

NEWS FROM THE BOARD

What they have been doing!

The board, along with Val Spencer, has been working hard to have a rough draft of the strategic plan ready for the Annual General Meeting in March. It is progressing, nicely and it should make for an interesting presentation for all who attend the meeting.

The five board members have also committed to re-offer for another year, but will be looking for new board members to beef up the team over the summer months.

If as a member you feel inspired to help, by serving on the board please submit your name, or the name of any other individual you would recommend as a possible candidate, to Betty Morton at the following e-mail address: secretary@hospicehalifax.com.

Planning for the AGM-

The Annual General Meeting is

scheduled for March 21, 2006, to be held at the Dalhousie Student Union Bldg - room 303.

The time is 7-9 pm. (confirmation will be sent out shortly). We count on your presence and the board is planning an interesting and informative evening. The official business portion will be first on the agenda and will be fairly brief, with a report from the chair, a financial report from the treasurer and re-election of board members. Following this there will be a short presentation by the board on the key points of the strategic plan, and a presentation by Val Spencer on what a proposed facility will look like and the layout of a potential site. Then, if it is ready, there will be a presentation from a Dalhousie University student working on a special project (see other section relating to this below), and finally there will be a short talk by one of our new mem-

bers who has first hand experience of the benefits of a hospice facility. **Please mark your calendar now for March 21st.**

Membership Drive -

In the last newsletter you may have noticed we planned to have a Membership Drive/Social Evening in February. This didn't happen, but has been re-scheduled for the summer (date yet to be determined) However, having a strong membership base is critical to not only the continued existence of this organization, but also to achieving our ultimate goal of a free-standing residential hospice facility. Therefore we ask each of you to do three things: 1) renew your membership dues (due March 1st), 2) attend the AGM meeting on March 21, and 3) bring a friend to the meeting who may be interested in learning more about us and possibly joining the team.

HOW THE WORKING GROUPS ARE DOING

Since the three groups were formed in September, work has begun on various projects, relative to each group's focus. As well, the groups are working together to support each other's efforts. However, each group needs your support; and are still looking for more people to join in and help with current and future initiatives. If you are interested in joining any of these three working groups, (

Communication, Education and Fundraising) or you would like to know more about what they are working on, contact Betty at 465-2058 or by e-mail to secretary@hospicehalifax.com

Films Scheduled by Education Team

The education team has reviewed 3 films, which they hope to bring to the general public in the next

few months. So far there are two bookings scheduled for National Palliative Care week. The first film "Surviving Death, Stories of Grief", will be shown Wednesday morning, May 3rd at 10 am at Halifax North Library. The second film "Pioneers of Hospice, Changing the Face of Dying", will be shown at the Main Library on Spring Garden Rd. on Thursday evening, May 4th at 7 pm..

There will be society members and board members at each of these films to support the education team and to respond to questions from the audience. *Both of these films are very worthwhile viewing, so whether you have seen them or not, plan to come and support your education team. There is no charge for these events, so come and bring a friend.*

Fund Raising Projects-

In a joint effort between the fund-raising team and communication team, a committee has been formed to plan, promote and organize the annual event "Hike for Hospice" [For more details on the Hike see the separate section in this newsletter.]

The fund raising team will be starting to work on several other planned yearly events shortly. The next planned fund-raiser, after the Hike, is the "Autumn Corm Campaign". Better known as the autumn crocus, it is the flower chosen by the National Palliative Care Association as the flower

symbol which represents Palliative Care/Hospice in Canada. The corm blooms shortly after being planted in the last few weeks of August or early September; it is a lovely fall addition to the garden. We placed a small order last year and found they were very easy to sell; this year we plan to place a bigger order. Volunteers will be required to sell them at various locations around the city, such as the Market and malls etc.

Communications, How Are We Doing?

The communication team, like the other two teams certainly has a challenge ahead. The members have been concentrating, initially, on internal communication, this newsletter being one of those projects. So how are we doing? Please let us know what you think of the newsletter, your feedback is important to us. As you are also aware by now, we are working on the look and content of all of our materials: brochures, posters etc., as well as a new design for the web

site. These things all take time, of course.

The second part of the communication teams mandate is external communications; it is very important that all projects organized by the other groups are well advertised and promoted in order for them to be successful. Another challenge this group has, along with the education team, is to let the general public know about the Society: what our goals are and why they are important.. In order to be successful at this, we need to make friends and contacts with the media. *If any of you have media contacts, which you can share with us, please let us know.*

Please support the working groups, They need your ideas, thoughts, suggestions as well as your assistance with projects. Your energy is the fuel for the society so consider joining one of these teams and putting your particular skill or expertise to work toward the Society's ultimate goal.

GOOD NEWS FOR ONTARIO'S HOSPICES

In our last edition we told you of the Ontario Governments announcement to support free standing hospice facilities. We'd like to share the following response, made by Janet Napper, Executive Director, for the Hospice Association of Ontario, to Minister Smitherman's announcement of the Ontario Government commitment of \$115 million in funding for end of life care, including operating costs for free standing residential hospice facilities.

"This is truly a wonderful day for end-of-life care in this Province.

On this day, Ontario becomes the first province in Canada to make a significant, multi-year investment in end-of-life care delivery.

By strengthening sustainability, this investment will enable hospice palliative care providers to plan and deliver integrated end-of-life care to terminally ill people and their families and to make long term commitments to both their care partners and their communities.

This day also marks the Government's unprecedented investment

in Community Residential Hospices – part of the Government's commitment to providing the people of Ontario with humane and cost effective choices at the end-of-life.

And this day marks the Government's continuing commitment to Ontario's 13,300 hospice volunteers who provide 600,000 hours of care to 12,000 terminally ill people and 39,000 family members in more than 450 communities throughout this Province.

"When you can no longer add days to your life, . . .

But what does this day mean for people who are terminally ill? I would like to tell you a very short story to show how significant this funding will be. One of the first things I did when I began with the Hospice Association was to visit a hospice day program to speak with a group of people who were terminally ill. After listening for about ten minutes, I felt a light touch on my upper arm. I turned and saw an elderly gentleman looking me right in the eyes. He said, "You

know, Janet, I know that I am dying. The problem is that everyone around me treats me as if I am dying. But when I'm with hospice palliative care people, they treat me as if I am alive, and I feel alive." That's the magic and the essence of the hospice palliative care movement.

Thanks to the foresight, the investment and the commitment of the Government of Ontario, hospices and all the people they work with

– physicians and nurses, counselors and therapists, palliative pain and symptom management coordinators and Community Care Access Centres - all of us - can ensure that so many more terminally ill people will receive the gentle, compassionate and wise care that they so deserve, and will live life as fully and as long as possible.

Mr. Smitherman – my very heartfelt thanks for this day, and for making me a part of it."

STUDENT PROJECTS -

Project 1 - Research for End of Life Care -

Dalhousie Master of Social Work students Jaimi McHone, Heather Lowe, & Loni Doucette are planning to conduct research within the area of Hospice Palliative Care. This research involves both individual interviews focused on background and experiences, as well as input regarding current and/or necessary supports. The research will also seek recommendations of those who currently or in the

past have had experience in the area of Hospice Palliative Care. The intended outcome is that this research will be multidisciplinary in focus, including input from various backgrounds nurses, doctors, social workers, volunteers, pastoral care etc. Please contact Loni Doucette at 445-5009 or Jaimi McHone at 405-6026 for details.

Project 2 - Review & Recommendation

Dalhousie Master of Social Work student Jaimi McHone will be

completing a literature review, as well as recommendations for action for the implementation of a free standing hospice facility in Halifax, Nova Scotia, as part of her Palliative Care course through the Nursing Department.

This information will be presented to the Hospice Society in both paper format and PowerPoint presentation. If available the presentation may be shown at the Hospice Society's Annual General Meeting, held March 21, 2006.

HIKE FOR HOSPICE!

We have gathered together an impressive Team to organize this year's Hike for Hospice. Our theme for the walk is Raising Awareness! We have set an aggressive target to double our fundraising efforts from previous years, and are hoping to achieve our goal of raising \$6,000.00. The money raised will go towards one of the society's key strategic goals of increasing public

awareness of the need for Hospice Care.

The Hike is scheduled for May 7th and the team is currently designing a challenging and fun route. We are looking at having the route kickoff in the downtown Halifax area and make ourselves visible to the public. So start dusting off your walking shoes, doing your

stretches and flexing your wallets! We need your support as walkers, ambassadors to create awareness or as volunteers. Please contact Betty at 465-2058, or e-mail at secretary@hospicehalifax.com. for information about the Hike or do volunteer to be a member of the committee.

HOW YOU CAN HELP!

The following is a list of things you could do to help the cause:

- 1) Talk about the society and the need for a freestanding hospice residence, to friends, family, co-workers, and politicians.
- 2) Take part in one of the events - Hike for Hospice coming up, also Autumn Corms Campaign.
- 3) If you work, propose a small fund-raising event through your employment, most employers are willing to help a good cause, and fundraisers can be fun events and good for company moral.
- 4) If you donate to United Way, make a self-directed donation.
- 5) Volunteer for one of the Working Groups. We need people who can organize events, write articles, do public speaking, do grant writing, and many other things.
- 6) Attend the Annual General Meeting and other events organized by the working groups.
- 7) Continue to be a member of the Society.

Editor's Note - This is the second edition of our quarterly newsletter, any feedback positive or negative would be appreciated. We want it to be interesting and informative, so if you have anything to share please submit it to one of the following members:

Kathleen McKinnon - phone 435-9682, or
e-mail: kathleen_mckinnon@ADP.com
Jan Evans - phone -469-2335 , or
e-mail: rarebits@eastlink.ca
Betty Morton - phone 465-2058 or
e-mail: betty.morton@ns.sympatico.ca

Note:

The Nova Scotia Hospice Palliative Care Association Palliative Care Conference and Annual General Meeting will be held this year on May 4-6th, 2006 at The Best Western Glengarry, Truro Nova Scotia.

For more information or to register for the conference

Contact Debbie Ross - 902-893-5536

or e-mail: debbie.ross@cehha.nshealth.ca

DATES TO REMEMBER

March 21,2006 - Hospice Society - Annual General Meeting
May 1st - 7th, - National Palliative Care Week
May 3rd & 4th - Hospice Society -Movie Series at Library
May 4th -6th - Nova Scotia Hospice Palliative Care Asso
Prov. Conference
May 7th - Hike for Hospice (route to be determined shortly)

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"When you can no longer add days to your life, add life to your days."