

P&DHS Newsletter



Spring 2017 Edition



PENTICTON & DISTRICT
HOSPICE SOCIETY

Penticton & District Hospice Society

Bill Everden Named Chair



Bill Everden has been appointed chair of the Penticton and District Hospice Society, the charitable organization that supports Moog and Friends Hospice House in Penticton.

A former board member of PDHS, Everden is past president of the former Skaha

“With the support of our donors, volunteers, Care Closet, community and health care partners, the Penticton and District Hospice Society will continue its work of providing quality palliative care services to the terminally ill and their families at Moog and Friends Hospice House”, said Everden.

“We will also be looking at ways to best provide grief

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Rotary Club and a member of Penticton Rotary, a past director of the Penticton Community Resource Society and the Pathways addiction Resource Society. He also served as a member of the allocations committee for United Way and is past chairman for BC Special Olympics and past chairman of the board of Penticton United Church.

counselling in the community”, he said. The Hospice Society currently provides support for a group of 75 volunteers who work at Hospice House and the community helping staff with a wide variety of services including mealtime help, companionship, reading, massage and music programs for the care and comfort of patients.



Volunteer Group of the Year



Penticton and District Hospice Society volunteers won the “Volunteer Group of the Year” award at the Innovation Awards dinner hosted recently by the South Okanagan and Similkameen Volunteer Center. This is the first time this award has been presented and is in recognition of the outstanding work done by all the society’s volunteers.

Meet the P&DHS Board of Directors

As PDHS Board Chair, **Bill Everden** has an extensive background with community organizations and served for several years on past Hospice House boards. Bill is a past president of Rotary and has served with the United Way, BC Special Olympics, Pathways Addiction Resource Society and the Penticton Community Resource Society.

Lan Thi Bray is vice-President with a background in banking, property management, pastoral care, and life coaching. She was a bereavement/hospice volunteer prior to joining the board.

Secretary **Sue Kirchman** grew up in Penticton and has worked in major hospitals in Canada as a health information science professional and as a community volunteer and children's coach. She and husband Paul operate a vineyard in Naramata.

Debra Huck is PDHS treasurer. She lives in Okanagan Falls and has worked in public accounting offices in Penticton since 1974. She was accountant and corporate treasurer for Great Valley Radio for six years and controller for Berry and Smith Trucking for 10 years.

Patti Skinner – Patti is the Care Closet representative on the Board for the past 14 years and has been involved with the society since inception. She attended the first volunteer training session in 1982. She still volunteers with the Care Closet.

Bob Mack – is a retired family physician and has lived in Summerland since 1987. He is currently the Medical Coordinator for Residential Care in Penticton and Summerland. He has enjoyed a long and positive involvement with Hospice House, both personally and through his work as a doctor.

Sharon Lindstrom – Sharon is a retired Penticton school teacher, librarian and public speaking coach. She says she became aware of Hospice House when her husband was a patient there. She has always wanted to give back to Hospice House and now she says she has her chance.

Barb Hatton – Barb is a retired school teacher and librarian for District 67. She is married with three children and three grandchildren. She has been a resident of Summerland for 40 years.

Ruth Sawyer – Ruth has been a volunteer at Hospice House for many years. She also belongs to the St. John Ambulance Therapy Dog Group with Rosie Doodle. She is Nana to four grandchildren and great Grandma to one very special little girl. She is looking forward to working with the board to further the cause of Hospice House and the Palliative Care Program.

Ann Collins – Ann is an insurance representative at Valley First Insurance. She lives in Okanagan Falls and has been a board member since 2015.

Karl Crosby – is a retired marketing, communications and fundraising professional and former newspaper editor. He has lived in the Penticton area for 13 years, married to Helga for 51 years and is fortunate to have two wonderful grandchildren – Sophie 16 and Matthew 3.

Director Emeritus **Elizabeth Landecker** – Dr. Landecker was the first medical director of Hospice House. A strong advocate for Hospice House and the palliative care program, she made significant contributions to pain management and end of life care in Penticton.

She was also instrumental in establishing the concept of a bereavement program to support the hospice program.

Care Closet Sets New Sales Record



The Care Closet on Main Street set a new one-day sales record on March 27.

A total of \$4,120 was taken in on 218 transactions for an average sale of \$18.90.

“People started lining up at 9 AM for our 10 AM opening” said long time Care Closet volunteer and PDHS board member Patti Skinner.

Sales were high for the entire week following the Care Closet's annual changeover from winter to spring clothing and accessories.

The Care Closet is owned jointly by the Penticton and District Hospice Society, SOS Medical Foundation, and the Auxiliary to PRH.

Celebrate Hospice Week May 7 – 13

Hospice week will be celebrated in Penticton with a proclamation presented by City Council in its regular meeting on May 2.

The Hospice Society is currently seeking a sponsor to place the proclamation in local newspapers so that residents will be aware of Hospice House and the services it provides. The Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association says that hospice care is about **“Living well – right to the end”**.

We are often afraid to talk about end of life care issues because it’s about the unknown. But hospice care is about living your life – and living it well – right to the end. We can’t know how or when that will be, but we can get informed about what may be available to us and share our wishes with our family. Creating an advance care plan can help you think about and focus on doing what’s important to you now and in the future

The national association wants Canadians to conquer the fear of dying and commit to two things:

1. Learn about hospice care and advance care planning – what they mean and what you think you may want (or know you want) when the time comes; and
2. Make a “bucket list” of the top five things you want to do before you die and share it with friends, family and on social media. By doing this you are making a commitment to live well – right to the end.

To support general awareness of the importance and value of Moog and Friends Hospice House, it is hoped that those who have experienced a loss at Hospice House will write a “letter to the editor” telling of their experience for publication May 7 – 13. The City of Penticton will also be issuing a proclamation announcing the week of May 7 – 13 as “Hospice Week in Penticton”.

Other notable news.....



Child and Youth Counsellor Susan Kast

The Penticton and District Hospice Society gratefully acknowledges the Canada Post Community Foundation for its generous grant of \$7,500 towards operation of the society’s Child and Youth Bereavement Program.

In the past several months, these funds were used to deliver a family Christmas event at the BRC, 46 child counseling sessions, eight parent consult sessions, and five children’s grief support groups. The funds have provided for the purchase of quality supplies for the crafts, snacks and activities of the children’s group and individual sessions. Support materials include a collection of 33 “stuffies” that depict different feelings and emotions to help children build on their emotional vocabulary. The grant has also provided for the addition of therapeutic focused board games and children’s books that illustrate stories of loss and healing.

There is a visible and demonstrated need for child and youth grief counselling in the community.

Hospice receives \$6000 Donation from Shoppers Drug Mart

Bill Everden, chair of the Penticton and District Hospice Society, accepts a \$6000 cheque from Shannon Crawford, owner of Shopper's Drug Mart, and Lesley Ramos, pharmacy assistant. The staff at Shopper's Drug Mart chose Moog and Friends Hospice House as their "charity of choice" in their annual fundraising effort. The Penticton and District Hospice Society are stewards of Hospice House and the Bereavement Resource Centre in Penticton.



Moog and Friends Hospice House would like to thank Shopper's Drug Mart for choosing us as "charity of choice" for their annual fundraiser

Fast Facts about Hospice House:

How Your Hospice Donations Are Spent

The Penticton and District Hospice Society recently purchased small refrigerators, bed comforters and floor lamps for all the patient rooms.

Cushions are currently being made for window seats, new patio furniture is being purchased. DVD players for patient rooms, new fans and recliners as well as new blinds have been purchased.

Cost of these items was \$35,000. Donations also provide for the very successful volunteer program and Child and Youth Grief Counseling Program.

According to statistics for the period April 1, 2016 to March

31, 2017, a total of **157** admissions were made to Hospice House where the average length of stay was 23.4 days. There were a total of 132 deaths at Hospice House, 31 at home and 11 in Penticton Regional Hospital.

During this period there were **244** referrals to the Palliative Care Program and **133** referrals for home care.

Thank you to all of our recent donors!



Report From Chair

It is a great honor to be invited back to the board of the Penticton & District Hospice Society and I think I can say that all of the board members are proud to be there. The new board has decided to prioritize and will try to get back to the basics. Our main focus will be, as our mission statement says, to support compassionate care and education, to ease the journey of dying and grief, and to be stewards to provide responsible and accountable management of the resources entrusted to the society. The Hospice House and Palliative Care Program will be the main focus, as well as the wonderful and active volunteer program. We will continue to support the youth counselling program as it is of great help to the youth in our community.

A decision has been made to sell the building on Nanaimo Avenue as it is not an appropriate space for what we do. We will, after it is sold move to a smaller more efficient space, and as I mentioned get back to the basics. We look at this as a positive decision and hope the members of our society and our donors feel that way too. There are new changes coming to health care that we hear will focus on having more people cared for at home, which could require an expansion of our volunteer program.

Thanks very much to this new board for all the support to the society, to the staff at hospice house, the palliative care team, the many volunteers, and thank you to all of the donors from the past and we hope you will continue to support our society as it moves to become more streamlined and efficient.

Bill Everden – Chair

Penticton & District Hospice Society



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HOSPICE SOCIETY

OUR VOLUNTEERS ARE A GROUP OF PEOPLE WHO ARE COMPASSIONATE, DEDICATED AND WHO ALL HAVE THE UTMOST INTEGRITY. THESE PEOPLE PROVIDE A VAST AND VARIED ARRAY OF SERVICES THAT BENEFIT PATIENTS ON THE PALLIATIVE PROGRAM.

Our volunteers who come into hospice house provide companionship, help with meals and feeding, support residents and families through listening and being a friendly face in a very difficult time. Most people think that is the extent of our program. While this is truly the most visible and longest standing part of our volunteer services there is so much more.

Massage



We are extremely fortunate to have the first and still one of the very few volunteer Palliative Massage teams in BC. We actually have two

separate teams....One which comes into hospice house every Monday morning going room to room providing gentle massage to not only our residents but their caregivers who are often exhausted and fragile. Our second team goes into the community visiting patients in their homes every Wednesday and Thursday doing the same. Training for the palliative massage course is offered only once a year in July for 10 days in Nelson. We got to a point where it was very difficult to grow our team. Many people who were interested in joining were unable to commit for that length of time at that time in the summer. In addition there was close to half of the program that didn't pertain to what we do at hospice....such as pool massage. Two years ago we developed our own training and under the guidance of Pam Westwood our team lead and we now conduct our own training when needed.

Pet Therapy

Since 2007 we have had our team of furry visitors every Wednesday. It is a day of the week that our residents and their families who are pet lovers look forward to. Their presence was also something staff members really enjoy.



Music Therapy



Our music therapy is a very valued program at Hospice. Our musicians include Simon, who plays the harp, Catherine, who plays the guitar, and Grant and Marlene, who both play the piano. Each of them come into hospice on a different day of



the week to play for our residents and families. This service has also branched out into the community to take music with companionship into patient's homes.

Community volunteers



Our Community volunteers hold an extremely unique role which focuses on patient and family needs at home. It can be helping to run errands, transport to appointments, sit with the patient while the caregiver gets a break or even walk their dog. It is gratifying to know that before patients come into hospice or if they choose to die at home we can support them.

Teen volunteer program



November 2016 we completed our first ever training with a group of teens from Pen-Hi and Princess Margaret. It was a project that the society has been wanting to implement for a couple of years. I am excited to say that we now have 5 new youth volunteers.. 3 grade 12's and two grade 10's who have joined our team. These young people will add a wonderful dynamic to our program and support in the house. It is exciting to know that as ambassadors for hospice and palliative care they will be communicating to their peers and helping to educate a new generation, based on their perspectives and experiences. I admire them greatly.

Gardening volunteers



With the help of Dr Landecker we have been fortunate to land the experience of the Penticton Gardening club, to volunteer their time each spring and fall to trim, prune and clean up our trees and shrubs. This much needed TLC is very much appreciated. We hope to move forward having our own gardening volunteers to add colorful pots and plants to our outside gardens and landscape.

Celebrate a life



Celebrate a life is a yearly tribute that has been a tradition of the Hospice Society since 1997. This wonderful ceremony allows individuals from all of our community to come together at Christmas and pay tribute

to a loved one they have lost.

Setting up our display at Cherry Lane mall, manning the table every day for 8 days, and tearing it down again is all done by volunteers. Some of these people are our regular hospice volunteers and board members and others are individuals who have taken on this task, yearly, since it originated. Without the volunteers this event wouldn't take place. We have people who come year after year to make sure they hang a tag and light a bulb on our tree for their loved one. It has become an important seasonal ritual for many in our community.

Staff Comments:

“There’s nothing that brightens up my day more than having one of our volunteers walk through the front door knowing they’ve come to offer their time to us.”

“The definition of “kindhearted”...having or showing empathy or kindness. This word describes our volunteers.”



Since 2009 Mary has been creating specialized gowns made from regular clothing so that the dignity of our residents can be maintained until their last days. This may seem like such a small thing but just wearing regular clothing as opposed to a hospital gown makes a huge difference to both family and our residents. Mary has also met other special requests from the nurses such as sewing bibs and door stops for Hospice House without hesitation.

Another Mary has been compiling volunteer hours quarterly for almost 10 years now. She ALWAYS...tells me it's nothing but the time that she saves me adding up all of the volunteer hours is immeasurable.

Ruth and Ken have seen the impact that having bird feeders outside the window of every room has made, so they have taken it upon themselves to hang and maintain our bird feeders. The importance of bringing just a bit of the outside world into our residents' last days, is substantial.

Robin has maintained our two large concrete planters outside our front entrance...spring, fall and Christmas for over 8 years.

There are many other volunteers who have taken on administrative duties to help out at the Bereavement resource center and with its programs.

Last but surely not least is our volunteer Board of Directors. While they're not under my lead there is still need to acknowledge their work in managing all that goes on with the society and maintaining patient comforts for the palliative program.

With over 3000 hours of dedication yearly, it is clear to see that we couldn't do what we do without our volunteers.

-Linda Brooks, Volunteer Coordinator

As the Child and Youth Grief Counsellor I sometimes find it hard to say that what I do is a “job”.

At the end of my day I can't say that I made something, fixed something, or produced something. The results of my work are hard to observe, measure, or even describe. And yet, at the end of most days I come home with the feeling that I was privileged to witness something extraordinary. I feel very fortunate to get to do the challenging work that I do and to see the impact grief services has on the lives of children and their families. Sometimes the steps towards healing are small and incremental as we work towards nurturing comfort and confidence; sometimes I am privileged to witness transforming growth within whole families.



The Child and Youth Program provides counselling services to children who have experienced the death of a parent, brother or sister. I will also see children who have lost a grandparent if they were one of the primary relationships in a child's life. These deaths occurred from a range of causes both sudden and expected- including illness, accident, overdose, suicide, and homicide. Many of the children witnessed the gruelling effects of cancer treatments, witnessed the death or discovered the

deceased and have traumatic memories. The youngest client is 4 years old and the oldest is 19. I recognize that grief is a family process and so I work with parents to support and educate them on children's grief and if needed I encourage them to access available adult grief support.

The Child and Youth Program offers two children's grief support groups each month. One for children from Kindergarten to Grade 3 and one for children Grade 4 to Grade 8. Each group session gives the kids a chance to share what's on their mind and an activity or craft to build on their coping skills. I get to see the special bond that forms between the kids that comes from a sense of belonging and being understood. The feedback that I often get from parents is that their child really likes the group and looks forward to the group each month. That tells me the group is meeting a need for them. Our program is very unique in that it is one of only a very few in the whole province to offer children's grief groups.

I also meet with kids and youth for individual grief counselling sessions and provide approximately 15-25 individual sessions each month. These sessions may include a more traditional counselling approach or include art, play, crafts or games. Making memories boxes seems to be one of the preferred activities for kids.

In providing grief counselling I hear stories of tragedy, trauma, and pain; I am also privileged to hear stories of incredible courage, love and resilience. These kids inspire me every day. I feel very blessed to play a part in their healing journey.

This is feedback one parent provided on the impact the Children's Program has had on her family:

"The children are coping so much better, they no longer show aggression and they no longer miss school because of anxiety. We have learned to talk always about our loved ones and to honour them at any chance available. We are no longer walking on egg shells."

As a non-profit organization we do our best to make every dollar count and to provide the very best service possible. This year we have been very fortunate to receive financial support from 100 Men Who Care, the Canada Post Community Foundation, and from generous members of our community who support the work of the Hospice Society. It has meant a lot to me personally to know there are people who care about the support needs of children grieving in our community. One very kind and talented woman, Marianne Schneider, gave a truly unique gift of a hand stitched quilt so that the children have a cozy place to sit during their grief groups.

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation for the many people in community who have supported the work of the Penticton and District Hospice Society over the years. Thank you so much for your generosity and the support you have shown to our program. It truly makes a difference in the lives of children and families who have experienced tremendous loss.

-Susan Kast, Child and Youth Counsellor

If you wish to receive this newsletter by email please call or contact us.

250-490-1107 or donations@pentictonhospice.com

Would you like to support Penticton Hospice?

Here's how!

Donate Online

Go to
pentictonhospice.com

Mail donations to:

Penticton Hospice Society
129 Nanaimo Ave W.
Penticton, BC
V2A 1N2

Shop at

The Care Closet
574 Main St, Penticton,
BC V2A 5C7



Volunteer!

Linda Brooks
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