

Surrey Hospice Society
"Companions for the Journey ..."

Summer 2008

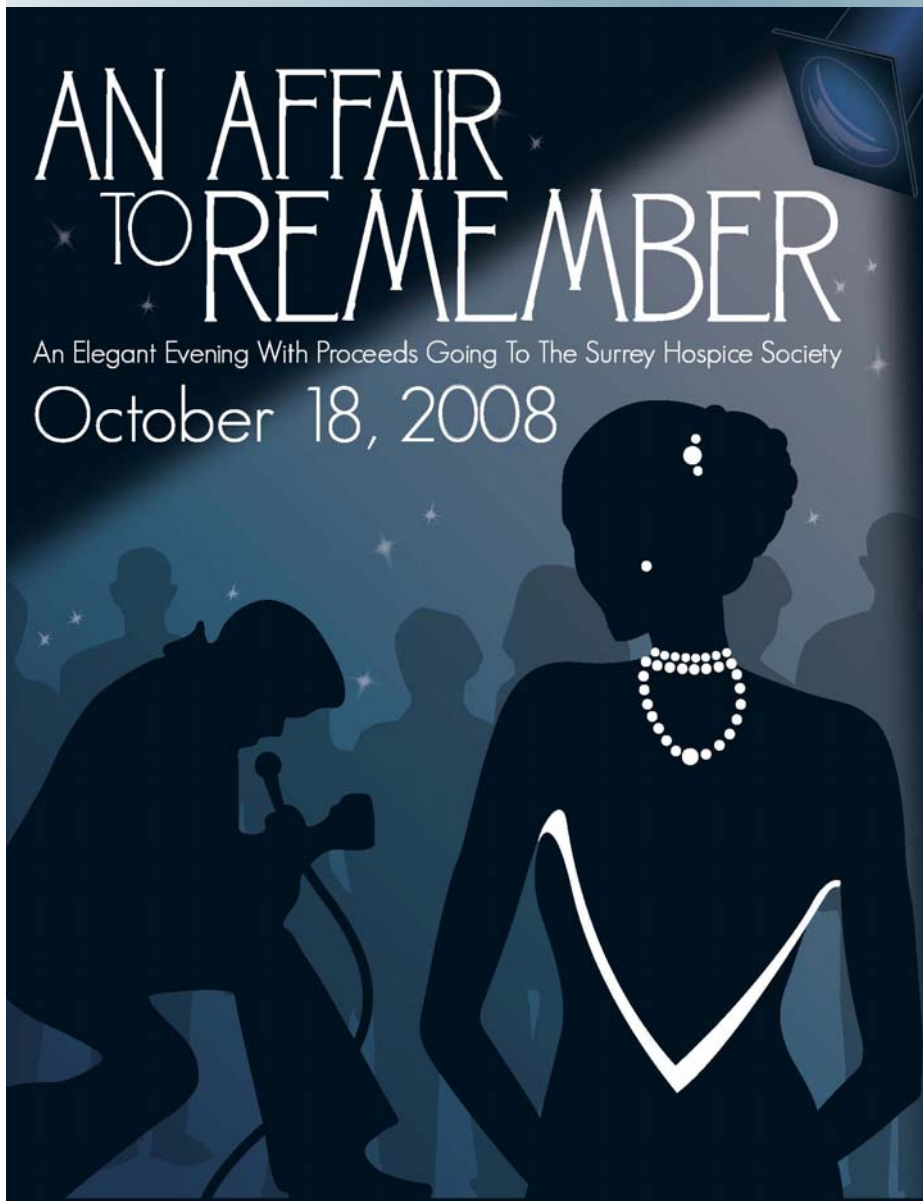
The Surrey Hospice Society is proud to present an
evening of dinner & dancing with

Elvis Elite - Featuring Steve Elliott

The Pearl Banquet & Conference Centre
201 - 13030 - 76th Avenue, Surrey

Tickets: \$80 per person - For tickets call 604-543-7006

Dress: Classy/Casual



Join us for our biggest fundraiser of the year - an evening of dining and dancing featuring Steve Elliott as Elvis. Steve performs all three eras of Elvis from the 50's Rock a Billy Years, to the 60's Movie years and Black Leather Comeback Special and last but not least... the 1970's Las Vegas Years! To catch a glimpse of this talented artist visit www.elviselite.com.

Our three-course dinner features a selection of entrées. For the beef lover, choose the Prime Rib Roast with Red Wine and Green Peppercorn Gravy. You may wish to enjoy the baked chicken stuffed with mushrooms and apricots with mango salsa. And, for the vegetarians we know you will enjoy the grilled vegetables and feta cheese baked in phyllo pastry served with pesto cream.

Tickets are available now by calling 604-543-7006. We accept Visa, cheques, or cash. Don't delay — invite your friends, enjoy a wonderful evening while helping to support Surrey Hospice Society.

A cash bar will be available - wine, beer, and mixed drinks.

Message from the Board President

Just about 30 minutes ago I finished my meditation, a practice that always relaxes and grounds me allowing the brain to stop screaming and make room for the wonderful music and water sounds to penetrate my body and soul. This wonderful gift to myself always leaves me feeling rejuvenated, calm and reflective.

It is in this state of reflection and calm that I am writing my first "Message from your 2008-2009 Hospice Society President," a position that I am honoured to hold, as working with Hospice truly speaks to my soul.

Often I am asked, "Why do you support Hospice or what got you involved?" The answer is a simple one - personal experience.

Like many people I have experienced the loss of loved ones and lived with

the difference when I had support and when there was none.

Imagine being a 17-year old girl, shocked when she was called by her father, on a cold November Toronto morning in 1969, just before she was leaving for school and told to go to the hospital where her mother was. The daughter had absolutely no idea that the call was to say goodbye to her mother who was dying from a terminal cancer, diagnosed 2 years earlier. This 2-year end-of-life journey was a secret between the dying mother, the shocked father and the doctor. What a painful, lonely journey this must have been for the parents. Back in 1967-1969 nobody heard of palliative care or hospice.

The impact of this "sudden" death on the young girl left its mark for years,

leaving a sense of guilt, betrayal, anger and irrational fear of losing her children once she became a mother herself.

Fast forward, to November 2002 and this young girl is now a 50 year old mother of two living on the other side of the country from her father, who was diagnosed with cancer earlier in the year.

She flies home to see her father at the hospital, who is now on the Palliative Care Unit. The doctors and nurses and volunteers are warm, friendly and open to answering any questions asked. The doctor is honest and gentle as he explains that end of life is imminent - maybe 3 weeks, maybe 3 months, but no longer.

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Message from the Executive Director

On May 10th, many of you joined us at Bear Creek Park to remember our loved ones who have passed away – by releasing a dove or joining the Walk of Remembrance. Thank you all for coming out on a drizzly Saturday morning – we were blessed with better weather as the day progressed.

The Surrey Hospice Society has so many reasons to celebrate – as we approach summer. First of all, the long awaited Laurel Place 20-bed Hospice Residence is open, and new patients are being admitted into this beautiful facility. The environment and the care will be the best that one can experience as patients transition on their final journey.

We have been working very hard to be ready for the influx of referrals that is expected with the doubling of the hospice residence and the increase of referrals from the community. At the beginning of July, we will finally open the doors of the recently renovated expansion next door to our present office. The newly created Children's Room is huge – and very inviting with a beautiful mural being painted over the summer, each counselor will have their own office, the homey family meeting room will be ready, as well as the Board room/library/resource centre.

Sometimes we wondered if we would really move in, and if the expansion would be a reality. Well – it is.

We will also be painting and replacing the flooring in our present space over the summer, and will hold our grand opening on Tuesday, September 16th. We want you all to attend. If you are receiving this newsletter, you have a heart for Hospice. And this new Resource and Support Centre will help us provide the grief support and the volunteer training that is greatly needed in the City of Surrey.

So – circle that day – Tuesday, September 16th, from 5-7 PM. Come and help us celebrate a dream that is coming true, and a vision that started long before I came to the Surrey Hospice Society.

We will also be bringing an additional Registered Clinical Counsellor onto our Staff in the Fall, and we would love to introduce her to you.

I hope you have a wonderful, safe and restful summer and will be ready to celebrate with us in September.

Marion Brandner
Executive Director

Message From Board President - Continued from Page 2.

Volunteers come by with coffee, books, say hello to the daughter and speak to her father kindly and in such a caring way that one would think they were relatives. But no they are volunteers with Palliative Care. They know what the dying and their family need.

Palliative care nurses were referred to as "Angels" by most patients and family members on the unit because of their kindness, honesty and willingness to explain what was happening to her father as she and her brother watched him slowly slip away, in not 3 weeks or months, but within 10 days of her arrival.

When I relive this story and tell others of being that 17-year-old girl, surprised at losing my mother, receiving no support afterwards and then to contrast that experience with the positive and supportive experience of being with my father as he was dying. Of listening to music with him, by telling stories over and over again and finally able to say goodbye to him - all this made possible with the support of the Palliative Care "angels", Hospice Volunteers and medical team. When my story is told, people quickly understand why I support Hospice.

At Surrey Hospice Society we need to

continually increase our circle of friends (and our volunteers) because we know that death and dying is not a topic most people want to talk about, a sense that perhaps somehow death is an option...yet it is inevitable for each of us and we must tell the Hospice Story to everyone - the community, the government, the business community - anyone who will listen.

It is through stories that hearts are touched and this moves people. We know from experience that most Hospice supporters (businesses, government, community etc) are those who have lost a loved one and appreciate fully the needs of the dying and their family members.

With the tremendous work and leadership of Executive Director, Marion Brandner, and her team of hardworking and committed staff the story of Hospice is reaching more people each month. We are making friends for life as people tell people who tell more people. It is a process, which takes time, but we are making great headway...again thanks to Marion and her team.

We need to continually expand our circle of friends and volunteers. And towards this end, the Board as well is

fully committed to do whatever it takes to continue raising the awareness and the funds to meet the increasing needs for support.

This working together of staff and Board has already yielded fabulous results as seen through the renovations and additions to the Resource Centre made possible by donations from Surrey Rotary Club, Ronald McDonald House Charities, Guildford Rotary, Surrey Foundation, Soroptimist Int'l of Surrey/Delta, the Order of St. John's and an anonymous "Angel" donor and individual donors. Our heartfelt thanks and gratitude for these gifts of kindness and belief in what we do.

On behalf of the Board of Directors I want to say thank you for everyone's contribution of time, love and energy. Every bit makes a difference and as we move forward together we can expect to reach our goal of increased awareness, community participation and resources.

Enjoy your summer.

With Gratitude

Judi Huta

President

Surrey Hospice Society Board

COME JOIN OUR TEAM!

The Surrey Hospice Society Development Committee is looking for volunteers.

Are you a good planner? Do you like to organize events? Do you enjoy fundraising?

Join us! We need you.

Meetings are one afternoon per month. Extra time may be required with certain events.

Contact Marion Brandner, Executive Director, at 604-543-7006 or e-mail marion@surreyhospice.com

Message from the Program Director

It has certainly been a busy time. A two week orientation for staff and volunteers planning on working in the new Laurel Place hospice residence took place in May just prior to its opening. Surrey Hospice Society Staff were invited not only to participate in the sessions but to help facilitate many of the educational workshops. It was a wonderful opportunity to re-connect with long time Hospice Residence staff and become acquainted with new members coming onto the team. It was also a wonderful opportunity for them to get to know the Hospice volunteers and their role as important team players.

The transfer of patients from the 10-bed residence to the new went very smoothly. The nurses reported that the patients all had the best night sleeps that they had had in a long time on that first night. Comments from both patients and their loved ones are that they love the new setting, its calming décor and ambiance. We are now closer to the 20-bed capacity and will have a full roster of patients in the coming weeks as the new routines for transfer and support are in place.

I would like to thank all the Laurel Place Hospice volunteers for their dedication and patience through this initial transition. As with any new

venture we have been faced with some growing pains as the staff and management on the Fraser Health Authority team get the new set up off the ground and we learn the new rhythms along with them. Your understanding and support have been most appreciated.

The new residence will have an even greater impact on the acuity level of the patients on the Palliative Care Unit. There is already a high volume of patient turn over and very complex scenarios that the volunteers are present to on that ward in Surrey Memorial Hospital. The medical staff are consistently praising the work of the volunteers and how important their role is in supporting the patients and their families. The Palliative Care Unit Social Worker we had for the last year just left her post and she couldn't say enough about the work the volunteers do. She said she could not have done her job without them. Very honouring words indeed.

So too praise is offered to the Community volunteers and the wonderful work they do with their one to one assignments with individuals in the home. These are often more intimate connections. The volunteers are invited into the personal settings of family and loved ones at a very sacred and vulnerable time. Often

following them onto PCU or into the Hospice Residence if they are not able to keep their loved one at home. More and more referrals are coming in from the home care nurses due to the great work of not only volunteers but our Community Client Coordinator, Joy Dockery.

Dust has been flying along with construction noise and piles of storage items that have no place to go during renovation at our Hospice Society office site. Chaos has clearly reigned over these last few months in the work environment. The Bereavement volunteers have been troopers through it all maintaining a positive outlook. They have adapted to various set ups in the meeting locations and staff dancing around the upheaval to what we normally like to present as a calm and welcoming environment. They are getting to know our new Clinical Counsellor, Rosemary Brown, who is doing an excellent job in her new role.

Deep praise once again goes not only to our Bereavement volunteers for their patience through this transition along with the office volunteers who have inhaled more than enough dust over these past weeks! Your dedication to the programs truly has shone

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Honouring the Mystery

I was much younger and just starting as a newly graduated trained volunteer for Victoria Hospice Society. One of my fondest memories follows.

I had been asked to visit on a "crisis call" for an older gentleman in an extended care home. He was considered imminent and his only visitor, his wife, needed some respite from her bedside vigil. I was given instructions to drive to the care home, report to reception and not to expect to meet the wife since she was exhausted and

had gone home.

When I arrived I was escorted to a large room, which appeared to be somewhat bare, in other words no personal touches to reflect a home and somewhat institutional looking save for a few articles of personal clothing and a greeting card on the dresser. The sole patient was unresponsive with closed eyes.

I took a seat, gently whispered into his ear, "Hi John, my name is Joy and

I'm here to sit with you to keep you company. You don't need to talk to me." There was no response whatsoever.

As I sat quietly looking around the room I wondered what kind of life John had lived. I could only imagine what it must be like now for his wife of some 50+ years. There didn't appear to be a presence of any other family members.

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Honouring the Mystery - Continued from Page 4.

The minutes turned into hours. (Normally I stayed for a minimum of two hours.) John's breathing sounded laboured at times but he never moved. The nurses bustled about in the hallways, checking in occasionally.

I began to question whether I was doing any good. I remember reflecting on the story about "if I can help just one person, then it makes a difference". I worried if I was truly helping or making a difference.

To pass the time and to stretch my legs I began to walk around the room. I noticed the sole greeting card on top of the silent television and looked at it. What surfaced inside was the most beautiful handwritten love letter from John's wife instead of what I had expected - a get well card from a friend.

I wondered if John had ever had the chance to read it prior to his transitioning. So I spoke out loud to him.

"John, I've just read the most beautiful card to you from your wife. I can see how much she loves you. I'll read what she has written. And I began to speak her words.

Halfway through I sensed something. I don't know why but I turned around as I was reading and looked at John. His radiant smile lit up the whole room and I knew he could hear me. After I finished reading I walked over to him. Our visit was coming to a close and I knew I wouldn't be visiting him again. I whispered in his ear that I would share this tender and sacred moment with his wife. Then I gave him a gentle hug and lightly touched on his hand. His thin fingers gently caressed mine briefly as if to assure me that he knew.

I stopped in the reception area and crafted a personal note to John's wife. I stated that if I had been her I would've wanted to know about what had just occurred and I would've been

comforted by it. I hoped it provided her with some comfort. I never heard back.

Two months later I received a letter in the Hospice office. It was from John's wife. She asked if I could meet her for lunch at the care home she was now living in. I was given approval and accepted to the offer. She thanked me profusely and with tears in her eyes attempted to explain how much my note had meant to her. She had read it over and over. We finished lunch; I hugged her and went on my way. I found out that she died three weeks after our lunch. I felt honoured by the experience and felt reassured that Hospice volunteering does make a difference.

Joy Dockrey

Client Coordinator - Community
Surrey Hospice Society

Reflections of a Hospice Volunteer

Today is Tuesday, March 18th and I am at home after completing my morning shift at the hospice residence. I arrive by 9 and leave after noon. I never know what will unfold during those three hours.

Today was a quiet morning. Some of the residents were sleeping, some were visiting, and one wanted to be on her own. There were two new residents I had not met and there was a resident who had been at the hospice since before my inaugural visit on December 13th last year. At this earlier time Peggy, another volunteer, had shown me "A Time In The Life of a Hospice Residence Volunteer".

I completed my hospice volunteer education program on June 1, 2005. It is coming up to my third anniversary and it continues to be a loving

experience. I began volunteering in the community and was a companion to six palliative clients and spent some time volunteering with several bereavement clients along the way.

Volunteering in the community means being invited into someone's home, their very private space, and sharing a part of their life at a most difficult time. During these weekly visits I encountered strength, courage, patience, acceptance, concern, humour and so much more. I received their unique gifts in exchange for my listening.

After the experience of volunteering for two years in the community I felt it was time for a change. I needed a regular day and time commitment each week. There was a need for hospice residence volunteers. I moved from the community to the

residence and I am enjoying the transition and growth this offers. I am still visiting clients 'in their homes' because each of the ten rooms at the residence is a home. It is an honour to receive an invitation to 'com on in' and visit for however short or long a time.

I hear wonderful stories about life and living, about family members and work experiences. I hear jokes and marvel at red nail polish. I hear music and singing to soothe. I see personal items used to make a room a home. I listen to family members share their sadness, concern and love. There are hugs, tears and smiles... and there are always cups of tea!

Jo-Anne Loughran

Volunteer

Message from the Program Director - Continued from Page 4.

through and you have miraculously managed to hold a very sacred place for those in deep grief through it all. Meaningful feedback has come from clients who have attended these programs.

The good news is the end is in sight and the new office space will allow us to offer a much better environment for clients, their loved ones and support for volunteer programs as well. Support groups were put on hold due to the construction but will resume in the summer once renovations are complete.

On a deeply personal note I extend tremendous gratitude for the love, understanding and support of the

Hospice staff, Palliative Care team and volunteers during this time. In the back drop of all these transitions my husband has been dealing with a rare situation with three distinct and different cancers and it has been a challenging time for us both. In this past month he was admitted to the Palliative community program and has had a recent stay on the Palliative Unit at Peace Arch Hospital but is now home better pain managed. I have done this work since the early nineties and have been with hundreds of people at the end of life but it is truly a different experience when it is a spouse that you love and are with round the clock. Challenging, exhausting, yet rich in ways that are

hard to explain. We have experienced many sacred moments of unconditional love not known before. I have always admired the Palliative Care teams but now have a much deeper appreciation for their role.

To all the staff and volunteers my most sincere thanks goes out for all the love, support and understanding you have offered during this very intense time. Sincerely can't put into words how grateful I am for the kindness you have all shown. It is most appreciated.

Blessings to you all,

Barbara Morningstar
Program Director

Dimensions of Grief

The Place of Rituals in the Process of Mourning

Around the time a loved one dies, we usually participate in some organized rituals to commemorate them and share our sorrow with others. Observing other rituals as the months and years go by can be powerful tools of healing.

Some rituals may be organized and some informal; some may be with other people and some by ourselves. For example, the *Dove Release* that the Society hosted in May was organized and participated in with other mourners. I took part in that event this year to commemorate the death of my father last May. It was a very sacred experience for me to remember the first anniversary of his death in such a special way.

A ritual can be any activity we create or participate in that has meaning for us as we remember our loved one. Dr. Alan Wolfelt, renowned grief therapist, states that meaningful rituals provide a setting for us to acknowledge the life and death of our loved one, and allow us to continue to say good-bye.

Some ideas which others have found helpful are:

- Growing a plant that holds a particular connection to your loved one.
- Putting a flower on your table the day of the month when your loved one died.
- Making a collage of memories, things you liked to do, values, feelings you shared.
- Writing a message on a helium balloon on a special day and letting it go.
- Visiting the cemetery or place of memorial and reading something special there.
- Watching a movie that you enjoyed together.
- Purchasing a book that your loved one liked and donating it to a library or school.
- Framing a favourite quotation that your loved one liked.
- Wearing a piece of clothing or jewelry that your loved one wore.
- Carrying a polished stone in a pocket to caress when out walking.
- Spraying a fragrance around that your loved one wore.

There are no 'appropriate' or 'inappropriate' rituals. Rituals are as personal as each of us and our relationship to our loved one. Rituals can encourage us to embrace our memories, offering a way for us to express our feelings and thoughts (even if just to ourselves). "When words are inadequate, have a ritual." Anonymous

Rosemary Brown, Clinical Counsellor

Community Thrift Store Update

Thank you all for supporting our events!!!!

Our Mother's Day Pamper Yourself Event was very successful. Mom's, kids and even husbands came in looking for a bargain. We just had a Father's Day and Gardening Event and that too went very well. These events have boosted an interest in the store by our regular shoppers as well as with ones who just happen to walk by and see the sign.

Take a peak at our upcoming 'Store Events' to the end of the year - we hope you can join us in all the fun and savings.

As summer approaches, all thoughts head to vacations and getting away from it all. While volunteers and staff are preparing to take time off to share in family and friends, the donations continue to come to the store nonstop. Summer seems to be the time for garage sales, moving and general house cleaning. We welcome your donations.

And along with that.....

We are seeking volunteers

Who have cash experience and those who would like to help out on the floor as well as sort in the back room. We are looking for volunteers for the following days and times:

Monday - sorters any time

Tuesday - sorters afternoon

Wednesday - sorters afternoon; cash and floor volunteers morning and afternoon

Thursday - sorters afternoon

Friday - sorters morning and afternoon; floor volunteers morning and afternoon

Saturday - sorters morning and afternoon; floor volunteers morning

If you know anyone who would be interested, please have him or her drop by the store and speak with us.

I would like to thank our volunteers for their hard work and commitment to the store and wish them all a Happy Fun Filled Summer.

Donna, Manager

Surrey Hospice Society
Surrey Fire Fighters Charitable
Society
Community Thrift Store

*Newton Crossing
7138 King George Hwy
Surrey, BC V3W 5A3*

*Store Hours:
Monday to Saturday 10 AM to 5 PM*

Telephone: 604-599-9930

MARK YOUR CALENDARS STORE EVENTS

AUGUST - "Celebrate the Child Within"

Books and Games, Back-to-School
On display August 16th thru 22nd.
Items go on sale Saturday, August 23rd.

SEPTEMBER - 50% OFF Store-Wide Sale - Saturday, September 27th.

OCTOBER - "Scare Yourself Silly"
Halloween Costumes and accessories
on sale October 4th thru 31st.

NOVEMBER - "Secret Santa: A Christmas Celebration" - On display November 3rd thru 10th. Items go on sale Wednesday, November 12th.

DECEMBER - 50% OFF Store-Wide Sale - Saturday, December 20th.

Watch for in-store specials and "Wacky Wednesdays" where you never know what will be on sale.

CONGRATULATIONS - 2008 Community Leader Award Winners

Joy Dockrey and Captain - Community Volunteer Top Honour Recipients

Joy, Client Coordinator - Community for the Surrey Hospice Society, and Captain, a certified therapy dog, visit regularly at the Fraser Valley Cancer Clinic, as well as dropping in on foster children and abused teens at Metis Family Services, where they offer unconditional friendship and a non-judgmental ear. Captain helps people relax and forget about their situations. "I'm a small part of it," Joy explains. "Captain is the one who makes the connection".

Judi Huta - Honourable Mention

Judi is the Board President of Surrey Hospice Society and volunteers with a variety of service clubs boosting their faith and optimism to help them succeed.

