



CHILLIWACK
HOSPICE SOCIETY
Centre for Grief Support

2026

Annual REPORT

**PREPARED FOR
FISCAL YEAR 2026**
APRIL 1, 2025 – MARCH 31, 2026

PRESENTED ON
JUNE 15, 2026



SCAN TO READ THIS REPORT ONLINE AND VIEW THE SLIDE DECK WITH ADDITIONAL PHOTOS AND CONTENT.

PROGRAMS AT-A-GLANCE

- ONE-TO-ONE GRIEF SUPPORT
- ADVANCE CARE PLANNING
- ANTICIPATORY GRIEF SUPPORT
- BASIC HOSPICE TRAINING
- BEREAVEMENT VISITATION
- CARING FOR THE CAREGIVER SUPPORT CIRCLE
- CHILD & YOUTH PROGRAM
- CHILDREN'S GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP
- COFFEE & COMPASSION DROP-IN
- EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOPS
- FIRST STEP GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP
- IN-SCHOOL OUTREACH
- MEN'S COOKING GROUP
- PALLIATIVE PATIENT VISITATION
- PET DEATH GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP
- PRE-TEEN GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP
- PREGNANCY & INFANT LOSS GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP
- RELAXATION PROGRAM
- SECOND STEP GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP
- SUPPORTIVE WALKING GROUP
- TEEN GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP
- TEEN GRIEF PEER SUPPORT TRAINING
- TRAUMATIC LOSS GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP
- VIGIL SERVICES

Chilliwack Hospice Society

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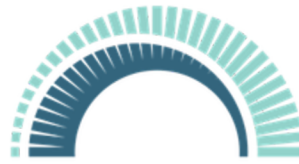
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Registered Charity #867303232RR0001

Thrifty Boutique

#101-7955 EVANS ROAD
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CHILLIWACK
HOSPICE SOCIETY
Centre for Grief Support

Our Vision

A Culture of Care in Dying, Death, and Grieving

Our Mission

Chilliwack Hospice Society is a community-based organization that helps individuals and families dealing with dying and death through support, education, and programs that promote wellness and healthy grieving.

Our Core Values

- 1 We believe that every person has worth and a right to be treated with gentleness and respect.
- 2 We believe that every person has the potential to experience hope, wonder and joy.
- 3 We believe that diversity and inclusiveness are vital to the strength of our organization.
- 4 We believe that the strength of relationships in our organization is based on trust and open communication.

Land Acknowledgement

We are privileged to live and work in S'ólh Téméxw, the traditional, ancestral, and unceded Stó:lō territory of the Ts'elxwéyq and Pelólxw tribes.



BRITISH
COLUMBIA

We acknowledge the financial support of the Province of British Columbia

How we help

5275

palliative
support visits

2382

bereavement
support visits

797

relaxation
treatment sessions

173

patient families
received
resource
materials and
information after
the death of
their loved one



In many cultures and traditions, marigolds are connected with memory, grief, and honouring those who have died. Planted by Volodymyr Ivashyna, bright orange and gold marigolds bloom in the Serenity Garden at Chilliwack Hospice Society, offering a beautiful reminder of warmth, remembrance, and the love that continues after someone dies.

President's Report



It's a true privilege — and a lot of fun — to collaborate with our leadership team, the Chilliwack Hospice Society staff, and our incredible board of directors. Together with our dedicated volunteers and members, we are united by a shared purpose: to support individuals and families facing dying and death through compassionate care, education, and programs that promote wellness and healthy grieving. Your support makes this possible, and we are truly grateful.

This past year has been one of growth for the Society. With a strong focus on recruitment, we welcomed new staff members, introduced and expanded programs, and enhanced our interior spaces to better support our work and those we serve. We continue to deepen our connection with the community through many initiatives, including our hallmark events — the ever-popular Thrifty Boutique Fashion Show and, of course, our Hoedown for Hospice. Financially, the Thrifty Boutique had another exceptional year, surpassing previous year-over-year results. This success is a testament to the unwavering commitment of our store manager, Sandy Parker, her highly engaged team, and our dedicated volunteers.

The meaningful work of the Chilliwack Hospice Society continues to attract talented and diverse individuals. I would like to thank our dedicated Board of Directors — Vice President Chris Emery, Past President Mike Olson, Treasurer Jacqueline Penner, Secretary Tammy Miller, and directors Gordon Penner, Matthew Peacock, Thomas Mueller, Jeanette Wishloff, and Jared Mumford — who generously give their time, energy, and expertise to ensure the Society operates at the highest level of excellence.

I would also like to recognize two board members who are stepping down this year. Thank you to Matthew Peacock and Past President Mike Olson for your service. Mike, we are grateful for your leadership, wisdom, and commitment over the past six years — you have made a lasting impact on the Society.

Over the past year, the Chilliwack Hospice Society has touched thousands of lives in our community. And, in a moment no one could have predicted, eleven rings and two medallions that were to be sold for \$30 each at the Thrifty Boutique captured international attention. The story made front-page news in the *Vancouver Province*, was picked up by local media, and featured on Global TV, CTV, and CBC. It even gained international coverage through outlets such as The Smithsonian, Fox News, *The Daily Mail* in England, the *New York Post*, and the *Miami Herald*. We were proud to collaborate with Simon Fraser University to help research and share the story of these remarkable medieval artifacts.

In closing, I would like to recognize our Executive Director Sue Knott, whose thoughtful and intentional leadership fosters a culture where our teams can thrive, collaborate, and make a meaningful impact — showing up each day with purpose and heart. I am extremely proud of the Society's impact this year and excited for the year ahead as we prepare to celebrate the Chilliwack Hospice Society's 40th Anniversary — 40 Years of Care — on Saturday, August 15 here at our Society office.

With gratitude,

Melanie Green
President

Executive Director's Report



As I reflect on this past year, I do so with deep gratitude for the people who continue to make Chilliwack Hospice Society a trusted place of support, comfort, and connection in our community. This year has been one of meaningful growth, continued learning, and renewed purpose as we mark 40 years of care.

For four decades, Chilliwack Hospice Society has walked alongside individuals and families navigating dying, death and grief. That work has changed over time, because the needs of our community have changed. What remains constant is our belief that every person has worth and deserves to be treated with gentleness and respect.

Our vision, *A Culture of Care in Dying, Death and Grieving*, continues to guide every decision we make, every program we offer, and every relationship we build.

This year, we saw again how important it is to keep evolving our programs to meet people where they are. Our professional staff and trained volunteers supported clients and patients through one-to-one support, grief groups, palliative care support, memorial events, education, caregiver support, relaxation treatments, and specialized programming for children, youth and families. Behind each program name are people who were met with compassion at a difficult time in their lives. Those stories remind us why this work matters.

We are also seeing rising community need and greater awareness of the impact grief has on individuals, families, workplaces, schools, and neighbourhoods. As grief becomes more openly recognized, our responsibility is to respond with care, skill, and accessibility. This year, our team continued to expand program offerings, strengthen training, and build capacity so the Society can grow in a thoughtful and sustainable way.

That growth includes important investment in our people and infrastructure. We were pleased to welcome Yuliia Kovalova as Bereavement Services Manager and Karlee Gross as a Child and Youth Program Manager alongside Kaylee Lovesy. Their leadership strengthens our ability to support people across ages and experiences. At Thrifty Boutique, we also welcomed Anat Kidron as a new sales assistant, joining a dedicated team that continues to make the store such a welcoming and vibrant place.

Thrifty Boutique remains both our largest source of revenue and a true community hub. It is a place where people shop with purpose, volunteer, build skills, connect with others, and support programs that remain free of cost to the community. This was another record-breaking year for the store, supported by loyal customers, generous donors, hardworking staff, and exceptional volunteers. Our fundraising events also continued to sell out, showing the strength of community support behind our mission.

I am especially grateful for our volunteers. They show up in so many meaningful ways: offering Relaxation Program treatments, supporting patients and families at Cascade Hospice, walking alongside others who are grieving in the Supportive Walking Group, giving weekly shifts at Thrifty Boutique, providing peer support in the Second Step Grief Support Group, helping at events, and serving throughout our programs and services. Their presence is one of the clearest expressions of our values.

To our staff, volunteers, donors, board members, Thrifty customers, and community partners, thank you. Because of you, Chilliwack Hospice Society continues to be a place where grief is met with understanding, people facing the end of life are surrounded with care, and no one has to navigate their journey alone.

Sincerely,

Sue Knott
Executive Director

Programs & Services

Grief & Bereavement Support

Anticipatory Grief
Attending program: 8
No. of sessions: 27

Bereavement 1:1 (Adults)
Attending program: 233
No. of sessions: 464

Bereavement 1:1 (Child & Youth)
Attending program: 100
No. of sessions: 407

Bereavement Drop-In
Attending program: 30
No. of sessions: 57
No. of volunteers: 3
Volunteer hours: 11

Craft and Chat
Attending program: 4
No. of sessions: 5

Family Art Nights
Attending program: 2
No. of sessions: 2

First Step Grief Support Group
Attending program: 29
No. of sessions: 186
No. of volunteers: 1
Volunteer hours: 53

In-School Outreach
Attending program: 6
No. of sessions: 6

Men's Cooking Group
Attending program: 12
No. of sessions: 51
No. of volunteers: 1
Volunteer hours: 9

Pet Death Grief Support Group
Attending program: 17
No. of sessions: 36
No. of volunteers: 3
Volunteer hours: 21

Pregnancy & Infant Loss Grief Support Group
Attending program: 4
No. of sessions: 14
No. of volunteers: 1
Volunteer hours: 2

Second Step Grief Support Group
Attending program: 26
No. of sessions: 154
No. of volunteers: 2
Volunteer hours: 62

Supportive Walking Group
Attending program: 31
No. of sessions: 242
No. of volunteers: 7
Volunteer hours: 284

Teen Drop-in Grief Support
Attending program: 1
No. of sessions: 1

Traumatic Loss Drop-In
Attending program: 21
No. of sessions: 44
No. of volunteers: 3
Volunteer hours: 10

Traumatic Loss Grief Support Group
Attending program: 21
No. of sessions: 91
No. of volunteers: 2
Volunteer hours: 22



Palliative Care Support

Caring for the Caregiver Support Circle
Attending program: 17
No. of sessions: 85
No. of volunteers: 2
Volunteer hours: 29

Cascade Visitation
No. of volunteers: 33
Volunteer hours: 4,081

Client & Patient Team Meetings
No. of sessions: 93
No. of volunteers: 28
Volunteer hours: 237

Palliative 1:1 (Home)
No. of volunteers: 1
Volunteer hours: 40

Palliative 1:1 (Home/Hospital/Facility)
No. of recipients: 46
No. of sessions: 95
Staff hours: 113

Palliative 1:1 (Hospital)
No. of volunteers: 3
Volunteer hours: 71

Vigil Services
No. of sessions: 5
No. of volunteers: 1
Volunteer hours: 16



Education & Training

Basic Hospice Training
 Attending program: 33
 No. of training hours: 862
 No. of volunteers: 11
 Volunteer hours: 33

Gentle Chair Yoga
 Attending program: 21
 No. of sessions: 115
 No. of volunteers: 2
 Volunteer hours: 10

Gentle Mat Yoga
 Attending program: 11
 No. of sessions: 30
 No. of volunteers: 2
 Volunteer hours: 4

Meal Companionship Training
 Attending program: 6
 No. of training hours: 12

Teen Grief Peer Support Training
 Attending program: 13
 No. of training hours: 178
 No. of volunteers: 2
 Volunteer hours: 10

Vigil Training
 Attending program: 9
 No. of training hours: 54



Pictured right: Emmy Kerr, volunteer yoga instructor

Free Workshops & Presentations

Movies That Move You Apr. 8, 2025
 Attending program: 1

Funeral Planning Jun. 19
 Attending program: 8

Wills & Estates Sept. 23
 Attending program: 22

Treasures in the Attic Oct. 6
 Attending program: 5

Advance Care Planning Jul. 15 & 17, Sept. 5 & 8, 2025
 Attending program: 27
 Volunteer hours: 11

Pregnancy & Infant Loss Wellness Day Nov. 15, 2025
 Attending program: 2
 No. of volunteers: 2
 Volunteer hours: 8



Relaxation Program

Relaxation Program
 Attending program: 135
 No. of treatments: 797
 No. of volunteers: 11
 Volunteer hours: 1,668



Additional Volunteer Service

Office Supports No. of volunteers: 5
 Volunteer hours: 417

Practicum Students No. of students: 4
 Practicum hours: 774

Board of Directors No. of directors: 11
 Volunteer hours: 62

Pictured: Gharaza Peerzada (left), fourth-year BSW practicum student; Cat Janzen, third-year BSW practicum student

Memorial Events

Mother's Day Memorial May 9, 2025
Attending program: 5

Father's Day Memorial Jun. 13
Attending program: 6

Rainbow Bridge Remembrance Day Aug. 21
Attending program: 6

Valentine's Day Memorial Feb. 13, 2026
Attending program: 3

Annual Memorial Celebration Nov. 18, 2025
Attending program: 60

Celebrate A Life Dec. 6–23, 2025
No. of volunteers: 30
Volunteer hours: 130
No. of butterflies: 280



Above, Cristal Biela gives a poignant speech at the Memorial Celebration, held Nov. 18, about her personal and professional experiences with grief and loss. A collaborative expressive art project completed as a group memorial ritual is pictured here.

Community Outreach



Volunteer Events

Volunteer Appreciation Luau Jun. 3, 2025
Attending event: ~100

Christmas Open House Dec. 9
Attending event: ~100

Community Events

Blush Baby & Bridal May 31–Jun. 1, 2025

Chilliwack Pride Festival Jul. 13

National Truth & Reconciliation Day Sept. 30

Family Resource Fair Oct. 15

Remembrance Day Nov. 11

No Fixed Address Screening Feb. 26, 2026



Pictured: Candice Quesnel (left); Deanna Fedorkew

Marketing & Communications

In fiscal year 2026, marketing and communications continued to strengthen public awareness of Chilliwack Hospice Society, its programs and services, major fundraising events, and Thrifty Boutique. Building on the previous year's rebranding rollout, this work focused on consistent messaging, clearer program promotion, and stronger visibility across the region.

A key priority was helping more people understand the depth and purpose of the Society's work. This included learning the unique focus of each program, reflecting the clinical and therapeutic approaches used by staff, and highlighting the subject matter experts who lead grief, palliative care, child and youth, caregiver, education, and memorial programming. Customized outreach materials supported staff attendance at community events, including resources related to children's grief, pregnancy and infant loss, and grief support for LGBTQIA+ individuals.

Marketing and communications also supported the Society's strategic priorities by helping grow awareness, strengthen community connection, promote inclusive access to services, and support a strong, profitable Thrifty Boutique. Annual advertising agreements with Rogers Sports & Media, Black Press Media and Pattison Media helped ensure strategic placement and consistent messaging through radio, print, digital audio, sponsored content, and online advertising.

Thrifty Boutique benefited from creative collaborations and community promotions, including ad placement on Around Chilliwack platforms and contest giveaways with the Chilliwack Independent Film Festival, The Vintage Barn Market, and 89.5 JR Country. A Central Village Easter egg hunt organized by Lily Poje and Danika Heinrich encouraged shoppers to visit Thrifty for special offers, while a brand shoot with Culture Co. and the Chilliwack Chamber of Commerce celebrated local women leaders in the store.

This year also brought significant media attention when rare artifacts donated to Thrifty Boutique were transferred to Simon Fraser University for study. Marketing and communications worked with SFU to help share the story and co-ordinate media interviews with local, regional, and international news outlets.

From community presentations and awards campaigns to newsletters, signage, social media, web content, and partnerships, this work helped keep the Society and Thrifty Boutique visible, trusted, and connected.



Analytics

Constant Contact

OPEN RATE **46%**
 SUBSCRIBERS **4.3K**
 EMAILS DELIVERED **151K**

Google Business Profile

IEWS **63.9K**
 INTERACTIONS **10.6K**
 CALLS **1.4K**
 DIRECTIONS **5.0K**
 WEBSITE CLICKS **4.3K**



Social Media

IEWS* **847.2K**
 INTERACTIONS* **16.3K**
 LINK CLICKS* **2.9K**
 FOLLOWERS **10.2K**

@chilliwackhospice
 @chwkthriftyboutique

*Calculations based on Facebook, Instagram, and Tiktok channels only

Thrifty Boutique



A year of purpose, connection and community



Fiscal year 2026 was a memorable year for Thrifty Boutique, marked by strong community support, creative events, meaningful collaborations and growing recognition for the store's impact. From busy shopping days and successful fundraising events to inclusive partnerships and international media attention, Thrifty continued to show how second-hand shopping can support both community connection and compassionate hospice care.

This year, **136,652 paying customers** visited Thrifty Boutique, **purchasing 349,270 items**. Women's clothing remained the top-selling category by far, followed by home décor, kitchen items and jewellery. The store also welcomed **1,347 new or renewed VIP Elite members** and received donations through **13,459 drop-off interactions**, reflecting the ongoing generosity of local donors who help keep quality items circulating in the community.

Behind those numbers is an extraordinary team. This year, **148 volunteers contributed 25,402 hours** to Thrifty Boutique, supporting donation sorting, merchandising, customer service, textile recycling and special events. Their commitment continues to make the store feel welcoming, organized and full of possibility. The staff also welcomed new sales assistant Anat Kidron to the team. This spring, sales assistant Danika Heinrich celebrated graduating with distinction from the University of the Fraser Valley with a Bachelor of Arts in Child and Youth Care.

Sustainability remained central to Thrifty's work. Through textile recycling, **the store diverted 176,815 pounds of textiles** from landfill, **generating \$24,759 in revenue** for Chilliwack Hospice Society. The team also hosted Closet Cleanout for a Cause on Earth Day, encouraging residents to donate worn and torn fabrics for recycling, and participated in the City of Chilliwack's City-Wide Free Swap event by receiving remaining items for resale or recycling.

Thrifty's calendar was filled with moments that brought people together. The 7th annual Fashionista Fashion Show, held May 10, 2025, at Evergreen Hall, celebrated a "Vintage Vibes" theme, while the 16th Anniversary Celebration Sale took place Aug. 15 on National Thrift Shop Day. More than 110 Chilliwack thrifters also enjoyed games, food, friendship and Relaxation Program treatments during the Galentine's Day evening shopping event on Feb. 13, 2026. At The Vintage Barn Market, held Oct. 31 to Nov. 2 at Chilliwack Heritage Park, the Thrifty team curated a beautiful display of preloved items and **raised \$8,000 and greater awareness** of the store.

The Boutique's community presence continued to grow through partnerships with Volunteer Chilliwack, Inclusion Chilliwack Society and Chilliwack Opportunity Society, offering opportunities for skill development, inclusion and social connection for people with disabilities. Thrifty also supported local organizations and events through donated goods, household items and gift baskets, including Ruth & Naomi's Mission, Cyrus Centre, Chilliwack Central Elementary School, The Free Store Chilliwack, Soroptimist International of Chilliwack, local high school graduation auctions and other community initiatives.

This year also brought meaningful recognition. Thrifty Boutique was once again named **Best Thrift Store** by readers of *The Chilliwack Progress* and was nominated for several awards, including **Community Impact** at the Chilliwack Chamber of Commerce Business Excellence Awards and **Inclusive Employer of the Year** at the Inclusive Employer Awards — Fraser Valley East. The Boutique also received international media attention after rare artifacts donated to the store were transferred to Simon Fraser University for study.

Through every purchase, donation, volunteer shift and community partnership, Thrifty Boutique continued to be far more than a store. It remained a place where generosity is put into action and sustainability supports service — shopping with purpose, just off the Evans Road roundabout.

Events & Fundraising

Photo courtesy of Vickie Legere.



Hometown Hoedown for Hospice Apr. 5, 2025
The 12th annual Hometown Hoedown for Hospice, held at Evergreen Hall, raised \$59,000. Attendees enjoyed a spectacular barbecue dinner by Guerilla Q, silent auction, dancing to country music favourites, and the always popular dessert dash.



Photo courtesy of Vickie Legere.

Fashionista Fashion Show May 10, 2025
Thrifty Boutique's 7th annual fashion show, held at Evergreen Hall, raised \$13,760. This year's Vintage Vibes theme brought together the elegance of the past with the creativity of thrifted fashion. The event featured 50+ one-of-a-kind thrifted outfits modeled by community volunteers



Russ Walsh Memorial Golf Tournament Sept. 11, 2025
Chaired by volunteers Gerry Enns and Kim Percy, the 2nd annual fundraising event raised \$55,000 at Meadowlands Golf & Country Club. After a purposeful round of golf, everyone gathered together to share a delicious lunch by Guerilla Q.



Vintage Barn Market Oct. 31–Nov. 2, 2025
The Thrifty team was thrilled to participate in the Vintage Barn Market at the start of the holiday season. Featuring a variety of preloved items generously donated by our thrifting community, Wenona, Steph and Sandy curated a spectacular display with support from our wonderful volunteers.



Celebrate A Life Dec. 6–23, 2025
Our annual Celebrate A Life memorial ritual at Minter Country Garden and Thrifty Boutique raised \$2,825.30. 280 butterflies were placed on the trees of celebration.



Galentine's Day at Thrifty Boutique Feb. 13, 2026
Over 110 Chilliwack thrifters enjoyed fun and games, food and friendship at our Galentine's Day evening shopping event at Thrifty Boutique. Relaxation Program volunteers also gave treatments to event attendees.

Milestones & Memories

A beautiful full-circle moment at Cascade Hospice

In September 2022, at the request of a young patient, Society volunteers helped create a meaningful wedding at Cascade Hospice for Debra Allen-Bernier, who was nearing the end of her life. Volunteers decorated the space, arranged light meals and refreshments, and provided compassionate support to Debra and her loved ones throughout the deeply emotional occasion. Debra died the following day, making the experience even more profound for everyone involved.

This past year, Debra's sister, Robin Legere, contacted Candice Quesnel at the Society to share an idea for how she hoped to give back to Cascade Hospice and the volunteers who had supported her family during that difficult time.

Robin arrived with 12 thoughtfully prepared gift bags for volunteers to use when celebrating birthdays with patients in hospice. Each bag was lovingly filled with birthday decorations, small treasures, a card and sunflowers, Debra's favourite flower. Together, the items created a simple but meaningful way to bring moments of normalcy, joy and celebration to patients and families at Cascade Hospice. Robin also created two wedding celebration bags, complete with a bridal veil and wedding decorations, intended for future weddings or wedding anniversaries celebrated at Cascade Hospice.

The heartfelt gesture beautifully reflected the lasting impact of the Society's palliative care support volunteers. The care, presence and compassion shown to Debra's family during such a significant moment remained with them long after her death. Seeing that experience transformed into an act of generosity for future patients and families was a powerful reminder of the meaningful connections and lasting memories created.



Candice Quesnel (left) accepts gift bags donated by Robin Legere for Cascade patients.

Community outreach builds awareness, connection, and access

The Society continued to strengthen community connections throughout the year by participating in local events, professional networks, and outreach opportunities that helped more people learn about available grief and palliative care supports.

Lucy Fraser attended the Blush Baby & Bridal event at Chilliwack Heritage Park on May 31 and Jun. 1, 2025, to share information about pregnancy and infant loss supports. Staff also hosted a booth at the Chilliwack Pride Festival on Jul. 13, offering support to those grieving, navigating the palliative care system, or seeking help with advance care planning.

Kaylee Lovesy and Karlee Gross participated in a Family Resource Fair hosted by Chilliwack School District No. 33 on Oct. 15, 2025, where they shared information about children's grief with parents and educators. Desmond Devnich and Sue Knott represented the Society at a National Truth and Reconciliation Day event hosted by Wilma's Transition Society at Sardis Park. Sue laid a wreath on behalf of the Society at Veterans Memorial Park on Remembrance Day, Nov. 11.

The Society joined community partners, including the BC Hospice Palliative Care Association, for a Feb. 26, 2026, screening of *No Fixed Address: The White Cart Memorial* at The'itsetliya Health & Community Centre. The film explored grief and death among people who are unhoused, and Lucy Fraser participated in a panel discussion following the screening.

Staff also attended the grand opening of The Grove, a 42-bed shelter for older adults facing housing insecurity, and Stronger Together, a community event hosted by Shxwhá:y Village and the Chilliwack Community Action Team in recognition of International Overdose Awareness Day.

Throughout the year, the Society hosted monthly Chilliwack Trauma and Resilience Informed Community of Practice meetings facilitated by Cristal Biela, a Community Health Specialist with Fraser Health. Sue Knott and Desmond Devnich also continued representing the Society through local and regional networks, including the Federation of Fraser Region Hospice Societies where Sue serves as president, Chilliwack Chamber of Commerce, and Chilliwack Healthier Community.



Honouring the bond between people and companion animals

Over the past year, Chilliwack Hospice Society continued to offer compassionate support for individuals grieving the death of a beloved pet. Through one-to-one support, pet death grief support groups and a meaningful Rainbow Bridge Remembrance Day memorial event, the Society created space for people to acknowledge a type of grief that can sometimes be misunderstood or minimized.

Karlee Gross stepped forward to lead this area of programming, including a Pet Death Grief Support Group held from Jan. 13 to Feb. 3, 2026. Later in the fiscal year, practicum students Gharaza Peerzada and Cat Janzen prepared for another series of pet death grief support sessions, which began March 16, 2026, and continued into the new fiscal year.

In recognition of Rainbow Bridge Remembrance Day, Chilliwack Hospice Society held a memorial event on Aug. 21, 2025. Coordinated by Deanna Fedorkew, the event invited participants to bring a photo of their pet and share memories in the supportive company of others who understood their grief. Grief support professionals spoke about the impact animals have on people's lives and the importance of validating pet death as a meaningful grief experience. Participants also created commemorative coasters featuring images of their pets, offering a tangible way to honour their memory.



A selection of the coasters created at the Rainbow Bridge Remembrance Day memorial event, Aug. 21.

Community generosity supports safer, more welcoming spaces

Generous community support helped Chilliwack Hospice Society make important improvements to its spaces this year, enhancing comfort, safety and functionality for clients, volunteers, staff and visitors.

On Oct. 8, 2025, Sue Knott attended an evening meeting of the Chilliwack Dogwood Monarch Lions Club to share an update on the Society's work. Following her presentation, club members surprised the Society with a commitment to donate \$20,000 toward hospice programs and services. Knott later joined the club on Oct. 23 during its weekly livestream bingo night for an official cheque presentation.

The donation supported a renovation of the kitchen at Chilliwack Hospice Society, including new cupboards, drawers, counters, backsplash and mobile island storage. The updated kitchen is more functional and welcoming, supporting many parts of hospice work. It is a place where meals are shared, tea and coffee are prepared for meetings and support groups, food is stored for memorial events, and participants in programs such as the Men's Cooking Group gather to cook, eat and connect.

The Society also received a \$4,727.84 grant from the Chilliwack Foundation to purchase and install two automated external defibrillators, one at Chilliwack Hospice Society and one at Thrifty Boutique. These AEDs help support the safety and well-being of volunteers, clients, customers and staff. With staff trained in first aid, the machines provide an important life-saving resource in two busy community spaces.

Chilliwack Hospice Society is grateful for the continued generosity of the Chilliwack Foundation, local service clubs, and donors whose support helps create safer, more welcoming environments for compassionate care.



Sue Knott accepts a presentation cheque from the Dogwood Monarch Lions Club, Oct. 23.

Education and training strengthen compassionate support

Education remained an important part of Chilliwack Hospice Society's work throughout the fiscal year, with several training opportunities offered for volunteers, staff and community members.

Basic Hospice Training was offered over several days from Apr. 28 to May 24, 2025, and again from Feb. 2 to Mar. 2, 2026. This 35-hour course provides a foundation for volunteers interested in hospice palliative care, covering topics such as communication, grief, self-care and compassionate support for individuals and families facing end-of-life challenges.

Additional specialized training helped prepare volunteers for specific support roles. Candice Quesnel led Vigil Training on Nov. 1, 2025, equipping volunteers to provide bedside presence to individuals and families during the final 72 hours of a person's life in a setting that is home to the individual. She also led Meal Companionship Training for volunteers supporting patients through shared meals, conversation and gentle, non-medical assistance that prioritizes dignity, comfort and connection.

Kaylee Lovesy and Karlee Gross led Teen Grief Peer Support Training, helping youth develop the skills and confidence to support peers who are grieving. Together, these training opportunities strengthened the Society's capacity to offer compassionate, informed and responsive support across its programs.



Basic Hospice Training – Spring 2025 cohort celebrates.

Awards & Recognition



THE CHILLIWACK PROGRESS 2026 A-LIST

ANTIQUE STORE
BABY/CHILDREN'S STORE
FUNDRAISING EVENT
LOCAL CHARITY
THRIFT STORE
WOMEN'S CLOTHING STORE
(WINNER)

COUNSELLOR
ECO-FRIENDLY STORE
HOME DECOR STORE
MEN'S CLOTHING STORE
(FINALIST)

COMMUNITYVOTES
CHILLIWACK
HOME DECOR
THRIFT STORE
(PLATINUM)

BOUTIQUES
NON-PROFIT
SECOND-HAND CLOTHING
WOMEN'S CLOTHING &
ACCESSORIES
(GOLD)

COMMUNITY
ORGANIZATION
(SILVER)



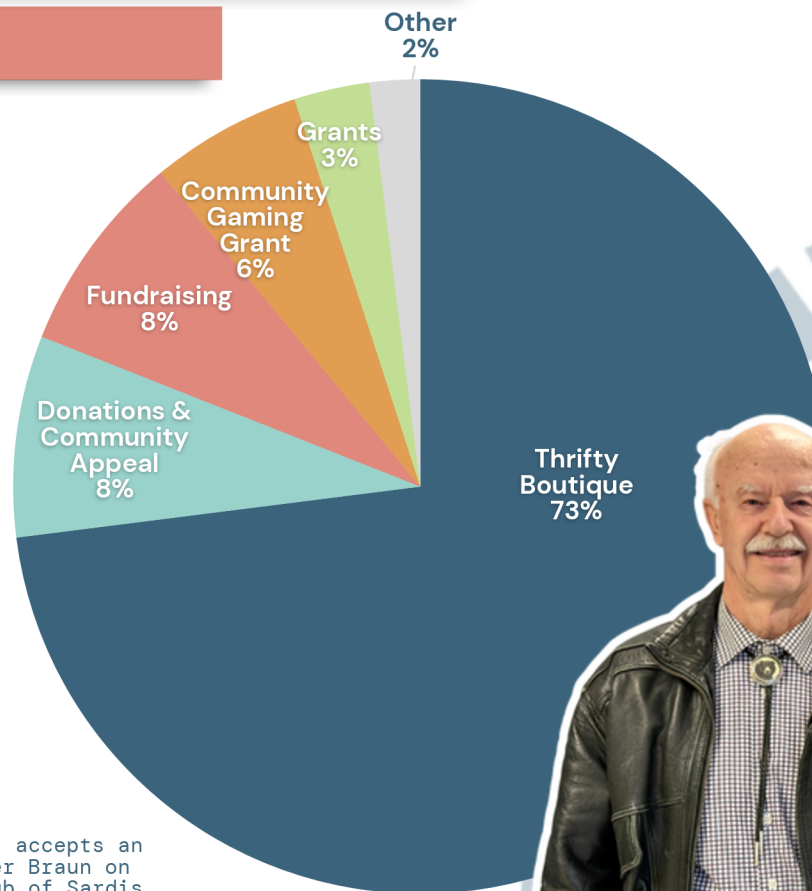
Volodymyr Ivashyna and Sue Knott attend the 2026 Business Excellence Awards.

Recognized among Chilliwack's business and community leaders. At the Chilliwack Chamber of Commerce Business Excellence Awards, held Jan. 31, 2026, at the Chilliwack Cultural Centre, Chilliwack Hospice Society was named a finalist for Non-Profit of the Year, Thrifty Boutique was named a finalist for Community Impact, and Executive Director Sue Knott was named a finalist for Business Leader of the Year.

Honoured for inclusion, belonging and community impact. Chilliwack Hospice Society was nominated for Inclusive Environment at the Fraser Valley Cultural Diversity Awards, held March 4, 2026, while Thrifty Boutique was nominated for Inclusive Employer of the Year at the Inclusive Employer Awards — Fraser Valley East, held Oct. 28, 2025.

Financial Report

Revenue FY26



Pictured right: Sue Knott accepts an annual donation from Roger Braun on behalf of the Kiwanis Club of Sardis.

Our Team

Our Board of Directors

Melanie Green
President

Tammy Miller
Secretary

Gordon Penner
Director

Jeanette Wishloff
Director

Chris Emery
Vice-President

Mike Olson
Past President

Jared Mumford
Director

Jacqueline Penner, CPA
Treasurer

Matthew Peacock
Director

Thomas Mueller
Director

Our Staff

Chilliwack Hospice Society

Sue Knott
Executive Director

Desmond Devnich, AA
Director of Marketing & Communications

Kaylee Lovesy, BSW, RSW
Child & Youth Program Manager

Sharilyn Jackson
Event Manager

Tammy Genzale
Financial Manager

Yuliia Kovalova, MA, RCC
Bereavement Services Manager

Deanna Fedorkew
Community Education Manager

Volodymyr Ivashyna, MEEP
Receptionist/Administrative Assistant

Lucy Fraser, MSW
Director of Programs

Candice Quesnel, BSW, RSW
Palliative Services Manager

Karlee Gross, BA (Hons.)
Child & Youth Program Manager

Thrifty Boutique

Sandy Parker
Manager

Stephanie Heinrich
Assistant Manager

Susan Greenway
Assistant Manager

Sales Assistants
Andrea Campbell
Wenona Guilderson
Danika Heinrich
Anat Kidron
Lily Poje
Bonnie Yule



David "Santa Claus" Jackson joins Hospice Society and Thrifty Boutique staff for a group photo at the Christmas Volunteer Appreciation Open House held December 9.



CHILLIWACK
HOSPICE
SOCIETY

Centre for Grief Support



THRIFTY
BOUTIQUE