



Thank You North Grenville

Over the past 18 months we have witnessed a worldwide pandemic, with people panicking and emptying the shelves of Lysol and toilet paper, but we have also witnessed some of the greatest kindness that we will ever see. We pivoted quickly to ensure that our clients continued to receive service and we relied heavily upon our volunteers to make this happen. Our amazing volunteers stepped up to drive meals, make phone calls, and visit clients virtually. They also participated in online training and support programs. Perhaps most importantly, our volunteers never once said “I can’t.”

We realized in March, when the world shut down again, that we needed to get creative with our fundraising strategies. Our Hike for Hospice turned into a virtual event, allowing participants to hike safely in their own neighborhood, and we raised one of the highest amounts ever. We want to give a special thanks to our sponsor PetValu and owner Steven Clarke, who for the past 4 years has supported Hike for Hospice by providing swag bags for our furry friends. The Municipality approved our request to support the Grief & Bereavement program and funded an extra day of support to help ease wait lists, add additional support groups and to train volunteers to assist those transitioning from counselling to supportive services. Then in the Fall of 2020, we realized we couldn’t host our Newfoundland Christmas Kitchen Party. Thus, was born the “Everything Under the Evergreen” auction. With the support of Hunter McCaig, owner of Rideau Auctions, we were able to raise much needed funds for our programs and services. Hunter graciously offered to both donate to and host the auction on his own web platform. Over 40 local businesses and individuals donate to the auction in a very financially difficult time and we are eternally grateful for the generosity of this wonderful community.

2021 has also not been a “normal” year and with it came 3rd and 4th waves and more lockdowns. We saw our clients and volunteers become more isolated and frustrated. But once again our volunteers rallied to stay connected not only with clients but with each other. We hosted another virtual Hike and raised over \$8000, we were fortunate enough to be able to gather outside, and we welcomed back our clients in person! Community member, Craig McCormick, offered to donate the proceeds from the sales of North Grenville Strong simply because he wanted to help. When we reached out in October for our “Everything Under the Evergreen” Online Auction, we were amazed by the responses from local merchants; everyone said yes! In fact, Kemptville Heat Source told us that they didn’t want to donate an item this year; instead, they wanted to give us a cheque and that’s what they did for \$500.

We have seen difficult times and we have seen how strong we can be when we band together to make a difference in the lives of others. I am so proud to be a part of this community and a part of this organization that is supported by so many wonderful volunteers and community members.

Thank you North Grenville.

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Upcoming Events

Christkindlmarkt November 13th from 11:00-4:00

Death Café November 17th from 6:30– 8:00 p.m.

Caregiver Coffee last Tuesday of the month at 1:00

Bereavement Support Group 2nd Wednesday of the month at 5:30 p.m.

Meditation Tuesdays via zoom at 7:00

Guided Journaling Wednesdays via zoom at 2:00 until Dec 22

Everything Under the Evergreen Online Auction November 22-27

Wreath Making Fundraiser November 30th at 1:00 or at 6:00

December Remembrance Ceremony will occur December 1st

Volunteer Christmas Gathering December 15th from 5:00-7:00

Compassion Cultivation Training Coming in January Weekly 2 hour classes for 8 weeks. Dates TBA

To join any of the events by zoom please call the office at 613-258-9611 ext 0 or email program@bethdonovanhospice.ca

Christkindlmarkt

On Saturday November 13, 2021, the Beth Donovan Hospice will be at the Christkindlmarkt hosted by the fabulous folks at My Local Markets.

Our volunteers and staff are busy preparing many delectable food items as well as some creative and fun Christmas crafts. For sale at our table, you will find cookies, loaves, jams, preserves, decorations and so much more! We will also be taking orders for our delicious “Christmas Puddings” (hint: make sure to place your order early as we sell out quickly every year). There will be a limited number of pudding orders so don’t wait!

All proceeds from the sale of our baked goods and crafts, will go directly to supporting the programs at Beth Donovan Hospice. This fun outdoor market will be held from 10am -4pm on November 13. My Local Markets will transform their space at the Kemptville Campus into a festive meeting place, where you can shop for local, homemade Christmas ornaments, decorations, gifts, and treasures. There will even be appearances by Santa and his friends. Join us as we kick off the Christmas season with joy, connection, and giving!

Our volunteers will be there with their smiling faces and would love to see you all. Be sure to stop by our table early, as we know we will sell out of all our items.

Journaling is good for you.

And not just for your mental health but for your physical health too. A growing body of evidence suggests that expressive writing can improve immune response, reduce stress, lower blood pressure, and improve sleep (Baikie & Wilhelm, 2005).

Much like meditation, when we take a few moments to write expressively, we are taking a moment to check-in with ourselves. When we are busy, we often don’t take the time to acknowledge and process our own feelings. Journaling; however, can help us engage in a deeper conversation with ourselves. Just a few minutes of writing can help you organize your thoughts, express your feelings, find clarity, and set goals.

The best part about this practice is that there are no rules. Simply writing about your thoughts and feelings will bring you to a deeper understanding yourself. When we are more self-aware we can experience more empathy, gratitude, intention, better sleep and reduced stress.

The only difficult part seems to be starting a new habit. One way to encourage a writing practice is to join a writing group or class. BDH is offering a Guided Journaling class on Wednesday afternoons via zoom from November 3 to December 22. Join us while we give you some tips and tricks to help you develop a journaling/writing habit and engage in a deeper conversation with yourself. The class is open to everyone in the community, and you can join at any time. Please contact Amy at amy.tibben@bethdonovanhospice.ca to register.

Baikie, K., & Wilhelm, K. (2005). Emotional and physical health benefits of expressive writing. *Advances in Psychiatric Treatment*, 11(5), 338-346. doi:10.1192/apt.11.5.338

Welcome Back Volunteer Gathering

On September 21, 2021, we were very excited to be able to host a welcome back gathering for all our wonderful volunteers. For many, this was the first time they were seeing each other face to face in over a year. We all gathered around the bonfire with lots of joy, anticipation, and laughter in the air.

A scrumptious meal was ready for all. The Volunteer Advisory Committee had prepared individual Charcuterie boards for each volunteer, along with a decadent dessert that Mary Lou introduced to us! Who would have thought that a brownie with a dollop of peanut butter and topped off with a warm, toasted, gooey marshmallow would be a hit? Not me... but it was!



We were delighted to have the opportunity to acknowledge and appreciate the service of many of our dedicated volunteers. This is something that we haven't been able to do since before the pandemic. There were several volunteers that really needed to be recognized for their many years of service. The following volunteers were recognized for their milestone commitments:

- Mary Lou Anderson - 6 years
- Jane Hale – 5 years
- Sue Jenkins – 5 years
- Cynthia Kowal – 5 years
- Rose -Lynne McDougall – 6 years
- Pat McGahey – 25 years
- Margaret Robertson – 5 years
- Peggy Vandervoort – 5 years
- Tania Wlotzki – 5 years



After all the recognition it was game time! Wow, do our volunteers and staff get competitive? YES! The group was divided up into two teams to play Headbands. I have to say the stress of being the person to place the new card into the headband was a lot of pressure!!! But the extra pressure was worth witnessing the excited efforts of everyone.

We were also very grateful to have local photographer, Terri-Lynn, join us as she captured so many wonderful moments from the evening. Terri-Lynn got some great headshots of all the volunteers and staff in attendance. I have to say the photos are amazing and I want to thank everyone for being such good sports about having your picture taken at the end of the evening!

All in all, it was a wonderful evening and it brought so much joy to have everyone together! Thank you to all of our amazing volunteers who are always there to support our clients, staff, and each other. We truly appreciate you!



Volunteer Education

Starting on September 22, 2021, we had 9 new volunteers sign up for the volunteer training program and since then, they have completed the in-person portion of the 30-hour HPCO training program. This group of volunteers were recruited through the new recruitment “push” this summer. Recruitment efforts continue with the hope of running another HPCO training session in February.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer with the Beth Donovan Hospice, but not sure where you would like to donate your time, contact us at [www. program@bethdonovanhospice.ca](mailto:program@bethdonovanhospice.ca). We would love to have the opportunity to talk to you and explain all the different volunteer opportunities!

The VAC committee continues to offer Continuing Education Sessions that support the important work of our volunteers. To date we have offered the following sessions: Advanced Care Planning, Grief Literacy, and Therapeutic Relationships.

We look forward to new education offerings coming in January, including Compassion Cultivation Training, which will be facilitated by Shireen Mansouri MD CCFP(EM) FCFP. Shireen is a family physician who is a certified Compassion Cultivation Teacher. She is interested in exploring Compassion Cultivation as a potential antidote to empathic distress and burnout. This course promises to help people move through life and its challenges with a steady mind, from a place of connection and inner strength. Stay tuned for further details.

What brings you joy?

Have you ever made a “Joy List?” It is just as the title suggests—a list of what brings you joy. Beth Donovan Hospice can help you understand how these lists can be used to brighten your day or perhaps help others know what is important to you. Joy lists are a key component to Advance Care Planning. Imagine you have been in a serious car accident and have lost the ability to speak for yourself. Do you know who would make health and personal care decisions for you? We can’t always predict if, or when, we will need to rely on others to make health or personal care decisions for us. Nor can we predict when we will be called on to make these decisions for someone else. That is why it is important to talk about what creates a joyful and meaningful life for you and the people around you.

In Ontario, Advance Care Planning (ACP) is confirming your substitute decision maker(s) (SDMs) and communicating your wishes, values, joys, and beliefs about care to help your SDM(s) make health and personal care decisions for you if you become mentally incapable of doing so for yourself. Want to learn more? Beth Donovan Hospice has a team ready to provide you with information and answer your questions. ACP workshops for volunteers were offered both in-person and virtually throughout the month of October. Keep an eye out for more upcoming dates and times. Community workshops, small or large, and individual client/family discussions can also be scheduled by contacting the Melissa at dayhospice@bethdonovanhospice.ca

Consider visiting this website for more great resources. www.speakupontario.ca .



The Day Hospice Program is Back in Full Swing!

Following strict Covid-19 guidelines, we have been able to welcome back a group of clients and volunteers to our Day Hospice program. Our days have been filled with musical guests, therapeutic art sessions, meditation, chair yoga and special outings. New this fall we have added Dance Movement Therapy and here's how Megan, our Integrative Counselling Therapist describes this unique program:

"Everyone has a general idea of dance as an art form. For those new to Dance/Movement therapy (DMT), it is useful to distinguish the use of dance as an art form and dance as movement in therapy. The major difference between dance as performance art and dance as movement in therapy lies in the basic theory. The central principle of DMT is that a significant and powerful connection exists between motion and emotion. The role of the dance/movement therapist is to give attention to the mover, helping them to explore this connection in their own life and experience, with the aim of healing themselves and enriching the relationship between the physical and psycho-emotional. The aim of dance and movement work is not simply to evoke or reflect feelings, but to encourage clients to feel in expressive action. In working with the day hospice program participants, the intention of the DMT group sessions is to use expressive movement as a tool for enhancing quality of life through connection with the self and community. Creating the opportunity to be playful and expressive in a body that is perhaps physically limited, uncomfortable, or a source of frustration gives a voice to an experience that words can often not express.

Those navigating a life limiting illness often feel unseen, unheard, misunderstood and at a loss for conveying their experience. Movement is a universal language that can be shared by anyone with a heartbeat. To be seen, to be able to express, and to be in relationship with one's body in a healthful way is the goal of these regular DMT group gatherings at BDH. This is done by incorporating music, play, laughter, improvisation and expressive movement into each session."



Another distinctive activity in our day program has revolved around the idea of "bucket-lists" or "joy lists." Staff, volunteers, and clients have explored and discussed places and things that bring them joy. From this, we look at activities they would like to do or places they would like to see or experience again. Special themed days are then developed around these memories and interests. For example, we took a tour of Tuscany using virtual reality, enjoyed a wine tasting and an amazing Italian lunch followed by grapevine crafting. Hawaii, Iceland, and Antarctica are our next virtual destinations to be visited in the weeks ahead.

A day trip was also planned to Baxter's Beach. The accessible ramp at the beach allowed clients to dip their feet in the water and wiggle their toes in the sand—something some of the clients stated they hadn't done for more than 10 years. The group is planning a morning away at the Smiths Falls Flying Club where one of our clients was once involved and has noted his enthusiasm to visit again.



All these special days could not be possible without our wonderful group of caring and creative volunteers. Thanks to each of you involved and a warm welcome to Linda, Amy, Connie, and Denise who have recently joined the group and have contributed in so many new and exciting ways!

Greetings from the Board of Directors

As we move through autumn, I am reflecting on the many things for which I am thankful. The summer seemed to disappear in a blur, with a flurry of activity around the hospice. Once again, through the outstanding efforts of Sue and her team, and a dedicated team of volunteers, programs pushed forward to support our clients and the community. It was wonderful to see Day Hospice running in person again, with a trip to the beach, barbeques, and a virtual trip to Italy!

New programs continue to be offered and projects are moving forward. The labyrinth continues to take shape and the healing garden is progressing well, thanks to the efforts of staff and volunteers. I also have to mention that the community support in these projects has been wonderful!

I am thankful to have this wonderful organization in my community and grateful to be part of it! It is a pleasure to support Sue and her staff, and the team of volunteers, who bring the vision to life everyday!

Best wishes for a safe and healthy fall!

Lynne Turnbull, Chair, on behalf of the Board of Directors



Practicing compassion towards self and others during COVID-19

The bereavement program at the Beth Donovan Hospice has seen a substantial increase in referrals for grief and bereavement support. COVID 19 has acted as a magnifying glass, heightening and sometimes reigniting once low-level feelings of sadness and isolation. Together we are experiencing isolation, fear, anxiety, low mood, and many more uncertainties and unknowns about now and the future. In these unprecedented times, it's time for unprecedented **kindness and compassion**.

The bereavement support program offers various options for connecting those who are grieving with volunteers and staff who can offer compassion. Compassion literally means: suffering together. When we feel and understand distress in others, compassion gives us the courage and wisdom to be present with another. Compassion has powerful energy. When there is so much around us that remains unknown, our compassion, kindness and humanity give us certainty and safety.

Being compassionate and kind is, however, not just about giving to others. We need to be compassionate and kind to ourselves, otherwise it is incomplete. We must try not to judge ourselves so harshly in our relationships, as parents, and in our jobs. This is a time to appreciate who we are as individuals, to recognize and value our different strengths, and accept our common humanity. We are all less than perfect and we are all doing the best we can in the circumstances we find ourselves in.

If you feel you would benefit from some compassionate presence in your life both from self and others, please feel free to contact the Beth Donovan Hospice. We offer individual counselling, online programming, and group support at no cost to those in our community seeking a pathway into healing.



COVID Loss Support Group Offered at BDH

At the Beth Donovan Hospice, we want to acknowledge that many people in our community are experiencing grief due to the countless losses that have occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In response to this need in our community, we are offering a COVID Loss Support group. Facilitated by a certified counsellor and trained bereavement support volunteers, this group has been meeting weekly to acknowledge, share, and mourn our losses in the community. We seek to reflect upon this “new normal,” reconstruct meaning, and explore various strategies and tools for self-care and healing as we navigate these unprecedented times.

The COVID Loss Support Group started mid-September and will run for 6 consecutive weeks. Though registration is now closed, we encourage anyone who is interested in participating in a COVID Loss Support group, to contact us. We anticipate this offering to take place again in the near future and encourage people to register early. For more information, please visit our website at www.bethdonovanhospice.ca or call us at 613-258-9611.



Brief Book review:

"It's Okay that you are not Okay" by Megan Devine.

One of the most popular books in the BDH library right now is the book “It’s okay that you are not Okay” written by Megan Devine. Devine is direct and compassionate in her writing as she validates the experience so many of us who are grieving a loss have had to navigate; advice from others about "getting past" grief, "moving on," "finding closure," etc.

This book contains the wisdom she's gained after ten years of living with grief; trying to figure out *why* so much of our cultural reaction to death and grief is not only not helpful but actually hurtful and harmful to mourners. This book treats everyone, both mourners and those who long to support mourners, with great kindness and empathy. Devine points out that death isn't fixable. It isn't something you "move on" from, but rather you just keep moving.

This book offers sage advice about coping with the cognitive issues posed by grief, when a person's brain is occupied with trying to reorganize a world that no longer makes sense and dealing with the often crippling anxiety that follows a loss. In validating the experience of grief, offering tangible strategies for navigating the healing journey, Devine also encourages readers to be grief warriors, stating “We have to be able to see what’s true without fear of being seen as weak, damaged, or somehow failing the cultural storyline.” (p 54).

The Beth Donovan Library offers a multitude of books on countless topics specifically related to grief and loss. We invite you to come peruse the shelves and borrow a good read that resonates for you.



