



Making Life Better for Local Seniors with Every Step

Melanie Freeman, 54, came to Carefor Civic Complex in 2021 after the passing of her mother and caregiver, Lucille. Admitting that “it was really scary” at first, she quickly made friends finding a home at Civic.

Soon she was thriving, participating in almost all activities at the home, even becoming the “unofficial PSW” supporting Activity Coordinator, Nikki Ewing in the home’s activities and leading them when Nikki was away.

In 2024, Carefor participated in the Grand Parade, a pledge-based walk. Melanie immediately joined, reaching out to everyone she knew (and approaching many people she didn’t). Alone she raised \$2,600, which was used to purchase new furniture at both Carefor retirement homes. She beamed with pride at her accomplishment.

“It’s amazing what can happen when a community comes together around one of its own.”

Carefor President & CEO, Steve Perry

So when Carefor chose not to participate in the Grand Parade in 2025, Melanie was disappointed but after a short conversation something new and uniquely Melanie’s was born: Care for Seniors with Melanie.

Through this campaign Melanie would walk every day to raise money for recreation and activities related equipment, outings and entertainment at the two homes. As someone who fully understood what recreation can mean to seniors who might not be able to afford activities in the community, Melanie

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threw her heart and soul into this campaign, and the community responded.

Melanie comes off as shy and soft-spoken so you wouldn't think she would know many people, but it appeared that everyone knows Melanie and they were more than happy to support her campaign.

It kicked off with a \$2,500 donation from Brian Mulvihill from Mulvihill Drug Mart. Then Melanie received donations from people like Pembroke Mayor, Ron Gervais, Deputy Mayor Brian Abdallah, former MPP Hec Clouthier and many others.

And Melanie earned every dollar, walking over 324,000 steps over the two month campaign, spending time at the Pembroke Mall and going on the radio multiple times to raise awareness.

When the campaign ended on New Year's Eve, Melanie had raised \$20,000, far exceeding her goal of \$12,000.

What was most remarkable was how the community supported Melanie. Carefor President & CEO Steve Perry commented, "It's amazing what can happen when a community comes together around one of its own."



Pembroke Deputy Mayor Brian Abdallah shows his support to Melanie



Brian Mulvihill kicks off the campaign with a \$2,500 donation



Pembroke Mayor Ron Gervais helps Melanie exceed her goal



Remembering Former Carefor Board Chair & Supporter Glenna MacKenzie

We were saddened to learn of the passing of Glenna MacKenzie, former Chair of Carefor's Board of Directors, and an Honorary Life Member since November 2021.

Glenna's commitment to Carefor and the communities we serve spanned decades. She first joined the VON Board of Directors in 1987, a role that marked the beginning of her extraordinary journey with Carefor.

Her leadership and vision shaped much of what Carefor is today and her contributions to the organization and the broader community

are far too numerous to count. Glenna championed every Carefor endeavour with passion and generosity—her most recent donation to the *Care for Seniors with Melanie* campaign coming just weeks before her passing.

Her dedication to our mission, vision, and values is woven into the very fabric of Carefor. Her legacy will live on through all we do and through her son, John MacKenzie, who serves as our current Board Chair and her granddaughter Kyra Swift who is a community member on Carefor's Finance and Risk Management committee.

Curl for Carefor Bonspiel Sweeps in the Fun and the Funds



On February 7th, 24 curlers of varying skill levels got together to sweep their hearts out to help raise money for Carefor Civic Complex and Mackay Centre.

We raised \$3,000 (and a few pints in the process) that will go towards much needed equipment and furniture at Civic Complex and Mackay Centre.



SATURDAY, June 6, 2026 | 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Carefor Civic Complex

(425 Cecelia Street, Pembroke, ON)

BBQ: For a donation
(all proceeds go to Carefor)

Car Entry: By registration



Enjoy mouthwatering BBQ and more!



People's Choice Award (vote on your favourite entry)

For more information and/or to register your vehicles contact Wendy at

(833) 922-2734 X 2298 or wknechtel@carefor.ca

Life at Civic & Mackay



Happy Halloween!



We said goodbye to our beloved nurse, Helen, who passed last year.



Spirit Week at Civic and Mackay.



Residents fell in love with Activity Coordinator, Nikki's grandson.



Tie-dyeing was a groovy scene.



PSW Suzie came in on her day off to spread Christmas cheer.

More than Buildings More than a Community

Carefor Mackay Centre and Civic Complex are both Ottawa Valley landmarks with long and rich histories in our community. Civic Complex was once the Civic Hospital where many people in the area were born; and Mackay Centre, commonly known as the "Mother House", was home to the Grey Sisters for many years..

Both were purchased by Carefor, and since then have been home to hundreds if not thousands of seniors. The buildings have stood tall for decades and have seen many people come and go. As with all things, time can take its toll. Such is the case for these two buildings.

Repairs and upgrades are ongoing realities of these homes as we ensure they remain safe and comfortable for our residents.



Mackay Centre

This year we have some significant renovations coming, such as roof repairs, new windows at Civic Complex and renovating washrooms at Mackay to make them more accessible.

As anyone with a home knows, renovations come with a significant cost. To prevent these costs being passed onto residents in the form of rent increases, we are fortunate to have the support of donors.

If you are able to, please consider a donation to keep these community landmarks safe and strong for local seniors.

Carefor

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