

Rotary Club of Palgrave's Weekly Rotary Minute

Written by Jim Firth

Last Wednesday evening, the Rotary Club of Palgrave was treated to a wonderful presentation by Patricia Franks of CAFFI. Caledon Area Families for Inclusion (?CAFFI?) was formed by a group of local parents of children/young adults with intellectual/developmental disabilities. The families came together out of concern for the lack of services, programs, and housing for their family members in the Caledon community. Many of these individuals have positive experiences as children in school programs and local recreational activities, but become excluded from programs, camps and activities as they 'age out', without viable options. At age 21, once these young people leave school, they are faced with little to do, few places to go, and even fewer places to live, as young adults in Caledon.

The need to support people in our community like Patricia never goes away.

Patricia is a Caledon resident and is the mother of an adult daughter with intellectual disabilities living at home. By Patricia's estimation there are 75 similar families in Caledon and as the parents age, they become concerned about the long-term care of their children. CAFFI was formed as a pilot project to create a shared living space for 3 adults with intellectual disabilities.

They now have a plot of land on Cedar Mains Road and will convert a heritage building into a 4 bedroom house. Three adult women with special needs and one adult roommate will live in the house as house mates. Plans are in place to have the home ready by winter 2018. They are fundraising and also need many helping hands.

To operate the house CAFFI will need help with administration, season outdoor work, handyman services, advisor's and so on. AS Rotarians, I know that many of our members and friends have these capabilities. Please feel free to email Patricia at cafficaledon@gmail.com and join us through Rotary to help others. To learn more about CAFFI and how you can help others in our community please check us out at rotaryclubofpalgrave.com and sign up for a free dinner at the Caledon Estates Banquet Hall.