



## 2024/2025 President's Report

2024/2025 has been another successful and busy year. Starting our year off with a name change to Elk Valley & Area Hospice. This name is more inclusive for all communities and those in between that we serve. Due to this name change new marketing material including rack cards, posters and banners were created and updated. A big Thank You to Lacey, Wordhouse Writing Studio for all her hard work in creating these, donating her time and expertise.

**Volunteers** continue to be the soul of our organization. Without the continued support of their time, energy and heart we would not exist. Some events that volunteers were helping at were: 1<sup>st</sup> annual Hike for Hospice, Hot Dog BBQ, Candlelight Remembrance Walk & Ceremony, Ghost rider's Hockey Game beer room and security, Griz Days beer garden and knitting circle making Dementia twiddle muffs. Twiddle muffs went viral and we received many donations of completed beautiful muffs.

Not to be missed in this shout out to volunteers is those that give so much of their time and heart in companioning both for end of life and bereavement. Thank you for your caring companionship to these individuals, their families and friends. This is the cornerstone of our organization.

A volunteer check in has been introduced for volunteers that are companioning. This gives them an opportunity for debriefing, voicing concerns, updates or interesting info sessions

An extensive volunteer procedure and policy document has been developed and implemented. This is a quite impressive document that covers all aspects of volunteering. Thank you, Jade for all your hard work on this.

Volunteers are not shown enough appreciation. We want you all to know in whatever way you volunteer WE APPRECIATE YOU! Through out the year we will continue to have volunteer appreciation events. A volunteer Morning Tea was held as part of National Volunteer Week where volunteers we treated to morning tea and received some training in light massage from Mireille Fortier, RMT from Thunder Meadows.

**Community Awareness and Education** is high on our priority list. This year we were able to offer a Companioning the Dying and a Companioning the Bereaved course along with an Advanced Care Planning Course. All were well attended and received. A grief session Heal Your Heart was also held in Sparwood in the spring. Board members also attended the community information evenings in Elkford, Sparwood and Fernie.

A newsletter was published in the fall and spring of the year with up dates, events, information and our accomplishments. This is posted on the Elk Valley & Area Hospice website.

The **kiosk** at the hospital continues to be manned by several volunteers. This included four high school students who are now busy in their final months of school. We have many lovely donated items for sale. Quilter's Guild, handmade quilts, Interior Envy, blankets and numerous handcrafted items from individuals. The kiosk continues to be a resource center for Hospice. There we have brochures, info, books and items to sell. A Tree of Hearts was set up before Christmas in the lobby at the Hospital for individuals to write a message on a heart to place on the tree.

One of our key goals as a Board has always been **financial stability**. Through Jade's hard work and tenacity our revenue totalled close to \$45,000. We are very grateful to our supporters, donors and corporate sponsors. Thank you to all who have so very generously donated to Elk Valley & Area Hospice. With some of these donations we are very excited to have started an Endowment Fund through the Community Foundation of the Kootenay Rockies. It's a small amount but our goal is to grow this each year as a step to more financial security. The endowment fund received a large donation of \$8000. from the Diana and Francios Poirier Foundation (Calgary), \$2500. from Lohn Foundation (Vancouver), \$1000. From Ghost rider Trading, various donations from the End of Year Giving Campaign along with numerous donations throughout the year.

The **palliative room** in the Hospital has the new bed and mattress installed. Through a collaborative consultation process an artist and painting was chosen to paint on the door of Whispering Winds, the palliative room. This conversation starting painting was done by local artist Erich Stoffels. A lovely painting was also donated to the room.

The number of **clients**, family and friends we support continues to increase over the years. This is partly due to Whole Community Palliative Rounds which we continue to be at the table with and also due to relationships being developed and public awareness. We received 27 referrals: 20 for End of Life and 7 for Bereavement. 14 of these received support. This included 40 in person visits and 75 hours of support.

Our **Wind Phone** project is still in the making. Funding for these windphones was received from Columbia Basin Trust ReDi (Resident Directed) Grant (\$6,643.31) and Stellar Vista Credit Union

(\$2000.) Sparwood High School students from James Lund's woodshop & Stephen Laarsen's Design Hub were awarded the contract to build and install these phones. Locations in Elkford, Sparwood and Fernie have been selected and the completed phones will be installed by early summer. Watch our website and FaceBook for the "opening" of these phones.

We are fortunate to continue to have Jade Elford as our Coordinator. She has been instrumental in raising the profile and funds for this organization. Jade is the force and organiser of the coordination of clients and volunteers, events, education, website, newsletter, social media, policy and procedures and grant writing. This is to name only a few of the many things Jade does and she does it all with such heart and kindness.

In closing I would like to say I am privileged and honoured to work with such an amazing Board. Each one has brought such heart, dedication and knowledge to this working Board. A few of the things they have been involved in is weekly Whole Community Palliative Rounds, writing of the policy and procedures for volunteers, Wind Phone presentations, co facilitating Companionship the Dying and Companionship the Bereaved, facilitating our recent Advanced Care Planning and information evenings. All of these take much time planning, organizing and implementing.

**Thank you to all for your time, dedication and donations both in kind and monetary.**

Elke Weber – President

Looking forward to this coming year:

- Quilt raffle
- Advanced Care Planning sessions
- Hike for Hospice
- Companionship the Bereaved
- Companionship the Dying
- Hospice Room mural finalization – finishing touches and signage
- Upgrades to furnishings in Whispering Winds room
- Wind phone installation
- Creation of a Coordinator manual
- Creation of on boarding package for new Board members
- Marketing strategy
- Updating hospice book section at the Fernie Heritage Library
- Continue knitting circle
- Volunteer check in
- Volunteer appreciation
- Explore office space