

Seasons

Celebrating the Seasons of Life | For Residents, By Residents



Spring/Summer 2023

MEET OUR MINISTER OF LTC

Q&A WITH MINISTER
PAUL CALANDRA



**RESIDENTS
SUPPORTING
STUDENT PLACEMENTS**

**SUSTAINABLE
RESIDENTS' COUNCIL
LEADERSHIP**

Seasons

Published twice a year, *Seasons* contains news and information of interest to those living and working in Ontario long-term care homes.

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To share your story, please email Melissa McVie at mmcvie@ontarc.com with the following information:

- Your article (250-300-word maximum) including a summary of the event, project or program
- Submission title and authors
- Pictures to bring your story to life for our readers
- Quotes – we love hearing about resident reactions to your programs/initiatives

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Cover Page Photo

Resident Debeing from Chelsea Park Long-Term Care in London, Ontario posing with her beautiful watercolour creation.

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Has your Residents' Council considered annual membership with OARC for 2023-24?

Save the Date: Residents' Council Week 2023
September 11th -17th

CONTEST: FIND THE RAINBOW FLAG

In honour of the upcoming Pride Month (June) and to celebrate inclusivity in LTC, we invite you to try and spot a rainbow flag in this issue of *Seasons*. This contest is open to all residents living in an Ontario long-term care home.

To enter, please email Melissa at mmcvie@ontarc.com before June 2, 2023. Be sure to include your name, address, and the page number where you found it!

Winners will be selected by random draw.

Congratulations to our previous contest winners Malitta Lockrey, Ron Malcolm and Elaine Hirst for finding the hidden snowflake in our Fall/Winter 2022 magazine.



Message from the OARC Board Chair



In my introductory message to this Spring-Summer edition of *Seasons* magazine, I am issuing a call to action! A call to be inspired; a call to support; a call to take a significant step in our collective journey of enabling and encouraging the culture change journey in long-term care (LTC) homes across our province.

My call to action is about purposefully supporting effective, meaningful and active Residents' Councils. For decades, Residents' Councils have been referenced in legislation that governs LTC homes in Ontario. Each successive piece of legislation over the years expanded and strengthened their functions and powers.

Residents' Councils are now mandated by legislation to exist in LTC homes and were given even more powers by the *Fixing Long-Term Care Act, 2021*. However, beyond this legal requirement Residents' Councils are essential. They are essential in reflecting residents' voices; they are essential in promoting residents' participation in home operations and decision-making; and they are essential in supporting the quality of living for each and every resident.

In the summer of 2022, OARC conducted a province-wide environmental scan and heard from over 1,000 LTC residents, Residents' Council Assistants and Administrators. One of the most important messages in the survey responses was focused on how significant in-person visits by OARC team members are to providing support and education to residents and their Councils.

And — that is where my call to action comes in. If your Residents' Council is already a member of OARC, and has renewed its membership — we are grateful and offer a sincere *thank you!*

I am issuing my request to all Residents' Councils who are not yet members of OARC. In order to effectively and substantively support its full functioning within your LTC home, we ask your Residents' Council to be a member of OARC! Your membership has tangible benefits. It directly supports an increased ability of OARC team members to visit homes and Residents' Councils in-person. Your membership supports OARC's ability to respond to what residents told us, through our survey, is most helpful and meaningful to them — direct support through education, application of OARC's tools and resources, and in-person coaching and visits.

We invite you to come along with us on this journey of culture change in LTC homes. Help us lead the way, be inspired and inspire others to listen to residents, and always truly hear what they have to say.

My best wishes to all of you for a hopeful Spring and pleasant Summer.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Nestor'.

Mary Nestor, Chair, OARC Board of Directors

Career Fulfillment in Environmental Services

*Similar to residents, our team members each have their own unique story and their own personal journey that led them to pursue a career in long-term care. **Here is Kirk's story:***

Born in the Philippines, Kirk Bolla made the move to Canada at 18 years old. Back home, Kirk had been enrolled in a Hospitality Management program, but in Canada he pursued training in Police Foundations, which he completed with honours. Shortly after, Kirk's career trajectory changed directions once again, this time from constable to contractor, when a friend introduced him to the home renovation field, with a vision to partner in a business. Always a handy and helpful person, Kirk realized early on that fixing things gave him a great sense of joy and accomplishment and he found his contractor work to be equally satisfying. After 2 years together, Kirk's friend and business partner decided he wanted to relocate, thrusting him into another period of transition. By this time, Kirk had started a family and he was determined to stay close to home and explore other jobs where his skills would be transferable. Little did he know that accepting a part-time maintenance aide position in 2015 would lead to a fulfilling career, characterized by personal growth and professional advancement in the 8 years that followed.



In 2021, Kirk was promoted to Director of Environmental Services at Streetsville Care Community in Mississauga, Ontario.

Reflecting on his work in long-term care, Kirk uses the word “gratitude” to describe how he feels about the positive response he receives through everyday interactions with residents and staff. “When I do my rounds in the morning, I visit different resident rooms for inspection, while engaging in conversation with them. I know most of the residents’ likes and dislikes, including what they enjoy watching on TV, so I help them to find the channel of their liking, and sometimes they open up and share their personal history with me.”

Describing his move to management, Kirk says, “it’s a bit stressful but I always love a challenge.” As the Director of Environmental Services, Kirk oversees several important areas of home operations, including maintenance,

LTC Team Member Spotlight

laundry services and housekeeping. In his supervisory capacity, Kirk shared that while he is more involved in decision-making, this has not stopped him from taking the time to connect with residents. When issues arise in the home, Kirk makes sure that he speaks to residents and their families to collaborate on a solution.

Kirk acknowledges that the pandemic has been difficult for both residents and staff, including himself. He recalls a time when he was working 7 days a week and pitching in to work in every department. “One day I was doing housekeeping and the next day I’m doing laundry, maintenance and I even helped out as a personal support worker.” Kirk was also amongst the many team members that spent time living in a hotel to prevent transmission of the virus, sacrificing time with his family, and missing important events like Christmas and birthdays. “At one point, my wife suggested

that I consider resigning after we’d been apart for over a month, but I explained to her that if I resigned, it would feel like giving up. I worried, who would be there to help the staff and the residents who have no control of the situation?”

Kirk speaks to his perspective on his work by paraphrasing a comment he’d heard from a colleague. “Our home is like a hotel. When you work at a hotel, you make sure your guests are serviced and accommodated well. It should be the same treatment with our residents—they deserve the very best.” Kirk goes on to say, “our residents have worked their whole lives and contributed to our economy. They have a family that loves and cares for them, and we should be treating them with the same respect and compassion as we do our own family members.” Kirk hopes that in 20-30 years, people will look at the contributions of his generation with the same reverence.



***Thank you, Kirk, for
all that you do!***

Page 4, top right of page:
Kirk poses with Residents’
Council Leaders Emmy F.
and Hollis W.

Page 5, bottom left of
page: Kirk standing with
members of the
Streetsville Environmental
Services team
(housekeeping, laundry
and maintenance).



Rethinking Your Outlook

By Dave Stanyon, Resident Leader, Kensington Gardens
OARC Resident Advisory Group (REAL) Member

With rare exception, I'm sure none of us chose to be in long-term care.

In my case, a stroke put me in a wheelchair and, living alone, my choices were limited. After the usual bout of depression which, the doctors assured me, was quite normal, I was bound and determined to make the best of a bad situation.

My daughter assured me that with my ability to adapt that she had observed growing up, coupled with my warped sense of humour that I would be just fine.

And, of course, she was right.

Soon after I took up residency at Kensington Gardens in Toronto, I came across a quote from Sir Anthony Hopkins which not only appealed to the aforementioned sense of humour, but served to focus my actions and attitude moving forward.

"None of us are getting out of here alive. So stop treating yourself like an afterthought. Eat the delicious food. Walk in the sunshine. Say the truth that you're carrying in your heart like hidden treasure. Be silly. Be weird. Be kind. There's no time for anything else."

Every morning, I can choose to be grumpy and sullen, but that serves no purpose and no one ...least of all me. So, I have chosen to live out the rest of my time here on Earth being silly, weird and kind. I highly recommend it!

Meet Dave, OARC's newest REAL member

- Born and raised in Montreal, Dave attended McGill University where he earned two degrees *and* met his future wife before moving and settling down in Whitby, Ontario.
- Dave and his bride of fifty years have three children.
- Before retiring, Dave held senior marketing positions in the electronics, telecommunications and consumer products industries.
- Dave's eclectic life experiences include: travelling to far off exotic places like Marrakech and Bora Bora, piloting a 767 and circumventing Toronto's CN Tower in the Goodyear blimp.
- Dave is Vice President of his Resident's Council and he serves as the Resident representative on the Continuous Quality Improvement Committee.
- In his spare time, Dave manages a Canadiana-themed Facebook page called 'Dave's Canada' and he is learning Spanish.
- Dave is committed to seeing that life for all residents in LTC is anything but boring.

We posed your questions to members of OARC's Resident Advisory (REAL) Group.

Question:

What strategies has your Residents' Council used to welcome new residents at your home?

Devora: Those first few days as the new 'resident on the block' can be devastating. Having a personal interaction with a resident peer can go a long way, and as a Resident Leader on my Council, I take pride in taking that first step to meet the new people moving in. Of course, extended periods of cohorting during outbreaks (which kept me stuck on my unit) disrupted my ability to visit new residents from other parts of my home in-person. This is where having [Residents' Council Home Area Representatives](#) (one or two per floor/Home Area) can be very beneficial. These residents can act as ambassadors for Council, provide peer support and carry out your welcoming initiatives for new people that move in, even during outbreaks, when safety measures are followed.

A few welcoming ideas include:

- Prepare a welcome letter or hand-written card for new residents (hand deliver if possible).
- Create and deliver a Residents' Council brochure or poster with a description of your Council's activities, meeting details and names/locations of Resident Leaders in the home.
- Work with your Nursing and Recreation Departments to assemble a welcome basket with toiletries and convenience items, a copy of the Bill of Rights and your Council brochure.
- Plan and execute a Welcome Social as a whole home event or a more intimate gathering on your floor. Include some ice-breaker games like a Getting to Know You BINGO.
- Implement a peer mentorship or friendly visiting program to support new residents during their transition, including tours of the home and personal invitations to join activities.



Looking for more inspiration? Check out OARC's archived webinar, [Residents Welcoming Residents](#) on our YouTube page.

Question and Answer with Minister Calandra

In this article, OARC Resident Leader Jim Gilhuly posed some questions to our Minister of Long-Term Care, Paul Calandra.

While most residents are aware of his appointment as Minister, many have expressed a desire to get to know Minister Calandra on a more personal level.

Question: Where were you born and raised?

Answer: I was born and raised in Toronto.

Question: Could you tell us about some of the important people in your life and how you spend your leisure time?

Answer: Most important in my life is my family. I live in Stouffville with my wife and two daughters. Outside of work I enjoy cooking and spending time with friends and family.

Question: What are your current roles and responsibilities in Cabinet?

Answer: In addition to serving as Minister of Long-Term Care, I also have the privilege of serving as the Government House Leader, where I help oversee the Government's legislative agenda and the operations of the Legislature.

Question: What do you see as your greatest challenge as Minister of Long-Term Care? How are you meeting it?

Answer: My first priority as Minister is making our long-term care system a better place for



residents to live. Everything we do is with that goal in mind. It's why we're making the biggest investment in long-term care in Ontario's history. It's why we're investing \$4.9 Billion dollars to increase direct hours of care for residents. It's why we're building 58,000 new and upgraded long-term care beds in every corner of the province.

Residents in long-term care built the province we have today. We owe them a great debt of gratitude; it's why we're going to keep making the necessary investments to improve life for residents.

Meet Our Minister of Long-Term Care

Question: Did you know your grandparents? Have they or any other older adults helped to shape your view of the society we have now?

Answer: Unfortunately, my grandparents passed away when I was very young. But coming from a large Italian family, there were always a lot of older relatives around and my mother was a large influence on me growing up. She taught me to respect our older generations and the wisdom they represent. I think that's part of the reason why I enjoy being the Minister of Long-Term Care so much. It gives me an opportunity to give back to those who have helped turn Ontario into what it is today.

Question: Food and the dining experience is a hot topic amongst residents living in LTC. Do you foresee any investments being made to further enhance resourcing for nutritional support?

Answer: As I mentioned before, I come from a large Italian family, so I certainly understand that good food is central to good living. It's why we increased the funding available for food and nutrition by 15% last year and another 9.7% in this year's budget. Our goal is to ensure that long-term care homes are homes, not institutions, and we all know a good meal is a part of making a home a home.

Thank you, Minister Calandra for your commitment to residents across Ontario! We look forward to continuing to get to know you.



Sustainable Models of Residents' Council Leadership



In the summer of 2022, the Ontario Association of Residents' Councils (OARC) conducted the Residents' Voices Survey as part of a province-wide environmental scan to explore the state of Residents' Councils in Ontario's long-term care homes, including their roles, perceived challenges and opportunities.

Through this survey initiative, we heard from residents (including Residents' Council Leaders), Residents' Council Assistants and Administrators who provided information about their Council's structure and operations and gave us some insights into the ways that residents are engaged outside of Residents' Council. OARC was also able to learn more about how our audiences prefer to receive information and the types of education they'd like to receive in the future. Some of the comments we received through our survey also suggested some barriers, including commonly-held perceptions held by residents and Resident Leaders:

- **Residents feel disconnected from Council and each other because of pandemic-related disruptions.**
- **Residents are losing interest in Council participation and meeting attendance is low.**
- **When asked about the effectiveness of their Residents' Council, residents rated their Council as being less effective compared to Administrators and Council Assistants.**

Through our Education and Home Support efforts, OARC has also heard loud and clear that many Councils have had to rebuild after a prolonged period of destabilization. Many Councils also lost strong Resident Leaders during the pandemic, leaving vacancies on leadership teams. Without meetings or active Resident Leaders, Councils have lacked continuity and connection.

How can Residents' Councils move forward in a more inclusive, sustainable way? Consider a change in your Council Leadership style!

OARC was encouraged to learn from our survey respondents that 1/3 of Residents' Councils have embraced the [Shared Leadership Team Model](#)—an approach to Council leadership that removes hierarchical titles/roles such as 'President' and 'Vice President'. Formal Executive titles are replaced with a more inclusive term, 'Resident Leader' and members form a 'Team'. Instead of having a set role or job description, residents are encouraged to contribute on the Council in collaborative ways that align with their individual strengths, interests and abilities.

Have you heard of Residents' Council Representatives?

[Residents' Council Representatives](#) are Resident Leaders who serve as ambassadors for their respective floors/Home Areas. OARC recommends that having one or two residents working together to 'represent' their part of the home is a great way to ensure that your Council meetings are reflecting a wider range of resident voices and experiences throughout your home. These Residents' Council Representatives can form the Leadership Team for your Council, or they can be added to compliment your existing Council Executive to create a more robust and sustainable leadership structure. Expanding your Council team to include more than 1-2 elected leaders also gives more people a chance to be involved in the work of Council and supports sustainability. During periods of outbreak, when residents might be cohorted and kept together on their respective Home Areas, your Council can easily continue to have smaller scale meetings with the support of the Council Representatives. These individuals can also provide Home Area updates at your general Residents' Council meetings with more detail and accuracy.

Residents' Council Representatives are well-positioned to get to know their resident peers, especially the residents they see and interact with on a daily basis in programs and at mealtimes, but also through 1:1 social visits with residents who don't often leave their rooms or join activities. With more residents living with cognitive changes, it is helpful to have Resident Leaders in every part of your home who might be willing to get to know their neighbours who might not be able to speak for themselves. These Resident Leaders may also strike up conversations with team members, managers, volunteers, caregivers and family visitors and bring additional feedback forward at Residents' Council meetings on their behalf.

Considering a change but not sure where to start? OARC is here to help — in person, by phone, or virtually! Connect with the OARC Education Team today at 1-800-731-3710 ext. 280

We also have Residents' Council Fact Sheets to support you on your journey on our website:

<https://www.ontarc.com/education-support/tools.html#factsheets>.

A note about Residents' Council Bylaws

Earlier this year, OARC hosted an educational [webinar](#) and released a [Fact Sheet](#) and [Frequently Asked Questions](#) resource to help residents better understand the importance of having [Residents' Council Bylaws](#). Through our Residents' Voices Survey, we learned that most Councils are operating without the structure and safeguards of Bylaws. OARC strongly encourages the use of Bylaws as a way to formalize and capture your agreed-upon Council practices. They also help to eliminate confusion and promote consistency when these are challenged due to changes in leadership or disagreement/differing opinions.

Purposeful Rounding for Positive Resident Outcomes

Shared by: Linda Facey, Director of Care, Moira Place Long-Term Care Home

The Care Management Teams of AON Health Long-Term Care Homes, Moira Place in Tweed and Centennial Place in Millbrook, began their journey to become a Best Practice Spotlight Organization through the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (RNAO) back in 2019.

With a goal of implementing two of RNAO's Best Practice Guidelines (BPG) – specifically Delirium, Dementia and Depression Older Adults (3D's), and Preventing Falls and Reducing Injury from Falls – we identified a process called Purposeful Rounding that we felt would most benefit our residents and further enhance the quality of our care delivery and approach.

Have you heard of the 4-P's?

Purposeful rounding is a process where staff ask residents if they have any needs related to the **4-P's**

These stand for:

Personal care needs

Possessions

Positioning

Pain

Purposeful Rounding is a process where staff approach residents every hour or two and ask them if they have any needs related to the '4-P's' which include their personal care needs, assistance with accessing possessions (glasses, remote control etc.), whether or not the resident wants to be repositioned (move from bed to chair etc.) or if they are experiencing pain. These consistent checks help to ensure that each resident's needs are proactively met and can often help to prevent falls and related injuries.

Before rolling out the new Purposeful Rounding program, information was shared with residents and families through monthly newsletters and postings in the home. Our Director of Care was also invited to attend a Residents' Council meeting as a guest to provide an overview of Purposeful Rounding and how it would support residents.

Residents learned that the first 'P' to assess for is pain. In order to do this, the team member providing care to a resident would first identify themselves to the resident and ask if they are experiencing pain. Staff are trained to look for non-verbal signs of pain including facial expressions that might indicate discomfort such as grimacing or other restless physical movements. If pain is suspected, this is reported to the Registered Staff (nurse) who will follow through with interventions to make the resident more comfortable.

Our new process for monitoring resident comfort and safety using the 4-P's has helped our team to develop more comprehensive and person-centred care plans. We have also enhanced our communication system to ensure that staff are educated about resident preferences and the 4-P interventions identified through Purposeful Rounding documentation. We are proud to share that our efforts have contributed to a steady downward trend of resident falls!

Building Champions: Leaders with Wings

Shared by: Lisa Reid, RN, Director of Care and Shaila Aranha, RN, LTC Best Practice Coordinator, RNAO



In April of 2020, Nithview Community Long-Term Care, a division of Tri-County Mennonite Homes embarked on a journey with the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (RNAO) to become a Best Practice Spotlight Organization (BPSO). Nithview's priorities were to make improvements in the areas of resident care and team member (staff) satisfaction by implementing three Best Practice Guidelines (BPG) on Person- and Family-Centred Care, Preventing Falls and Reducing Injury from Falls, and Preventing and Addressing Abuse and Neglect of Older Adults.

Adopting a 'Champion model', team members at Nithview were selected and trained to take on leadership and coaching roles in

specific areas, including falls prevention, skin and wound care, continence care, bathing, care planning, admission support, and student/new employee mentorship. Champions worked with residents and families on the different program areas, utilizing RNAO'S Best Practice Guidelines, following legislative requirements, reviewing policies, and supporting staff at all levels. Our Champions engaged with residents and families in assessments, care planning, communication, education, care conferences and weekly quality rounds. They also participated in interdisciplinary meetings, providing education and mentorship to team members, and monitoring quality in care by conducting audits.

The Champions' roles at Nithview continue to be a vital part of success in resident, family, and staff satisfaction. By embracing an individualized approach, residents and families have expressed that they felt supported on a more personal level. One resident shared, "I am happy that I am very much involved in my care plan!"

Champions are motivated to continue to mentor and train their teams based on their individual learning needs because they too have witnessed positive changes within the home. Students and new staff receive enhanced training and peer-to-peer mentorship. Staff look to the Champions as a resource for guidance and welcome their support for the team and residents. This program has also had a positive impact on staff retention during the pandemic.

Tri-County Mennonite Homes' mission is to "Make Everyday Matter." Developing Champion roles within Nithview Community has helped bring the organization's mission alive. We are proud of their advancement and prouder of "Our Champions." They are our **"Leaders with Wings."**

Home Sharing and Innovation



Farm to City Visits are a Winter Hit!

*Shared by: Tonya Claydon,
Director of Programs*

The cold temperatures couldn't put a dent in an afternoon of smiles, laughter and memories for residents, families and staff at peopleCare AR Goudie in Kitchener, Ontario! While our residents are quite

accustomed to receiving visits from the therapy dogs that frequent our long-term care home, this winter we tried something a little different: therapeutic visits featuring animals of all shapes and sizes! In early December, our home arranged a special visit from various 'nativity scene' farm animals. Miniature cows, donkeys, alpacas, rams, goats and bunnies were brought in by Toronto Animal Wranglers to provide some unconventional pet therapy.

We know that pet therapy has many benefits, including decreased anxiety, depression, loneliness, apathy – and increased quality of life overall. Many residents that call peopleCare AR Goudie home grew up on farms and share deep-rooted memories connected to farming and the animals they were used to seeing on their family farms. In hosting this therapeutic animal visiting program, it was our hope that residents might feel connected to the farm animals in different ways than our conventional pet therapy visits with dogs. And our hopes and expectations were far surpassed!

Throughout the afternoon, residents, family members and staff were able to reminisce about their time spent on farms and engage in meaningful conversations with each other about their shared experiences. That, combined with endless nuzzles of soft fur and cold noses made for a memorable experience for all. Reflecting on the special day, resident Joan C. shared:

"The animals were so well behaved! We got to pet them and spend as much time outside with them as we wanted. My favourite was the miniature cow!"

Anticipating the higher foot traffic, the Residents' Council had the great idea to combine the animal show with our annual Christmas bake sale to make it an even bigger success.

The Councils' instincts were right, and their fundraiser generated close to \$350!

AR Goudie residents are looking forward to a summer visit from these farm to city friends, and meeting even more unconventional animals thanks to the team at Toronto Animal Wranglers.

Your Voice Matters: Resident Involvement is Key for Student Placements in Long-Term Care

Have you noticed students training in your long-term care (LTC) home?

Students are an essential part of a home's care team. Successful relationships with residents are what students value most in their placements and make a difference in whether students join the LTC team.

What can you do to support successful student placements and participate in training?

Get to know them! Student placements are a chance for residents to engage and build relationships. It's an opportunity to welcome them and share information about your life, care plan and neighbours. Since students are often new to the LTC environment, they can be unsure about interacting with residents. Your kindness and encouragement can help them relax and may persuade them to stay and pursue a career in LTC when you:

Connect. Tell students about yourself, say hello and be supportive as students train.

Educate. Help students understand your experience in LTC and what you need.

Appreciate. Let students know how much they're needed and why you appreciate them.

Helping attract and retain staff in the LTC sector is a priority for the Ministry of Long-Term Care in Ontario. So much so that they've invested \$73M to develop the Preceptor Resource and Education Program in Long-Term Care (PREP LTC). PREP LTC can help Ontario's LTC homes:

- **Increase** student placements in the LTC sector.
- **Attract and retain** LTC future team members.
- **Provide** a positive experience for students and preceptors.
- **Reduce** the administrative burden with placement coordination support.



The next time you meet a new student, take a moment to see the person who

may be nervous and unsure.

By being friendly and asking questions, residents can help a student feel comfortable and create a bond that could launch a student's LTC career.

Has your Residents' Council considered Membership with OARC?



Formed by residents living in long-term care homes over 40 years ago, OARC provides a unified network for support and education for Residents' Councils province-wide.

OARC empowers residents to understand their rights, share their lived experience and shape the places they call home.

Membership dollars extend OARC's ability to reach more Residents' Councils to provide in-person education and support to exercise their full legislated scope and powers, to enhance effectiveness and sustainability. OARC is also committed to assisting the supportive partners that help to mobilize and enrich Residents' Council operations, including team members and Administrators/home leadership.

We are grateful for our growing number of individual Residents' Councils and organizations who continue to demonstrate support for resident voice and contributions by investing in an annual OARC membership — Thank you!

OARC membership renewal letters have been mailed to our 2022 members and we are reaching out to Residents' Councils who may be thinking about becoming an OARC member for the year ahead, joining the 400+ Residents' Councils connected through our network. Please reach out to us to learn more!

Connect with us at: ontarc.com



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