



Langley Hospice News

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

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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, and in honor of National Volunteer Week, April 12–18, we would like to say a heartfelt “Thank You” to all of our amazing volunteers. From their roles on our society and foundation boards, to working in the Second Story Treasures Thrift Store; providing care and support through the Hospice Residence, in the community and through our Supportive Programs Centre; to working in the office, on the grounds or with one of our special events, volunteers are involved in every aspect of the work we do in the community – for the community.

As a community organization, volunteers are our most important resource. In the last year, Langley Hospice Volunteers have given the precious gift of over 27,000 hours to assist us in continuing to provide important palliative and bereavement support programs to the more than 5,000 children, teens, adults and families who access our services each year. On behalf of our staff and board of directors, we would like to thank each and every one of you for your contribution. What you do truly makes a difference to the individuals and families that we serve and we are grateful for your continued dedication and support.

We hope you enjoy reading the stories that follow from and about some very important people...

OUR VOLUNTEERS!

Thornton Smith: A Spiritual Journey of the Heart and Soul

“The source of love is deep in us and we can help others realize a lot of happiness. One word, one action, one thought can reduce another person’s suffering and bring that person joy.”
— Thích Nhất Hạnh

If you are familiar with the Langley Hospice Society, there is a strong possibility that you have also heard of Thornton Smith. As one of our esteemed volunteers of the past fifteen years, Thornton has participated in and supported a variety of services and events. From

...serving as a past treasurer of our Board of Directors, to providing support in palliative and bereavement settings, and more recently, participating in the creation of our beautiful children’s garden – it is not exaggerating to state that Thornton has done it all.

Thornton attributes his interest in volunteering to when he first began to lend his support at a residential home for the physically disabled in England. After he moved to Canada and created a lovely family, Thornton began to serve on our Board of Directors as treasurer. Initially describing it as “something to do”, as he had a limited knowledge about hospice, it was through this opportunity that he realized the importance of grief work and supporting others at the end-of-life. It is the importance of this work, and the strong connections made as a result, that allows him to continue with his contributions. “We are all social beings,” he eloquently states, “and when all the trappings of material life fall away, there is only people and relationships remaining”. This was best personified for Thornton during one of his first volunteering experiences at the residence. “A woman’s husband had just died and “I sat quietly with her” he shared. “The silence and quiet was deafening. It was a hugely emotional and profound experience. However, it is this kind of familiar experience that often occurs at the residence; disguised in different forms and in varying circumstances”.



After fifteen years (and counting) of volunteering for hospice, Thornton was pleased to share another personal story and one he describes as a personal achievement. As co-facilitator for a ten week loss-support group, Thornton states how surprised he was at the healing process that began for many, if not all, participants in the group. “During the weekly sessions”, he continues, “ a phrase evolved out of Dr. Wolfelt’s [work] which became a bit of a mantra for me – *death and grief are spiritual journeys of the heart and soul*. Coincidentally, at this time, my daughter was going through her last few weeks of a fairly difficult pregnancy. In our weekly group opening, when we share about our lives, I would give an update of the latest events and witnessed these participants becoming surrogate parents to baby Norah, who was born happy and healthy. Mother and baby visited the group on our last session, much to the delight of all. During this time, my mantra was modified to – *BIRTH, death, and grief are spiritual journeys of the heart and soul*”.

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From a genuine interest to a heartwarming mantra, Thornton Smith represents the compassionate support and diligent efforts that Langley Hospice Society's volunteers demonstrate time and time again. Thank you!

Shivani Kaushik, MSW, RSW
Adult Bereavement Program Coordinator



Support Group Facilitators: Brenda Singbeil and Alice Klassen

The Langley Hospice Society has been blessed by the support of two very generous long-term volunteers, Alice Klassen and Brenda Singbeil, who co-facilitate our Adult Bereavement Support Groups. We asked them what brought them to Hospice and what keeps them volunteering.

Alice Klassen, a volunteer with Langley Hospice for almost five years, had been aware of its presence in the community prior to volunteering here, but after she helped out at a Hospice children's camp, she wanted to become more involved. Several years later she took the hospice training and following that started co-facilitating bereavement support groups. Alice says that what has kept her volunteering is the satisfaction she gets from seeing the changes that happen when people come together at a critical time in their lives and commit to listening without interrupting or judging each other. As they support each other in this way, people often feel very supported. She likes the challenge of seeing how members of groups differ, but seem to have a common appreciation for coming to a safe place to express thoughts and feelings that sometimes do not have an outlet. Alice said that hearing people talk about the difficult experience of the death of a loved one has taught her a lot about life, and has helped her to learn about her own losses.

Brenda Singbeil, a volunteer with Langley Hospice for six years, originally came to the Langley Hospice Society in 1990 when she was looking for support for her in-laws. She said that although she did not know much about Hospice, she felt that something about it fit for her. Fast forwarding to December of 2009, Brenda saw an ad in the local newspaper for basic training at the Langley Hospice Society. While uncertain about taking the training, she decided to cut out the ad and leave it on her coffee table to look at daily. When she made the decision to take the training, and called our Palliative Coordinator, Fernande, she was told that she needed to call back to confirm her participation by the end of that business day, as training started the following day. Brenda said, at that moment 'it just felt right', so she decided to take the training, and it is this feeling of 'it just feels right' that keeps her volunteering today. She enjoys what she does at Langley Hospice, and feels that she has a good balance between volunteering at the residence and co-facilitating adult bereavement support groups. Brenda finds it rewarding to see family members at the residence, and then again in group. In addition, Brenda's favorite

part of volunteering with the Langley Hospice Society is the people. She feels like she is accomplishing something that is needed, and also likes the hugs she gets from others.

The Langley Hospice Society is incredibly thankful for all of the time and effort volunteers like Brenda and Alice contribute. The support they have given, and continue to give, to their community and group members, is truly remarkable.

Devan Christian
Practicum Student, Adult Bereavement Program



Dave & Kay Turner: Second Story Treasures and More

Dave and Kay Turner have been volunteering with Langley Hospice for over eight years. This amazing duo gives the gift of their time and talent in many areas of the work we do in the community, including a number of hours weekly at our Second Story Treasures Thrift Store in Walnut Grove, where they have taken on the leadership of the music and books department, along with training new volunteers that join the amazing team at the store. The Turners also volunteer their time during our annual Celebrate a Life campaign, a community awareness campaign we host at the Willowbrook Shopping Centre each December, along with assisting our Children and Youth Bereavement Programs in outings and activities like their annual Langley Rivermen Hockey Night. Dave's love for music and his many years of experience playing piano have extended to many of our special events, where Dave has played piano to entertain at volunteer appreciation events, retirement dinners and at our annual Fall Gala fundraiser, with Kay by his side, turning the pages of his music throughout the events.

This is a couple you're apt to remember if you have spent much time with them at all. They each have a vibrant sense of humour, and will always have a kind word and a smile if you cross paths. They are often the first to volunteer for a task or activity, and are always glad to lend a hand. They are passionately committed to whatever they put their efforts behind and we are lucky to have them as part of our Langley Hospice Society Volunteer Team.

We are blessed to have our many incredible volunteers, but Dave and Kay are truly special in their unique contributions, and in the way they do what they do, as a team, and enjoying spending time together doing for others. The Turners and their ongoing contributions to the Langley Hospice Society and the community of Langley are just another example of the tremendous gifts of our volunteers.

Shannon Todd Booth
Communications & Funds Development Manager

Volunteer Stories ... In Their Own Words:

The Top 10 Reasons I Volunteer at the Langley Hospice Second Story Treasures Thrift Store:

1. I respect and admire the work that Langley Hospice Society does.
2. I love volunteering because it is my chance to give something back to the community.
3. I like the management and the fact that they are well-organized.
4. I like my fellow volunteers. We have fun!
5. I enjoy meeting new people.
6. I am proud of Wayne, my husband, who is Mr. Fix It at the store on Monday mornings.
7. I am a shopper who loves clothes and each day I am impressed with the quality of the donations that come in the door.
Note: I must wait, like everyone else, to purchase any item after it has been priced and displayed in the store.
8. I get out of the house.
9. I get a coffee break - often with goodies!
10. I feel appreciated.

Colleen McLaren
Second Story Treasures Thrift Store Volunteer



Death Means Different Things To Different People

She died as I was driving to the hospice to do my volunteer shift. When I arrived, the nurses told me she had died. I walked down the hall and saw the curtain drawn to her room. The nurses had revered her death by protecting her from curious or prying eyes. When I am around someone who has died, a feeling of reverence overcomes me and I know that this person who is dead was special. She breathed. She loved. She cried and laughed. She had lived and now her life was over.

I had never met her. I had so many questions about her and her life. Was she a wife and mother? Was she a professional? Had she accomplished what she had wanted in her life? How big was her sphere of influence? Did she have family who would mourn her passing?

The man from the mortuary came and I hurried to get our precious quilt. I was there to help him, but he said he could handle everything. So I watched him. He was efficient. He had handled bodies before.

I could see her face from across the room. Effects of suffering and pain lingered on her face. The beauty that was once there had gone. I felt grateful that she no longer suffered.

He knew what to do. He took the blue bag and tucked in her toes and laid it on her torso. When he covered her head and tucked in her arms and hands, the reality of her death hit me again. I helped drape the quilt over her body. He wheeled her out of her room and to the hospice door.

I followed him out and to the gate. There were no mourners to walk with me. She had died alone. But as I walked I felt I represented everything that hospice stands for; the nurses who gave her loving care; the volunteers who sat at her bedside and all those who work in the background so that hospice can be its best.

Kathy Nilsson
Langley Hospice Residence Volunteer



My life is coming to an end

My life is coming to an end
I'm not asking you to be my friend

There are times I may not want you near
Other times I need a listening ear

Listen to my request
Always treat me with respect

Look at me - speak directly to me
Honour my dignity

My end is near but I still have an identity
Express empathy, not pity

As my life here slips away
Comfort me in a compassionate way

We all live, we all die
Be sincere when you say goodbye

Thanks for being a caring volunteer
Thank you for being here.

Maureen Airey
Langley Hospice Residence Volunteer

Volunteering at the Langley Hospice Society

Recently, I worked for several years in retail; I was good at it, but I found that the work had little meaning for me. I wanted my efforts to be purposeful. Before I had my kids, I worked as an administrative assistant for a non-profit organization. There I felt needed, an equal part of a team working to help others. I wanted to do so again. I went back to school to update my skills and, needing current office experience, I started looking for volunteer opportunities. I found just what I needed; the Langley Hospice Society, a non-profit organization that uses volunteers in its office. I was immediately impressed by the inclusiveness shown on the volunteer application form as it made clear that any applicant from any background would be considered. My kind of place!

So here I am, again a part of a team, warmly welcomed by people who share my values, working together to help those who need us.

Heather Frenette
Supportive Programs Centre Office Volunteer

Musings of a Volunteer at Langley Hospice Residence

“What made you volunteer for Hospice?” “Don't you find it sad being around the dying?” How many of us have had these and many other questions like them posed when people find out that you are a volunteer at Langley Hospice?

My journey as a volunteer has been one of personal discovery, growth and challenge. I remember during my initial training, as I listened to Fernande and the other presenters, I would look for the key to unlock what was expected of me. I thought that once I learnt “how to be a good volunteer” all would be well. I initially felt frustrated at our weekly sessions as I tried to analyze and second-guess the process. But as the training progressed, I found that there is no key, in fact there is no lock, other than the one that I wrap my heart in. I needed to let go and listen; not easy for me. Each week as the training continued I would ask myself “Why am I here?” The answer that came back was: “because you want to be; be patient and listen”. I am a stubborn person, but slowly the challenge to suspend judgment and allow the lessons being presented to seep into my heart took hold. I was proud when I finished and could start the visits at the residence.

I can remember how nervous I was that first time, unsure what I was walking into - what I was expected to do? I am no longer as nervous, mostly I am just excited about being at the Residence. What a privilege it has been for me; it is very different from what I thought it would be. Each time I enter the Residence it is like I enter a different world, a place without pretence. A place where important things happen.

In our everyday lives we are rushing around looking for who knows what. Once you push the keypad and enter the Hospice Residence, the importance we place on stuff in our daily life is gone. Of course there is loss and pain, confusion and for me a sense, at times, of not being able to match up to the needs of the residents. But overriding all of these things is a sense that what is happening is important. As you journey with these people, in their last moments you realize that in a small way you are making a difference. As a volunteer I have been with people who allow me to be a part of something that is very private; being a part of their life and - at this moment - death journey. I remember one of our clients saying to me: “It's good to talk to someone who is not afraid to talk about my dying; so many of my friends don't visit me because they don't know what to say about death.”

When our clients and their families at the residence ask me why am I there, I say “because I want to be” and without exception they are so grateful for the time we as volunteers spend with them. I see the making of coffee, the washing of dishes, the removing of dinner trays, as important as being able to hold hands with our friends as they talk about their family, or listening to family members share their confusion and ache as they struggle with losing a loved one.

Now when I am asked the questions: “What made you volunteer for Hospice?”, “Don't you find it sad being around the dying?”, I have answers. I still find it difficult to fully answer the question “What made me volunteer?” But I volunteer because it's important and I can do it. It is not sad to be around people who are dying. The dying teaches me about the preciousness that is my life and how important it is to be awake to cherish the moments that are gone so quickly. As one of our residents said, “I have had a good life and I lived it well so I am ready.” I hope I will be able to say the same when my life comes to its end.

Kiernan Hillan, Langley Hospice Residence Volunteer



Josie Duminico
Langley Hospice Residence Volunteer

Why I Volunteer With Langley Hospice's Child and Youth Program

I began helping out at Langley Hospice three years ago to gain some volunteering experience before I applied for university. I was fairly young at the time, about age 16. I am now in university, well into my degree, but I continue to volunteer for a variety of reasons.

Working with the kids who are experiencing grief over the loss of a loved one has been one of the most rewarding things I have ever done. Children are extremely dependent on their caregivers for survival, so when one or both of those caregivers dies the children are put in a difficult state.

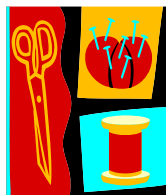
Children are supposed to laugh, play, and not have many stressors in their lives. They shouldn't have to worry about not having a mom to brush their hair before school or future worries like not having a dad to walk them down to aisle when they get married. All of these worries, emotions, and stressors can be extremely taxing on an adult, let alone a young child or early teen. Adults need support with their struggles and emotions and so do kids.

That's what the children's program at Langley Hospice aims to do and hence, why I love it so much. They aim to help children understand their emotions and help make it all make sense but also to help the kids be “kids” again. I love volunteering here because I love seeing the smiles on these children's faces. Being able to play, laugh, and be downright silly with these kids is why I volunteer at Langley Hospice. Even if I can make their grief process a fraction easier, then it is completely worth it in my books. Not only do I have a tremendous amount of fun with the kids, but they also teach me new things every day. One thing that I have grown to admire from the children is their incredible resiliency and strength. Seeing the children thrive after a tough loss inspires me in my daily life when things get stressful.

I encourage all who have a passion for play to volunteer with the children's program at Langley Hospice. I guarantee that you won't be able to help out just once, you'll find yourself coming back again and again, just like I did!

Konnor Mitterer
Children's Bereavement Program Volunteer

What's New...



From our **Hospice Caring Hands Quilters**: "We would like to thank everyone who has donated material for the quilts we make for children going through the grieving process. We now have more material than we can store, thanks to the generosity of so many people. When we do need more material, we can only use 100% cotton and prefer larger pieces instead of scraps. Also we

cannot use holiday-themed material. However, we can always use more backing material, which would need to be 100% cotton and in larger pieces (42" or larger; the quilts are usually 36"x36" to 36"x40" or slightly larger)."

Resource Library Update: We are in the process of updating our hospice lending library, and are hoping to get your input! We're looking for donations of gently-used books and other resources on the subject of grief, loss, death and dying that may have had a cherished place in your home library, but that you might not mind passing along to help support someone else in their journey. We would also like to hear about resources that may have helped you in your personal passage through grief and loss, that we could look out for in our quest to update our current materials. We would really appreciate your donations and recommendations! You can send your suggestions to info@langleyhospice.com, or drop off any contributions you might have at our **Supportive Programs Centre**.



Save the Date!

Thursday April 9, 6:00 – 8:00pm New Volunteer Orientation This first-time training is be open to all volunteers, as well as people interested in volunteering, with Langley Hospice Society. Some of the topics covered will include who we are, what we do, areas our volunteers help out in and will help people get a stronger understanding of grief and bereavement support. **We will be hosting two more orientations throughout the year: Saturday, June 20, 10:30 - 12:30, and Thursday, November 12, 6 - 8pm.** Please RSVP for any of these sessions at 604.530.1115 or by email to Denise at volunteer@langleyhospice.com.

Saturday, April 18, 6:30pm Volunteer Appreciation Event; invitations will be coming out shortly.

Friday, April 24, 6:30pm Clemo's Crusade for Hospice Pub Night at the Fort Langley Pub

Saturday, May 23, 6:30pm Matthew Silverman with Tres Guitarras concert, Frosting Cupcakery & Bake Shop

Saturday, July 4, 1:00—3:00pm Butterfly Release at Krause Berry Farms

Thursday, August 13, 5:00pm Annual Langley Hospice Society Garden Party

Thursday, August 20—Sunday, August 23 Camp Chrysalis Children's Grief Camp; we are looking for enthusiastic volunteers to help on the clean-up crew on Monday, August 24 ~ please contact Denise if you're interested in lending a hand!

Friday, August 21 - Sunday, August 23, West Fine Art Show at Thunderbird Show Park



Langley Hospice Celebrates the Supportive Steps Walking Group's One Year Anniversary!#

Please join us for a one-hour walk at 12:00pm on **Tuesday, April 21**, followed by a pot-luck lunch.

The walk begins and ends at the Langley Hospice Society Supportive Services Centre, located at 20660 48 Avenue, Langley, BC. V3A 3L6

*Registration is not required
For more information, please contact
Shivani or Devan, 604-530-1115
or at adultgriefsupport@langleyhospice.com*

Welcome New Volunteers!

A heartfelt welcome to the following new volunteers:

- ♥ **Client**
Donna Evans Brenda Jones
- ♥ **Children's Program**
Brianna Campbell Glynis Marks
- ♥ **Gala Committee**
Diane Boyd Shawn Siak
- ♥ **Gardening Committee**
Sydney Carrick Roy Clements
Ruth Noble
- ♥ **Office Team**
Heather Frenette
- ♥ **Second Story Treasures**
Aaron Bisig Gloria Blessin
Cheryl Clarke Carol Collett
Jason Kimto Kim Kubala
Shallah Montaine Tyler Penner
Peggy Reid Alicia Vlasik

Volunteer Hours
November 1, 2014 - February 28, 2015

♥ Client Volunteers	2,633 hours
♥ Store Volunteers	3,153 hours
♥ Office, Events, Board Newsletter & Other	5,655 hours

That's a total of 11,441 hours over the last four months!
Thank you to all of our wonderful volunteers for your generous commitment to Langley Hospice!

December, 2014 ~ March, 2015 Donations Made in Memory of:

Derek Allder
Bonnie Anderson
Kaye and Sal Azzarello
Joshua Bates
Jean Blair
Tuan-Ni Chen
Doreen Clements
Doug Court
Karen Cracknell
James "Dan" Currie
Harry Davis
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Erhard Eckmann
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Donald Morris
Sharon Morson
Max Muller

Sandi Murtough
Fran Mutch
Renate Newnham
Donna Penner
Laurel Joy Ponych
Vic Porter
Richard Shermann
Barry Smith
Ken Stewart
Marion Sundquist
Donald Thebaud
Gordon Edwin Topnik
Bernie Vaughan
Robert "Mike" Walton
Joyce Whittall
Brian Zayonce

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



For generations, we've served the families of our community. We offer support through the unique benefits that are available as a Dignity Memorial® provider:

- National Transferability
- 24-Hour Compassion Helpline®
- Bereavement Travel Program
- 100% Service Guarantee

To learn more, please call us at 604.530.6488.

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



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