Newsletter | Fall 2026

HOSPICE HAPPENINGS

The Hospice Sweethearts | HOSPICE HEART STORY

A Final Chapter of Love

Our parents, Carol and Tom, were two of the most loving, selfless, and amazing people we have ever known. They loved their family, their friends, and, most of all, each other.

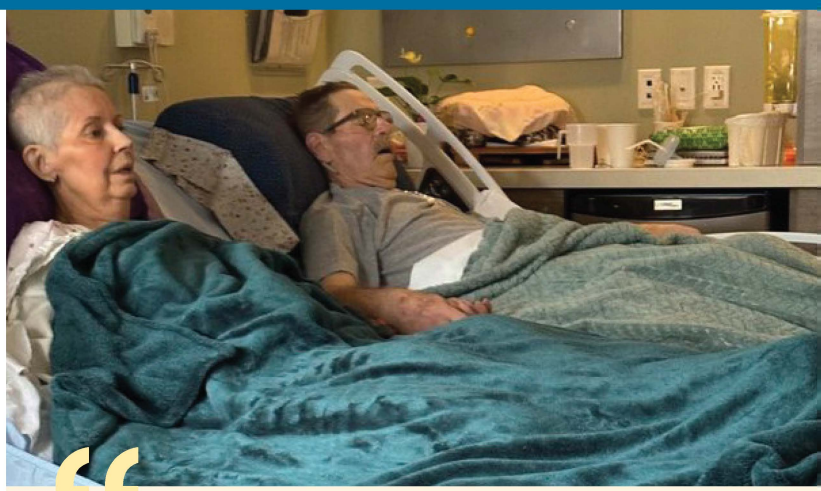
Both grew up on farms in Chatham-Kent, where they learned the value of hard work, perseverance, and taking care of one another. They married on January 21, 1977—Mom was 19 and Dad was 23—and spent the next 48 years building a life and family together.

Mom, Carol Ann Eleanor Richmond, was born September 1, 1957. She was a daughter, sister, wife, mother, grandmother, aunt, and friend, but to those closest to her, she was simply someone who was always there. She had a kind and generous heart, an empathetic ear, and the best hugs. As children, we remember her volunteering at school and daycare and being the neighbourhood mom who always had homemade snacks and welcomed extra kids into our home.

Dad, Harvey Thomas Eves—known to everyone as Tom—was born August 13, 1953. He was supportive, kind-hearted, goofy, and quick to laugh. He worked hard to provide for his family but always made time for our sporting events, recitals, Scouts and Girl Guides. He was also the biggest kid of all, happily building forts, starting snowball fights, playing yard games, and splashing in the pool with us.

Together, Mom and Dad taught us that hard work matters, that anything is possible when you are willing to put in the effort, and that you should never give up on your dreams. Above all, they taught us to love and care for one another.

In May 2024, our family's world changed when Mom was diagnosed with cancer. After numerous appointments, we learned that her cancer was palliative. She tried treatment because she wasn't ready to leave. She wanted more time with her family and friends and to watch her grandchildren grow.



> ***For our family, Hospice provided something we never expected: it gave us our parents back. After months of being caregivers, we could once again simply be their children. We could visit, laugh, share stories, make memories, and love them without constantly worrying about whether we were doing enough.***

By November, Mom's health was declining rapidly, and she decided to stop treatment. Then, in December, Dad's health began to deteriorate. In early January, we learned that he also had cancer and was palliative.

When Mom realized Dad was sick too, she knew it was time to consider Hospice. She worried that caring for both of them at home was becoming too much for the family.

In February, while taking Dad to his first oncology appointment, we received a call that a Hospice bed was available for Mom. That day, she moved into Hospice. The following day, Dad visited her and immediately decided that he wanted to be there too.

HEART STORY | Continued...

The next day, a room across the hall from Mom became available. Dad moved in without hesitation. He could be with Mom every day, and they could both be cared for. It was exactly where he wanted to be.

Our parents loved Hospice.

The staff and volunteers became an important part of their lives. Dad loved joking with the nurses, talking hockey, and indulging his sweet tooth. He especially loved the "special ice cream button," which brought ice cream not only for him but for the grandchildren too.



Mom loved having her nails painted, cuddling therapy dogs, enjoying the courtyard, and getting to know the staff. She would tell us stories about them and how wonderful they were.

The people caring for our parents became people our parents cared about too.

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After five weeks, Dad passed peacefully with Mom holding his hand and all of his children gathered around him. The Hospice staff even arranged the room so Mom could be beside him during his final moments and gave Dad a beautiful walk of honour as we said goodbye.

Five weeks later, Mom joined him and received an equally beautiful farewell.



During their time at Hospice, the staff affectionately called them the "Hospice Sweethearts." At first, the words seemed both beautiful and heartbreaking. But they were perfect.

After 48 years of marriage, our parents spent their final weeks exactly as they had spent their lives: Together.

Hospice could not take away the heartbreak of losing them. But it transformed their final chapter. Instead of being defined only by illness and fear, those weeks were filled with visitors, laughter, games, ice cream, hugs, stories, and love.

Hospice gave our parents comfort, dignity, companionship, and precious time together. It gave our family a safe place to gather and allowed us to be a family instead of caregivers.

For that gift, we will be forever grateful.

Whenever we hear "Hospice Sweethearts," we will think not of tragedy, but of two people who spent nearly half a century loving one another and were given the beautiful gift of being together until the very end.

Thank you to the staff, volunteers, physicians, administration, supporters, and donors of Hospice. You gave our parents—and our entire family—a truly special gift.

Shared by Noelle in loving memory of her Mom and Dad.

SUPPORTIVE CARE |

A Season of Connection, Compassion, and Care



As the holiday season approaches, many of us look forward to traditions, gatherings, and time with the people we love. Yet for those experiencing illness, anticipatory grief, or bereavement, this time of year can also bring a mixture of emotions. Joy and sorrow often sit close together, and it's completely natural to feel both.

At hospice, we know that there is no single way to experience grief and bereavement, especially through the holidays.

For someone nearing the end of life, holidays may be an opportunity to create meaningful moments together — sharing a favourite meal, listening to familiar music, looking through old photographs, or simply sitting quietly with the people who matter most. Some families find it comforting to focus on small, manageable moments rather than trying to recreate every tradition. Others choose one meaningful ritual to honour together, allowing the rest of the season to unfold gently.

For those grieving, the holidays may feel different this year. Traditions can carry both comfort and sadness. There may be an empty chair at the table, a familiar voice that is missing, or moments when joy and grief exist side by side. Many people find it helpful to plan ahead for these tender moments — choosing which gatherings feel supportive, creating a quiet space to step away if emotions rise, or lighting a candle to honour the person who is dearly missed. There is room for all of it.

We encourage families to give themselves permission to celebrate in ways that feel right for them. That might mean keeping traditions, changing them, creating new ones, saying no to some invitations, or finding small moments of connection that bring comfort. It can also help to set gentle expectations, communicate openly with loved ones, and build in small practices that support emotional wellbeing — a daily walk, a grounding breath, a moment of reflection, or writing down one memory that brings you warmth.

Sometimes, the most meaningful gift we can offer one another is simply our presence. A phone call. A cup of tea. A listening ear. A willingness to sit with someone without needing to make their grief better. Even brief moments of connection can help soften the weight of the season.

Over the coming weeks, we invite you to hold a little extra space for yourself and for others. Be gentle with what this season may bring and remember that you do not have to navigate grief alone. Chatham-Kent Hospice's Community & Supportive Care services are here for you. Keep a lookout for upcoming holiday support groups, including Coping with Grief Through the Holidays, or give us a call to talk about what type of grief support feels right for you.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

GRIEF AND BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT
Coping with Grief through the Holidays
Wallaceburg: Wednesday, December 2
Chatham: Thursday, December 3
Blenheim: Friday, December 4
Tilbury: Monday, December 7
Bothwell: Tuesday, December 8

Moments Matter:
Memorial Ornament Making
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10

Grief Café Holiday Edition
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 15

Photos with Santa at the
Glasshouse Nursery and Garden Centre
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 26

Holiday Market at the Moose Lodge
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 28

Tilbury Lions Christmas Light Festival
NOVEMBER 27 TO JANUARY 8

"Embracing the End of Life"
Book Launch Celebration
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6

Pickleball for Hospice
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6

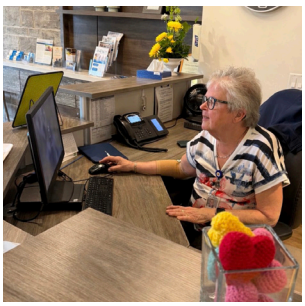
Friends of Chatham Gathering
SATURDAY, MARCH 13

Chatham-Kent Hospice

Learn more about these and other events at:

www.chathamkenthospicecom/upcoming-events

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT | A Warm Welcome



At Chatham-Kent Hospice, we often say that our reception desk is the welcome to our home—a place where calm, clarity, and compassion meet every person who walks through our doors. It is the first space families encounter, and often the one that gently sets the tone for their visit. Our Reception Volunteers play a meaningful role in creating this sense of comfort and steadiness each day.

Reception Volunteers provide more than information—they provide reassurance, presence, and a warm point of connection during moments that can feel overwhelming. A friendly greeting, a calm voice on the phone, or a thoughtful offer of support can ease a family's worries in ways that are quietly profound.

If you enjoy helping others, staying organized, and being part of a supportive and compassionate team, this role offers a chance to make a genuine difference. You'll learn new skills, support families and visitors, and help ensure our hospice remains a place where people feel cared for from the moment they arrive.

Your time at our reception desk helps make our hospice feel welcoming, steady, and truly like home.

CORNHOLE FOR HOSPICE BEATS THE WINTER BLUES



Looking for summer fun in the middle of winter? We have just the thing!

Beat the winter blues with a fun day of friendly competition at the 4th annual Cornhole for Hospice taking place Saturday, February 20, 2027, at the John D. Bradley Convention Centre. Open to players of all abilities, Cornhole for Hospice offers participants a full day of good company and good competition for a great cause.

After registering a team of two, players collect pledges for their chance to win prizes. That means that even if your cornhole skills won't lead you to the championship, collecting pledges still gives you a chance to leave a winner. Pledge earners have the chance to win a set of custom cornhole boards valued at $600 and other great prizes. The more pledges you earn, the more chances you have to win, and all money raised through the event stays right here in Chatham-Kent to support end-of-life care and grief and bereavement services offered at Chatham-Kent Hospice.

When it's time to compete, teams are guaranteed three games in a random round robin style tournament before teams are split into two divisions with Pool A – the Best of the Best – competing in a double elimination tournament and Pool B – affectionately named the Best of the Rest – competing in a single elimination tournament. The winning team of each division receives a cash prize.

During the event everyone in attendance has the opportunity to participate in a 50/50 draw and the ever-popular, nail-biting, Airmail competition where players try their luck at sinking a bag in the airmail tube – think a "nothing but net", throw but cornhole.

To register, visit www.cornholeforhospiceck.com
Register by December 31, 2026, to take advantage of early bird pricing of $175 for a team before the price increases to $250 in January.

CONTACT US TO LEARN MORE OR DONATE:

Chatham-Kent Hospice
FOUNDATION

We are grateful for your support of Chatham-Kent Hospice.

If you would no longer like to receive a copy of this newsletter or wish to receive an electronic version, please let us know:

Email: foundation@chathamkenthospice.com
Phone: 519-354-3113 extension 2403.