

Bad Hair Day



Carolyn McAfee's favourite picture is the one hanging up in her bathroom of a cat having a bad hair day. Throughout her cancer treatments, that picture has been a focal point for many emotions – laughter on the good days and a rant or two on the bad ones.

“When I was losing my hair from the chemotherapy treatments, I'd often look at that picture and then in the mirror and instead of crying, I'd laugh,” said Carolyn. “I'm not sure whose expression or hair looked worse.”

Cancer and its devastating impact is something Carolyn knows all too well. She cared for her sister, Pat MacGillivray, who died of lung cancer in 2004. That was when Carolyn was first introduced to The Dorothy Ley Hospice. The Hospice provided services in the home during Pat's illness.

“My cancer isn't terminal so I was quite surprised when my Social Worker at Trillium Health Centre, Tamara, recommended I give the Hospice a call,” said Carolyn. “I found the

chemotherapy treatments a challenge and felt the need to talk to others going through the same experience. Tamara thought the Hospice's Day Program would provide me with that opportunity, get me out of the house and provide my husband with a break from his caregiver responsibilities.”

Carolyn said she called the Hospice with some trepidation. She was worried that being with others who were dying would be depressing. Instead, she found it quite the opposite.

“This isn't a sad or 'pity me' group,” says Carolyn. “We rarely talk about our illness, more about life in general and what is working or not working for us. If we are having a 'bad' day we talk about it during the round table discussion at the start of the day. After that we share laughs and talk about life in general – our kids, family and books we are reading.”

For Carolyn, the fellowship she has found at the Day Program is really important. Most of the rest of the week, she is housebound because she tires so easily. While she has a lot of support from friends and former work colleagues, it isn't quite the same.

“I would encourage anyone going through cancer treatments to attend the Day Program,” says Carolyn. “Even if you have a really positive outlook on life and a positive prognosis with your illness, you go through a rollercoaster of emotions. Cancer is a scary word. I see others in the group who are much sicker than me and yet they have great coping skills. I've learned a lot from watching and sharing experiences with them.”

Carolyn thoroughly enjoys the Therapeutic Touch treatments, where trained experts use a passing of the hands over the body to help rebalance the energy fields within. The sessions give her energy, alleviate some of her anxiety and give her an overall sense of wellbeing.

She also has a lot of fun doing the crafts. “I never considered myself particularly good at crafts,” crafts,” Carolyn explains, “but the volunteers are wonderful and help you along the way. The end product isn't what is important. It's the camaraderie we share during the process.”

As for the cat picture and the Bad Hair Day, Carolyn figures she have many more laughs with the picture as her hair starts to grow back.

Circle of Support

The following is an edited version of Tara Addis' comments at the International Women's Day Breakfast at the Old Mill on March 8. Tara's mom, Eaniece, received residential care from the Hospice in the spring of 2010.

I cannot think of a more appropriate way to mark International Women's Day than here with you in support of The Dorothy Ley Hospice.

My mom, our family, received an incredible gift - being cared for by the team at DLH and that support continues today, six months later.

Now indulge me for a brief moment, close your eyes and think of that person in your life who is your rock (perhaps your best friend, your sister, your spouse) your “go to” person who unconditionally provides an empathetic ear, strong shoulder

and compassionate embrace, day or night – your safe haven, for as soon as you are in their presence you know you are home, you can breathe again.

Take a long deep breath – this image, this feeling is DLH - human comfort, dignity, a genuine circle of support. For hospice is about living, living fully until the last breath.

For our family, “living fully” meant sensitively meeting mom's physical and emotional needs

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President's Report to the Community

It is hard to believe that another fiscal year has come to a close. While our statistics are being finalized, several themes are evident.

The important role of hospice in this community and the health care system is evident from the surge in demand for support. Opening the Centre has given Dorothy Ley Hospice a higher public profile and provides a physical space where people can visit and gain a better understanding of our services.

Demand for residential care grew substantially. We received close to 600 applications for access to a residential bed last year. This compares with 445 applications the previous year. The downside is that we were only able to operate at an 8-bed capacity because of funding constraints. In spite of the cutbacks, we served 112 people and maintained a 93 per cent occupancy rate.

While the numbers for our community programs are still being finalized, we saw demand also increase for care coordination, home visiting, bereavement and spiritual care, day program and integrated wellness. Together, these services support individuals to live well with their life-limiting illness, address their fear of pain and dying and provide grief and bereavement support after their loved one dies.

Last year, we served close to 2,000 individuals, the majority of whom were living with cancer. We anticipate that number will be greater this year. What that number doesn't take into account is the time spent with family members answering questions, offering advice and supporting their needs. According to the Hospice Association of Ontario, for every individual cared for in the community, hospice supports another four family members. For every person who receives residential care, hospice supports 10 family members. Based on those statistics, the Hospice helped more than 4,000 people last year.

We could not have achieved this success without the invaluable contribution made by 260 amazing volunteers. Their roles vary from home visiting to supporting the residential care team, preparing meals, answering phones and greeting people at the reception desk, maintaining the Hospice gardens, volunteering at Day Program, helping with fundraising events and administrative tasks. They are truly the heart of hospice and critical to our ability to serve this community.

Financial constraints continue to be our biggest challenge. Government funding from the Mississauga-Halton Local Health Integrated Network (LHIN) and the Mississauga Halton Community Care Access Centre provide us with 54 per cent of our funding. The remaining 46 per cent is raised in the community from generous donors. You are our life-line to being able to continue to provide quality care. Your donations through this newsletter, direct mail appeals, fundraising events and monthly donations make a substantial difference. The following quote highlights how your support helps others.

"I had no idea how out of control I was until the morning we transferred my mother to

DLH from our home. Everyone was so helpful and understanding. I was turned back into a daughter from being a caregiver and my mother became my parent again, not my patient. Hospice turned an absolutely awful period in my life into something so meaningful and peaceful."

There is a saying that it takes a community to raise a child. It also takes a community to ensure people with a life limiting illness can die with dignity, meaning and hope.

Sincerely

Jack Cooper
President

Circle of Support



(l to r) Donna Cansfield, MPP Etobicoke Centre; Breakfast Guest Speaker Jacquie Perrin, CBC Network News Host; Jack Cooper, Dorothy Ley Hospice President; Tara Addis, Hospice supporter

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so she was comfortable and able to retain the day-to-day simple pleasures that had so significantly marked her life.

This included a continuation of Sunday night dinners with her grandchildren who would bound into the Hospice with stories of school yard antics, hockey games and dance class. Sharing a few laughs over a cup of tea with her nieces, conversing about everything from those big projects at work to online dating.

Or perhaps it was as simple as "just being" - sitting and reading to mom the news of the day and sharing our desires for the future.

In essence — LIVING.

The expert and caring team at DLH, the professionals and volunteers gave us that gift, the peace of mind to just be together as a family, the opportunity for my sister Renae and I to be daughters, to breathe.

Each of us was able to access the practical support we needed to make what is a difficult and challenging journey, a profoundly rewarding and meaningful one.

The team ensured mom always had dignity and choice. At the same time they partnered with my

sister and I to prepare us, and our young families, every step of the way. This support continues today.

At some time, in some way, we must all face the end of life. And most of us share a common hope - that when death comes to us or to a loved one, it will be peaceful and free of pain. We hope to be surrounded by those we love, feeling safe, comfortable and cared for.

DLH helped us make this wish a reality for our mom.

Now we must ensure it is a reality for others, our loved ones, our colleagues, our neighbors. Just as it takes a village to raise a child, it takes a village to grow and sustain hospice. It takes a community of citizens, government and businesses, coalescing around this common hope of ensuring quality of life during the last stages of life.

I am committed to ensuring others have access to the expert compassionate care we so tenderly received - I am committed to helping hospice help others live fully until their last breath - JOIN ME in my support of the Dorothy Ley Hospice.

As Margaret Wheatley wrote "there is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about."



The Dorothy Ley Hospice fosters hope and dignity through exemplary care, advocacy, education and research for individuals living with the challenges of life-limiting illness or loss.

President **Jack Cooper**
Editor **Fran McBride**
Designer **Ken Meats**

The Dorothy Ley Hospice
220 Sherway Drive
Etobicoke, ON M9C 0A7
tel: (416) 626-0116
fax: (416) 626-7285
info@dlhospice.org

Charitable No.: BN 13019 3394 RR0001

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COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



Circle of Friends
Tapas Night



Despite the freezing temperatures and falling snow outside in early February, the camaraderie, fun and culinary learning experience inside couldn't have been better. It was a great way to launch a new Hospice fundraiser – *Circle of Friends*.

Circle of Friends is a series of cooking classes held three or four times a year in partnership with Cirillo's Culinary Academy. The theme for the launch event was a Tapas night. Chef John Cirillo and his staff coached and encouraged the participants as they sliced, diced and cooked their way through nine different dishes. Afterwards everyone sat down to a fine feast and enjoyed the fruits of their labours along with a glass of Spanish wine to match the food.

The next *Circle of Friends* event is **June 9**. In keeping with the summer ahead, the theme is ***Beyond Traditional BBQing***.

Selected items from the menu include Chili and Passion Fruit Glazed Grilled Scallops with Mango Salad, Grilled Pizza with Summer Vegetables and Buffalo Mozzarella, Cedar Plank Vegetables and Potatoes along with Grilled Tandoori Chicken and Grilled Lamb medallions. As an added bonus, Chef Cirillo will give a demonstration on how to select and cook the perfect steak. Tickets are \$200 each, with a \$100 tax receipt. This makes a **great Mother's or Father's Day gift** for the person who has everything. To purchase your ticket, call Fran McBride at 416-626-0116 ext. 234.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Programs and Services

Volunteer Information Sessions

Sundays, May 29, July 10 & 24, Sept. 11 & 25 at 3:00 p.m.
Saturdays, June 11 & 25, August 6 & 20 at 10:00 a.m.

Bereavement

Walking Through Your Grief - May and June Humber Bay Park

Wednesday, 9:30 to 11:00 a.m.

Mississauga Valley Park

Wednesday, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

Picking up the Pieces - A support program for the newly bereaved

Mondays, May 9 & 23, June 13 & 27, July 11 & 25, and August 8 & 22, from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

Circle of Daughters - Women grieving the loss of a parent or grandparent

Tuesdays, May 17 to June 28, from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m.

The Tuesday Friends Group for Older Adults

Tuesdays, June 7 to August 9, 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

Here's Looking at You - Father's Day Remembrance

Sunday, June 19, 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Integrative Wellness

Stress Relief Relaxation Classes

Wednesdays, 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.

Therapeutic Touch Spa

Thursdays, 2:00 to 6:00 p.m.

Interactive Poetry Reading with published poets

Tuesday, May 31, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Acupuncture Clinic with students of Toronto School of Traditional Chinese Medicine

Every Tuesday starting June 7, 2:30 to 4:30 p.m.

Fundraising

Beyond Traditional BBQing

hands on cooking class

June 9 – 6:00 to 9:30 p.m.

Cirillo's Culinary Academy

Tickets are \$200 each (\$100 tax receiptable)

Hospice Highland Golf Classic

July 12 at BraeBen Golf Course

Registration begins at 11:00 a.m.

\$275 per person which includes 18 holes, cart, lunch and dinner

Wine and Art

September 25 – 1:30 to 4:30 p.m.

Westmount Gallery

Tickets are \$100.

Halloween Bed Race

October 23 – 8:00 a.m. to noon

The Kingsway-Bloor Street between Royal York and Prince Edward

\$100 registration fee per team

Please register for all programs by calling the Hospice at 416-626-0116.

Individual sessions or programs may be cancelled if there is insufficient registration.

For more details on any of these events, please go to the website at www.dlhospice.org

The Loving Hands

At only 12 years old, Mark Kamran has learned that life isn't fair. His mother, Laura, died less than a year ago after living with cancer for a number of years.

Laura realized that her death would be hard on Mark and wanted advice on how to tell him of her impending death and strategies to make the loss a little easier. She called The Dorothy Ley Hospice and asked for support.

Cher Curshen, Integrative Wellness Care Coordinator and Children's Grief Therapist met with Mark and his mom both in their home and again in the hospital. Together, they decided to create a legacy project – something that would bring back good memories for Mark. After talking about a number of possibilities, they settled on capturing Laura's painted hand prints on canvass. After her death, these would then be used to make a blanket that was a mix of her hand prints, knitted swatches and fuzzy fabric.

"I picked red for the wool because it was Mom's favourite colour," said Mark. "The paint colours for the hand prints, I picked at random. I used a paint brush to put the paint on her hand and then, together, we would press her hand on the canvass. After each colour, we would wash her hand and then pick the next one."

The hand painting took place in the hospital. By this time, Mark's Mom's health was failing. Despite having lots of relatives in the room offering

advice, Mark knew exactly what he wanted to do and he stuck to his game plan. Some squares have hand prints that are all the same colour. A couple have hand prints of multicolours. Each print is quite distinctive and shows the lines and swirls of a hand that meant love, comfort and security for Mark.

Laura died on September 10, 2010. Cher meets with Mark every other week to talk and help him through his grief. Together they are knitting the swatches that will join the hand prints. Cher knits a few rows and then Mark knits a few. While they knit, they talk about life with his Aunt Nora (his guardian and mother's twin sister) and Nora's husband Gary and their kids Luke and Nickie. In addition, Nora and Laura's older sister Goretti and her children Andrea, Blake and Chandra have a strong bond with Mark. Together the whole family ensures that he is surrounded by love and support to help him cope without his mother.

Cher offers, "We cannot protect children from the pain of grief, but we can support them by working through the grief process together. A child often does not have the emotional vocabulary to express their feelings. Often activities such



as this one or drawing a picture, writing a poem or banging on an instrument help children to work through their loss and grief in a healthy way."

When asked what is the one piece of advice that is helping him the most, he says it is that all emotions are good and that he needs to embrace them rather than push them away.

Nora says the time Mark spends with Cher is helping him to move forward with his life, one day at a time. He especially enjoyed dying a chunk of his hair bright green for green hair day at school.

"Mark keeps a lot of his emotions to himself," says Nora. "I keep telling him he has to let me know what he is thinking and how he is feeling so we can help and support him. Cher is helping him to open up a bit more and to know that we are all here for him."

Once completed, the blanket will take a place of honour on his bed, or be used to lay across him while watching TV, bringing him not only comfort but also pleasant dreams.



Hospice Highlands Golf Classic

Tuesday, July 12
BraeBen Golf Course

\$275 a person before June 15. \$300 after

Includes: BBQ lunch,
green fees & cart, gourmet dinner

Registration: noon,
shotgun start at 1:15 p.m.

To register contact Fran McBride at:
fmcbride@dlhospice.org
416-626-0116 ext. 234

Tribute Tree



This year we welcome you to practice a new tradition of paying tribute to your parent(s) by sharing a reflection of them, the lessons they taught you, the values and beliefs they instilled in you and the memories you hold dear.

Please stop by to add a leaf to our Tribute Tree, on display at Dorothy Ley Hospice between May 8 and June 19th.

Paper leaves are available at the hospitality desk or by contacting Kristine Gagnon, Bereavement Care Coordinator

This remembrance activity is offered without charge; donations in memoriam are appreciated.



Bereavement Care Program