VON VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER SPRING 2023 (MARCH - MAY)



Durham Hospice Services



opportunities with VON Durham Hospice Services. I had by then, lost my mother (2002); my mother-in-law (2010); my father (2015); and eventually my father-in-law (2019). Surely, I felt that I had something to offer other people who are grieving losses similar to mine.

Thus, my journey from Maureen-to Maureen the volunteer-to Maureen the Volunteer Trainer began.

Although I was officially retired, I still felt that I was not done yet! Years before, I had trained as a Social Worker, but once I completed training, I found that "life" got in the way. Instead, my career skills were put to good use outside the Social Work field. Now I could see that volunteering would be a return to my roots. I would be helping individuals work through their grief journey. I haven't looked back once! This volunteer role has been so rewarding to me as person, and has increased my sense of self-worth.

Earlier this year, the opportunity for the Volunteer Trainer position appeared and I didn't hesitate to apply. I know that the quality of client care we provide would not be possible without our tremendous volunteers. So, as I now work alongside this brilliant team at VON Durham Hospice Services, I work hard to support our volunteers, so that they can provide the best of themselves to their clients. After all, I am a volunteer too!

> Maureen Chomica Volunteer Trainer

In this issue:

- Announcements & Good News
- Day Hospice Activities
- Save-the-Dates!
- Self-Care Moment

"Be like a flower. Survive the rain, but use it

to grow."

@positiveenergy_plus



December 2022 Holiday Volunteer Education & Appreciation Dinner!

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Please join us in welcoming some new members of the VON Durham Hospice Services team!

Maureen Chomica Volunteer Trainer

Volunteers

Cathy F. Matt K. Debbie F. Ramona K.

Stephenie Selvazzo

Palliative Care Coordinator

Spring Ahead! Don't forget to turn your clocks FORWARD on March 12.

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Update!

Thanks to our group of BINGO volunteers, we received a fundraising total of:

November: \$2, 607.13 ! December: \$3, 188.72 ! January: \$2, 181.65 !

Charity gaming funds directly support our VON Durham Hospice Services programs, as we are a non-profit organization. We are always looking for more volunteers to help out at Pickering Delta Bingo & Gaming.

> If you are interested, please contact Tanya: tanya.bahnesli@von.ca

Volunteer Connections is back!

COMING SOON

We are happy to announce that *Volunteer Connections* will be returning for VON Durham Hospice Services volunteers! Beginning in March, events will be held every 3 months, and IN-PERSON! We want to see you there!

Volunteer Connections aims to:

- Support volunteers with relevant education/resources
- Provide volunteers with a safe space to self-reflect, seek support in their matches, and connect with other volunteers
- Encourage volunteers with tools/ practices valuable to their self-care

Save The Date!

Thursday March 23 6PM - 8PM VON Durham Hospice Services Whitby Office

Details & Registration coming soon



Volunteer Appreciation Week! April 16-22

We want to celebrate YOU! Please join us for a variety of scheduled activities including: 2 virtual education sessions AND 1 in-person event at our Whitby office location Details coming soon to your email!

How To Build A Memory Garden

A memory garden can be a meaningful way to remember a loved one you have lost, and a peaceful place where you can go to reflect. Tending to your plants can also be healing, and a self-care activity. Plan one for your backyard, on your balcony, or even indoors - this is a project that the whole family can get involved with!

Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Pick a spot that is meaningful and accessible to you
- Think about sensory experience colors, scents, sounds, textures
- Pick your loved one's favorite plants, scents, colors, etc. Some flowers have symbolic meanings (ex. forget-me-nots =true love, respect, remembrance; Petunias=hope, healing, well-being)
- Think about gardening throughout the seasons, or using perennials/annuals

Personalize it!

- Use painted rocks, tiles, glass gems
- Hang wind chimes, ornaments, beaded strings, bird feeders, garland, ribbons
- Pick a bench or chair to relax on; light an outdoor lantern or add a fountain
- For pets: use dog print stones, a collar, a leash, their favorite toy
- Inscribe a name/saying on a plaque, or on weather-proof wood
- Add any trinkets/items that remind you of your loved one(s) - ex. golf club, teacups, helmet, wheelbarrow, action figurines, gnomes

VON DURHAM HOSPICE SERVICES

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<u>Across</u>

5. flower symbolizing perfect and deep love 7. nectar-feeding insect with two pairs of

- large, brightly colored wings
- 8. this Equinox arrives on March 12
- 9. young sheep
- 10. bright energy for plants

Down

flower symbolizing rebirth and new beginnings
tall plant of the lily family with edible shoots
this day in April celebrating practical jokes

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and hoaxes 4. a device used as protection from the rain 6. popular pastime activity of eating food outside on a blanket

One-Pan Cajun Orzo With Sausage

INGREDIENTS

- 1 Tbsp. olive oil 1 small yellow onion, chopped 1 red bell pepper, chopped 2 cloves garlic, minced 12 oz. Andouille sausage, sliced 8 oz. orzo
- 2 green onions, thinly sliced 2 c. low-sodium chicken broth 2 tsp. Cajun seasoning black pepper and salt, to taste 4 oz. cream cheese, cut into cubes 1 (14-oz.) can fire-roasted diced tomatoes

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SPRING CROSSWORD!

Complete the crossword using the clues below.



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DIRECTIONS

- 1. In a large deep skillet over medium heat, heat oil. Add onion and pepper and cook until soft, 5 minutes. Add garlic and cook until fragrant, 1 minute more. Add sausage and cook until warmed through and golden, about 2 minutes.
- 2. Add orzo and stir to toast for 1 minute. Add diced tomatoes, broth, and Cajun seasoning. Season with salt and pepper. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer until orzo is cooked through and tender, about 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.
- 3. Add cream cheese and stir until melted, then stir in green onions.

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