

# INSIGHT

STORIES OF LOVE AND LIFE AT STEDMAN COMMUNITY HOSPICE



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# Towards The End Of Life, Food Can Still Be A Pleasure

It's been said that food is symbolic of love when words are inadequate. In all cultures, the preparing and giving of food is a way to express love, and in difficult situations where it can be hard to find the right words, the comfort provided by a warm bowl of homemade soup can be a simple way to show you care.

"We want patients to die as they lived, having experienced life's pleasures and we view what we do in the kitchen as an important part of the care our hospice provides," says Wendy Keeton, kitchen aide at Stedman Community Hospice.

While food prepared at the hospice has a role in supporting the body, the need for sustenance decreases significantly as a person approaches the end of life. Their body is changing

and does not need as many calories as someone who is active and healthy. Food also has a role in supporting the mind and spirit. The focus goes beyond nutrition to creating a shared experience and retrieving treasured memories around the sights and smells of a particular food.

"The smell and taste of favourite foods elicit wonderful memories for patients, often taking them back to their childhood, to a home filled with the aroma of Mom's baking," says Wendy.

When possible, patients are consulted about favourite foods and food experiences.

"The Hospice kitchen is supported by paid staff and a dedicated team of volunteers," says Lynn Felker, Community and Volunteer

Engagement Co-ordinator.

"Food is selected and prepared similarly to how you would make decisions at home. Sometimes a special meal is prepared and at other times choices are given based on what is available that day. Some days there are ingredients and manpower to focus on a special request. Other days a tasty selection of homemade frozen meals is available to be heated up, served, and enjoyed," says Lynn.

Retired teacher Julie Neal volunteers in the Hospice kitchen for two 3-hour scheduled shifts each week, and more often when the need arises.

"I knew when I retired I would want to be doing something in the community. Last year, when my dad became ill and came to the Hospice during his final days, I was here



frequently, and it didn't take me long to know this was the place where I wanted to help," says Julie.

Julie, who learned the art of baking at her mother's knee, is known for her much-loved lemon drop cookies and lemon loaf.

"The flavours I find most soothing are lemon and cinnamon. The staff will sometimes wander into the kitchen, curious to see what I'm making, lured by the smell of cinnamon," Julie smiles.

In addition to providing end-of-life care to patients, Stedman Community Hospice also provides support to family members who are on their own grief journey as they anticipate the loss of the person they love. Family and visitors can access light snacks, home-baked treats, coffee and tea in the common family rooms at any time of day. In addition, Hospice volunteers circulate a treat cart, filled with snacks, from room to room. Often family and friends who have been caring for a loved one may forget to care for themselves.

Each person's grief journey is unique, however, the offer of food is received by most as a gesture of supportive care and concern. In general, families will not have regular access to meal support. When there is an abundant supply, or the situation of the

*"The volunteers are a representation of the community's support and families take great comfort in the knowledge that the whole community is with them. When you're here, you know this. The feeling is palpable."*

individual creates the need for a meal, it will be provided.

When Julie is working a shift, she is usually in the kitchen but says she gets great enjoyment from the times when she's called on to visit patient rooms with the treat cart.

"It's nice to interact with the patients and their families. I know when I was here with my dad, those moments when I got to visit with the volunteers were moments I looked forward to. They knew I was a tea drinker, as opposed to a coffee drinker, and made sure to include tea on the cart. Now I am making sure I do the same."

Lynn says the Hospice's goal is to have two people volunteering in the kitchen at any time throughout the week so that it can continue to provide individual meal experiences along with the 1,500 baked treats prepared each month.

"Families regularly express their awe at the level of volunteer support they witness here at the Hospice," says Wendy.

"The volunteers are a representa-

tion of the community's support and families take great comfort in the knowledge that the whole community is with them. When you're here, you know this. The feeling is palpable."

Julie agrees.

"Volunteering here is the most positive thing ever," says Julie.

The "PSWs, nurses, all the staff are here for the right reasons. It's the most positive place I've ever been!"

*To learn more about volunteering at the Hospice, please contact Lynn Felker, Community and Volunteer Co-ordinator at 519-751-7096, ext 2523 or by email at [lfelker@stedmanhospice.ca](mailto:lfelker@stedmanhospice.ca).*

## About the Cover



Kitchen staff person Wendy Keeton and volunteer Julie Neal discuss cookie options as they begin planning for the holiday season.

**1500**

The number of treats baked monthly for patients and their families



**2500**

The number of volunteer hours contributed annually to the Hospice kitchen

**5** The number of bushels of vegetables harvested annually from the Hospice gardens





Murray and Dorothy Barton are pictured here enjoying family time with their grandson Blaker.



Dorothy and Murray Barton are pictured here on the day of their son Craig's marriage to Michelle.

# “When someone is there to help carry the load – it’s everything”

**C**raig Barton says if it was up to him, there would be a giant halo sitting atop Stedman Community Hospice. As a son who saw his father admitted to the Hospice on the same day his mother passed away here, Craig says he probably knows better than most just how amazing the care is.

On Boxing Day of last year Craig, his wife Michelle and his sisters were

preparing for their father, Murray to join their mother, Dorothy, at the Hospice. Murray had been diagnosed with prostate cancer more than 25 years ago and more recently diagnosed with bone cancer. Dorothy was his caregiver but in 2022, Dorothy was diagnosed with lung cancer and her cancer progressed quickly.

“I think she was so focused on her husband that she let things slide with

herself. She ignored the signs,” says Michelle.

“She would get up every morning and make sure his breakfast was on a tray and his laundry was done.”

In late October 2022, Dorothy moved to the Hospice.

“She was so relaxed when she got the call. She was so happy to be at the Hospice. She loved that bed and marvelled at the cost of it!”



"We were looking at perhaps having them both in the same room at the Hospice, but that was not to be," says Craig.

Dorothy passed away in the morning of December 26 and Murray entered the Hospice that afternoon, staying in the same room where Dorothy had spent her final days. Prior to Murray coming to the Hospice, Craig, along with his sisters Denise and Kim, did their best to care for Murray at Denise's home, but Craig admits that with his mother in Hospice, and everyone in the family working full-time in demanding jobs, it was a struggle.

"The Hospice was a gift, an incredible gift," says Craig.

"You walk in and it's like walking into someone's home. It looks like a home; it feels like home. The staff and volunteers make you feel like you are home."

"We all took turns sleeping in her room at the Hospice," says Michelle.

"The PSWs would greet us with a smile saying they heard we were having a sleepover, and they made you feel so welcome, that you didn't feel like you were creating work for them. They took all that pressure away."

Craig says the staff were equally accommodating about moving his mother's bed outside so she could enjoy the fresh air and the gardens.

"You didn't even have to ask. They would be the ones to introduce the idea. They were so willing to do that, for mom and for dad, and my dad just loved the outdoors."

"The families get as much care as the patients. They sense how you're feeling and ask you how you are doing."

"You know when you're here what the end result will be, but to leave here every day knowing your parent is being so well looked after, the value of that is priceless, it's immeasurable. You don't have the luxury of being able to do all you want to do on any given day and when someone is there to help carry the load – it's everything," says Craig.

"My advice to anyone who has a family member who is dying is that if the opportunity arose for your loved one to go to the Hospice, jump at the chance," says Craig.

"It's a relief for the person coming in and it's a relief for the family. It's total care, by the staff and the volunteers alike."

The Bartons were so grateful for the care their parents received at Stedman Community Hospice that in September they held a fundraising event at Peavey



*Murray Barton took comfort in visits from therapy dogs like Roxy during his time at Stedman Community Hospice.*

Mart where Michelle is a manager. Customers had the opportunity to purchase items on the Hospice's wish list. The Bartons made a monetary donation, and the store raffled a barbecue.

"It was important to us to support this amazing place. It was a good day," says Michelle.

"We hope to do it again next year," says Craig, "and we'll do it bigger and better next time."

## Consider a Monthly Gift

A gift of  
**\$20**/month  
provides  
a day of meals  
for an end-of-life  
patient

A gift of  
**\$50**/month  
provides supplies  
for one legacy  
project  
i.e. remembrance items  
such as a quilt  
or hand mold

A gift of  
**\$100**/month  
provides an hour  
of one-on-one  
counseling for a  
grieving family  
member

To donate, please visit [www.sjlc.ca](http://www.sjlc.ca) or call 519-751-7096, ext 2475.





# Supportive Care for the grieving and bereaved

**S**upportive Care focuses on holistic care, including the body, mind, and spirit. It encompasses psychosocial, emotional, spiritual, and bereavement needs.

Stedman Community Hospice offers a variety of programs and services in the community and at Hankinson House, 445 Grey St, Brantford. Our programs and services are designed to support individuals living with a progressive, life-limiting illness, their families and care providers. The Hospice also provides grief support to those who are bereaved.

Our supportive care practitioners are members of the hospice palliative care



interdisciplinary team. They assess, acknowledge and nurture those who are living with advanced illness and are on a journey of dying and death, all while being sensitive to personal, cultural, financial, legal, health and spiritual needs.

## Specific opportunities can include:

- Legacy Creation & Memory Making
- Advance Care Planning
- Funeral / Memorial Service Planning

Our programs and services are available to individuals in Brantford-Brant, Six Nations of the Grand River, Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, Norfolk and Haldimand counties. Programs may be available to individuals outside of these regions on a case-by-case basis.



**Rev. Jenn Hind,  
M.Div., M.A.**

It is by way of personal experience with grief and bereavement that I discerned a call to ministry after realizing the tremendous support I received from my faith community upon the death of my father. This experience forever changed my outlook on human relationships and the need for supportive care in the community.

Spiritual Care along with grief and bereavement support continue to be my passion and purpose. In 2016 I graduated Seminary from Martin Luther University College and was ordained by the United Church of Canada. From there I spent seven years in Congregational Ministry in Waterloo. When the opportunity arose to join the incredible team at Stedman Community Hospice, I jumped at the chance to come home to a place where I could reestablish my focus on grief and bereavement support in the community. I live in Cambridge and in my spare time I enjoy biking, and spending time with the Spirit by walking in nature and along the water.



**Krista Campure, B.A.**

My name is Krista Campure, and I am thrilled to have joined the team at Stedman Community Hospice as the Grief and Bereavement Support Coordinator in May. I started my educational journey with completing a Bachelor of Arts degree in psychology from McMaster University in 2001. I have experienced a myriad of losses starting as a child, but one of the most significant was the stillbirth of my first son in 2010, which inspired me to become a birth and bereavement doula in 2014. I have recently completed the Death, Dying and Bereavement certification through Wilfrid Laurier University along with becoming an End-of-Life Doula through INELDA the International End-Of-Life Doula Association. I have a deep passion for helping others, holding space, providing compassionate care, and meeting you where you are.



## Current Programs:

### Together In Grief

A drop-in grief support group occurring on the first and third Tuesday of each month from 2-4 p.m. *Together in Grief* welcomes adults of all ages (18+), who have experienced any type of loss from death (i.e., sibling, partner, friend, spouse, parent, child, family member, pet, or loved one) and at any point during the grief journey. This program is co-facilitated by a staff member and a volunteer. Registration is required. Register online at <https://together-in-grief.eventbrite.ca>

### Partner/Spousal Loss

A 10-week grief support group open to those who have experienced the loss of a partner or spouse. This group is delivered as a closed group where the same participants meet weekly for 10 weeks.

For schedule of sessions, additional information or to speak with a member of the Supportive Care team, please contact us at: Stedman Community Hospice at (519) 751-7096, Ext 2500.

### Returning Soon:

- Day Program
- Survivors of Suicide Loss Support Group
- Care for the Caregiver

## ALL ARE WELCOME



**Julie Lebold, RSW**

My name is Julie and I'm excited to be part of the Supportive Care Team at Stedman Community Hospice as the Grief and Bereavement Practitioner. I've recently completed my Master of Social Work, including a practicum at two hospices in the Waterloo region. It was through some personal experiences in hospice and with death, as well as my education and practicum that I became passionate about supporting individuals at end-of-life and in their grief and bereavement. I am particularly interested in being able to grow the legacy program offered at the Hospice, as this is a way for families to create lasting memories with their loved ones, often creating a special piece of art that can be shared with generations to come. I am extremely grateful and honoured to be able to offer compassionate support and a safe space to those in the Brantford community.

## GIFTS OF SECURITIES

A donation of stocks, mutual funds, or stock options is a tax efficient opportunity to pay no tax on capital gains while supporting Stedman Community Hospice.

### How It Works.

#### Three simple steps:

1. Connect with your investment advisor on which investment securities to consider for donation, having the most beneficial philanthropic and financial impact for you.
2. Connect with us to let us know that you would like to make a gift and we will send you the securities donation form.
3. Complete the transfer form and instruct your investment advisor to transfer the investment securities directly to St. Joseph's Lifecare Foundation.

	Selling Shares or Donating Cash	Donating Shares
Current market value of shares	\$10,000	\$10,000
Original cost of shares	\$1,000	\$1,000
Capital Gains Realized	\$9,000	\$9,000
Tax on Capital Gain	\$4,500 (50% capital gain inclusion)	\$0
Donation after tax	\$5,500	\$10,000
Your charitable tax credit <small>assumes 46% tax rate</small>	\$2,530	\$4,600

*Chart represents current tax-saving opportunities, Fall 2023.*

**For more information please contact us at 519-751-7096, ext 2558.**



# Tis the season of Hope

**A**s we move closer to the end of 2023, we begin to turn our attention to the upcoming holidays and the new year. For most of us, this is a time to reflect on the past 12 months, a time to examine the highs and lows, the wins and losses, a time to reminisce. With the promise of a new year, it is natural to wonder what the coming months may bring. For most of us, we hope for happiness, good health, and good fortune. When we hope for a better future, we trust our life choices will result in positive outcomes. Hope helps us to see that there are many possibilities ahead of us. What is hope and why is it so important? Hope is an optimistic state of mind. It is a belief that we can achieve or change something despite potential barriers and challenges. But hope is more than just optimism. For those living with a life-limiting illness or facing the end of life, hope can be complex.

Hope is a healer. The medical community has long understood the important role hope can play in illness and recovery. Not that long ago, some medical practitioners believed it was so important for patients to hold onto hope that truths about illness, treatment and prognosis were often withheld from the patient. Certainly, that is not the case today. Patients request more honesty, transparency, and involvement in their care and medical practitioners aim to build long-term relationships with patients to provide holistic, patient-centered care. The medical community

works tirelessly to find balance between the communication and ethics of hope. It is important for people to have clear and accurate information about their illness and prognosis so they can make good healthcare decisions. Woven into that information is hope. Hope helps us to see that there can be many positive possibilities ahead of us. Hope can positively influence someone's quality of life as well as act as a buffer against the negative effect of stress. Those who are hopeful tend to have less stress and anxiety which can lead to better health outcomes.

Hope is not giving up. A lot of people associate palliative care with giving up hope. Decisions about treatment options can sometimes be gut wrenching. Many people believe it's a decision about quantity versus quality of life. It doesn't have to be one or the other. Palliative care is about providing comfort and relief alongside curative care. It's about offering options to individuals and their families that can improve quality of life and respect choices.

It should be about what is best for the individual; what are the options that honor their values, their wishes and how do we support values and wishes with a palliative approach to care. Palliative care providers help people achieve their best quality of life, for the rest of their life. Hope changes from curing the disease, to living life as fully as possible. Hope still exists- even for those living with a life-threatening illness or facing the end of life.

Hope is important. Certainly, when faced with a challenging diagnosis, we all hope for a cure. When that is not possible, reframing a person's hope is valuable and beneficial. Hope can be aimed at finding joy or comfort. It can be cultivated and focused on achieving life milestones, such as meeting grandchildren or attending a child's wedding. It can be the acknowledgment that there can be good in our lives, even under challenging circumstances. Sometimes the hardest part about navigating tough times is choosing not to lose hope.

Hope means you're not alone. At Stedman Community Hospice, we believe hope can give new meaning to life. To have hope is to want an outcome that makes your life better in some way. We know how important hope is. The time individuals, their family and friends have left can be filled with deep love, grace, and a newfound definition of hope.

*We are here to help. If you or someone you know needs assistance around palliative care or grief and bereavement, please reach out to us at (519) 751-7096, ext 2500.*

**By Karen Candy,  
VP Campus of  
Care, St. Joseph's  
Lifecare Centre**



Programs and services of Stedman Community Hospice are made possible by donor support.

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