

CELEBRATING YOUR SUPPORT

Steps for Life-Walking for Families of Workplace Tragedy is the biggest event and the biggest fundraiser of the year for Threads of Life, and has been since the beginning. Your support for this event helps to raise awareness of the importance of health and safety, and ensures individuals and families have access to services to help them cope and heal. We could all see and feel that support across the country this spring, and we celebrate you!



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Bill Stunt



It can feel a bit ambivalent, celebrating this organization that none of us wanted to join. Through this 20th anniversary year for Threads of Life, we're thinking not so much of celebrating, the progress so many of us having made on our healing journeys, hon-

ouring our losses and recognizing the challenges. But one thing we do celebrate is the support Threads of Life has received across two decades, from our partners, funders, donors and volunteers. The healing that Threads of Life continues to offer to those affected by workplace tragedies couldn't happen without all of you. **Thank you.**

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Finding solace and support in prevention

by Rose Wilson

June 21st, 2013 is a day that our family will never forget. It was a beautiful, sunny Friday and it was George's and my 33rd wedding anniversary. I had just returned home from work for the day but George wasn't arriving home for a few hours yet. I began putting around the kitchen when suddenly an OPP officer showed up at our front door with news that no parent should ever hear. The officer asked if I had a son Justin and I replied yes. He informed me Justin had been in an accident. Thinking he meant a car accident, I asked what hospital Justin was at. He replied and said 'I am sorry but Justin was in a workplace accident and passed away this morning.' Well I think I ran to the backyard which is on Lake Simcoe, and stood on the dock ready to jump in and start swimming and never stop.

Justin was 29 years old, single, and working for a contracting company at a graphite mine in Kearney, Ontario. On the day of the accident, two turbines had been removed from the roof and insulation was applied to the open holes. The crew was in the process of removing metal sheathing to cover the holes when Justin stepped onto and through the insulation and fell 60 feet to the floor of the building. He was killed by the resulting massive trauma. Our family was changed forever.

Justin was our second-born. He has a sister Alicia who is two years older than him. Growing up they were like any



Justin Wilson with his favourite boy Charlie

other siblings, bickering, then the next minute they were the best of friends. They always had each other's backs. Justin's favourite sport was soccer. He began playing from the young age of four and continued into his adult years on a men's league. He enjoyed playing the positions of forward or midfield. We as a family travelled many miles across Canada to tournaments, as far as Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and PEI. We made many wonderful family memories and close friends along the way.

Justin had a very kind heart. He always thought of others and cared for many, especially the elderly, like his grandparents. He would visit his grandmother often, just popping in to say "ok gran let's go to Tim's for a cup of tea" or "let's go to Wendy's for a burger." I always said Justin would have been best in the culinary arts – he loved cooking and was excellent in the kitchen. He made many lovely meals for us and our guests.

After such unexpected tragedy, families often turn to people with similar experiences for grief support. Trying to navigate through such intense emotions does not come naturally, obviously. This is when our family heard of Threads of

Life, which dedicates their time and efforts to support families after a workplace fatality, life-altering injury, or occupational disease. Since these situations are preventable, it is important to bring awareness to workplace safety, so that other families do not have to deal with such tragic loss.

The most unfortunate thing about a workplace illness, injury or death is that typically, awareness is not sought until it affects one directly, whether it's a family member, friend or an acquaintance. Living in the Barrie area, our family has been fortunate enough to be surrounded by the most wonderful friends and family, who have continuously offered support while we have been navigating through the profound stages of grief over the last 10 years.

The Steps for Life walk in Barrie always has the most profound impact on our family. The outpouring of kindness as participants gather for the walk around Lakeshore Drive in Barrie to bring awareness to workplace injuries, illness and tragedies is truly great. Every year, aside from when the walk was cancelled due to COVID, we

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A lifelong journey after injury

by **Russell Claus**

My journey with Threads of Life actually began many years before I had ever even heard of it, 13 years ago, on a hot northern British Columbia day in late July. There, on the last day of my fourth season as a tree planter, I suffered a life-altering workplace injury.

Tree planting is most often piece-rate work, and I had pushed myself to work as hard as I could that day. Knowing it was my last opportunity that season to make as much money as I could to pay for my university tuition, I ignored the feelings of dizziness, fatigue, and nausea that slowly built throughout the day as I began to suffer from a case of heat exhaustion. By the time the end of the work day came, I was feeling very nauseous and needed to ask my co-worker who was driving us back to camp, to pull over on the side of the logging road so I could get out to vomit. While I was outside of the vehicle, the driver lost sight of me, and in an attempt to pull the vehicle further off to the side of the logging road to avoid industrial traffic, he accidentally struck and ran me over with the crew vehicle, shattering my pelvis. The accident would leave me requiring two reconstructive surgeries, temporarily bound to a wheelchair, and with permanent impairments due to nerve and soft tissue damage.

From the moment that truck rolled over me, I would rely heavily on the



Russell Claus

support of many people: such as my co-workers who helped to evacuate me to the hospital; the medical practitioners who provided me care to allow me to get back onto my feet; and in particular my partner who was with me every figurative and, eventually, literal step of the way in my recovery. As I healed, and slowly became more comfortable and at peace with the “new normal” of my post-accident body, I found that my accident had provided me with tools for returning some of the support I had received in my time of need. People in my life, some like my co-worker who was driving that day, who were directly impacted by the accident, and others who experienced their own tragedies or injuries over the years all seemed to find some comfort or benefit from talking about what I had experienced.

This began to take more solid shape when in 2019, I saw a Threads of Life Speaker’s Bureau volunteer share their story at a workplace safety conference I was attending. From there I researched Threads of Life further and first got involved with my local Steps for Life event that year. Then in 2020, I joined the Speakers Bureau myself.

To my surprise, even though it had been 10 years since my accident, I found that I too experienced continued benefit

by telling my story with Threads of Life. Yes, I found fulfillment and purpose by turning my negative experience into something positive by highlighting the importance of prevention in workplace health and safety and making a meaningful contribution to the mission to eliminate workplace fatalities and life-altering injuries and illness, but it was also more than that. As I told my story to groups of total strangers, in a way reliving those experiences and that time in my life, I realized that there was still pain and difficult emotions I had not yet fully processed. With the support of the wonderful staff and fellow volunteers

and family members of Threads of Life, and through the practice of story telling, I have reached a new phase in my healing journey from that fateful summer day. I have learned that this is a lifelong journey that continues to this day.

Looking forward, I am excited about having the privilege to continue my participation with Threads of Life and in my journey of healing and growth through deepening my involvement with the charity and in the continued sharing of my story. But most importantly, I am hopeful that my efforts, however small they may sometimes feel, contribute to a future where work related injuries, illnesses, and death are a thing of the past. It’s so gratifying to see my old friends in person, to talk to new ones and to be part of this caring group.

Thankfully, Threads of Life is national in its outreach and offers Family Forums in the Atlantic, Central Canada and in the West. The magazine contains personal stories of loss and heartbreak but also of courage and resolve after involvement with the Threads of Life volunteers and support. As we honour the organization’s 20th anniversary, my hope is that this wonderful association will continue to offer support along with the many partnerships and the many volunteers.

Living with loss & grief: Just one story of many

by **Jolene Gust**

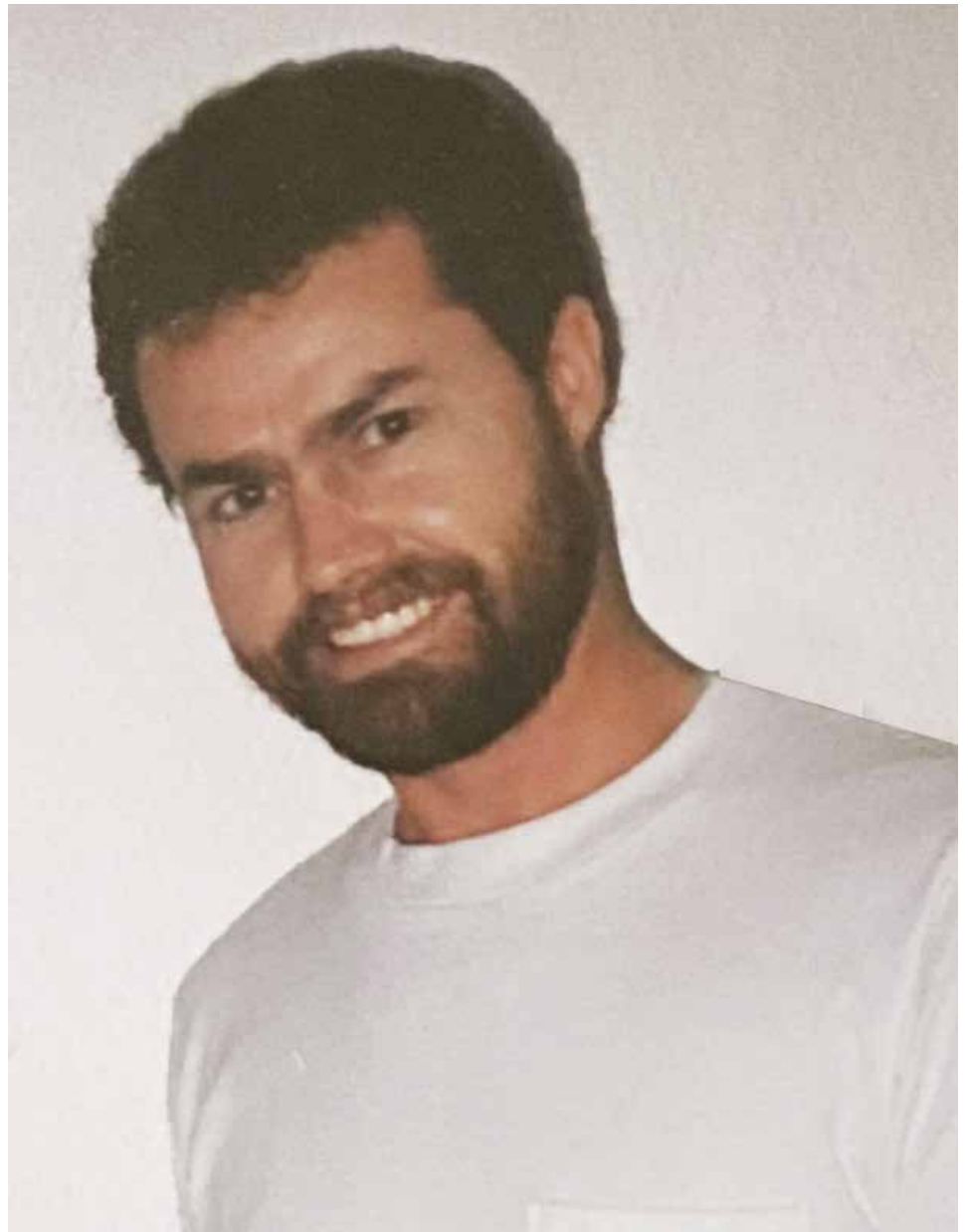
We all have dates of anniversaries that we will forever remember, and April 28th is one of mine. This is the Day of Mourning, a day we remember workers who lost their lives, were injured, or became ill due to a work-related tragedy. This is a day that I personally get to reflect upon as my dad, Ken Wiebe lost his life due to a work-related fatality.

This is also a yearly reminder to me that there is still work to be done around workplace safety. My dad had won years of awards for being Injury Free and No Time Loss. But he paid the ultimate price when he lost his life after being electrocuted in a potash mine where he worked just outside of Saskatoon. He was just nine days short of celebrating his 38th birthday on May 23rd. This year, 2023, marked the 32nd year anniversary since my dad became a statistic. At the time of his death, I was 16 years old.

On May 14, 1991 I was awoken by my mom asking me to come and lock the door behind her as my dad was taken to the hospital because there had been an incident at work and he got hurt.

I was a bit confused as my dad had the day off from work. He had meetings scheduled that day and he and my mom were going to meet some friends for lunch.

I walked down the hallway, watching my mom scramble grabbing her shoes and purse. I stopped when I was across



Jolene's dad Ken Wiebe

from the front door where a man stood with safety glasses on and the lights on his hard hat still shining.

I remember wondering if he even realized that they were still on.

Jump forward: knocking on the door it is the friends that my parents were going for lunch with. I tell them that my mom is not home, that my dad was called into work to fix a high voltage piece of machinery and there was an accident, and he was hurt. They leave.

Time jumps forward again. The next thing is Frank and Roxanne at the door again; this time the thing that I am focused on is the tears stuck in Roxanne's eyelashes. Good friends of my parents were the lucky candidates to tell me that my dad had died. My heart still hurts for

them to have to carry that memory.

My two sisters were in school at the time. I don't know who told them. I also do not remember how we all got to the hospital.

The next part of my story is what I think is most important because it is the raw reality of a workplace fatality.

The hospital room is quiet, the temperature is cold, sterile feeling. I am given strict instructions not to move the white sheet covering my dad from his chest down. When you are electrocuted, there is an entry and an exit point. For my dad as he had both hands in contact, the electricity crossed over his chest and the exit points were one of his hands and one of his feet. All the hair on his face was burnt off. He still had oxygen nasal

pads in his nose.

We were told that there was a co-worker near my dad when the incident happened. He said he had seen my dad walk over to the machinery then walk back to his jeep to look at some prints then back to the machinery. What followed next was my dad calling out “oh No” followed by some bright lights and sparks. Remembering that first, this is electricity, so his coworker was watching helplessly as there was no way to ground the power. And second, he was working underground, so time was another factor not on his side. He needed to be loaded into an underground jeep-style vehicle, then wait for a shaft to be called and lowered to bring him back to surface level.

There were many lives impacted that day: his co-worker who witnessed the incident, other co-workers who worked tirelessly to get to him and get him to surface and into the ambulance, the shaft operator, my dad’s friends who had to tell one of his daughters that he has died, and his family. He was a son, uncle, brother, a husband, and a father.

When a workplace injury, disease or fatality happens the impact of that is a ripple effect that touches so many people.

It is my understanding that my dad’s locker has since been retired in memory.

If I had a message of safety to others it would be this:

- **SLOW DOWN** – be aware of your workplace surroundings. Do not get complacent – if you see a hazard, report it and take the measures needed to stay safe.
- **KNOW YOUR RIGHTS AS A WORKER.** The right to know, the right to participate and the right to refuse work if you feel the job or task you’re doing is unsafe for

yourself or others.

■ **STAND UP FOR YOUR SAFETY.**

Take ownership. Safety is everyone’s responsibility. Don’t rely on someone else to act – this is your life, treat it with respect. Speak Up & Step Up.

When I was looking for something to say or play for my dad’s funeral, I came across a song by Harry Stamper with the words “we just come to work here; we don’t come to die”. That is what I believed lit my safety spark and I knew from then that I was going to do something in the safety profession but wasn’t sure in what capacity.

My story does not only include loss and grief, but it also comes with many blessings. One of those blessings is that I am fortunate to work for a leading safety organization, Energy Safety Canada (ESC). ESC has presented many opportunities for me to grow in health and safety including going to the University of Calgary – Continuing Education and taking Occupational Health and Safety. I am currently completing my second certificate in the program.

Another blessing is that I was invited to attend a virtual conference a couple of years ago held by Women in Occupational Health & Safety Society (WOHSS) and that is where I was introduced to Threads of Life. I remember thinking ‘WOW, where was this organization when I needed them?’ To answer that, it is better late than never as the grieving process gets easier over time, but it never fully goes away. I soon followed up to participate in the annual fundraiser Steps for Life. This year marked my third year participating in the walk and I am proud to say that Energy Safety Canada was one of this year’s sponsors!

I am also honored to share that I was a

selected recipient in 2022 to receive the Threads of Life Scholarship funded by the Board of Canadian Registered Safety Professionals (BCRSP).

I believe in the core of who I am that every man and woman deserves to go home to their loved ones at the end of their workday and as long as there are workplace incidents, then I will continue to be an advocate for health and safety. The day my dad lost his life, I found my voice.

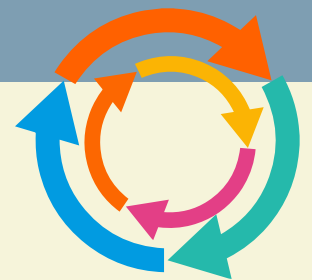
...*Finding Solace* continued from pg. 2

have more and more team members and supporters. The bright T-shirts along with the large group of walkers, help to show support for families that have been impacted along with the mission, vision and values that Threads of Life aims to achieve.

We hope to continue spreading awareness for workplace safety and the Threads of Life organization through the annual Steps for Life walk. Many families like ours rely heavily on the programs offered to assist them through their grief and loss. Over the years, Thread of Life has not only become a heavily relied upon organization for individuals in need but, through the programs, many people have become each other’s family of support. Grief is a universal experience, although it affects everyone differently. Especially when a loss is sudden and traumatic, coping in the aftermath can seem impossibly difficult. It can certainly help when those searching so desperately for comfort during a period of such deep loss can connect with those who are on the same path to healing or already further along in their healing journey.

Threads of Life believes sharing your experience of workplace tragedy helps you heal.

Are you ready to share? You could write a reflection on one idea, write a poem, draft a post for our blog (threadsoflife.ca/news), or share your full story as family members have in this issue. To learn more, email: Susan at shaldane@threadsoflife.ca.



Six ways you can learn to cope this year

FAMILIESCONNECT workshops are like a cross between going for coffee with your friends and taking a really good master-class – you can learn new skills, and also talk and share in a safe atmosphere. From now to year-end, there are six more monthly FamiliesConnect sessions, offering six more chances to heal and grow. Register at threadsoflife.ca/familiesconnect.

<p>JULY Wed. 19 July 2023 6 - 8 pm ET</p>	<p>Journey to Self - Yoga and Wellness In this workshop we will work through a gentle healing yoga flow to release stagnant energy from the mind and body. We will learn healing techniques...that can help to remove emotional blockages. Learn tools that will assist you in the journey back to self.</p>
<p>AUGUST Wed. 16 Aug. 2023 6 - 8 pm ET</p>	<p>Resilience ...even when the very worst happened This talk will look at resilience and little mini steps to regrow resilience if yours is depleted.</p>
<p>SEPTEMBER Wed. 20 Sept. 2023 6 - 8 pm ET</p>	<p>Christmas, anniversaries and celebrations ... Oh My! Holidays such as Christmas and celebrations, as well as anniversary dates of injuries, illness or fatalities, can leave us feeling overwhelmed. We'll discuss self-reflection prior to, and during these events, and identify situations and triggers that can lead us to feel overwhelmed. We'll also do a mindfulness and visualization practice as a way to acknowledge strong or negative emotions and thoughts, and send them safely away from us. Join us in this interactive and collaborative session.</p>
<p>OCTOBER Wed. 18 Oct. 2023 6 - 8 pm ET</p>	<p>Making friends with your grief Whether your experience is as an injured worker, a caregiver, or a family member coping with fatality, you walk with grief and loss each day. Let's talk about what makes you feel better (movies? music? walking?), and learn from one another. Bring your mug and your favourite comfort food recipe.</p>
<p>NOVEMBER Wed. 15 Nov. 2023 6 - 8 pm ET</p>	<p>Who am I now? Taking the next step What is the next step in the midst of grief and loss? In this workshop we will talk and share about taking the next step while holding space for our grief.</p>
<p>DECEMBER Wed. 13 December 2023 6 - 8 pm ET</p>	<p>Pet therapy</p>

Training this fall for family member volunteer roles

Many of those who have been helped by Threads of Life decide they'd like to give back by volunteering. This fall, training is scheduled for new Volunteer Family Guides and speaker volunteers. VFGs provide one-on-one peer support for others who have experienced tragedy, and speaker volunteers share their personal stories to help prevent future tragedies. Training for both roles takes place in November. To learn more, contact kpitts@threadsoflife.ca for the VFG program or shaldane@threadsoflife.ca regarding the speaker program.



Volunteer Profile: Durham Region Steps for Life Committee

by Tracey Csordas, Regional Development
Coordinator, Central Canada

Durham Region Steps for Life is fortunate to have a blend of loyal members who've been there from Day One, plus new volunteers among its committee and event volunteers

In 2011 Durham Steps for Life held its first walk and has been a growing success ever since. This is a testament to the dedicated group of committee volunteers, many of whom have been there since day one.

The dedication, passion and magic of this committee shines through in all the original members who are still as focused and dedicated as they were 12 years ago.

Kerri Stewart, the Committee Co-Chair reflected on how she learned about Threads of Life in 2010 after attending a speakers bureau presentation. She had the opportunity to chat with Threads of Life volunteer speaker Bill Bowman who shared information about Steps for Life walks. With the closest walk being Toronto, Bill suggested they start a committee and walk in Durham Region. After attending a few meetings that brought the group together, Kerri said “we were ‘all in’ and said ‘let’s do this,’” and the Durham committee was formed.

The committee is robust with most of their original founding members along with new ones they have welcomed along the way. Cristal Diemer-Ewles, Committee Member attributes their success as a committee to “working well because we have a good relationship” and they “have a commitment to Threads of Life but also a commitment to each other”. Lucas Curran joined the committee in 2021 and shares he appreciated the support from the committee. “Everyone works well together and there is a great alignment between Threads of Life, Steps for Life and OPG and the safety culture,” Lucas says, “and it has been a real pleasure working with the planning committee and participating in the Steps for Life.”

In its second year, the committee had a family member join. They shared that none of the founding members had been personally affected by tragedy, so when Patti Penny joined it put it all into perspective for the group, confirming why they organize the walk. Patti’s presence

there “solidified our understanding of who we were working to help and support,” Cristal says. The personal connection was immense for the committee. Dermott Barrett, Committee Co-Chair shared that they all have a “connection to health and safety in our roles and that provides a good foundation for why we help”.

While understanding there is a serious message to be delivered, they still want to keep the walk fun and family-friendly. Even the committee members’ families get involved! All the members enjoy having an added touch for the kids by including Home Depot workshops, fire trucks and various other activities that bring families together. This year, Home Depot generously donated door prizes that left walkers going home with flower baskets and lawn tools. The committee works to add a new element each year to keep it fun.

On the day of the walk the committee gets so much joy out of seeing the “sea of yellow” – seeing everyone walk together brings the committee members back year after year. Dermott says he enjoys the local connection: they get more out of seeing and supporting members of their community. All the members love seeing familiar faces of teams that walk every year. The mix of family teams and workplace teams brings diversity to the walk.

Cristal highlights the importance of having a family spokesperson to open the walk is key. That personal story reminds everyone why they walk.

The committee talks about succession planning to continue the success of the Durham Steps for Life and they have welcomed new members over the years. However no one is even thinking about leaving anytime soon – this group of volunteers are truly committed. Dermott shares that past members have left due to relocation or a change in job roles but no one has left because they don’t want to continue.

When asked why they love volunteering for Threads of Life, Kerri echoes Dermott’s thoughts that when a volunteer role “aligns with the work that we do on a daily basis” it becomes a natural fit.



In addition to the company's other forms of support, CannAmm teams participated this year in Steps for Life in Edmonton and in the National Online event

Celebrating Our Partners' Support: CannAmm Occupational Testing Services

by **Scott McKay**, Director Partnerships and Fundraising (retired)

Threads of Life is currently celebrating our 20th anniversary. We are very proud that we have grown each and every year since our inception in 2003. We currently provide our peer-based support programs to over 3,350 family members across the country. All of our programs are available to our families at no cost. Our partners play a critical role in both our growth and funding through their support of our mission:

To help families heal through a community of support and to promote the elimination of life-altering workplace injuries, illnesses and deaths.

Our Threads of Life partners contribute to our community of support by growing awareness of Threads of Life; providing volunteer support to Threads of Life, participating in Threads of Life events including Steps for Life and Speakers Bureau, and providing funding support.

Our partners come in many shapes and sizes and include employers, unions, trade associations, health and safety system partners, schools, media and others. One of our longtime stakeholders is CannAmm Occupational Testing Services. CannAmm has been a partner of Threads of Life since 2011. The national company helps businesses manage drug-free workplaces, and help in ensuring the health and safety of employees by assessing if they are medically and physically fit for the job. CannAmm first became involved in Steps for Life, and came on board as a sponsor for the walk the next year.

CannAmm saw a clear alignment between their own work and Threads of Life's vision and mission. "Essentially, both organizations are committed to do our best, in our own way, to prevent injury, disease, and death due to incidents at

the workplace," says CannAmm CEO Peter Deines. CannAmm was also inspired by "Threads of Life's ability to weave a community of support around people and their families when such unfortunate outcomes do occur."

Like many of Threads of Life partnerships, the relationship with CannAmm has evolved over time. Today CannAmm's support includes national sponsorship of Steps for Life, featuring Threads of Life speakers at their WorkSafe Forums, and profiling Threads of Life with their network of clients and contacts. In 2023, CannAmm teams took part in the Edmonton Steps for Life walk and in the National Online Steps for Life event.

In addition, Peter has served on the Threads of Life board of directors since 2014 and is currently the vice chair. Peter recently reflected on the impact he has seen Threads of Life have on families: "Some feel that Threads of Life has saved their lives," he says. "A sense of inclusion fills a critical void in people's lives. Our prevention message, through family member presentations, Steps for Life, social and traditional media, shares our family members' lived experiences and amplifies it in a meaningful way."

Threads of Life thanks CannAmm and all of our partners both large and small, working together in pursuit of our vision **to lead and inspire a culture shift, as a result of which work-related injuries, illnesses and deaths are morally, socially and economically unacceptable.**

To find out more information on how you and/or your organization can support Threads of Life please contact Lorna Catrambone at lcatrambone@threadsoflife.ca.

Donors like You: NORCAT-Threads of Life Charity Hockey Tournament

At its best, sport can bring people together and create inspiration. That's clearly the case for the annual NORCAT-Threads of Life hockey tournament.

"I enjoy the opportunity to meet up with fellow tradespeople and friends each year, have friendly competition and raise a few extra dollars for a great cause," says tournament founder and organizer Dan Fleming.

Dan is the Toronto region manager for NORCAT, a skilled labour training and development company. He is also a Threads of Life family member – Dan's father, whom he's named after, died of lung cancer after years as a boilermaker working in oil refineries, power plants, pulp and paper mills and steel plants.

The hockey tournament, now more than 30 years old, pre-dates Threads of Life. Dan started the tournament in 1992 when he was working as a carpenter. His brother was a millwright and the two "thought it would be great to start a hockey tournament between the two trades," Dan explains. The event has grown steadily since then, this year with 21 teams representing unions, trade groups, and contracting companies.

Dan became familiar with Threads of Life while working at the Construction Safety Association of Ontario (CSAO, now the Infrastructure Health and Safety Association). But after 2008, when his father died, he became more involved.

"I introduced my mum to Threads of Life and the family forum, and was able to see all the great work and support that Threads of Life provides to families," he says. From there the idea was born to make the annual hockey tournament a fundraiser for the organization.

Since 2016, the renamed NORCAT-Threads of Life Charity Hockey Tournament has raised close to \$40,000 to support families affected by workplace tragedy. After some down-years



Players from Carpenters 27 celebrate, one of the four division champions at the NORCAT-Threads of Life hockey tournament this year

during the pandemic, 2023 was the biggest ever, bringing in more than \$10,000. Teams from the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), UA787, Carpenters 27, and EllisDon all won their divisional finals.

The contributions to Threads of Life come from the teams' registration fees, sponsorships and donations. These funds help to sustain the programs and services for families affected by workplace tragedies. But the tournament is a winner in building connection and inspiration too.

"The tournament is a great opportunity for the construction trades to network, create comradeship," Dan says, "and we also raise awareness of safety and of the support that is provided by Threads of Life."



A very fond farewell

This summer Threads of Life will be saying goodbye to Scott McKay as he retires from his role as Director of Partnerships and Fundraising. Many of our Threads of Life partners and most of our volunteers have heard Scott talk about our mission and vision – he holds those close to his heart. In his nearly 10 years with Threads of Life, Scott has made a huge contribution in developing the organization's approach to partnerships, expanding and deepening those relationships, and increasing the funding to support our services. We will miss Scott's dedication, his knowledge and his smile, but we know he's going to enjoy his retirement.

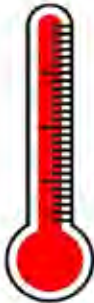



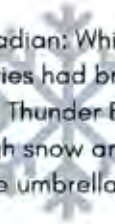





Working, walking, **WINNING together!**

The best ‘wins’ are the ones that are shared, and boy, did our great big, cross-Canada Threads of Life team come up BIG this spring! Fundraising smashed through all previous records, with more than \$950,000 raised at press time, to support families affected by workplace tragedy. And that’s not all: more than 20 new families found Threads of Life this spring, thanks in part to the promotion and excitement around Steps for Life events.



From sea to sea and rain or shine (or snow!), you made Steps for Life 2023 the most successful ever!

Here are just a few of this year’s highlights:

 <p>10 communities were so successful they had to boost their fundraising goals!</p>	<p>That’s dedication! With wildfires close to their community, Grande Prairie assessed the risks and moved their event indoors due to the air quality; providing the community the opportunity to come together during a very challenging time.</p>	<p>Earliest birds: Charlottetown opened Steps for Life season this year with a walk on April 22.</p> 
<p>Hope in action: After a pause of seven years, Medicine Hat AB was back with its own Steps for Life event this year! Small but mighty.</p> 	 <p>STEPS FOR LIFE</p>	<p>All-Canadian: While lots of communities had bright sunny walk days, Thunder Bay pushed on through snow and Toronto wins the umbrella award!</p> 
<p>Putting the FUN in fundraising: Edmonton organised the Fill Your Freezer Fundraiser and Cookie Fundraiser. Both London and Thunder Bay held doughnut fundraisers. And we love the sound of Red Deer’s Burger of the Month fundraiser!</p> 	<p>Completely unexpected support: The students in a primary class at the school where the London walk takes place put the letters in their window to spell Steps for Life and coloured paper running shoes to decorate their window.</p>	<p>It takes a city: Once again, the City of Timmins raised a flag at city hall for Steps for Life - each year it flies for the entire month of May.</p> 
 <p>25 stories: Family spokespersons shared their personal experience in 25 communities coast to coast.</p>	 <p>Largest turnout on walk day? Yay Edmonton! 341 walkers!</p>	<p>Tomorrow’s workers: Churchill High School in Calgary provided student volunteers with some students returning who previously volunteered in 2022.</p> 



The very first fundraising walk for Threads of Life was held in 2005 in Toronto. Participants came from across the country to join in. In 2008 the event was branded as Steps for Life, with walks held in four communities and \$61,000 raised. In 2023, Threads of Life's 20th anniversary year, there were Steps for Life walks in 27 communities, plus many organization and family walks as part of the National Online Event. Thank you for walking with us for 19 years!

Team Challenge Winners, 2023

CATEGORY	Community	Team Name	Team Leader d
NATIONAL TEAM Winner	Metro Vancouver	Sun Valley Gold Vancouver	Rebecca Harris
NATIONAL INDIVIDUAL Winner	London	Work Boot Warriors	Mark Vaandering
Atlantic Canada TEAM Winner	Halifax	Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia	Chrisanne Delano
Atlantic Canada INDIVIDUAL Winner	St. John's	RothLochston	Chris Gregory
Central Canada TEAM Winner	Toronto	NORCAT	Dan Fleming
Central Canada INDIVIDUAL Winner	London	4BOT	Eugene Gutierrez
Western Region TEAM Winner	Calgary	Stratus Electrical and Instrumentation	Samantha Johnston
Western Region INDIVIDUAL Winner	Vancouver	KLTP - Burnaby Terminal	Jordan Daye
National Online Event TEAM Winner	National	WSIB - IT and Corporate Services	Patrick Byrne
National Online Event INDIVIDUAL Winner – TIE!	National	Team Tyson	Monique Titanich
	National	Cooper Equipment Rentals	Paul Gaspar
TEAM - Spirit Award Winner	St. John's	Wonderbrands	Colin Byrne

UnMATCHable commitment!

Some of our partners are so passionate about health and safety, and supportive of their employees, that they match their staffs' donations and fundraising. Leader of the pack in matching funds is Ontario's Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) with employee events, fundraising, and leadership playing a key role. A special thank you to all our fund-matching partners and their employees for making such a difference.

Upcoming Events

■ Families Connect online workshops threadsoflife.ca/programs/families-connect-workshops

- Journey to Self - Yoga and Wellness- July 19
- Resilience ...even when the very worst happened – August 16
- Christmas, anniversaries and celebrations ... Oh My! September 20

■ Western Family Forum September 22-24 – www.threadsoflife.ca/ff

■ Central Family Forum October 27-29 www.threadsoflife.ca/ff

■ Volunteer Family Guide training November 23-28

■ Speaker's Bureau Volunteer training – November 23-26

SHARE THIS NEWSLETTER!

Pass it along or leave it in your lunchroom or lobby for others to read.

How to reach us

Toll-free: 1-888-567-9490
Fax: 1-519-685-1104

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Family Support – Threads of Life
P.O. Box 9066
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Threads of Life is a registered charity dedicated to supporting families along their journey of healing who have suffered from a workplace fatality, life-altering illness or occupational disease. Threads of Life is the Charity of Choice for many workplace health and safety events. Charitable organization business: #87524 8908 RR0001.

MISSION

Our mission is to help families heal through a community of support and to promote the elimination of life-altering workplace injuries, illnesses and deaths.

VISION

Threads of Life will lead and inspire a culture shift, as a result of which work-related injuries, illnesses and deaths are morally, socially and economically unacceptable.

VALUES

We believe in:

Caring: Caring helps and heals.

Listening: Listening can ease pain and suffering.

Sharing: Sharing our personal losses will lead to healing and preventing future devastating work-related losses.

Respect: Personal experiences of loss and grief need to be honoured and respected.

Health: Health and safety begins in our heads, hearts and hands, in everyday actions.

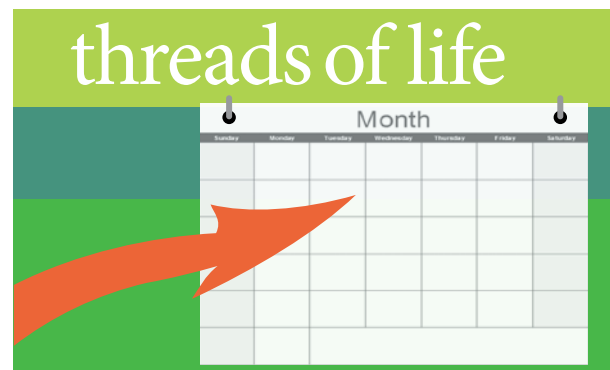
Passion: Passionate individuals can change the world.

Why you should become a monthly donor

When you become a monthly donor for Threads of Life, there are benefits for both you and us:

- Easier on your bank account** - You spread your gifts out over the year, rather than making one or two larger donations.
- Easier, period!** – Once you commit to being a monthly donor, you don't have to think about it. Your gifts come automatically. It's easy to set up on our website donation page or through our office.
- Greater impact** – With committed monthly donors, Threads of Life can predict cash flow and better plan ways to carry out our mission of helping families and preventing tragedies.

If you'd like to become a Threads of Life monthly donor, please visit www.threadsoflife.ca/donate or call our office at 888-567-9490.



THANK YOU!

to our

Steps for Life Sponsors



NATIONAL SPONSORS



TOTAL BUILDING ENVELOPE



CONSTRUCTION



Champion Sponsors (\$2000+)

100% Safety Inc.
 Aecon Group Inc.
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 Badger Infrastructure Solutions Inc.
 Black and McDonald
 CARPENTERS & ALLIED WORKERS LOCAL 27
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 Damisona Roofing Ltd
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 Enbridge Gas Distribution
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 Infrastructure Health and Safety Association - IHSA
 International Paper
 Journey to Zero Safety Solutions Inc.
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 MAG Silver Corp
 Millennium Construction and Design Inc.
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Morguard Investments Ltd.
 Northern Mat and Bridge LP
 NorthStream Safety and Rehab
 NS Department of Labour, Skills and Immigration
 Peak Construction Group
 Power Workers Union
 Public Services Health & Safety Association - PSHSA
 SAFE Work Manitoba
 Saskatchewan Government Insurance (SGI)
 Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board (WCB - SK)
 SIKA Canada
 SNC Lavalin, Pennecon, Dragados General Partnership
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 Trades NL Building Trades of Newfoundland and Labrador
 Unifor Canada
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 Workplace Safety & Insurance Board Head Office - WSIB
 Workplace Safety and Prevention Services - WSPS
 Workplace Safety North
 WorkplaceNL (WCB NL)
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COMMUNITY LEADER SPONSORS (\$1500 TO 2000)

Brogan Safety Supplies
Carpenters Local 1669
Construction Safety Nova Scotia (was NSCSA)
CRCS Disaster Kleenup
GFL Environmental Inc.
Joelle's Technical Resources & Custom Works Inc - (JTR)
Kiewit Ledcor Transmountain Partnership (KLTP)
Labourer's International Union of North America Local 506 (LIUNA Local 506)
Ministry of Labour, Training & Skills Development
Modern Niagara Group Inc
National Safety Services Inc
New Brunswick Construction Safety Association - NBCSA
Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro
Ontario General Contractors Association - OGCA
Ontario Power Generation - OPG
Safety Services Manitoba (SSM)
Workers Compensation Board of PEI - WCB PE
WorkSafeBC

COMMUNITY SUPPORTER SPONSORS (\$1000 TO \$1500)

AltaGas Pipeline Partnership
BTG Energy
Canadian Society of Safety Engineering -Manitoba - CSSE
Canadian Turner Construction Company
Carpenters Millwrights College & Local 579
EOE SOLUTIONS LTD
Gypsum Drywall Interiors Ltd.
HCM Contractors Inc.
Heidelberg Materials Canada Limited
IBEW Local 1615
IBEW Local 586
Inertia Hydrovac
KLS Earthworks & Environmental
Mott Electric
New Pacific Metals Corp
Payne Transportation
Salus Technologies Inc.
Stiller Financial Inc.
The International Association of Heat & Frost Insulators Local 95
Trinity Safety and Training

Unifor BC Regional Council
UNIFOR Local 848
Wilkins Health and Safety Solutions
Wonderbrands

COMMUNITY ADVOCATE SPONSORS (\$500 to \$1000)

Central Ontario Building Trades
Covenant Construction
Crystal Sound Music Services
DeFord Contracting Inc.
Element Technical Services
H2 Solutions Inc.
Hall Group of Companies
Ironworkers Local 700
Kaizen Safety Group Inc.
LH North Ltd
Made Safe
Mark Roehler Training Services
Medicine Hat Regional Safety Committee
Medics In Action Inc.
New Brunswick Community College
Nova Scotia Trucking Safety Association
Safety Buzz Campus
SaskEnergy
The Corporation of the County of Lambton
The Gray Group
The Redlands Group
Tractus Projects
University of Saskatchewan
West Brant Window World

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Central Ontario Broadcasting
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Pattison Media Ltd
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Rock 102 and 650 CKOM
Saskatoon Media Group
Zed 98.9 FM and Real Country 95.5