

2022

ANNUAL REPORT

Events for Life

Making a difference in the lives of individuals
in our community.



Events for Life



Events for Life (EFL)

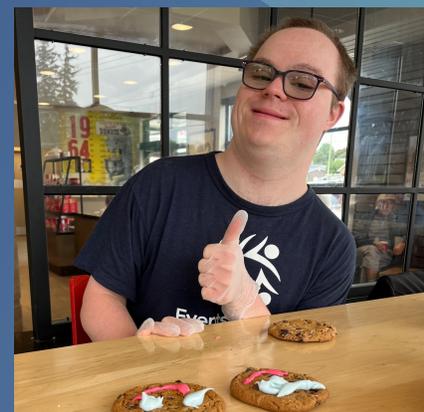
Established in 2013, Events for Life is celebrating 10 years of operation! The program started in the summer and was based out of Shelley Higginson's house. The program grew and moved to the basement of the Thornbury United Church. The program kept growing and with the generosity of a local family, Mike and Alicia Hutchings, the program has a new Centre to call home. In 2017 Events for Life became a Not-for-Profit registered charity.

A Board of Directors was formed to help guide Shelley and the staff team. In 2018 Barb Weeden joined the EFL team as the Executive Director. Shelley, Cathy and their close friends have to be so proud of the business they have built. Six participants started with Shelley. There are now 35 participants enjoying many special events which bring joy to their lives. The staff team has increased to 5 full-time and 4 part-time staff, a volunteer coordinator, a volunteer facility manager and a team of supply staff.

Cathy Butler and Melanie Johns were instrumental in helping Shelley get EFL grounded. Christa and Jim Carroll amongst other dedicated volunteers helped pave the way for EFL to become a registered charity in 2017. Thank you to all those who helped along the way! The journey continues as we search for our fully accessible home to accommodate more learners.



info@eventsfor.life



A message from the Chair Celebrating 10 years!

What a wonderful year we have had at Events for Life. Our outstanding staff has pivoted from a virtual program ending in March , to a full time in person program , at two different locations.

The generosity of the Hutchings family , as well as the Blue Mountain Community Church , has allowed our program to continue to grow. We are very fortunate to be supported by amazing volunteers and are well recognized in the community of the Town of Blue Mountains. I have been involved with EFL as the Chair of the board since our inception in 2013 . I have decided to step down after 8 years but plan to remain as the Past Chair and will continue to help grow our organization . I can't thank my fellow board members enough for all their hard work and expertise during my tenure. I will always be part of Events for Life , as it has become our second family and Thomas will always be involved.



Cathy Butler, Chair

From all the participants, families, volunteers, staff and friends of Events for Life, we want to Thank Cathy for her 10 years of devotion and support. Cathy was an integral part of this grass roots story helping Shelley Higginson to build and expand the incredible program Events for Life offers.

Thank you Cathy!

A message from the Executive Director

We were off to a good start in July 2021. The participants were able to return to learning, mostly outdoors, but back to the EFL Centre and the Blue Mountain Community Church with their friends. Large events could not be held so there were not any fundraisers during the summer months.

In September, the Tim Horton Smile Cookie Campaign started. Participants were able to make posters and go to the store in Meaford to stand outside and wave their banners. The campaign this year brought in over \$7,000 from cookies sales.

During the month of November, the "Giving Tuesday" campaign was underway. With some donations being matched, EFL was able to raise over \$30,000.

The weather was perfect for us to host our annual "Christmas Craft Sale" in December. It was the first craft sale in almost 2 years. There was non stop traffic from 9 am to noon. We raised over \$8,000 from participant crafts.

As covid numbers began to rise, the program stayed outdoors as much as possible, but unfortunately it came to a halt in January. The program remained virtual until the spring.

In May, EFL was so fortunate to get the green light to host the "Women's New and Gently Used Clothing Sale." Record breaking crowds and great weather enabled us to raise over \$14,000.



**Barb
Weeden**

*A message from the Program
Director, Shelley Higginson
Celebrating 10 years of growth!*



A word that summarizes the past year would be "flexible". Our approach to the pandemic made us realize how amazing our staff are at being creative and diverse in their program delivery. In the past year we've gone from on-line to half in person days half on-line, in person masked and social distancing to back on-line... you get it.

Through all of this we have continued to offer social, recreational, and lifelong learning programming for our participants. Our distinct strain of programming defines who we are and sets us apart from any other programs. With our growing numbers we continue to operate out of two facilities and we have had to hire two PSW workers to help support some participants with higher needs.

We have provided the staff with professional development covering team work, risk management and personality assessments. This has helped motivate staff and work together better. To assist staff with program development we purchased curriculum for culinary, healthy lifestyles, work experience and art. This has given the staff a wide variety of resources to aid them with teaching all levels of learners.

We developed an online program that checked all the boxes for our ongoing mission. When winter weather closes our locations we can easily move to an online format. In addition to the staff teaching participants, we now have several community facilitators teaching the participants, yoga eccentrics, music, dance and exercise class. All these lessons and more can be facilitated virtually so we do not need to ever cancel program days again.

The silver lining to the pandemic was our ability to reach more participants virtually. Our registration has gone from 6 participants in 2013 during the summer, to now servicing 35 participants year-round spread over 4 days.

Conquering Covid!

2022 was phrased our year of flexibility.

The program returned to in person learning but had to remain operating out of two facilities to maintain ratios and covid restrictions and to accommodate the increase in participant numbers.

The EFL Centre operates four days per week and the Blue Mountain Community Church (BMCC) operates for three days per week.

• EFLCentre

Culinary Skills
 Healthy Lifestyles
 Outdoor Experiences
 Recreation
 Workshop
 WorkExperience supported
 and independant

• BMCC

Performing & Creative Arts
 Christmas Black Light show
 Music and Drama
 Spring Fling
 Library
 Conversation Cafe
 Work Experience-supported
 and independant



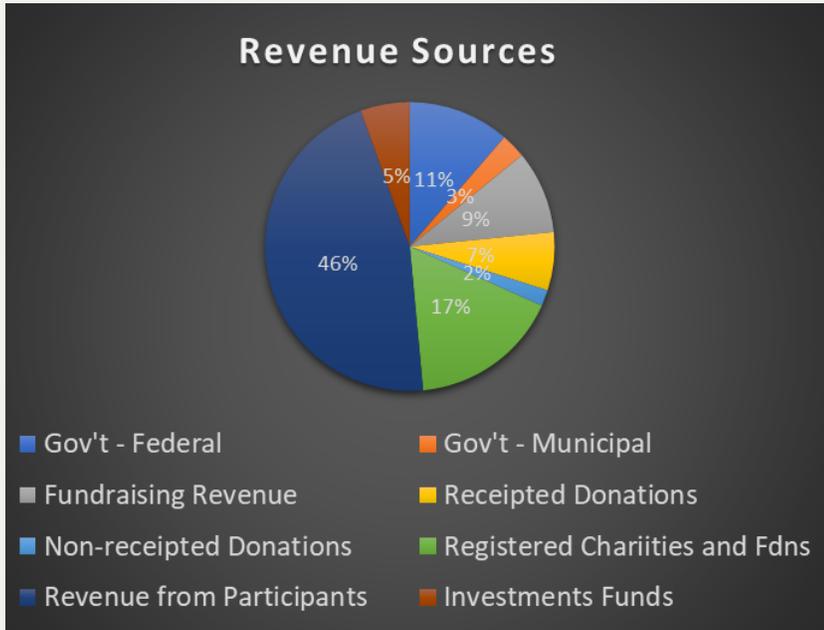
Year in Review Highlights

SEPTEMBER Smile Cookies Campaign

NOVEMBER Giving Tuesday

With many donations and some very generous amounts, we raised over \$30,000!

Our 2nd event in Meaford we raised over \$7,000!



DECEMBER EFL Christmas Craft Sale

The first opportunity for an in person event, the sale drew over 200 people and raised over \$8,000



MAY Womens Clothing Sale

After another stay at home winter, the clothing sale raised over \$14,000!

Thank You

Events for Life wishes to thank the hundreds of individuals that donated throughout the year. Every dollar counts. We appreciate your generosity and support.

A special THANK YOU goes out to all the volunteers who helped on-line and in person, during events, driving and helping support individuals. Your assistance makes our world go 'round! We couldn't operate without your help!

From Community Foundations, Clubs and local businesses to generous individuals and Associations, we thank you so much for helping Events for Life especially through these challenging times.



Thank you to our sponsors and donors:

- G. H. Gordon Foundation
- CN Railroaders, Benevity
- Blue Mountain Village Association
- Blue Mountain Foundation for the Arts
- George Cedric Metcalf Charitable Foundation
- McFarlane Family Foundation
- McLeod Family Fund
- Meaford Community Foundation
- Monks Family Charitable Trust
- Waugh Family Foundation
- IBM Employee Fund
- Town of the Blue Mountains
- Tim Horton Franchise Owners, Meaford
- Rotary Thornbury-Clarksburg
- Rupert & Timothy Smith Charitable Foundation
- Thornbury Home Hardware
- Ashton Blinds
- Georgian Peaks Club
- Goldsmith "Family Market
- Good Grief Coffee Roasters
- Melanie & Tim Johns
- Town of the Blue Mountains Fire Fighters Association
- Yoga on the Mat, Deb McCann

A special thank you to Maureen Munden, the recipient of the ROBERT G. KEMP ARTS AWARD, for enriching our lives through art and producing an amazing exhibit!



In memory of

Program Staff Team



Andrew Lainey



THANK YOU

To Melanie Johns, EFL Board Member, grass roots supporter and fundraiser!
Bike Canada Event 4 Life!

Melanie, her husband Tim and friend Nicki, cycled across Canada to raise awareness and funds for EFL while fulfilling their Event of a lifetime! Thank you so much for sharing your passion and raising over \$12,000




Events for Life

EST 2013
THORNBURY, ON

ENHANCING THE LIVES OF INDIVIDUALS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Thank you for your Donation!