

THE GARDENS ON TENTH

Report to the Churches for 2021

It has been a trying 19 months for many of us, and the pandemic presented many challenges for the Seniors in our community and our buildings.

Together with the supervisory team, we have done our best to navigate the Pandemic and all of the challenges that came with it.

In October 2020, The Apartments had their first positive case of Covid-19. These were trying times for our tenants and families. Following public health orders, we had to stop all activities and congregate meals and tenants were isolated to their suite. Our staff wore full personal protective equipment and changed going in/out of each suite. This continued until January 2021 when there was no longer any disease transmission or any ill tenants. And although we were thankful to have things return to a semi-normal, there was sadness for those we had lost.

With the Province in Code Red for the winter months we did our best to try to keep all tenants in all 4 buildings engaged. We had a Christmas Elf who delivered gifts and do it yourself kits. We applied for and received grant funds to hire additional staff to visit with tenants who were feeling the loneliness of code red restrictions and absence of shared meals, activities and family gatherings. In March Public Health came into our buildings and provided an immunization clinic for our tenants. By the end of March, the second clinic was held and tenants spoke of their relief to have been able to receive the vaccine.

The spring and summer months brought a return to normal where we could reopen our dining rooms and have musical entertainment in our courtyard, multiple activities for all buildings as well as pet and music therapy in the Apartments.

We hired Levi Froese for the Spiritual Care Coordinator position in June and that brought a return of in-person devotionals, hymn sing, and bible study. The tenants like him and find him engaging. During the summer months he could often be found outside walking with a tenant or sitting and visiting 1/1. In person church services have also resumed and we are thankful that Levi connected with our supporting churches to facilitate this.

With the winter months soon upon us, there are many planned activities and events that will occur for our tenants. We look forward to theme night suppers with entertainment, bingos, crafting, games and exercise classes as well as musical groups coming in to perform. Although we have not returned to life as it once was, the staff work hard to plan many activities in all 4 buildings to keep our tenants entertained and engaged. We look forward to a time when The Gardens on Tenth can open our doors and invite community back to enjoy events as well.

We are very pleased to say that we have become an inclusive employer, working with W.C. Miller to provide work experience for students, and recently connecting with EAPD (Employee Assistance for People with Disabilities) to offer our organization as a place of employment for those who would need the supports of EAPD to become competitively employed. We have hired youth with disabilities from our community and we believe in hiring our youth and supporting/mentoring them in their first experience of paid employment.

Over the past year, we applied for many grant opportunities.

- The New Horizon's Grant gave us funds to replace the stairs at The Apartments entrance.
- The W.C. Miller Youth in Philanthropy Grant funded yard games and activities for Tenants
- The Altona Community Foundation funded new furniture for the common areas in the Units and Manor.
- We applied for Canada Summer Jobs and The Green Team Grant. This allowed us to hire 3 youth from our community for summer jobs. These students held full-time positions in Maintenance, Life Enrichment and the kitchen throughout the summer months and were a benefit to each department as well as to the Tenants who interacted with them.
- We were also able to receive grant funds from The Province of Manitoba for a Vaccine Initiative Clinic as well as additional Life Enrichment staff to visit with our seniors in isolation over the months of lockdown.

Thanks to fundraising efforts and the generosity of our community we will be able to paint in both The Apartments and Manor and we have also replaced The Apartment stairs and railings due to safety issues.

The Manor was in need of some upgrades so we installed new lights to brighten the hallways and common areas for Tenants. Soon we will be installing new cupboards and countertops in The Manor as well as installing a large screen tv for tenants.

Over the past few months, we have been working towards a plan to reduce costs for The Apartments Tenants and improve the care we provide for tenants. We have had meetings with the RHA and Home Care Coordinator and are working together to provide this option to tenants and families.

Tenants/Families who have the Self-Managed Home Care would be able to use the government funding to cover the support fee costs. The RHA has already held an information session for families and in the coming weeks we will meet with family to see how much interest there is from families to proceed.

With restrictions easing, even in the midst of the 4th wave we are happy to welcome our volunteers back. Volunteers make a difference and even the helping out with the smallest tasks can make a real difference to the lives of the seniors we support. We are always looking for volunteers who enjoy singing, reading, crafting our baking to volunteer with us!

And in conclusion I would like to acknowledge the many dedicated staff we have within our facilities. They have had to change, adjust and readjust to many different restrictions and new rules in the work place. No matter what came their way, they never wavered, and always came to work with a positive attitude and smile for the tenants and continued to go the extra mile throughout it all. So, if you see them, stop and thank them, for these are the people The Gardens on Tenth could not do without.

Thank you,

Submitted by Lisa Smiley
Managing Director