

SEPTEMBER 2019

## Hello to my new Hospice Family!

By: Hajni Hos, Executive Director

On August 26th, 2019 I had the honour of joining the amazing team at Hospice Peterborough as the new Executive Director.

Since walking through the doors, I find myself more and more at home with each passing moment. My admiration continues to deepen for the incredible work and accomplishments of the countless volunteers, donors, staff, clients, and families that make up Hospice Peterborough.

Stepping into this role, which was previously occupied by Linda Sunderland, I have a newfound understanding and appreciation for Linda and all of those who dared to dream and who turned this enormous project into a reality.

Linda dedicated over 26 years of her life to working at Hospice Peterborough. As I carry forward her legacy and those before her, I vow to serve this organization to the best of my ability with an open heart. I am grateful to have been chosen to lead Hospice Peterborough including the new Hospice Residence into the future.

In my former life, I was a lawyer and teacher in Hungary until immigrating to Canada 13 years ago. Once in Canada, I found a passion working with another incredible organization, the New Canadians Centre in supporting immigrants and refugees.

My desire to help and give back to my community is the common thread between Hospice Peterborough and the New Canadians Centre. The noble work of supporting people and their families through life and death is close to my heart.

I've quickly realized that Hospice Peterborough is about living. It is about the quality of life in

every moment, making every moment matter.

Together with my husband, Steve, we raise two wonderful and mischievous young children on our farm outside of Norwood. As most immigrants, I am terrified of bears and poison ivy, but have grown to love Canadian winters and I am slowly warming up to hockey. Music is a big source of joy for me, I play a number of instruments, sing with the Westben Festival Chorus and co-lead a community Christmas choir in Norwood.

I am at my best when my brain and heart are



equally engaged in my work. I know I can offer Hospice Peterborough strong leadership, my diverse experience, a steady hand, and a duty to serve.

I am truly thankful for the open arms and open hearts that have welcomed me into this next exciting chapter. I am looking forward to meeting all of you and value your continuous support and dedication!

With much appreciation,

Hajni Hos

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## A Summer at Hospice

By: *Chloe Darling, Special Projects Assistant and Hospice Volunteer*

“Hope does not lie in a way out, but in a way through.”

These words by Robert Frost truly capture the essence of hospice and palliative care, and I was fortunate this summer to be able to see hospice work in action. I am a third-year student at Trent University in the nursing program, and I just finished my third summer working at Hospice Peterborough as a Special Projects Assistant. I was asked to write a piece for this newsletter describing my experience working at Hospice, but where would I even begin? So much happens in one day at Hospice, so to describe a whole summer is nearly impossible. As such, I've used Mr. Frost's words as a place to start.

Working as a Special Projects Assistant, I helped out in several areas of Hospice and completed many tasks such as issuing tax receipts, taking donations, answering phones, entering data... On paper, my job looked like any other desk job. The only difference was

the environment I worked in. As soon as you walk into Hospice there is a sense of calmness and serenity, even on the busiest days when the building is bustling with people from all walks of life. The everyday administrative tasks provided the structure for my day but each day was filled



*Pictured: Chloe Darling, Special Projects Assistant and Hospice Volunteer*

up and enriched by the unique stories surrounding me. The biggest and most enjoyable task I worked on this summer was creating the video Every Moment Matters ([www.hospicepeterborough.org/2019/07/30/moments-that-matter/](http://www.hospicepeterborough.org/2019/07/30/moments-that-matter/)). I sat down with ten people, including clients, family members, volunteers, and residence staff, and filmed them answering the question “What does Hospice mean to you?” The results were incredible. I don't

want to give the whole video away, but I want to share a particularly lovely quote from one of our Hospice clients, Deirdre: “I'm not afraid of dying, I really am not. I'm afraid of not enjoying my life... To me, Hospice is about enjoying my life.”

And this brings us back to the words of Robert Frost. For most people who come to live in our residence, the only way out is through death. Many people would say that these people have no hope, but that's not true. It's just that the focus of the hope shifts. It shifts to a place where hope is found in the small moments, and hoping that each day will be meaningful – whatever that means to each individual. For many people, I believe, there is the hope that they can come to be at peace with the knowledge they will die.

This summer, I came a bit closer to accepting

this truth. The only certainty in life is that we will die, and the great thing about working at Hospice is that you are confronted with that fact every single day. Some people might not want to spend each day confronted with the fact that we will die, but it's helped me to learn to enjoy each moment of every day. Working at Hospice has been the best summer job I've ever had, and I'll continue to implement the principles of hospice and palliative care wherever I go from here.

## Children's Programming at Hospice Peterborough

*By: Natalie Warner, Manager of Community Programs*

The start of a new school year turns people's thoughts to children. Hospice has always supported children and teens who are closely connected with someone who is dying, or who are grieving. In the past children's programming has mainly involved contracted staff and therapists. Hospice has now begun laying a foundation to build stronger in-house supportive care for children and teens with the Expressive Arts Room and Sheila Bourgeois, our Grief and Wellness Coordinator.

Expressive arts is a guided approach to allowing people to explore their emotions and connect with their feelings through art. While Hospice uses predominantly visual arts approaches currently, expressive arts approaches can include other art mediums such as music or drama, and can be useful for both children and adults. A room for expressive arts had always been part of the plans for the Hospice build and in the winter, before moving, a group of hospice volunteers, some of whom use arts based approaches in their therapy and others who are artists themselves, was convened to provide input into creating a creative atmosphere in the room. The architecture for this is perfect, the expressive arts room on the lower level has south and east facing windows which fill it with natural light. Shelves contain a variety of paints, papers, clay, fibres, and other materials for creating. Musical instruments and a small group of toys are tools for facilitating music and play based approaches.

One of the staff members you will most often find connecting with clients in the Expressive Arts Room is Sheila Bourgeois. When she started last year, Sheila had just completed her Master's degree in Child Life and Pediatric Psychosocial Care at McMaster University, which included significant research in how to support young children in grief. She also brought a wealth of



work experience supporting children and parents. Sheila's knowledge and experience have been recognized by our provincial and national palliative care organizations as this year she was selected to present workshops at both the Hospice Palliative Care Ontario and the Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association conferences.

Visit the Hospice website ([www.hospicepeterborough.org](http://www.hospicepeterborough.org)) to learn more about future developments in programming for Children, Teens and Expressive arts.



## The Spirit Drum

In the short time it has lived at Hospice, the Spirit Drum has become an important part of life here. Handcrafted by Mark and Melanie of Spirit Drum in Markdale Ontario, it lives in the Oasis room which is the spiritual reflective space just inside the front doors of Hospice. The drum has been used to guide meditation, by participants in the bereaved children's group, and by the women's group to create expressive music together.

When someone dies in the Hospice Residence the family, staff, and volunteers gather to honour the person who has died as their



body leaves the building. The Spirit Drum leads the way, it's music guiding the procession. Some people believe it guides the spirit as it finds its way to where it needs to be, others feel it creates space for peace in the hearts of the family and staff, in their sadness. Please visit our Oasis Room to hear the spirit drum in person.

## Thank you to SGS

SGS Lakefield employees showed their generous community spirit by presenting Hospice with a cheque for \$1,250 raised through the Hydrometallurgy Group BBQ. This gift was to support their supplier and friend Tom Rowden, in honor and memory of his wife Pauline Rowden, who recently died in the end of life residence at Hospice Peterborough.



*Pictured (l to r):  
Ila Mihailescu  
(SGS), Hajni Hos,  
Executive  
Director Hospice  
Peterborough,  
Tom Rowden,  
James Brown  
(SGS)*

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**Donors make our care possible.** 



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Hospice Peterborough's community hours are Monday to Friday 9 am to 5 pm. After hours visits can be arranged. The Hospice Residence is open 24/7. All services are provided at no charge. Call for more information.

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