



# Hospice Happenings

Volume 5 Holiday 2009

## You Made Such A Difference!

### Agapé's Mission Statement

The Salvation Army Agapé Hospice provides unconditional love and acceptance to individuals in need of end of life care.

Agapé is a leader in giving individualized physical, social, emotional and spiritual care. Residents and their loved ones are assured of dignity, respect and hope in a home like, welcoming setting

### Agapé's Vision Statement

In the Christian tradition of servant leadership, we foster a caring community of unconditional love, peace and hope.

### An Open Letter To the Caregivers of The Salvation Army Agapé Hospice



An avid sportsman, Bill Stewart holds his favorite piece of art. This unique photo of skiers applied to slate now resides at Agapé hospice in memory of Mr. Stewart

My Dad, Bill Stewart, could be a difficult man at times. However, as discovered during his recent stay at Agapé Hospice, he was a genuinely good and decent person with a great sense of humor.

I spent many days sharing Dad's last moments at Agapé and was most impressed, and at times in awe, as I witnessed the interaction between the various Agapé caregivers and my father. The warmth and compassionate care he received, and the dignity and respect with which he was treated, enabled him to be at peace, often bringing a smile to his face.

Particularly in his final days, knowing that Dad was comfortable and receiving the best physical and emotional care possible enabled me to leave him from time to time. I could attend to necessary duties and deal with my own emotional wellbeing without having overwhelming feelings of guilt.

Another priceless advantage of Agapé's care was the way in which my family & I were treated during this very difficult process. At a time when one is feeling completely powerless, to have our input sought out, our wishes listened to and our direction acted upon gave us a greater sense of control. I can not thank you enough for that!

While I am still in shock over the loss of my father, and share his dread and loathing of pity, I would like to thank the Agapé caregivers who made the end of his life a little easier to bear. From the bottom of my heart, words cannot express my gratitude. While I am not a religious person, I cannot think of a better term than to say "Bless you for the fine work you do"!

This Holiday Season, I encourage you to please support Agapé Hospice so compassionate hospice palliative care is available for other families like ours!

Sincerely, *David Stewart*

### The Power of Spirituality

Hospice Palliative care is that which aims to relieve suffering and improve the quality of living at the end of life. "The factors patients say are most important to them in their final days are not only pain and symptom management. They want to find peace within themselves, with their relationships and with their god or spirituality, says Dr. Shane Sinclair.

A PhD graduate in the U of C Faculty of Nursing, and the Coordinator of Spiritual and Pastoral Care at the Tom Baker Cancer Centre, Dr. Sinclair recently conducted a study at Agapé Hospice of the settings in which dying occurs and the relationships between residents and their caregivers. Dr. Sinclair, reports "there is growing evidence that the spiritual wellbeing

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### Give the Gift of Peace, Respect & Dignity This Holiday Season

Memorialize your loved one with a personalized stocking on Agapé's Holiday Memory Tree. Turn to page 3 to find out how!



## The Power of Spirituality cont'd

of those facing end of life is significantly affected by the resident's environment and the spirituality of their caregivers". "More than being provided clinical care and words of comfort, spirituality is experienced in the comfortable homelike environment, the sense of peace that descends upon one as they enter a facility like Agapé Hospice. It is the serene gardens, the compassionate warmth, a caring touch and the grace, respect and dignity with which one is treated that makes a dramatic difference in those facing end of life", says Dr. Sinclair.

Dr. Sinclair was recently convocated, following completion of a thesis based on his research. His findings form the basis of his approach in effective hospice palliative care and sets a standard that Agapé caregivers follow.



Dr. Shane Sinclair & Agapé Caregiver, Patty Powers, enjoy Agapé's Dr. Geggie Serenity Garden with resident, Isabella Gordon

## Corporate & Social Philanthropy, Partying With a Purpose A Season Of Giving, In So Many Ways

As Corporate Calgary looks positively toward an improved economy many are making plans for Holiday social events. Particularly with the downturn this year, to thank and send a positive message to employees for their dedicated perseverance or to give a token gift to build business relationships with clients is important. However, many are concerned if these activities are appropriate or appear frivolous as stakeholders tighten the reins or others may be suffering economic hardship.

Several organizations have turned what may seem an awkward situation into a positive, opting to add a charitable component to their client and employee stewardship. Some are forgoing corporate gift giving and instead making a donation in the names of clients or company employees to a favored charity. Others have included team building or fundraising activities to develop partnerships with a charity. What better way to participate in the giving spirit of the season and setting a positive example!

For information about how you can make a difference this Holiday Season, please call Agapé' Hospice's Development and Communications Manager, 403 282-6588 ext 243 or visit [www.agapehospice.ca](http://www.agapehospice.ca).



## The Calgary Waldorf School Students Give The Gift of Loving Embrace

As part of their curriculum, the students at the Calgary Waldorf School learn the fine art of handiwork. As their final project last spring, the Grade 5 class handcrafted a beautifully knit shawl and generously donated it to Agapé Hospice's Prayer Shawl Ministry.

Agapé's Spiritual Care Coordinator, Marlette Reed, recently blessed the shawl and the student's teacher, Glenda Koppe, presented it to Agapé resident, Pat Gidaly, on behalf of the class. Joining them in the emotional ceremony was her mother-in-law, Jenny Koppe, a long time volunteer at Agapé and Mrs. Gidaly's daughter, Lisa Dawson.

Mrs. Gidaly and her daughter were both very moved by the generous spirit of the students and were most impressed at the quality of their workmanship. Ms. Dawson expressed how grateful she and her family were for the comfort the shawl would bring her mother and for the very meaningful moment they will long remember.

## The Pandemic Pandemic: The High Cost of Preparedness

Since The World Health Organization officially declared the H1N1 flu virus a global pandemic on June 11, 2009, the *swine flu* story has captured the news. The social impact of a flu pandemic is top of mind for everyone. People have stopped shaking hands or hugging friends, teammates and business acquaintances, opting to bump fists or elbows instead. Sales of hand sanitizer have sky rocketed.

We also hear much about the economic impact on certain industries, but have you stopped to consider the enormous impact on a care giving facility, like Agapé Hospice, to prepare for such a pandemic ?

Everyday Agapé's caregivers provide critical services and are charged with the wellbeing of the resident's we serve, and their loved ones, even as our many caregivers may also be at risk. In a pandemic, continuing the quality and availability of service while ensuring the health and safety of the many caregivers, staff and volunteers is imperative.

Not only has the cost to prepare for a potential pandemic increased Agapé's operations budget significantly, it has been an enormous strain on Agapé staff and management resources. Each caregiver must be fully trained in pandemic preparedness and infection control, vaccinated and fitted for N95 masks. In addition, sufficient staffing must be available in the event of caregivers falling ill or of a surge in capacity. A 3 month supply of medical and food supplies must be stored and rotated, visitors informed of required hand sanitation, and the facility itself must be meticulously maintained to prevent infection.

The generous support we receive from our community helps to ensure that we may continue to provide our highest standard of compassionate care, even in the event of an emergency, and we are most grateful.



### Give the Gift of Peace, Respect & Dignity This Holiday Season

There are many ways to remember your loved ones this Holiday Season. Making a donation to Agapé Hospice will provide

an opportunity to honor someone special while ensuring that others receive the gift of quality, compassionate hospice palliative care.

Perhaps you wish to remember a loved one or to make a donation in someone's name in lieu of flowers or gifts this year. **With your donation of \$25.00 or more, Agapé Hospice will hang a festive stocking, with the name of your choice, on Agapé's Memory Christmas Tree.** For your support, you will receive a tax receipt and the knowledge of having made a difference for someone facing end of life.

Simply complete and return the enclosed form with the name you wish to have remembered or you can call Agapé Hospice at (403) 282-6588 or email: [colleen.clancy@agapehospice.ca](mailto:colleen.clancy@agapehospice.ca) to make arrangements. *Please Note: (Stocking not exactly as shown.*

*Offer valid to Dec. 24th, or while quantities last)*



## Getting Through the Holidays

The holidays are a joyous time for most, but for those who have experienced a loss, the usually festive time of year can be a painful reminder that their loved one is no longer here.

"Traditionally, it is a time of family, friends and laughter, but for people who are in the grieving process, the holidays can enhance feelings of personal grief and separate us from what used to make us happy." Cynthia Bozich-Keith, a clinical assistant professor in the School of Nursing at Purdue University. She recommends;

- Be gentle with yourself. Be sure to take time out to care for yourself
- Be sure to eat a nutritious diet, exercise, get adequate sleep and avoid alcohol.
- Talk about your feelings with people you love and who love you. Embrace your memories. The process of sharing memories may help with the healing process.
- Set limits. It's important to let go of the need to be perfect or of doing it all. Perhaps this is the year to share those things with others.
- Don't feel guilty if you find yourself enjoying yourself around the holidays. Your loved one would be happy to know you are enjoying yourself.
- Celebrate life. Attend a holiday or religious service if faith is part of your life. Find comfort in acts of remembrance such as donating a poinsettia in memory of a loved one at church or making a donation in their name to a charity.

If you are having difficulty getting through this Holiday Season, Agapé's Bereavement Program Coordinator may be able to help by providing further information. Phone (403) 282-6588 for program details.



### The 7th Annual Flavours of Italy & Inaugural Italian Wine Awards Gala

On October 8th, members of the Canadian Italian Chamber of Commerce, and friends, gathered at Hotel Arts in celebration of Italian food and wine in Calgary. The guests sampled a wide variety of Italian cuisine and award winning wines and created in lively bidding wars during a Live & Silent Auction.

As a result, The Chamber's Regional Director Dusan Rnjak, presented a cheque for \$5,040, the proceeds of the auction, to Agapé Hospice's Council Chair, Don Brownie and Development & Communications Manager, Colleen Clancy. Agapé is very grateful to the Italian Chamber of Commerce, and the many generous donors and participants for their support!

### Volunteering is Rewarding In So Many Ways

Long time Agapé Hospice volunteer, Carolyn McDonald, recently presented a cheque to Agapé's Volunteer Resource Manager, Peta Collings.

The cheque was a donation from RBC, Carolyn's employer, and was generously given in recognition of Carolyn's dedicated volunteer service to Agapé.

Congratulations Carolyn, and thank you for all you do!



### A Partnership of Caring

A not-for-profit service organization, Agapé Hospice provides a peaceful homelike setting and compassionate end of life care to our residents at no charge. During an average stay of 18 days, the resident pays only for their pharmaceuticals and oxygen. Agapé's priority is to help residents peacefully live the remainder of their lives to the fullest and support their loved ones through the process.

In order to ensure that crucial services are available in the time of need, Agapé Hospice relies heavily on the support of our valued funding partners, the Alberta Health Services and The Salvation Army Red Shield Appeal. However, in addition to this support, Agapé's Fund Development team is required to raise in excess of \$1.3 million dollars annually to ensure the continuation of the quality care and services for which Agapé is renowned.

Meeting our goals is only made possible through the generosity of our community partners; individuals in our community, Calgary's corporate and business leaders, various charitable foundations and associations. We are grateful for your support!

**Did You Know you can designate your Salvation Army or United Way donation to Agapé Hospice?**

### A Special Thanks To Our Generous Donors

Calgary Poppy Fund, Times Press, Pierre Moreau, David Cox, Kensington Sun & Salsa Festival, Rotary Club of Calgary South, Estate of Marilyn Hamulka, Estate of Betty Brackenbury

The Bietz Family, Daunhauer Family, Anne Davidson, Erroll Hautzinger, Rebekah Hillhurst Lodge #116, McInnes & Holloway, First Calgary Savings, Ryan Pavelich, The Calgary Foundation, Annette Lane, James Scott, Foothills Street Rod Association, McKee Homes Ltd, Elbow River Lodge, Don Campbell, Cline Family, Joan Ellergot, A.L. Knight, Italian Chamber of Commerce, Helping Hands Event, Estate of Bette Ann Wilson, Annette Lane

Allan Blaine, Liz Dovey, DOX Investments, Samuel & Melissa Durante, Fraternal Order of Eagles, Ruby Fung, Susan Graszka, Allan Greener, Muriel Jones, Norbert Klatt, Ruby MacNeil, M. Lee Matheson, Lillian McConnell, D. Norgaard, Royal Purple Calgary #7, Rundle Energy Partners, Len Sisco, Norman & Elvira Thurn, Rick & Lynn Walker, Kwok Wee, Helene Weir-in Memory of Patty Read, Rotary Club Calgary Heritage Park, Calgary Sinawik Youth Foundation, Canadian Pacific Communications & Public Affairs, Holy Spirit Charitable Society, Lynda Syverson, Telus Corporation, Elaine Plomp

*Agapé Hospice is extremely grateful for each and every donation. Unfortunately, the availability of space limits recognition to donations of \$1,000 or more received since the last newsletter.*



### Community Council

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- Carol Graham, Vice Chair
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- Tom Dixon
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- Howard Gorman
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