

July 2021

LUPUS LINK



Lupus Ontario's Monthly Newsletter

21-25 Valleywood Drive, Markham, ON L3R 5L9 | 905-415-1099 or 1-877-240-1099

President's Message



Linda Keill

Summer is here and Ontario is finally opening up following a very tough nine months of partial or full shutdown. I hope that by now most of you have been able to receive your second dose of vaccine and now have the protection that you need to be able to visit friends and family. Based on the guidelines published by the Federal Government this past week, many of us will still need to take precautions and I urge you all to stay safe by following their recommendations.

Despite all the recent positive news regarding COVID-19, Lupus Ontario will be holding our events over the summer virtually. Although the upcoming Walk for Lupus Ontario is an outdoor event, municipalities have not been issuing the park permits which would be required to hold a Walk in a park. The Walk is off to a great start with 16 community locations, over 80 individuals and 25 teams registered. We are hoping to beat our fundraising goal of \$75,000 and are well on our way to doing so. If you have not done so already, please register and let your family and friends know about the Walk.

During the summer, the Lupus Ontario team turns their efforts to planning for our new fiscal year which starts October 1st. If anyone has any ideas for new programs or other ways that we can support you, please feel free to let us know. We want to ensure that Lupus Ontario is providing the services that the lupus community needs to the best of our ability. You can send your suggestions to me at president@lupusontario.org and I will be sure to pass your ideas on to the appropriate committee.

In closing, I hope that you are all able to enjoy a wonderful summer and that we can look forward to even better times ahead in the fall.

Volunteer Walk for Lupus Ontario
Coordinators needed in communities across Ontario.

No experience necessary.
Please call or email for more information!

The Support and Education Committee would like to thank the members of Lupus Ontario for coming out each month to learn and show support to our guest speakers who have taken time out of their busy schedule to volunteer their time to Lupus Ontario.

Upcoming Events/Meetings

CLASSES

Dance and Medicine –
Intersection Between
Movement, Art and Chronic
Illness

July 7 @ 7 p.m.

July 21 @ 7 p.m.

JULY WEBINAR

July 20 @ 7 p.m.

Join Michelle Bruxer for a presentation about identifying stress and anxiety, practical strategies to cope, as well as resources and services available.

SUPPORT MEETINGS

Young Adult Monthly Social
- July 6 @ 7 p.m.

Ottawa Online Support Group -
July 12 @ 7 p.m.

Provincial Online Support
Group - July 13 @ 7 p.m.

Durham Online Support Group
- July 26 @ 7 p.m.

WALK FOR LUPUS ONTARIO 2021

Please join us for the Annual Walk for Lupus Ontario 2021. We have chosen August 21st as the 'official' date for the Walk this year but because it is a virtual event you can participate at whatever time and place you prefer. Although this event is historically known as the 'Walk' for Lupus Ontario, you can choose to do any activity you would like in support of lupus awareness and research. For example, you could complete a craft, do yoga, create a video of something new you have learned to do, etc. We want to ensure that everyone can participate to the best of their abilities. Registration is free and you can [sign up here!](#)

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the Walk for Lupus Ontario. The event will be held virtually across the province on August 21, 2021! Walk a Block for Lupus started in 2001 with the participation of the provincial lupus organizations across Canada. In 2015, it became the Walk for Lupus Ontario. Over the years, the Walk for Lupus has raised over a million dollars to fund the Lupus Ontario Geoff Carr Research Fellowship, support and education programs for lupus patients and their families and advocacy projects aimed at improving programs and services for lupus patients and their families.

In 2020, we were able to raise just under \$60K, but this year we are aiming to come together and raise \$70,000!

We are honoured to have Dr. Murray Urowitz as our Honourary Chairperson for the 2021 Walk. Dr. Urowitz is Director of the University of Toronto Lupus Clinic, Professor of Medicine, Senior Staff Physician Toronto Western Hospital and Senior Scientist with the Toronto Western Hospital Research Institute. He is a recognized expert on treating lupus and a world-renowned lupus researcher.

Please consider supporting the Walk for Lupus Ontario by joining our team or making a donation towards our fundraising goal. For more information, to register or make a donation please visit our web site www.lupusontario.org.

PRACTICAL STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING STRESS AND ANXIETY WEBINAR (JULY 20 @ 7 P.M.)

Presented by Michelle Bruxer

This webinar will focus on managing symptoms of stress and anxiety. Michelle will be covering information about identifying stress and anxiety, practical strategies to cope, as well as resources and services available. This webinar will be hosted by Michelle Bruxer, who is a social worker and who volunteers with Lupus Ontario as a Support Group Facilitator and as an Education and Support Committee Member.

This event is free and we ask that you [register in advance](#) - hope to see you there!

RECAP OF MAKEUP, SKIN CARE & GETTING READY FOR SUMMER WEBINAR

In this talk, Colleen Mack discussed how she uses her skills to spread awareness and educate others about lupus. Makeup has become a form of expression and creative outlet that has helped her to cope with her illness. She discussed different products for specific skin types, how to care for your skin during a flare, the importance of SPF and different options to stay cool and covered during the warmer weather.

All of our webinars are recorded and copies of the presentations are uploaded to our [Education page](#).



Martina Whittick

At the end of May, we welcomed Martina Whittick to our team as the new Fundraising and Marketing Manager. Martina brings extensive experience in fundraising, organizing major events and volunteer management. During the month of June, Martina has been working with our Social Media team to improve our promotional materials for the Walk and has reached out to all our Walk for Lupus Ontario Coordinators to offer her support. Please feel free to reach out to Martina via the Lupus Ontario office (905-415-1099 ext. 3) or by email at mwhittick@lupusontario.org.

Welcome Martina, we are very excited to have you on board!

GOVERNMENT SUPPORTS: CAREGIVING BENEFITS

Written by Carolyn Pancham

Employment Caregiver Leaves

Have you suffered an injury or illness and require a family member to provide care or support during your recovery process? **The Family Caregiver Leave** is an unpaid, job-protected leave of up to eight weeks per calendar year per family member. You will require a medical certificate from your doctor stating that you have a serious medical condition to be eligible for the leave. **The Family Caregiver Benefit** provides financial assistance of 55% of your earnings (maximum of \$595 a week) during that time for qualified individuals.

Is your prognosis dire? **The Family Medical Leave** is another unpaid, job-protected leave of up to 28 weeks in a 52-week period. If a qualified health practitioner certifies that you have a serious medical condition with a significant risk of death occurring within 26 weeks, then your loved ones may have an option for palliative care. **Compassionate Care Benefits** provides financial assistance for the caregiver of a person that requires end-of-life care.

Call Service Ontario at 1-800-531-5551 or TTY 1-866-567-8893 to inquire about the different types of leaves under the Employment Standards Act. Service Canada could be reached at 1-800-622-6232 or TTY 1-800-926-9105 for caregiver benefit eligibility.

Caregiver Tax Credit

The Canada Caregiver Credit helps caregivers that supports a spouse, common-law partner or dependent who has either a physical or mental impairment. Contact the Canada Revenue Agency at 1-800-959-8281 for further details of claiming the amount on your tax return.

Caregiving Support

If you are being discharged from the hospital and are unable to take care of yourself after a medical episode, consider the **Ontario Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs)**. It is a community health-care organization that provides needs-based service. Ask your health care provider for a referral or call them directly at 310-2222. Once a care coordinator provides recommendations, you may be eligible for home care services.

Stay tuned for next months' article on the Disability Tax Credit!

***This article is intended to provide general information only. Please seek advice from a qualified professional for your situation.**

TRIBUTE TO MARTHA LYNNE BEST

Lupus Ontario was deeply saddened to hear of the passing of Martha "Lynne" Best on May 1, 2021. Lynne was a long-time member of Lupus Ontario and was dedicated to creating awareness of the disease. Lynne committed her life to helping others through teaching children with special needs and her volunteer activities at Lupus Ontario. Whenever there was an event planned, Lynne always tried to be there to help. Our President, Linda Keill, first met Lynne at the Dance for the Cure where they were assigned as greeters for the evening. At that time, she shared her love of travel and despite having some serious issues with lupus, she was an intrepid traveller who loved adventures, the great outdoors and any challenge put in her way. We are very grateful for all that Lynne did for Lupus Ontario and for the inspiration that she was to all Lupus Warriors. We extend our sincere condolences to Lynne's daughter Christina and to her many close friends.



VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH

The Volunteer of the Month for July is Sabrina Dussin. Being the parent of a child diagnosed with lupus, Sabrina has experienced that fear of the unknown and the challenges lupus presents to a young person. She decided that she wanted to make a difference for the lupus community and become involved with Lupus Ontario. Since 2018, Sabrina has been the Chair of our Italian Dinner Committee. Over this time, the event has grown into a gathering of over 500 people, has drawn a new audience of younger people, added some fun features such as a cannoli bar, a world class accordion player and has netted Lupus Ontario over \$125,000 for education, research, and support. The event has also attracted an increased involvement of provincial and local politicians and planted the seeds for the Province of Ontario officially recognizing Lupus Awareness Day on May 10th. For Sabrina, volunteering has been a family affair with her husband Anthony Del Rizzo, her sons Andrew, Matthew and Christopher, her parents Alida and Joe Dussin and her sister-in-law Jennifer Del Rizzo playing a key role in organizing the event. With the Italian Dinner cancelled in 2021, Sabrina has agreed to be Co-Coordinator of the Walk for Lupus Ontario in Vaughan. She is bringing the same enthusiasm to this role that she has for the Italian Dinner. Thank you to you, Sabrina, and your family for all you are doing to improve the lives of lupus patients!



MEETINGS/EVENTS TO COME

Young Adult Monthly Social - July 6, Aug 3 and Sept 7 @ 7 p.m.

Dance and Medicine – Intersection Between Movement, Art and Chronic Illness – July 7 and July 21 @ 7 p.m.

Ottawa Online Support Group - July 12, Aug 9 and Sept 13 @ 7 p.m.

Provincial Lupus Online Adult Support Group - July 13, Aug 10 and Sept 14 @ 7 p.m.

Practical Strategies for Managing Stress and Anxiety Webinar - July 20 @ 7 p.m.

Durham Online Support Group – July 26, Aug 30 and Sept 27 @ 7 p.m.

MISSION

Lupus Ontario's mission is to provide vital support, education, awareness, advocacy and research through the fundraising efforts of our staff and volunteer community to help those with lupus live longer, healthier and better lives.

GOAL: LIFE WITHOUT LUPUS

Keep up with Lupus Ontario on social media!

 @LupusOntario

 @LupusON

 Lupus Ontario