



HOSPICE HAPPENINGS

VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER

In previous newsletters and through emails and Zoom meetings, we have learned about how things at the Hospice Simcoe Residence have had to change because of the pandemic. Mostly, we've looked at it through the lens of a volunteer, noticing how our roles have altered during the past three months. This month we offer a look through the eyes of a daughter whose Mom was a resident in March when everything changed. Nena Lamarre chose to remain in Hospice Simcoe with her mom, Helen Kaczanowski. Here is Nena's story.

I Will Always Remember

It's my birthday today, the first time in my memory that my Mom won't be arriving with an arrangement of peonies from her garden to celebrate my birth. She died April 7, 2020, almost exactly two months ago. I miss her every day, but especially today.

Midsummer Sound, the summer music program I help run with my daughter, Janice LaMarre, held two benefit faculty concerts a few years ago, to raise funds for Hospice Simcoe. Little did I know that Mom would spend the last three months of her life there, and that I would be in residence with her for the final three weeks.

Mom had a terrific fear of nursing homes. Her wish to die at home was made very clear. When she suffered a stroke in 2017, she spent seven weeks in hospital and then moved home. It was my privilege and honour to care for her there, with the help of my loving husband.

We had two years at home together, but the time came that I was no longer able to care for her. How blessed we were that there was a bed available at Hospice Simcoe the very day that Mom needed one.

The compassionate care and support given not only to Mom, but to myself and other members of the family, was such a gift. Our journey began before the pandemic, so we got to witness the army of volunteers that make life there a thing of beauty. A busy kitchen, musical afternoons, spiritual care and friendly visits from Daisy the therapy dog and her human; all went into making the transition from home to Hospice much easier. We spent hours there, but did go home every night.

Things got much more complicated once the pandemic hit and Hospice went into lockdown. Visitors could no longer come and go. If you came in, you stayed. If you left, you could not come in again. The decision was an easy one. I stayed.

I Will Always Remember

Staff was reduced, volunteers were no more, and physical distancing and other measures were put into place. The family members of the residents became very close, as we shared an exceptional and unique time. We talked together, sang together, laughed together, and cried together. We prayed together. We were physically distanced, but so very close in heart and mind.



Nena with her mom, Helen... a few years ago!

It was a healing time for me, being in residence at Hospice Simcoe during the pandemic of 2020. Playing keyboard and jumbay with Lori and Garrett (those two deserve a chapter of their own!), teaching my piano students via Skype from the Quiet room, lovely walks and quiet time in the graveyard next door, cleaning up the grounds for therapy, and arranging 120 tulips for the rooms were just some of the ways I spent my days there. After three precious weeks of days and nights with my beloved mother, she passed quietly in the night. My time there ended with a most beautiful 'walk of life' in her honour, held outside on a perfect spring day, with the sun shining and birds singing. It is a time I will always remember.

Book Review

Moody Cow Meditates written by Kerry Lee MacLean is a fun and explorative way to communicate with children about "moody feelings".

Peter the Moody Cow explores his bad *everything* from a bad dream to a sister who draws on his skateboard, to missing the bus and falling off his bike. His grandfather is a great listener and reminds him that it is okay to feel the feelings.

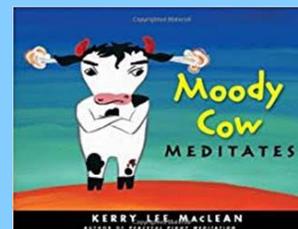
Grandfather shows him how to make a Mind Jar. An empty jar, glitter, glycerin and some dish liquid is all that you need.

The water in the jar is your mind's natural state. A pinch of glitter for each thought that you notice. When you are ready you can put the lid on tightly and mix it up. You will see all of your sparkles (Thoughts) spinning around and rushing around the water. Set the jar down and breathe out slowly.

Watch the glitter settle down to the bottom.

Your thoughts will settle too.

"It all started one stupid, rotten day when everything went wrong..."



Many thanks to Danielle for telling us about this wonderful children's book.

WHAT HAVE OUR VOLUNTEERS BEEN UP TO?



Sharron Bowden and Kelly Davis helped out with gardening and windows. Mike Ramsay cleaned windows as well.



Thanks to all the volunteers who have brought baked goods and meals to the house!



Jeff and Jenn Green have often cooked Holiday dinners at Hospice Simcoe. This year they also prepared a Father's Day meal. Because they couldn't be at the residence they BBQ'd ribs and pulled chicken and made coleslaw, baked beans and pies, all of which they delivered to the House. Thanks so much!



Have you read a good book lately? Have you seen a good movie? Do you have a favourite podcast? Let us know so we can share your suggestions with our readers.

Doris: **Netflix documentary "A Secret Love"**. The story of Terry Donahue and Phil Henschel.

Sandi: **Crime Junkies Podcast**

Danielle: **"From Here to Eternity"**- Travelling the World to Find a Good Death- Caitlin Doughty ...fantastic book!

Sam: **The Politician** Season 2 Netflix





AT HOME MEMORIAL SERVICE

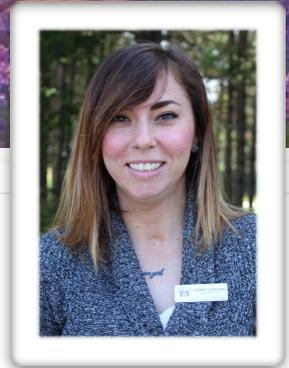
An ongoing tradition at Hospice Simcoe has been the twice yearly Memorial Services held to remember the residents who have died in the previous year. In June and December family members, friends and volunteers gather to celebrate the lives of those who have passed through our doors. It is a time of healing and of reuniting with others who are on the same path.

*This Spring we were unable to hold this service.
Carol Holden suggests some ways this could be done at home.*

Along with the myriad of emotions that appears with all the unknowns of this unprecedented pandemic, comes the overwhelming grief for families who have lost loved ones and are unable to honour them with a funeral service. As we know, the ceremony is an extremely important part of our grief process so families are encouraged to prepare a memorial service for their loved ones during these social gathering restrictions. Some suggestions are to gather family (and friends) that are in your 'social bubble' to a home memorial service. Encourage all to gather their favourite photos of their loved one to display on a storyboard. For other family and friends who are unable to physically attend, invite them to provide photos, as well as a poem or favourite memory they would like shared at the memorial. This allows them to start their grief process and creates an inclusiveness in the ceremony. Selecting songs that are important to the family is a gentle way to commence and end the memorial. Lighting a candle while the music is played is a great way to honour the deceased and creates the rituals of a funeral. Encourage all who are in attendance to share their favourite memory, story, and reflections of their relationship with the loved one. Don't forget to include children in the processes. Technology provides for family to remotely join the ceremony, a great way to continue to 'check in' with each other as well as to create a community support on social media sites where photos, videos and reflections can be shared. Participating in family and personal activities outside of a ceremony becomes very meaningful for family members to remember their loved ones. Making a memory box, photobooks, video collection, or gratitude journals are some ideas to consider. Remember there is no right or wrong way to celebrate the life of your loved one; do what is important and personal to you and your family and know that there are a variety of support groups available through Hospice.

BEREAVEMENT UPDATE

from Colleen



How to describe 2020? To say the least, it has been interesting. On one hand it has been full of grief as we have watched COVID-19 sweep across the globe, taking many lives and leaving many more bereaved. It has been stressful as we have been scrambling to establish a new normal in a world where things are seemingly changing every day, sometimes every hour. It has been emotionally and mentally difficult as we have had to stay away from our loved ones to protect their health and ours. If one were to focus on such events, it would appear as if the world is all doom and gloom. Except a lot of good has been going on as well. Look no further than Hospice Simcoe and you will see some of that good. The bereavement volunteers have been a prime example of some of the positive things that are happening. Thanks to their compassion and dedication, we have been able to quickly rise to the challenges COVID-19 imposed and pivot our programs so they can be provided virtually; making sure those bereaved in our community are not left out in the cold during the pandemic.

As of today we can say that all of our programs have been transitioned onto the virtual platforms Hospice has adopted, such as Zoom and Crowdstack. Grieving is a difficult enough process, let alone when it is through a pandemic and you are being asked to physically distance yourself from those who could be of great support. That is one of the many reasons our clients truly appreciate the effort you volunteers have made to keep our programs running and what you are doing to support them.

It is often said that it takes a village to raise a child. I feel that sentiment rings true for those who are grieving as it takes a village to help them through the process. Thank you for showing our clients they have a village no matter what.

••••• Programs Available:

••••• Availability of programs varies due to season and interest. Listed below are programs the bereavement team is still offering during COVID-19. For more information, please contact Amy or Colleen at (705)725-1140.

- **Book Club Coffee Talk Grief Literacy Mindfulness Meditation**
- **One to one support Psychoeducational Groups Smart Grief Workshops**
- **Teen Drop In Walking Group Yoga for Grief**

What's Happening?



From the Chair.....

Hello Everyone, Well, we got some great news from Kelly this morning at the town hall meeting that many of you attended. It is so exciting to be making plans to have volunteers return to work at Hospice. I know that many of you have continued providing services through gardening, dropping meals off as well as some virtual client support. Many thanks for assisting during these difficult times. It was so encouraging to hear that many of you will be engaging in the training and want to step back into your roles. For me personally, the social isolation has been worse than any fear of the virus.

Thanks to those who were able to attend the virtual AGM. There were many good news stories related to all the successes Hospice has enjoyed over the past year. There were record breaking fund

raising events, high volunteer hours, new programs and services and heart warming stories from clients. I feel so privileged and proud to be part of such an amazing organization.

We were sad to bid farewell to two Directors, who have each completed their terms. Shane Mayes and Alison McFarland will be missed. Their contributions were extremely valuable as we continue to develop our skills and strive for excellence. Thank you Shane and Alison. We are also pleased to welcome three new Directors to the Board. They all bring unique experience contributing to a diverse skill set required for Board activities. Scott Ward, Dr. Giulio Didiodato and Katie Grasmeyer were voted in at the AGM and unanimously supported by current Directors. Their profiles will be posted on the website. The election of officers also took place. Andrew Matthews remains as Treasurer, Sharon Hannigan as Secretary, Cindy Taylor as Vice Chair and myself as Chair. Although we were prepared to have me step down to Past Chair, a special resolution has allowed me to serve up to another year, providing stability during this ever changing environment. Take good care. Looking forward to seeing you.

Sincerely, Chris

Do you have a Hospice story you would like to share? email our Editor, Sandi at hospicesimcoenewsletter@gmail.com

RE ENGAGING VOLUNTEERS

from Kathy & Tonya



It is hard to believe that it has been 4 months since the world of COVID 19 descended upon us and our way of working at Hospice Simcoe. But in spite of the changes in our world you, the Volunteers, have managed to pivot and continue to provide service to our clients, residents and their families in very meaningful ways. You have helped us to build on the successful programs that we all know are so supportive for those that we serve. We know that we will have to shift our way of "doing business" and it will be done with the utmost care of safety for everyone and hopefully allow a comfortable way to expand your "bubble". We will continue to serve many clients through our technology and we have heard many positive stories about the benefits of this type of connection although we know that in person would be our preference.



We will be offering some additional training for the reception and kitchen teams in hopes that they will come and help us to fill those very important roles in the residence. For those that are comfortable to resume face to face visits on a porch or within the residential facility we will also offer additional training for those Volunteers. This doesn't necessarily mean that every visit will need to be face to face but once relationship is established it might be somewhat easier to meet through technology.

Safety and risk management are the top priorities with any of these new opportunities and Kelly is in constant contact with the local health unit for support. We certainly believe that there will be a return to the earlier days of COVID in the fall and we may have to ask Volunteers to step back again.

I understand the many benefits of volunteering including the sense of helping in our community, fellowship and our own mental health. We understand that these options may not work for everyone but please know that many of you bring years of life experience and hospice training to the table and are very valuable to us and our community. I'm happy to hear if you have other ideas of how to be involved or how we can use the wealth of knowledge that is within this team and encourage you to reach out to us. Hospice Simcoe is a team of very dedicated staff and volunteers.

Kathy and Tonya

HOSPICE HAPPENINGS

In our Community...

Join us for our annual Hike for Hospice – this year we are going ‘virtual’.

We invite you to virtually hike with us between September 25 and October 4th

Walk, jog, bike, tread mill, climb stairs, skip rope, go to the gym or whatever other activity you can think of. You can choose what day and how you ‘hike’ for us during the 10 day period. Choose whatever distance and skill level is appropriate for you. Whatever you do, please remember to adhere to public health guidelines regarding the number of people who can gather together.

Last year’s event broke a new record with over 700 participants and over \$110,000 raised. Thanks to all of you, this event has become our biggest annual fundraiser.

If you did not keep the pledge form sent to you in March, we would be happy to send you another one or you can register and collect your pledges on-line. Just go to our website <https://www.hospicesimcoe.ca/hike-for-hospice/>

Start collecting your pledges now. If you are collecting cash or cheques and using a paper pledge form, please keep an eye on our Hike page website for updates to let you know when it is safe to bring them to our office. We are currently not able to allow visitors into the office, but if you have a large cheque or don’t want to wait, email me and we will make arrangements.

Visit our Facebook page for regular Hike updates.

Don’t hesitate to contact me if you have questions. lynda@hospicesimcoe.ca

Our thanks to our 2020 Hike Sponsors: Purehealth Pharmacy, Kiwanis Club of Barrie, Barrie Press, Abram’s Service Centre, Allandale Veterinary Hospital, Auto Trim Design, Dalston General Store, Deluxe Taxi, Jeff White Group, Jeff’s Junk, MediGas, Parker Coulter Realty Brokerage, and Plumbtech.

The following had generously offered to provide goods or services for our on-site event. Although their services will not be required for a virtual event, we do want to recognize them:

Barrie Lions Club, Barrie Rotaract Club, Domino’s Pizza, Fox’s Bakery and Deli, LT Event Medical Services, Michael Enterprise, Rock 95/KOOL FM, Signs of Innovation, Snap’d Barrie, Starbucks, and Wild Wing Barrie South.

Like us, Follow us, Engage with us!



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