



HOSPICE HIGHLIGHTER

February 2026

Nurse at Hospice Peterborough completes new honour guard quilt



If you've said good bye to a loved one at hospice, you may be familiar with the "honour guard quilt"—the hospice-branded quilt that is draped over residents as they make their final exit from the building. When this quilt was beginning to show its age, Sarah Hyland-Daniel, a nurse in our residence, set out to create a new one.

"This is my second quilt I've ever made," Sarah shares. When her manager asked if she wanted to craft the next quilt, Sarah responded: "Why not?"

Butterflies have been long used as a symbol for loss and palliative care. For many, they represent not only transformation, but the ways loved ones show up in our lives long after they are gone. Naturally, Sarah felt butterflies were a fitting theme for the quilt.

Walking us through the process of making the quilt, Sarah started: "We found a butterfly-themed quilt that was a kit, but it just didn't fit our colour schemes."

So, at an all-employee meeting in the Fall of 2025, staff members cut out butterfly shapes in colours that reflected brand colours. This way, each staff person could participate in making the quilt. "It means more when you're all involved in the process of it," Sarah says.



Top: Nurse Sarah Hyland-Daniel working on the new hospice quilt.

Bottom: Hospice staff lend a helping hand to the quilt's creation by cutting out fabric butterflies.

She then used appliqué to sew the butterflies onto the base fabric. During quieter moments in the residence during the holiday season, Sarah and other hospice staff would cut out shapes that would eventually make up the final product. She continued working away on it on her days off, adding: "I just like being crafty and busy."

There were unexpected challenges, but Sarah persisted. She originally intended the base fabric to be all white, but a measuring error led to her decision to add a green border at the bottom of the quilt. Despite the error, Sarah was happy with the colourful outcome. "I feel like the green is very grounding," she says.

Sarah notes that the role of quilts at hospice is "really impactful." She expands: "They're on every single bed, which creates an environment of home. It's more cozy and peaceful. And each one is different and unique." Sarah shared that sometimes she and the other residence staff will change a bed's quilt upon learning more about a resident's story, taking note of favourite colours and patterns when residents share their preferences: "We find a quilt that we think will suit them."

This new quilt will play an important role in the honour guard: a hospice ceremony that families can choose after their loved one dies. It's a moving procession in which a resident leaves the building, with their family following behind, often to the sound of their favourite song. It's not uncommon for staff and volunteers to join in on the ceremony to witness and pay respects during the final goodbye. Rather than opting for a white sheet to cover the person, Sarah said that the quilt is "kind of like the last bit of respect we can offer the family. [...] They have something beautiful with them until they leave our care."

Sarah feels a little sad now that the quilt project is over. "Now what do I do?" she jokes. The crafty hospice nurse said the process was fun: "I looked forward to doing it on my days off."

When asked for final thoughts on what impact she hopes the quilt will have now that it is complete, Sarah expanded on the meaning behind the quilt's imagery:

"The butterflies are leaving our logo which is an image of people together. It's like their family members are leaving, but they're going to spend time with other family members...and other butterflies. I hope they see that."

Thank you, Sarah, for sharing your time and quilting talents with us!



Former client and volunteer Christine shares heartfelt thank you to donors who read her letter

Over the past couple of months, you may have read a letter from Christine Mackey, a former client and volunteer who shared her experience receiving support from Hospice Peterborough as she navigated the loss of her 20-year-old son Patrick, and said goodbye to her father while he was in Hospice's care.

In response to that letter, Hospice Peterborough received a record-breaking number of donations. These donations mean that Hospice Peterborough can continue providing essential support to people facing life-threatening illness and grief. Your donations help keep the residence a beautiful and comfortable place for families to say goodbye to those they love, you make a variety of free programs and services possible.

In a short video, Christine expressed her deep gratitude for the donations that have been made in response to her letter. She shares: "Thank you for supporting this deeply important work. Thank you for caring for people you may never meet. Thank you for ensuring that people like me can receive crucial support during life's most difficult moments. This truly means everything."



“Thank you for supporting this deeply important work. Thank you for caring for people you may never meet. Thank you for ensuring that people like me can receive crucial support during life’s most difficult moments. This truly means everything.” – Christine

Former client and current volunteer Christine, who recently shared a letter on the impact of Hospice Peterborough.

“A way to stay connected”: Get to know the Hospice Peterborough Book Club



Hospice Peterborough book club co-leaders (from left) Nancy, Mary Ann, and Mary Lou.

Four times a year on a Friday morning, a lively group of volunteers and people connected to the Hospice Peterborough community gather for a book club. But this isn't your average book club.

At other book clubs, one might expect to find members discussing character development in titles off the latest New York Times bestseller list. However, the members of Hospice Peterborough's Book Club dare to dive deeper, discussing topics often deemed taboo – death, dying, illness, and grief – and relating them to their own experiences. The *Hospice Highlighter* was delighted to sit down with the Club's co-leaders Mary Lou, Mary Ann, and Nancy to learn more about that makes the club so special and learn more about why you should join their next meeting.

“Book clubs are usually intellectual,” starts Mary Lou, who's been involved with the book club since its inception in 2020, “quite often in our book club we get into the emotional part.”

Mary Ann agrees. One of the first criteria for choosing a book for the club is that it is “more emotional.” A former front desk and residence volunteer, Mary Ann appreciates that the book club has become a way for her to stay connected to the work of hospice when she is not immersed in the work itself.

For Nancy, this quality of distance from hospice work, but connection to it, is crucial: “When you're involved with hospice volunteering, it's very much in the moment and responding to where the needs are,” she reflects, “whereas with the book club and with the book, you can kind of stand back and get greater perspective. Reading a book [...] gives you an opportunity to reflect on ‘what was going on there?’”

Though the group began meeting monthly, the shift to four-times-a-year came about after the group had already read many of the major titles in the genre, *Being Mortal* by Atul Gawande and *When Breath Becomes Air* by Paul Kalanithi to name a couple. Plus, a less frequent meeting meant more people could commit to joining without the pressures of reading a new book each month.

When choosing a book for the club, the group trusts word-of-mouth and recommendations from other hospice volunteers, even a list Hospice Palliative Care Ontario has crafted, further exploring titles that include “helpful information and facts, [...] discussion points,” says Mary Ann. Books must be “well-written and believable,” and have “enjoyable stories and examples,” she adds.

When asked to share some of their favourite books, there is some discussion, however, consensus is found on a few titles as their favourites:

- *Hope for the Best, Plan for the Rest* by Sammy Winemaker and Hsien Seow
- *With the End in Mind* by Kathryn Mannix
- and *Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters at the End* by Atul Gawande

"It's a warm, friendly, open group, and everyone is welcome," Mary Ann emphasizes "If you don't have time to read [the book], you don't necessarily have to," adds Mary Lou, noting that if most participants have read the book, you're still okay to join, listen and participate in the discussion the book inspires, even if you didn't finish it.

"There's a number of people I have connected with who have had someone die here," Nancy shares, "and they want to have a continued involvement," the book club could provide that extended connection and sense of community.

If you're interested in joining the Hospice Peterborough Book Club, please contact BJ Ross at bross@hospicepeterborough.org or 705-742-4042 ext. 224.

February's meeting will focus on *Smoke Gets in Your Eyes: And Other Tales from the Crematory* by Caitlin Doughty, while April's meeting (April 17) will focus on *After You* by Jojo Moyes.



A few titles the book club has discussed at previous meetings.

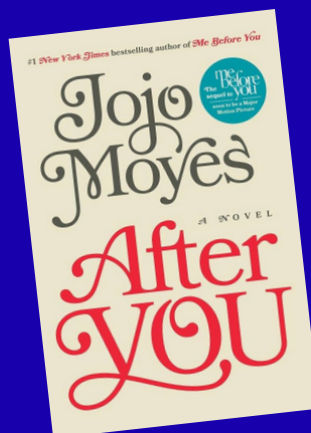
April 2026 Book

*Hospice Peterborough
Book Club*

10-11am

Friday, April 17, 2026

Participants can attend in-person at Hospice Peterborough or via Zoom



Hospice Book Club is a warm, open group with a shared interest, and anyone connected to Hospice is welcome to participate!

For more information or to register, please contact BJ Ross: bross@hospicepeterborough.org or 705-742-4042 ext. 224

"After you" by Jojo Moyes



New program!

Grief Support Groups for Teens & Young Adults

Free dinner provided!

Grieving teens (ages 17-18):
1st & 3rd Wednesdays of the month | 6-7:30pm

Grieving young adults (ages 19-25):
2nd & 4th Wednesdays of the month | 6-7:30pm

Location: Hospice Peterborough.
Starts February 2026.



To register, please scan the QR code.

You can also email intake@hospicepeterborough.org or call 705-742-4042 ext. 251 to confirm your spot.



Hospice volunteer Carolee.

Hospice Peterborough volunteer Carolee is offering free Advanced Care Planning (ACP) education for your organization! Book a session today.

What is Advanced Care Planning (ACP) important?

- ACP is a way to help you, and your substitute decision-maker (SDM) prepare for your future health care needs
- ACP helps your SDM learn more about your health issues, values and priorities in case they need to make decisions for you in the future
- ACP conversations you have today will make it easier for your SDM(s) in the future so they don't have to guess at your wishes in the middle of a difficult time.

What types of organizations and groups would benefit from ACP education?

- Retirement homes
 - Seniors Centres
 - Libraries
 - Church groups
-are just a few examples!

Get in touch!

If your organization is interested in booking a free Advanced Care Planning presentation from Carolee, please email admin@hospicepeterborough.org



WHAT NOW?

On the threshold of life, death and grief.

WITH JULIE BROWN, RED KEATING AND DAVID KENNEDY



Spotlight on a recent *What Now?* episode:

AFTER THE FIRST WAVES: WIDOWHOOD, GRIEF, AND LIFE FIVE YEARS ON



The hosts welcome Dr. Jan Hux, a retired physician and past CEO of Diabetes Canada. Jan's husband Edwin died in 2020. Jan reflects on the past 5 years and candidly explores the challenges of spousal death and the transition to a life in which Edwin is physically absent.

She shares with clarity some of the surprises, both difficult and healing that she encountered along the way. What shines through is the genuine love Jan and Edwin shared, and still do.

HEAR THE FULL EPISODE...   

www.what-now.buzzsprout.com

Hospice Norwood in partnership with
Hospice Peterborough presents...

Making Space for Grief: Learning & Creating Together

at Westwood Public Library
312 Centre Line, Westwood, ON

March 10th, 2026
9:30 am - 3 pm



Register Here



This FREE day includes:

- Information on how our brains and bodies respond to grief
- An opportunity to create a unique arts based project
- Time for both interaction and private reflection
- Lunch and snacks



For more information, contact
Edna at Hospice Norwood:
705-660-3737
Register at Eventbrite.



Kinsmen Club of Peterborough & Kinsmen Super TV Bingo donate \$5,000 to Hospice Peterborough



Hospice Peterborough was deeply grateful to once again receive a \$5,000 donation at the Kinsmen Club of Peterborough's Annual Founders' Night Dinner on February 18, 2026.

Kinsmen Club of Peterborough Vice-President and Chair Bob Hall (pictured) shared that the donation was made in memory of club members who have died over the years to honour their legacies. Funds were raised through the Kinsmen Super TV Bingo fundraiser, which will donate an impressive \$750,000 to initiatives across East Central Ontario in 2026.

Thank you Kinsmen Club of Peterborough & Kinsmen Super TV Bingo for this incredibly generous support and for all the ways you support our community and beyond!

Support Hospice Peterborough

YES, I want to support vital hospice palliative care!

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Postal Code: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Please contact me to discuss my legacy gift, or gift in a will, to Hospice Peterborough.

Donate online at hospicepeterborough.org
Or mail to 325 London St Peterborough, ON K9H 2Z5

Registered Charity No.
11947 8964 RR00019

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



325 London Street
Peterborough, ON K9H 2Z5
705-742-4042
admin@hospicepeterborough.org

Let's
Connect!



@hospiceptbo



@HospicePeterborough



@hospiceptbo

Amount:

\$50 \$75 \$100 \$200

Other: _____

I would like to make my gift by:

Cheque (payable to Hospice Peterborough)

Visa MasterCard AMEX

One-time donation Monthly donation

Card #: _____

Expiry Date: _____

CVV: _____

I would like to be an anonymous donor

This gift is in memory of:
