

## Special Edition Touch Base Newsletter

### National Volunteer Week April 19-25



### VOLUNTEERS STAY CONNECTED DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Phones and other types of electronic devices are assisting volunteers to stay connected with our clients, caregivers, and families during this difficult time. Some of our volunteers send an email message to a client's family member to make arrangements for an appropriate time to connect with their loved one. Other volunteers organize a "conference" call so that family members can be included in the visit using phone and/or other technology. Family members appreciate, and are conveying their appreciation, that volunteers are continuing to connect with them as well as with their loved one. We are so proud of our volunteers for their flexibility and creativity in how you support these vulnerable people. Your efforts are making a difference!

#### NEIGHBOURS HELPING NEIGHBOURS

Many Volunteers are keeping active with grocery shopping and picking up needed medications for their neighbours who are self-isolating. Two other volunteers are picking up meals at the Ash Grove Inn and delivering back to their community bringing some joy on a plate!

*"The things you do for yourself are gone when you are gone, but the things you do for others remain as your legacy."*

#### FROM ONE VOLUNTEER TO ANOTHER

I have been a volunteer with MV Hospice and Palliative Care since its inception. I have heard many times about the important role that is played by our volunteers. It was only when my husband, Roger, was admitted as a resident patient that I fully realized the importance of the visits from the volunteers. We were, unfortunately, caught in the middle of the COVID-19 Pandemic and the volunteers were no longer allowed to visit. It was at that time that I realized how much we missed the quiet presence or the laughter of those who spent their time with us. Volunteers are the backbone of the MV Hospice Palliative Care program and we are so grateful to be surrounded by loving, caring people who do a huge part in easing the stress of waiting for a loved one to die. THANK YOU SO MUCH.

*- Dorothy, Jeff and Doug Wilson*

**WE ARE FORTUNATE TO HAVE EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU ON OUR TEAM!**

## Covid-19 and Volunteers

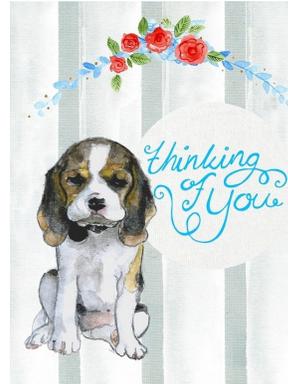
**WOW!** Could any of us have imagined how our world has changed and the many ways we need to adapt during this strange time in our lives? During the past four weeks, I have been phoning our families and I have heard how much the volunteer assistance has meant to them. I hear how appreciative they are that you are continuing to phone and stay connected with them, continue to assist with peeling potatoes (even though it's no longer done in their home), to pick up groceries and, in general, to be available at the end of the phone. It has been made very clear to me during this crisis that



our volunteers are **definitely the Heart of MV Hospice** because when I can't offer a volunteer presence in a client's home I struggle with what I can offer as assistance for them.

So... I need to adapt and change my thoughts and ways of offering assistance. What can we do?

1. Social distancing can affect us all in many ways: fear of contracting the virus; loneliness from being isolated; depression from a sense of what the future may be; and worry about family at a distance. A way to combat this is to stay connected. The best thing we can do for others is to remain in close contact. This is not just with those families we were visiting but also with each other as volunteers, as teams, our front-line hospice staff, and our own family. We need to encourage each other to keep active. Email, text, Skype, What's App, Zoom. The younger generation can assist with technology but



for many of us it can still be a phone call ... or think how special a card or letter could be.

2. As we connect it allows us time to debrief and defuse. This means we talk about the pandemic, the news, and our fears and worries. Acknowledging this new

reality helps us, and those we connect with, to cope.

3. Volunteers are special people. They see that someone is hurting, they care, and they want to do something about it. I need you to connect with me and give me ideas of how you think you can assist. What "good news" stories do you have that may help others? A local friend and I were talking and during our conversation she thanked me for calling. She wanted me to thank all the staff at the hospital and said if she were able, she would make a sign and put it on her lawn to thank them but she couldn't do it. She wasn't physically able. Well, a few hours later, one of our volunteers was busy making the sign. It is proudly displayed on the lawn for all health care workers to see. My friend is so very pleased that she is able to brighten the day of others and in so doing we have brightened her day.

Thanks everyone!

*Karen*

The world  
is hugged  
by the  
faithful  
arms of  
volunteers.

## MUSIC ENJOYED AT ONE'S END-OF-LIFE JOURNEY



One of our volunteers, Anne-Marie, recently journeyed with her mom to the end of life. Graciously, she is sharing a video her family took showing her mother really enjoying some music. It is evident that Anne-Marie's mother lights up while listening to the beat of the music. The link to view this video is [https://youtu.be/W-jZaSKC2\\_g](https://youtu.be/W-jZaSKC2_g). Thank you, Anne-Marie, for sharing these precious moments with everyone.

## Message from Lisa

To Our Valued Volunteers,

***“We cannot always control everything that happens to us in this life, but we can control how we respond.”***

The rich understanding and living of this sentiment has evolved over my life, but has accelerated both from the current pandemic circumstance and from interacting with you, our volunteers.

I have such respect and admiration for each of you and as I have the opportunity to get to know you and your personal stories, I am inspired by how you choose to respond to all that life brings to you in a giving, caring, and positive way. I have heard and seen how many of you have overcome your own personal battles, sicknesses, and tragedies but do not hesitate to then walk beside, and be present for, others in the same circumstances.

The experience, the skills, and the wisdom that you bring to MVHPC and the families we are supporting is vital to our continued growth and success and we value your input, feedback, and opinions as we strive for excellence in hospice palliative care.

Your service makes a difference, and if ever you doubted it, please read the letter on the first page from one of our own volunteers that is now on the other side of that caring. She also wondered at times if her shift

*No one is more cherished in this world than someone who lightens the burden of another.*



was really needed or had any impact but you will read that YES, it does!

MVHPC volunteers are respected and trusted team members. We are grateful for our board members, our administration and loan cupboard helpers, our bird feeder helper, our team leaders, our hospice unit volunteers, our home visiting volunteers, our complimentary therapy volunteers, our bereavement team and our maintenance volunteers. Your dedication and loving response to need is the reason we can help so many people. Please choose to respond with kindness and patience during this current crisis, and please choose to continue to serve the people depending on us in a safe and responsible way.

Thank you, thank you, and thank you again!

***Lisa***



*We make a living by what we get, but make a life by what we give.*

- Winston Churchill



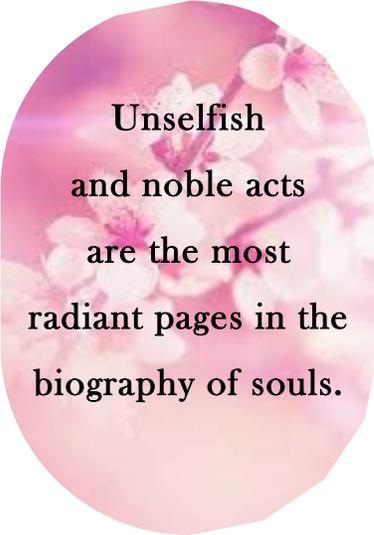
## CARDS OF APPRECIATION to MV HOSPICE VOLUNTEERS

On behalf of our entire family, I want to thank you so very much for the care you provided to Gwynne during her time at the hospice. You folks are an amazing team doing wonderful work.

My mom was so very proud of your team and the valuable contribution you make to everyone in your community. It seemed so fitting that she spent her last few days in hospice, surrounded by friends, family, and colleagues.

Again, my deepest "thank you" for what you gave to Gwynne and our family. It is something we'll always treasure.

Warmest regards,  
David Foster & Family



Unselfish  
and noble acts  
are the most  
radiant pages in the  
biography of souls.



Thank you to Karen  
Wagner and her team  
at MV Hospice for  
making it possible for  
many of us who  
loved Brian to gather  
around and share his  
final moments.

- J.K.

Board members, staff and volunteers of  
MV Hospice Palliative Care.

Your kind words and advice were a great help to me and my family. You ladies will always be near and dear to my heart.

Keep up the great work!

## APRIL IS ADVANCE CARE PLANNING (ACP) MONTH

### LET'S GET EVERYONE TALKING ACP!!! *Now More Than Ever, We Need To Talk ACP!*

Health can change without warning, and that is more evident than ever in the COVID-19 reality.

#### What is Advance Care Planning?

- It is deciding who will speak for you if you can't speak for yourself.
- It is a way to give loved ones the confidence to make decisions for you during a difficult time.
- It means thinking about your values and wishes for future health and personal care and sharing your wishes with others.

MV Hospice can assist with ACP or visit the resources listed below:

For Individuals and Families: <https://www.speakupontario.ca/resources-for-individuals-and-families/>

*"A life well lived is a life well planned"*