
MENNO PLACE

National Grandparents Day Party – just like the local fair!

The generations came together in a party that felt “just like Playland” (huge local fair) at Menno Place this past weekend. With bouncy castles, a photo booth, fair food and the Korean Hurricane Drum Line, Menno Place celebrated National Grandparent’s Day with gusto. Over 600 people joined in the fun. Forty volunteers served 60L of ice cream, 550 hot dogs and over 300 cotton candy cones.

Abbotsford, BC – September 14, 2015 – Menno Place residents are all smiles as they recollect the amazing National Grandparents Day Party that took place this past weekend. Residents invited children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren to play with them in the 1 acre secure courtyard that is the center of the Menno Place campus. More than 600 people joined in the festivities!

“This is just like Playland!”, said one resident, referencing the huge local fair. He was hosting five of his great-grandchildren. All smiles, he led them to the cotton candy station where they all enjoyed a blue bundle of whipped sugar. Their next stop? The bouncy castles!

With bouncy castles, bean bag toss, a craft table sponsored by The Reach Gallery, storytime sponsored by The Fraser Valley Library, a photo booth, live entertainment, hot dogs, popcorn, bubble station, button station, temporary tattoos and karaoke, there wasn’t time to sit still. Children brought their energy and their joy to the senior’s campus of care.

When Mickey and Minnie Mouse made their appearance, both the children and the seniors broke into smiles. High-fives, big hugs and family photos with the legendary mice brought the generations together in a way that helps to solidify the bonds of family.

“This is more than just a party”, says Karen Baillie, CEO of Menno Place, “This is a way of giving our residents the opportunity to share positive family memories across the generations right here in their own home. Some residents can’t get out, so we brought the party here for to them to share.”

The party ran out of hot dogs... twice! “We planned for 300 people and thought that would be a huge success,” said Sharon Simpson, Director of Communications and Stakeholder Engagement, “We couldn’t imagine that so many of our residents would take the opportunity to share this day with their families.”

Over forty volunteers made the event possible by manning booths, providing security, cooking hotdogs, serving popcorn and cotton candy and transporting residents from their homes to the courtyard to take in the festivities. “We served over 60 litres of ice cream!”, laughs Karin Schroeder, a staff member who brought her daughter along to help for the day. An 85 year old senior said, “Dad always said no to cotton candy at the fair when I was a child. We could never afford it. This was the first time I’ve tried it!”

Annette Foster, Resident Care Co-ordinator and staff member for the past 18 years at Menno Place, was excited to see how her passion for seniors could dovetail with her husband, Kelly’s entertainment

company, Joyful Celebrations. It's hard to imagine the day when a bouncy castle is the right entertainment choice for seniors but the two came together perfectly for this captivating party.

“A significant goal for the Recreation Department at Menno Place is to bring the generations together and demystify the stigma of senior care homes”, says Alison Priebe, Recreation Aide who spearheaded the organization of the event. “This event met that goal and forever changed the way those little people will think about visiting great-grandpa or grandma.”

International Grandparents Day was first recognized in Canada in 1995. It is a family day intended to; honor grandparents, give grandparents an opportunity to show love for their children's children; and help children become aware of the strength, information and guidance older people can offer.

Karen Baillie sums it up when she says, “Menno Place's Grandparents Day Party was our opportunity to publicly affirm the identity and importance of grandparents and the vital role they play in the nurturing, upbringing and education of the next generations. It was our privilege to throw them a party!”

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The Reach Gallery Museum

The Reach Gallery Museum Abbotsford aims to be the centre of cultural and creative innovation in the Fraser Valley. www.thereach.ca

Fraser Valley Regional Library

FVRL values open access to library services along with collaboration within the local community. They are an innovative organization deeply invested in the enjoyment, lifelong learning, literacy and vibrant health of communities. www.fvrl.bc.ca

Joyful Celebrations

Joyful Celebrations Entertainment Company seeks to provide all the “extras” to make a party come to life. From bouncy castles to mascots to photo booths to party extras, they bring the party to you! www.joyfulcelebrations.ca

Fraser Valley Junior Korean Drum Team – Hurricane

Performing traditional Korean drumming, the Fraser Valley Junior Korean Drum Team brings vibrancy and energy to their dynamic performance. [Hurricane Drum Team](mailto:hurricanedrum@gmail.com) – contact hurricanedrum@gmail.com

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About Menno Place

Menno Place is one of BC's largest campuses-of-care providing residential care, assisted living, supportive living and independent living to 700 residents in 6 buildings on 11 acres. Founded in 1953 by the Mennonite Benevolent Society, we have been privileged to serve the physical, emotional, spiritual and relational needs of thousands of elders and their families.

<http://www.MennoPlace.ca>

For further information please contact:

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Images:

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/vu6z4xuoqwd0ko7/AABNcSYXAg_2KHHBz-1TECIQa?dl=0

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Annette and Kelly Foster of Joyful Celebrations Entertainment Company