

HOSPICE HAPPENINGS

VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER

Participants in our yearly Hike for Hospice have a reason for doing the trek. Many are volunteers who want to raise funds for the organization they hold near and dear. Staff, as well, keenly take on fundraising efforts. Many others are family members of residents who chose Hospice Simcoe for their end of life journey. Carol Holden chatted with Katie Marshall about her reasons for participating in the hike this year.



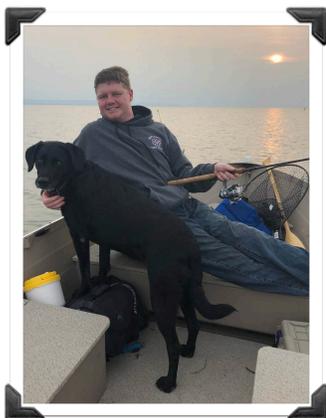
“Today you would be 31. I’m sure we would stay up too late and drink too many beers. I’m sure we would have a big fire. Today we’ll do our best to celebrate for you big brother. I love you and miss you every day Jesse Hubbert”.

Katie Marshall posted this on her Facebook page on June 13th as a tribute to her brother Jesse - her reason for participating in the Hike for Hospice this year. Jesse coined his birthday as ‘Hubfest’ where Mom, Sherry posted, “we are doing our best to celebrate the beautiful life we were blessed to have for 31 years. It’s hard without you here.”

Katie describes Jesse as the “kindest, most caring man, who would give you the shirt off his back to help someone else”. “He was the first to volunteer if you needed something”, Katie said proudly.

Jesse was a typical teen, who loved sports and the outdoors, until a rare adverse reaction to a meningitis immunization at 14 years old resulted in an auto-immune disorder which attacked his joints; specifically, his knees. Jesse spent the majority of his high school years in and out of Sick Kids and Bloorview Hospitals, but was blessed with a great tutor and a period of remission by grade 12. During his brief remission Jesse was able to follow in his dad, Rob’s carpentry footsteps and studied at Georgian College. His career was short lived as Jesse relapsed. His medical treatments and medications were no longer able to manage the nerve pain.

On a typical day Jesse lived with pain that was at an 8 to 9 out of 10 level. Temporary relief from infusions would minimize his discomfort to a 5 or 6 out of 10. Yet, even with that much pain, Jesse continued to feed his passions of baseball, hockey, hunting and fishing with a smile on his face saying, “I’m okay”.



Jessie and Chloe

Jesse went from baseball player/umpire in New Lowell to announcing for tournaments. He traded his hockey skates in for a sledge and became the goaltender for the Paralympic Ontario North sledge hockey team. A ‘fly-in’ moose hunting trip to Cochrane with the extended Hubbert clan was a highlight memory for the family, as Jesse was able to attend. Each family gathering, sporting event, day on the water or in the bush was followed by a week in bed . . . but the smile never left his face. Katie credits her parents, Sherry and Rob, for the “incredible job” they did to ensure the family unit remained unaffected. She never missed a horse show and her brother never missed a baseball or hockey game. The illness became part of the family life.

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JESSE'S STORY

It was Sherry and Rob's parental leadership and unconditional love that encouraged Jesse to take his final journey with Hospice, with the support of their great family and friends, (Katie provided a heartfelt thanks to Trish, a very close family friend). Katie emotionally shared their family story at Hospice with Jesse, expressing, "I can't explain the relief our family felt to be at Hospice Simcoe, who welcomed us with open arms. I don't have words to express our treatment and care", Katie continued. "They knew our names; not just Jesse's but every one of us".

Jesse not only brought his PlayStation in, his black Lab companion Chloe was able to visit and be at his bedside at the end. Katie wanted to recognize the amazing medical team that cared for Jesse, with a shout-out to Garrett! Garrett connected with Jesse and always had him joking and laughing. Katie recalls the heavy metal music, Jesse's favourite, blaring from the showers that Garrett arranged. This same headbanger music played on their final walk out with Jesse, where the care at Hospice could be summed up by how Garrett wrapped Katie up in a tight bear hug after the final walk. It was a very comforting and loving moment that filled her heart in that life-changing moment on March 9th.



Jesse in goal.

Katie chose to Hike for Hospice, as did her sister-in-law Courtney, as a thank-you for accommodating and supporting Jesse and her family through their difficult journey. Katie said she knows Hospice is fundraised based to operate and proudly said "she couldn't think of a better way to thank the organization that gave my brother a peaceful and dignified end of life".

She went on to say that, "Hospice always went above and beyond to meet our needs as a family, with Jesse as the focus". Words cannot express our appreciation." Katie spoke so many times of how Hospice Simcoe accommodated all Jesses final goodbyes and wishes, while managing the safety requirements during COVID.

Katie hiked on horseback and with Jesse's dog Chloe, with a goal of \$1,000 for Hospice. 'Hike for Jesse' raised over \$2,000 and Courtney's team added an additional \$600! Thank you so much Hubberts and thank you Katie for sharing your story.



Anyone who knew Jesse, as I did, remembers his beautiful smile and infectious laugh, his zest for life, and his love for his family and his incredible inner-strength that enabled him to persevere no matter what life threw at him.

As we listen to Katie's story, we realize how privileged we are to have Hospice Simcoe in our community to journey beside families for the most positive end of life experiences.

A SUCCESSFUL HIKE COMPETITION



Marjan and Alex



Murray and Marjan



Meeka

A few more hike photos on page 6

There is absolutely no doubt that Alex Rattray is a huge admirer of Hospice Simcoe. After a twenty minute phone conversation I came away thinking what a wonderful ambassador he is for us. And, for the last two years as an avid, *competitive* hiker for Hospice. He has convinced friends and family to support his enthusiasm by sponsoring him in the Hike for Hospice.

Alex's story started a few years ago when Dr. Emerson suggested to his wife Mary, then battling cancer, that she might benefit from our Living Well program and that Alex might enjoy the Caregiver program as well. At first hesitant, the pair decided to give it a try. Once Mary met Marjan and Gaile, program facilitators, she was happy to attend the weekly sessions and Alex found the Caregiver program a caring place where he could meet others whose lives mirrored his in many ways.

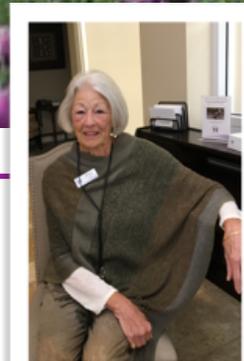
After Mary's passing - at Hospice Simcoe - Alex continued to keep in touch with Marjan and it was Marjan who first suggested, in 2020, that they compete to see who could collect the most money for the hike. Marjan and her husband Murray and dog, Meeka, hiked and Alex hiked and cycled. Both were hugely successful and together raised \$14,400!

This year they did it again - with one major difference. Murray suggested that all three of them do the bike ride together. The bike trail they chose? The Tiny Trail from Waubashene to Midland - a round trip distance of 40km! (Marjan admits she wasn't quite prepared for that distance but she made it with only one spill. Those barriers along the way are very daunting!). Once again, this year Marjan raised a bit more than Aex but Hospice Simcoe is the real winner with \$15,325 donated.

Both Alex and Marjan put a great deal of effort into the Hike. Hours are spent requesting and collecting donations. They ask for contributions through letters and emails to friends and family and follow up with thank you cards after. But for both it's a labour of love.

Thank you Alex for your enthusiasm and desire to help Hospice and thank you Marjan for your dedication as a volunteer. We can't wait to see what your plans and goals are for next year.

Book Review by Sharron Bowden



Before and After by Judy Christie and Lisa Wingate

If you have read Lisa Wingate's book, Before We Were Yours, you must read this non-fiction follow up.

Connie Wilson, born in 1950, is one of the last children who was illegally adopted through the Tennessee Children's Home Society, owned and operated by Georgia Tann. Before We Were Yours was brought to Connie's attention by a friend who knew of her history with the TCHS. After reading the book nonstop, Connie contacted Lisa and shared her story. Connie proposed trying to find other adoptees who are still alive and suggested organizing a reunion to share their stories.

Lisa comes on board and contacts her friend and author, Judy Christie, to enlist her help. Together, with Connie and several others, they make this event happen.

Before and After is about the reunion. Fifteen survivors came together for a weekend, bringing documents and pictures and stories to tell how their lives had unfolded. Some of the documents and pictures appear in the book.

Thanks for this book review Sharron!

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



Teresa Amado: Homeland Elegies, novel by Ayad Akhtar

Joyce Lindsay: The Chef Show on Netflix, The Rose Code, novel by Kate Quinn, Code Name Helene, novel by Ariel Lawhon

Kathy G.- H.: Why Be Happy When You Could Be Normal, Non-fiction by Jeanette Winterson

Sam White: Malibu Burning, novel by Taylor Jenkins Reid

Cathy Charlton: Sparks Like Stars, novel by Nadia Hashimi

Josie McDonnell: Awake, Netflix movie



Send your suggestions to hospicesimcoenewsletter@gmail.com

"In the case of good books, the point is not to see how many you can get through, but rather how many can get through to you."

Mortimer J Adler

"A little reading is all the therapy a person needs sometimes."

AT HOME MEMORIAL SERVICE A TIME TO REMEMBER

Our memorial services, held twice a year, offer a time to remember, to reflect and to reunite with others who have suffered a loss. Even during Covid, our spiritual team, led by Lori, has found a meaningful way to continue this tradition. Many thanks to Sonja Free, one of our long time bereavement volunteers for helping with the organization and for doing this writeup.



On June 13 Hospice Simcoe held its semi-annual Memorial Service on-line. This is a beautiful time to honour and recall memories of loved ones who are no longer with us.

The naming of those no longer with us and the lighting of a candle for each one of them is a powerful healing ritual which has been a part of these services for many years. It is “a time to remember”...to travel back to the special memories that have formed over time in these special relationships.

One of our volunteers, Lyne Drolet, shared a beautiful story which she had written which went right to the heart of what it feels like to have lost a loved one. As part of the story, she introduced us to a very symbolic and meaningful custom of Buddhist origin called OBON which is a way of honouring those who have died. One part of this custom is that of making a small boat, filling it with a small object or two connected to the loved one, adding some pictures and placing a candle in it. These boats are then taken to a body of water to be released with all the candles having been lit – a bittersweet time filled with love overflowing. As Lyne had said, **“When all participants had come back to shore, they had been amazed at what they had been witnessing and had cried pearls of love”**. How beautiful!!!

Throughout much of the service there was soft background music being played. It was like a stilling of our souls for those precious moments. Our Lori Dallimore also sang a piece called **“Safe Place To Hide”** which was new to me. As I listen to her sing, tears came to my eyes. So later I went online to find the lyrics. I would like to share the “Chorus” with you:

And when you're all alone
When your walls are breaking yet there's no escaping
And I, I'd fly through the night
To get back to your side
To be your safe place to hide

May we always remember that we are never alone in our grief. Our loved ones are always with us only in a different way.



GRIEF AND THE LBGTO2S COMMUNITY FROM COLLEEN



Safety is an important element to a person who is bereaved, and when grieving it's not uncommon to feel vulnerable and unsafe. Having access to people, places and resources that make you feel safe can have a significant impact on one's ability to engage in the grief process; engage in the grief work necessary to adjust to their new reality. That being said, there are many people bereaved without access to just that, or who don't feel secure enough to do so simply because of one attribute to who they are as a person; because they are LGBTQ+.

Those who are LGBTQ+ have experienced longstanding systemic, social oppression and injustices that have fostered a lack of trust and security in the many systems put in place in our society. Homophobia, and a lack of safe and sensitive supports are only a couple of barriers the LGBTQ+ community faces on a regular basis. This can make it difficult to know where to go and who to turn to for support when bereft.

Everyone deserves to grieve in their own way, and feel safe in doing so. Gender and sexuality should not act as a preventative roadblock in accessing support. So how can Hospice act as ally in breaking down these barriers with our community members who are part of the LGBTQ+ community? The truth is, a small article is not going to accurately depict the work that needs to be done. However, one place to start is by acknowledging and informing yourself on the experiences this part of our community faces on a regular basis. For more information on becoming an ally and on how to support the LGBTQ+ community with their grief, please call a member of Hospice Simcoe's Community Support Team at (705) 725-1140.



More Hike Photos

A HUGE thanks to all of our volunteers who participated in this year's Hike for Hospice! You biked, you hiked, you ran, and, most importantly you helped us raise over \$111 000!! We can always count on you.

Pictured ...

1. Susan and Daisy put in their mileage
2. Jan Cole biked the trail from Barrie to Cookstown
3. Barb Weir chose Georgian Bay for her hike location
4. John Porter took his granddaughter along for part of the hike.

What's Happening?

Lunch & Learn

**Monday, July
26th @ 12pm**



Volunteer Support

**Meeting: Date TBD -
watch your email**

Did you know?...

There are some fabulous online resources for you to access to expand your learning about palliative care and current trends and topics in the field.

**Hospice Palliative Care Ontario
(HPCO) www.hpco.ca**

**Canadian Virtual Hospice
www.virtualhospice.ca**

From the Chair

Hello Everyone,

I hope you are enjoying this lovely weather and taking opportunities to be out and about, connecting with loved ones and friends. As I'm writing this, the good news today is that we are moving to stage 2 reopening earlier than expected. Yippee!

I wanted to thank everyone who participated in the strategic planning session on June 11th. Any feedback I have received indicates it was very productive with some great ideas coming forward. The Board went through a similar exercise and it was no surprise that the themes were congruent, focusing on growing community programs, particularly bereavement and support to children. Very exciting to vision and plan for the future.

The AGM took place on Monday evening, June 20th. There was lots of good news to share. We took a few minutes at the beginning of the meeting to formally recognize our Hospice Heroes, Tammy, Danielle, and Eva for their exceptional contributions during the horrific crisis at Roberta Place. Kelly received a letter from Ontario Health, commending them and Hospice Simcoe. A copy of this will be posted at the residence and Bell Farm Road. We also celebrated the resounding success of the Hike! Congratulations to Marilyn, Josie & Judi. Thanks to all who participated. \$111,000.00! Wow!!

The election of Directors and executive positions occurred as well. We were sad to say so long to Carolyn Moran, and welcomed a new Director, Lori Bedford, who comes to us with extensive Board experience and a strong financial background. We are pleased to announce that Ray Trask and Scott Ward were elected as Co-Vice Chairs. Andrew Matthews was re-elected as Treasurer and Sharon Hannigan re-elected as Secretary. The Board passed a special resolution to re-elect me as Chair for one more year. We have established a solid succession plan to replace me in 2022. I promise, only one more!!

Well, I think that's it for now. Have a great summer. Hope to SEE everyone in the fall. Thanks for all you do and your generosity.

Sincerely, Chris



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

HOSPICE HAPPENINGS

In our Community...



Hike for Hospice

2021 Hike for Hospice was a great SUCCESS!

Sincere thanks for those who participated by walking, running, biking and collecting pledges to support Hospice Simcoe. **Together we not only achieved our \$100 000 goal but we surpassed it, raising more that \$111 000!**

We are very grateful to this year's hikers, donors, volunteers and sponsors who helped make this year's hike a resounding success. **Thank you everyone!**

Knights of Columbus Blueberry Festival

For the second year in a row the Knights of Columbus Council 1626 are unable to make their delicious pancakes due to government restrictions and recommendations. In lieu of pancakes, there will be donation boxes at the cashier tills and net proceeds will be used to support Hospice Simcoe. From July 16 - 25 head to Barrie Hill Farms to pick up fresh fruits and vegetables and support Hospice Simcoe!



Hospice Simcoe Golf Tournament

Our annual Hospice Simcoe Golf Tournament is back and in full swing (pun intended). Mark your calendars for Monday, October 4th at the Barrie Country Club and stay tuned for more information.

If you're interested in participating please contact josie@hospicesimcoe.ca

For more information, visit our website: <https://hospicesimcoe.ca/fundraising-events/golf-for-hospice/>

Like us, Follow us, Engage with us!



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