**The Eyeopener for December 15, 2020 Hospice Society**

The Zoom Meeting was called to order by Destiny Reay with 13 of 19 members present. Joy LeBlanc and Bill Harder, the speakers from the Hospice Society were present as guests.

Destiny played O Canada sung by a children’s choir preforming via Zoom.

**The Guest Speakers, Bill Harder and Joy LeBlanc from the Hospice Society** were briefly introduced.

Joy expressed pleasure working with Bill for Hospice. Initially the plan for the Hospice Society was to build a building. When the size of this task was discovered they moved to programming. The Society services from Viking to Wetaskiwin. The training of volunteers was by weekend seminars but is now by Zoom. Pam Cummer is the chair. She is working with Mike Leathwood to see if some hospice beds can be incorporated in the renovations of Stoney Creek. The latest client was even introduced by Zoom to their volunteer. In the pandemic they have developed an I Pad program. They have about 20, to set up for clients so they can access volunteers, as well as other programs like the library. The biggest challenge with the I Pads is Wi fi. Many of the clients are out of urban areas and do not have or cannot afford Wi fi. The Society has had calls from other areas in rural Alberta looking at providing hospice care. They first trained volunteers from Wetaskiwin, now they are helping them to form their own society.

Bill told us a couple of stories. His youngest grief client was an 11-month-old child whose sibling was a SIDS death. Another client is Stephen. He is terminally ill and has children 9 to 14. They are going into the home to support the children and Stephen. Stephen cannot go out and does not have many social supports. They hope to help the children develop good patterns for grieving. In 2018 Hospice touched 1500 people who accessed Hospice 4600 times. The Hospice program is very cost effective.

Covid has propelled them into areas they might not have gone. Online training allows training anywhere. They did their first online 2-hour Zoom session (done on communication by Chris R.) which went very well and got excellent reviews. There are both gains and losses with Zoom.

Most of their work is end of life care for the elderly in long term care and at home. Younger people are fewer, most have cancer. Grief counselling is to a wide range of people grieving over death, including death by suicide. Covid has increased the number of people who have difficulty coping, and they think this has increased the number of suicides.

Self-care and mutual care for volunteers is another aspect of Hospice. Volunteers often end up being the caregivers for their own family. They must be supported in their grief too. Volunteers are taught self care through contemplative practice and mutual care. Volunteers give varying amounts of hours; some are only available for a few hours, so Hospice needs a lot of them. They have about 100 volunteers.

The Nav Care program was initially a research project by the U of A and Covenant. The research group asked Hospice to absorb the program into Hospice after the pilot. Nav Care makes it easier for the ill to accept care earlier in the course of the illness. It does not have the stigma of Palliative or Hospice care. Hospice can continue to support them and their families through death and into grieving.

Clients receiving Medical Assistance in Dying have asked for assistance from Hospice. This is a sensitive area and Joy is careful to assign volunteers who can cope with this new aspect of death and dying.

They have a VR Goggle program to enable clients to do 360-degree virtual reality walk throughs. These videos can be from a client’s home, farm or favourite place including other countries. There is a library of 360 videos.

**Food for Thought – John Stoddart**

The cost of food continues to go up. It is predicted to go up $50 per month for the next year—meat, flour and vegetables will be the main items affected. California used to supply most of our vegetables, but now South Africa is more important because of the drought and fires. Food from out of country is bought in American dollars. The Canadian dollar is improving which will helps.

**Announcements**

* Mikkel is attending the Noon Meeting December 21. Contact Dan Cole if you wish to attend.
* The ASSET program of the U of A wants to stuff 14 stockings. They should be for youth 18 to 20 years old--$20-$25 dollars—Chris Rebus has a container on her front porch. Contact her for details.
* Fall Learning sessions continue. Register with the District Website.
* The Noon club is supporting Trendy Walrus and Auto Shoppe in supplying the Women’s Shelter with new underwear and socks.
* Remember to donate to the Foundation before year end. Rob noted that the District Foundation grants would be distributed in January.

**Motions**

Two motions were recommended by the Board:

MSC Odell, Cliff. That Chris Rebus be appointed Chair of the PR Committee for Rotary Year 2021-2022 for our club. Consensus positive. Carried unanimously.

MSC Alan, Destiny. That we send $1000 to Days for Girls Camrose from the Gaming Funds. Carried unanimously.

**Happy Bucks**

For: A 4 minute- YouTube video by Tom Foolery, Brent Collingwood announced as District Governor for the 2023 – 2024 year, the Library which is still offering several services—they also have a tree for the Women’s Shelter, Ken Drever is back to normal and thanks Seasons, the ability to interact with guests and fellow members each week.

We closed with the Four Way Test by Alan Fielding.

***Next week Rev. David Eriksson will be here - “Christmas in a time of Covid***”.

Odell O., publisher pro-tem. Thanks to editor John S.