

Scotch, champagne on tap to raise funds for local vintage seniors



It's a good year for scotch, champagne, and CHATS' Community & Home Assistance to Seniors.

The organization, which provides supports to help elder residents age in place as long as possible, will signal the start of spring with a series of fundraising tastings celebrating some of our favourite tipples.

Drams will be hoisted on Tuesday, March 21, in the first fundraiser, 'Better with Age,' featuring a scotch tasting evening with whisky sommelier Keith Scott and the Aurora Whisky Society.

Billed as an 'interactive experience in the world of whisky,' the event will take place at The Shed Stonehaven Banquet Hall with a three-course buffet meal by Chef Roger Wakileh.

'On behalf of myself and the Aurora Whisky Society, we are very proud to be entering our ninth year supporting CHATS' Better with Age Scotch Tasting,' said Scott. 'Our ongoing partnership with CHATS helps seniors in our community live their best life at home and in their communities.'

CHATS CEO Christina Bisanz says CHATS is 'thrilled' to continue the partnership into another year, noting that funds raised will go a long way to helping local seniors in the community.

'Social events demonstrate how important it is to be engaged and active, learning something new, and being connected to your community,' she said. 'Through activities like this, CHATS is able to raise funds to help us deliver and expand programs that keep our clients socially connected with friends, family and their community, helping them to live well and improve their physical, mental and emotional wellbeing.'

While the Better with Age program is nearing its first decade supporting CHATS, the non-profit is offering a second tasty way to support the organization and the seniors they serve, moving from the grain to the grape.

On April 25 at the historic Aurora Armoury, Bubbles & Smiles will be the first CHATS champagne tasting, an event inspired by the journey Colleen Jones, Vice Chair of CHATS, experienced with her own mother.

A year prior to the pandemic, when her mother needed care, Jones had to move across the country to make that happen.

'Like most seniors, my mom did not want to move from her home, but living on her own, without help, was no longer viable,' said

Jones in a statement. "Regrettably, the community where she lived did not have the types of supports she needed."

CHATS picks up the thread: "Unfortunately, Colleen's mother passed away in 2020. But the experience opened Colleen's eyes to the plight of hundreds of thousands of seniors and caregivers in similar positions. In an effort to ensure that seniors and caregivers can access the supports they need to successfully age at home, Jones—now back in York Region—decided to raise funds for CHATS, a not-for-profit that provides the types of supports that she and her mother so desperately needed but were unavailable."

Her brainchild, Bubbles & Smiles, is a champagne tasting, led by sommelier Melvyn Ong, with a selection of hors d'oeuvre paired to each sip of bubbly.

"This event is intended to provide a new and engaging evening of culinary learning for participants while raising awareness of the programs and services for older adults and their caregivers provided by CHATS," said Bisanz. "We are grateful to be able to offer the expertise of Melvyn Ong for this special event."

Tickets for both events are on sale now.

For information and tickets to the Better with Age Scotch Tasting event on March 21, visit chatsbetterwithage.com. For the Bubbles & Smiles Champagne Tasting on April 25, visit chatsbubblesandsmiles.ca.

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