



Langley Hospice News

Volume 20 Issue 4

20660 - 48 Avenue, Langley, B.C. V3A 3L6

December 2013



Langley Hospice Society, a community-based, non-profit organization, provides compassionate support to help people live with dignity and hope while coping with grief and the end of life.



On behalf of the Langley Hospice Society staff and board of directors, I would like to thank our amazing volunteers, clients, donors, sponsors and supporters for their tremendous support and contributions all year long and for helping us celebrate our 30th Anniversary in 2013.

We know the holidays are upon us and we are quickly surrounded by the exciting store displays, jingling television and radio commercials, and a rush of invitations from employers, friends and family for seasonal gatherings. However, for those grieving the death of a loved one, the festive holiday season itself can often be an overwhelming experience. At the Langley Hospice Society, many of those we support through our anticipatory, early and ongoing grief support programs can find this a difficult time of year. In this month's newsletter we've had our bereavement coordinators, Shivani Kaushik and Linda Sheridan, share some information and ideas to assist those who may be struggling this holiday season. Thank you for your ongoing support!

Sandra Castle, Executive Director

The Importance of Creating New Rituals for the Holiday Season

Rituals empower people emotionally, mentally, and spiritually. We have the ability to create rituals through customs, traditions, and our own desire to invent a new ritual that provides meaning in our life and to have the opportunity to extend a person's presence beyond death. While our society encourages us to mourn quickly and return to our normal lives, for many individuals, this suggestion is easier said than done. The death of a loved one can leave the survivor without motivation, a sense of place, self-confidence, and even the loss of social supports. Therefore, to truly make the return to our own "normal" lives once again can prove challenging. It is not just the loss of a loved one we experience; it is the loss of many things that were once "normal" to us.

In continuing with your healing over your loss, you might also design rituals for anniversaries, birthdays and other events that were symbolic for you and your loved one. Rituals can help you to establish the spiritual meaning and understanding of your loss. The ritual becomes an ongoing memorial or representation that you can respond to and absorb the significant changes that have taken place. When

you create a ritual from your heart, special meaning will fill you with purpose and, most of all, love.

Creating a sacred ritual can offer a tremendous sense of honouring for the loved one you are missing. It also offers balance, comfort and support for you. The overall effect of creating rituals can assist you in coping with the coming holidays. Remember to be gentle and nurture yourself.

Suggestions for filling your holiday loss and tears with celebration and love:

- ♥ Express yourself through artwork or journaling.
- ♥ Begin your holiday dinner with a minute of silent prayer and a toast in their honor.
- ♥ Send up a balloon(s) with messages and prayers to your loved one.
- ♥ During the meal ask the question: "What comes to your mind when you think of _____?", and share memories with those who surround you.
- ♥ Plant a tree or a special plant in their honor.
- ♥ Light a candle(s) in their memory.
- ♥ Place a single flower or bouquet of flowers that your loved one cherished as the centerpiece.
- ♥ Look at pictures (or display pictures) from past holidays shared with your loved one.
- ♥ Design a quilt with the memories you have.
- ♥ Play a favorite song.
- ♥ Create a sacred altar with photos and treasures where you can sit and reflect.
- ♥ If you vacation in a special area that you used to go to with your loved one, do something special in honor of them.
- ♥ Consider volunteering: for an organization affiliated with your loved ones' illness, hospice or a caregiving program to help others through your own experiences; help feed the homeless over the holidays; read or spend time with children who have terminal illnesses or the elderly in nursing homes or hospitals.
- ♥ Donate gifts in your loved one's name. This is even more special when you donate in their memory at their birthday, a special anniversary, etc.
- ♥ Offer a scholarship in a loved one's name.

(Source: National Organization For Empowering Caregivers: www.caregivers.com)

Happenings...

Society Office Christmas Hours The office will be closed from Tuesday, December 24th at noon through Wednesday, January 1st, reopening on Thursday, January 2nd at 8:30 a.m.

Second Story Treasures Holiday Schedule The Thrift Store will be closed for the holidays and seasonal maintenance from **Sunday, December 22** through **Thursday, January 2**, reopening at **10:00 on Friday, January 3**. We will be open to accept donations only on **Monday, December 23 from 9am —2pm**, and on **Friday and Saturday, December 27 and 28**, and **Monday and Tuesday, December 30 and 31 from 11am – 3pm**.

Langley Hospice would like to thank brothers **George and Albert Tecklenborg**, and **Teck Construction LLP** for their generous support and sponsorship of our inclusion in the **Langley Advance's 2013 Christmas Song Book** which will be arriving soon to a mailbox near you. Teck



Construction's head office is located in Langley, on 216th near the airport, and since 1957 they have been building in the lower mainland of British Columbia. They have a reputation for quality workmanship, performance and fairness that is admired and acknowledged by the industry and we are proud to be partnering with them as we enter into the holiday season and our annual Langley Hospice Celebrate a Life Campaign.

In November, 2013 another group of volunteers successfully completed the **Spirituality Training course**. The course was facilitated by Charlene Neufeld, Spiritual Care Practitioner from Fraser Health Region.



Stop by our **Celebrate-A-Life** event at the **Willowbrook Mall** in Langley from **November 30 to December 14, 2013** (near the southeast entrance by Swimwear Etc.). Each year more than 450 people remember a loved one by

writing their name on a memorial ornament, placing it on one of our trees and writing a special message in the Memory Book. There is even a special tree to honor the memory of our pets.

The **Children's Program** will be offering two **day camps** in December for children involved in the program. The first, on Saturday, December 7th, will be for younger children from 12:30pm – 4:30pm and the second, on Sunday December 15th, will be for older children from 12:30pm - 4:30pm. Children can share holiday memories and decorate an ornament to honour their person who has died and make holiday treats to share with their families.

A **children's support group** will be offered **starting January 21** for children aged 6—9 years, with a second group for teens beginning in February. If you would like more information about these groups, please contact Linda Sheridan, Child & Youth Bereavement Coordinator at 604-530-1115 or by e-mail at lindasheridan@langleyhospice.com.

Langley Hospice will be offering **bereavement support groups for adults** who have lost a loved one, with new groups starting in January. Please contact Shivani at 604-530-1115 to see if one of these groups is for you.

Langley Hospice Certificate Training Program for those wishing to volunteer with clients, or who are interested in the subject. This 10-session program covers issues on life and death, as well as grief and loss and related skills. Fee is \$135.00 and will be starting in the new year (dates to be announced). For more information or to register, please call Fernande at 604-530-1115.



Helping Children Throughout the Holidays and Other Special Events

Holidays, birthdays and anniversaries are often times when memories of a special person who has died are very present in the minds of children. The memories may come with some very strong emotions. It is not uncommon for children to feel sadness or anger or other uncomfortable feelings when they think of the unfairness of their loss. This is especially true for children who have lost a close family member. Many children fear they will forget their person; these times throughout the years can be very important occasions to acknowledge the relationship and memories children have of the person who died.

Sometimes caregivers and other adults in children's lives worry about what to do during these times. They may think that acknowledging the occasion or talking about the deceased person may cause more harm to the children or make them feel uncomfortable. At these times children are also worrying about the other family members in the same way as the adults are worried about them. It is important that families find a way to talk about these memories. Together they may create new family traditions to honour and celebrate the life of the person who died.

Embrace your memories: Holidays may be a good time to pull your comforting memories close to you. Perhaps you can:

- ★ Buy or make a special ornament.
- ★ Purchase a special photo frame and display a picture of your loved one.

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- ★ Make a scrapbook about the person who died.
- ★ Visit a meaningful place.
- ★ Buy or make a gift that your special person enjoyed, e.g. chocolates or cookies. Wrap them, then open them and share with others.
- ★ Send a charitable donation to an organization in memory of your loved one.
- ★ Do things that bring comfort to your family: baking, decorating together, snuggling in blankets and watching movies.
- ★ Share special and fun stories of holidays past with your loved one.
- ★ Buy a special candle that is lit each year.
- ★ Hang a special stocking and fill it with notes, photos, special treats that remind you of your person who died and share with others.
- ★ Write a special card of thoughts and wishes for your loved one who has passed away. The cards can include stories of past holiday experiences, or stories about this Christmas and what was enjoyed. Share these cards with each other, or put them away and read them next year; this could become a holiday tradition.
- ★ Encourage children to embrace the memories that comfort them. Allow your children to teach you about these memories by drawing pictures or writing a story. If certain memories upset them, find a box and symbolically put them away until the holidays are over.



Many thanks to the **BC Liquor Control Board** and their annual Share-a-Bear Program, which donates bears to charities for use in children's programs. These furry friends will be distributed to children in our grief support groups and day camps leading up to

Christmas and in the months to follow. Merry Christmas to everyone who contributes to this generous program through the BC liquor stores!

Would You Like to Get Your Newsletter by E-Mail?

Please send your e-mail address to: info@langleyhospice.com, and help us to reduce our mailing costs and save a few trees!



A Christmas Wish for Our Volunteers And Friends

As Christmas fast approaches
We have a special wish for you
That you know how much you're appreciated
For all the amazing things you do.

Thank you for your gift of time
For giving all year through
The way you care, the way you share
The way you do, what you do

We hope the holidays hold special times
For you and those you hold close to your heart
Remember to take time to be kind to yourself
And enjoy some of the joy that you impart
May the warmth of the season embrace you
As you go about your way
May love and laughter surround you
Today and every day

We wish you and yours the happiest of holidays
And that you find joy in all you have and do
We wish you a Merry Christmas
And a Happy New Year too!

Langley Hospice Society & Foundation
Staff and Board



Langley Hospice Society presents
An Evening of Spanish Guitar
with Bill Walker

Tickets: \$10.00 available at the
Langley Hospice Society
Date: Thursday, January 16th
Time: 7:00pm to 9:00pm
Location: Langley Hospice Supportive Programs Centre
20660—48th Avenue, Langley BC
Phone: 604.530.1115

Please join us in a "Coffee House" atmosphere, for a fun evening of entertainment and refreshments as we enjoy listening to Bill Walker explore some of the natural tones and moods of the Spanish Guitar. Includes refreshments, entertainment, basket raffle and more!

Proceeds to benefit the Langley Hospice Society

October—November, 2013 Donations Made in Memory of:

Lance Bracken
Bruce Campbell
Ian McKay Coyle
Stanley Enge
Roberta Frankforth
David Green
Evelyn Holmes
Brian Jones
Greg Long
William Matricardi
Allan Hugh Murray
Betty Phillips

Mary Reed
Lloyd Richardson
Marjorie Sampson
John Smit
Robert Tatarniuk
Joyce Urbaniak
Dave Wallace
Gordon Walters
Rhonda Wardstrom
Richard Welch
Patricia Wong

For years they have provided great comfort to families like mine.



We take great pride in providing superior and comprehensive funeral, cemetery and cremation services that far exceed the ordinary. We strive to provide not only exceptional, personal care but also dignity and respect to make this difficult time reassuring and comforting.

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To learn more about these important and valuable benefits, please call us or visit www.dignitymemorial.com

HENDERSON'S LANGLEY FUNERAL HOME
20786 FRASER HIGHWAY, LANGLEY, BC V3A 4G6 604.530.6488



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