

# transitions

THE NEWSLETTER OF **VICTORIA**  **HOSPICE**

SPRING 2025

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT Meet Maureen Dixon

When Maureen Dixon reflects on her experience as a Victoria Hospice volunteer, she speaks with conviction: “It’s about giving people a safe place to grieve alongside others who truly understand. A place where there’s no judgement, just kindness and understanding.”

Maureen joined Victoria Hospice as a volunteer eight years ago, after a long career as a school principal in Red Deer. Her time supporting grieving families there left a lasting impact, inspiring her to continue that support in her retirement.

Since 2017, she has been a dedicated volunteer on the Inpatient Unit every Friday morning, her radiant smile and compassion brightening everyone’s day.

Beyond the Inpatient Unit, Maureen is a valued member of the Bereavement volunteer team. She has lent her support to the Walking Group, Grief Cafés, and Living with Grief workshops, skillfully supporting people navigate the complexities of grief.

A life-long learner, Maureen welcomes opportunities to improve her skills for the benefit of patients, clients, and families. She also mentors new volunteers, sharing her wealth of experience and guiding them through their initial shifts on the Unit.

In 2024, Maureen was named an Honorary Lifetime Member of the Victoria Hospice Society, recognizing her outstanding contributions over the years.

Victoria Hospice CEO Teri Henderson acknowledges the invaluable role of volunteers: “Whether at an event, in the office, or on the Inpatient Unit, I am continually amazed by the dedication of our incredible volunteers. They are the foundation of our organization, and we are profoundly grateful for their unwavering support.”



*Interested in volunteering with Victoria Hospice? Keep an eye on our website for current and future opportunities. Learn more at [victoriahospice.org/volunteer](https://victoriahospice.org/volunteer).*



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# Hospice Hearts Club Members recognized at the Community Support Centre

Last fall, Victoria Hospice unveiled a new donor wall to recognize our generous community of monthly donors, fondly referred to as the Hospice Heart Club. Liz Johnson, a dedicated member, attended the unveiling and knows firsthand the impact of monthly contributions.

Liz's husband Ian received end-of-life support from Victoria Hospice in 2023. A former

nurse, Liz was Ian's primary caregiver, with support from the Palliative Response Team, until his care needs exceeded what could be managed at home. Transferred to the Inpatient Unit, Ian spent his final days surrounded by compassionate care, allowing Liz to simply be there as his wife.

"You never know when you or a loved one will need hospice. Victoria Hospice was there for Ian and me when we needed it most. They bring heaven to earth," Liz says.

*Join Liz in becoming a Hospice Hearts Club Member today! Visit [victoriahospice.org/monthly](http://victoriahospice.org/monthly), use the enclosed form or call us at 250-519-1744.*

Liz Johnson (R) and her friend Iris Hoytema (L) by the new Hospice Hearts Club wall at the Community Support Centre. Liz gives monthly because she knows firsthand how important it is to have hospice services available when and where they are needed.



## Why give monthly?

Monthly gifts are one of the best ways to support compassionate end-of-life care at Victoria Hospice.

They provide stable funding, reduce processing costs, and ensure your donation makes the biggest impact.

As a member of the Hospice Hearts Club, you'll receive special invites and recognition on our donor wall.



## Hike for Hospice returns at a new venue!

Join us on Sunday, May 4 for Hike for Hospice, a meaningful event to raise funds and awareness for compassionate end-of-life care and bereavement support at Victoria Hospice.

This year's event will be held at Willows Park in Oak Bay!



The 3.5 km family-friendly walk will take you along Beach Drive to the Oak Bay Marina, then loop back to Willows Park. Participants can gather friends and family, join the Workplace Challenge, or dress up their pets for the Best Dressed Dog contest. Prefer to walk on your own schedule? The Hike on Your Site option lets you participate anytime in May. And don't forget to show support by entering our 50/50 raffle!

Hike for Hospice is more than just a walk – it's a heartfelt way to celebrate and remember loved ones while supporting hospice care in our community.

Check in and entertainment at Willows Park starts at 9 am, opening ceremonies at 9:45 am, and the walk begins at 10 am.

We look forward to seeing you there! Sign up online at [victoriahospice.org/events](http://victoriahospice.org/events)

To volunteer or for more information, contact Debbie Greenway at [Debbie.Greenway@victoriahospice.org](mailto:Debbie.Greenway@victoriahospice.org) or 250-519-1747

# Animal Therapy on the Unit!

Victoria Hospice has partnered with the Pacific Animal Therapy Society (PATS) to bring therapy dogs on-site twice a week. Every Monday and Wednesday afternoon, patients and staff can connect with these specially trained canines.

One of these dogs is Brio, a seasoned therapy dog at Royal Jubilee Hospital who has recently joined Victoria Hospice with her humans, Kit Pearson and Katherine Farris.

Research shows that petting a dog or cat can reduce blood pressure, calm the heart, and alleviate stress, anxiety, and depression. For those approaching end-of-life, spending time with a pet may also provide pain relief and spiritual connection.

Victoria Hospice LPN Kirsten highlights the value of therapy dogs. "It's amazing to offer patients who have loved animals their whole lives the chance to enjoy companionship at the end of their lives. It has a calming effect that brings so much comfort, and the staff love it, too!"

Each Monday and Wednesday, one of seven teams will spend an hour on the unit, prioritizing visits to patients who wish to see the dog. The length of visits varies based on demand.



Brio the Labradoodle at work. Learn more about a day in the life of Brio in her own words (with a little help from her mum) at [victoriahospice.org/stories](http://victoriahospice.org/stories)

## SAVE THE DATES

Sunday May 4	Sunday June 8	Saturday–Sunday July 19–20	Sunday October 26
<b>Hike for Hospice</b>	<b>Teeny Tiny Garden Tour</b>	<b>Cycle of Life Tour</b>	<b>Fashion for Compassion</b>
			
Gather your friends to walk in memory of a loved one and raise funds to support compassionate end-of-life care.	Explore some of Victoria's loveliest backyard gardens. Tickets to this perennial fan favourite go on sale in May.	Cyclists take on a two-day challenge to support hospice care on Vancouver Island. Pledge your support or sign up to ride at <a href="http://cycleoflifetour.ca">cycleoflifetour.ca</a> .	Enjoy a fabulous fashion show, delicious lunch, and more at the Delta Ocean Point Resort. Watch for ticket details coming soon!

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 5, 2024 to February 19, 2025.

**IN MEMORY** Trevor Alexander • Sidney Alexander • Blanche Anderson • Morey Anderson • Manfred Angene Eileen Atkins • Sherry Austin • Penny Authier • Jeannette Ballard • Arturo Barbon • Pamela Barry • Beadle Family Robert E. Bearpark • Jean Bell • Patricia Bell • Bonnie Bell • H. B. Bennett • Pasha Bérubé • Guy Bicknell The Bingham • Milka Bistic • Robert Blaikie • Kathryn Blaikie • David Bone • Catherine M. Bonnar • Shiu Bou Arlene J. Boyden • Walter Brain • Helen Braithwaite • Art Brazier • Peg Brazier • Sheila Breen • Shirley Briggs Steven D. Brown • Bob Buckingham • Lori E. Burley • Harry J. Burniston • Margaret Campbell • Brian G. Carr-Harris Bill Carragher • Walter T. Carter • Donald Cawley • Barbara Chambers • Ernle Chatfield • Dale Chekwech Charlie H. Chen • Shirley Chew • David Chu • Jeffrey R. Clarke • Connie Clarke • James Cline • Catherine M. Colebrook Keri L. 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We'd love to hear your hospice story. Please connect with us if you would like to share your experience.

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