



OAK RIDGES HOSPICE HERALD

Spring 2020 Issue 7

HOSPICE CONSTRUCTION CONTINUES



Since breaking ground last December, the team at J.J. McGuire General Contractors has been working diligently with subcontractors and trades to move construction of our new hospice into full swing. Throughout the first quarter of 2020, the site bustled with activity while crews braved the winter chill to complete site excavation, pouring of the building foundation and installation of underground plumbing. Next steps include back-filling the site, pouring of the concrete slab and commencement of the framework.



Despite extensive restrictions imposed on business activities as a result of the pandemic, construction of Morgan & Sidhu House is permitted to continue since hospices are considered to be part of the province's essential health care infrastructure. The construction team is adhering to Ministry of Health recommendations to keep workers safe through social distancing and providing additional on-site hygiene stations, while project meetings are being conducted through virtual means.

We are hopeful that the construction schedule can be kept on target through these challenging times, allowing us to maintain the hospice's targeted opening date of early 2021.

HIKE FOR HOSPICE - POSTPONED

Plans for our 3rd Annual Hike for Hospice, originally scheduled for Sunday May 3rd, have been put on hold while social distancing measures are in place.

We look forward to rescheduling this event when conditions improve and we can once again enjoy the company of our beloved family, friends and supporters.

Stay tuned to our website and social media for details on future events!



A MESSAGE FROM DR. STEVE RUSSELL



The pandemic has brought to the forefront many conversations about our society's fragile existence, our vulnerabilities and even our own personal mortality. How did we get here, in the blink of an eye, and when will we see the end of this extraordinary time? And yet these questions of life and death are always with us, dressed in different guise for each one of us. What will take us some day?

Many of you have seen the YouTube video chat we posted about making your wishes known when it comes to your healthcare choices in the event of a serious illness.

This is called Advance Care Planning, and there is a nationwide focus on this issue this week. Many of you gave us positive feedback on the presentation of such a difficult and delicate topic. Some of you will have struggled with the raising of such a somber discussion. Every person has their own unique story.

And this is the point of Advance Care Planning. You know better than anyone else what your values are, what's most important to you in life, and how you would define quality of life. The process is like a conversation, letting others know what makes your life meaningful and worth living. What will bring you joy, and what you would rather avoid at the end of life.

As a family doctor, it has been my privilege to sit at the bedside of many people as they approach the end of their lives. Some are reflective, telling stories from their younger days -- stories of joy, triumph and adventure. Some tell "war stories" from the hardest times of their lives -- how they survived, the lessons learned and who helped them along the way. Each dialogue is a treasured look into a life lived, and each person has their own unique focus on what is most meaningful to them. It's a sacred privilege to be trusted with these stories.

Some of the most agonizing moments are when patients fade beyond awareness, and doctors and nurses turn to family members for guidance on the direction of care. Many next of kin (substitute decision-makers) are not prepared for these life and death decisions. They struggle to articulate what their loved one would have wanted -- they feel that they never heard what mom, or son, or husband really valued. This is a difficult position to be put in.

So, as a gift to your loved ones, try to push through the discomfort and have a conversation about your wishes. It will free you from the tension of unspoken values, and free your family members from the burden of making decisions on your behalf. They will simply repeat what you have already said yourself.

One mentor of mine used to put it this way: "If we found a note inside your mother's (or father's or sister's) pocket, that they had written before they became so ill, telling us just what to do in this situation, what do you think it would have said?" This always seemed so wise, and helped guide the conversation. "What would they have said?"

What would you say?

We trust that you are all staying safe and well, and we thank each and every one of you for making the sacrifices you have made to keep our community protected from the spread of the corona virus. We were so disappointed that the Annual Hike for Hospice couldn't happen this May. We long for the day when the worst of the pandemic has passed and we can reconnect with you all, in person, on much sunnier days than these.



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IT TAKES A VILLAGE

OAK RIDGES HOSPICE GRATEFULLY RECOGNIZES THE MANY INDIVIDUALS, COMMUNITY GROUPS AND FOUNDATIONS WHO HAVE SUPPORTED US IN THEIR OWN UNIQUE WAY



Councillors from Uxbridge Township along with Mayor Dave Barton present Dr. Steve Russell with a cheque for \$25,000.

Uxbridge Township

Uxbridge Township has shown their support for hospice care with a contribution of \$25,000 to the "Building For Compassionate Care" Capital Campaign.

Ward 3 Councilor Bruce Garrod says "We can't all have a hospice — that doesn't make any sense — so the fact this council is able to support having this built in Port Perry to clearly support individuals throughout Durham Region I think is a great approach."



Linda Bruno, Assistant Manager (L) and Dana Smith (R) of Dana's Goldsmithing present Dr. Steve Russell with a cheque for \$3160.

Dana's Goldsmithing

The creative and passionate team at **Dana's Goldsmithing** designed a gorgeous sterling silver pendant based on our "Tree of Life" logo with a portion of the proceeds designated to support Oak Ridges Hospice.

Sales began in September and to date \$3160 has been raised! Limited pendants are still available by visiting danasgoldsmithing.com



Greenbank & District Lions Club

As the Lions Clubs of Canada celebrate their 100th anniversary of serving communities, we want to send a special thanks to our friends at the **Greenbank & District Lions Club** for their donation of \$1500

thank you



SAVE THE DATE!

We are excited to partner again with the team at **McMurtry Law** for the 2nd Annual Amazing Race Port Perry.

A tentative date of **Saturday September 26th** has been set.

OUR INVALUABLE VOLUNTEERS

Our volunteers are amazing and the lifeblood of our hospice family. We asked Aly what volunteering for ORH means to her and wanted to share her story with you!

I chose to volunteer with Oak Ridges Hospice because I truly believe that people deserve to have choices about where they want to die.

Over the last three years, I have had the opportunity to be a volunteer member of the Operations Committee as well as the Hike for Hospice committee. These roles have been life changing. I have met many wonderful people and become part of an incredible team. I plan to volunteer in the hospice once it is completed, supporting residents and their families, as well as continuing to assist in fundraising. I have been fortunate to share my passion for photography through my photos taken at the Hike for Hospice and the golf tournament.

I truly look forward to the day when the doors of Oak Ridges Hospice open and we can start providing palliative care from our hospice home to the residents of Durham Region.

Aly Miller
Event Photographer
Hike For Hospice & Operations Committee



In Memoriam

Oak Ridges Hospice gratefully acknowledges donations in memory of the following individuals:

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|-----------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------------|
| Neil Bailey | Gail Anne Chellew | Eugene Hyshka | Tony Santiago |
| Douglas Baird | Claudine Collings | Bill King | Leslie Ruth Weatherbee |
| Karen Brown | Christine Eady | Tom King | John Murray Williams |
| Isolde "Izzy" Burrell | Charles Foster | Lawrence Malcolm | |
| Heather Boyd-Butt | Gisela Hoffmann | Joanne McLean | |

Donations received from January 1st to March 31st, 2020

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