

Hospice Matters

The Magic of Hospice

Many think Hospice will be a sad place, and while sad things happen here, those who visit know our halls are alive with a kind of magic.

When a volunteer sits vigil, holding hands and listening to a resident, or Day Hospice guests playing board games to the sounds of a volunteer's music, these halls are filled with special, heartfelt moments. Staff and volunteers have continued to go the extra mile, fueled by an innate desire to honour people's wishes and preserve their dignity.

"Sometimes in life, you get these little glimpses of the best humanity has to offer. They appear out of nowhere and they ask nothing in return".

Quote from a husband who's wife was in residence

When the young father from Macedonia died at May Court Hospice, and it was custom he leave dressed in a special suit and bow tie. Staff researched videos on YouTube overnight so they could get the tie just right.

When a Day Hospice guest knit over 30 hearts in one week. The hearts are given out in pairs to patients in the residence, with one heart going to the patient and the other heart going to a family member unable to be at the hospice.

When a resident gets brought out to the garden to put their bare feet in the grass one more time, or has a gentle hair wash or a shave, it helps to preserve dignity.

Thank you volunteers, staff and donors. You enable special magical moments in so many more ways, each and every day. We are so grateful for your tireless dedication and commitment to Hospice.

As we look ahead, we need to focus on taking care of our own, as well as others. We continue to count on your wonderful support to help fund our services and adequately pay our employees. We'll continue to advocate for more government funding, and will work to increase fundraising results through legacy gifts, monthly donations, major gifts, events, and campaigns like #GivingTuesday.

Our priority remains to meet the needs of our community with high quality care, and to ensure we are reaching specific communities, especially Francophones and people of diverse communities. There is much to be done, but we know, with your support, the magic of hospice will continue.



Lisa Sullivan, Executive Director

May Court Moments *Hilary - A staff perspective*

It was a beautiful, early fall Friday and some of us met in the back garden for lunch. There was a gentleman on a bench sitting quietly. As he got up to leave, one of my colleagues said “take care Stephen” and he stopped, surprised she’d remembered his name, and thus began a May Court Hospice moment that I will remember forever.

Stephen spoke to us about his beloved Gail, who had passed that same date and time, six years prior at May Court Hospice. Each year since, he comes to spend time in the garden, to sit, be still, and reflect for an hour or two. Stephen has many reasons to visit, connect to space, reflect, but as he walked away that day, I wasn’t sure if he realized what listening to him had done for us as staff members.

Stephen is a wonderful storyteller. We were all totally absorbed as he recounted his stories about their many travels, including 3 weeks of sailing the Greek Islands. Stephen and Gail were lucky to have a period of time between her diagnosis and needing hospice care, that they could travel. He told us about Gail affectionately, how he’s been doing since.

As I returned to my desk, while I was sad for his loss, I realized I was feeling many other emotions... inspired, fulfilled, uplifted, and very motivated. We need to keep working hard to ensure other families have access to the wonderful care that Gail and Stephen received. A colleague shared that hearing his recollections of their adventures reminded her how precious our time is and to prioritize making time for the trips, the dates, the dinners, the moments, so that our lives feel well lived when we look back near the end.

What are your moments?

Our Mission

Hospice Care Ottawa provides compassionate, high quality care to people and their caregivers from the time of diagnosis with a progressive life-limiting illness through their palliative and end-of-life journey.

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No Better Time Than the Present *Michelle - A caregiver's perspective*

Liz and I met in graduate school in 1996 while studying urban planning and design at TUNS in Halifax. We settled in Ottawa and then moved to London, where I completed my doctorate at Western University.

In late 2019, we returned to Ottawa for my new role as a Principal at Goss Gilroy Inc. Within months we found ourselves in the midst of a global pandemic, juggling work and life, and buying a home, while confronting Liz’s life-threatening cancer diagnosis.

After a courageous two-year battle, Liz entered hospice. We were a little nervous leaving gay-friendly downtown for Ruddy-Shenkman in Kanata. But our concerns were alleviated by the generosity of those most progressive and brave staff and volunteers who truly stepped forward. We thank you.

Same-sex marriage was not possible when we first fell in love 25 years ago, and we decided no better time than the present. We were married by Rev. Sharon Moon in the family lounge, surrounded by our inner circle on Friday April 15th, 2022. While each day brings its challenges and lessons, we are grateful to the hospice staff and volunteers who helped make our day unforgettable and continue to show up in remarkable and unexpected ways.



Love at the Opera *Tom McCool - A donor profile*



When Marjorie took her seat at the opera in 2005 it turned out to be the best seat in the house. Sitting next to Marjorie was Tom McCool. A conversation was struck up and that continued for the next 16 years, until Tom's death in 2021.

Tom McCool was a valley boy. Born in Pembroke, he loved his home in the valley as a teenager. When Tom contracted polio he spent a year in an Ottawa hospital in an iron lung, followed by eight months in a body cast and then learning to walk again. Separated from family and friends through all of this, Tom remained positive. He went on to university in Windsor, Ontario.

Tom became a teacher of history and library science, joining a family of teachers, his mother and two sisters. For over 20 years Tom taught in Sudbury at Chelmsford Valley School. As well as a lover of opera, Tom was a lifeline learner, studying everything from library science to wine at universities and colleges in Canada and the United States. Tom was also a big sports fan, especially baseball, and along with baseball goes beer. Beer festivals and a collection of beer mugs were some of Tom's loves.

As retirees, Marjorie and Tom spent many years travelling. The one place that drew them back regularly was Victoria, British Columbia. So much so, that they took up residence there, also giving Tom the time to write the family history. Tom died in Victoria in 2021 but he knew of Hospice Care Ottawa through a close friend, who was a volunteer at the May Court Hospice. Knowing of the care and comfort brought to patients and families, Tom decided to name Hospice Care Ottawa as a benefactor in his Will.

We are very grateful to Tom and Marjorie for their kindness. Thanks to this legacy gift, more individuals and families can receive compassionate hospice and end-of-life care, at no charge, when comfort matters most.

For more information about legacy gifts by Will to Hospice Care Ottawa, please contact Hilary at 343-961-7037 or hilary.evans@hospicecareottawa.ca.

Advocacy for Palliative Care - Are we doing enough? *Kathleen - Staff*

Dr. Sandy Buchman told a powerful story at the virtual AGM in September, when he spoke of his own father recently dying. For many of us, the personal experience of our loved ones passing connects us to our work in hospice and palliative care like no other. After facing hurdles with a hospital, his father eventually received care at home. As Dr. Buchman so poignantly said: "Who gets that privilege?"

Dr Buchman shared photographs of line-ups to shelters, to large gymnasium style rooms, filled with cots for the dying poor. "Who advocates for these people in these line-ups?" he asked, adding that our advocacy for the most vulnerable is failing. Across the province of Ontario, the average cost of a hospital bed is 3 times higher than the cost of a hospice care bed. There is economic incentive for the government to increase funding. There is a need for compassionate care to be available to everyone, not just some.

Dr. Buchman's call to action was for all of us to "put our collective minds together" and be creative. Stimulate new press. Advocate outside of our systems and social circles. Advocate, donate and show what it means to have a community like Hospice Care Ottawa, in the final days.

For letters templates and other advocacy materials visit our website at: <https://www.hospicecareottawa.ca/>

Your continued support is truly appreciated!

As you know, all of our programs and services are provided at **no charge** to the people we serve and their families. With only roughly 60 percent of our funding provided by the government, we must raise over \$2.2 million each year to ensure programming, compassionate care, and magical moments continue. You can help ensure that care and comfort is available when comfort matters most.

Please make a donation with your new, convenient reply coupon enclosed with postage paid envelope, donate online, and/or support one of our upcoming special events this holiday season.

Upcoming Events at a Glance

Virtual Homes for the Holidays...

Donate today & receive your tour link Nov 18

and Holiday PopUp Shop

Shop for our great cause Nov 25, 26, 27, 2022, 10 am to 4 pm at the Hellenic Event Centre, 1315 Prince of Wales Dr. For a complete list of merchants visit our website.

#GivingTuesday Campaign

Tuesday, November 29, 2022

Shine A Light of Remembrance Ceremony

Monday, December 12, 2022

For the most up-to-date event information visit www.hospicecareottawa.ca



Take a virtual tour inside eight exquisite homes decorated for the season and shop in-person at our Holiday PopUp Shop!

Access to the virtual tour granted by donation. To make a donation today, please visit our website and click the image above. For more information, please call 613-591-6002 x 232

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The May Court Club
of Ottawa
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You have received our bi-annual newsletter in appreciation of your support of Hospice Care Ottawa. If you prefer to receive electronically or to update your mailing preferences, please email kathleen.reichelt@hospicecareottawa.ca



YES, I want to help support more magic moments at Hospice Care Ottawa!
Thank you. Please see new reply coupon enclosed with postage paid envelope.