



# Hospice Happenings



FRIDAY 10 OCTOBER

## 20th Anniversary Vision



**Imagine** a place in Edmonton where those who were dying could receive compassionate care in a comfortable home-like setting, living each day to the fullest in whatever way they chose.

**Imagine** the peace of mind, knowing that your loved one is being cared for by well-trained professionals and volunteers, who are attending to their physical, emotional and spiritual needs around the clock.

**Imagine** the comfort of knowing that support is also available for you and your family during this time and beyond.

This is the vision **Marion Boyd**, co-founder of [Pilgrims Hospice](#), gave during her keynote speech at the annual Sunflower Luncheon this September.

**"On our 20th Anniversary, we have decided to move boldly ahead to achieve our vision of a 16-bed residential hospice in the city of Edmonton. We believe that a residential hospice is long overdue in this city and is the best option for those who are dying, who do not wish or need to spend their last days in an institutional setting and for whatever reason are unable to stay at home."**

Support our vision by becoming **ambassadors** of Pilgrims Hospice. Let's ensure that individuals of influence know the need for residential

## Find us on



## In this issue

- 20th Anniversary Vision
- Embarrassed for Edmonton
- Sunflower Luncheon
- A Son's Grief
- Thank you!
- Another Way to Give
- Young Adult Grief Support Group (Ages 18-30)
- Congratulations to Kerri!
- New Staff
- Festive Concert

## In other news

### Pilgrims Hospice Society

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

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

If you would like to make a

hospice in the city of Edmonton.

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## Embarrassed for Edmonton

The sentiments of Marion Boyd were echoed by Seanna Collins, Edmonton Media Host/Personality and Sunflower Luncheon MC:

**“As someone who was born in Edmonton, I am totally embarrassed that we don’t already have a residential hospice, that people have to move to other areas of our country to get the help and support they need, require or wish.**

**There is a 24-hour residential hospice in Red Deer, Okotoks, and two in Calgary but here, in the City of Champions - a city rich in oil, the capital city of Alberta, and a city who seems to care so much about their sports teams - we don’t have a 24 hour residential hospice for end of life care. What a shame. What a loss. What a tragedy.”**

Seanna recounted how in 2013, she helped her dear friend and “Edmonton Mom”, Pat, as she received her first round of treatments for cancer. Then - after living her whole life in Edmonton - her daughter moved Pat to Ontario so she could take care of her. When the cancer got too much, Pat went into a hospice in Burlington, Ontario.

Pat called to tell Seanna about this amazing place. Her exact words were: **“If this is what heaven is like, I’m going to be well taken care of!”**

Above all, Pat praised the care, compassion, the home-away-from-home feeling while she was there, and her daughter cannot say enough about how much love the entire family was given - they could visit 24/7, stay the night in her room or in a separate room that was available for family and enjoy everything as if it was their own home.

Seanna Collins speaks for all of us at Pilgrims Hospice: **“I truly hope that one day we see a Hospice like that, here in Edmonton”.**

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## Sunflower Luncheon

This was our record year for events and the **Dr. Helen Hays Sunflower Luncheon** was no exception. Celebrating our **20th Anniversary**, 170

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.

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Friends of Hospice filled the beautifully decorated Fairmont Hotel MacDonald Ballroom. Seanna Collins was our dynamic MC again and Keynote speakers Deb Birkett and Marion Boyd delivered passionate messages; Deb introduced us to some of the Faces of Pilgrims and Marion spoke to the Need for a Residential Hospice in the city of Edmonton.

Thanks to the generous support of those attending, we raised \$20,893.36 to help ensure the sustainability of Pilgrims Community Programming. Special thanks to Lynn Mandel and Miss Sarah Chan for taking time out of their busy days to lend their support to Pilgrims Hospice Society.

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## A Son's Grief



I've had the privilege of working with a courageous young man since late last fall. A typical kid, interested in video games, music, the skate park and hanging out with friends. His world changed when his mom ended her life, prompting an immediate move, with his dad and younger brother, back to Alberta to be surrounded by family and friends.

Blair has done tremendous work this last year to heal from the trauma of his mother's death. At any age, death is a tough process to explore but for a boy entering his teens, with the loss of his talented, artistic mother, then a move to a new community, it seems an almost impossible feat. But Blair is one of those rare kids who has a strong desire to rise above the tragic experience that currently shapes his every day. And now he's inspiring others to be proactive in this grief.

Two weeks ago, Blair stood in front of over 650 people who had gathered together to [learn about the effects of suicide](#) on a family and a

community. A fundraiser, as well as an awareness opportunity, **Nelly's Project** was created by the [Soul Sisters Memorial Foundation](#) in memory of Blair's mom, Jeanelle, affectionately known as "Nelly". Blair spoke for just a few short moments but the words he shared moved the crowd. Not only did they raise over \$53,000 to help pave the way for more grieving children and teens to attend our [Expressive Arts Program](#) but they honored Nelly's spirit by listening to her son's account of his own personal journey, one that so many walk alone.

Blair talked about the support he has received, not just from the facilitators but from the other participants who shared their stories with him. He has found his safe place and knows that the value in sharing his words ended up creating more opportunities for others to attend programming.

When **Danny Hooper**, MC for the event, asked what he would do now that he had attended programming and counselling, Blair replied: **"I keep going. The door is always open!"**

Bravo Blair for a job well done. A son's grief, a shared story, a mother honored. All of this equals community awareness and continued programming. And hurting hearts on the path to healing.

- Cheryl Salter-Roberts, Manager & Grief Educator, [BriarPatch Centre for Grieving Families](#)

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**Thank you!**



Special thanks to the *Eldon & Anne Foote Fund* at [Edmonton Community Foundation](#), for their generous gift and ongoing support of Pilgrims Hopsice.

This gift allows us to sustain our programs - providing quality and compassionate care to those living with life threatening illnesses and respite care to their loved ones and caregivers.

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## Another Way to Give

Did you know that a donation to [United Way](#) can be assigned to Pilgrims Hospice Society as your charity of choice?

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## Young Adult Grief Support Group (Ages 18-30)

***Help, support, and resources as we journey together.***

Once a month drop-in support group on Wednesday evenings from 7:00-8:30pm. Upcoming meetings:

October 22

November 19

December 17

There will be topic discussion and time for sharing. No cost but donations gladly welcome.

Please call Jesse McElheran to register (780) 413-9801 ext 307 or email at [jessem@pilgrimshospice.com](mailto:jessem@pilgrimshospice.com)

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## Congratulations to Kerri!



Kerri is our [Adult Respite Day Program](#) Health Care Aide, and this month she was awarded at the Health Care Aide Conference in Edmonton with the Francis Montgomery Health Care Aide Hospice and Palliative Care Award! Nice work Kerri!

Kerri works exceptionally with our clients, ensuring that each one feels valued every time they come to the program. Treating them with dignity, respect and kindness, Kerri shares her great sense of humor and keeps us all smiling.

Our Adult Respite Day Program Nursing/Care staff provide not only for physical care, but just as importantly, also for spiritual and emotional

well-being. Emphasizing these aspects during End of Life care is a vital part of Hospice and assists those individuals in “living until the end” ~ the philosophy behind hospice care.

- *Bonnie Ross, Adult Respite Day Program Manager*

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## New Staff

The Board, Management and Staff send a warm WELCOME to **Liz Barlick**, who is joining us as our new **Fund Development Administrative Assistant**. Liz will be instrumental in providing the Fund Development Committee with administrative support, as well as ensuring that Pilgrims Hospice continues to recognize and THANK our generous donors and sponsors, especially through our 20th Anniversary Campaign.

Liz is passionate about bringing Pilgrims VISION of a Residential Hospice in Edmonton into REALITY! We are excited to have Liz join our Pilgrims Hospice Team! You can contact Liz at [lizb@pilgrimshospice.com](mailto:lizb@pilgrimshospice.com) to provide your email address for receipting purposes, ideas for the next newsletter, or just to say Hi and Welcome.

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## Festive Concert

You are invited to our **Festive Concert**, Tuesday, December 9th, 7pm, at St. Andrews United Church, 9915 148 St NW, Edmonton.

Featuring a variety of local talents, this will be an evening the whole family can enjoy. Save the date and see next month's newsletter for more information!

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