

# *B21 Gazette – The place we all belong*

***Since our last Gazette in November, we've been very busy with events, fundraisers, and community activities. We have so many things to share for the new year. Please enjoy our newest edition!***

## **Smile Cookie fundraiser**



Beyond 21 recently received a generous amount of donations from the Tim Hortons Holiday Smile Cookie fundraiser, which took place from November 18th to November 24th at the Cornwall and Lancaster locations. Each Tim Hortons cookie donation contributed 50% of the proceeds to our organization. Overall, the fundraiser raised a whopping \$25,905.

Two of our participants were involved in decorating the cookies. Kenny and Melissa spent an afternoon volunteering their time at a Tim Hortons location, adding the finishing touches to a couple of batches of cookies. Our participants are always eager to contribute to activities in our community. Some participants also helped with cookie deliveries alongside their support workers, further demonstrating their involvement in the fundraiser.

Beyond 21 is a non-profit organization, which means we rely on donations, fundraisers, grants, and more. The support of the community gives us the opportunity to thrive and be our best. The Tim Hortons cookie fundraiser has helped us move forward.

To our community: thank you for all your support!

## **2024 Christmas pageant**



Beyond 21 hosted another successful Christmas Pageant for family and friends to attend. Preparation for the show began in late October and continued through November. The program was divided into two sections: in the morning, we attended different literacy programs, and in the afternoon, we had a dress rehearsal. Beyond 21 was always busy during this time. Upon arrival at the program, we would

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practice "Believe" from *The Polar Express* in sign language. It became a part of our routine, and we began practicing this performance as early as September to ensure its success.

On December 18th, we finally performed our pageant. We had three performances throughout the day. With the help of students, volunteers, participants, and staff, we began our day by setting up chairs and walls. The show started with Charlie and his angels. Charles, a non-verbal participant, with the help of his twin brother, created a voice box to address his angels. It gave Charles the opportunity to shine at the beginning of our show. The next performance was a medley of songs by a campfire. "Jingle Bell Rock" and "Jingle Bells" were sung by a large group, and "Petit Papa

Noël" was sung by one of our French participants, Jennita.

Next was a line dancing routine. A group of 11 participants and a staff member performed a line dance to "Blue Christmas" by Elvis Presley. Learning the dance routine proved to be challenging but fun. Act four was the "12 Days at Program," a parody of "The 12 Days of Christmas." As a big group, we changed the lyrics to things only people at Beyond 21 would understand. It was a fun experience writing the lyrics and singing about Cathy in a pear tree. This has since become an inside joke among everyone at the hub. Later on, our friend Todd told Christmas dad jokes, Mr. Grinch paid us a visit, and our biggest surprise was performing "Believe" using ASL (American Sign Language). Stephen sang "Believe" a

cappella, and our participants did the rest. We received a lot of positive feedback from families and friends about "Believe" and the rest of the show.

We love to see what we are capable of by sharing our talents. We hope to present more in 2025 as we continue to develop our organization. Here are some photos from our great day!

***To be continued on next page...***

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**Our Christmas line dance** 🦄



**Todd delivering his Christmas dad jokes**



**Melissa providing music as the families arrived**



**Behind the scenes of our show**

## Literacy program

Beyond 21 staff members were assigned different roles to teach participants various literacy subjects. These included writing skills, reading skills, computer skills, and Proloquo2Go.

Proloquo2Go was introduced to several participants who are either non-verbal or have difficulty with communication. After discussing the program with several support workers and gathering verbal feedback from

participants, we learned that it had an impact on some individuals. Some participants expressed that it wasn't for them due to mobility or visual impairments, but overall, it provided an easier way for them to communicate. The program allows participants to express their needs to staff and support workers. It also enables them to be included in conversations with their peers, giving them a voice. Compared to other programs or devices, Proloquo2Go is simpler to use. It includes a voice-over, pictures to select from, and simple settings. Users can create full sentences, but for some participants, one-word actions or emotions are often enough. The app can also be customized or adjusted as

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needed. We hope to integrate it into everyday life at the hub.



*Mylene using Proloquo2go*

## **Reading program**

For our reading program, Nancy took the lead. Every day she would write down words on the whiteboard to practice spelling. Picture cards for letters were used to help break down the words. When working with sentences, they learned about where to include a comma or a period. They practiced small and long words with the

help of cue cards, which participants brought home to practice.

They learned to spell their names, making sure to add the uppercase letter at the start of their name, and the rest being lowercase. They also practiced their writing etiquette, writing their name twice and keeping their writing between the lines. They traced letters on dotted lines. Another part of the reading routine included placing their tongues on the top of their mouth and saying different words to help make different sounds. They recall every activity with joy as they feel it was fun to learn.

The staff has noticed positive social changes in the participants. Learning has brought more confidence in certain participants.



*Nancy leading the reading group*

## **Computer skills**

For our computer skills program, Tara took the lead. The participants were provided iPad's and given the chance to explore to get more familiar with their device. Tara showed the participants how to create journals within the notes app, using the keyboards and apple pencils provided. They learned how to compose an

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email, which is a useful skill for everyone. They used the world map, looking up different locations around the world as a way of learning about new places and how to use the GPS. They used the camera app to create videos and even produced an interview. Someone did the filming while a participant interviewed with pre-written questions.

Infinite paint is an electronic program that allows users to be creative with many art tools. Different pencil fonts, paint, marker or chalk style, different color settings, etc. The opportunities were endless with this program. The group experimented with Artificial Intelligence (AI). They created different pictures with AI, anything that came to mind including a chicken on the moon, Ken and Barbie on the moon, and too many others to mention.

Kahoot is a program to make quizzes and play them as a big group. The group created several games, for example quizzes involving life skills, kitchen rules, etc. These quizzes can be private or used by people around the world. For fun at the end of the program, they would often play a Kahoot or two. They played with the Wii console as part of their game day during the week. Mario Kart and Wii sports were played to name a few. Computer skills are very important in an age where technology is used for everything. It is preparation for new skills.



*Computer skills*

## **Writing skills**

Stacey led the writing group. Participants practiced their writing and word comprehension skills. Some of the activities were word connection and reading comprehension. Stacey helped the group with reviewing letters, how to trace them out and integrate them into sentences.

## **Community activities from 2024-2025**

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Our participants selected many photos of community activities we have experienced from early last year till now!



Will checking out at Walmart ✓



Nancy & Maria tee-ing things up 🏏



Girls trip to the mall



Ambulance visit from a paramedic friend



Marc getting the full Cornwall Police experience 🚓

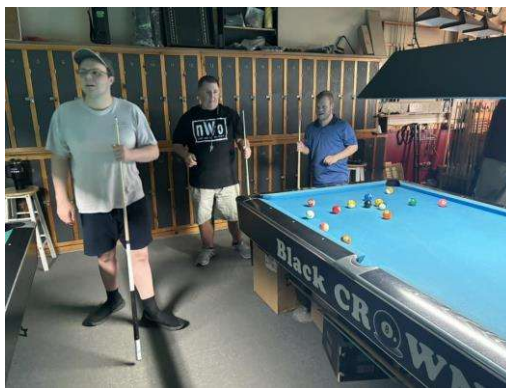


It's berry fun at the Avonmore Farm 🍓

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Prize winning photographers (L to R: Chad, Alex, Gerry), with B21 founder Tish Humphries in Williamstown. They were proud winners of multiple red ribbons. 🏆



Playing pool with the boys at the Billiards



Making friends at Bee Meadow Farm 🐾



Jean posing with his family after a hard-working day at the family brunch 🍷



Visiting Cornwall's newly accessible Park of Hope 🇦🇨



Our photographers taking photos at the Lavender farm in South Glengary 🌸

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Fueling up! 🚗🔌



Doing program at the park 🍁



Taking photos at the Power Dam visitor center 📷



Our own drummer boy 🥁



Just a guy's day at the Benson Centre 🏠



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*Hanging out in the hot tub at the Aquatic Centre* 🐦



*Best bowler in town* 🎳



*Wearing mismatched socks for World Down Syndrome Day* 🧦



*A visit from retired RCMP Bill Stewart, who worked for Queen Elizabeth II* 🐶

## Drumming circle



In early December, a regular friend of ours, Jodi, brought a large amount of percussion instruments for us to play as a big group. Everyone had a set of drums to play, along with smaller gadgets like maracas, a water bowl, a steel tongue drum, etc. A part of the larger instruments brought in was a gong, which was very loud. We all had time to shine.

We always thrive with visitors and music. Here are some photos from our visit.

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***Thank you for reading  
our Gazette! We hope to  
return before summer!***

