

Touch Base Newsletter

December 2019

Lisa's Message

As you may or may not know, we have a fundraising relationship with the St. Francis Valley Healthcare Foundation which helps us fund areas of our program not covered by Ministry of Health, and we have an ongoing "Wish List" that we have on display in the hospice apartment and it is periodically posted to Facebook.

We are blessed that no matter what we add to our Wish List, families step up and fund the items as a way of thanking MVHPC for all we have done for them. When I say "we", it is mostly because of volunteer efforts in homes, facilities, and hospice. Our volunteers are continually recognized as that special someone who brought some light into a dark day or offered a kind word that eased their burdens. All those small gestures result in many generous gifts to our program. Here is a recent rundown of items that have been donated because of volunteers:

- Killaloe Team generated a gift of eight months of Loan Cupboard rental fees.

- Combermere/Palmer Rapids/Quadeville Team — New batteries for electric wheelchair and two new CD players.
- Barry's Bay Team — Three lovely wooden benches for outside hospice and flowers to plant in them.
- Hospice Team — Two Transport Wheelchairs for Loan Cupboard and \$200/month for one year from one family, and \$700 for comfort mattress for Loan Cupboard from another group.
- Water Tower Lodge Team — \$5000 gift for volunteer training.
- Therapeutic Touch Team — \$400 to support volunteer education.

This is only what has been done in the last 3 months but there has been much more!

I don't think any of us truly comprehend the impact we have through our services nor do we fully appreciate how much it positively affects the recipients. Just today I was told that MVHPC is a blessing for our community.

Our combined efforts continue to shine an important light on hospice palliative care. I recently read — *Hospice Matters! The end of life deserves as much beauty, care and respect as the beginning.*

Thank you for inspiring me each day . I wish you all a wonderful holiday season and Happy New Year.



"No one is more cherished in this world than someone who lightens the burden of another." ~Author Unknown

Karen's Message

Holidays and anniversary dates are trying times for people who are grieving because these days are changed forever when a significant person in your life has died.

I'd like to encourage all of our volunteers and especially those who are providing bereavement support to reach out to those who are grieving. Dawn Cruchet has provided us with pamphlets that may help, and there is a handout that we use at *Help for the Holidays* that gives practical suggestions for coping during holiday periods. These special dates highlight feelings of emptiness and loss.

Here are some of Dawn's suggestions to help people cope with these difficult days:

Perhaps the most important thing to do is to **plan** the upcoming anniversary date.



Talk about what family members want and need to do and how they may want to honour the memory of the person who has died. Talk about the person who is no longer there. Sharing tears and memories is healing. Allow each family member the freedom to choose what is best for themselves — everyone grieves in their own unique way.

Rituals help us to find meaning in the memory of our loved one who has died. They involve active participation and promote comfort and healing. You can create any type of ritual that is meaningful to

you. Celebrate the life of the person who has died; honour their memory.

These and other ideas are available for you to share. You may already have copies of handouts from volunteer training, or come in to the office to pick up what you need.

Team Leaders Attend Champlain Hospice PC Education Day

Six Team Leaders participated in a Group Learning program hosted by the Champlain Hospice Palliative Care Program on October 16th.

Learning topics included:

The Language We Use; Early Identification and the COPD Patient; Advance Care Planning and Goals of Care; Supporting Children and Youth through Death, Dying and Grief; and Self-Care and Self Compassion.

We received positive feedback and all volunteers enjoyed their day. The following comments were shared:

“ Instead of dying with cancer, palliative care is about living with cancer.

"I had many "takeaways" from the day, but I'll highlight areas from some of the sessions I attended.

1) *The best way to spread knowledge is through social*

interaction, which is what makes change occur. This is 14X more effective than reading toolkits, best practices, etc.

2) *Patients describe breathlessness and its effects: drowning, waterboarding, asphyxiated, helpless, hopeless, isolated/lonely, anxious, terrified – knowing this is how a person might be feeling can help us to support them through these feelings.*

3) *Why should we talk about death with kids? Because it normalizes dying/death; honesty fosters open communication, helps build rapport, gives spaces for memory making and allows for the child to create legacy."*

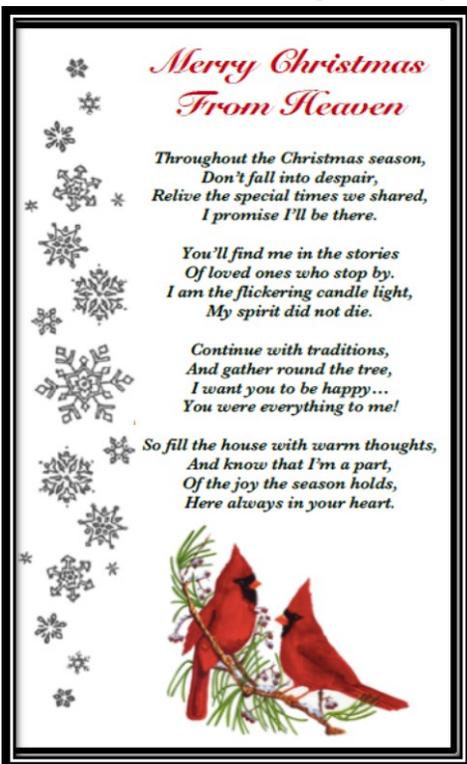
I personally took away from this event the importance of language and honesty. Using the correct language does not only mean using the terms death and dying, (i.e., use the word "died") but speaking in clear and concise terms to everyone. We learned how to discuss death and dying with children of various ages and the importance of honesty in these conversations. Language is critical in life

Welcome to Our New Volunteer Recruits



14 new volunteers have been added to our numbers and with them comes a wealth of experience and talents. 3 new volunteers are Therapeutic Touch providers. 1 is added to our Madawaska team, 2 from Golden Lake, 3 from Killaloe, 4 from Quadeville /Palmer Rapids/Combermere and 3 from Barry’s Bay, and 1 halfway between everywhere (Behind Killaloe/Wilno/Barry’s Bay) which helps greatly in many points of our catchment. We will be slowly introducing them to both home teams and institutional volunteering as their police checks get

processed. Team Leaders will be notified when our new recruits are able to begin on home teams. With 3 new male volunteers it brings a total of 10 men to our Visiting Hospice program. We often have male patients that request only males to visit. I believe a Male Team would be very beneficial and allow for easier scheduling. I hope this can be initiated by January. Welcome everyone. Thank you for recognizing a need and stepping forward to be part of a team willing to help. Together we are making a difference!



"I am only one; but still I am one. I cannot do everything; but still I can do something; and because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do the something that I can do."

Edward Everett Hale.

Information on Green Burials

At the recent Volunteer Touch Base meeting, representatives from Green Burial Ottawa Valley shared a wonderful video (28 minutes long) and thought-provoking statistics on traditional burial and cremation. Many questions were answered, and you may check out their website for the main concepts and criteria for green burial.

Link for the video: <https://vimeo.com/131680248>

Website: greenburialottawavalley.ca

If you'd like to be on their mailing list,
email: greenburialottawavalley@gmail.com

Volunteer Questions Answered

1. Where do I locate the procedures related to the Medical Equipment Loan Cupboard?

Procedures can be found in the Volunteer Resource Book which is located at the Volunteer Desk in the Hospice apartment.

2. Is there any paperwork to complete when 'loan equipment' is returned?

No. A volunteer just needs to get the person's name who borrowed the equipment and what the item is. Staff will update the file while the volunteer cleans the equipment before taking it back to the Medical Equipment Loan Cupboard.



• Important Dates and Upcoming Events •

DATE & TIME	TOPIC	LOCATION
April 14, 2020	Advance Care Planning Day	
May 24 - 30, 2020	National Hospice Palliative Care Week	
May, 2020	Annual Champlain Regional Hospice Palliative Care Education Day	

In Praise of MV Hospice Volunteers

MV Hospice was an amazing experience. You are all so wonderful. What a great place this is. We can't thank you enough.

Thank you for letting me step out for half of the day so that I could be strong for my mom until the end.

- Shannon Ross

Medical Equipment Loan Cupboard Donations Are Appreciated

MVHPC staff would like to extend our appreciation for all the donations we have received for our Medical Equipment Loan Cupboard to date.

Equipment is available to *ANYONE* for post-surgery or injury support, assistance in the home, or palliative care support.

MV Hospice Palliative Care

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TOUCH BASE MEETING TIMES

WINTER (Nov-Mar): 2:30-5:00 PM
SUMMER (May-June): 5:30-8:00 PM

First 1/2 hour of meeting
is for social time.

Monthly Statistics

2019	Oct	Nov
Active Volunteers	107	121
Volunteer Hours	366	397
Volunteer KM	5,867	6,972
# of Families Served	32	35