

# transitions

THE NEWSLETTER OF **VICTORIA**



**HOSPICE**

SUMMER 2025

## Generous legacy supports skills and opportunities

It wasn't Mike Marley's sense of humour, captivating stories, or joie de vivre that won Ethel Marley's heart – it was Mike's passion for helping others, she says.

"As a nurse and caregiver, what drew me to Mike – apart from his wonderful personality, of course – was his kindness and how much he wanted to support people and give back to his community," Ethel says. "He was a giver."

When Mike was facing a life-limiting illness, he and Ethel had many conversations about how to extend their generosity through legacy giving.

"Mike had supported Victoria Hospice for many years, always taking time to learn about and understand their needs," Ethel says.

After Mike died in May 2024, Ethel honoured his memory and their shared values by establishing the Mike and Ethel Marley Scholarship at Victoria Hospice. The scholarship provides training and education for clinical and volunteer teams to enhance their skills and practice in end-of-life, palliative, and bereavement care.

With nursing and management experience at Royal Jubilee Hospital in units from intensive care to plastic surgery, Ethel knows first-hand the importance of continuing education in health care and how donor support can make a big difference.

"People come into the nursing profession with a huge level of dedication to helping others and the desire to develop their skills," she says. "I was fortunate to manage the burn unit at the Royal Jubilee Hospital where community donations were an important part of enabling staff to attend key continuing education courses."



Mike and Ethel Marley loved travelling, golf, entertaining – and each other. "We were soulmates," Ethel says. They also shared a spirit of giving. A new scholarship in their name will support training and education for staff and volunteers.

Always looking for ways to make a difference, Mike had a practice of noticing where a little extra help for training and education could propel someone's career. A young sommelier and a physiotherapist who lacked the means for qualifying courses are just two of the many people Mike quietly supported or mentored, just for the joy of giving, Ethel says.

"Mike loved innovation, and that's what education is all about, especially in health care. It's about people learning new things that, for example, can make someone's end-of-life experience more comfortable," she says.

"Many of us have been touched by a loved one's passing and we all have stories to share. Nothing is more precious than having our loved ones cared for with respect and dignity, and that is why Victoria Hospice is such a vital part of our community."

*Learn more about leaving a legacy at Victoria Hospice by contacting Senior Development Officer Michelle Atamanchuk at 250-812-3753 or [michelle.atamanchuk@victoriahospice.org](mailto:michelle.atamanchuk@victoriahospice.org).*

*Save the date!*

## FASHION FOR COMPASSION

**DON'T MISS OUT!** Join us **Sunday October 26** at the Delta Ocean Pointe Resort for a fun and elegant afternoon! Fashion for Compassion returns with a fashion show, delicious lunch, pop-up boutique, and more to support compassionate care at Victoria Hospice. Tickets on sale August 15 at [victoriahospice.org/events](http://victoriahospice.org/events)



# Message from the CEO

As we move into the summer months, I want to take a moment to reflect on the profound impact your support continues to have on the care we provide at Victoria Hospice.

We can all recognize this is a challenging time for health care. It's with a special thanks to our dedicated donors that we can continue to provide dignity, comfort, and compassion to those who we serve. You are ensuring that our support continues, and that no one walks alone in their most challenging days.

Thanks to the incredible generosity of our community during our spring appeal and throughout the year, we've been able to take meaningful steps to improve care—one of the most significant being the bolstering of our team with an additional nurse on our night shift. This change is already making a real difference.

Nighttime can be a vulnerable time for patients and families and having an additional nurse available means faster response times, more hands-on care, and greater peace of mind for

everyone involved. It's a tangible example of how your support directly enhances quality of life when it matters most.

Another vital area your support strengthens is education and training for our care teams. Whether it's new staffing resources or long-time volunteers deepening their skills, continuous learning is at the heart of compassionate, high-quality hospice care. This month's cover story highlights a particularly moving example: a legacy gift that has established a scholarship fund dedicated to education and training. This generous act ensures that every team member—now and into the future—can access the knowledge and tools they need to support patients and families with expertise and empathy.

Every gift, every hour volunteered, and every message of encouragement you send helps build a stronger, more responsive hospice. As always, I am deeply grateful to be part of a community that values dignity, compassion, and care through end of life and bereavement.

While we continue the search for a new home for Victoria Hospice, we are strengthening our care for the families who need us now. We look forward to working with you through all the steps along this journey. On behalf of all of us at Victoria Hospice—thank you.



Teri Henderson



Teri Henderson, RSW, MSW  
Chief Executive Officer  
Victoria Hospice

## Lighting up the darkness

Earlier this spring, Victoria Hospice's Child and Youth program hosted a lantern making workshop for bereaved families at the Esquimalt Gorge Pavilion. Victoria Hospice provides the only specialized bereavement services available in Greater Victoria for children under 12, and the only in-person bereavement-specific counselling service for youth.

Did you know that donations and grants fund 100% of our bereavement programs? Your support ensures no one has to walk alone through grief and loss.

Photo by Liz Rubincam





# Creating space for meaning at the end of life

Spiritual Care in a palliative setting supports patients and their families with the psychological and spiritual aspects of care, helping them find meaning, purpose, and hope in the face of serious illness and death. This can include addressing religious needs, helping patients understand their life's meaning, exploring how they wish to be remembered, and facilitating forgiveness.

Spiritual Care, in its many forms, is an important aspect of the interdisciplinary care model at Victoria Hospice. It allows the practitioner to meet the patient or family member where they are, and find out what is important to that individual at this moment.

Victoria Hospice's Spiritual Care Practitioner, Elizabeth Barnard, has supported hundreds of patients through the end-of-life process. A conversation will usually begin with Elizabeth asking, "Tell me what is most important to you today?" allowing the individual to reflect on what would truly bring them comfort, peace, or resolution.

Together with the counsellors, music therapist, clinical staff, volunteers, and friends and family, the spiritual care practitioner plays a vital role in the care that is provided every day at Victoria Hospice.



Elizabeth Barnard leads the Hospice Spiritual Care program

For more information, visit [victoriahospice.org/spiritualhealth](http://victoriahospice.org/spiritualhealth)

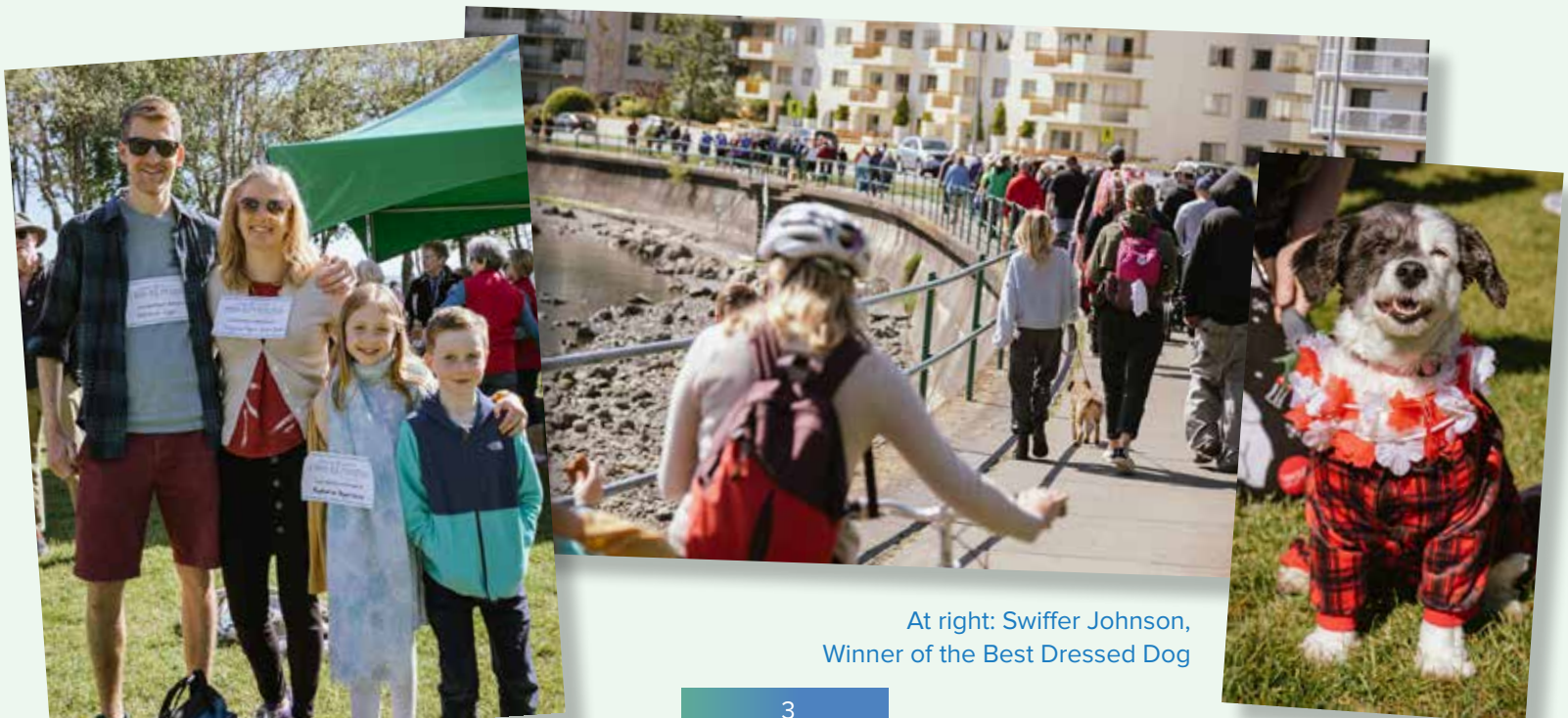
## Every step counts at Hike For Hospice

Thank you to everyone who participated in Hike for Hospice on May 4 at Willows Park, our beautiful new location. The sun was shining, the music energizing, and the morning filled with heartfelt reflection as we gathered to honour and remember loved ones.

Over 200 hikers helped raise more than \$65,000 in support of compassionate end-of-life and bereavement care.

Congratulations to Team Goldstream 161, our top fundraising team for the third consecutive year, and to Pat Hannah, who once again led the way as our top individual fundraiser.

Special thanks to our volunteers and sponsors including Dignity Memorial, Thrifty Foods, Heart Pharmacy, and Amica Senior Lifestyles for their continued support.



At right: Swiffer Johnson,  
Winner of the Best Dressed Dog

## Youth volley winning goals to support compassionate care

The sun came out for another hugely successful Anneswer to Cancer soccer tournament! Family, friends, and soccer players gathered at Tyndall field for an action-packed day on May 10 that included a 12-team round robin tournament and raised \$43,768!

When Brett Hyslop's mother, Anne, passed away at Victoria Hospice in 2010, he wanted to give back to the organization that had provided so much support to his mother and family. Brett's business partner in World Cup Soccer Camp, Steph Steiner, suggested they start a soccer fundraiser and together they founded Anneswer to Cancer in 2011. To date, more than \$700,000 has been raised for Victoria Hospice by this dedicated group.

Did you know that each year, the team t-shirts are designed by one of the players? This year's design was created by Kristi A., a 12-year-old Grade 6 student and soccer enthusiast who has participated in the tournament for the last three years. Kristi describes her design as a representation of her "favourite blue cleats, with a soccer ball tucked inside a pink cancer ribbon."

When asked what makes the tournament so special, Kristi says "All the kids and organizers and families working together for a common goal. And the friendships we've made. It's awesome."

Kristi A. models her  
bespoke design for this year's  
Anneswer to Cancer team shirts



## Comfort and connection when it matters the most

Thanks to the generous support of the P.A. Woodward Foundation, Victoria Hospice has added a very special piece



of equipment to the Inpatient Unit —a new, state-of-the-art cuddle bed.

This bed does more than offer physical support—it helps bring people closer together when it matters most. With three expandable widths, it comfortably accommodates two people, making it possible for children, spouses, grandchildren, and friends to lie beside their loved one during visits, quiet moments in the rooftop garden, overnight stays, or even in their final hours together.

Cuddle beds play an important role in palliative care, offering emotional and physical comfort by creating a safe space for closeness and connection.

LPNs Stacey and Diana love the new cuddle bed because they know what a comfort it will be for their patients and families

These moments of physical touch can help ease anxiety, support mental health, and bring comfort to both patients and families during a difficult time.

The bed is also suitable for bariatric patients, ensuring safety and comfort for all, and helping us to provide care that is inclusive and dignified for everyone.

Adrienne, an LPN at Victoria Hospice, sees the impact every day. "Patients can experience increased anxiety as they approach the end of life," she shares. "The comfort of having a loved one lying beside them has extraordinary therapeutic value."

Thanks to the generosity of the P.A. Woodward Foundation, this new bed is already helping patients and their families experience greater comfort, connection, and peace during their time at Victoria Hospice.



# Retirement community rallies around riders

It takes fitness and courage to cycle 200 km in two days—but the key ingredient is community support.

That's what the cycle team "Trillium Titans" found when they signed up to ride in the Cycle of Life Tour. The annual event sponsored by Think Communications has raised more than \$2.6M for hospice care on Vancouver Island since 2011.

"Residents of our retirement community have really rallied around our cycle team and cheered us on," says Debra Prior, Director of Community Relations for Trillium Communities.

"Everyone has had experiences with loved ones impacted by hospice care and the phenomenal services hospices provide. Everyone has been touched by grief and loss, and our residents wanted to do something positive to make an impact."

Members of the retirement community helped the Trillium Titans raise \$7,000 for hospice care in just over two weeks in 2024.

"One gentleman who had recently lost his son said to us, 'I know the great work hospice does and I've been impacted by it personally.' He opened his wallet and wrote a cheque for \$1,000 – we were floored by it."

A Licenced Practical Nurse who began her career at Victoria Hospice, Debra says the way hospice provides care for the whole family has stayed with her from day one.

"Something I learned at hospice and have taken with me everywhere is the hospice approach to caring for the person and their family with dignity and respect. Everyone deserves that."

Trillium Communities has stepped forward as the finish line sponsor for the 2025 Cycle of Life Tour, with plans for more ways to involve residents and community members.



The Trillium Titans are one of the teams who will cycle through the Saanich Peninsula, Cowichan Valley, and Salt Spring Island to raise funds for compassionate hospice care on Vancouver Island in the Cycle of Life Tour July 19–20.

The 2025 Cycle of Life Tour takes place July 19–20. Learn more about the event and pledge your support at [cycleoflifetour.ca](https://cycleoflifetour.ca).



## Give the gift of compassionate care

☐ **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 .....

Address.....

City/Province .....

Postal Code .....

Phone .....

Email .....

Credit card type: ☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard ☐ AmEx

Card # .....

Expiry date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

My donation is ☐ in memory ☐ in honour of .....

Please send an acknowledgement letter to

Name.....

Address.....

City/Prov/Postal .....

☐ Please send me Victoria Hospice Connections e-newsletters.

☐ I have included Victoria Hospice in my will.

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

☐ I wish to remain anonymous.

Compassionate end-of-life and bereavement 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 February 20 to May 21, 2025.

**IN MEMORY** Renee Abrioux • Sidney Alexander • Sherry Austin • Penny Authier • Jeannette Ballard Pamela Barry • Robert E. Bearpark • Patricia Bell • Bonnie Bell • Zara Blue • Carol Bond • David Bone Bella Bourakovskaia • Hazel Brooks • Bob Buckingham • Margaret E. Campbell • Douglas Campbell Betty Carmichael • Sally Chan • Michael L. Chupick • Anthony W. Clayton • Richard W. Coneybeer • Jenny Cox Sharron Dezell • Gerd Doering • Cindy Donatelli • Barbara Downie • Sandra Duchene • Barbara Eldred Manuel Pam Engwer • Perry Fainstein • Stephen Fincham • Enrique Fonseca • Margaret A. Ford • Harry Fowler Roger Francis • Susan Fritz • Marlane G. Fuller • Donald Gajda • Chris Godfrey • John Gray • Phyllis Gray Marguerite Green • M. Gropp • Robert Guskey • Carol Harrison • Bunny Hawkes • Ernie Hawkins • Hugh H. Hayes Garry Hayes • Emily Henderson • Iris Henslowe • Donna Hooper • Ethel M. Howard • Christopher J. Hoyt Lesley Hulme • Lianne J. Hunter • William Ingram • Maureen Innes • Don Irish • Mary Irish • Marilyn Kraeker Ryan C. Krisher • Jerald Kustaski • Florida Laforest • Middleton Lambert • Lavone Landie • Kenneth C. Lawrence William Lawson • Lisa J. Layton • Ernie J. Lechner • Victoria Lindgren • Catherine Lomas • Mike Macfarlane James D. MacGregor • Alastair G. MacIsaac • Ruth Mackie • Judy MacLachlan • Edward Mah • Kathleen Marshall Mavis Mayne • Hazel McCudden • Joe McGregor • Janice McIvor • Sharon McLaughlin • Colin A. McNeil Elizabeth Milton • Tara Mogentale • Christine E. Molnar • John Motala • Eissa Nafisi • Rob Newberry Margaret Ng • Timothy Nurse • Carol Nurse • Catherine M. O'Neil • Michael O'Fallon • Shirley Obersteller Gail Owens • Andre Panteleyev • David Parry • Evalyn Partridge • Rita J. Paulhus • Paul Perry • Kevin Peterson Sylvia B. Plumridge • John Plumridge • Donna Poelking • Mary Purcell • Ailsa Quann • Donald A. Rahrick Marlene K. Rieberger • Allen Robb • John Robertson • Milforde Rose • Tara S. Ross • Robert Rouse • Marvin Ryan Yvonne Sanders • Kenneth R. Sapriken • Duncan Shaw • Ceri E. Smith • Mary Smith • Audrie Smith • Charles A. Somodi • Peter Songhurst Sheryl Steeves • Sandra J. Stephens • Linda Stern • Dorothy Stirling • Dallas Stober • Howard Swift • Edna Szabados • Isobel A. Thicke Ron Tidman • Dennis Todd • Karen Towne • Edna Vaines • Margaret Vey • Denise Voss • Michael Wainwright • Simone Walther • Emmett W. Weeks William J. West • Jennifer Whybrow • William Wigmore • Jean L. Wilson • Donna Wood • Joyce Woods • Edward J. Woollard • Colin Wright Wendy E. Wyles • Jim Yardley

**IN HONOUR** Dara Behroozi • Benjamin How • Deborah Robinson

## A LIFE OF SERVICE AND COMPASSION

# Remembering Alastair MacIsaac

Victoria Hospice bids farewell to one of its most long-standing volunteers, Alastair MacIsaac, who passed away recently at

the age of 95. Alastair's story reads like a chapter from Canada's history—one marked by devotion to service and fueled by a commitment to the people around him.

A retired soldier who once served as aide-de-camp to two Lieutenant Governors General, Alastair transitioned seamlessly from a career of formality and duty into the deeply human world of hospice care. Since 1996, his presence graced Victoria Hospice, where he contributed over 8,000 hours and earned the Lifetime Member award in 2010—a small token for decades of dedication.

In 2015, Alastair reflected on his path to hospice work, crediting the journey of friends and colleagues who found comfort in hospice care for drawing him in. What struck him most was the balance of skill

and empathy: patients were not only pain-free but treated with dignity, and the care that made their final days meaningful. It became a calling, one he answered unwaveringly for nearly thirty years.

"As a member of the clinical team, I always looked forward to seeing Alastair arrive on the unit for his weekly shift," says Carolyn Maze, RN. "His compassion, kindness, and curiosity were so appreciated by patients, families, and staff. His commitment to Hospice will always be remembered by those who had the good fortune to be touched by him."

As Alastair's extraordinary life is celebrated, Victoria Hospice honours the kindness and legacy he leaves behind—an echo of service that will remain within our hearts.



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

Contact Lorealee Smyth  
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