



Community Highlights

Summer 2026

Welcome to the CLAPW newsletter, where we celebrate the achievements of people across Ajax, Pickering, and Whitby. Learn about our core services, from 24-hour accommodation services to employment supports, and hear heartfelt testimonials from families, individuals, volunteers and staff. Get the latest on social activities,

volunteer openings, and CLAPW events that foster inclusion. Together, we can foster true belonging.

[Learn More](#)



A Note From the Executive Director



Summer has flown by, as it always seems to, and it has been a season filled with progress, accomplishments, and memorable moments at CLAPW.

We offered our [Spirit of Summer](#) program in both Ajax and Whitby and officially opened the Watersdown Youth Home. We also launched our [new online payment and registration system](#), hosted a community barbeque in May, and celebrated Caribana together in August. Throughout the summer, people enjoyed the many opportunities to connect with friends, participate in community activities, and make the most of the warmer weather.



Sadly, toward the end of the summer, we lost Jayne Rae T., a person who had been supported by CLAPW since 1985. Jayne was dearly loved and exceptionally well supported by the dedicated staff team at our Cochrane location. She was truly a delight and will be deeply missed by many.



We also said farewell to longtime staff member Steve White, who retired from his position as an overnight staff member at our Pringle location. Steve was a dependable and dedicated employee who served the agency



for more than 36 years. We thank him for his many years of service and wish him a happy, healthy, and well-deserved retirement.

We are looking forward to our upcoming Annual General Meeting, where we will screen the movie created by the Screening Society group from our Community Connections program. And yes, there will be popcorn!

We are also thrilled to have been selected as the Charity of Choice for the Ajax Waterfront Race, taking place on October 4. You will find more information about the event later in this newsletter, and there is still time to get involved!



And, we have officially begun our work around housing navigation through a Thriving Communities Fund grant by the Region of Durham.

We are sorry to see the WeCandle project come to an end. The founder made the difficult decision to wind down production because the revenue generated through candles sales was not sufficient to sustain the project. Although we are sad to see it go, participants developed valuable job skills, strengthened their resumes, and gained meaningful work experience that will serve them well as they begin searching for new employment opportunities.



So, grab a cup of coffee, or perhaps a refreshing summer beverage, and enjoy this edition of our newsletter!



Community Spotlight

Run, Walk or Cheer -- Join Us at the Ajax Waterfront Race!



Community Living Ajax Pickering and Whitby is incredibly honoured to be the charity of choice for the [2026 Ajax Waterfront Race](#), taking place on Sunday, October 4, at Rotary Park in Ajax.

We extend our sincere thanks to the Ajax Waterfront Race Organizing Committee for selecting CLAPW as this year's charity partner and for the tremendous work involved in planning such an inclusive community event. The committee's generosity, leadership and commitment to bringing people together will have a meaningful and lasting impact on the people and families we support. We are truly grateful for this partnership and for the opportunity to be part of this special day.

Funds raised through the race will support the development of CLAPW's Housing Lead Project, funded in part through the Region of Durham's Resilient Communities Fund. This important initiative will help people with developmental disabilities and their families explore housing options, prepare for future housing needs and connect with valuable community resources.

There are many ways to get involved. Participants can [register](#) for the Kids' 1K, 5K, 15K or 20K Challenge. People of all abilities and experience levels are encouraged to participate—you can run, walk or move at the pace that works best for you. Neurodivergent participants are warmly welcomed and encouraged to register.

Not interested in completing a race? You can still support the event by volunteering, making a donation, sponsoring a participant or coming out to cheer everyone on. Every contribution will help make the day a success and support more inclusive housing opportunities in Durham Region.

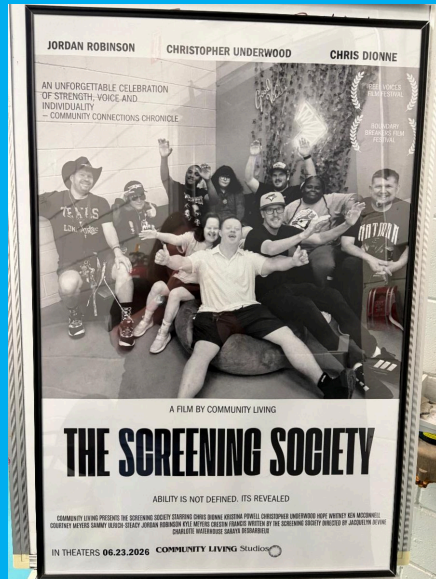
The race begins at 8:30 a.m. at [Rotary Park](#), located at 177 Lake Driveway West in Ajax. [Online registration](#) is open until October 1, 2026. Please note that current registrations do not include a race shirt.

Register, donate or learn more through [Race Roster](#), or visit the [Ajax Waterfront Race website](#).

Once again, thank you to the Ajax Waterfront Race Organizing Committee, its sponsors, volunteers and community partners for supporting CLAPW and helping to advance inclusion in our community. Let's show up in full force for a wonderful day of community, inclusion and purpose!

Submitted by Lisa McNee Baker

Community Connections



The Screening Society: When Creativity Takes Centre Stage

A few years ago, an idea was born: What if we made a movie?

The idea began when a person supported through CLAPW's Community Connections program dreamed of making a film. What started as a creative vision soon grew into something much bigger. Staff began creating fun, short films inspired by the interests, personalities, and strengths of the individuals we support. Over the years, we experimented with small projects, and discovered



Throughout the film, they share their personalities, interests, talents, and the things that make them who they are.

More than simply making a movie, the project gave them an opportunity to express themselves, try something new, learn new skills, work as a team, and see their ideas come to life.

After months of creativity, laughter, learning, and hard work, the moment they had been waiting for finally arrived.

On June 23, *The Screening Society* held its premiere at Cineplex Pickering. Family, friends, staff, and members of the community gathered to celebrate and watch the finished project on the big screen.

For the filmmakers, it was more than just a movie premiere. It was a moment of accomplishment to celebrate

creative was to turn ideas into stories.

Then, over the last year and a half, that little idea began to grow into something extraordinary.

With the generous support of Ontario Power Generation, we were able to purchase equipment, costumes, props, and everything needed to take our filmmaking to the next level. More importantly, we were able to create a space where creativity could take centre stage, and where everyone involved could bring their own ideas, talents, and personalities to the project.

And so, *The Screening Society* was born.

Eleven individuals, each with their own abilities, skills, interests, and perspectives, came together with one shared goal: to create a film that was truly about them, by them.

The result is a collection of interviews, short films, and movie trailers that give audiences a glimpse into who these individuals are.

everything they had accomplished.

As the film played, the pride in the room was unmistakable. There were huge smiles, plenty of excitement, and an incredible sense of accomplishment as everyone watched their creation come to life on the big screen.

What began years ago as one person's idea had grown into a collaborative creative project that brought 11 unique voices together.

The Screening Society is proof that when creativity is encouraged, ideas are given room to grow, and people are given the opportunity to showcase their strengths, something truly special that can happen.

And this may only be the beginning. The cameras are ready, the creativity is flowing, and who knows what *The Screening Society* will create next?

Submitted by Jacquelyn Devine, Direct Support Professional

Volunteer Impact

Celebrating a Summer of Volunteer Engagement

This summer has been filled with energy, learning, connection, and community spirit, thanks to the many volunteers and student placements who have generously shared their time and talents with us.

We are incredibly grateful to our 34 dedicated volunteers and 11 college placement students who have supported programs, activities, and residents across our organization. Their enthusiasm, compassion, and

commitment have helped create meaningful experiences for everyone they serve.

We have also been fortunate to welcome five community groups who volunteered their time with us throughout the summer. These partnerships brought fresh ideas, exciting activities, and memorable moments for participants of all ages.

A special thank you goes to the volunteers from the Sanctus Church Youth Group, who joined our Summer Program to lead soccer skills and drills. Their energy and encouragement kept participants active, engaged, and having fun while developing new skills.

In July, 10 Youth in Policing participants spent time with us running a variety of activities for the Summer Program. Their leadership, creativity, and positive attitude helped make the program both enjoyable and enriching.

We were also delighted by visits from our four-legged friends. Therapeutic Paws of Canada made two visits to the Summer Program, bringing plenty of smiles, comfort, and companionship. In addition, Sunshine Therapy Dogs visited a couple of the homes, providing people with opportunities for connection, joy, and therapeutic interaction.

Adding an extra layer of discovery and excitement to the summer, volunteers from Let's Talk Science engaged Summer Program participants in a few awesome hands-on experiments. These interactive activities sparked curiosity and encouraged learning.

As we reflect on another successful summer, we are reminded of the incredible difference volunteers make every day. Whether sharing expertise, leading activities, offering companionship, or supporting programs behind the scenes, our volunteers enrich the lives of those we serve and strengthen our community.

Thank you to all of our volunteers, students, and community partners for making this summer one to remember. Your generosity and dedication are truly appreciated!

Submitted by Sharon Burgess, Volunteer Services Lead



Sanctus Church Group



Youth in Policing



Let's Talk Science



Therapeutic Paws of Canada



Volunteer Spotlight: Michayla and Sophia

For the past year, Michayla and Sophia have been bringing creativity, fun, and connection to participants at Community Connections through the weekly art group they lead.

Their dedication and enthusiasm shine through in every session as they plan and facilitate engaging art projects that encourage self-expression, creativity, and social interaction. Participants look forward to each group and take great pride in the artwork they create, often eager to share their finished projects with others.

Michayla and Sophia consistently go above and beyond to make each activity enjoyable, welcoming, and accessible to everyone. Their patience, creativity, and positive energy have helped make the art group a valued and well-loved part of Community Connections.

Thank you, Michayla and Sophia, for your commitment and for the joy and inspiration you bring to our participants each week. Your efforts have made a lasting impact, and we are truly grateful for all that you do!

Employment Supports

Advocacy in Action

Andy N., a participant in the CLAPW Employment Supports program, was recently featured in a Global News story highlighting the grassroots effort in Ajax to save historic Hartrick House. As a group organizer, Andy brought local residents together to raise awareness and advocate for the preservation of this important piece of Ajax's heritage. His involvement demonstrated the power of community participation, leadership, and taking action to make a meaningful difference close to home.

[View the Story on Global News](#)

Supported Independent Living

Summer Fun & Adventures Continue!

The summer fun is still going strong! The people in the Supported Independent Living (SIL) Program have been enjoying opportunities to get out, try new things, and take part in activities they enjoy.

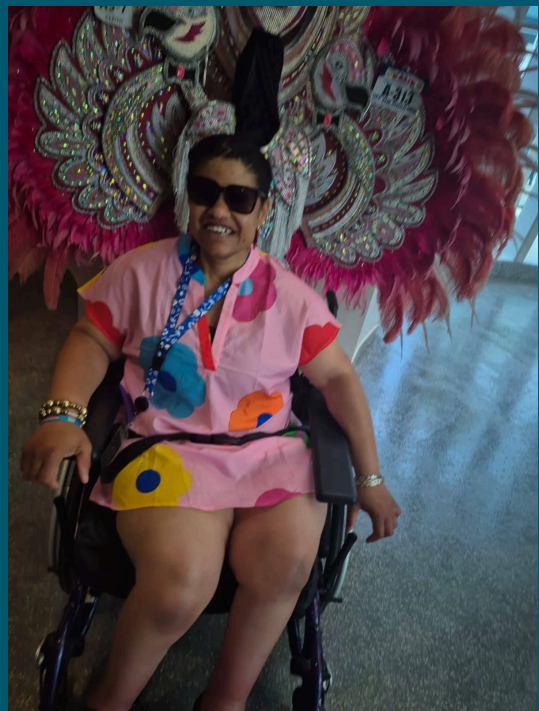
During the last week in August, people had the chance to visit the Canadian National Exhibition (CNE) and enjoy a day filled with summer entertainment and activities.

People have also been staying active in the community. One person has been enjoying keeping score for a local baseball league, combining a love of baseball with an opportunity to get involved and contribute.

Looking ahead, September promises even more fun, with outings planned to a Toronto Blue Jays game, a boat cruise in Peterborough, and Centre Island in Toronto.

From baseball to boat rides and everything in between, there are plenty of opportunities to enjoy the season, spend time with others, and create great memories!

[Learn More About the SIL Program](#)



Cheers for Peers



Jacquelyn D.: July Employee of the Month

Jacquelyn makes a meaningful difference every day through her compassion, creativity, and dedication to the people we support. She played a key role in *The Screening Society*, helping participants create films showcased at Cineplex and ensuring everyone had the opportunity to shine.

Whether supporting participants, welcoming new staff, or taking on new challenges, Jacquelyn brings positivity and care to everything she does.



Forestview: July Team of the Month

The Forestview team has been selected as July Team of the Month in recognition of their dedication, teamwork, and resilience. In a challenging and ever-changing environment, the team consistently demonstrates compassion and professionalism while providing person-directed care that prioritizes each resident's dignity, choices, safety, and well-being. Even on the toughest days, they continue to support one another and the people they serve with positivity and commitment. This well-deserved recognition celebrates the incredible impact they make every day!



Vrushti P.: August Employee of the Month

In her time at CLAPW, Vrushti has made a positive impact on the people she supports and her team.

Starting with us as an enthusiastic student, she has grown into a valued member of our staff.

Vrushti brings a calm, friendly, and positive attitude to every shift, along with genuine care and attention for everyone around her.

Spirit of Summer: August Team of the Month

The Spirit of Summer team made an incredible impact throughout the summer. Their dedication, creativity, professionalism, flexibility, and enthusiasm were instrumental in creating a successful and memorable program.

Each team member brought care, commitment, and positive energy to their work, making a meaningful difference in the lives of the people they supported. CLAPW is incredibly grateful for their hard work and dedication, and for the wonderful team that helped make this summer one to remember!



Upcoming Events

COMMUNITY LIVING
Ajax-Pickering and Whitby
Inspiring Possibilities



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING



With a special movie screening



DATE & TIME:

Monday September 21, 2026

5:30 PM

Doors Open

6:00-6:45 PM

Movie Screening

6:45 PM

Business Meeting Begins

LOCATION:

The Ajax Centre for the Arts (formerly the St. Francis Centre)

78 Church Street South, Ajax, Ontario L1S 6B3

AGENDA

Featuring a movie by
the Screening Society
of Community
Connections

- Board Elections
- Auditor Presentation
- Annual Report

Staff Service Awards

Light refreshments will be served throughout the evening

Inspiring possibilities

RSVP to dana.sullivan@clapw.org by Monday September 14, 2026

ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY

FRIDAY
NOVEMBER 20TH, 2026
6:00PM - 12:00AM



AJAX CONVENTION CENTRE
550 BECK CRESCENT, AJAX, ON



TICKETS AVAILABLE ON OUR WEBSITE:
WWW.CLAPW.ORG/SITE/HOME

TICKETS ON SALE FROM SEP 14 UNTIL NOV 13

NO EXTENSIONS ON TICKET SALES

\$55 PER PERSON

DINNER AT 6:45PM

- RAFFLE TABLES WITH FESTIVE PRIZES
- HOLIDAY TUNES AND DANCING

Community Living Ajax Pickering and Whitby | 36 Emperor St. | Ajax, ON L1S 1M7 CA

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