

Stories of Love and Life at Stedman Community Hospice

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# CHARLOTTE'S LIGHT

For five-year-old Charlotte Stewart, the list of expected lifetime milestones was limited. Born with a neurological degenerative disorder, Charlotte was not expected to survive past the age of eight months. After years of being cared for at home by her parents, Jessica and Jeremy Stewart of St. George, Charlotte joined our Hospice family in the summer of 2017. During her time with us, Charlotte's beauty illuminated our halls and brightened the hearts of everyone who surrounded her. Charlotte's Aunt, Cara Overduin, shared with us the family's experience with Charlotte at Stedman Community Hospice.



Photo Credit: Charlotte Light Photography

*"Initially, we were apprehensive, but that apprehension turned quickly to a flood of relief. Thanks to the amazing team of nurses and personal support workers, as well as the peaceful atmosphere at the Hospice, Charlotte was so at ease. We had never seen her more comfortable or calm. It gave us such a sense of relief to just be able to be with her as a family, celebrating the joy of having her in our lives. We are so thankful."*

***"Charlotte deserved a life that was defined by the joy in it, not the number of years. We are thankful to Stedman Community Hospice, and everyone who supports it, for making it possible for us to celebrate that joy."***

Cara spoke of the comfort and calm that Charlotte and her family were able to experience while with us at the Hospice. Surrounded by her family and doted upon by her little sister, three-year-old Vienna, there was no shortage of love and light surrounding Charlotte.

It is thanks to the tremendous generosity and compassion of our community supporters that we are able to offer this kind of care and peace of mind to families like the Stewarts. Charlotte touched the lives of everyone who was blessed to care for her during her time with us.

On September 14, 2017, two days after celebrating her fifth birthday, complete with a beautiful birthday party held in the Hospice Family Room, Charlotte's family, along with our Hospice family, said their final goodbyes. We are eternally grateful for having had the privilege to care for Charlotte.



Charlotte and her Aunt, Cara Overduin

# OUR DONORS: THE HEART OF HOSPICE

Twelve-year-old Aaron Phillip-Fenech had a lot more on his mind than winning a contest when he decided to give back to the community who had supported him in his bid to win the Ethiopian Airlines Canada 150 contest.

Ethiopian Airlines Canada hosted the contest to mark Canada's 150th birthday. People were asked to upload a video describing what they 'Love about Canada' and the top five finalists were selected by tallying the thousands of likes and shares they received during the duration of the contest.

To say 'thanks' to his community for their support, Aaron gave a \$500 donation and promoted the work of Stedman Community Hospice. Ethiopian Airlines Canada and RadonicRodgers Strategy+ were so moved by Aaron's generosity that they too donated \$500 to the Hospice. We were so impressed with how Aaron engaged with his community and showed his generosity through his efforts...thank you Aaron!



*Pictured: Aaron and his parents Leslie & Jamie Collard, along with Lesley Lehmann, Director of Development and Communications of St. Joseph's Lifecare Foundation*



In honour of her 40-year career with CIBC, Debbie Cummins was the guest of honour at a retirement party hosted by her friends and colleagues. In lieu of gifts, Debbie requested that her guests instead consider a donation to Stedman Community Hospice. Debbie's friends showed their love and appreciation for her in a BIG way and gave her a \$3,000 donation as her send off!

On her first day of 'retirement', Debbie celebrated by joining our incredible roster of Hospice Volunteers! This was her way of giving back in appreciation of the care her Mom, Catherine, received at the Hospice before she died.

Thank you Debbie...we couldn't be more delighted to have you!

*Pictured left to right: Annie Lockhart, Hospice Executive Director Cheryl Moore, Anna Trakas Nemeth, Debbie Cummins and Meghan Bowler*





Kent Dixon, President of ROI Group and Olga Consorti, President & CEO of St. Joseph's Lifecare Foundation

# JOIN THE MONTHLY GIVING CLUB AND WATCH YOUR GENEROSITY DOUBLE!

KENT DIXON OF ROI GROUP  
WANTS TO HELP YOU  
DOUBLE UP

Thanks to incredible Community Booster Kent Dixon, President of ROI Group, when you join the Monthly Giving Club, your monthly contribution to Stedman Community Hospice will be doubled for one full year!

Already a Monthly Giving Club member? Increase your monthly gift and that will be matched too!

Joining the Monthly Giving Club is easy, convenient and a very savvy way to make a donation while avoiding the December 31 charitable tax receipt deadline. Your donation is spread over 12 months, lessening the impact on your year-end expenses, while continuing to support your favourite charity.

For as little as \$10 per month, you will help even more people in need throughout the year. Your gift of \$120 becomes \$240 thanks to Kent and ROI Group! See the enclosed Donor Card for details.

## A GRATEFUL MOM GIVES THANKS

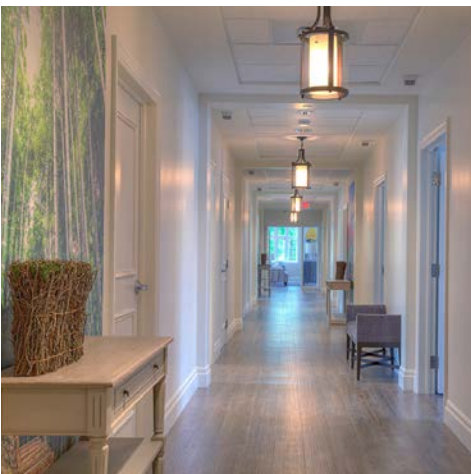
By following, liking, sharing and retweeting our posts on Facebook and Twitter, you are highlighting the impact that the Hospice has had on the lives of thousands of patients and their families - making you our biggest ambassadors! Thanks to grateful Hospice family members like Melissa Wright, we can continue to showcase the love and light found at Stedman Community Hospice.

*"My 11-year-old son Donovan spent his last week of life at Stedman Community Hospice in June 2014. I couldn't have asked for a more peaceful end to his life here with us. Everything about the Hospice was amazing: the staff, the volunteers, and even just the way it felt like home. I know my baby was at peace when he left this earth and I'm glad I was given the opportunity to give him that dignity and peace in the end."*

Facebook Review - Melissa Wright

# WELCOME TO OUR HOUSE: BUILT BY COMMUNITY LOVE

Stedman Community Hospice is known as 'the house that community love built' and we couldn't be more proud. From breathtaking views of our gardens, to spacious family rooms featuring cathedral ceilings and the finest of modern, comfortable furnishings and decor, we want our patients and their families to feel welcomed and at home during their time with us. Steeped in light and soothing colours, our Hospice is a haven of peace and calm. We are so tremendously grateful to our donors for their endless generosity in making our dream home a reality for everyone we are privileged to serve.





# FOR THE LOVE OF HOSPICE

We are proud of our incredible team of Staff and Volunteers who provide compassionate, loving and professional care. Recently, we sat down with members of our front-line team to ask them about their Hospice experiences. Not surprisingly, asking our team about what they do for our patients and families resulted instead in them expressing what the patients and families do for them!



Executive Director Cheryl Moore regards individuals and families who are facing death as her greatest teachers. She considers it a privilege to "bear witness to the intimate experiences of the dying and those who love them." Moore concedes that it is the highest honour for her and her staff team to provide compassionate care to everyone who comes through the doors of Stedman Community Hospice.

Registered Nurse Elizabeth Pottruff credits her career at Stedman Community Hospice as having provided her with the privilege to compassionately care for hundreds of patients and their families, resulting in a tremendous sense of personal and professional fulfillment. "I will always be grateful" says Pottruff, when asked of her feelings about her experience with Stedman Community Hospice.



Before getting her placement at Stedman Community Hospice, Personal Support Worker Lindsay Barber admits she didn't know what a Hospice was. "Within a week of being there, I knew this Hospice is where I wanted to work. Seeing the love for not only the residents and families, but also for each other as staff and volunteers, was such a life changing experience for me." Lindsay feels privileged, lucky and proud to work with a team that loves what they do and cares for everyone so deeply.



# CHASING THE LIGHT

*The following excerpts are taken from Canadian artist Sarah Phelps' article 'The Day My Mother Died'. You can view Sarah's stunning artwork (including the pieces in this article), by visiting [www.sarahphelps.ca](http://www.sarahphelps.ca)*

For months, my Mom, 71 year old Marilyn, a loving mother, wife and humanitarian, battled with unexplained illness. As my family and I endeavoured to care for her at home, my coping mechanism was painting. 'Chasing the Light' (see photo, right) was initially inspired by the idea that we (and my Mom) were chasing the light of hope through the darkness we were experiencing. After a CT Scan revealed that my Mom had cancer throughout her body and bones, the truth revealed itself. She was going to die. 'Chasing the Light' now steered toward my mother chasing the light to the other side.



Chasing the Light

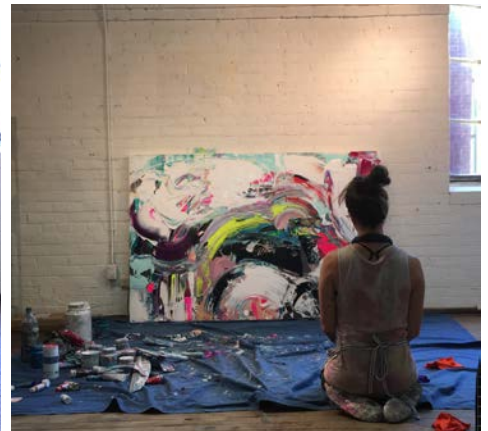
Though our hearts burned with sadness at the thought of losing her, something amazing happened when my Mom was admitted to Stedman Community Hospice. Thanks to the generosity and compassion of every single donor who supports the Hospice, my mother was finally able to breathe fresh air, feel the heat of the sun, watch the clouds, spend time in the beautiful gardens and sleep in peace and quiet. Each step of her journey was approached carefully and lovingly by the highly experienced nurses, doctors and support workers; in particular, our 'earth angel', Registered Nurse, Tara Young. It was a great relief to our family that she would be taken care of with compassion and truth. It calmed our hearts and minds that she would pass with dignity, peace and love.

The day my mother died was surreal. Intense emotions welled up inside me and I had to let it all out. Devastated, but determined, I drove to my art studio in Toronto and painted my heart out. I sat in front of the blank canvas (see photo, below) reflecting on all that had happened, and contemplated what I would paint. I thought about her life, my relationship with her and how lucky I was to have such an amazing mother. As I poured the colours, my intuition moved them across the canvas. I felt peace knowing that my mother was with me in spirit, watching me and guiding me. The painting, which now hangs in my home is a constant reminder that my mother is always with me. The title of the piece (see completed painting, below) is 'Freedom & Light' which is what my Mom now has on the other side.

Stedman Community Hospice was the ultimate blessing and we will never forget the compassion that lives in the hearts of all the people that work and volunteer there. We are forever grateful to the people who so generously donate to the Hospice so that people, like my mother, may die with the dignity and peace they deserve. Thank you.



Sarah and her Mom, Marilyn Phelps



Freedom and Light





Stedman Community Hospice Garden Photo Credit: Hospice Volunteer Norma Schmitt

# THANK YOU!

Each year, thousands of people rely upon the programs and services of Stedman Community Hospice.

We are tremendously thankful for your generosity to St. Joseph's Lifecare Foundation, the official fundraising organization for Stedman Community Hospice. Together, we will continue to offer our unrivalled programs and services to every family in need, regardless of type of illness, economic status, age or religion.

We hope that you will once again find it in your heart to give generously and support our mission by completing the enclosed donor card and returning it in the postage paid envelope.

For your donation of \$100 or more, you will receive a special ornament keepsake, exclusive to Stedman Community Hospice, to remind you of the light you have brought to the lives of Hospice patients and families.

As an extra incentive to give this year, join the Monthly Giving Club, or increase your current monthly gift and watch your donation have DOUBLE the impact, thanks to Kent Dixon, President of ROI Group, who has so generously committed to matching your monthly donations for the entire first year!

Because of the giving spirit of donors like you, the families of Charlotte and Marilyn and everyone else we've had the privilege of caring for will never receive a bill from the Hospice.

May the joy of helping patients and their families fill your heart with love and your home with light!



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Watch us on RogersTV 20 for Season 2 of 'Redefining Hope for Hospice'

