



Palliative Care Society of Cape Breton County

2 0 2 0 N E W S L E T T E R

FESTIVE WISHES THIS SEASON

2020 has been like no other. However, it is the year that the Hospice Palliative Care Society has made great progress in establishing a 10-bed Community Hospice. Success has come from years of advocating, planning, working with the Palliative Care Service, Membertou Properties Inc., Nova Scotia Health and, most importantly, the fundraising efforts of our supportive partners and the community's generosity. In its own way, 2020 has been an exciting year, and we thank all who have shared in the experience of fundraising, donating, planning, and building!

We want to express our gratitude to the Palliative Care Service healthcare staff and physicians in hospital and in the community for giving compassionate end-of-life care to palliative care patients and their families. We have missed the presence of the wonderful team of volunteers who offer additional comfort but hope to see them return in 2021. We are also grateful to the Society's staff members who have given so much of themselves to fulfilling the Society's mission every day.

We look forward to 2021 as the Hospice doors are opened to patients and families. On behalf of the Society's Board of Directors, we wish you and yours a happy holiday season and a healthy year ahead.

Patricia Jackson
Co-chair

Irene Khattar
Co-chair

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HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS

As a homecare worker for 25 years, Mary Luker knows how important it is to provide care and comfort in the home. The task took on a whole new meaning however, when she had to care for her husband Robert. Knowing the toll his care was having on his wife, Robert offered to go to hospital. Mary knew that wasn't what he wanted. It wasn't what she wanted either. Robert died on his birthday at home, exactly where he wanted to be. "I loved every minute of it," said Mary. "I loved him to death. He treated me like gold, and I got the chance to return the favour."

Robert and Mary's journey was made easier thanks to the support of the Hospice Palliative Care Service of Cape Breton County. Mary says the staff that came to their home were awesome. "They answered every question I had, showed me how to inject the pain medication," said Mary. "They allowed me to concentrate on being there for him." Bob was the type of person that didn't want anything sugar coated and always dealt with the truth. The openness with which staff provided his care made it easier on the couple. They knew what was facing them both. "Having their support took a lot of stress off my shoulders," said Mary. "And it allowed Bob to live the way he wanted each and every day."

Music Therapist Jill Murphy was part of the team that provided support for the family. With her help, Bob put together CDs for the family and Build-A-Bears for the grandkids. Bob loved to watch cooking shows, and would have many ideas on what to create in the kitchen for themselves, families and visitors. Bob knew Jill was coming over, and decided that stuffed mushrooms should be on the menu that day. "It was surprising what he came

up with," said Mary. "It was all a part of making sure he had everything he wanted."

Like many Cape Bretoners, Bob was a big hockey fan and loved discussing the latest action on the ice with staff member Susan MacKenzie. After one visit, Susan — a member of the Toronto Maple Leafs fan club, decided to reposition Bob's beloved Bruins garden gnome to face the world from a different angle, much to Bob's surprise and delight. Mary says Bob made the most of his time, including taking in a Johnny Reid concert and spending one last night at their summer cottage in Aspy Bay. With the help of two friends, Bob was able sit on the steps of the cottage, enjoying the spectacular view with a whiskey and a cigar.

A week before Bob passed away, the family came together for a traditional Easter brunch, and an early birthday celebration. Mary says she takes comfort knowing that she made it possible to have everything the way Bob wanted. "I loved taking care of him, and I'm so glad that he was able to stay at home with the people he loved in the place he was most comfortable."



2020 AGM AWARD RECIPIENTS

At the 2020 AGM, the Hospice Palliative Care Society recognized two community-minded individuals who have given so much to the Society and helped realize a Community Hospice for Cape Breton.

CHIEF TERRANCE PAUL, MEMBERTOU

The Society wishes to express its appreciation to Membertou, a community that exemplifies generosity, sustainability, authenticity, understanding, inclusivity and caring support for one another.

We thank Chief Terry, the Membertou Band Council, Membertou Development Corporation, Membertou staff and most of all the people of Membertou for both listening and hearing about the need for a Hospice in Cape Breton. Chief Terry and his

team have shared and responded to many options with the Society to make the precious land and servicing available to us. Membertou quite literally gave the Society its first significant donation for the campaign with this gift of land and the ability to build upon it. Membertou represents the very fabric of our foundation.

The Society wishes to extend its thanks for sharing this on-going journey with us and creating the opportunity to provide the thousands of patients and families of the Palliative Care Service with a Hospice. A home where they can live fully until the end of their days. The Society's Board of Directors, and in a true spirit of gratitude, presented the 2020 Appreciation Award to Chief Terry Paul and community of Membertou.



DEBBIE YOUNG RECEIVES MARGARET CUSACK AWARD

The Society was incredibly honoured to present the Margaret Cusack Award posthumously to **Debbie Young**. A dedicated long-time volunteer, Debbie embodied the spirit of Palliative Care and generously supported several other community causes and events as well. This award was accepted on her behalf by her loving husband, Tommy Young.

An incredible friend to all, Debbie gave selflessly, representing the epitome of Palliative Care - compassion, caring and sharing. Her enthusiasm and support for things great and small was an inspiration to us all. Charming, persuasive, and genuine, Debbie used her natural talents to help raise thousands of dollars over

the years. Her involvement in the Golf Tournament, Pop-Up Shop, Shake, Rattle and Roll, and many other Hospice Society events meant not only guaranteed success, but a guaranteed good time. Debbie's friendly, inviting personality and her infectious laugh drew people in and made them feel included and welcome.

For these reasons, and many others, Debbie will be so greatly missed, but we know she would want us to be working harder now more than ever. The Society is forever grateful for Debbie's work and impact on our community, but more importantly on the people she met and touched along the way.

HOSPICE CONSTRUCTION UNDERWAY

On July 28, 2020, the Hospice Society, joined by Chief Terrance Paul of Membertou, the Honourable Derek Mombourquette and Brett MacDougall of Nova Scotia Health – Eastern Zone, gathered on site at the future home of Cape Breton's only Community Hospice to turn sod and mark the start of construction. It was an emotional day that culminated more than 30 years of determination, collaboration and hard work to establish a Hospice in Cape Breton, which will soon complete the circle of care for patients and their families facing end-of-life.

Although the world still battles the COVID-19 pandemic, since that day, support for the project continues to pour in from the community. We are nearing our goal to raise \$5.2 million dollars thanks to the leadership of Co-Chairs Brian and Monica Shebib and the many donors that have given to this project.

Construction of the 10-Bed Community Hospice is well underway and on track to be ready for a Fall Opening in 2021. Collaborative planning discussions continue with Nova Scotia Health and the Society is reaching out to the community to raise funds to furnish and finish the interior space needed to deliver the hospice experience.

Thank you to our many donors, volunteers and supporters who have made monetary donations or have given time to help make a community hospice in Cape Breton a reality. In a year where fundraising has posed challenges, the Society and community are working towards reaching the final \$1.5 million needed to complete this important project - together we will!



MAZDA TEST DRIVE REVS UP \$5000 IN SUPPORT

Over three days in October, more than 200 people test drove the Mazda fleet and helped raise \$5000 for the Community Hospice. Led by Sydney Mazda and with the generosity of Mazda Canada, the Hospice Society was thrilled to be selected as the charity of choice for this year's test drive event. Donors cruised the hospice course, driving in style and class while behind the wheels of the Mazda Miata to the Mazda CX5. Big thanks to Lindsay Donovan and the team at Sydney Mazda for all their work.



Sydney Mazda Owner Mike Perry and Lindsay Donovan, Online Manager present the \$5000 cheque to Society representatives Alicia MacIntosh, Kathy Forsey and Irene Khattar.

PORT MORIEN POLAR BEAR DIP SPLASHES INTO 2021

Like everything else, The Port Morien Polar Dip will look quite different this year, but organizers promise it will be just as fun! For 2021, a virtual 'Polar Splash' is being planned to raise money for the Port Morien Legion and Hospice Cape Breton

This year, the Port Morien Legion is challenging people to do a virtual polar 'splash' however they see fit, and submit a video to its Facebook and Instagram pages. Be creative and have fun - if you want to keep with tradition and take a real dip in the ocean, be our guest! Perhaps you fill your kid's pool or maybe it's a bucket of water or a squirt from the hose. Whatever you choose, you have from December 15 to midnight on New Year's Day to complete and submit your challenge.

This holiday season, help us make the most of every precious moment.

DONATE TODAY.

www.circleofcarecb.ca



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Hospice Palliative Care Society of Cape Breton County

Card Number: _____

Cardholders Name: _____

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Thank you for your support!