

January 2021

## For the Love of Jan

*While grieving the loss of a wonderful wife, mother and grandmother, the Paris family thanks Hospice Peterborough for helping them cope and initiates fundraiser to support grief services.*

Bill Paris has more than 50 years of wonderful memories that he made with his late wife Jan.

He recalls meeting her when they both attended Crestwood Secondary School, marrying a few years later and, as a younger man, coming home from an excruciatingly long day at work at Paris Marine and finding Jan sitting on the couch with their newborn twins Julie and Deborah – one in each of her arms nursing a bottle - while she rocked their two-year-old Tracey with her foot.

“She was a great mom and a wonderful person – very giving, very kind,” Bill says. “We had a wonderful life together.”

With their three children, Bill and Jan built many memories together boating on Clear and Stoney lakes, winter skiing in British Columbia, Alberta and Quebec and enjoying time together as a family, even if it was only playing a game of cards.

Later in life, Jan was a healthy and vibrant woman at age 73 who enjoyed volunteering, painting, taking trips with her husband to their second home in Florida and spending as much time as she could with her beloved grandchildren Avery, Ethan and Kensington. After getting an all-clear from a physical in July 2019, Jan began feeling tired more often by November and had to start putting on a jacket even when it was hot outside. She also started feeling tired in the afternoons and wanted to go to bed earlier in the evenings.

By mid-December, a bone-marrow biopsy at Princess Margaret Cancer Centre in Toronto confirmed she had Acute Myeloid Leukemia and Bill explains that the chances of having this disease at her age is less than 17 in 100,000.

In typical fashion, Jan didn't complain. She remained tough, positive and loving until her final days, which she spent at home surrounded by family.

Through their journey, the Paris family has come to realize the importance of Hospice Peterborough and the many services it offers from when a loved one is diagnosed with a life-threatening illness to when it's time to grieve.

“I don't know how we would've gotten through this without Hospice Peterborough,” Bill says. “It's the kind of organization that you don't know much about until the time comes that you need them.”



*Jan and Bill Paris with their three daughters.*

In memory of his wife, he is initiating the 'For the Love of Jan' fundraiser for Hospice Peterborough – asking others to join the monthly giving program and pledging to match all donations up to \$10,000.

The fundraiser will direct all donations to programs that support children and teens – an area for which Hospice Peterborough receives no government funding.

The groups support youth in our community who have experienced the death of someone close to them and – often through arts-based activities - help them manage their feelings and behaviours. Even through the pandemic, Hospice continues to offer these services virtually either one-on-one or in small groups.

Hospice Peterborough executive director Hajni Hós thanks the Paris family for sharing their deeply personal story and for giving back to the community in memory of a loved one.

“It is fitting to direct these funds to children and teen groups in honour of a cherished mother and grandmother who devoted herself to her family,” Hós says. “When children in our community can better manage their grief, we all win.”

## For the Love of Jan (continued from first page)

The Paris family is well-known in Peterborough as they own Paris Marine, a family-owned third-generation boating centre in Lakefield that was started by Bill's father Jack in 1947.



*"We just loved being together," Bill says.  
"We were inseparable."*

Bill grew up in this area and recalls meeting Jan when they were both 18; she was his first serious girlfriend.

After high school, Jan became a registered nurse, eventually working in the surgical unit at the former St. Joseph's Hospital, and Bill went to work for his father. They married in 1970 and welcomed Tracey in 1974.

Afterward, their doctor told them they likely wouldn't be able to conceive again; they welcomed their twins in 1976.

Life was good for the young family who lived in Young's Point as Bill worked at the busy and growing boating centre and Jan joined him in 1980 by working in bookkeeping.

They were also busy supporting the community as Jan and Bill were volunteers with Festival of Trees and both involved with local Rotary and Kinsmen clubs. They both also volunteered at Big Brothers Big Sisters of Peterborough, each being a mentor for a local child in need.

But, as always, their first priority was family.

When their daughters went off to university, it was bittersweet.

"We had always devoted so much time together as a family but now it was a chance to do more things together," Bill says. "We were very much in love."

They travelled to different countries including honeymooning in Barbados and visiting Japan, the Caribbean, the Virgin Islands, England and the United States, eventually buying a second home in Florida.

"We just loved being together," Bill says. "We were inseparable."

The couple was in Florida when Jan started feeling unwell and after flying back to Canada and getting the diagnosis, doctors told Jan she may have only a few months to live.

"They asked Jan what she wanted to do and she said: 'I want to go home,'" Bill explains.

At home on her beloved Stoney Lake, Jan spent time with her family and, although she was weak, never lost her quick mind and was still able to socialize and play cards with her daughters who came to be by her side.

"Jan never mentioned the disease and didn't cry and didn't talk about it," Bill says. "She was focused on her family."

During this time, Hospice Peterborough was invaluable, he says, as staff helped connect Bill and Jan with supports and healthcare workers including nurses who could provide care at home. Bill adds it was reassuring to know that, if needed, Jan could've opted to stay in the homey and comforting Hospice end-of-life residence instead of in a hospital.

"But we were lucky that she was able to come home," he says.

When the family was reeling from grief, Bill recalls getting a letter from Hospice Peterborough offering grief recovery groups but felt so raw at the time that he threw the letter in the garbage.

He says he's glad he eventually did call and was connected to support groups, which were offered over Zoom because of the pandemic.

Over the course of 10 sessions, Bill says he found it cathartic to hear other people's stories and to learn more about how the brain behaves during grief and how certain things, such as a song or photograph, can be an emotional trigger.

"I couldn't listen to music for a very long time," he says. "But I've learned how to counteract those emotions."

The groups also offered suggestions of how to say goodbye to a loved one, even sometimes writing a letter. "Thanks to these sessions, I'm in a much better place now," Bill says.

He encourages everyone to donate to this fundraiser and is looking forward to matching donations, knowing the money will help others who, right now, may not know they too may eventually need these kinds of life-changing services.

It simply makes sense, he says, for Jan's memory to inspire a fundraiser for an organization that helps so many people in our community learn how to cope through loss.

"Jan was always smiling, always laughing, always helpful," Bill says. "She was the most positive person I knew."

*If you would like to donate to Hospice Peterborough through the 'For the Love of Jan' fundraising drive, please [click here](#) to find out more information. The Paris family will match all donations made before Feb. 28 up to \$10,000.*

## For the Love of Jan

From now until February 28, 2021 all monthly donations will be personally matched by the Paris family up to \$10,000, as a legacy to their beloved matriarch, Jan.

Our monthly giving program, called the *Circle of Caring*, provides the consistent, sustainable revenue Hospice Peterborough needs to ensure long-term success.

Large or small, your monthly contribution will ensure programs and services are there for individuals and families at every step of their journey; from diagnosis, through death, and grief.

Joining takes less than 5 minutes and there's no annual renewal, just call 705-742-4042 x226 at any time to cancel or change your donation.

*Circle of Caring* members will receive exclusive communications, event invites, and more!



Jan with her grandchild, Kensington.

Do it for the community. Do it to double your impact. Do it *For the Love of Jan*.

[For more information, and to sign up, click here.](#)

### Your impact looks like:



**\$25/month**

**Provides a child with grief programming.**



**Any gift per month**

**Your gift will support ALL programs and services.**



**\$50/month**

**Provides a terminally ill person with supportive care.**



**\$70/month**

**Provides a week of meals to a resident.**

## Feeding the Soul

*Chef Greg Marshak has a unique and gratifying role at Hospice – offering fresh home-made comfort food to those in the end-of-life residence and catering to the needs of those in grief*

He has cooked fancy meals for demanding customers, served as head chef in myriad restaurants and created exotic dinners in the fast-paced rush of professional kitchens across Canada.

But, for Greg Marshak, working as chef at Hospice Peterborough has been the only job that has truly fed his soul.

“I feel like this is where I was meant to be,” he says.

Life has been drastically different for the 53-year-old since starting his new position at Hospice about two years ago.

Now Greg is making big batches of fresh, homemade soup (think potato, cauliflower and aged cheddar!) that he knows will comfort and soothe those in palliative care.

As these residents are now beyond dietary restrictions, Greg delights in creating them decadent meals if they so choose: Southern-fried chicken, food with plenty of butter and cream or a beautiful rich meatloaf.

Residents sometimes request special meals from their childhood or those that remind them of their native province such as the man from Newfoundland who requested an old favourite - liver and onions. When it



*“Hospice has changed my life, 100 percent.” - Greg*

was brought to him, the man cried with gratitude.

“I’m the luckiest cook in town because I get to have experiences like that,” Greg says.

Many people know Greg from his time as owner of the café in the Peterborough YMCA where he served up healthy muffins, delicious sandwiches and fresh-fruit smoothies to fitness buffs after their workouts or hungry kids who had just finished their swimming lessons.

He explains that he’s originally from Cannington, ON and moved to Peterborough 13 years ago to be closer to his children and then worked at various kitchens in the city including restaurants, BE Catering and Rubidge Retirement Home.

Shortly after leaving the YMCA, he took on the unique role at Hospice, which had just opened its new location on London Street after its award-winning renovation.

The full-time job is a slower pace than he’s used to and offers a camaraderie and fulfillment like no other.

When new residents arrive to the facility’s 10-bed end-of-life residence, he gets to know them and what food they like and dislike before personally shopping for fresh produce to create their favourite meals.

The meals are entirely up to the residents to decide: He’ll make rich comfort food, if requested, or a healthy fish dinner with a side of salad. He says he works closely with the personal support workers (PSWs) who also take the meal requests or assist residents in eating.

Whether he’s working with a PSW, nurse, grief counsellor, staff member or trained volunteer, he says everyone is whole-heartedly on the same page to care for the whole person, improve quality of life and enhance comfort.

“We are a real team beyond any team I’ve ever been a part of,” Greg says.



*Greg at home in his kitchen with fresh baked goodies.*

## Feeding the Soul (continued from previous page)

When visitors come through the doors, they're often greeted by the smell of Greg's freshly baked cinnamon rolls, muffins or carrot cakes. His treats, meals and beverages are available to visiting family and loved ones as well as to anyone using the 26 Hospice programs and services such as grief groups, day hospice and groups for children.

He explains that following the pandemic, his job did change a little.

He used to make big batches of homemade soup and garlic bread for the common room where visiting family members would eat together, chat and offer each other support.

New restrictions currently prevent that. He also used to prepare morning snacks and a hot lunch for support groups who met in the building, although the pandemic has forced many groups and services to now meet virtually.

But life will go on after COVID-19 and Greg looks forward to the day when everyone involved with Hospice can congregate again and offer love and support without having to distance.

In the meantime, he remains thankful for his fulfilling job where he can offer comfort and nourishment during end-of-life care.

Since joining Hospice, he has also trained to be a volunteer and, after COVID restrictions lift, he plans to visit the homes of people in palliative care to offer companionship and respite for the caregivers.

As a younger man, he never dreamed his passion for cooking would lead him to this type of job, and these opportunities, but he's thankful that this is where he has landed.

"Hospice has changed my life," he says. "100 per cent."

Written by Elizabeth Bower-Gordon

## New Staffing Made Possible Thanks to Community Foundation of Greater Peterborough Grant

Hospice Peterborough has added a team member thanks to a generous grant from the Community Foundation of Greater Peterborough ([cfgp.ca](http://cfgp.ca)). Elizabeth Bower-Gordon is the new communications support assistant and will work with Hospice until June. Elizabeth is a long-time Peterborough resident who may be best known for working as a reporter at The Peterborough Examiner. She primarily worked the Education and Lifestyles beats and enjoyed writing feature stories that profiled people in the community. After writing a six-part series about the Trent-Severn Waterway, Elizabeth became a finalist for an Ontario Newspaper Award (ONA) in feature writing and the series was turned into the book *Trent-Severn Waterway: Then and Now*, which has sold more than 3,000 copies. Over the years,



Elizabeth Bower-Gordon

Elizabeth has also worked as a freelance writer and content coordinator for the Peterborough magazine Neighbours of the Old West End in which she again profiled community members and aimed to strengthen local neighbourhoods. After recently completing a post-graduate degree in professional Communications at York University, Elizabeth is now embarking on a second career. She is thrilled to join the team at Hospice Peterborough, where she has volunteered since September.



**Community  
Foundation**  
of Greater Peterborough

*Here to help...*

You don't have to face death and grief alone.

**Hospice Peterborough**  
**705-742-4042**

## Heartwarming Stories of Community Caring

Marion Pollard was used to going out and keeping busy. The 85-year-old great grandmother was a self-proclaimed 'social person' – an avid shopper, a member of multiple Bridge clubs, and lover of food enjoyed with girlfriends and family.

When the pandemic hit, that all stopped rather abruptly. Suddenly finding herself stuck at home, she turned to her lifelong hobby of knitting.

For many years she has donated mittens to the Northminster United Church's Mitten Tree – a long standing tradition where annually up to 500 pairs of mittens are collected on a tree in the church's front entry. The mittens are then distributed to local schools to ensure every child has warm hands through the cold winters.

This year, with an abundance of mittens, Marion's daughter had an idea.

"My daughter Julie said, 'You should try selling those, they're beautiful!'" And Julie suggested she show the mittens to her book club.

"They completely overwhelmed me with the number of mittens they bought, I just could not believe how many they bought!"

The mittens ended up raising \$370, approximately 37 pairs of mittens, and Marion decided she would donate the money.

Although never using Hospice Peterborough's services,

she understands the importance of the work; from diagnosis through to death and grief, Hospice Peterborough supports individuals of all ages. And thanks to support from people like Marion, these programs and services are all offered at no charge to the

recipient! Twenty –six programs and services are offered to the community, from assistance navigating palliative care options, to art therapy for children who have experienced a loss, are offered in the newly-built 16,000 square foot, home-like Hospice Peterborough building at 325 London St.

"I'm sure they will make good use of it."

So what's next for Marion? "Well I got a little bit tired of knitting mittens, so I've already started in the new year to croquet tuques!" she laughs. "You will probably hear from me again next year!"



Marion in her home with her trusty wool and needles.

"We thank Marion for her generous spirit through these difficult times," says Hospice executive director Hajni Hős. "A pandemic only intensifies the need for our services of grief groups, day hospice and an end-of-life residence – all of which are offered free of charge and depend on the generosity of the community, and people like Marion, to continue."

Interested in supporting the work of Hospice Peterborough? Become a monthly donor and your consistent donations will allow us to continue helping local people. [Click here.](#)

## Treescape and Canadian Tire Lansdowne Help Light Up Hospice for the Holidays



Thank you to **Treescape Certified Arborists** and **Canadian Tire—Lansdowne St** for making our holiday tree lighting possible.

We repeatedly heard how much people loved seeing this memorable tree when driving past and coming into the building. One person told us this beautiful tree was a source for comfort for her and over the holidays whenever she was feeling sad, it would cheer her up by driving by to see the tree.

Thank you for bringing a little light into everyone's day.



# GRIEF 101.

The Basics of Grief

Grieving a Death During COVID-19

Living with Grief

Grief & the Holidays

AVAILABLE FOR FREE ON  
OUR YOUTUBE CHANNEL



## YouTube Resources

We have recently created a playlist on YouTube where all of our resources for grieving have been grouped together. Search Hospice Peterborough on YouTube, or click the photo to the left to access these resources.

These videos are free for use and to share with those who benefit from them.

## Making Connections (and wreaths!) During a COVID Christmas



Christmas looked very different at Hospice this year with our community programs running virtually. Our Day Hospice Women's Group decided to celebrate together by having an afternoon of virtual crafting.

One of our amazing volunteers put together kits so each woman could create a unique tabletop decoration or wreath and our chef Greg added some holiday treats for each of the women to enjoy.

Yes, it was very different, but there was laughter and holiday cheer filling the Zoom room on that afternoon.



*The Day Hospice Women's Group wreaths craft helped members find connection and laughter amidst the pandemic.*



## How you can help

When you donate to Hospice Peterborough you are supporting 26 programs and services.

Please consider making your gift today.

**YES, I want to support vital hospice palliative care!**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount:

\$50  \$75  \$100  \$200  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to make my gift by:

Cheque (payable to Hospice Peterborough)

Visa  MasterCard  AMEX

Card #: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to be an anonymous donor

This gift is in memory of:

\_\_\_\_\_

For your safety, and the safety of our residence and staff, please consider donating online, or through the mail. We appreciate your understanding.

**Registered Charity No. 11947 8964 RR0001**

Tax receipts will be issued for donations of \$20 or more.

**Donate online at [hospicepeterborough.org](http://hospicepeterborough.org)**

**THANK YOU!**

**Donors make our care possible!**

## HOSPICE PETERBOROUGH Circle of Caring

MONTHLY GIVING PROGRAM

### Join the Circle of Caring!

Our monthly donors provide stability and set Hospice Peterborough up for long-term success and sustainability.

Right now all monthly donor's contributions are being matched, meaning you **double your impact!**

**[You can learn more and sign up for monthly giving here](#)**



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