

Easing into the next evolution

The key may be hiring your very own downsizing diva

Matthew Strader

mstrader@caledonenterprise.com

Brenda Alderdice is a helpful lady.

And now, she's a diva.

One of the most popular volunteer faces at the senior centre, her friends describe her as a "go getter," "dedicated" and "loving."

And clients are beginning to say the same about the latest franchise owner for The Downsizing Diva.

The Downsizing Diva is a franchise that assists seniors in one of the more stressful times of their lives – the time to downsize.

"I couldn't have done it without her," said client Adele, who Alderdice recently helped move from a large four bedroom home into a comfortable two bedroom condo. "My husband is in a nursing home, and my brother is mentally handicapped. I didn't have anyone to help me, and the whole situation felt really overwhelming."

That is where the diva's work comes in.

"It can be something as simple as helping pay off bills and close accounts to the stress of the actual physical move," said Alderdice. "It all depends on what the client needs to make their transition easier."

And making transitions smooth is the goal.

The Diva's are about finding moving and downsizing solutions for seniors. As their website claims, "two thirds of all the people who have ever reached the age of 65 are alive today."

In other words, there are a number of people about to enter a difficult time at an age when they may not want to deal with difficult tasks.

"It's a big relief to have things taken off your hands," said Adele.

And Alderdice, according to her client, may be the perfect person to take these things on in Caledon.

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Avoid chaos

Sometimes the key is simple organization

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According to Adele, she had a lot of classic problems. She had a number of things with sentimental value. Tough to get rid of, she said. She had an overwhelming amount of things to organize for sale. But where should she take them? she wondered.

"I didn't have any idea where I could take my furniture and make some money off of it, and she had all those answers."

Alderdice has a number of her things at consignment stores that she had contacts with, Adele said — meaning that she may get a little spending cash from some of her things. An avid volunteer, Alderdice also knew some really nice places to take some of her things for donations.

"She's got places she can take these things to help battered wives, to help the poor, or people don't have things," said Adele. "She packed them up, took them with her, took garbage to the dump, recycled things and really helped me make tough decisions. She was good at establishing what I needed and didn't. A lot has sentimental value, so it can be hard to choose, but she was firm with me,

fair and encouraging. It ended up being fun."

Adele said that when the movers came, she was ready. Her diva had everything packed thanks to a productive crew of helpers. She sold some other stuff through websites and even helped unpack at the new condo.

"She came to my new place and directed the movers, helped decide where to put things, it was a revelation," said Adele.

"Where before I was wondering if I could do this, she made it comfortable. I could not have done it without her."

For Alderdice, it's simply about planning and being prepared.

"It's just crucial for a senior to start thinking about the future," she said. "What we stress

is as you age you need to have a plan. If you don't then often times we see a crisis occur, and then it's chaos for the kids and the families."

Are you looking to move, and are you overwhelmed by the process?

Then contact your own diva, and make the whole experience fun.

www.downsizingdiva.com

brenda@downsizingdiva.com

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-Brenda Alderdice



Without the help of Brenda Alderdice (right), downsizing client (Adele) said moving out of her four bedroom home would have been impossible. But with the help of the determined and kind Downsizing Diva, she called her experience became a pleasure.