

cowichan
hospice



ANNUAL REPORT 2020



~ Winner ~

**BLACK TIE
AWARDS**



BUSINESS • SERVICE • EXCELLENCE

2020 Non-Profit Organization

The House that Love Built is Open

By Christa Fox, Chair, Cowichan Hospice House Task Force

In our homes, our communities and across the world, 2020 was a difficult year. However, there was some light among the clouds in Cowichan. Thanks to your extraordinary support, Cowichan Hospice House opened its doors in November. It is a place where people at the end of life can now find comfort, expert medical care and compassionate support for themselves and their families.

Without your generosity, this extraordinary project would still be only a dream. Thank you for all you have contributed to this achievement.

In spite of the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, construction on Cowichan Hospice House continued on schedule through 2020.

Prior to opening for patients, Island Health Palliative and End-of-Life program leaders, in collaboration with Cowichan Hospice staff, provided two weeks of training for Island Health nurses and staff and Cowichan Hospice staff and volunteers. On the first day of training, 50 people representing every aspect of care, from food services to facility maintenance, participated in a joint Zoom session for a welcome and teachings from Cowichan Tribes Elder Doreen Peter and an orientation to hospice palliative care.

This session laid the groundwork for the cooperation and teamwork so critical to integrated whole-person care, now a foundational part of the culture of Hospice House. Twenty family physicians were also provided separate training in preparation for caring for their patients at Cowichan Hospice House.

As COVID-19 restrictions lessen, Island Health's expert medical staff will continue to focus on easing challenging symptoms while Cowichan Hospice staff and volunteers continue to provide emotional, spiritual and practical support at Cowichan Hospice House. Together, they are helping our families, friends and neighbours live well at the end of life, with those they love close by.

To quote Darlene Vorm, who writes later in this report about her sister's death at Cowichan Hospice House: *I believe the most important work we do in this life is the work required of us as we are leaving, at the end of life. It takes peace and rest and a sense of safety to do that.*

Thank you for helping to make this important work easier with your support for hospice care.

A VIDEO TOUR
of Cowichan
Hospice House
is available [HERE](#)

We are honoured to provide hospice services across the traditional unceded territories of the Cowichan, Malahat, Halalt, Penelikut, Lyackson, Stz'uminus, Lake Cowichan, Pacheedaht and Ditidaht First Nations.

Cover photo courtesy of Island Health





Jamie Goodman, Board President and
Gretchen Hartley, Executive Director

Our Vision

Compassionate,
person-centered,
end-of-life and
bereavement care
available to anyone,
anywhere in the
Cowichan region.

Our Values

Compassion
Respect
Integrity
Collaboration
Honouring Life

Dear Friends,

It is wonderful to look back at the successful opening of Cowichan Hospice House in the midst of a pandemic. Thank you for your contributions to this amazing community achievement!

We raise our hands in gratitude for the resilience of those who seek hospice care and for those who serve them. The pandemic made the death of a loved one more difficult, as visits to people in hospital and in long-term care were necessarily restricted. Grief was made more difficult when families and friends could not gather to care for and console each other, nor to celebrate lives of loved ones in the normal ways of the past.

Hospice volunteers and staff stepped up to adapt services to ensure that no one would have to grieve alone. Telephone calls and FaceTime sessions replaced one-to-one meetings. For others who did wish to meet in person, we used the larger rooms in our community office, with safe COVID protocols. Support groups met both over Zoom and in a large airy rented hall—according to the preferences of participants and following provincial guidelines. It has been an extraordinary time, but hospice care has been adapted and, with your support, responded to the need.

It has been 40 years since Cowichan Hospice was founded (although technically next year will be our 40th AGM), and it is even more fitting that we reflect on all of the care provided to people in our community over those years. Amazing volunteers, dedicated staff and wonderful donors from our community made this care possible.

It is time also to look forward to how we will sustain the care that our community will need in the future, particularly as our population ages. The board recently completed a strategic planning session and plans to consult with our community once again to ensure that we continue to meet the needs of people in Cowichan as we emerge from this pandemic. We are looking forward to connecting with you soon!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jamie Goodman".

Jamie Goodman, Board President

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gretchen Hartley".

Gretchen Hartley, Executive Director



*“ I see the future
as holding more
hope than despair,
something I may not
have seen without
counselling, so thank
you to my friend
and to Cowichan
Hospice.
”*

Bereavement Counselling Helpful

The obituary section of the *Citizen* offers ample evidence that many readers suffer grief following the death of a loved one, so I wonder if it might be of help to some to share my recent experience following the death two years ago of Linda, my wife of 50 years.

My initial response was that I could cope, which I did well enough I think, until a friend asked if I'd considered bereavement counselling. I realized I may have missed an opportunity. I approached Cowichan Hospice. Since then I have had four meetings with a trained volunteer and in that short time have arrived at a clearer understanding of my bereavement and my future.

We began with an emotion-based approach, discussing denial, anger, guilt and acceptance at which point, my question was, “acceptance of what?” I was developing a strong sense that Linda and I were still in a relationship (something which surprised me, but not family and friends). Then I read the following affirming statement in C.S. Lewis' book, *A Grief Observed*: “Bereavement is a universal and integral part of our experience of love. It follows marriage as normally as marriage follows courtship or as autumn follows summer. It is not a truncation of the process but one of its phases: not the interruption of the dance, but the next figure.”

This helped me accept that the relationship between Linda and I could continue as a marital one, albeit chaste, despite the words “deceased” or “the estate of” being affixed to her name on official documents.

As if anticipating my realization, shortly before she died, Linda had written, “Gregg, you know love is stronger than death.” Believing that, I intend to live out my marital vocation as best I can, writing to my wife regularly of what Jane Austen called “important nothings” and allowing Linda's wit, intelligence and loyalty to nourish me.

—Gregg Shoop

Glenora

Credit: Letters, Cowichan Valley Citizen, March 11, 2021

We are interested in hearing YOUR Hospice story.

We gather stories from clients and volunteers to share with those who might wish to help, and those who may need support but don't know what services are available through Cowichan Hospice.

A Better Way to Say Goodbye



Kathryn

Family was everything to Kathryn and the hospital visitor restrictions deprived her of us when she most needed us. She was in a shared room and the busy environment made sleeping difficult. As her condition progressed, her cheery personality was replaced by verbal aggression. I had never seen her like that.

I was desperate to get Kathryn into a place where she could be visited by family members and could rest for the last part of her journey. Shelley, the Palliative Services Coordinator at Cowichan Hospice House, helped make all this happen. When Kathryn came to the house, I think she finally felt safe. She seemed to relax, to actually sleep, and to be at peace.

Kathryn could no longer communicate when she went into Hospice House, but family members commented on the beautiful environment and the friendly staff and volunteers. Seeing Kathryn appearing to be at peace was a relief. The Hospice nurses and staff could not have been more kind or accommodating, and Shelley stayed in touch, even after Kathryn's passing.

—Darlene Vorm

When Darlene lost her 94-year-old father in the midst of the COVID-19 lockdown, she never thought she'd be facing the loss of another family member so soon after.

Later that year, Darlene's sister Kathryn was hospitalized with a grim prognosis. She received quality care in the hospital, much as Darlene's dad had, but this acute care setting didn't bring Kathryn comfort or peace when she needed it most. She found both when she moved into Cowichan Hospice House.

Darlene generously shared her experience of Kathryn's compassionate care as her family prepared to say goodbye to her.

I think it's our ultimate responsibility to provide a dying human with the exact grace that is offered through Cowichan Hospice.

I believe the most important work we do in this life is the work required of us as we are leaving, at the end of life. It takes peace and rest and a sense of safety to do that.

The hospital is critically important to recovering and getting well, but I honestly feel that this setting was preventing Kathryn from doing her final work in dying.

I think it's our ultimate responsibility to provide a dying human with the exact grace that is offered through Cowichan Hospice. For the family members and friends who are saying goodbye to someone they love, it's beyond comforting to see them in a place that has been so perfectly constructed, staffed and managed. This place is an extraordinary accomplishment.

The Comfort of a Volunteer

In December 2017, my sister was diagnosed with stage 4 lung cancer. We were devastated.

From the moment I walked into Cowichan Hospice I was met with warmth, compassion and understanding from everyone I came into contact with. I didn't feel alone.

My sister passed away three years later at Christmas time. My hospice volunteer, Dedie, has helped me so much. Her compassionate, non-judgmental approach has been my saving grace. She helped me understand my feelings of anger and despair were normal and never judged me. During the past COVID year she has listened through many phone calls of tears and offered



reassurance. I still speak with her every three weeks. I feel I could not have been such a support for my sister without the support given to me by Dedie.

With thanks,

Leslie Sanchez
April 2021

FAREWELL, 2020 RETIRING VOLUNTEERS!

Pat Lamont was a Cowichan Hospice volunteer from 2007-2020. Her primary

role was recording volunteer hours and statistics—no small task. She will be greatly missed around the office. Thank you Pat for all your hours working on the hours!



19 years ago, Malcolm Gloster joined Cowichan Hospice as a one-to-one volunteer.

Among many other things, Malcolm helped pioneer the Wellness Clinics at the Cowichan Hospice Community Office.

"It's a privilege to be of service.

I felt that I was contributing, helping someone who needed help."



THANK YOU, VOLUNTEERS,

for Your Long and Dedicated Service to
Our Cowichan Community:

5 years

Cora Dash
Zoe Lauckner
Rebecca Lusk
Kirsty Maxwell
Don McClintock
Stephanie Paddle
Marja Tencate

10 Years

Heather Ferris
Lorna Pierce
Lois Rose

15 Years

Shelley Kuecks
Mary Kae Smith

19 Years

Malcolm Gloster

20 years

MaryAnn Deacon

MaryAnn Deacon knows everyone in Cowichan,
or *at least* knows their mother or neighbour.

She may well be our chief friend-raiser in the community. A hospice volunteer for more than twenty years, MaryAnn has offered one-to-one palliative and grief support and wellness care, chaired the Reel Alternatives Committee and, except for a stint teaching in China, has served on the board since 2000. She says, "I've enjoyed it all." This extrovert also continues to take care of ailing or grieving neighbours and friends with home-made food, wellness treatments and recommendations for art openings or an opera not to be missed. Forever an advocate for the development of a hospice house, it was fitting to see MaryAnn sign off as Board President on our first Memorandum of Understanding with Island Health.



Thank You to the Amazing Quilters of Cowichan Valley

Both the Cowichan Valley Heritage Quilters and Handmade Hugs Society Cowichan Valley have donated many gorgeous quilts to Cowichan Hospice House. These hand-crafted works of art bring warmth, beauty and comfort to the patient and family rooms.

Handmade
Hugs
Society
Cowichan
Valley



Cowichan
Valley
Heritage
Quilters



Mary Kae Smith has been a Cowichan Hospice volunteer since 2006.

Presently she provides palliative support to clients in the community.

"Hospice work can often be difficult, but it is rewarding to see the comfort that we, the hospice volunteers, can bring to families during

a very unsettling time for them. It is often the small moments that are so poignant."



Therapeutic Touch in a Touch-Free World

Therapeutic Touch (TT) is a soothing, relaxing therapy for those who are near death, grieving or caregiving.

"In addition to gentle touch, practitioners are trained to detect energy fields around the body and provide physical and emotional relief. But how does one offer Therapeutic Touch when we cannot touch those in need of our comforting hands?"

—*Judith Schweers,*

TT Therapist and Instructor, Hospice volunteer of 12 years

Throughout 2020, specially-trained Cowichan Hospice Volunteers provided Therapeutic Touch sessions to clients in their homes remotely, by phone and via Zoom.

Barb's Story My son Chris had a lovely hospice volunteer, Stephanie, who visited him in the hospital, and later in his home, to provide Therapeutic Touch treatments. The sessions calmed him and seamlessly eased him to the other side.

I too was a client in the in-person Therapeutic Touch care clinics; it helped me when I was not able to talk about my grief. When COVID restrictions hit, about a year after Chris passed, we were unable to continue in-person sessions.

The wonderful group of women trained in TT began to offer treatments virtually and, although I was skeptical at first, I came to enjoy it. I have received many wonderful treatments from different practitioners who warmly and openly assist me in my healing process.

I have only deep gratitude and love for all involved in both Hospice and Therapeutic Touch.

—*Barb Kruger,* Hospice client

Your Generosity Made a Difference in Our Community

In 2020, **628** people in the Cowichan Region were served by one or more Cowichan Hospice programs:

- 272** Support for those who are grieving
- 195** Support for people living with serious illness
- 149** Support for family members
- 12** Information and referral

Where Your Support is Helping

56 Chemainus	23 Lake Cowichan
66 Cobble Hill	2 Malahat
20 Cowichan Bay	35 Mill Bay
19 Crofton	38 Shawnigan Lake
299 Duncan	1 Thetis Island
5 Honeymoon Bay	2 Youbou
50 Ladysmith	12 Out of area



Goodbye to Our Wonderful Gardeners

Last fall we said goodbye to our fantastic gardening team of Ingvar, Janice and Ron. They have worked countless hours developing the space and keeping it looking beautiful for us all to enjoy. They are sure to make the world a more beautiful place wherever they are!



Attending a Traumatic Loss Group

Margaret Collin describes her son Joshua as a “multi-talented man who loved carpentry, especially heritage restoration.”

“He was a good person who worked hard and helped a lot of people and he was a loving and responsible father to his two sons.” Sadly, in December of 2019, Joshua took his own life after struggling for many years with intense physical and emotional pain.

The impacts of his unexpected tragic death were severe for Margaret.

“I was in trauma, shock. I was experiencing intense grief and I wasn’t functioning well. I wasn’t sleeping or eating well and not functioning well at work.”

Margaret reached out to the Vancouver Island Crisis Line for support and they connected her with Cowichan Hospice. After attending some one-to-one sessions with Cowichan Hospice’s Bereavement Coordinator, Margaret was invited to participate in a grief group specific to traumatic loss.

“I don’t have a social network of friends and have very limited family relationships so the hospice [support group] was very important to me. I found it helpful to just be in a group of other people going through similar things. It helped me to see firsthand that I wasn’t alone in this, that there were a lot of other people suffering too.

“Out of ten of us in the group, eight had lost a child and the biggest cause of death was suicide. So there were several other parents there experiencing the same level of intense grief and that’s hard for people to understand unless they’ve been through it themselves.”

She was grateful for the thoughtful

and caring presence of the group facilitators including one staff member and two volunteers.

“They created a community of grief and they did it very quickly and with a lot of compassion. They kept emphasizing how much



courage it took to attend the group and how much they appreciated us participating. Everyone expressed such gratitude to each other; it’s conversations they can’t have with their friends and relatives. It’s a really unique service. I consider it an essential

It’s not the same, it won’t ever be the same, but that’s the nature of life. I am a new person now but I still have all the memories.



Above: Margaret with her son Joshua
Left: Joshua as a boy

service—part of the medical and mental health system.

“It’s so important for the health of the community because it’s almost impossible to grieve in isolation. You need the support of other people. Hospice gave me that.”

In looking back at those early days engulfed in deep grief, Margaret says she now has hope for the future.

“I have hope for my survival. I say that because I’m aware there are people that, when they lose someone, particularly to suicide, they themselves become a higher risk for suicide.”

Margaret is grateful for the support of the Cowichan community in ensuring the traumatic loss group is available to her and others who need this type of specialized support.

2020 FINANCIALS

Balance Sheet

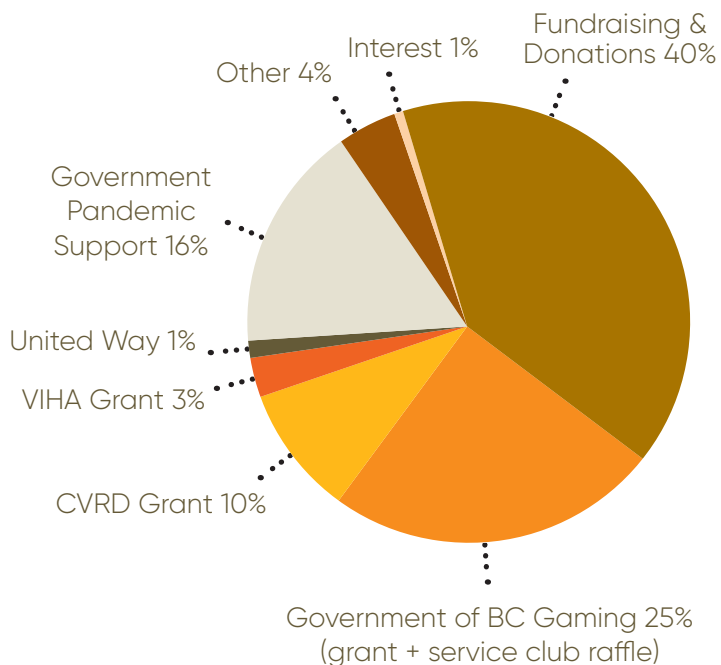
	Operating Fund 2020	Capital Fund 2020	Hospice House Fund 2020	Total 2020	Total 2019
Current Assets	\$ 681,248	\$ 219,377	\$ 2,727,672	\$ 3,628,297	\$ 5,453,857
Current Liabilities	\$ 241,208		\$ 2,727,672	\$ 2,968,880	\$ 4,993,533
Net Assets	\$ 440,040	\$ 219,377		\$ 659,417	\$ 460,324
Liabilities & Net Assets	\$ 681,248	\$ 219,377	\$ 2,727,672	\$ 3,628,297	\$ 5,453,857

Income Statement

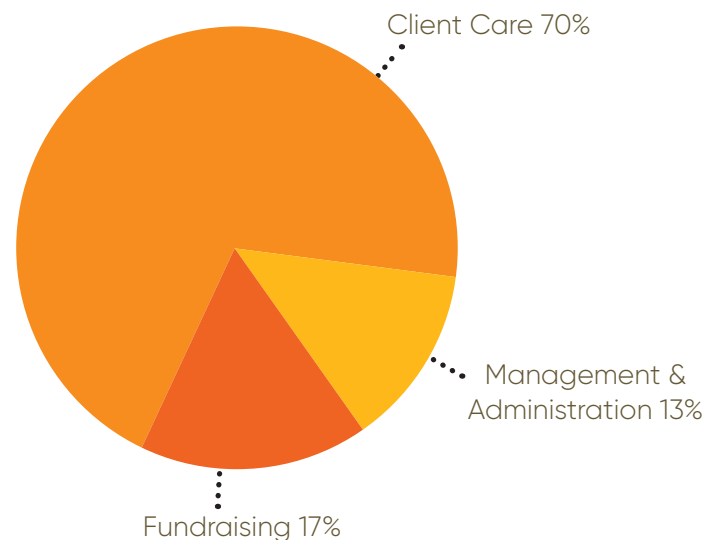
Revenues	\$ 631,696		\$ 3,410,376	\$ 4,042,072	\$ 933,254
Expenses	\$ 430,655	\$ 8,908	\$ 3,403,415	\$ 3,842,978	\$ 874,926
Excess Revenue Over Expenses	\$ 201,041	\$ -8,908	\$ 6,961	\$ 199,094	\$ 58,328

Volunteers contributed a \$125,900 value in 2020 when calculated at \$20 an hour.

OPERATING REVENUE



OPERATING EXPENSES



Thank you

for Supporting Cowichan

\$100,000+

Patrick & Beryl Campbell
Charitable Trust
Rotary Clubs of the Cowichan Region

\$25,000-\$49,999

Ian & Mollyanne Baker
Jan & Johanna Groot Wassink
The Gurski Family

\$10,000-\$24,999

Beverley Angus
Chemainus Health Care Auxiliary
Duncan Lions Club
Jennifer & Raymond Wheeler

\$5,000-\$9,999

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First West Foundation
Vanessa Rocchio
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United Way North & Central
Vancouver Island

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Blueline Exteriors Ltd.
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Tycon Steel (1998) Inc.
Michael Usborne
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Sandra Wolfe

\$500-\$999

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To learn how
you can support
hospice care in
Cowichan, visit
cowichanhospice.org
or call 250-701-4242

Hospice with your gifts in 2020

\$200-\$499

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We have done our best to include everyone who made a contribution of \$200 or more between January 1 and December 31, 2020. We apologize in advance for any errors or omissions.



cowichan
hospice

COWICHAN HOSPICE
COMMUNITY SERVICES

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Duncan BC V9L 1G2
250-701-4242 | 1-888-701-4242

cowichanhospice.org
frontdesk@cowichanhospice.org

Cowichan Valley Hospice Society
Charity BN/Registration number:
11887 8388 RR0001

Open your
Heart
to Hospice.



An Apple Tree's Legacy Lives On

When we broke ground for Cowichan Hospice House in 2019, it meant that a beloved, long-standing apple tree had to be removed. With the help of Warren Walters, a retired research technician with Agriculture Canada's Plant Breeding Program, we were able to keep the tree's legacy alive by grafting new "baby" trees from it. Two of these young trees were planted at homes in the Cairnsmore neighbourhood, one was planted at the bus stop near Hospice House, and one in Duncan's Centennial Park.

**Thanks to all who helped give this
beloved tree new life in
our community!**

"Baby" tree in
Centennial Park

"Baby" tree in
Cairnsmore
neighbourhood