



Hospice Halifax

A PLACE LIKE HOME

Notes and News

Issue #5

January, 2017

Hospice Halifax is a non-sectarian, not-for-profit, registered charitable organization, dedicated to supporting people affected by life-limiting illness, death, grief, or loss. We are also committed to expanding awareness about the strengths of hospice care.

Our goal is to open a 10-bed freestanding residential hospice, to be located at 618 Francklyn Street in Halifax. This hospice will be the first of its kind in HRM and will provide a place within the community where people facing end of life can be cared for in a home-like setting and where their family and friends will also receive support. Hospice Halifax will provide supportive or palliative care - comfort treatment aimed at relieving disease-related symptoms but not curing the disease.

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New Hospice Plans Unveiled

Neighbours get first look at exciting new design

On January 16th, neighbours of Hospice Halifax were the first to hear about the updated draft design for our hospice-to-be. Board chair Dr. Jane Henderson set the scene: "We appreciated the feedback we had received from the community, so we took a closer look at our plans to renovate the two existing buildings on Francklyn Street," she said. "Hospice Halifax is committed to developing a design that is appropriate to the neighbourhood."

To that end, over \$50,000 was invested in expert investigations and analysis in the hope that the two houses could be renovated and adapted to create the new hospice. Sadly, these efforts showed that the foundation, roof, and floors are not strong enough to accommodate those needs and that the building structure would not meet current code.

"After much careful research and consideration," explained Dr. Henderson, "we learned that by the time we made the changes necessary to provide the physical, social, and spiritual supports essential to hospice care, we would have lost the original character of the buildings and it would have been a lot more expensive. That's why we've decided to build a new facility - a much more feasible option that allows us to maximize sustainability, energy efficiency, and quality of living space for people in our care and their families." This was not an easy decision or one which the Hospice Board took lightly.

At the January 16th gathering, the audience was walked through the proposed new design by architect Anne Sinclair, who described how its features both support the building philosophy described by Dr. Henderson and respond to neighbours' concerns. The proposed design also involves a much shorter construction period and less disruption to the neighbourhood than renovation of the existing buildings would have entailed.



In her design, Ms. Sinclair has tried to reflect the memory and history of the two existing houses. Effort will be made to salvage materials and interior heritage elements and to incorporate them into the new facility, and discussions are already underway with local organizations about donating timbers and other materials for reuse.

Landscape designer Sue Sirrs then described ideas for exterior features that would complement the new design and the existing streetscapes. One focus of attention is on ways to afford privacy to both hospice residents and neighbours.

Guests, board members, and volunteers then brainstormed enthusiastically in smaller groups and made numerous suggestions, which included a welcoming foyer, the lighting in residents' rooms being such that the resident can sleep while a family member reads, and the need for subtle but clear exterior signage. All comments were recorded and will inform the fine-tuning of the design.

In the coming months, public meetings to present the new building plans and to describe the role of hospice in today's communities will take place throughout HRM. A capital campaign to fund the construction of the new facility will also be launched soon.

Meanwhile, Hospice CEO Wendy Fraser is making every effort to ensure that hospice supporters understand the reasons for the new design. "My hope is that it will both honour the history and be a beautiful addition to the neighbourhood," she says. "If you would like to discuss this further, please contact me at w.fraser@hospicehalifax.org or call 902-446-0929."

Celebrate Valentine's in Style

Hospice's Feeling the Love Dinner and Dance, February 11th



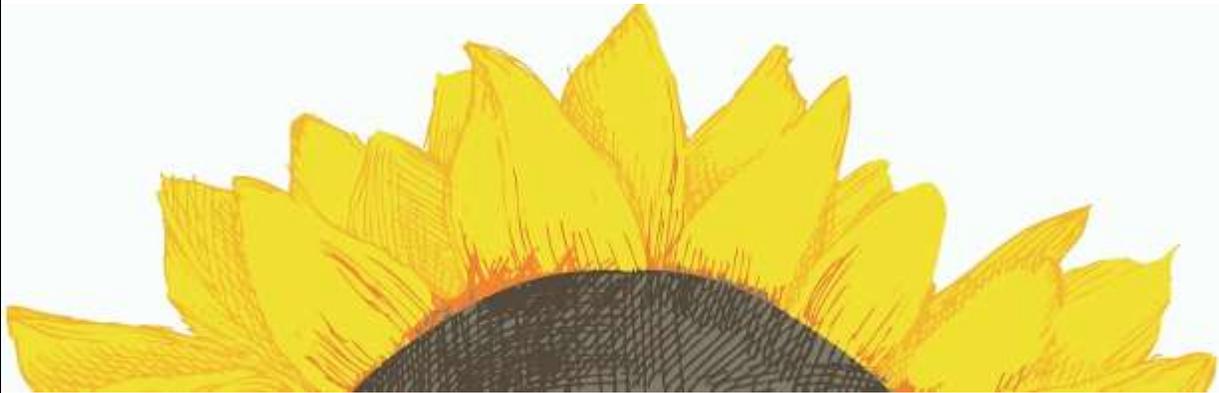
Don't forget to mark your calendar for this 4th annual gala event, a chance to defy winter and dress up for an evening of elegance and fun at the Westin Hotel. Dance to music provided by the funk and soul band The Mellotones, or relax in the lounge while enjoying the smooth jazz of Sasha Muise & The Double Sharps.

Want to strut your stuff but not interested in dinner? No problem - tickets are also available for just the dance. It's a light-hearted evening for the young, the old, and everyone in between. And for those who want to stay till morning, the Westin is offering a special room rate of \$119 for the night.

Making this event even more special are the door prizes provided by our generous sponsors. This year features a pair of diamond earrings contributed by Touch of Gold, a \$250 gift certificate from John David Shoes, and a \$150 gift certificate to Le Bistro by Liz.

Since it began four years ago, *Feeling the Love* has become a signature Halifax event and a great hospice fundraiser. To date, it has raised a total of approximately \$200,000.

So shake out your party frock and shine up your dancing shoes, or sign up to help with one of the volunteer activities. For tickets and more information, go to <http://feelingthelove.ca/>.



Did You Know?

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the modern hospice movement. It began in 1967, when Dame Cicely Mary Saunders opened St. Christopher's Hospice, located in southeast London. Widely considered to be the first modern hospice, St. Christopher's Hospice still provides palliative care to more than 2,500 individuals every year, both in its facilities and in patients' homes.

End-of-Year Fundraising

Generous gifts to Hospice Halifax

This year, Hospice held its annual Angel Tree campaign at two Sobeys stores in HRM. We were also at the Forum Farmers' Market on two Saturdays in late November, selling hand-crafted angel ornaments.

Together, the Angel Tree and our regular holiday campaign brought in \$6,480 in donations. Thank you to all the community members who gave Hospice Halifax this very welcome holiday gift.



Bereavement Support

Now every Saturday

After a brief break for the holiday season, bereavement counselling is again being offered every Saturday from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at 618 Francklyn Street, in Halifax. Everyone is welcome on a drop-in basis; there is no need to sign up. Sessions are peer-led, with counsellors present to help guide discussion as the participants desire.

If you are interested in a bereavement support group but cannot attend on Saturday mornings, please give us a call at 902-446-0929.

Speaking of Death

Death Cafés in Halifax and Dartmouth

At noon on Thursday, February 2nd, the next monthly Halifax Death Café will take place on the second floor of the Just Us! Coffee and Tea House, located at 5896 Spring Garden Road. The monthly Dartmouth Death Café will be held at 12:15 on February 9th in the Sobeys Community Room at 268 Baker Drive, in Dartmouth.

The goal of these cafés is to provide a place where people can talk about death and related issues, something that's not always easy in a culture where death is traditionally not addressed openly.

Everyone is welcome at these gatherings. The atmosphere is warm and respectful, and people are free to talk, share personal experiences of death, or just listen. Discussion is open-ended, with no pressure to reach or adopt any conclusions about life, death, or life after death.

Remember: The Halifax café is held regularly on the 1st Thursday of every month. The Dartmouth café is held on the 2nd Thursday of every month. For more information on how to recruit a team or about the Hike, please contact Erin at

Hike for Hospice

Looking ahead to May 7th



For more than a decade, the first Sunday in May has been Hike for Hospice day. Volunteers, staff, board members and a host of friends step out with banners and good cheer to celebrate Hospice Halifax's achievements, help spread the word, and raise funds. There's a bagpiper in the lead. Children are always part of the throng and there's often a dog or two. The event concludes with refreshments and draw prizes. For the past two years our hike has taken us along the Halifax boardwalk, and we'll continue the tradition this year.

May feels like it's a long way away, but it's really not too early to start building the Hike teams. This is one of the most exciting parts of the event. Workplace groups sign up friends to walk with them. Everyone gathers pledges, and friendly rivalries develop for the largest number of walkers and the most pledges.

If you've done this before, you know what fun it is. If you haven't, please consider asking your friends, neighbours, and workplace colleagues to participate. In 2016 the hike raised over \$36,000. Our goal for 2017 is to raise \$40,000.

care@hospicehalifax.org. Winter won't last forever, and a spring Sunday on the waterfront - mark May 7th on your calendar - is definitely something to look forward to!

Hospice Halifax Ads on Metro Transit Buses

Getting the word out



Keep an eye out for Hospice Halifax's newest ads, featured on the back of Metro Transit buses. A burst of bright yellow, featuring a large sunflower, provides a cheery note for drivers and pedestrians in the middle of Halifax's winter. Through these ads we hope to increase awareness about the building of Halifax's first residential hospice and to encourage visits to our website.

Paper always a possibility

As we've mentioned in previous issues of *News and Notes*, many members and friends of Hospice Halifax prefer to receive an electronic copy of the newsletter rather than a mailed copy. That also enables us to get the news out faster. However, if anyone would prefer a printed copy, please just let us know by emailing care@hospicehalifax.ca or calling 902-446-0929.

Please visit our website at www.hospicehalifax.org.
Donate to our cause at www.hospicehalifax.org/index.php/donate-now/.