



# Ho-ho-hospice Happenings: December 2013



---

TUESDAY 3 DECEMBER

## It's the Holiday Season...



In conjunction with the festivities of [Candy Cane Lane](#), we welcome you to drop-in for refreshments, holiday music, and warmth, at our [Christmas Open House](#), **Friday December 20, 6:30-8:30pm**. If you would like to volunteer during this event, to greet our guests or serve refreshments, please contact [Debby Harink](#), 780 413 9801 ext 314.

---

## ...the Season of Peace

**Annual Candlelight Memorial Service** for families who have experienced the loss of a baby and/or the loss of a child. All family members, including siblings, are welcome to attend.

**Sunday, December 8th, 2013, 7 p.m. at Glenwood Memorial Gardens, 52356 Range Road 232, Sherwood Park.**

Please pre-register by calling 780.413.9801 ext.309 or email [cherylsr@pilgrimshospice.com](mailto:cherylsr@pilgrimshospice.com). Last day to register is Friday, December 6th, 2013.

---

## ...the Season of... Reindeer?

### Find us on



### In this issue

- It's the Holiday Season...
- ...the Season of Peace
- ...the Season of... Reindeer?
- ...the Season of Gratitude
- ...the Season of Togetherness
- ...the Season of... Penguins?
- ...the Season of Love
- ...the Season of Family
- ...the Season of Caring
- ...the Season of Giving

### In other news

#### Closed for the Holidays

Pilgrims will be **closed December 24, 2013 through January 1, 2014 inclusive**.

We will re-open January 2nd, and look forward to another year of serving our community, with family centred hospice care and bereavement services.

**Pilgrims**



Click the picture for a special surprise!

---

## ...the Season of Gratitude

In November we started our monthly [Wish List](#); on the second Wednesday of each month you will find our list updated on the website, and through social media. We would like to thank Home Depot Distribution Centre for granting our first wish from the list - a new mini-fridge for the Adult Day Program! Also, to support practical needs of the hospice, they have donated \$1000 in gift cards for purchases at Home Depot.

Much gratitude also goes to the [Edmonton Symphony Orchestra](#) for the gift of ten tickets to Symphonic Celebration, taking place in January. A few clients and volunteers of the Compassionate Companions Program will enjoy this special outing together.

You may have also received notice of our [Christmas Non-event](#) in lieu of the traditional Share the Spirit cookie trot. Pilgrims has received many donations thus far, and they keep arriving daily. We have great appreciation for the support of our friends; both old and new. If you would like to contribute to the continued operation and expansion of our services, please call us or [DONATE](#) online.

---

## ...the Season of Togetherness

## Hospice Society

9808-148 Street  
Ph: 780 413 9801  
Fax: 780 413 9748  
[info@pilgrimshospice.com](mailto:info@pilgrimshospice.com)

*Celebrate Life...Our Pledge of  
Care and Compassion*

[Pilgrimshospice.com](http://Pilgrimshospice.com)

If you would like to make a contribution to Hospice Happenings, or nominate a volunteer for outstanding service, please feel free to make any submissions to **Debbie Nessel**, by way of email:  
[debbien@pilgrimshospice.com](mailto:debbien@pilgrimshospice.com)

Suitable additions would include such things as: stories, poems, jokes, photos, etc.

## Forward to a friend

Know someone who might be interested in the email? Why not [forward this email](#) to them.

## Unsubscribe

Don't want to receive these emails anymore? You can [unsubscribe](#) instantly.



On a beautiful, sunny, fall morning, I stood in our community centre and watched in awe as an energetic group of volunteers worked quickly to put together the final details on an inaugural event we had created just 3.5 weeks before. They worked cheerfully, helping each other with tasks that we had dreamed of but had not yet tried out. I wondered, as they worked magic, if our efforts would be worth the time and energy. Would this event impact the participants in the meaningful way we had hoped and planned for?

On a beautiful, sunny, fall afternoon, I stood beside the lake in my vibrant community, surrounded by family, friends and perfect strangers, as we remembered our sweet children, no longer walking alongside us but with us forever in our hearts. I was filled with pride in seeing these hurting families reaching out to each other in love, as they shared the pain, as well as the joy of seeing and saying their child's name, with hope and understanding that they need not walk alone. Together, we created an art project, a beautiful paper quilt, wrote notes of hope to line the trees along our path, attached loving family messages to donated teddy bears to be given to newly bereaved families, walked the cobblestone trail as the leaves fell gently to the ground around us, stopping at each name, to honor and remember. We blew bubbles as names were read and listened to the bell toll for each child represented. We expected a small crowd and were blown away that more than 4 times the number of families we had initially predicted showed up. Thankfully, we had enough for everyone to participate and it turned out to be a very successful day, beyond our wildest dreams.

The event I am describing was our 1st [Annual Baby Steps Memorial Walk](#). This special day took place on Saturday, October 5th, 2013 at Festival Place in Sherwood Park. We anticipated that we would have between 20 and 25 participants, but ended up with just under 100

people in attendance. We collected over 60 new teddy bears to be given to newly bereaved families. Our keynote speaker, Alexis Marie Chute, shared her inspiring story of rebuilding life after baby loss. With soft music in the background, families, young and old, took part in the various activities our volunteers had so carefully planned for all.

Outside, small tags bearing heartfelt words were hung from the tree, softly blowing in the warm breeze. Precious names, written on the sidewalk with care and compassion, were photographed to be preserved forever.

After the walk around the lake, scrumptious cupcakes and juice were provided to end the afternoon. Families lingered, children dancing in the park, blowing the tiny bubbles that each were given at the beginning of the event.

The greatest success of the day was not that we had a lovely number of attendees, or that the cupcakes were the perfect color, or that the newspaper came out to document the day, or that we had just exactly enough volunteers to help out. The greatest success of the day was watching families connect with each other, marvelling at their child's name, sharing their stories, enjoying the comfort in knowing that their journey, so harsh and difficult and most often so isolating, is one that can be shared with others, perfect strangers to each other, until they come to a place where others who understand are present. Families, grieving for the rest of their lives, reaching out to each other with understanding and heartfelt support.

We are looking forward to presenting the 2nd Annual Baby Steps Memorial Walk in 2014. A walk to remember our precious children, gone too soon but forever loved.

Submitted by [Cheryl Salter-Roberts](#)

Manager, [Pilgrims Hospice BriarPatch Centre for Grieving Families](#)

---

**...the Season of... Penguins?**



[Click the picture for another little surprise!](#)

---

### ...the Season of Love

We would like to remind you of another heart filled holiday, Valentine's Day, and of course our related event [Hearts for Hospice!](#) We hope you will join us once again for a sensational evening.

**Sunday, February 9, 2014**

**[Il Forno Restaurant](#) 14981 Stony Plain Road**

**5:30pm Reception, 6:30pm Dinner**

You will enjoy a five course dinner with wine included, and back by popular demand, **The Tenors** will once again provide entertainment for the evening.

Contact **Gloria Bauer** to purchase your tickets, **\$125** each, all proceeds to support Pilgrims Hospice.

**780 458 2586**

[gbauer@shaw.ca](mailto:gbauer@shaw.ca)

---

### ...the Season of Family





One of our valued day program volunteers will be welcoming a new bundle of joy into his family this month. Even dad's deserve a baby shower, so the Pilgrims family was happy to throw one for **Tony** - complete with pink goodies, a diaper cake, gifts, games and a burger buffet for lunch. We will miss Tony as he is away taking care of his wife, and three children - but can't wait to meet their new little girl, and have him back in the new year.

---

### **...the Season of Caring**

With the New Year comes new program dates. If you're looking for bereavement support, here are our winter 2014 groups:

**H.E.A.R.T.S. Baby Loss Support Program** ~ Tuesday, January 28th, 2014 at 7 p.m. BriarPatch Family Centre in Sherwood Park.

**The Compassionate Friends Child Loss Support Program** ~ Tuesday, January 14th, 2013 at 7 p.m. BriarPatch Family Centre in Sherwood Park.

**Expressive Arts for Grieving Children, Teens & Families**

Thursday, January 30th, 2014 to Thursday, March 20th, 2014 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Pilgrims Hospice, Edmonton group (children ages 5 to 12, teens ages 13 to 18, and adults).

Saturday, January 18th, 2014 to Saturday, March 8th, 2014 from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. BriarPatch Family Centre, Sherwood Park group (children ages 5 to 12, teens ages 13 to 18, and adults).

**Grief Journeys: Adult Support Group**

Monday, January 20, 2014 to Monday, March 17, 2014 from 6:30p.m. - 8:30p.m. at Pilgrims Hospice.

Please pre-register by calling (780) 413-9801 ext. 307 or [jessem@pilgrimshospice.com](mailto:jessem@pilgrimshospice.com).

**Our Counselling Services and Spiritual Care Co-ordinator, Jesse McElheran, recently attended the Comprehensive Bereavement Skills Training at the internationally recognized Center for Loss and Life Transition in Fort Collins, Colorado. This course was taught by Dr. Alan D. Wolfelt, Ph.D., a noted author, educator, and grief counsellor. At this training Jesse deepened her understanding of issues surrounding grief and loss. After training, she described feeling affirmed in her counselling role and better prepared to support those who have experienced the loss of a loved one. Please contact Jesse at (780) 413-9801 ext 307 if you have any questions surrounding the adult bereavement services offered through Pilgrims Hospice.**

---

## ...the Season of Giving

The Volunteers of Pilgrims Hospice give more than time to our organization, they give energy, compassion, ideas, and heart... working in our various client support programs, special events, and administrative roles.

Pilgrims is accepting [volunteer applications](#), and in March 2014, will be holding [Volunteer Training](#), developed by the Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association.

**The application deadline, for the spring series intake, is February 7, 2014.**

If you have any questions regarding volunteering with Pilgrims, please [email](#) us.

---

You are receiving this newsletter because you signed up at pilgrimshospice.com or received our pdf newsletter.  
Having trouble reading this? [View it in your browser](#). Not interested anymore? [Unsubscribe](#) Instantly.