



Community Newsletter



Spring 2024

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Why We Do What We Do

Hello from the Executive Director

Welcome to the Spring edition of our CVHS Community Newsletter. These quarterly newsletters are intended to introduce you to the many hands and hearts that are inspired to contribute to our services and are building on over 40 years of kind, loving hospice and palliative care in the Comox Valley and to those who have received such care. They will also highlight our community partners and supporters who contribute in all sorts of ways to create a community of caring.

Recently the BC Centre for Palliative Care spearheaded an input process to develop a first-ever consensus-based definition for the care provided by hospice societies in BC. The short version of the definition is:

Hospice societies provide emotional, social, practical, spiritual, grief and bereavement support and care to enhance quality of life and maintain dignity for those living with or affected by life-limiting illness or death. You can [read the full version here.](#)

I've had the privilege since joining CVHS in Dec 2022 of seeing the work of our hospice society in action. The dedication, expertise, creativity and compassion of staff and volunteers guides this organization in continuing to strive for excellence. As part of this continued growth, CVHS is committed to understanding and implementing an intentional process to create an equitable, diverse and inclusive space and practice. Leading with

heart, guided by community.

Thank you for your interest in what compassionate end of life and grief care looks like, right here, right now, and what the future may hold as we continue to learn and grow to meet the changing needs of our community.

Warmly,
Christine



WE ARE HERE FOR YOU

- ♥ When you are healthy and curious
- ♥ When you have a life-limiting illness
- ♥ When you are caring for a loved one
- ♥ When you are grieving a loss

About the Aitken Community Hospice

The 6 bed hospice is owned and operated by Golden Life Management under contract with Island health. Our CVHS offices are adjacent to the Aitken community hospice and we provide on site support to patients, their families, and loved ones.



**Joan Gillies -
CVHS Board President**

When people are at their darkest moments, hospice is there to support them through the loneliness, fear and loss that is grief. We serve hearts. The staff and volunteers of this remarkable organization are beautiful, warm and generous people who share in the vulnerability of loss. The most commonly held description by CVHS volunteers of their work is that it is a privilege. We are a charitable organization that could potentially touch the lives of every person in the Comox Valley and we hold that responsibility as sacred work. This society is the Comox Valley at its very best!

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging

CVHS Board Member

Diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging are concepts meant to help create environments where everyone can be their full selves — not just without fear of discrimination, but with an expectation of true, intentional inclusion. What can we do as an individual, as a board director, to help create a welcoming space where there is a true sense of comfort and belonging? A small step is asking “what are your needs in our space?” And then continue to ask, “what more can we do?” There is so much. CVHS is committed to working towards a space and other aspects of our organizational practice that reflects the community we live work and play in.

We respectfully acknowledge that the land we gather on is the Unceded Traditional Territory of the K'ómoks First Nation, the traditional keepers of this land.



Karver Everson's art graces the hallway of CVHS. Having a young, local, indigenous artist tell his story and reflections about his powerful painting is an honour.

<http://karvereverson.com/>

“The image is an eagle and an I Hos/sisiutl . The eagle is the highest being to our creator. I was told that the eagle takes our prayers to the creator and is a mediator between our

worlds. The I hos is a supernatural being that is associated with protection. My grandmother said the two heads reflect life balance.”



Our 2024 Board Members

(From left to right) Bruce Muir, Linda Lytle, Dennis Evans, Krista Manuel, Nelda Adamus, Joan Gillies, Raida Bolton*, Karen Guinan, Myrna Holman, Patricia Korven, Karen McKinnon

[Get to Know Our Board Members](#)

*Our thanks to former Board Director Raida Bolton, who has stepped down as a board member and now supports us as Community Fundraising Ambassador.

MYTH OR FACT?

Myth: Hospice is just a place people go to die.

Fact: Hospice is a philosophy of care that promotes personal dignity at end of life, whether the person dying is at home, in hospital, in a hospice facility, or elsewhere in the community. It seeks to honour their unique experiences, backgrounds, and spiritual beliefs.

Meet Our Partners In Care

The Island Health Palliative and End of Life Care team is an interdisciplinary team that supports those living with progressive, life-limiting illness across the care continuum. They are a team of physicians, nurses and a social worker who support clients with complexity in relation to their palliative care diagnosis or trajectory, as well as supporting other clinicians who provide direct patient care.

Holly Anderson, CV Palliative Team Coordinator speaks to our partnership in care: “ In the Comox Valley, the Island Health Palliative and End of Life Care Program is very fortunate to have such compassionate, knowledgeable and collaborative partners with the Comox Valley Hospice Society. The professionalism and expertise that the counsellors at the Comox Valley Hospice Society bring to our inter-professional teams is valuable and unique. It is extraordinary that the counsellors from the CVHS work across continuum to provide a consistent approach in the support of psychosocial and emotional care for our clients and their families. The Island Health and Comox Valley Hospice Society teams deeply value and trust one another which enhances our communication thus allowing us to care for our clients in a more individualized way.”

This partnership, that includes Golden Life Management and the exceptional Aitken Hospice nurses, create a circle (hug) of care that strives for excellence in caring for those in their final journey and the ones they love.



What's On the Calendar

Our major fundraiser of the year is gearing up (literally) for the 2024 Cycle of Life Tour held on July 20-21, 2024. This annual event supports quality hospice care, caregiver supports and compassionate grief and bereavement services on Vancouver Island and right here in the Comox Valley. Each hospice on the island is represented by its own team of volunteer riders.

You can meet the team on our website where you can click on a rider's name to support their individual fundraising goals or donate to the team as a whole. Here are some fundraising opportunities you won't want to miss!

- **4th Annual Fill a Dump Truck Drive-Thru Bottle Drive** will be held on April 20th 10-3pm at the Canadian Tire parking lot. Just drive up, and let the team do the work! (Returnables only)
- **Spin-a-Thon Fundraising Duo** May 11th from 9-4pm. A fun challenge between the Comox Valley Cyclepaths and the Cowichan Life Cyclers will be underway outside of Canadian Tire. Come down to support them as they commit to eight hours of non-stop pedaling and donation collecting to see which team gets bragging rights.
- **Cumberland Market Days May 18th** - The team will be selling 50/50 tickets between 10-4pm so stop by to say hello!
- **Beer and Burger Night and Auction** at Match Eatery July 16th - Watch for more details!
- **50/50 Raffles:** We are offering four draws during 2024, one for each season of the year. Stay tuned for the next 50/50 draw, ticket sales will be available online after June 1st to be drawn on June 21, 2024.
- **Seniors Expo in Cumberland June 8th** 10-4pm. Stop by to say hello and to learn more about our programs and services.
- **Advance Care Planning Information Session - April 28th** from 1-3pm. Register for this free info session to learn more about how to document your health care wishes if you were unable to speak for yourself.

Visit comoxhospice.com for a current list of fundraising and community opportunities!

Free Community Offerings

(No registration required)

A variety of weekly Wellness Wednesday Cafés are hosted each month. See our website comoxhospice.com for details!

- Mourning Coffee Café
- Elephant in the Room Café
- Death Café
- Free Spirit Café

Complimentary Reiki/Healing touch is also available by appointment on Wednesday afternoons. Call 250-871-0696 to book a time or email reception@comoxhospice.com.

Spring Groups for CVHS Clients

**Playing With Art
Through Grief**

**Gentle Walks for
Grieving Hearts**

**Caregivers'
Support Circle**

"As a new art explorer, it was great to have experienced and knowledgeable artists guiding the weekly projects. A focused passage on grief was a great way start each session."

"Hospice was my soft place to land when hard things were happening. I am truly blown away by hospice. Everyone goes above and beyond to make a horrible time so much better."

"I realize that this journey is a hard one but one that can be navigated. Being able to say what I felt was wonderful. I felt validated with the feedback from not only the leader but also others in the group."



"Fundraising is the gentle art of teaching the

joy of giving. " – Henry Rosso

"Whispering Winds" is a wall mural created for CVHS by local artist Brad Allen. The leaves added to the tree recognize those who have gently shown us the joy of giving through their donations.

We'd like to thank our most recent donors of the Comox Rotary Club for their generous donation of \$6000.

Watch for our next issue! We're looking forward to introducing you to some of our staff and volunteers, and sharing photos of the many fun events planned over the summer.

Donate Now



Easing the Journey of Dying and Grieving