

# Newsletter

## Winter 2025 / 2026

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### TO OUR VOLUNTEERS, MEMBERS & COMMUNITY

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As another winter settles gently around us, we are reminded of the strength that comes from community and the compassion that guides the work we do each day.

Our volunteers, donors, community partners and members all play an important role in ensuring that individuals and families in our community can receive hospice care grounded in empathy and understanding. Together, we move closer to our vision of a community where every person is supported through the final chapters of life and in the grief that follows.

This end of this year also brings an important transition for our hospice. We extend our heartfelt thanks to our outgoing Coordinator, Jade, for her dedication and the care she has shown during her time with us. At the same time, we are excited to welcome our new Coordinator, Jen Asselin, whose warmth and experience we look forward to sharing with our community. You'll find a little more about Jen in this newsletter.

Thank you for supporting our hospice. May this winter and holiday season bring you calm, warmth, and connection.

– Elk Valley & Area Hospice Board  
& Coordinator



## MEET OUR NEW COORDINATOR

Elk Valley & Area Hospice welcomes Jen Asselin into the coordinator position. Jen has always been passionate about ensuring that everyone has the right to dignity, autonomy, and access to resources.

Her professional work with victims of crime, death related complexities, and trauma survivors

combined with her personal experience with death and grieving, community board work, and community engagement is an asset for the coordinator position with Elk Valley & Area Hospice.



Please join us in offering a warm welcome to Jen! We are delighted to have her with us and look forward to the care, compassion, and dedication she will bring to our community.

If you would like to reach out, say hello, or connect, you can contact Jen at [elkvalleyhospice@gmail.com](mailto:elkvalleyhospice@gmail.com).

Welcome Jen!

## WE'RE LOOKING FOR A NEW TREASURER



Our hospice is currently seeking a new Treasurer to join our Board as soon as possible. This is an important role that helps ensure our society continues to run smoothly and responsibly. If you—or someone you know—have experience with bookkeeping, financial management, or nonprofit administration, we would be grateful to hear from you.

Your support in helping us find the right person is truly appreciated. For more information or to express interest, please contact us at [elkvalleyhospice@gmail.com](mailto:elkvalleyhospice@gmail.com)

### CANDLELIGHT MEMORIAL WALK & CEREMONY

To mark National Grief & Bereavement Day we once again had the privilege of hosting our annual Candlelight Memorial Walk and Ceremony in partnership with Cherished Memories Funeral Services and the Elk Valley Hospital.



This year, the gathering at Elk Valley Hospital opened with thoughtful and grounding words from Leala Tomlinson, Director of Elk Valley Hospital, who spoke beautifully to the dedication, compassion, and emotional weight carried by hospital staff in their daily service.

Our walk to Cherished Memories followed, lantern and candles glowing against the winter evening. As always, the candlelight symbolized that even through the shadows of grief, we continue to hold the light of our loved ones close.

At Cherished Memories, we were welcomed by JJ Gawryluk, who has now taken over the family business from his parents. JJ offered a moving and sincere welcome speech that spoke to the importance of remembrance and community support. The ceremony that followed provided a gentle space for reflection, accompanied by a slideshow honouring the lives and memories of those we have lost.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to Cherished Memories Funeral Services and the Elk Valley Hospital for their continued partnership and support in bringing this meaningful event to life once again. And to everyone who joined us, thank you for sharing your presence, your stories, and your light.

## END OF YEAR GIVING CAMPAIGN - RECLINER FOR HOSPICE ROOM

This year, for our End of Year Giving Campaign, we are focusing on a very practical and meaningful need: purchasing a new recliner for the hospice room at Elk Valley Hospital. This specialized chair will offer comfort to both patients and their loved ones—whether it's a place to rest during long visits, a supportive seat for moments of connection, or simply a soft space to be close when it matters most.

Your gift to this campaign will make a direct and immediate impact. By contributing, you're helping create a more comforting, compassionate environment for families spending precious final moments together. Your generosity ensures that no one has to face the end of life—or the grief that follows—alone. Thank you for considering a gift that will bring comfort and care to our community when it is needed most.

Whether you choose to give a donation or invite others to donate, your contribution and sharing will directly support the purchase of a new recliner for the hospice room.

If you would like to donate to our End of Year Giving Campaign please go to the below link:

**[Donate Here](#)**





## EVENTS & FUNDRAISING CONTINUED



Well hot diggity dawg!

Thinking back to this summer's Hot Dog BBQ still makes us smile. Thanks to the support of our amazing community, we raised over \$1,000 for our hospice programs!

A huge thank-you to everyone who came out, bought a dog, and cheered us on—and of course to our incredible volunteers and @eldhosiig for making the event such a success. We're so grateful.

## FUNDRAISING VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

FERNIE GHOSTRIDERS SECURITY & BEER ROOM - We were lucky enough to secure another Ghost rider game and we are looking for 12 volunteers to help run the beer room and security on Saturday February 28th, 2026 5-10pm.

If you are interested or would like to know more about these fun volunteer opportunities please drop Jen an email at [elkvalleyhospice@gmail.com](mailto:elkvalleyhospice@gmail.com).

Volunteers must be minimum 19 years of age for these events.

## EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES IN 2026

WE WILL BE OFFERING THE  
**COMPANIONING THE DYING** COURSE  
IN 2026 PLEASE EMAIL US FOR MORE  
INFORMTAION [ELKVALLEYHOSIPICE@GMAIL.COM](mailto:ELKVALLEYHOSIPICE@GMAIL.COM)

## PROJECTS

### WIND PHONE PROJECT COMPLETE



Many of you may already know about this meaningful project, but we're pleased to once again highlight the installation of three Wind Phones in the Elk Valley – quiet, unconnected telephones that offer a reflective space for anyone experiencing loss. By lifting the receiver, you're invited to speak to your loved ones and let your words drift into the wind.

Locations:

- Elkford: Boivin Peace Park
- Sparwood: Lions Park
- Fernie: Annex Park

This project was made possible through the collaboration and generosity of local organizations, community partners, and volunteers. We extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone involved and give special thanks Columbia Basin Trust & Steller Vista Credit Union for funding this project.

May these Wind Phones continue to offer gentle moments of healing, remembrance, and connection. To learn more please go to our website:

<https://elkvalleyhospice.com/the-wind-phone/>



## GRIEF DURING THE HOLIDAYS

Holidays, like most special occasions, can be a hard time for some of us. When we have been touched by grief, we are often between two realities – being festive and lively, and in the depths of grief. Grief looks different to each of us. Grief reveals itself to us in many unique ways – it isn't always crying and feeling sad, it can show up by being distracted and forgetting to turn the oven on while cooking the turkey. It can look like the lights not being put up in time, or at all. Grief reminds us of the Love that has transformed itself into memories. Sometimes all you can do when grief takes over is to take a breath and be patient, to be gentle and kind with yourself.

‘Grief, I’ve learned, is really just love. It’s all the love you want to give, but cannot. All that unspent love gathers up in the corners of your eyes, the lump in your throat, and in that hollow part of your chest. Grief is just love with no place to go.’ ~ Jamie Anderson

### TREE OF HEARTS

If you are visiting Elk Valley Hospital, we invite you to write a message and place a heart on our Christmas Tree in memory of a loved one, friend, client and/or patient.



IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT THE INFORMATION PROVIDED OR WOULD LIKE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT BEING PART OF OUR HOSPICE, PLEASE EMAIL JEN AT [ELKVALLEYHOSPICE@GMAIL.COM](mailto:ELKVALLEYHOSPICE@GMAIL.COM) OR PHONE 250 423 4453 EXT. 38109



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