



**Cranbrook ♥ Kimberley
HOSPICE SOCIETY**

Hands that Serve | Hearts that Care

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Bereavement Talk/ Volunteer Business Meeting

June 16, 2025

9:00 -12:00

Bereavement Talk 9:00 – hosted by Francine Guerrette-Smith

Attendance: Francine, Cheryl T, Anne, Mark C, Jackie J, Judi & George W, Kim L, Marla T, Rikki D, Brian Clarkson, Chris O, Jeff W, Carolyn

Francine wanted to talk about one-on-one companioning, and see if anyone has anything to share or wants to talk about.

Francine and Brian shared that they see a couple individually for bereavement support. It is a complex grief situation where 3 losses have occurred within the family in the last couple of years. It has been 2 months since their last visit and now these clients don't answer texts or calls. They could be possibly overwhelmed with their grief and are just not ready to use our services. Francine and Brian reminded the group that we can't take it personally as we don't know the stage of grief they are going through. They will continue to reach out to the couple and remind them that they are available to help when needed.

We've discussed and affirmed that there's no set timeline for bereavement, and we'll continue to support our clients for as long as they need us. We encourage our team to discern if a client still requires our services once they reach the one-year mark.

Francine shared the following poem:

“In our darkest moments, we don’t need solutions or advice. What we yearn for is simply human connection—a quiet presence, a gentle touch. These small gestures are the anchors that hold us steady when life feels like too much.

Please don’t try to fix me. Don’t take on my pain or push away my shadows. Just sit beside me as I work through my own inner storms. Be the steady hand I can reach for as I find my way.

My pain is mine to carry, my battles mine to face. But your presence reminds me I’m not alone in this vast, sometimes frightening world. It’s a quiet reminder that I am worthy of love, even when I feel broken.

So, in those dark hours when I lose my way, will you just be here? Not as a rescuer, but as a companion. Hold my hand until the dawn arrives, helping me remember my strength.

Your silent support is the most precious gift you can give. It’s a love that helps me remember who I am, even when I forget.”

Ernest Hemingway

BSG for Substance Abuse

Francine and Judi Watson were hoping to see a BSG started for substance abuse in the fall or near future. Due to the drug epidemic currently happening everywhere, we need to do our part and attempt to support those that are grieving the loss of a loved ones due to substance abuse. Discussion was held about implementing helpful materials pertaining to drug abuse into our existing bereavement support group manual. Resources are available through Dr. Wolfelt’s material and possibly from the ‘Mom’s Stop the Harm” group.

Marla, Cheryl C, Rikki and Chris have all expressed interest in being part of this Initiative. Francine has found a helpful resource called “Gone to Soon – Navigating Grief and Loss as a result of substance use” copies will be available in the office library.

When we are confident, we have the right tools to assist with this specific type of grief, planning and advertising of the groups will occur. Question was posed if we want to include suicide BSG as well.

Walk & Talk Program

Cheryl Crich will be working with Mike Jensen on the "Walk and Talk program". Drawing inspiration from a professor at Mount Royal University that focuses on nature walks and grief support. Cheryl is enthusiastic about implementing some innovative changes. The most significant shift will be in participant eligibility. Previously, the program was restricted to individuals who had completed a BSG. Under Cheryl and Mike's leadership, the "Walk and Talk program" will now be open to anyone who wishes to attend, fostering a more inclusive and accessible environment. This change is directly inspired by the positive outcomes observed in an Alberta-based "Walk and Talk" initiative that thrives on broad community participation.

She shared what works in Alberta:

- ❖ Participants need to register
- ❖ Setting guidelines at the beginning of the sessions in regards to privacy, thanking participants for the courage and strength to even come to the sessions
- ❖ Small fee would be initiated
- ❖ Having 2-3 volunteers guide a walk with 15 clients works for them
- ❖ Finding the correct schedule that works for the majority of participants, for example weekends do not necessarily work
- ❖ Changing the walk routes acknowledging that the walk is now different from once they first started- as does grief overtime
- ❖ Sunlight walks
- ❖ Participants will sometimes choose to become a volunteer

Once more details are worked out the program will be advertised. The goal is to have it running hopefully for the fall.

Bereavement Training consisting of 4 modules for new volunteers will most likely occur in October.

Volunteer Business Meeting

Attendance: Marla, Suzanne, Jeff, Cheryl T, Cheryl C, Diane K, Greg R, Feather B, Jenn G, Anne, Zena, George, Judi, Cindy, Mark W, Mark C, Kim, Chris, Brian, Francine, Jackie, Thea, Bobbi, Karolyn

Board update

Chair, George Watson commented on the great turn out for the volunteer meeting! It's been our highest attended meeting thus far!!! It's been fantastic to see the positive and bright changes that have occurred over the last year. We had a successful dinner and silent auction fundraiser last year and have formed an amazing steering committee of great community leaders working on our hospice house project. CKHS is heading in a positive direction!

East Kootenay Foundation for Health (EKFH) has made us the main focus for fundraising for the next couple of years! Brenna Hong will be making this community announcement July 18th at a charity golf tournament benefiting our future Hospice House. Projected donations from this fundraiser can be anywhere from \$40,000 - \$80,000. This is beyond huge!!!!!! We can't thank Brenna and EKFH enough for their support. With EKFH involvement the dream of a Hospice House will become a reality much sooner than planned. As George says "*This is not just a vision anymore*". We are still waiting on confirmed land donation unfortunately, but hope to make an announcement soon. Due to our exciting partnership with EKFH we will be cancelling our planned dinner and silent auction scheduled for November 15, 2025 and instead will be assisting EKFH with their annual Starlight Gala November 1, 2025 as we will receive all proceeds from this event. This makes sense as EKFH and CKHS would be seeking donations from the same donors. We may re-book our event for the spring of 2026.

CKHS contacts have been made with Ktunaxa nation, Cranbrook Ministerial association, Physician association and David Wilks. All have been asked to support our hospice house project.

George described how valuable it has been to work with the Home Health Palliative team weekly. He noticed a couple of weeks ago how sad it seemed in the room of health care professionals, this brought forth the reminder of self-care. The services we provide are not always easy and we need to remember to take care of ourselves when we are feeling overwhelmed or burnt out. Please remember if you need to talk to someone reach out to your loved ones, friends and fellow volunteers. We need to support each other, as we are a TEAM!

The Farmers market held June 7 was successful. This was a first for CKHS. Thank you to Jeff Williams and George and Judi Watson for attending on behalf of CKHS. Lots of people stopped by our booth for information and were happy to take one or two of our many brochures. Next Farmers market will be Saturday, July 5th hopefully. Confirmation will not be made until Monday June 30th. If you think you may be able to help July 5th, please let Karolyn know.

George shared that a very impromptu FUN fundraiser was held June 14th & 15th at the Cranbrook Golf course. Long story short 2 long time buddies (friend A and friend B) were golfing, and one of them thought the other desperately needed a haircut and asked what would it take for them to get a haircut. Friend B said raise a \$1000. Challenge accepted over the 2-day event.... \$2805.00 was raised and donated to our Hospice House Building Account! Many thanks to Karl McConnell for being such a great sport!!!!

Many thanks to McPherson's for hosting the lunch today, they are so supportive of CKHS and the services we provide. If you see any of the staff around town that you might know, please let them know how much they are appreciated.

Education Update

Seven new volunteers have successfully graduated from primary hospice training! Please welcome Judy Morrison, Greg Ross, Feather Bertrand, James Dumas, Judith Sinclair, Cheryl Crich, and Kayla McKinley to CKHS! All new volunteers wish to be client facing volunteers, thank you as you are all much needed. We are happy to have you join our team!!

Marla commented that overall, our first attempt at providing the first 3 primary training modules online was successful. We are still waiting on more feedback as to how we can improve from some of the new volunteers.

Jeff suggested that the online versions need to be more interactive should we continue to use them going forward. Jeff feels the first 3 modules maybe shouldn't be offered online. Online training is currently not being used at some of the hospice organizations that Karolyn contacted.

Office Admin Update for June

Current Statistical Information:

61 members

16 volunteers for Kimberley (12 client facing and 3 for fundraising, 1 for music therapy)

45 volunteers for Cranbrook (31 client facing, 6 members, 5 board members, 3 fundraising only)

Volunteer hours for:

April = 318 hours (28 reporters)

May = 360 hours (31 reporters)

Kimberley Clients = 18 clients

Cranbrook Clients = 47 clients with 2 on hold

19 of our clients have completed their palliative journeys in 2025.

May Intake=3

June=3

Notable information:

- We have been approved for a grant from the Kootenay Community Foundation for \$650
- Music care program is up and running again led by Marty Musser. Marty stopped in the office to introduce himself, and said he will be playing at the Pines, maybe the Green Home and JCV.
- The board approved that we should only be keeping client records as long as needed. Client records will be kept for 1 plus a calendar year.

PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE

Let the office or your coordinator know if you have something notable to share about your client. For example:

- ❖ Decline in health
- ❖ They have passed away
- ❖ They no longer want our services or
- ❖ They want our services but not right now
- ❖ You as the volunteer think that you may not be the right fit for each other.

New Parking Procedure for EKRH

If you have an old parking pass, please return it to switchboard. The new process is that they track volunteers and staff by your license plate number. If you want to be identified as a volunteer to park at EKH, please email leo.liang@interiorhealth.ca at Interior Health. They need your name and you can have them record a maximum of 2 license plate numbers per volunteer.

Policy and Procedures Guide/CKHS Bylaws

While it is slow in the office I am working on updating our P & P guide. Lots of antiquated data needs to be updated and edited. I will be asking the board for approval.

I will be meeting with George to review our bylaws.

Volunteer Survey

Volunteer survey returns have been poor, with less than 50% of our membership replying (24 in total) Hard copies were provided at meeting, please take time to make your opinion be heard. All responses are confidential. Deadline extended to June 27th. Marla Taylor and Judi Watson will provide follow-up.

Future Volunteer Meetings for 2025/2026

She has made the suggestion that we start to have alternating CKHS volunteer meetings and specific town volunteer meetings.

For example:

September & November (All member meeting for both Cranbrook and Kimberley volunteers with alerting locations)

October & December (Kimberley hosts their own and Cranbrook hosts their own)

No one objected so we will trial this new process.

Administration roles - Volunteers and Office

Marla made a suggestion that we need to have clarified “job” descriptions for both office administration duties and what volunteers are responsible for, this would include:

- Volunteer liaison

- Education coordinator
- Intake coordinator
- BSG leader
- New volunteer BSG leader

Board will discuss and review at next board meeting.

Bereavement Update

Please refer to bereavement minutes from pages 1-3 of this document. Francine reminded us all that if we are keeping private and confidential information at home to shred any information when not needed. There is also a shredder at the office if you wish to dispose of information there. Please be mindful of sharing information with others about your clients. It would reflect poorly on the work we do and our society as a whole if we are not diligent in safe guarding our client information. It is ok to let others know in the community that you are a hospice volunteer (BE PROUD) if you wish to, but we should never tell people who are clients are, if they want to share the information that is up to them.

Suggested Children's Grief education for continued education is being explored.

Next meeting:

Will be September 22 in Kimberley at McPhersons 10:00 am -12:00pm, as discussed in earlier minutes this will be an all-volunteer meeting for both Cranbrook and Kimberley volunteers.