) are fulfilling in and of themselves. "That's the best part."



SPRING BRINGS EXCITING CHANGES

Happy Spring, everyone!

As I mentioned a few weeks back in one of our editions of "A Cup of Coffee with the Cupboard," I think it is one of my favourite seasons: new growth, colours, and exciting new opportunities.

Here at The Lending Cupboard™, we have also been experiencing some of this. If you have come to visit us lately, you will notice some minor changes to our front area. All in hopes of making your visit to us more welcoming, inviting, and comfortable. When you visit us, we know that you are most likely picking up medical equipment or daily living aids for yourself or your loved ones. Sometimes, this task can be overwhelming. Here at TLC, YOU, our clients, are OUR focus. We understand that you may be experiencing challenges when you visit us, so we want to ensure your visit is met with compassion and kindness and that you leave with the medical equipment and daily living aids that you need to maintain your mobility, independence and dignity.

We are constantly working behind the scenes to ensure our equipment is in tip-top shape and ready to serve your needs. Speaking of our equipment, I want to remind folks that when you return or donate equipment, please go to the back of our building (#1-7803 50 Avenue). There is plenty of parking and signage to guide your visit. When you return your equipment to the back of our building, it allows us to clean and inspect the equipment before it goes to our loans area, where all the equipment is cleaned and ready to serve another community member. Thank you in advance for



helping us ensure we keep everyone safe and our equipment ready to go!

Thank you for your continued support of the work at The Lending Cupboard™. I am always humbled by the great, kind words we receive in our community. Our mission is to ensure we are here to support your medical equipment and daily living aid needs, and we are continually working to ensure we are doing just that. Thank you for attending our

events, such as our Ladies' Luncheon that was held on Thursday, May 11th at RDP – what a fantastic day as women from our community gathered to support each other and The Lending Cupboard™, once again showing we are stronger than diamonds and together we can do so much! I look forward to connecting with more of you over the coming months.

Until next quarter, please take care of yourself and your loved ones, and if we can help, please reach out.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "L. Shatto". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lori Shatto, CFRE
Executive Director



CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES

1. Preheat oven to 375°F. Stir together 2 3/4 cups all-purpose flour, 1 tsp baking powder, 1 tsp baking soda and 1/4 tsp salt.
2. Beat 2/3 cups melted salted butter, 2 cups lightly packed brown sugar, 2 eggs and 2 tbsp hot water in a large bowl until smooth. Add flour mixture; beat well. Stir in 1 1/2 cups Chocolate Chips. Drop by tablespoon onto ungreased cookie sheet.
3. Bake 8 - 10 minutes. Let cool. Makes about 4 dozen cookies.