

# HOSPICE HAPPENINGS

## VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER

### Still Serving Our Community

We reached out to Tammy Pollard this month to find out how life has changed at the Hospice Simcoe residence since the pandemic began. Tammy is the head of our clinical team and has worked many, many extra hours to oversee what's going on these past 40+ days. here is her response to our request.

Thank you, Tammy, and everyone else on your team for carrying on. We wish we could be there with you.



I have been a part of the Hospice Simcoe family since 2010. My primary role is leading and mentoring the clinical team and overseeing residential admissions. I have been a registered nurse for the past 28 years.

I will never forget the date March 11, 2020. The World Health Organization declared a pandemic of the Coronavirus disease, Covid-19. The world as I knew it changed that day. Personally, for my 3 teenagers, everything in their lives came to an abrupt halt including high school, college, jobs, dance, hockey and socializing with friends. Professionally, that next week I was involved with many teleconferences, phone calls and emails while trying to figure out next steps with Kelly as to how our organization would be impacted. We received many directions

from Hospice Palliative Care of Ontario, Simcoe Muskoka Health Unit and the Ontario Ministry of Health. For the next several weeks, guidelines changed day to day - sometimes hourly. We connected with other hospices; the LHIN and our local hospitals to stay connected and let them know of any changes in processes and admissions.

What is the new normal like at Hospice Simcoe? At the beginning of the pandemic, we were given many guidelines. One guideline was that all health care providers should choose one place of employment and not cross between health care areas: we chose to follow that path. About 50% of our clinical team is on a casual basis and working fulltime in other sectors. Our dedicated staff consists of 15 clinical team members. They remain committed, resilient and optimistic.

Our current visitor policy includes having one loved one come in with the resident and stay at Hospice Simcoe for the duration. We are following isolation practices, swabbing for COVID 19 for residents, screening measures for all staff, residents and visitors done twice a day. We are following guidelines for all personal protection equipment (PPE) for our residents. Family members also wear a mask. We are using OTN (Ontario Telemedicine Network) for physician "assessments" with our residents. Families are using Skype and Facetime to 'visit' their loved one. Window visits are allowed at a distance of 6 feet.

COVID 19 has changed all us in some way. When the pandemic started, I was anxious, fearful and worried. They say that every cloud has a silver lining. For me, that includes settling down to a slower pace and taking the time to appreciate my family and colleagues. During morning rounds at Hospice Simcoe, we share laughter, encouragement, inspiration and support. I look forward to this empowerment in my day and hope we always continue with this format. I have really gotten to know my colleagues personally and professionally. I am optimistic and the fear is now behind me.

We miss the volunteers immensely. We miss the hugs, cups of tea and compassion. The care continues as they are sewing masks and gowns for us, dropping off meals for staff and volunteers, sending us cards of encouragement. I know that I couldn't do the job that we do without our volunteers and now know this even more. I look forward to the directives that will bring us all together again. Be well.

# VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION WEEK



## A note from Kathy and Tonya

“Let’s all cheer for our Volunteers” is Volunteer Canada’s theme to celebrate National Volunteer Week this year. Hospice Simcoe would have been gathering at our usual spring luncheon (although we had moved it to May to include more snowbirds) to applaud and celebrate the accomplishments of the Volunteer team over the last year. So while we miss physically seeing each other and catching up, we wanted to share the amazing statistics from last year...to be celebrated!

We had an increase of 1200 volunteer hours recorded this year up 17% over last year. That number speaks to the increase in programs and services while keeping the well-established volunteer positions such as home visiting and the residence filled and working at capacity. Our biggest growth has been in the bereavement, the complementary therapy and family volunteering programs.

YOU, the volunteers, logged **20,873** hours over the past year and a big thanks to everyone who diligently added their hours to Better Impact so that we can use this tool to celebrate your great work.

The administrative volunteers logged over 3600 hours, including newsletter, data entry, reception (residence and bell farm), kitchen support in both facilities was a whopping 3821 hours, grief and bereavement accounted for 2580 hours, residential support including complementary therapy, musicians, spiritual and residential care added 4234 hours, the home visiting team had a record of 2275 hours, fundraisers offered 1000 hours and the important work of the Board, decorators, maintenance and gardeners added to the final total!

As we have journey through this very unprecedented time for the world and Hospice, volunteers have risen to the challenges and continue to support Hospice and our clients in new and unique ways. Thanks for your compassion, dedication and flexibility to move forward together as a team in our new way.

Please help us to account for all of your volunteer hours (adding to Better Impact OR letting Tonya or I know) as we move forward so that we can shine a light on the great work that is accomplished by volunteers at Hospice Simcoe.

All of us at Hospice “applaud” our volunteers and send a heartfelt thank you to each and every one!  
Kathy and Tonya



# WHAT HAVE OUR VOLUNTEERS BEEN UP TO?

We reached out to several volunteers to find out how they're coping in these self isolating times. Everyone expressed how they miss their regular hospice jobs but each of them has kept busy in other ways.



**Donna Goodeill** along with Trish Steele and others have been busy sewing for Hospice Simcoe. Donna's 94 year old mom, Eleonore, who lives in Collingwood, has also been making masks and caps

## **From Cassity Kingswell...**

"I have been chatting with my client via phone and involved with the teen bereavement online program.

I am also in my sewing room making masks and surgical caps for my friends and health care workers.

And ..... I am eating and eating and eating. Lol. I live alone so when I make cookies I get to eat them all!! Lol

I miss my daughter, son in law and my grand babies. It hurts my heart to not hold them but I am grateful for their health. The distanced smiles and

## **From MJ Adams...**

"Walks along the waterfront, reading novels, binge watching Amazon Prime, FaceTime with family, enjoying participating in the online Bereavement 101 course. Zoom time every Friday with my 3 sisters from California, New Hampshire and Windsor.

I am grateful for this downtime. Grateful for the strong Public Health presence in each of our provinces.



## **From Marjan de Jong Deller...**

"Well before this all started I removed wallpaper from our bathroom. What a mess underneath...so had to fix and repair drywall. Dust everywhere. So.. sand wooden stairs to make more mess. Paint bathroom, trim then continue into bedroom down hall and stairs. Clean clean clean.

We walk the dog every morning for an hour. Talk to community client and Living Well participants. Have had a few Zoom get togethers with Hospice people. FaceTime kids, grandkids good friends. Watch several movies, play crib and backgammon. Really miss hospice work and people but getting a lot done at home. Take care all and hope to see you soon."



## **From Carol Holden...**

"Here's what I've been up to..."

Zoom has been the yield to keep in contact with our Hospice team for newsletter writing as well as for 1:1 bereavement sessions. Creating a Facebook page for our Volunteers has kept me busy posting positive items as well as Hospice updates. This has been a great time to catch up on writing and photo projects and I'm currently creating a 'Book of Awesome' for our family just in time for Mother's Day. Also...we are primary caregivers for our grandkids with both parents being on the frontlines so that business is still there. "



Have you checked out the new Facebook page, [Our Hospice Compassionate Community?](#) It's aimed at volunteers only and Carol finds wonderful quotes and images and stories to warm our hearts and inspire us.



# WHAT HAVE OUR VOLUNTEERS BEEN UP TO?

## From Shelley Bone...

Let me just say. Thank goodness we moved to Horseshoe when we did. My husband has been able to work on odd things in the new house. We have been able to do some great walks. We've been able to see two of our four children. (missing the other two and three grandkids). I'm really missing coming into Hospice. I miss Margaret terribly. (Margaret is Shelley's Tuesday kitchen partner.) Puzzles, movie nights, sewing some masks for WE-UNITE. i must say I'm a little out of sorts today. Maybe I need to make some cookies. Looking forward to getting back to a routine.



## From Darlene Botman...

I for one have been insanely busy ... staying at home!  
Kathy and Tonya have me working remotely on admin stuff for Hospice and I am actively involved in the Bereavement 101 learnings. I have also been recruited by a local grassroots Facebook group who are making homemade masks for our hometown heroes. We have over 75 sewers in the community and have delivered to date almost 3000 face masks with RVH being our biggest supporter. In between all this I try to get some self care by trail walks and inhaling some fresh air. Too many Zoom cocktail/dinner parties to count but making our new normal very tolerable.

## I Am The Dragonfly by Carol Holden

The dragonfly is considered to be the 'diamond' among insects. Around since the beginning of time, with more than 5,000 species, the dragonfly has two large compound eyes, three pairs of jointed legs and two pairs of long, smooth, delicate translucent wings. Their colour is exquisite, as they fly silently with elegance and grace while being a tiny fierce warrior of one. The dragonfly's adult lifespan is a mere 6 months, yet is a symbol of adaptability, transformation and change. As Hospice volunteers, we are embarking on a journey that may last the adult lifespan of the dragonfly, where we must exhibit flexibility, in the midst of fear, to this unknown ever-changing path of this pandemic. Draw upon your inner strength as you illuminate with courage and poise while your character transforms. Be the 'power of one', like the dragonfly; show your true colours and bring joy to others with elegance and grace.

Courage is not the absence of fear but the triumph over it  
~Nelson Mandela~



The opportunities and requests for volunteer support that appear in this newsletter are designed for Hospice Simcoe registered and trained volunteers.

If you wish to become a registered volunteer, please contact Kathy or Tonya; [kathy@hospicesimcoe.ca](mailto:kathy@hospicesimcoe.ca)  
[tonya@hospicesimcoe.ca](mailto:tonya@hospicesimcoe.ca) Thank you!



# Book Reviews

## by Sharron Bowden and Carol



### THE NICKEL BOYS by Colson Whitehead

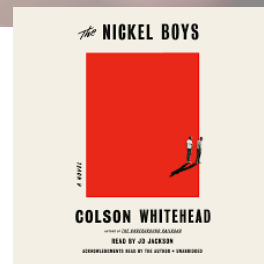
The Nickel Academy in Colin Whitehead's book is based on the Dozier School which was an actual reform school for over 100 years. The story revolves around two young African American men who were sent to this reform school in the 1960s. Elwood is an intelligent young man with his eyes on attending college. He believes in a better world and follows Dr. Martin Luther King, and recites to himself some of Dr. King's speeches. His friend, Turner, thinks Elwood is worse than naive; that the world is crooked and the only way to survive is to scheme and avoid trouble.

In the beginning they looked out for each other but the tensions arising from Elwood's ideals and Turner's skepticism lead them to decisions that will change their lives forever. When Elwood and Turner try to escape, Turner is successful but Elwood is shot and killed. The book

follows the life that Turner led after his escape. At times this book was a tough read, but stick with it. It's definitely worth it. After reading *The Nickel Boys* I was prompted to do some research:

**The Arthur G. Dozier School for Boys** was a reform school. It was in operation in Florida from January 1, 1900 until it was closed on June 30, 2011. Until 1968 the facility was segregated. During the 111 years of its existence boys at Dozier were beaten and whipped for the slightest infraction. They suffered sexual abuse from their teachers. Some boys did not survive the vicious treatment and were buried in the school cemetery.

After the school was closed the bodies of more boys were discovered, with no identification. The University of South Florida is now conducting high tech investigations at the 1400 acres of the former Dozier School. A few of the men who were teenagers and younger in the '60s when they were sent to this school are now coming forward to speak about the treatment they withstood.



### EVERY BREATH by Nicholas Sparks

If you need a break from Corona and crave a feel good literary escape with two beautiful geographical locations thrown in, this may be the book for you.

This is a classic love story but not like the old Harlequin romances. It is complicated but simple, the characters flawed, interesting and ordinary. The story takes place in North Carolina beach country (look up the location on Google) with a touch of African safari thrown in.

Tru and Hope meet when circumstances throw them together at a time when neither are looking for someone new. It really is love at first sight. Of course their lives are complicated with relationships including partners, parents and a child. Tru and Hope's relationship blossoms quickly and just as quickly comes to an end when Tru heads back home to Africa. Hope has major decisions to make and they don't include Tru at this time.

But as in all good romance fables, love prevails. It just takes many years in this case. But why do we make the decisions we make? We have to go with our instincts sometimes and other times we make them because of our circumstances, our age or others we are responsible for. We all do the best we can at the time. Hopefully we learn from our mistakes and grow from them.....and sometimes what we want just wasn't meant to be. This book will make you think about all of this.



# HOSPICE HAPPENINGS



## From Teneal and Danielle....

First off we wanted to say “**HAPPY VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION WEEK**” to all of you. Hospice Simcoe would not be the agency we are without all our amazing volunteers. Some words that come to our minds when we think about our Visiting Volunteers are: compassionate, flexible, devoted, advocate, listener & kind-hearted. You truly make the difference in our clients’ lives. You are so appreciated.

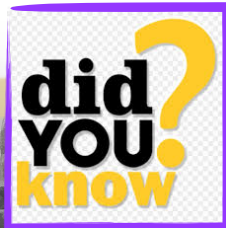


Also, I wanted to let you know that one of our fellow visiting volunteers, Maryanne, provides distance Therapeutic Touch. She is currently doing this with 2 of her community volunteers, and has offered to provide this to any other interested clients.

Therapeutic Touch (TT), it is a holistic, evidence-based therapy that incorporates the intentional and compassionate use of universal energy to promote balance and well-being. TT can be done with hands on for physical touch but this is not required as our energy field extends beyond the body so that working close to the body, but not touching, is equally effective as studies have shown. The intent is to re-pattern the energy field toward wholeness and health thereby enhancing the body’s own ability to heal. TT has been shown to promote a relaxation response reducing anxiety and stress.

If you or your client is interested in this, please let me or Danielle know.

Be well. We miss you all!!



## Open For Communication

Although much has changed in the past month, much has remained the same. This is very true of our **bereavement** groups. Instead of face to face meetings, virtual meetings are now taking place.

**The Grief Literacy Group** continues to meet once a week.

**Teen Drop In** was held last week.

**The Young Adult Loss Group** and the **Adult Child Loss Group** have continued and are both wrapping up in 2 weeks.

Feedback has indicated that the clients prefer smaller groups, especially with the online format because it allows them to connect with the other participants. Amy, Colleen and some volunteers have created online resources and chatrooms for participants who are very appreciative of the opportunity to meet virtually.

During COVID-19 If you are interested in learning more about Hospice Services, including Bereavement and palliative support, please call our residence @ 705-722-5995 or our Bell Farm Office to leave a message @ 705-725-1140

Many thanks to all of the volunteers who have sent cards and letters to the staff. They are very much welcomed and appreciated.



# OUR SPIRITUAL TEAM

## Instruments of Peace

As most of you know, our Spiritual Team provides comfort and empathy to residents and families before, during and after their end of life journey. Within the house, and within the community, their support is welcomed and embraced. In this article, Carol Holden shows that, like the members of an orchestra work together to create a musical composition, so do all volunteers in our spiritual team contribute to a symphony of caring.

The Spiritual Care Team strives towards the above statement “holistically”: physically, mentally, emotionally, socially, and spiritually. Imagine our Spiritual Care Team as a Symphony Orchestra, with 14 members who act as *section leaders* led by a very compassionate and gifted Conductor carrying the baton- our Spiritual Care Coordinator Lori. This *ensemble*, formed in September 2018, meets off-site bi-monthly to *compose musical scores* that will provide support to our caregivers, residents and family, staff and volunteers.

Each meeting begins with a *warmup* reflection, story sharing, or an inspiring video before brainstorming on what new initiatives to *compose*.

The strength of the Spiritual Care *ensemble* team comes from all the *instruments* the section leaders play and the different areas of Hospice in which they volunteer.

The *movements* in each symphony are always played with such emotion as they *compose* to help people find and express their story of love amid the sorrow of loss.

The Spiritual Care team is open to facilitating meaningful spiritual practices that uniquely support and encourage people to journey at their own *tempo and rhythm*, as everyone hears *music* differently. Each song is composed specifically by the resident and their family, selecting their individual *genre* journey, where each *melody* provides them the freedom to move through their particular experience, needs, emotions with the ability to express themselves. Their *timbre melodies* find that sanctuary in the midst of what their life is, that collectively comprises their *poetic symphony composed* of every colourful emotion in the rainbow reflecting what truly matters to them.

These musical masterpieces are orchestrated through the Spiritual Care Team that make available, to us as volunteers, the many *instruments* to choose from to *melodiously* move people through and connect them to what matters deeply to them while creating space and time for them to reflect on their lives and engage in self-care. Every Hospice volunteer has played one of the many instruments available with new instruments and *music textures* always being added to enrich the *sound* of the experiences.

So, what would your Hospice symphony look like? What instruments, provided by our Hospice Spiritual Care team, do you choose for the residents and their families and what melodies have you played lately?

Reflect on the mellow melody next time you enter the Quiet room as you *note* the spirit pins, the reflection journal, or the envelopes of quotes. Ponder the *tuneful tones* through music, meditation, home visiting, bereavement 1:1, yoga, reiki and other mindful experiences.

Consider the *cantata* of colours in the writing, visual art, and the multiple *chromatic chords* of legacy projects.

Appreciate the *acoustic* accent of a bereavement card, the monthly *theme* of the community reflection blackboard in the Atrium, the *aria* of information available in the Hospice library or the 30 days of gratitude to fill our hearts with song.

We are thankful for the daily thought that Lori generously gives us to help direct our day.



# OUR SPIRITUAL TEAM

## Instruments of Peace

Instruments of Peace... continued

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Consider the *cantata* of colours in the writing, visual art, and the multiple *chromatic chords* of legacy projects.

Appreciate the *acoustic* accent of a bereavement card or followup call, the monthly *theme* of the community reflection blackboard in the Atrium, the *aria* of information available in the Hospice library or the 30 days of gratitude to fill our hearts with song.

We are thankful for the daily thought that Lori generously gives us to help direct our day.

We as volunteers, are instruments of peace - all harmonizing in the Hospice symphony orchestra through the music provided by our conductor / coordinator Lori and the Spiritual Care team. Our song compliments beautifully with the melody, not yet composed, of our residents and families. Together, we celebrate the journey of living life fully to the last day and assist in creating a composition for others that will be listened to for years to come. Thank you, Spiritual Care team and volunteers, for being dynamic, valuable musicians in our Hospice Symphony.

***Creating compassionate community by validating one another's experiences with honour and respect and giving people a safe place to live out their experiences and find their story of love in the midst of their loss.***



### Our Community Reflection Wall

You may have noticed the blackboard in the atrium in the house. Lori Scholten-Dallimore and her Spiritual Care Volunteer team initiated this and over the past while it has generated many positive reactions. Each month, Lori writes a theme on the board with the hope that visitors and volunteers will add their thoughts. **Please send your suggestions to [Lori@hospicesimcoe.ca](mailto:Lori@hospicesimcoe.ca)**

**May's theme: " Spring brings Hope - new beginnings in the midst of endings... Hope in the midst of sorrow."**

# What's Happening?



## Lunch & Learn



**Mon. May 25th**

**Zooming with Lori**

**Spiritual Care in Action**

**12-1pm**

**Provide your own light lunch!**

*Email Tonya for the link to the zoom*

## Zoom Town Hall with Kelly

**Wed. May 6th**

**1-2pm**

Send any questions for Kelly to  
[tonya@hospicesimcoe.ca](mailto:tonya@hospicesimcoe.ca) and for the link

**May 13 | 3 - 4PM**

### **Anchoring Ourselves During Disruption and Change™**

Participants will learn key neuroscience-based tools to create a new, more empowered and productive approach to, and relationship with, change and uncertainty. Participants will:

- Locate themselves in the three-phase transition process.
- Learn the power of personal choice between resistance and consent.
- Engage in a practical experience of shifting their mindset for clearer thinking and better problem-solving.
- Appreciate their own resilience as a reliable anchor in the sea of uncertainty and ambiguity.

**Contact Tonya for Zoom link**

### From the Chair.....

Hello Everyone,

What a stressful sad time it is for all of us. It is an opportunity for us to count our blessings, alter perspectives and focus on what positive changes may occur following this crisis.

Not sure about you, but I have been very distressed over the last few years about political unrest, violence and just a general lack of respect in everyday life. I remember, growing up in a small town, where communities looked after each other, especially vulnerable marginalized individuals. This was probably an impetus for me to pursue a career in Mental Health and Addictions. Growing up, my parents, with six children, and Dad working at a paper mill, ensured that we went to Church and had a rich family life. I am so grateful for that.

I am, and always have been, a very dedicated Health Professional. Observing the atrocities in our Nursing Homes is unforgivable. None of this is new. It is very frustrating to realize that past efforts to address these issues of underfunding, lack of staff training and poor physical environments were ignored. Why does it have to take a crisis like this for those in charge to finally take notice?

I would like to encourage everyone to be responsible citizens and make sure there is more accountability for those who are making unwise and ill informed decisions.

Enough of my ranting.

We have such an amazing team at Hospice. On behalf of the Board, I want to thank Kelly, her amazing team and our exceptional volunteers for the continuing care being given to our clients and families. It is so heart warming.

Sincerely and most fondly,  
Chris



**May 15th @1-Stay Tuned for Details**

**Bob Fehir**

Program Manager at Canadian Mental Health Association (Simcoe County)

Contact Kathy for zoom link to attend

## A Tribute to The Hon. Aileen Carroll

### by Lynda Murtha



Many may not know that for 13 years before I came to work at Hospice Simcoe, I was the senior staff person in the office of The Hon. Aileen Carroll, Member of Parliament and Member of Provincial Parliament for Barrie. Sadly, Aileen passed away on April 19<sup>th</sup>.

Aileen served as Cabinet Minister at both levels of government. She was Barrie's first and only federal Cabinet Minister. It was an honour to work with her and to have remained a close friend after she retired from political life in 2011.

One of the priority files in her MPP office was helping to secure government funding for a residential hospice in Barrie. Jim McIntosh, a partner at Barriston Law and a former Hospice Simcoe Board Chairperson, chaired the Capital Campaign that raised the \$6 million needed to build our residence.

"We would not have been able to get the project underway if Aileen had not been there to help us secure \$2.8 million from the province. I will never forget the call she made to me as she was headed down the 400 to the Legislature to tell me we had our money and that it would be available in time for the start of construction. It was then that I knew with certainty that Hospice Simcoe was going to succeed with the completion and opening of its 10 bed residential hospice facility. There were still many challenges to overcome but Aileen had quietly and steadfastly worked her magic. Hospice Simcoe now stands as a testament to the quiet and confident support that Aileen Carroll provided to our residential hospice project and to the greater Barrie community as a lasting legacy. I will always be grateful for the support she provided and the belief that she had in the Hospice Simcoe vision." Jim McIntosh



I remember the many meetings, letters and phone calls between the Health Minister's office, Jim and other Hospice Simcoe leaders. It gave me great insight into the wonderful work that was being done by Hospice Simcoe volunteers and their vision to, one day, provide residential care. It was at that time Aileen told me she had a special connection to Hospice Simcoe as she had been one of the very early Hospice Simcoe community volunteers.

Elizabeth Priddle remembered Aileen from the time she was starting out as a new hospice volunteer in 1993...

"The City of Barrie will remember Aileen Carroll as a city councilor, Federal and Provincial Cabinet Minister, I remember her as a compassionate hospice volunteer. I'm told she could be a fierce competitor in the political arena: I remember her rocking a tiny baby so the client, a young mom, could get a much needed nap. I remember a warm caring woman who wore her heart on her sleeve."

My heart is heavy at the loss of my friend and for her grieving family, but I am grateful for the wonderful memories and the legacy she left behind. Her public service, her many volunteer endeavours and her generosity have left the Barrie community a much better place.



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[www.hospicesimcoe.ca](http://www.hospicesimcoe.ca)

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