

Surrey Hospice Society

"Companions for the Journey"

Winter 2009



'An Affair to Remember 2009' Newsflash

To all of you who participated, sponsored, donated and attended our 2009 Fall Fundraiser 'An Affair to Remember' we want to express our deep appreciation and gratitude for your generosity.

This year was the best yet, in attendance and in raising funds. In 2007, our net funds raised were \$4500.00, 2008 - \$15,900, and this year 2009 – our net funds came in just over \$29,000.00.

So we are moving in the right direction, and anticipate 2010 to be even more successful.

Please save the date and...

Come Celebrate With Us In 2010

We invite you to join us in celebrating our 5th Annual 'An Affair to Remember' on

November 20th 2010

Sincerely,
Surrey Hospice Society Staff,
Board of Directors & Events Committee

An Opportunity to Give

We are quickly approaching the close of 2009, and looking to 2010 with hope and anticipation.

Many of us consider how we might make a difference by contributing to our favorite Charity with a donation for 2009. Some families have decided to forego Holiday gifts and give the amount that would be spent to a Charity. What a great legacy to introduce or continue within a family.

The Surrey Hospice Society would be grateful if you made the 'Work of Hospice' your choice for your 2009 donation – before the end of the year in order to receive a tax receipt.

There are a number of ways you can contribute, and we invite you to look at the back page of the newsletter for options that are available.

Thank you from all of us at the Surrey Hospice Society



Message From the Executive Director



Christmas is around the corner and I absolutely love this time of year. It brings back happy memories of my childhood, and the warmth of family and friends making the season bright.

Music was a focal point in our family, and the stereo played all day and evening for most of December.

Our house was transformed into a gallery of crafts and handmade symbols of our traditions, and then of course – there was the ‘shopping’ for the tree and the gifts.

My father would take my sister and I shopping (separately) and we felt so special being taken out for lunch, and then shopping for ourselves, and for our Mom.

These are such treasured memories – and I have passed these along and carried them on with my own children, and now grandchildren. It warms my heart when I watch our daughter and sons continue our traditions with their children.

There was an album we played every Christmas, by the Fischer Choir – it was a German choir – we couldn’t understand the words, but we had to play it every December. That album went missing over the years, and our daughter went on the internet searching and searching – over the past few

years. This year she was successful, and was able to download it (legally!!), and made CD’s for each family member. Our sons (twins – with children of their own), sat back and said ‘I feel like I’ve stepped back in time, and I’m 10 years old again’.

The way we often think of celebrations in the present, is how we experienced these celebrations in the past – as children. Sadly I have been hearing stories of people dreading the season, all because their memories are not good ones. Many have tried to build new ones – starting new traditions so that they don’t repeat their past. That takes real courage and determination.

It can also be dreaded because the beauty and joy of the past has been replaced with sadness and loss – of a loved one, or financial challenges. And these emotions need to be handled with tenderness and care.

This is why we host ‘Coping Through the Holidays’ and ‘Celebrate a Life’ where individuals and families who have lost a loved one can remember and celebrate their life.

Supporting the family, both before and after a death, is a mainstay of hospice care. Hospices offer support to those who are bereaved to help them work through their loss and grief in a supported relationship.

There is no ‘right’ way of responding to or coping with a

death; people react to loss in their own way. However, Celebrate a Life events provide a focus for those who are grieving and, together with hospices’ bereavement support services, offer the opportunity to talk to someone who is trained in helping people deal with loss.

If you feel you want to find ways to keep the person’s memory alive during the holiday period, you could:



- Light a candle in their memory (take care not to leave it unattended!)

- Decorate the tree with something that reminds you of them
- Put up a photograph
- Visit the grave or a place you enjoyed together



- Listen to music that you enjoyed together.

Help Us Go Green...

by receiving your newsletter by email. Please contact us by phone (604) 543-7006 or by email: admin@surreyhospice.com.

If you are receiving our newsletter and would like to be taken off the mailing list, you may also contact us by phone or email.

Thank you!

Message From the Executive Director... continued

- Get everyone involved in your Christmas to contribute a memory and share it as part of your celebration.
- For children, Christmas still brings its usual excitement as well as grief, and these emotions fluctuate in peaks and valleys as children cannot sustain emotions the way adults do. You may find it hard, but if possible embrace the laughter and joy of any children around you
- If you feel guilty when making plans for the holiday season, remember it's important to give yourself permission to enjoy life again. You may need to put your and any children's needs first, rather than doing what others expect. For some people it's important to maintain traditions that have always happened, for others introducing new or different traditions may be important
- Remember time is a healer – as clichéd as it sounds, eventually, the time and energy spent grieving will slowly decline and it will gradually become possible to enjoy life again, laugh with people, feel genuine happiness and make positive plans for the future
- If you have a faith, or if you just feel you want to, you could say a prayer.



As I anticipate this Christmas Season – I sense a feeling of wonder and joy, along with deep appreciation and gratitude that makes me feel better as a person.

However you plan to celebrate and whatever your traditions may be, I wish you and your family an abundance of peace and joy this festive season and may your experiences lift your spirit through out the coming year.



Marion Brandner

Executive Director

Season's Greetings Everyone...

With the holiday season upon us and 2009 fading away it is a great time to reflect on this past year and give thanks.

What a wondrous year it was!! Surrey Hospice Society went through lots of trials and tribulations this past year as you all know.

Yet here we are at year end standing together as a team... stronger, more committed than ever to our work. Together...the staff, the volunteers and the board are going forward in 2010...like Olympians... focused, energized and with great belief and faith that we will continue to offer the best service we can to those coming through our door.

I would like to personally thank each and every one of you for the contribution you made in 2009



to our organization. It is your open heart and love for what you do that truly touches and changes lives. Everything you do has an impact ...be it serving tea, baking cookies,

listening with an open heart, sitting quietly with a family member, organizing fundraising events, training others, running the store or answering phones. No action is too small or goes unnoticed...it all counts and has significance.....

and so...

To each of you...my heartfelt thanks and gratitude... we cannot do it without you!

On Behalf of the Board of Directors I wish you all a wonderful holiday season, and a happy peaceful 2010.



Judi Hlava

President

My Name is Marion Cuthbert, and This is My Story:



"Maari, we all grow older but growing wiser is something else. You must earn your wisdom and then live it."

My husband died of pancreatic cancer sixteen months ago and throughout his illness, he inspired us all with his quiet dignity and courage. Following his death, I had made an appointment to see Rosemary for grief counseling and the moment I entered her office I intrinsically knew I had found a soft place to fall. Tears streamed down my face

and fragments of my pain littered the space around us. When we finished, Rosemary very beautifully pieced me back together.

Around this time, I had started my "Basket of Treasures" – a simple tool I used to get me up in the morning. Everyday, I was determined to find one small token of grace, symbolizing that every new day has a surprise in store, if only I could get beyond the darkness and find it. However, it wasn't until I participated in the Nature's Amble walks that my basket really started to fill. Fresh air, beautiful park settings, compassionate people to walk with, followed by hot drinks, home-bakes and a special place to share our stories seemed the perfect recipe for the renewal of hope. As for my basket, it took on a life of its own. Every pebble, orphaned button, earring, and even a gift of a feather, all represented a magical correspondence to the many smiles and kindnesses and generous displays of spirit, for

these too made a home in my basket.

Gratitude and wisdom now come to mind when I think of another program I embraced: "Finding your Way". Every Tuesday evening a small group of us, facilitated by Rosemary, gathered together for strength and comfort. I was reminded of something my great-grandmother had said to me a long time ago: "Maari, we all grow older but growing wiser is something else. You must earn your wisdom and then live it." So through listening and sharing with others, I was able to move from being a victim of pain to gaining victory over my pain. The Surrey Hospice Outreach provided that smile of opportunity. Words are powerful, they can hurt, but they can also heal and it isn't how you write but why you write that matters. When you spill your troubles onto a page and read them, it feels as if your heart is talking back to you, and with a little patience, carefully tucked inside, each word is the answer you are looking for.

And now to end my story, I would like to mention the Dove Release Event that was held in Bear Creek Park last May. Two days earlier my family and I participated in the installation of my husband's commemorative bench. It was particularly meaningful to us. The word "release" is apt because the moment I set free my tiny

messenger, I felt my sorrow lifting and I knew I was ready to reclaim my joy and cherish the love Walter and I shared together. I would like to conclude my story by thanking The Surrey Hospice Society staff and volunteers for providing these programs through which I was able to gain deeper insight and compassion for the wounds of others and in so doing heal my own.

Marion Cuthbert



"This may be your time, your treasure, or your talent. Each is extremely valuable..."



Bereavement Programs and Services in 2009

This year has been full of opportunities for us to companion people in their mourning. Staff have kept busy carrying out individual counselling – sometimes just once and sometimes for months, depending on many variables. Occasionally, after clients completed counselling, they requested someone to keep in touch with them (by phone and/or in person) for some time - a service we were able to offer with committed volunteers.

The kinds of deaths grieved have been varied – only about 1/3 of our clients came via the Palliative Support programs that we offer (in the community, in Laurel Place and in the Tertiary Palliative Care ward at Surrey Memorial Hospital.) Others were referred to us from family or friends (word of mouth), school counsellors, RCMP Victim Services or various helping agencies in our community. Since many of those deaths were violent, sudden and traumatic, the grief was complicated and the mourners' coping capabilities often stretched to the limit.

In addition to the individual counselling, we hosted several grief groups this year. *Hopeful Hearts* in the spring and fall saw 15

children and their parents attend. One mother said about the group: "in meeting other children, my kids felt that they weren't alone." Another commented: "it gave my kids and me positive ways to deal with our grief." Unfortunately, due to the staff changes, we were not able to host a *Teen Group* this year, but hope to offer one in the New Year.



Two *Nature's Amble* (walking group) sessions were held, with 24 walkers attending. *Finding My Way* (adult grief group) also ran twice in 2009 with a total of 19 participants. Some of the clients took part in both of these opportunities.

For the first time, we offered a group solely for parents who were mourning the loss of a grown child. Six parents attended to grieve the deaths of their offspring from ages 18-39. It was a unique opportunity for parents to walk with each other through this extremely difficult journey. One parent said: "I cannot tell you how

helpful it was meeting others who had experienced similar tragedies." Another commented: "Although we are all grieving differently, we are all sharing the same loss. Being a part of this group has helped me to start my healing journey with others travelling the same road." We will be offering another group in January for grieving parents.

Facilitating these groups (along with trained volunteers) is a sacred privilege. Although everyone's experience is unique, participants find commonality of challenges, thoughts and feelings amongst this circle of others which acts as a balm to their wound. They share the pain, as well as ideas for surviving and eventually thriving as they begin to build a "new normal."

Several special programs – the *Walk for Remembrance/Dove Release* in May and in December – *Coping with the Holidays* and *Celebrate a Life* rounded out the Bereavement programs and services we offered our clients in 2009. It has been a rich year at Surrey Hospice Resource and Support Centre and I look forward to continued opportunities to serve in 2010.

Rosemary Brown
Clinical Counsellor

"I wear a bracelet that has engraved, "Breathe in suffering. Breathe out compassion."



Volunteer Corner

Office Volunteers

Some of the Things You Will Be Doing as a Volunteer:

- A regular weekly 4-hour shift in the Hospice office. Includes answering the phone, greeting clients, assisting visitors with the library and performing general office duties. Computer skills are an asset.
- Occasional projects around our office.
- Assisting with our educational events.
- General office maintenance.
- Assisting with fundraising events including a fun social event held annually.

Website Maintenance

Volunteer

We are looking for a committed volunteer to update and maintain the website at least once every two months.

Development Committee

Volunteer

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?

Come Join our Committee!

WELCOME

New Volunteers

Office Volunteers:

- Peggy Chao
- Jazmin Perez
- Helen Boyle



CONGRATULATIONS to the following volunteers for completing the Volunteer Training Program:

- Darlene McKay
- Brian McKay
- Suzanne Barton
- William Hemrick
- Tracy Pringle
- Laura Cable
- Gagan Dhingra
- Danyka Low



Keep an eye out for our next Volunteer Training Program, due to take place sometime in Spring 2010

Thrift Store News



At this time of year, I would like to look back on the time spent here at the thrift store. The year has been good to the charities that we support. In spite of a larger thrift store moving in, we have held our own and our customer base is building all the time.

In the spring we opened our location in Cloverdale. We went in with a bang and had a great time, but the store was not able to financially support itself, so we closed the doors at the end of November. I would like to thank Marie and all the volunteers who supported the store and worked so hard to keep it looking wonderful.

I am very proud to say that I have worked with a lot of street people during my time here and have become quite close to a few of them. We have success stories to tell from two of the girls. One has come off her substance use and is going to school and living in her own place. She looks, acts and lives completely different from before, that at first I did not recognize her when she came in to visit. I am very proud of her accomplishments.

Another of the girls has become a mother. She has been coming here since it opened and there were days when I did not let her come into the store because she was high. But when she found out she was pregnant, she stopped using, went into recovery and she came in last week with a healthy beautiful baby boy. She is doing so well, and I hope she can stay on this road for herself and her baby.



While these stories are far and in between, it is wonderful when they do happen.

It fills my heart to know that the work we do here is not just selling clothes and knick knacks, but helping people have a better life and letting them know that help is here if they need it.

While we help our community, we are mindful of the family we have right here in the store, the volunteers that keep this store going. They have lives and

families that rely on them and need them. We appreciate the time they spend away to help the store succeed.

As the year has come to an end, I would like to remind ourselves of the ones we lost to sickness or passing away.

Jackie who lost her husband to cancer in the summer time, Shirley and Shoshana who are struggling with breast cancer, Mae who is fighting with back and leg pain who misses the store and the companionship she developed, Lorraine my assistant manager who recently lost her father to cancer. We lost two of our long time volunteers within days of each this past month, June who passed away from a heart attack and Phyllis who had leukemia. Both these ladies had volunteered here from the start and they will be greatly missed.

As we come into the Christmas season, may our hearts be filled with the memories we have gathered and the Hope, Peace and Joy that this season brings.

Donna Chubb

Thrift Store Manager

Surrey Hospice Society
Surrey Fire Fighters Charitable Society

Community Thrift Store

Newton Crossing 7138 King George Hwy
Store Hours: Monday to Saturday 10 AM to 5 PM
Phone : (604) 599-9930

We are looking for volunteers who would be interested in volunteering at the
Newton Thrift Store

Please contact Donna or Lorraine at:
(604) 599-9930

Today may be the day that your life will be touched by the news that you or a loved one is facing a life threatening illness. Maybe you are grieving the death of someone close to you.

The Surrey Hospice Society has been supporting our community for 23 years, companioning individuals and families during what is often the most sensitive and sacred life transition they will face.

To continue reaching out to our community, we need your help! Please visit www.surreyhospice.com for more information today.

Yes. I will support the Surrey Hospice Society

\$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 \$25 or \$_____

One Time Gift Monthly Gift \$_____

Please make cheques payable to: **Surrey Hospice Society**

VISA MasterCard Cheque Enclosed

Card No. Expiry Date _____

Name on Card Signature _____

Please send me information on making a gift through my will.

Name _____

Address _____

City Province Postal Code _____

Monthly donors: I hereby authorize Surrey Hospice Society to make automatic monthly withdrawals from my bank account or VISA card, as indicated. I understand that I may cancel this authorization at any time by notifying Surrey Hospice Society, in writing. I will receive a tax receipt for the total amount of my monthly gift on an annual basis. I have enclosed a "void" cheque or provided my VISA Card information.

Signature _____

Date _____

Charity No. 11920 6605 RR0001



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Mission Statement

We are rooted in the community and branching out to those in need, by providing social, emotional, and spiritual support for individuals and their loved ones as they face life-limiting illness, and we provide ongoing grief support programs for children, teens, and adults.

We believe no one should face a life-limiting illness alone, and no one should be alone with their grief.

We offer "Companions for the Journey".

WAYS TO CONSIDER DONATING

- One-time Gift
- Monthly Gift - have you considered monthly giving? This is an easy, effortless, effective way to support the Surrey Hospice Society with your monthly gift of \$20 or \$30 or \$40 per month.
- Leaving a Legacy - make a gift through a will or other gift planning instrument. Call us to learn more about the benefits of charitable giving through financial and estate planning.

The Surrey Hospice Society has signed up with CanadaHelps.org to take it an easy way to donate.

Visit our website at www.surreyhospice.com and click on any of the CanadaHelps.org icons.

CanadaHelps was created to make giving simple. They have not only made the process simple, but fast, secure and convenient.

