



GREATER TRAIL HOSPICE SOCIETY NEWS & NOTES



Christmas Service of Remembrance

*The Christmas Season is approaching;
a time for family to be together,
to share the gifts of love and joy.
For your family, this Christmas
may be particularly difficult.
We want you to know that you are not alone,
that we and others share in your loss.*

Please join us

*Sunday, December 4th
at 2:00 PM*

*St. Andrew's Anglican Church
1347 Pine Avenue, Trail, BC*

All are Welcome

*RSVP by November 25, 2022
trail@myalternatives.ca
250-368-8080*



ALTERNATIVES[®]
FUNERAL & CREMATION
SERVICES



**"Hospice care is more
than helping people
die with dignity, it's
about helping them
live out life with love."**

GIVING TUESDAY

November 29



There are so many different
ways to express generosity on
Giving Tuesday & every day!

- **Make a donation** to Hospice and help us support those who have life-limiting illness, who are approaching end of life, or are grieving.
- **Become a Volunteer or Board Member**

**Donate at or visit
www.trailhospice.org**

‘Grieving is how we say Goodbye’

By the time that this newsletter gets delivered to you we will be a good way through the month of November. Spiritually, November is a month in which we are encouraged to realign, to refocus and to regain our inner strength. November also marks the finality of autumn with winter making its presence known. Here in the Kootenay Boundary we turn our clocks back in an effort to keep darkness manageable, but for many people, the shift from the light and sun filled summer seems ominous and depressing.

November has always been a more sombre month for me even though I really love that the snow is coming. The darker days make it more challenging to be outside. When I take down my Thanksgiving and Halloween decorations inside and outside of my home I know that I will be taking a break from any type of festiveness for 2 weeks to allow for Remembrance Day to be respected. A poppy is my only adornment.

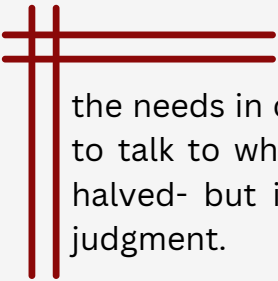
On **November 11th** we go to our local Cenotaph and pay our respects in what seems to be the coldest morning of the month. As I shift from foot to foot in my cozy winter boots, I look at all the participants in their thin uniforms with bare hands proudly hoisting their flags and instruments and wish that the sun would shine on them. I think of the people who risked their lives and gave their lives for our country. I reflect on how cold they must have been; how afraid and lonely they were. I grieve although I didn't know them, but in my heart I thank them and wish them peace. I allow myself to really feel all of my emotions while at the Cenotaph, contemplating the extreme sacrifices that have been and continue to be made. I reflect on how my family was shaped and changed by death. But in reflecting on the people who have gone before me, personally and historically, overall, I feel a sense of pride, of compassion and most of all love.

I have come to realize that during November I can feel the darkness more fully than any other month of the year. I also know that in greeting and acknowledging my sometimes-painful thoughts I can let go of them. I can say goodbye to the heaviness for a while.

November 15th was **National Grief and Bereavement Day**, the date that recognizes grief and bereavement in our communities.. This year the focus was ‘Grieving is how we say goodbye.’ It serves as a reminder that it is important to understand grief and to be patient with ourselves and anyone else who may be experiencing grief- for any reason. It also reminds us that there is help available to everyone who is experiencing grief and that there are people in our communities who want to ensure that everyone has access to that help.



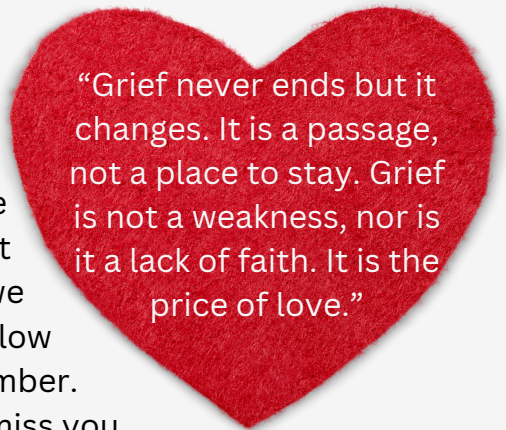
The Greater Trail Hospice Society just hosted another volunteer grief support training session on the first three Mondays of this month. **Our referrals for grief support increased by 67% over last year** and we are working hard to meet



the needs in our community. We understand how important it is for everyone to have someone to talk to when they are experiencing grief. A problem shared may not always be a problem halved- but it sure feels good to know that someone will listen with empathy and without judgment.

I love this quote that was used on our volunteer recruitment poster:

When we pause to remember our veterans on Remembrance Day, when we reflect on the lives of the people who have left our world, we are acknowledging the love and respect that we have in our hearts. Sometimes it takes a cold, dark time to allow us the proper setting to reflect. It is an opportunity to remember. It gives us another chance to say I love you, I respect you, I miss you and goodbye- just for now.



It is important to have support so that you can also see that there is hope, and to remember that even in our sad times it is possible to smile. It is important to remember that life is more than suffering and even the worst days will pass by. It is during the darkest of nights that the stars shine their brightest.


My heart goes out to everyone who is struggling through this seasonal transition- I hope that you have the courage to reach out for help when you need it. I hope that you can see every little sliver of light that comes into your life.

I will put my poppy back into my top drawer so that I still see it from time to time but know that it is okay that it waits until next November to be worn. I am looking forward to untangling all of my Christmas lights and decorations and finding the perfect tree down in my yard.

All the best to each of you, and please, if you are in need of support this holiday season, just remember that Greater Trail Hospice Society is here for you. Our next public event, **Christmas Service of Remembrance**, will be held at St. Andrew's Anglican Church in Trail on Sunday, **December 4th at 2pm**. Everyone is always most welcome. -Gwen Ziprick



**Place a card in
memory of a loved one
on the Memorial Tree
by Dollarama at the Mall
Nov. 26-Dec. 11**





Three Cs for Coping with Grief Over the Holidays

For those who are grieving, special days such as holidays and anniversaries associated with the deceased can be especially hard. Acknowledging the challenge of facing these days does not make a potentially difficult time any easier, but preparing for them by tapping into helpful coping strategies may provide some much-needed comfort.

CHOOSE

On anniversaries and during the holidays, it can be easy to feel obligated to be a part of activities or events that have the potential to increase your pain. Remember that you have choices. Decide what activities you want to be part of, who you want to be with, and what you want to do. After her husband died, June was invited—and felt pressured—to join her sister-in-law for Hanukkah celebrations. She decided that she would retain the freedom to choose where she wanted to be until that morning. “I never know how much energy I’ll have or how I’ll feel until that day,” she explained. She decided to eat dinner with a few women she knew through a widow’s support group and chose to go to her sister-in-law’s house for dessert.

Choosing personal ways to recognize and acknowledge the person who has died may help bring a positive focus to your grief. Lighting a candle, creating a ritual, placing a memento on a tree, holding a moment of silence, or giving a toast are some simple ways to acknowledge the losses felt so deeply, especially on holidays and anniversaries.

COMMUNICATE

Discussing your choices with others is important, as their ways of dealing with grief may be different. June, for example, talked with her sister-in-law, explained her feelings, and asked if she could make a decision that day. Once her sister-in-law understood June’s feelings and needs, she understood the need for flexibility. Communicating about your choices can be especially important around holidays and other special occasions as there may be long-standing traditions or expectations involved. The Smith family, for example, had a long discussion about how to handle the Christmas tree following the death of one of their children.

COMPROMISE

Each person deals with loss in his or her own particular way and therefore has different needs. There is no right or wrong way to grieve. Leaving space for compromise is important. For example, some people in the Smith family saw the Christmas tree as an important tribute to their late son and brother. Other family members felt it was disrespectful. The family was able to talk through each point of view and decided to have a small tree—not in the main living room, but in the family room. Those who wanted to help decorate were welcome, but those who chose not to would also be respected.

Nothing changes the fact that holidays, anniversaries, and other special days can be especially difficult while grieving. But if you choose your actions, communicate your choices to others, and find suitable compromises, you may find that they become bearable and that you have renewed strength and hope.

(Developed from *Journeys with Grief: A Collection of Articles about Love, Life and Loss*, edited by Kenneth J. Doka, Ph.D., MDiv., copyright Hospice Foundation of America, 2012)

