

## Visitation Pods

VIVA Thornhill Woods has once again opened to family who would like to visit our Community Member through ingenious creation of our "Visitation Pods"! Guests can safely visit their loved ones at a distance, and with some protection from the hot sun! It is lovely seeing families reunite after weeks apart. All visits currently need to be scheduled in advance. If you are interested in booking a visit, please email our Lifestyles Manager [kayla.deosaran@vivalife.ca](mailto:kayla.deosaran@vivalife.ca) and she will kindly aid you in the sign-up process.



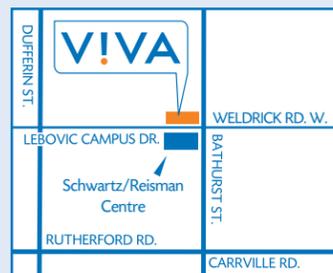
## Bailey's and Biscotti Cart

As a special surprise to our Community Members, the Culinary Team created a decadent Bailey's and Biscotti cart that went around the Community during a warm afternoon. Community Members enjoyed this unexpected sweet treat. Look out for more snack carts in the days ahead.

## Hans' Poets Corner "Tragedy, Resident Geese"

Every morning they fly in, from the west,  
To take a look at their empty nest,  
They cry out for their brood of five  
But recently they took the goslings life,  
Because they did not understand,  
That the goslings would follow  
Wherever their parents went,  
When these parents flew  
From the nest to the ground,  
The goslings "kamikazied" duty bound,  
They could not fly, none did survive,  
Less than 24 hours old,  
That was their life.

May 5, 2020  
I think the gander has a second wife,  
Who does not mind to waste part of her life,  
Sitting on the results of his fertilization,  
He never told her of his reputation,  
But I listen to their conversation,  
All he talks about is fornication,  
The second wife must be her sister,  
She looks alike and he really mist-her,  
Now number 2 is sitting there to breed,  
And I will have to watch a repeat.



## Making Today Great!

VIVA Thornhill Woods Retirement Community  
9700 Bathurst Street, Vaughan, ON L6A 4V2  
[vivalife.ca](http://vivalife.ca) (905) 417-8585 Find us on



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# V!VAvoice



July 2020

Your V!VA Community Newsletter

Due to the ongoing pandemic, there is no events calendar. Please speak to your Community's Lifestyles Team to learn more about what's happening at your Community this month!

## Fun in the Sun!

Many more outdoor performances have taken place in the past few weeks. From Cantor David Edwards, and violinist Grenville Pinto to a quartet of very

talented belly dancers – we have had quite the variety of entertainment, with more to come throughout the summer months!



## Special Birthdays

Even though we had so much going on at VIVA Thornhill Woods, we always make sure to celebrate birthdays even in limited circumstances. A big happy birthday to everyone who celebrated in May and June! We hope to celebrate in a much bigger way next year!



## Hallway Walking

As Public Health began to loosen up our restrictions, our fabulous Personal Support Workers helped Community Members get some much-needed time outside of their suites by walking with them along the hallways. Thank you very much to our PSWs for all the hours spent walking with our Community Members and for making wearing so much personal protective equipment fun!



## The Benefits of Gardening for Seniors

Summer is here, and so is gardening season! Our Community Members couldn't be happier to get their hands dirty again, because the Victory Garden is a big part of *Making Today Great!* at VIVA Retirement Communities. We sat down with Laura Moon, the Lifestyles Manager at VIVA Whitby Shores, to chat about the benefits of gardening for seniors, and VIVA's pioneering Victory Garden concept.

*Hi Laura. What are the benefits of gardening for seniors?*

Gardening is great for many reasons. Physically, gardening is beneficial for everybody, but particularly for seniors. It keeps fine motor skills honed. Digging, pulling weeds, and opening packages are great tasks for certain types of arthritis to reduce inflammation in your knuckles, and throughout your hands. Those fine motor skills also keep fingers nimble, which is particularly important for what we call 'Activities of Daily Living' such as doing up the buttons of a shirt, using zippers, or opening cans or jars. Also, reaching and bending over those garden beds helps with flexibility. We sweat a little, too, which means the blood is pumping, so gardening is good for circulation and our cardiovascular system. And finally, there can be a little lifting too when safe, with bags of soil.

*Wow, that sounds pretty intense!*

Not really. Gardening is a gentle activity that isn't as overwhelming as an exercise class. When I ask new Community Members what they've done in the past to stay active, many will tell me 'taking care of my yard and garden'. It doesn't feel like they're working out, but they really are. They'll be out in the garden for a little bit every day, getting their recommended 30 minutes of exercise. At the very least, they're getting their vitamin D from the sun!

*So, those are the physical benefits. What other kinds of benefits for seniors does gardening provide?*

There are mental and emotional benefits as well. Watching something grow that you've planted and nurtured can provide an individual with a renewed sense of purpose, responsibility, and accomplishment. There is also a social aspect that brings people together, particularly when it comes to VIVA's Victory Gardens.

*Can you share a bit more about those Victory Gardens?*

Sure! The name Victory Garden is borrowed from the efforts of civilians in Canada during World War II to help with food supplies while the battles were taking place overseas. VIVA has taken this idea of gardening for the common good and designed each of its Communities with a Victory Garden as the focus of the outdoor space. The gardens are built to be senior-friendly with raised garden beds and built-in areas for seating. This allows for easier, ache-free access to the plants and vegetation. Community Members work together to grow flowers to decorate their suites and our amenities, while the fruits and vegetables grown are shared with our Culinary Team to use in their VIVAlicious recipes.

*The entire Community gets to enjoy the literal fruits – and veggies! – of their labour!*

Yes, exactly! It helps us follow through on VIVA's mission to create a place where people can live, laugh, and love. People have connected who otherwise might not have. I've seen Community Members who, since they've moved in, haven't really spoken to one another, but now that we all garden together, we'll end a day of planting or pruning at *Perks!*, our Community's Bistro Café, chatting over a coffee or tea. It's a lot of fun and very rewarding.

*How does the Victory Garden address those physical challenges that come with aging?*

The Victory Garden brings our Community Members back to something that they used to that perhaps became too difficult in their house. Perhaps the yard wasn't level posing a slip, trip or fall risk. The Victory Garden is paved and flat, which makes it easier for our Community Members to walk on, or use their wheelchair or walker. Perhaps bending over, crouching or kneeling is difficult. The Victory Garden has raised garden beds so if Community Members had vertigo or back issues, they no longer have to worry. We even have garden beds at a few different heights to accommodate Community Members in walkers and wheelchairs.

*That sounds like it ties in to the emotional benefits you mentioned.*

It sure does. Many Community Members go from missing the ability to do something they loved, to being overjoyed. That is one of the best parts of what the Victory Garden can offer: enabling people to do what they love. Recently, we had one Community Member share that she dearly misses her garden at her old house. She had not yet attended one of our gardening programs, so upon hearing this, the other Community Members invited her to join them and she was thrilled.

*The social benefit of gardening manifested itself right away.*

Exactly. And now she comes out at 4:30 every afternoon to water the garden. She hasn't done that in years. She has regained her sense of purpose. And that's important, especially to Community Members who are in Assisted Living who may love gardening. Nobody is excluded.

*You're adding a whole new meaning to "all-inclusive" retirement living!*

[Laughs] But it's true! For example, some Community Members who might not enjoy gardening can't leave the building for specific reasons. They might no longer drive or have family nearby to take them on outings. And some don't always come out on our shuttle bus. So, we offer a wide range of on-site events, programs and services. The Victory Garden stands out, however, because those Community Members can still enjoy the beauty of nature, and the sense of peace and calm that inevitably comes with simply taking a stroll through the garden.

*That sounds delightful. Thanks for taking the time to chat, Laura!*

You're welcome – and thank you!

To learn more about VIVA Retirement Communities or our Victory Gardens and gardening programs, please contact the VIVA Lifestyles Manager at your Community.

