



ANNUAL REPORT

April 1, 2018
to
March 31, 2019



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Board List for April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019

BOARD CHAIR

Kimberly Carson

CEO Canadian Breast Cancer Society

TREASURER

Eddy Burella

Chartered Accountant

SECRETARY

Stephen Rayfield

Marketing Strategy Mentor, Author,
Trainer and Speaker

DIRECTORS

Jim Clubine

Clergy

Deanna Perkins

Global Campaign Manager

Hang Mei Chen

IT Specialist

Teresa Rivero

Occupational Therapist

Doris Kamwa

Physician

Tom Davies

Retired Executive

Aimee Gallienne

Human Resources Specialist

Staff List for April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019

Jan Pearce

Executive Director

Virginia Bidwell

Coordinator of Volunteers

Patti Enright

Supportive Care Coordinator

Michelle Juer

Supportive Care Coordinator

Lerryn Pitcher

Financial Administrator/Counsellor

Rebecca Simkin

Fund Development Coordinator

Heidi Spiar

Living Room Coordinator

Bonnie Strand

Counsellor

Cindy Knowles

Administrative Assistant

Melanie Gross

Administrative Assistant

Caroline Allen

Fundraiser

New Board and Staff since April 1, 2019

April 1, 2019: Raymond Lai - Board Member

April 1, 2019: Nirmala Persaud - Board Member

May 6, 2019: Michelle McMinassian - Counsellor

June 24, 2019: Tricia Stanton - Coordinator of Volunteers

August 6, 2019: Tammie Milburn - Client Care Coordinator

President's Report

As I look back on the past year, I realize how much Evergreen has been changing and evolving while still serving the community with as much impact, if not more, than in the past. Although there have been a number of changes in staff this year, we fondly say goodbye to those who have moved on, and we welcome the energy of our new staff. Serving over 900 people in the Markham, Thornhill and Stouffville area, Evergreen's volunteers and staff support the community with ongoing work and commitment that continues to astound me. My gratitude for their ongoing commitment to Evergreen and the communities we serve is enormous. Thank you to each of you for what you do.

Through the tireless outreach and work with stakeholders of our Executive Director, Jan Pearce, Evergreen remains a respected service within our community. Jan's leadership and community involvement have established a partnership with the palliative care team on a daily basis to share information and support other service delivery within the catchment area and another partnership with the Evergreen Palliative Care Doctors that have changed their name to support Evergreen in the community. Jan's commitment to Evergreen is the backbone of our success.

I am pleased to announce that the board of directors made an exciting step forward in support of a residential hospice in the Markham community. Progress is being made on the establishment of a residential hospice that will continue to support the community outreach of Evergreen long into the future. There will be exciting announcements over the months to come, and we look forward to being a part of this exciting new project for the community.

I am overwhelmed by the support of our donors and their commitment to Evergreen. As we unveil the dedication of our Living Room to the late Don Ferguson at this year's AGM, I am reminded of the generosity of our many contributors and participants at our gala and dove release event, as well as all the community events that support Evergreen. Without their ongoing support, we would not be able to deliver the service to the community as only 30% of our funding comes from the government. It is with gratitude that our stakeholders support as much as they do, and this allows Evergreen to continue to serve the growing demands from the community.

It is my honour to serve as Evergreen's Chair, and I would like to thank our new board members and the long standing board members for their ongoing support and commitment. I believe there are very exciting days ahead for Evergreen so, on behalf of the board of directors, thank you to each of you for your involvement with Evergreen as we look to the future.

Warmly,
Kimberly Carson

Executive Director's Report

Our dedicated staff team and over 78 fully trained committed volunteers were able to serve over 939 families this year. There were another 102 who helped with office work, fundraising, community awareness, Board Governance and events. After thirty years of service, Evergreen continues to provide support to more and more families each and every year.

Services to clients included palliative care home volunteer visiting, *The Living Room* day hospice services (including hundreds of sessions of complementary therapy), a support group for women with cancer, a new support group for men with cancer, seminars for caregivers, a monthly resource mailings for caregivers and those who are bereaved, bereavement support groups and professional counselling for clients with life threatening illnesses, caregivers and bereavement clients. All services are provided with no fees for the client.

In the community, Evergreen continued to have a role of informing and educating people about palliative care, normal bereavement and health care navigation. Presentations were made to over 4200 individuals at service clubs, clubs, faith groups, school staff and students, government and other community agencies.

This year, we moved our Compassionate Community Initiative forward, completing a Compassionate Community Markham-Stouffville-Thornhill Charter with 15 agencies and individuals signing on to complete six projects. This new approach to caring for vulnerable individuals in our community - in our case, isolated seniors and those with dementia - recognizes that formal health care only provides a maximum of 10% of the care needed to be healthy. The rest comes from family, friends, neighbours and the community at large. Evergreen worked with partners in faith communities and cultural groups, at local schools, and in family health teams.

Our funding from the Ministry of Health, funnelled through the Central LHIN and distributed to Evergreen and the other York Region hospices through Better Living Services, continues to flow in spite of the change in government during this past year. We continue to outperform our targets for the *number of clients served* and *number of visits made* to be sure that, as the health care system adjusts to the new Ontario Health Teams, we will be included. Although we only receive 30% of our operating budget through the government, it is still an important part of how we are able to function.

Staff continued to ensure that Evergreen had a presence at the Markham Board of Trade meetings this year and has made some solid connections in the business community with the networking help of our new fundraising support person, Caroline Allen. We also continue to participate in the Stouffville Chamber of Commerce activities. Business partners are essential for Evergreen success through sponsorship of events and special programs.

This year, the Board and Executive decided to move forward in a bid to establish residential hospice services in Markham. As part of that work, we have strengthened our partnership with local palliative care physicians in Markham and Stouffville. In October, they will be associated with Evergreen and identify themselves as *Evergreen Palliative Physicians*, routing their palliative care mail to Evergreen and referring the families of their clients directly for bereavement follow-up. We also began formal discussions with a number of local partners during this year to establish a plan to fundraise, design, plan and build a residence in Markham.

Evergreen remained an active member of the Ontario Caregiver Coalition (OCC), which continues to inform the public of the important role of informal caregivers in the health care system and press the government for more support for caregivers. OCC became a charity in this past year, and Evergreen continued to receive and share resources for caregivers with the membership across the province. Evergreen's caregiver resource mailings have been well received in the community, and we regularly share the content with others and add new ones discovered through collaboration.

Evergreen continued to offer *Powerful Tools for Caregivers*, an amazing program developed by Stanford University. Although it is difficult for some caregivers to find the time to attend the series of seminars, those that do feel that the information about self-care, and encouragement to practice it, improves their relationship with their loved one, their other family members and the professional healthcare team.

Evergreen continued to work with *Better Living Health Services* and the five York Region hospices as part of a leadership team across the Region. Collaboration continues to reduce the competition and increases the cooperation across borders while improving the services we can provide to our clients.

Evergreen continued to work with HPCO on collecting outcomes measures that more effectively describe the value of community hospices in the health care system. With consistent provision of data to HPCO, we are able to obtain information about trends and needs locally while contributing to the provincial database for use in negotiations with the Ministry of Health.

There has been considerable change in staffing at Evergreen this year. Early in 2019, I began to move the daily operation responsibilities to Lerryn Pitcher, the new Community Hospice Manager. Lerryn has been with Evergreen for many years, in a variety of responsible positions, and has a strong commitment to the value of community hospice in our community. Lerryn's focus on the needs of clients, both current and future, is such that I have no worries that Evergreen will continue to grow and respond to community need. In addition, her organizational skills are exceptional and efficiencies in office management have been outstanding!

My role is now with the residential hospice negotiations and development, Compassionate Community development for community awareness and improved care for the vulnerable in our area, and the continued development of the Board. I also continue to represent Evergreen in the community at regional and provincial activities and work on non-event fundraising.

Virginia Bidwell decided to retire this year after 20 years of service as Coordinator of Volunteers. Early 2019 was spent sprucing up her records and files for the arrival of the new Coordinator, Tricia Stanton, in June. Ginny's retirement party with Evergreen volunteers happened in June and with staff in July. Ginny continues to assist on the Compassionate Community project a few hours each week. We already miss her in the office daily!

Our staffing has also shifted over time to address the high demand for counselling services for all categories of clients. There has been an increase in referrals of clients with life threatening illness that need help in adjusting to changes in life expectations. Many spouses, parents and children of the ill person require support from counsellors as they look forward to a future without their loved one. Over-stressed caregivers are being referred for support in their efforts to care for themselves while being a caregiver, and we continue to get high volumes of referrals for bereaved individuals. As a result, we have increased the hours of counselling available each week to address the waitlist and welcomed Michelle McMinassian, MSW, to our Team.

Patti Enright, our nurse for the past 5 years has left to pursue her dream of bedside palliative care nursing at Margaret Behan residential hospice in Newmarket. We were lucky to be able to acquire Tammie Milburn in the last month to address the nursing needs of the our clients and participate at the daily Hospice Palliative Care team huddle phone calls and monthly rounds across the region. Tammie will also be doing public and professional education about Evergreen services, palliative care and bereavement.

I believe Evergreen is in a good place to move forward and address the increasing needs of the community. We have a skilled committed staff team with energy and compassion to work well with clients, families and other providers in the area, and to provide the best-coordinated service possible. We have a huge team of volunteers who continue to amaze me with their commitment to their clients and to Evergreen as a viable important phenomenon in their home community. We have a strong Board with skilled and compassionate members who will lead us into the next phase of development, without losing in the process what everyone from Evergreen has developed over the 30 years since our beginnings in 1989.

But most of all, it is the support from the community itself that confirms the value of the work that we do, and, without which, none of the accomplishments of the past 30 years could have been possible. Many thanks to all who had a part in the building of Evergreen and to those who will continue to provide support in the coming years. It has been an honour and a privilege to work with all of you.

Jan Pearce
Executive Director



Client Services Report

Evergreen's focus in the past year has been extending services to more residents of Markham, Stouffville and Thornhill while maintaining the best possible quality of service.

All of Evergreen's small staff (7 part time and 2 full time) provided service to clients and their families every day: by phone, in person and by mail/email. Some support is provided in one-to-one sessions (by volunteers or staff), and some support is in the group format. Our front line staff devoted all their time to client services while the rest took on specific client support roles, in addition to other activities. As always, all of the staff supported the dedicated volunteers working within their sector of service.

With the amazing support from our over 78 active client volunteers, Evergreen care is able to focus on quality of life for the whole family starting at the initial diagnosis, through difficult treatment and, if necessary, through to end-of-life care and bereavement. With the combination of the staff team and trained volunteers, we were able to offer quality support to families through our in-home services, caregiver support, and wellness focussed services (including *The Living Room*, *C-Care Support Groups*, and *Powerful Tools for Caregivers*), as well as provide one-to-one counselling and bereavement support to hundreds.

During the year April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019, Evergreen served more than 939 families, held 217 groups with 3500 participants, sent 1899 bereavement support monthly mailings, sent 383 caregiver mailings, spoke to over 4200 community members at meetings and presentations, and celebrated 3 memorials. Our volunteers and staff provided 17,828 visits, and this was only possible because of the generous donation of about 10,000 hours by our committed volunteers. In addition, many hours were provided by volunteers involved in office work, the all important fundraising activities and, of course, on the Board of Directors.

In Home Support Services

Providing services at an individual's home, at the time they want it, by a consistent volunteer, continued to be the most important part of what Evergreen did in 2018-19 and is where most of Evergreen's volunteer hours are invested.

After a professional assessment by nurses Michelle Juer or Patti Enright, clients let them know what is the most important need in their life at that time. If we can meet that need, we do. If not, a referral and warm hand off is organized to insure that vulnerable clients get the service they require, from one of many organizations and institutions with which Evergreen collaborates. Families are also offered the option of having a compassionate, well- trained volunteer visit their home to provide a variety of services, including:

- emotional support to the client or caregiver or both,
- respite care, to allow the family or friends who are doing the care an opportunity to go out, rest or have some time alone,
- accompaniment on medical appointments, a walk in the park or an errand,
- a non-judgemental listening ear when a client or family member wants to unload feelings without burdening the family,
- assistance with legacy work,

- a silent presence in the room while someone sleeps, or
- a comforting touch when feeling alone.

Because Evergreen volunteers are regular visitors to the client's home, they may be the first people to notice when the caregiver is struggling or a client crisis is approaching. This early warning system may facilitate early intervention with extra professional home care from the LHIN home care providers in time to reduce emergency room visits and hospital admissions. Evergreen volunteers in the home are also in the position to inform families about other Evergreen services that might be of help to the family. Individual counselling, caregiver support groups, C-care cancer support groups and *The Living Room* may be options for some clients or family members. Evergreen provides in-home support to people of all ages, from childhood to the very elderly, at the location of their choice.

Caregiver Support

Evergreen remains committed to helping families stretch their limited resources by assisting family caregivers through counselling, support groups and respite. Caregivers are contacted directly about their needs, which legitimizes their position in the family and society. This helps the caregiver recognize the pressures they are under, as well as their limits - often leading to earlier intervention.

The *Circle of Care* support group, facilitated by caring, experienced volunteers or staff, is a place for caregivers to meet with other like individuals and learn from and support each other. Telephone support on alternate weeks helps relieve some of the difficult emotions typical in caregivers struggling to cope when overtired and stressed. Counselling by Evergreen professionals is also available for caregivers when their stress is interfering with their ability to continue. Evergreen also intervenes when a volunteer or staff member identifies crises that may result in emergency room visits by informing the medical system of increased client needs for support.

Evergreen also offers the program, *Powerful Tools for Caregivers*. This Stanford University developed program is a six-session workshop for caregivers, focussing on self-care as a way to provide better care to a loved one. There are opportunities to talk about their own situation with others who understand and a great way to learn new strategies. Communication techniques and dealing with difficult emotions are other topics that are addressed. Graduates are very positive about how the sessions impacted their lives.

In August of 2018, we started a new program of caregiver mailings. These mailings, sent once or twice a month, provide information about resources, self-care and support. It is a good entry point for caregivers who feel that their personal care is not important when their loved one is sick. We started with 10 participants, and this program has grown to 80 participants per month who receive our mailings.

The Living Room

The Living Room has a team of dedicated volunteers led by Coordinator, Heidi Spiar, and remains Evergreen's most well-know program. Recognizing the inherent therapeutic value in organized curriculum and recreation, referrals to this palliative program continue to grow. While clients are enjoying yoga, massage, art expression, mind-sharpening trivia games and interactive social projects, caregivers can tend to their own needs, knowing their loved ones are enjoying a day out of the home.

Generous community members and organizations provide a nutritious lunch as part of the program. Volunteers serve the meal so clients benefit from a truly fulfilling social and dining experience. This year, *The Living Room* capacity increased to 672 visits. We grew our community partnership capacity by adding six new contacts that have enriched our program with cultural diversity, environmental sensitivity, and holistic health. We also added six new contacts for the provision of lunch.

C-Care Support Group for Women Experiencing Cancer

This seven week closed support group is facilitated by professionals and survivors to provide women experiencing cancer with useful skills and helpful information. In 2018 – 2019, we offered 4 support group series and supported 240 women.

Grief and Bereavement Programs

The feelings one experiences after the death of a loved one can frighten and sometimes immobilize the newly bereaved. Indeed, when a loved one dies, the initial shock and bewilderment may well last weeks or months. A great deal of bereavement support and counselling focuses on the normalcy of the grief reaction, in spite of how abnormal it feels, removing the additional burden of feeling inadequate or “crazy” as a result. This allows bereaved family members to really feel the loss and work through the grief experience in the way that is best for them. Understanding the normalcy of grief does not eliminate the pain of loss, but it can reduce the anxiety about their feelings and help them create more reasonable expectations about their progress.

Drop-in adult support groups are offered monthly and facilitated by trained volunteers, providing ongoing support to families struggling with the death of a friend or family member. These groups may help individuals work through a particularly difficult time of year (holidays, anniversaries, birthdays) or may be a person’s first introduction to Evergreen’s services.

Circle of Hope, an adult support group series facilitated by experienced volunteers, was offered three times this year. Often, the groups are all the support that is needed to help a person get back on track. Others may have more complex issues, requiring one-to-one counselling, which was provided in 2018-19 by counsellors Bonnie Strand and Lerryn Pitcher. Six or more (depending on the situation) professional sessions are provided at no charge to the client. Referrals to other agencies or professionals may also be made if the situation warrants.

Support for children and teens is also available. Evergreen takes referrals from school staff, parents and other agencies that may know of a child or teen who is having difficulty coping with a death or the serious illness of a loved one. Groups are age specific, teach about normal grief, and often involve activities that encourage the sharing of feelings about the loved one they have lost.

In November, Evergreen also provided two sessions of “Coping with the Holidays,” for those who are grieving. As well as helpful tips, the evening included a memorial candle lighting ceremony and refreshments.

Evergreen’s Front Line Client Service Providers:

- Michelle Juer RPN Supportive Care Coordinator
- Patti Enright RPN Supportive Care Coordinator
- Bonnie Strand BA Counsellor
- Lerryn Pitcher Counsellor
- Heidi Spiar Living Room Coordinator

Volunteer Report

Wow! Congratulations to everyone who has been involved with Hospice over the last thirty years! What wonderful work has been accomplished. It has been my privilege to have been involved for the last twenty years. The first event I attended was the 10th Anniversary celebration at Markham Museum. As I retire, I think of all the people I have worked with - clients, volunteers and staff. You have made such a difference in our community.

Evergreen Hospice would not exist without the efforts of all our volunteers. Evergreen is a dynamic organization providing many different programs with minimal staff. There are almost two hundred volunteers who give time, expertise and passion to Evergreen. Some volunteer weekly throughout the year and some volunteer once a year at an event, giving their time in a short block. We need you all!

About half of our volunteers support our clients in the community; these are the women and men who are available on a consistent weekly basis to meet the various needs of our palliative and bereavement clients. Many volunteers visit clients in the clients' homes, long term care facilities or the hospital. Some volunteers facilitate client groups.

Volunteer Board members set policy, work on committees and provide direction for the organization.

Office volunteers provide valuable support for staff and volunteers by answering the phone, compiling mailings, filing, sorting, calling, delivering, picking up, copying and so much more.

Fundraising volunteers do an outstanding job of raising the financial resources to fulfill our mission by planning, organizing and managing our special fundraising events such as the most successful Gala, *Let's Misbehave!*, Taste of Stouffville, and Hike for Hospice: A Walk to Remember. Our event volunteers pick up, lug, set up, carry, organize the silent auction, arrange, haul, take down, move, put away and take back.

All our volunteers enhance their skills through structured learning opportunities and experience, and this allows them to make a difference for hospice families, their own families and the community. We build community capacity!

Evergreen Hospice recognizes the very significant contributions of individual volunteers in a variety of ways. At our Annual General Meeting, it has become a tradition to acknowledge volunteers who have been with Evergreen for 5, 10, 15, 20 and 25 years. Receiving 5 year certificates are Doris Kamwa, Farid Muharib, Janet Chippin, Judy Kim, Nicole Barton, Sara Pickard, and Zakira Haider Ali. The following have been Evergreen volunteers for 10 years: Goretti Fernandez, Joan Petit, Lisa Papineau, Sue Butts, Susanna Liang. Receiving a 15 year certificate is James Clubine. Three volunteers have been volunteering with Evergreen for 20 years – Heather Martino, Lisa Razgatis and Wayne Bidwell. There are two very special volunteers who have been with Evergreen since it began. Receiving their 30 year award tonight are Donna Gedir and Robin Bryan.

It is an honour to say thank you to all our volunteers for your enthusiasm and dedication to the particular roles you play. It will be my privilege to continue to work with you as a volunteer. Your commitment, hard work and the joy you bring make a difference! You are inspiring!

Fundraising Report 2018-19

Over this 2018-19 year, our long-standing Fund Development Coordinator, Rebecca Simkin, took a leave to care for her husband. This was followed by a bereavement leave, but she is returning to work later this month to continue her support of Evergreen programs and services of which she now has a personal appreciation. During her absence and continuing into the 2019-20 year, Evergreen has had the benefit of the community development skills of Caroline Allen.

Changes in fundraising methods have been impacting charities across the country. Although the traditional methods of direct mail and event-based fundraising still have an important place in Evergreen's funding, Evergreen has been looking into ways to take advantage of new approaches and ideas.

We improved our batch email promotion of events and services this year and learned to use social media more successfully as a way to inform the public of our activities and encourage donations. Our request for Canada Summer Jobs funding in the coming year included a student savvy in social media. We improved fundraising materials, utilizing research on what is the most successful. We changed the way we informed clients about the way Evergreen is funded so that they were aware of the financial limitations to what can be provided and that has increased general community awareness.

With the help of three committed women, Evergreen began the *Ask a Friend* program. Developing a small pamphlet that highlighted the cost of specific programs and opportunities to support a program of their choice, Suzanne Ceseroni, Nancy Fattore and Lina Bigioni approached individuals in their circle who may not have known about Evergreen and its mission before. What an amazing effort!

In May, we held our traditional Hike for Hospice, working with York Region Hospices on the *National Hike for Hospice* date for the event. We included a dove release for families remembering their loved ones and an opportunity to read poetry or prose dedicated to their special person. However, the early date in May made it so close to the Gala fundraiser, it was difficult to get the promotion it needed to be as financially successful as hoped.

We were lucky to be the recipient of funds from a wide variety of "third party events" led by community members who hold an event or activity to benefit Evergreen. Community churches participated in a Lent donation program for Evergreen. The 100 Women Who Care - Stouffville chose Evergreen as their recipient of funds. The Bayview Golf and Country Club held their annual Lilac Tennis Tournament in honour of Evergreen's work. The Unionville Curling Club Women's Golf Tournament benefited Evergreen. Proceeds were committed to Evergreen from a family memorial ball tournament, a neighbourhood Christmas party, a staff event at Pfaff Motors, The Rotary Club of Markham Unionville 50/50 draw and the Chinese Canadian Computer Association Poker Tournament and Spring Dinner, all of which indicate the community's belief in our work.

Both Alectra and Beechwood Cemetery supported our programs again this year indicating community awareness of the need in our community.

Our Taste of Stouffville event was held in August, but Mother Nature had other plans for the day, which included rain for the first 6 hours of the event. Although the rain impacted our fundraising ability, everyone who attended after the rain stopped enjoyed the music, food and drink. We were also able to use the event as a public awareness effort since the pre-event promotion also promoted the services Evergreen provides in the Stouffville area.

Our annual Gala, the largest fundraiser of the year, was *Let's Misbehave! -A little party never killed nobody!* It was a tremendous success and inspired many of our regular supporters to "come as a flapper or gangster or a silent film star" to really enjoy the fun of a 1920's speakeasy. Many new people attended this year because of the theme and the fun attached to it. A huge group of people collaborate to deliver this event, and they went above and beyond the call of duty. Our amazing sponsors made it the financial success we needed to continue with our programs not covered by our 30% government funding.

The move forward with residential hospice in Markham will change our fundraising plan; however, it will not change our commitment to the community support that has been provided to almost 1000 families in this past year. All future fundraising will include maintaining or growing support for these programs while developing the residence in order to provide a full compliment of end of life care for the residents of Markham, Stouffville and Thornhill.

2018—2019 Events



**FAITH GROUPS, SERVICE
CLUBS , SCHOOLS AND
GROUPS**

Association of Chinese
Canadian Entrepreneurs
Bayview Country Club
Central United Church
Chinese Canadian Computer
Association
Grace Church ACW
Knights of Columbus #11708
Layne MacDonald Ball Tournament
Markham Lions Club
Markham Unionville Rotary Club
Ontario Delta Zeta Master
Pfaff Motors
St. Andrew's United Church UCW
Thornhill Presbyterian Church
Thornhill United Church
Unionville Curling Club
United Way of Greater Toronto
United Way of Toronto and York
Region

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Kylemore Communities
Lynde Dermatology
Markham 7 Dental
Markham District Energy
Minto Communities
Structural Group
The Bridge
The Miller Group
Tim Clark's Flowers
Town + Country Volkswagen

FOUNDATIONS

Southhill Glen Foundation
Trotter Family Foundation

PROGRAM SPONSORS

Beechwood Cemetery
100 Women Who Care Stouffville

**HIKE FOR HOSPICE: A WALK
TO REMEMBER SPONSORS**

Beechwood Cemetery
Clintar Landscaping
Dixon Garland Funeral Home





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