

The PCSBV Bulletin

July 2022



Palliative Care Society
of the Bow Valley

IT TAKES A VILLAGE

Having a community of support at end-of-life

Imagine how much more important your relationships would become if you were diagnosed with a life-limiting illness. The bonds we form with those around us are often what bring us the most happiness in life. Additionally, when we are going through a difficult time, we turn to those closest to us for help. Experiencing the highs and lows of life remind us of the importance of being surrounded by a supportive community. This is especially the case for individuals with a life-limiting illness. When an illness prevents an individual from caring for themselves as they would have done before their diagnosis, that individual must rely on others to assist them with fulfilling their daily needs and wishes.



For someone with a life-limiting illness, doctors, nurses and other members of their medical team play an important role in providing physical and emotional care. However, members of a medical team are often not able to fulfill all the needs and wishes of an individual who is nearing the end of their life. The team may not know or understand the individual they are caring for like family and close friends do. For this reason, an important support community for an individual will be the people they connect with most often. These are people they can count on to step in and help when they are no longer able to assist themselves. In addition, it is with these people that an individual can have conversations about their needs, their wishes and their end-of-life experience.

What does a complete support community look like? There is no 'one size fits all' template. An individual's support community may extend beyond close relatives or friends and could include co-workers, neighbours or members of their religious community. All of these people play an important role in providing comfort and showing kindness. As well, an individual may feel that there is value in reaching out to a new community group, such as an Alzheimer's society or a palliative care society, for information or support that is specific to their situation or illness. All these groups come together to form a supportive and responsive community.

The old saying "It takes a village..." is often used to refer to the bringing up of a new life. However, it can also refer to the end of a life. It truly takes a village of people to ensure that those nearing the end of their life are kept in comfort, treated with dignity and surrounded by love.

Who is in
YOUR village?

Palliative Care Society of the Bow Valley



CANMORE - DROP-IN GRIEF SUPPORT WALKING GROUP

TIME: Every Wednesday from 4:45pm to 5:30pm.

LOCATION: We will meet at the community mailboxes at Riverside Park which is south of 8th on River Road.

This is a no-cost grief conversation group open all who are 18+ who are grieving. The walk last approximately 30 minutes and then ends with a guided conversation on the themes of grief and loss.

For more information, contact Bill at bill.harder@pcsbv.ca



BANFF - WALKING GROUP - PAUSED UNTIL SEPTEMBER 2022

DROP-IN GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP - Online Gathering

Wednesday | 7:00 - 8:00 PM

Email: bill.harder@pcsbv.ca to register and receive the zoom link.



DROP-IN GRIEF SUPPORT VISITS

Monday | 11:00 am to 2:00 pm.

Bill Harder welcomes drop-in visits at the Banff Canmore Community Foundation, 214 Banff Avenue.



Volunteer Training Courses: July 2022

July 22: Family Dynamics (Facilitator: Betty Piwowar) Time: 6:30 - 9:00 PM - [Zoom Link](#)

July 23: Role of the Volunteer (Facilitator: Bill Harder) Time: 9:00 AM - 10:30 AM - [Zoom Link](#)

July 23: Virtual and Phone Supports (Facilitator: Bill Harder) Time: 10:45 AM - 12:15 PM - [Zoom Link](#)

July 23: Exploring Spirituality (Facilitator TBA) Time: 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM - [Zoom Link](#)

July 24: Emotional and Psychological Supports (Facilitator: TBA) Time: 9:00 AM - Noon - [Zoom Link](#)

July 24: Case Studies (Facilitator: Bill Harder) Time: 1:00 - 4:00 PM - [Zoom Link](#)

Aug 2: Grief Companionship (Facilitator: Bill Harder) Time: 6:00 - 9:00 PM - [Zoom Link](#)

Hospice Pet Therapy

Humans and their pets are faithful companions who share a strong emotional bond. Pets often contribute to their owner's feelings of relaxation and reduce anxiety and stress. The special relationship between humans and their pets also exists between humans and animals in general. In many health care settings, patients and animals are paired together as a form of therapy. Specifically, in a palliative care setting, pet or animal therapy is used as a strategy to improve or preserve an individual's wellbeing, happiness and overall comfort. Pet therapy can be especially effective in a palliative care setting in transforming a terminally ill patient's outlook on life to be one of joy rather than one of fear or sadness.

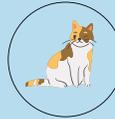
In a hospice setting, pet therapy can take on many different forms, from the type of animal to the activity practiced. There are six main types of animals used in hospice pet therapy. Dogs are the most common request from patients because of their ability to read human emotional cues and their outgoing and energetic nature. Cats are also a popular request because of their calm and loving presence. That said, other animals such as rabbits, pigs, horses and birds are also among the animals used in pet therapy. Each animal has a different demeanor which allows pet therapy to be suited to a variety of individuals. As well, depending on the animal chosen, pet therapy can involve a variety of activities. For more active animals, it can involve playing with a toy or tossing a ball to fetch. Pet therapy can also be more relaxing when individuals simply want to pet, cuddle or talk to an animal peacefully.



We ♥
Animals!



Dogs are a popular choice for hospice pet therapy because of their ability to read emotional cues and their outgoing and energetic nature.



Cats are an equally popular choice for hospice pet therapy because of their calm, quiet and loving presence. As well, cats have an ability to connect emotionally with humans which can be important for pet therapy.



Rabbits have a calm and quiet nature and are often small enough to sit in a patient's lap. They are a great alternative for patients who are allergic to dogs or cats.



Birds are fun, cheerful and entertaining which make them great for pet therapy. They bring both laughter and enjoyment to patients who interact with them.



Horses have a kind and calm nature and are a popular choice for hospice pet therapy because of their ability to communicate and bond emotionally with humans.



Pigs are a great choice for pet therapy because of their calm and affectionate nature. Pigs are very intelligent and serve as a great alternative for patients who have had past negative experiences with either dogs or cats.

Regardless of its form, pet therapy has been shown to have several concrete physical and emotional benefits for hospice patients. It can help reduce pain and blood pressure while promoting cardiovascular health. As well, pet therapy can have positive impacts on an individual's mobility by encouraging physical activity while interacting with an animal. In terms of emotional benefits, the relaxing presence of animals can reduce the feelings of fear, loneliness and anxiety that come with being diagnosed with a life-limiting illness. In general, pet therapy animals are loving and understanding towards humans and can improve the overall comfort of an individual coping with a life-limiting illness



Golf for Hospice

Palliative Care Fundraising Event



The Palliative Care Society of the Bow Valley is hosting a fundraising golf event on:

THURSDAY, AUGUST 25th, 2022

at Stewart Creek Golf & Country Club

\$375.00 per golfer includes:

- 18 holes of golf, including power cart
- Breakfast sandwich
- Boxed lunch
- Après-golf reception
- Two beverage tickets
- Challenges and prizes
- Tax receipt (issued following the event)

Funds raised will support our mission to provide holistic palliative care from diagnosis to end of life, the delivery of public education, grief and loss navigation, community-based support programs, and the future construction of a hospice.

For more info contact Kristin Fry at fd@pcsbv.ca or 403 707 7633

REGISTER TODAY at www.pcsbv.ca



Palliative Care Society
of the Bow Valley

SUPPORT PALLIATIVE CARE SOCIETY OF THE BOW VALLEY

Help today for support tomorrow!

The Palliative Care Society of the Bow Valley offers essential services to those in our community experiencing life-altering changes, including terminal diagnoses, life-limiting illness, and grief.

Together with supporters like you we can achieve our goals for better palliative care services and programs delivered to communities throughout Alberta with our focus in the Bow Valley.

PLEASE CONSIDER MAKING A DONATION TODAY TO SUPPORT PCSBV RAISING FUNDS TO CONTRIBUTE TO COSTS SUCH AS:

VOLUNTEER TRAINING & WORKSHOP EDUCATION SUPPORT

\$42 per month → Giving \$42 per month supports the training of a client-care volunteer

- Our volunteers make a difference in client's lives on a weekly basis

\$500 per year → Giving \$500 per year supports workshops on navigating grief and loss

- For health care workers
- Town staff
- Parks staff
- Parents, teachers, child support staff
- The Bow Valley community



WAYS TO GIVE:

- **General Donations** are used for programs currently with the greatest need of your financial support.
- **Tributes** honour a family member, friend, or loved one.
- **Building** donations support creating a residential hospice home accessible to the Bow Valley community.
- **Monthly donations** will ensure constant support throughout the years.

Donations of \$25 or more will receive a charitable receipt. Here are the ways you can make a donation:

- Click on the link >> **[Donate today!](#)**
- Online at www.pcsbv.ca and click on the "Donate" button.
- Send a cheque to:
Palliative Care Society of the Bow Valley, PO Box 40113, Canmore Crossing, Canmore, AB, T1W 3H9.

For more information contact Kristin Fry, Fund Development at fd@pcsbv.ca or call (403) 707-7633

THE LIVING FUNERAL

Holding a Celebration of Life Before Death Occurs

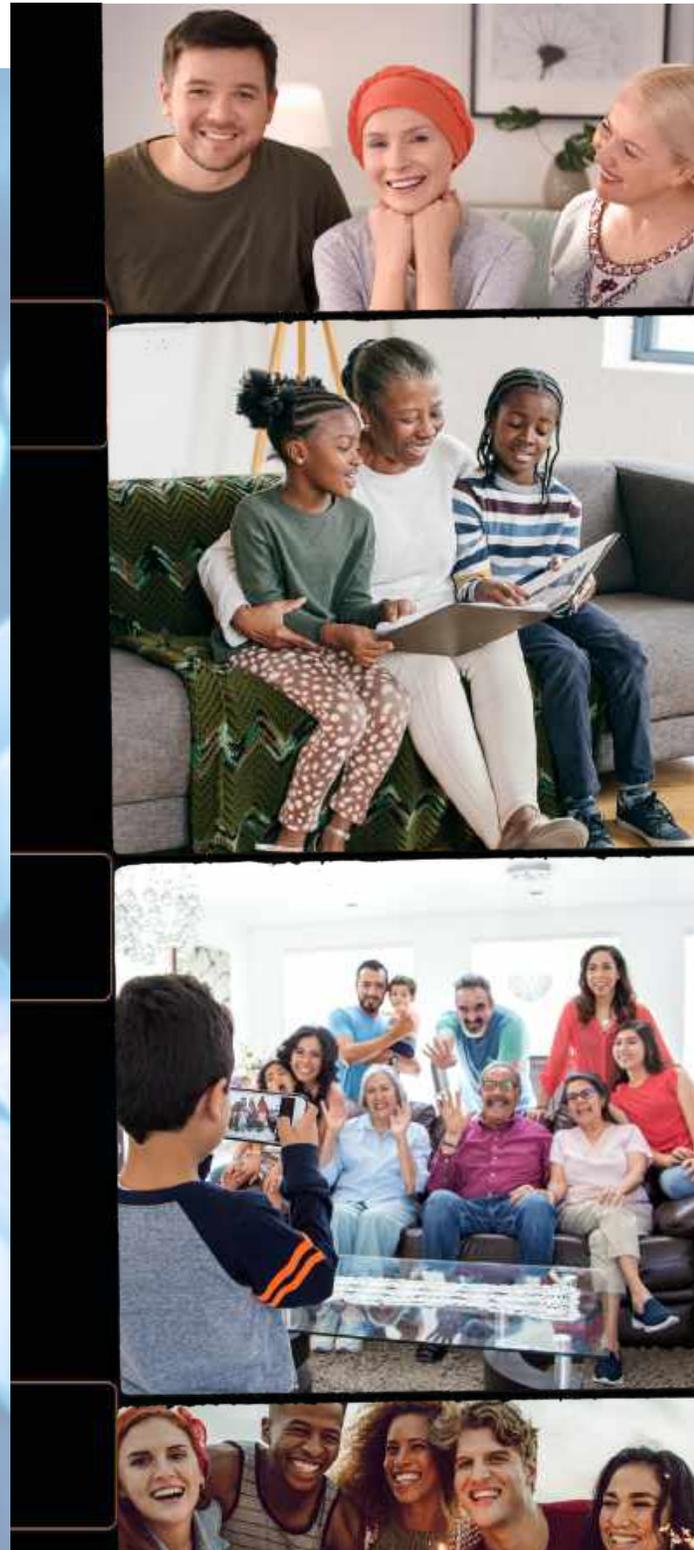
It is important both to celebrate a life lived and to mourn a life lost. Often, after the death of a loved one or a close friend, it can be difficult to focus on celebrating when feelings of sadness, loss and pain are dominant. Recently, people have begun to host living funerals which allow them to celebrate their relationship with an individual close to them before that individual's death.

A living funeral, also known as a pre-funeral, is a funeral held for a living person, often one with a life-limiting illness. Funerals are frequently sad occasions meant to provide closure to loved ones after the death of someone close to them. People gather to share stories and kind words about an important individual who is no longer part of their lives. Unfortunately, these precious stories and words are not experienced by the individual who should hear them most.

Living funerals allow loved ones to gather to celebrate a relationship that has enriched their life. They provide an opportunity for loved ones to share important messages or stories with an individual nearing death to honour the love and memories they share. Living funerals can be either celebratory or somber. Some prefer a traditional or religious ceremony while others prefer their living funeral to resemble a birthday party.

For an individual diagnosed with a life-limiting illness, a living funeral presents the opportunity to reflect on their life and appreciate the people who have impacted it, as well as to consider the effect they have had on the lives of others. In this way, living funerals encourage honest and heartfelt communication between an individual and their loved ones.

In addition, a living funeral is an opportunity for an individual to spend valuable time with those closest to them. Many people host living funerals to ensure that their final moments with their loved one are filled with joy, laughter and fond memories rather than only with sadness, pain and loneliness. Instead of mourning the loss of a special relationship after death, many are choosing to celebrate these relationships while they still can. In this way, living funerals provide a sense of closure for both an individual who is facing death and those closest to them.





EMBRACED BY A COMMUNITY OF CARE

Bow Valley Community Brings Support for the Callaghan Family

Bow Valley resident Brian Callaghan has experienced first-hand what it means to have a village of support for himself, his wife and their children when they were in need. Since the death of his wife, Brian has supported the need for hospice care in the Bow Valley. Not only that, he advocates for families to openly accept the community support as it is offered.

"I realized I could not be all things to all people."

From the moment of our birth until we die, we are part of a community. The degree to which we engage in this community of friends, neighbours, colleagues, service clubs, faith groups and general society is in my view transactional.

We offer of our time, talent, and resources in an exchange of purpose, common good, shared beliefs, and values. For many it affords us a life in which we grow within ourselves when we participate in activities and relationships that serve a goal or enrichment beyond ourselves. We move from a state of individual life focus and self-fulfillment to one with community purpose.

Throughout our lives the dependance and acceptance of the attributes of community: such as the messages of joy at the birth of a child, comradeship within one's line of work, car pooling with a friend as we move our children through the events of their life, to the shoulder on which we may need to lean or at times cry, form the tapestry of community life. All of the above are true in my family's life experience.

When my wife Helmi was diagnosed with a mixed glioma brain tumor at the age of 33 our life was changed forevermore. With four small children ranging in age from 3 to 10 and the need to continue working, we found ourselves enveloped in the embrace of a community of care. Helmi was immediately surrounded by a group of women who throughout her journey gave her their unqualified support and affection. They took her to appointments, sent us delicious food and treats, took her on hikes into Lake O'Hara, on long walks by the Bow River and to a Rolling Stones concert! The members of our church were only a phone call away as I realized I could not be all things to all people.

Community is there for people as a place where one will find both the tangible attributes as mentioned and the existential. As we will all come to an end one day, it is my hope for each of us that beyond our resumes, which chronicles our worldly accomplishments, we will be remembered by our eulogistic resumes. This resume is one of remembrance. The way in which you will be spoken of.

The members of this community will say that you were, loving, kind, compassionate and that you left the community a better place because of your contributions to nurturing it.

Throughout the course of our family's life journey this community gave all the above to us. We had to accept the love and support we needed willingly and openly. It was difficult at times to receive such care at our time of passage, but we knew in our hearts the source was true. This was especially so when Helmi's women's group would meet at our kitchen table to plan her Living Funeral and Celebration of Life service while I prepared supper. It was at times surreal yet at the same time a worldly manifestation of a community expressing its love and concern for our family.

When we care for the needs of one, we care for the entire community. In caring and through action we bring meaning to our lives and build better communities for all. In fact, we build the community we want and need.

We'd like to thank Brian Callaghan for his contribution to our newsletter.

PCSBV Board of Directors Following the 2022 AGM



Palliative Care Society
of the Bow Valley

Julie Hamilton, Chair

Martin Buckley, Vice-Chair

Gerald Duggleby, Secretary
(New: First 3-year term)

Jane Saly, Treasurer
(New: First 3-year term)

Belinda Boleantu, Director

Rosemary Boulton, Director

Penney Gaul, Director

Catharine Hinds, Director

Jessica LaBonte, Director
(New: First 3-year term)

Donna McKown, Director
(For second 3-year term)

Martin Tweeddale, Director

Upcoming

Save The Dates

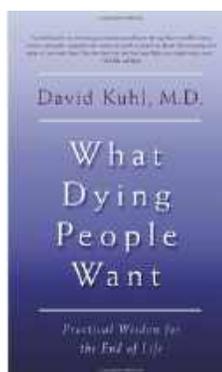
Truth and Reconciliation Day – September 30

National Hospice Palliative Care Day for
Children – October 13

National Bereavement Day – November 15

RECOMMENDED READING & VIDEO RESOURCES

What Dying People Want: Practical Wisdom for the End of Life



From his own experience as a doctor and from interviews with people living with a terminal illness, this book addresses end-of-life realities and provides practical wisdom and strategies for people that are terminally ill, their families and caregivers.

Uncoupled – Dealing with the Death of a Spouse

Alberta Health Services Video - **Highly Recommended**

This is a helpful, supportive video to watch if you or someone has lost a spouse. Four bereaved spouses share their stories and their experiences with the loss of their partners. Including what they have done to get through, what was helpful, what was not, and how their life changed.

FOLLOW US!



@PalliativeCareBowValley



@PCSBowValley

Palliative Care Society of the Bow Valley



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