

Riverstone residents embrace the Christmas season



By Mike Riley

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Riverstone Residence in Bancroft had their annual Christmas event on Dec. 16 where residents and their families get together to visit, enjoy festive food and drinks and go for horse-drawn carriage rides through the snow. According to Carolyn Smith-Green, who owns and operates the Riverstone with her husband Don, it was a magical day and a big success and they're already planning next year's event. Smith-Green says that she and her husband Don, being relatively new owners at Riverstone (since August, 2022) had the Christmas event last year and again this year. "The residents and their families enjoy the horse sleigh ride and hot chocolate. We hope that this annual tradition continues," she says. Smith-Green says that all the residents and staff are welcome at the party as well as their families and they're expecting approximately 100 people, including around 30 residents. She says they'll serve hot dogs, hot chocolate, and hot apple cider. At the end of the afternoon, just before they have dinner, they're having a musician coming to play for everyone named Paul Richard. "The best part will be all of the Riverstone community visiting. The residents are excited about the party but they are equally or even just a bit more excited about our Christmas 'Seniors Helping Seniors' donations. We are partnering with CARE North Hastings and we are putting together gift and food baskets for local seniors. Bancroft is a wonderful community," she says. Smith-Green thought everything was fabulous and what a beautiful day it was on Dec. 16. "A lot of the residents' families have come in from out of town and there's a couple of surprises. A couple didn't know their son was coming so there's been tears, so it's really nice," she says. According to Smith-Green, there was a slight hiccup when the horses they'd originally booked for the carriage rides weren't able to come, as there was a mechanical issue with their transport. However, Littlebrook Farm from Madoc galloped into the breach and the carriage rides were able to be put on as scheduled. "It's so nice to be part of a small community where everyone comes together to help out," she says. Overall, Riverstone Residence Christmas had music, hot dogs, sweets and refreshments like coffee, tea, hot chocolate and apple cider. They also had live music with local musician Paul Richard performing at 3:30 p.m. for the residents and their families. Smith-Green said the day was pretty simple, just visiting and getting the families together. "We did it last year for the first time, because we'd just bought Riverstone. I found last year some of the residents didn't reach out to their families so I did it for them this year so that more families could come," she says. Smith-Green told Bancroft This Week that they thought it was a very magical day. "Lots of laughter and smiles from everyone," she says. "We are already starting to plan next year!"