

Remember loved ones at Hike for Hospice

Kim and Brodie Johnson's close-knit group of friends have shared joys and sorrows for more than 20 years.

When Brodie was diagnosed with a brain tumour, they surrounded the couple with care. When Brodie died at Victoria Hospice two years later, they were right there to support Kim and her children.

Now they're all honouring Brodie's memory and raising funds for compassionate care at Victoria Hospice by teaming up for Hike for Hospice on Sunday, May 7.

"It's really hard to have to say goodbye to a loved one, and I can't imagine having to do it in a sterile hospital room with just white walls and a bed. "It was really nice to have a homelike environment at Victoria Hospice," Kim says. "It's important to me that other people get that opportunity as well. I know it's expensive to provide this level of care."

Brodie's room at hospice became Kim's second home for two weeks, she says.

"We had a lot of visitors; his friends and family were able to come in to be with him and say goodbye. We had people come by with guitars to sing to Brodie, which he always loved – it felt so homelike. Being able to bring our dog, Swiffer, up to sit in the room with Brodie really helped us through the process," she says.

"I was so appreciative of all the staff, volunteers and everybody



who really helped me through that horrible two weeks. The people were amazing, and the environment and the services – including counselling for me and my kids – made it easier."

Brian Mitchell is one of Brodie's friends who holds his memories close.

"Forty-eight years is not a lot of time to make a large impact on people, but that was not true of my dear friend Brodie Johnson. He had a larger-than-life personality that made an impression on everyone, and still does, through the stories and laughs we share."

Kim, Brian, and friends were the first to register for Hike for Hospice and are already off to a strong fundraising start under the team banner Goldstream 161.

They invite everyone to share memories and honour loved ones by lacing up their walking shoes on May 7.



TOP RIGHT: Kim and Brodie Johnson at Sunfest in 2018

LEFT: Team Brodie: Kim Johnson, Lorelee Smyth, Dan Salmon, Shannon Mitchell, and Brian Mitchell

Registration is open!

HIKE FOR HOSPICE SUNDAY, MAY 7

Register now and purchase 50/50 tickets at victoriahospice.org/hike

How are you within?

Spiritual care at Victoria Hospice

Spiritual support for people who are dying and their loved ones is a key element of interdisciplinary end-of-life care at Victoria Hospice.

Spiritual Care Coordinator Debra Caravitis helps people connect with what gives meaning and purpose to their lives, to hope, forgiveness, and to their relationships – with self, others, a greater source, whatever that might mean to them.

Debra serves patients and families at hospice and in the community, and staff and volunteers in their work and in their own inner life.

“Spirituality is such a broad area, encompassing different things for different people,” she says. The sense of the spiritual taps into something greater than themselves, and can be expressed in many ways, including through a love of nature, art, or animals. It may include religion, but not necessarily.”



Spiritual care can include offering blessings and honouring rituals, keeping vigil, companionship, recording memories, and liaising with religious communities.

Patients and families often don't know what to expect at the end of life. Debra is able to talk with people about what kind of experiences they may encounter as conditions change and explore their concerns and hopes.

“Bearing witness to pain – not trying to “fix” or ameliorate it and deeply listening when someone is feeling the pain of all the losses they may be encountering – all this is part of spiritual care,” she says.

“A question like, ‘how are you within?’ invites people to touch into what matters most to them.”

Supporting people of all ages through major transitions and the unknown has been Debra's life's work. She has worked with people at the beginning and end of life.

Prior to joining Victoria Hospice as a counsellor on the Victoria Hospice Palliative Response Team in 2014, Debra worked with children with special needs and their families as a teacher and consultant. She moved into the Spiritual Care Coordinator role in September 2022.

Debra has extensive training as a spiritual director. She is on the Canadian leadership team of the Sacred Art of Living Center for Spiritual Integration, which advocates for a human and soulful way of dealing with suffering.

“The focus on holistic care and tending to the spirit has always been part of my work with hospice,” she says. “I'm grateful for this opportunity to be with patients and families at this important transitional time.”

Meet Music Therapist Maryann Burrows

“Music therapy is not about sitting at the bedside strumming a guitar. Our thorough training involves psychology, neuroscience, and counselling. Perhaps a better title is music-centred therapist,” Maryann says.

“Music therapists use a variety of strategies and interventions to address goals like reducing fear, anxiety, isolation, or increasing connection to self-identity, relaxation, and comfort. Interventions can include singing, music-assisted relaxation, instrument playing, personalized recordings, and much more. I use music as treatment in the same way a nurse would use medications or other techniques specific to their profession.”

Music therapy at Victoria Hospice is made possible thanks to support from the CRD Arts Commission, the Music Heals Charitable Foundation, the Hamber Foundation, and our generous donors.



Better for having known you

Max White leaves a compassionate legacy

Victoria Hospice joins with Max White's friends and family to cherish the memory of his compassionate presence. Max died on July 2, 2021.

He was introduced to Victoria Hospice services when the Palliative Response Team provided support at home for his wife, Freda. After her death in 2007, he wanted to give back as a volunteer.

He touched the lives of countless patients, families, and staff at Victoria Hospice, serving on the Inpatient Unit and in Bereavement Services, supporting many programs and co-facilitating bereavement groups. Max even crafted beautiful wooden toys for use in play therapy sessions with the child and youth grief counsellor.

Bereavement Counsellor Betty Anderson remembers Max's many contributions.

"His warm, calm, intelligent presence and his top-notch people skills fostered the sense of community and safe haven that are integral to a group support session," she says. "Max's lived experience of being the 'one left behind' after a long and deep connection to a spouse 'tuned his ear' to be able to hear even the unspoken feelings of others in a similar situation."

In a 2019 interview, Max reflected on his time as a volunteer.

"It was a very special experience and one in which I certainly grew as a human being, and also grew in abilities. You learn so much about people and how they can handle things and how much other people can contribute to getting you back your



Max White pictured here in 2018

wholeness. It's astounding what people do in support. "Hospice gives you the chance to contribute some things that you don't even know you have."

In addition to his legacy of compassion, Max left a gift in his Will to support patients and families at Victoria Hospice into the future. His generosity will be long remembered, and his presence greatly missed.

We are grateful and better for having known him.



Victoria Hospice welcomes new Medical Director

Victoria Hospice is pleased to announce Dr. Christine Jones has been appointed Medical Director, effective January 19, 2023.

Dr. Jones has long been an advocate for excellence in palliative and hospice care and her dedication is inspiring.

She began a career in family medicine with a largely geriatric population in 1995, and her patients often required a palliative approach to care and frequently accessed Victoria Hospice services. She was invited to join Victoria Hospice team as a consulting palliative care physician in 2000 and since then, "I never looked back," she told us.

We are delighted such a highly skilled physician and educator has accepted this key leadership role as we expand to meet the growing needs of our community.

Host an event to remember!

Every year, individuals, families, and friends come together to support compassionate end-of-life care at Victoria Hospice. Last year, they raised more than \$265,000!

Hosting a fundraising event can be a rewarding way to honour the memory of a loved one. From yard sales and car washes to bottle drives and art sales – the sky’s the limit!

Here’s how you can get started:



Do you have a hobby or an interest that sparks your joy? Harness that enthusiasm and imagine how you could create a fundraising event from an activity you love.



Set a goal. Whether you’d like to raise \$100, \$1,000, or \$10,000, every donation makes a big difference.



Connect with Development Officer Raisa Frenette at rfrenette@victoriahospice.org or 250-519-1741. She’s here to support you and has resources to help you plan your event.

Heather’s Great Big Garage Sale

After Heather McEwen’s dear friend, Julie, died at Victoria Hospice, she wanted to honour her, and the care Julie received. Inspired by the sentiment, “Be the things you loved most about the people who have gone,” she held a wildly popular “**Great Big Garage Sale for Hospice**” in 2019. She raised more than \$3,500 while lifting spirits at the same time.



Emily’s Raffle

“Victoria Hospice was such a saving grace for my family,” says Emily Craveiro from **Brown’s Socialhouse Uptown**. She brought neighbouring local businesses together to create a beautiful gift basket for a raffle and raised more than \$2,370. “I am hopeful we can raise more and more every year to support this amazing foundation that supports so many people daily,” she says.



L-R: Sam Higgins, Grace Chicanot, Matt Quinn, Emily Craveiro, and Victoria Hospice Development Officer Raisa Frenette

Coming full circle

Bereavement Services welcomes intern

This fall Bereavement Services welcomed Mark Seemann, an intern from City University’s Master of Counselling program. Mark shadowed and observed counsellors for the first three months and started seeing clients in January.

“We are thrilled to see a return of counselling interns to the bereavement program and honoured to support Mark in his professional development,” Director of Bereavement Services Marney Thompson says. “He’s a keen learner and brings a welcome fresh perspective to our team.”

Counsellors Karen Loucks and Steven Silvers are sharing the supervisory responsibilities, but the rest of the team has made themselves available for guidance and sharing ideas.

“It’s a fantastic, collegial environment with great mentorship and attention to both where I’m at and where I need to be,” Mark says. “There are so many different approaches in counselling and the fact that there are six counsellors offering feedback gives me a wide variety of perspectives to weigh and balance and see what fits for me in developing as a practitioner.”





L-R: Victoria Hospice Bereavement Counsellor Steven Silvers and intern Mark Seemann

Mark’s recent background is in emergency management, including policy development, research, and teaching, but with an undergraduate degree in psychology, this feels like coming full circle, he says.

“I have missed interacting with people and touching their lives in some way. As a second career I see counselling as something I can offer into my 70s and 80s.”



Save the dates!

SUNDAY, MAY 7	SUNDAY, JUNE 11	AUGUST 26-27	SUNDAY, OCTOBER 22
Hike for Hospice	Teeny Tiny Garden Tour	Cycle of Life Tour	Fashion for Compassion
			
<p>Lace up your walking shoes to support patients and families in the Victoria Hospice circle of care!</p> <p>The event starts at Fisherman's Wharf Park at 9 am and the 3.5 km walk gets underway at 10 am.</p>	<p>Enjoy inspiring gardens with friends and family on this fan-favourite annual tour. Tickets are \$30 and go on sale at select locations around town in May.</p>	<p>Local riders train all year for this two-day ride that supports local hospices on Vancouver Island. Sign up to ride or show them your support by sponsoring a rider and cheering them on to the finish line!</p>	<p>After a two-year hiatus, Fashion for Compassion is back! Join us at the Delta Ocean Pointe for lunch and a fabulous fall fashion show at an event that never goes out of style. Ticket information coming soon!</p>



Tax Tips Webinar available anytime

A new webinar from Will Power, a national movement inspiring Canadians to think differently about their charitable giving, offers financial planning tips on ways to set up your estate to help loved ones and charities while reducing your tax bill. It's free, and you can attend anytime.

Go to willpower.ca/webinar

Your Donation Makes a Difference

YES! I will join the Hospice Hearts Monthly Giving Club!

My **monthly donation** will be: \$10 \$25 \$50 \$100 Other

My **one-time donation** will be: \$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 \$1000 Other

Name

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City/Province

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Credit card type: VISA MasterCard AmEx

Card #

Expiry date: ___ / ___

My donation is in memory in honour of

Please send an acknowledgement letter to

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City/Prov/Postal

Please send me Victoria Hospice Connections e-newsletters.

I would like to find out more about including Victoria Hospice in my will.

I have included Victoria Hospice in my will.

I wish to remain anonymous.

Compassionate end-of-life care at Victoria Hospice is made possible through the generosity of our community. The people named below have been commemorated in memory or in honour by friends and loved ones through gifts to Victoria Hospice from November 2022 to January 2023.

IN MEMORY Sidney Alexander • Trevor Alexander • Sidney Alexander • Jo Ann L. Allan • Ruth Anderson • Fred Angene Marion Armstrong • Robert J. Arnott • Mary-Wynne Ashford • Elizabeth Astbury • Eileen Atkins • Laurie Auger Penny Authier • Gina Ballard • Jeannette Ballard • Pamela Barry • Janet Bavelas • Robert E. Bearpark Alex Beattie • Bonnie Bell • Hilda Bennett-Brown • Janet Benning • Herman Bergink • Henry Bertrand • Les Biggs Nancy Bingham • Dee Bingham • Don Bingham • David Biro • Lucille R. Bishop • Jim Bisson • Darryle Black Robert Blaikie • Kathryn Blaikie • Peter Boldt • Kim Bond • David Bone • Glenis M. Boudreau • Marie Boudreau Donna Brandle • Sheila Breen • Hazel Brooks • Russell E. Brown • Steven D. Brown • Bob Buckingham • Emery Budai Lori E. Burley • Iren Cameron • Johnathon Cameron • Margaret E. Campbell • Maggie Campbell • Doreen Carriss Wayne Carter • Donald Cawley • Tess Caya • Ann Chaland • Robert Chaland • Elizabeth A. 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IN HONOUR Sidney Alexander • Betty Anderson • Shelley Andrews • Daugulis Family • Gardiner Family • Gloria Greeniaus • Canh Ngoc Ho • Trisha Hortsing Katherine Le Corre • Beth McDonald • Michelle Nelson • Ariel Nesbitt • Rasna Pitt • Serena Pitt • Trish Reid • Cara Saucedo • Charlotte Smith • Jamie Tattrie

We'd love to hear your hospice story. Please connect with us if you would like to share your experience.

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You may have noticed a change in this issue of *Transitions*. We've made a switch to lighter-weight paper to reduce mailing costs and conserve resources. We hope you like it!