

HOSPICE HAPPENINGS

VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER

A Hospice Journey.. through the eyes of a student

- Nicole Welch is a 4th year Social Work Student from Lakehead University. She joined us in late September and will complete her 420 placement hours by the end of March. Nicole has shared her time supporting the bereavement, home visiting and spiritual care teams at Hospice.
- She wrote this lovely story about her time with us so far. Enjoy the read and thanks Nicole!

When I first began my journey as a Social Work student three years ago, as with many things, it was a daunting list of "to-dos." The list of classes, assignments and exams was, at times, overwhelming. I pressed forward through my academic journey by counting down days, checking off the boxes of what seemed to be a never-ending list. I knew that if I could get through all these program requirements, I would, in fact, graduate.



As a wife and mother of five, I knew my fourth year of school would be the most challenging. The expectation of four academic classes and an off-campus placement opportunity would require an additional 420 hours of my precious time. As with all things, I looked at this experience as something to complete and conquer. One more thing to scratch off the list!

In my first year of school, a social worker named Amy Pritzker spoke to my class about the work she did at Hospice. I was fascinated with her beautiful spirit and enthusiasm! She spoke passionately about her work in bereavement and expressed her incredible love for what she did. How did someone with such a contagious warm personality work in a place surrounded by loss?

Over the next two years, Amy's presentation would linger with me. *Continued on pg.2*

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 tonya@hospicesimcoe.ca Thank you!



WELCOME NICOLE

A Hospice Journey continued

I have always believed everything happens for a purpose; there are no coincidences.

A few weeks before Amy spoke to our class, I had undergone the sudden death of my stepfather, my "Daddy Les." I was still, in fact, grieving when she spoke to us. I was pushing through the semester with a great loss in my heart, holding on to precious memories and longing for friends to speak his name. When you are grieving the death of someone dear, the presence of a friend willing to mourn alongside you is the most beautiful gift. I was grateful for the wonderful friends who walked this journey with me, allowing my tender heart to adjust slowly to my new normal.

For that reason, it is no coincidence that I am here doing my placement at Hospice Simcoe. I started my honour with incredible ambition with the same intention to complete my hours as quickly as possible. As the weeks moved on, my heart quickly changed. Each staff member, resident, family member, gently pressed on the brakes of my never-ending to-do list. I learned to stop and listen, realizing the immense privilege of being a companion, listening ear, or someone to lean on through life's most difficult transitions.

Wonderful moments such as...

Observing our facility dog, Daisy, pressing her nose against a man with terminal cancer.

Singing a song to a resident who might be feeling a little blue.

Laughing with the staff as we shop for chips and snacks at "Dan's Inconvenience Store."

Wrapping your arms around a teenager who just lost her mom.

Smelling freshly baked cookies, made by a generous volunteer, coming out of the oven.

Holding the hand of a precious grandmother as she recalls stories from the past.

I have met people and listened to stories that will reside in my heart, influencing who I am as a person, a social worker, a wife, a mother, a friend. I have realized the immense honour it is to volunteer within Hospice Simcoe and no longer see my placement as hours to complete. I will be forever changed by my time here, where I am now treasuring every sweet hour.

*"It's snowing still," said Eeyore gloomily. "And freezing."
"However," he said, brightening up a little, "we haven't had an earthquake lately." A.A. Milne*

SURVEY RESULTS

FROM KATHY AND TONYA



Thanks to all of the volunteers who completed the volunteer survey. We had over 90 respondents and we will use this information to develop volunteer policies, new volunteer engagement opportunities, recognize best practices, and educational opportunities. The survey is also an important component of the H.P.C.O. accreditation standards that we are required to submit for successful accreditation compliance.

Here are some of the responses:

89 volunteers feel that they receive appropriate training

79 know the process for sharing a complaint (on the bottom of the main page on our web-site is a link to our complaints policy and is accessible for anyone)

79 know about the Volunteer Policies and Procedures (these are located on the Hospice website under the staff login button or on your better impact main page on the bottom right hand side under files)

Training: Volunteers rated team de-briefings, lunch and learn, and Hospice hosted workshops as number one training opportunities

Suggestions for additional training included: indigenous practices at end of life, more grief and bereavement training, enhancing our communication skills, how to manage emergency situations, more disease-specific information, and defusing hostility

97% of respondents feel valued, supported, engaged, part of the team, respected and that their roles match their interest in their volunteer work at Hospice Simcoe.

How do Volunteers want to be recognized?

- **#1 answer:** feedback from clients and/or staff: that I was part of a team that made a difference
- Current methods including the bigger group activities
- A card in the mail, email communication is enough
- To be a volunteer is gift enough; we are well-treated and supported

How we communicate

86 volunteers felt that they received updates regularly (Tonya and I usually send an email to the entire team 2x a month and other staff communicate with updates to specific teams. If you don't receive emails from us please let us know)

173 responses want to receive communication through email, phone calls and the newsletter

HOSPICE HAPPENINGS

Survey results continued...

Other comments

- Appreciate, enjoy and love being a Hospice volunteer
- Value the time spent at Hospice
- Better communication with the staff and volunteers would be appreciated
- More opportunities for "de-briefing"
- Being appreciated is "key"
- Wonderful job and if you didn't we wouldn't attract the high caliber, passionate and committed individuals who volunteer

Who responded?

25 in-home visiting volunteers

63 residential volunteers including complementary therapies, music, kitchen, reception, etc.

25 grief and bereavement

7 fundraisers

7 Board/administration



Accreditation

We have been working hard to complete the Hospice Palliative Care Ontario standards to renew our accreditation in April 2020. We will have the accreditation surveyors from HPCO here visiting during the first two weeks of April to interview staff, volunteers, and clients and to look at all of our proof that we are following the standards. This has been a big project for the Accreditation Committee (staff & volunteers) under the leadership of Teneal and all of the staff who have been working to make sure that we meet all of the standards for a successful accreditation. Join us at our Lunch and Learn February 24th from 12pm - 1pm for more accreditation information and what volunteers "really need to know"

"The hard soil and four months of snow make the inhabitants of the northern temperate zone wiser and abler than his fellow who enjoys the fixed smile of the tropics. "

--Ralph Waldo Emerson

HOSPICE HAPPENINGS

Mamma Mia!!

If you're looking for a night out in February, we highly recommend that you rush right out and purchase tickets for Kempenfelt Community Players' production of Mamma Mia, starring our very own **Lori Scholten-Dallimore** as Donna. Lori and the rest of the cast have been in rehearsal since September and, according to Lori, they are very close to show-ready.

Mamma Mia is running from Feb.6th - 16th, Thursdays to Sundays at Georgian College Theatre. Tickets are going quickly - many Hospice Simcoe folks have saved their seats already.

Get your tickets at kempenfeltcommunityplayers.com or at Ticketpro.



Staff & Volunteer Picks

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. Here are a few suggestions we received this month.

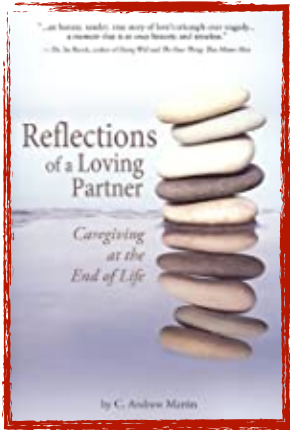
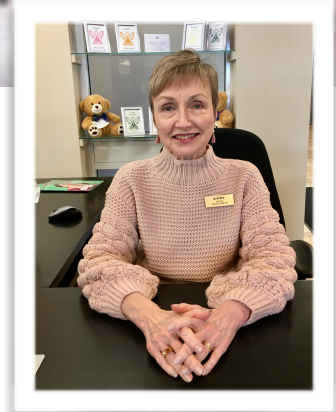
- Margaret W: Marriage Story - Netflix movie
- Sam : The Guardian, John Grisham
- Margaret K: Offspring - Netflix series
- Tammy : The Path Made Clear - Oprah Winfrey
- Emily: You - Netflix series and The Witcher - Netflix
- Wendy: Nurses - new Canadian series on Global
- Cathy C: The Song of Jade Lily, Kathy Manning
- Tonya : Booksmart - Amazon Prime



Since we opened the residence in December of 2009 to the end of the 2019 calendar year, we have had 2,220 residents here. Our number of volunteers has grown from 25 to 200!

HOSPICE HAPPENINGS

Book Review by Kathy Jenkinson



Reflections of a Loving Partner: Caregiving at the End of Life by C. Andrew Martin

Hospice Simcoe has acquired a new resource to assist anyone who is grieving the loss of a beloved partner. It is the poignant story of one man’s journey through the anticipation of loss, the loss itself, and the aftermath. In this case, the partners are a gay couple and the cause of death is AIDS, back in the day when the AIDS virus was at its most deadly.

C. Andrew Martin writes eloquently of his response to his partner’s diagnosis and their journey through its final stages. Andrew contacts his local Hospice to learn what to expect, how to prepare for the end, and how to be a supportive caregiver throughout. The weekly Hospice training sessions gave Andrew and his beloved Gil the opportunity to discuss issues openly, something they might have otherwise avoided.

This deeply moving experience prompted the author to change careers and become a registered nurse with special training in palliative care. His new training as well as his personal experience allows him to share his own “End of Life Coaching Exercises” at the end of the book to guide readers on their own caregiving journey.

This is a valuable read for anyone who has ever loved and faced the loss of a loved one. You can easily relate to the emotions described and benefit from the insights provided by both the narrative and the exercises that accompany it. I would highly recommend this book.

Thanks to Kathy for her contribution this month.

Like us, Follow us, Engage with us!



336 Penetanguishene Rd
Barrie, ON L4M 7C2
705-722-5995

www.hospicesimcoe.ca

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Hospice Simcoe

What's Happening?

Lunch & Learn

12-1pm

Light lunch provided.



Mon. Feb.24th

Accreditation

Kathy and Teneal will update us on the accreditation process... why we do it, what it entails

While there is no cost for the light lunch, some volunteers have indicated they would like to make a donation. There will be a donation box available for those who wish to do so.

• • • • • **Compassion Fatigue and Vicarious Trauma Workshop** • • • • •

- Tues. Mar. 3, 2020 1-4pm
- Hospice Simcoe Community Room
- This workshop, led by Tamara Nowak-Lennard, Clinical Manager, Nurse Specialist will offer staff and volunteers an interactive opportunity to explore the signs and symptoms of compassion fatigue (cost of caring) and vicarious trauma.
- Registration is required for HS staff and volunteers. Contact Nicole Welch at 705-725-1140 or nicole@hospicesimcoe.ca

From the Chair.....

Hello Everyone,



The Board of Directors had our regular meeting in January. Lots going on but all is well. A few of us have been directly involved in preparing for accreditation. This is an arduous, complex process, requiring thorough reviews of policies and practices. A great deal of work for the leadership team, particularly. I know you will hear more about it closer to the actual survey date. Teneal is doing a fantastic job keeping us all on track and ensuring that we submit all the required information. Thanks Teneal.

It was brought to our attention that staff and volunteers would like to know a bit more about individual Directors, some background, professional life and their role on the Board. Moving forward, we are happy to provide this information by profiling a different Director monthly. Thanks for asking!

I'll start. I have been a volunteer Director for the past eight years, Chair for the last two. I am Nurse by profession but spent the last 20 years in Administrative roles at RVH. I worked in many different departments, my passion being Mental Health and Addictions. I was asked to join the Board at Hospice prior to my retirement. I had a very special interest in Palliative Care, having looked after my Mom during her last months. I think I have expressed my feelings about what happens at Hospice many times in my writings. I also participate on the Finance, Quality, Governance and fund raising working committees. I feel that I get back twofold than what I give!

Sincerely, Chris

HOSPICE HAPPENINGS

In our Community...

Join us this May - Annual Hike for Hospice!
The countdown is on...

Hike for Hospice is on Sunday, May 3. Save the date and start putting together your hike team. for any questions, contact us at 705-722-5995 | lynda@hospicesimcoe.ca

3rd Party Events

Join in on these community-run events supporting Hospice Simcoe.

Want to support Hospice Simcoe and love event planning? If you or someone you know would like to or have held a event benefitting Hospice Simcoe, please contact Lynda Murtha at lynda@hospicesimcoe.ca

SAVE THE DATE!
FRIDAY, MARCH 6, 2020

YBC Territory 3
10th Annual Curling Bonspiel
at the Barrie Curling Club



Noses and Hoses

5 Course Scotch & Tasting Menu

SATURDAY
February 15th
At Redline Brewhouse
6pm - 9pm



SUPPORT ANGUS FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION

\$75 Ticket PORTION OF PROCEEDS GO TO SIMCOE HOSPICE



Save the Date for Dish!

Dish for Hospice | Wednesday, June 10, 2020

My thanks to reception volunteer Kerry Desmond who will take on the job of coordinating Dish for Hospice this year. - Lynda, Fund Development Manager