



Creating hope ...one step at a time

Steps for Life – Walking for Families of Workplace Tragedy is a chance to honour and support those whose lives have been changed forever by a work-related fatality, life-altering injury or occupational disease. And each year, those families are buoyed up by the love and commitment that a whole community demonstrates – businesses, safety professionals, friends and neighbours alike.

For more photos and results, see pages 10 and 11.



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Eleanor Westwood

Spring is such a busy time in the health and safety world! From Day of Mourning through NAOSH week and a full slate of conferences and events, it's a packed agenda. But for Threads of Life, the highlight is our annual Steps for Life events. The walks are always a bittersweet time. We look with profound sadness at the memory lane signs, representing lives lost and lives changed. But at the same time, the support demonstrated by so many walkers and volunteers is heartening. The idea of "paying it forward" was the theme for this year's Steps for Life events. Threads of Life families have been through some of the toughest time imaginable, but they find a way to be positive and look for someone they can help. And those of us with the good fortune not to be touched by workplace tragedy have the opportunity to pay it forward too, by walking, volunteering and fundraising. Our goal is to build a world where Threads of Life is no longer needed. But in the meantime, I hope every one of us know in our hearts the difference we've made for families who need that support.

Thank you.

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HOPES DASHED

Forgiving and recovering from the death of a dad and grandfather by Tracey Mino



Earl with his grandson Daniel

October 8, 2010 at 6:00 in the morning my phone rang. I had that stomach-dropping feeling you get because you know a call coming at that hour isn't good news.

Dad had fallen off a ladder and collapsed at the grocery store where he worked, and they were rushing him to the local hospital.

My Dad, Earl Mino was born July 1940 in Hamilton, Ontario. He was the oldest child and had not one, not two but three sisters. He always did have an uphill battle. As a child he loved horseback riding, playing hockey and baseball. As an adult he was a soft-spoken, thoughtful, gentle, patient man. He was free-spirited and always having fun. Although, sometimes he couldn't keep his mouth shut and once it landed him with a broken nose and a car chase down the main drag of Hamilton heading to the hospital.

My Dad, by career, was a butcher. He enjoyed working and he loved the people he worked with.

On April 22, 1967 he married the love of his life, my Mom, Dianne and they were married for over 40 years. A few years later they started their family, having myself and then my sister, Denise. I was Daddy's little girl. I recall always following Dad everywhere he went and helping him with whatever task he was doing at the time.

Our parents were very giving, kind and social, and my Mom is still to this day. They knew and taught my sister and me that life was good and it is meant to be lived and more importantly, to have fun doing so. My parents ALWAYS enjoyed hosting and being at a good party; they loved to dance.

My Dad was the peacekeeper in the family. He was the one who could see clearly when everyone else was losing their heads. He was the healing balm. He had a gentle way of getting you to see the other person's side and lead you to the solution but made it look like it was your idea. My Dad exemplified good

character, honesty and commitment. He had a way of making people feel important by taking the time to stop for a chat, no matter how busy he was. He would rather be late than end a conversation prematurely, and he always made you feel that what you were saying was the most important thing in the world.

His laugh was contagious. He was always happy and that happiness spilled over to all those he knew.

My Dad dedicated his life to Air Cadets for over 40 years. He was Captain of the Listowel and Wingham Squadron for many years. He helped make a positive difference to hundreds of kids.

He was awarded the Queen's Jubilee medal for his over 40 years of service and for his unyielding dedication to the Cadets and Youth of Canada.

As the years went on, another addition to our family is Lori, who quickly found a place in everyone's heart, becoming a 3rd daughter to Mom and Dad and another sister to Denise and I. Several years ago I met John, a man my Dad knew he could trust with my heart and life.

Everything took a backseat when his greatest treasure, his grandson Daniel, my only child was born. Everyone could see the great pride and joy he took in his grandson. My Dad and Daniel had a very close relationship they were like two peas in a pod sharing a very special bond.

I will never forget walking into the local hospital that October day. I did not wait to get permission. I went straight to the trauma unit where my Dad was. I will be forever haunted by what I saw. There was my Dad, although it did not look like my Dad, lying on this cold steel table wrapped in a black plastic bag. His face was all bloody and black and blue and swollen. His head was so swollen and there were tubes running out of his mouth and lines running everywhere and so many monitors flashing and people moving all over the place. Then he was whisked away from me, to the ambulance for transport to Hamilton General Hospital.

When we arrived at Hamilton General they already had him in surgery.

During surgery it was discovered that my Dad had a significant and life-threatening subdural hematoma along with significant skull and facial fractures. Too much blood had accumulated between the skull and the

brain and was putting too much pressure on the brain. They drained the blood and removed a portion of his skull to allow fluid to escape and alleviate the swelling. The next 24 hours will tell if he's going to survive.

Walking into ICU to see my Dad after his surgery was surreal. Nothing could have prepared me for the sight I was about to see. My strong, full of life Dad was lying on a hospital bed so still and lifeless. Tubes coming out of his mouth to breathe for him; lines and tubes and so many blinking beeping machines. It was overwhelming.

His body kept convulsing. The nurse said it was because he's trying to breathe on his own. Hope. As elusive as it was, I would grasp at anything.

The last Father-Daughter time I got to spend with my Dad was from 2:00am to 6:00am. I held his hand the whole time. I hugged him constantly. I talked about everything to him.

He made it through the night! Against all odds he made it! Hope!

The next morning, Daniel was asking to see his Papa. How would a seven-year-old handle seeing what I knew he would see? I took him in. It was the best thing I could have done. It gave him some precious last moments with his Papa and it allowed him to see what was really going on.

Late in the afternoon we had a meeting with the surgeon. Hope; completely dashed. If he managed to survive, he would be in a vegetative state as his brain had been so damaged and he had had several severe strokes. We had a choice to make. We could keep him alive in that state on life support or we could remove the life support and let him die. How do you make a decision like that?

Later, a nurse came rushing in and said, he's making the choice for you.

My Dad never regained consciousness once he collapsed at work. Saturday, October 9, 2010 in the late afternoon, after 36 hellish hours my Dad succumbed to his injuries and died.

The visitations and funeral seemed surreal. There were hundreds of people. It tore my heart out when the cadets did my Dad's last post. I wanted to scream when they lowered the flag. All I kept thinking was this isn't real, this isn't happening.

I don't remember much about the first year following my Father's death. It was a traumatizing, unbearable pain. Our cherished family life was ripped to pieces and it nearly tore our family apart. My Mom was suicidal and pushing everyone away. My son was having gut wrenching nightmares and wouldn't let me out of his sight. My sister shut down and shut everyone out.

Year Two I think was worse because the numbness of the shock had worn off and all I was left with was this overwhelming agonizing pain.

I went through a depression during year three and I ended up on medication for a few months. It has been and continues to be a long journey.

concrete floor. After a few moments, he got up, climbed the ladder again and finished putting the trays away. He collapsed several minutes later.

My Dad's boss was grief stricken over what had happened. It was a traumatic loss for him as well. Yes, he made a mistake, an irreparable and very costly mistake. People often ask me

“ We had a choice to make. We could keep him alive in that state on life support or we could remove the life support and let him die. How do you make a decision like that?

My Dad made a choice. He knew the ladder was not safe however, my Dad was old school and he continued to use it even after reporting it several times to his boss. All of this could have been avoided had my Dad and his boss just made the right decisions.

We attended the trial in the spring of 2012. The owner of the store was found guilty of failing to provide proper equipment, failing to provide direction, training and supervision on proper use of ladders and was fined \$50,000.

We know from security video footage what happened in the stock room that day. My Dad was placing several packages of Styrofoam meat trays onto a top shelf. He made an attempt to put the package onto the top shelf and failed the first time. On his second attempt he put his one foot onto the higher ladder step. The ladder rocked, my Dad lost his balance, and plummeted face first onto the

“don't you hate your Dad's boss”? My reply is: Hating someone and un-forgiveness is like drinking poison and expecting the other person to die. I forgave him the day the accident happened.

Forgiveness isn't something you do for someone else, it is something you do for yourself, otherwise you will never heal.

The best way I can honour my Dad's memory is to forgive, let it go and keep moving forward.

Threads of life has helped us navigate through and heal from one of the most traumatic, heartbreaking experiences we have ever faced as a family. I cannot imagine where our lives would be without Threads of Life. We will be forever grateful for this amazing organization.

The laughter and celebrations have come back to our home. We have a new normal but not a single day goes by that we don't miss my Dad.



Earl with his wife Dianne and daughters Tracey and Denise

A FAMILY'S LIFE CHANGED TODAY, FOREVER

Bulldozer overturned in water-filled pit

by **Pamela Baker**



James Baker

James Wallace Baker: a son in a family of six children, a father to six children, a grandfather to two, a loving husband, a son-in-law, a best friend.

James was a family man whose children meant the world to him. He attended basketball games, pageants, school concerts; he taught them to drive, he taught them to fire a gun. He would send so many text messages ... he was in constant contact with them all.

He loved farming from his quaint vegetable stand in Tilley, New Brunswick. He loved the peacefulness of the country life and he loved meeting new people. He loved to laugh and he enjoyed life.

He loved hunting and the best memory I have is of the final moose season just before he left us. Jim and I had three days together to hunt for that one big moose. He was like a kid with a new toy. He was out doing what he loved, out in nature, getting to experience the ultimate hunt in our area. We did get a massive moose with huge antlers, which hang in my bedroom now. Never did I believe I would

have moose antlers hanging in my bedroom, but they seem to belong there. Jim was ecstatic and proud of his accomplishment. Little did I know that would be the last hunt with my best friend. He was just beginning to become interested in bow hunting, and he spent some of his spare time practicing his shots – I have a garage door where his arrows went all the way through to prove it. I haven't had the heart to repair those holes yet.

He was a man who would pick up the guitar once in a while and if we were ever so lucky he would sing a tune and often make you laugh with the words he would sing.

He was a man the settlement loved. He lived in Tilley his whole life, worked at the family farm and only went back out in the workforce as a bulldozer operator when things got tough – and things cost more to raise a family of six children. He was not used to being away from home or his family. At first it took us a long time to adjust. We would have tears, even my Jim. We were a very close family and him being away broke our circle.

On October 26, 2014, my daughter and I drove our Jim to meet with his supervisor for a four-hour drive to Carouquet, where they were finishing up a job that should have been done but the three different companies had many differences which caused the project to take longer than expected. His last job was in a pit where they hauled old dirt from the highway and stored new dirt used to construct the new highway. Jim was not looking forward to the pit work, but he knew that was the last job and then he would be home.

On October 27 Jim texted me at lunch time, as he did sometimes. We exchanged a few texts and then it went quiet. I did not think of anything being wrong. Mondays were generally busy and after lunch I would not hear from him till later in the evening.

So, on this day, what we thought would be a regular Monday: school times, work days. In the evening I had my regular house cleaning chores and my daughter Heather who was still in grade 12, had just arrived home from school activities.

At approximately 8 pm, two police cars entered my driveway. At first I was not alarmed. The three police officers asked to come in and asked if I was Pamela Baker. They told me there was a fatal accident and that Jim's bulldozer had overturned in a body of water. It was not making sense to me at all. I was in total disbelief. People talk about the body purging fluids when one dies – this is what happened to me on the evening of October 27, 2014. This is what happens when one dies, and that's why I say a part of me died that night the RCMP told me our Jim was taken from us.

Somehow I had to get myself cleaned up, manoeuvre to the phone, call my parents, and figure out how to get to my children before the social media went on a frenzy. We had one child in Grand Falls, three in Fredericton at different universities, and one in college in Saint John. And the clock was ticking – the accident had happened between 12:30 and 2 pm, we were not notified until 8 pm.

After the shock of hearing the news, we somehow planned a funeral and I walked around numb and knowing nothing but wanting to know everything.

I had so many things to take care of financially and legally. Jim and I were not prepared for this. We lived in an old farm house which was in his family for 100 years. How was I

going to take care of everything plus all the children?

Somehow, I would put my feet on the floor, take care of things, continue to work, learn how to plow, do maintenance around the house and cry as I did it. But I had to. I found the strength to do each task as Jim did and continue to do all my tasks as well. All our life dreams were no more; all of our children's issues were not our issues, but my issues.

Trying to get my children back to their colleges and universities and trying to make sense of it all at the same time. My daughter asked me "what is the sense of it all, why should we carry on or go back?" Deep down, I had no answer, but being a mother I looked at her and answered with all the strength I could "I am not sure, Hannah, but I do know that by going back you are going to help someone or affect someone's day which will make a difference in someone's life someday..." They all went back and then in a short time they were home for Christmas. We didn't really have Christmas that year. There was no joy to bring to them, but we did put a tree up in the cemetery ... so I guess we had a family gathering, just a little different than what we were used to.

Grief is a terrible battle, especially dealing with such a tragedy. I not only had my grief to deal with but the grief of the six children and that is a treacherous road itself to have to go down. It's an ongoing battle because our Jim is so missed in our lives. He was one of the good guys who still should be here.

What happened that day? We know Jim was working his bulldozer to fill a hole in the pit which had accumulated approximately 10 feet of water. We know he was working alone in that area. We know that we truly do not know exactly what happened in those final hours, other than a tragic accident.

The owner of the pit brought concerns to the three companies involved about dangers of the water hole and he wanted it corrected. But no one listened. A pipe had been installed underground to drain the pit but it was not installed properly or deep enough, which led to the pit being as full as it was especially after a weekend of severe rain storms. This made the pit very unsafe, and the ground where the bulldozer was operating even more unsafe due to the contents of the soil that had been dumped there and there was reason to believe berms were not properly in place.

We know that the RCMP would not go in to the site. We know the ambulance would not go in, nor the fire fighters. We know there was no rescue plan, and we know these companies were not prepared.

“ Jim lived in Tilley his whole life, worked at the family farm and only went back out in the workforce as a bulldozer operator when things got tough - and things cost more to raise a family of six children. He was not used to being away from home or his family.

The investigation and court proceedings lingered on and were very draining. We would have to travel to Carleton Place and there would be delay after delay. We are an English-speaking family, however the company chose the proceeding to be in French so a lot of times we would have to guess what was being said. The court proceeding went on until February 2017. Two companies pleaded guilty and were fined, and the third was found not guilty. In March 2018, an inquest recommended increased supervision for construction sites more than a kilometer apart from each other, and more oversight by WorkSafeNB of all construction sites, gravel pits and quarries. The chief coroner also recommended changes to regulations that would require the water depth to be posted at sites with water nearby, and require a joint health and safety committee on any construction site with two or more employers.

Jim and I chose to have a big family, but we chose that together, and what occurred that day took away our future. He won't be here for the birthdays or Christmases to come. He won't be here for the weddings to come. His

four daughters will have to walk down the aisle without their father. All the grandchildren to come that he could have been crawling on the floor and playing with, we and they won't get to experience any of that because

our Jim was taken from us. That day took all that away and so much more. My children were robbed of a very big part of their lives and their futures, and I was robbed of my best friend.

Our two sons returned to college and are finding their paths in this world. Three of our daughters are still in university. With counselling they have done quite well and are on track with their education. Our other daughter, with her two children are moving forward. We are living. We are learning to move forward without our Jim by our side.

We are learning to live with the pain of not having such a wonderful person in our lives but learning he watches over us daily. I still work, and have become a stronger person because I had to. Through my volunteer work, I hope to make changes to benefit families, so they have a better understanding of the system and they don't feel alone. Every time I hear of another life lost in the workplace, I get a gut-wrenching feeling in the pit of my stomach and I always say aloud "another family's life is changed today, forever".



Pam, centre, with Pam and Jim's children



Making the first contact with a new family

Making a phone call and asking about available services – that sounds easy, right? However when it is a family's first contact with Threads of Life it may not feel so simple to make that call. It is hard to know what to expect and for many people it is difficult to ask for help no matter the circumstances.

They know that they will probably be asked about their own experience and for some sharing your story, especially to someone you have never met, may feel a little frightening or even overwhelming. Many families may be in a place where they find it challenging to reach out to others at all. In the early part of the grief journey, people often pull back and isolate themselves to protect from further pain. It is an entirely natural response to the very unexpected and unwelcome world they have been thrown into.

With each call or email, I am again devastated by why yet another family needs to connect with us. Devastated to learn of yet another diagnosis of disease, life-altering injury or fatality due to going to work. My heart goes out to each family as their lives have been turned upside down and they have to figure out how to navigate life again. At the same time I am grateful that they have connected, that they have found us. It is always my hope that Threads of Life will be able to provide them with some comfort, a sense of community and be that safe place for them to land.

I can hear the nervousness in their voices over the phone. The voice is often quiet and hesitant to say why they are calling. As we talk the conversation often goes one of two ways although I always hope for a combination of both. Either they listen while I explain our services and only ask a few questions of me. Or I listen as they share their story. I take my cues from them and do my best to determine what they need as each call is different. The one thing

I do hope for is to hear a change in their voice by the end of the call. There may still be emotion in their voice however hopefully there is also a sound of someone who has found some answers and somewhere they can trust.

We know that families need to make the decision to contact us when they are ready, and make that first connection. Somehow though, they first need to find out about Threads of Life to make that choice. This once again emphasizes just how important the relationships with all of our partners, supporters, volunteers and family members are. So often you are the ones letting new families know about Threads of Life. You are the ones explaining our programs and more so the essence of what this organization is about. You are the voices encouraging new families to call and see if they will find some help and support with us. I cannot describe how significant it is that you create that awareness and share with new families. From all of us at Threads of Life, thank you and please continue being our ambassadors!

How you can help a new family

So often, people who've experienced a work-related tragedy learn about Threads of Life by word of mouth. If you know someone who might benefit from Threads of Life's programs, feel free to tell them about your experience. You could give them our web site address, www.threadsoflife.ca, or ask our office for a brochure you could leave with them. But, you may not even know who among your circle has been affected by a workplace tragedy. Share our posts on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram – you may never know who will find the courage to reach out for help as a result!

A little tribute to my sister Amanda

by Jess Peat

I lost my sister Amanda when I was 10 years old... I still remember that dreadful day. It was the worst day of my life. Pulled out of school, told the bare minimum but I knew it was bad. It was all over my teacher's face and in his voice. My worst fears were confirmed and I lost the ability to stand. My body just shut down. She was my big sister...

I also remember the last time I saw her. It was the night before the accident and it was Hallowe'en. We both loved dressing up and I remember being bummed out she wasn't getting dressed up as well. Maybe that's why I love Hallowe'en so much. My favourite time of year but also the toughest, very bitter-sweet. I know I said goodbye, but did I tell her I loved her? I can't remember.

Since losing my sister, I know it changed me. I don't think anyone ever really gets over that missing void. You try to fill it, but it's never the same or enough. Losing someone you see every day can really turn your whole world upside down. Talking about it is tough and I have never liked to share my feelings. Sometimes bottling it up makes you feel stronger but I am realizing, your bottle can only hold so much until your emotions come bursting out. I don't like sharing that I was depressed and still am from time to time. I have gone to some pretty dark places and I am not proud of it. But I am trying to open up and share. It's better than bottling it up or feeling ashamed about how you feel. Trying to find something to help you cope with it in a healthy manner can help you acknowledge your pain.

I decided I needed to have some connection to her. It doesn't matter how many years have passed, that void is still there and you search for some kind of relief. For me, I felt like I needed a piece of her. I have always wanted a tattoo since I was 14 years old. It was the same age Amanda was when she died. At first I wanted wings or an angel but it never felt right. I kept changing my mind. I couldn't decide. Now I am 28 years old and I finally decided what I wanted. From time to time I reminisce through some old pictures



Four family members all share a tattoo, a tribute to Amanda

and knickknacks of Amanda's. I was admiring one of her drawings and how talented she was. Another thing all us siblings shared: our love of art we got from our father. I am always so surprised that she was only maybe 13 when she drew it. She also signed it and I thought: "damn, her signature is better than mine will ever be!"... and that's when I realized what I wanted tattooed on me and somewhere I could always see it. So on Amanda's birthday my brother Thomas and I both got tattoos of her signature, and now my father Steve and grandmother Barb also went and got the same tattoo.

The day my grandmother got hers done she was very nervous that morning. She picked up the paper for that day and to her surprise, one of the articles was a story from *Threads of Life* about my sister Amanda and another boy named Nick, both killed in the workplace. It was a very touching article about my step mom Sharon and Nick's mom Judy, who connected over the loss of having a child killed in the workplace. My father pointed out that Nick, whose picture was beside Amanda's, was covered in tattoos. My grandma was so excited to show me this article and I could tell she wasn't even nervous to get her tattoo now. All the doubts she had were gone.

Getting Amanda's signature tattooed may not take the pain away, but remembering her beautiful smile and the time we did have with her, helps ease the void. We will always have a little piece of Amanda on us to remember her by. She was one of a kind and her memories will live on in us forever



Johanna LeRoux

“In spite of how active I am, I really am an introvert,” she says. “Sometimes, for the things that are really important and really worthwhile, you make a choice to push out of your comfort zone.”

While she values all her volunteer experiences, Johanna admits that sharing her story through the speakers bureau lies closest to her heart. After training, her first presentation was to a full classroom of college students all preparing for work placements. She was terrified when she stepped to the podium, but she could see as she spoke that all the students were focused on her message. When she finished, her relief was mingled with the sense that she had “found something that would help make something positive out of this, and help me heal.”

When the instructor told her one of the students in the class had actually gone to school with Johanna’s son Micheal, Johanna thought “maybe I made a difference”.

It wasn’t long before she was speaking in front of thousands of people at a Day of Mourning ceremony in Toronto’s Queen’s Park. Another highlight was a trip by plane and helicopter to a remote energy company town in Labrador, to give four presentations in two days for the company’s workforce. Over the years, she has shared her story dozens of times, to many thousands of people.

As a seasoned speaker, Johanna has also become one of Threads of Life’s key media spokespeople, interviewed for newspaper articles, radio shows, television news, videos and documentaries.

It’s something that “I would never ever in a million years have pictured myself doing,” she says, “but anything I can do that will help create awareness of Threads of Life, I will”.

In all her speaking, Johanna says, “it’s worth how hard it sometimes is. It gets more comfortable to do it. It doesn’t really get any easier.”

She approaches it all from the point of view that if she can change or protect just one person, then it’s worthwhile. And the opportunity to talk about Micheal is a huge motivation too.

“Looking back 12 and a half years to where I was, volunteering gave me my life back,” Johanna says. “It’s a pretty deep pit that you get into. Threads of Life really gives you the opportunity to try and turn something that was so tragic, so devastating, into a positive; to change the way the world sees workplace safety.”

It didn’t take long for Johanna LeRoux to decide she was going to be all-in with Threads of Life. She was attending her first family forum, and at the end, there was a workshop about volunteer opportunities. “I asked for all the information,” Johanna says. “I wanted to do it all.”

That first forum she describes as “life-changing”. After her son Micheal died following a fall from a ladder, she had been searching for some kind of support for parents of adult children. When she came across Threads of Life online, she realized it was a perfect fit. After speaking with Executive Director Shirley Hickman on the phone, Johanna agreed to attend the forum, and then suffered “all the usual questions and doubts” beforehand. When she got there, she says “we were just welcomed with such open arms and such warmth and understanding” that she was convinced she should contribute. She felt compelled to give back because Threads of Life has given her so much, she says, and she has a desperate need to try to protect other families from what her family has experienced.

Within the next year, Johanna completed speakers bureau training, and then Volunteer Family Guide training. She walked in Steps for Life the first few years, but eventually was convinced to join the Midland Steps for Life committee, and moved to the Barrie committee when those two walks merged. In the past few years there, she has been responsible for media relations and outreach. Now she is also assisting as a facilitator for the new Threads of Life community peer support groups.

The irony of all these volunteer roles is that none of them come naturally to Johanna.

Presentations during Day of Mourning and NAOSH week

The days between April 28 and the end of NAOSH week are the busiest of the year for Threads of Life volunteer speakers. This year, there were 58 presentations packed into those days, across the country. Bill Bowman, from Hamilton, holds the record, completing 14 presentations for sawmilling company Tolko Industries in Northern British Columbia. Here’s how those 58 speeches break down:



Strengthening the volunteer foundation

Volunteers are the firm foundation on which all Threads of Life programs and services are built. One of the many ways our partners support Threads of Life is by allowing and encouraging their own employees to volunteer.

Thanks to our partners, corporate volunteers serve on Steps for Life organizing committees, and plan other fundraisers as well. While these individuals devote many hours of their personal time to their Threads of Life volunteer roles, many of our partner organizations – companies, safety associations, compensation boards and government ministries – allow employees to use work time for meetings and other tasks.

A report by Volunteer Canada notes that employer-supported volunteer programs are a win-win-win: “They help businesses strengthen community relationships and improve employee engagement. They also give non-profits access to new resources and skills while allowing employees to refine and enhance their skills and expand their networks.”

At Threads of Life, we can certainly attest to the resources and skills our volunteers bring. Our board of directors is made up of volunteers who provide crucial expertise on everything from finance to legal matters to human resources. Several board members are supported by their employers to bring their skills to Threads of Life.

One of those board members is Jackie Manuel, CEO of the Newfoundland and Labrador Construction Safety Association. Jackie has been a board member since 2010 and in turn encourages her own employees to volunteer for Threads of Life.

“At the NLCSA, we have always encouraged our staff to volunteer,” Jackie says. “Threads of Life is aligned with the NLCSA’s mission and values and so, really resonated with our team. We dedicate our efforts every day to the prevention of workplace incidents and illness in the construction industry, and so the opportunity to volunteer and assist another organization that supports that mission just makes sense.”

Jackie adds that her staff members volunteer as part of the speakers bureau and on the Steps For Life community organizing committee as well as through fundraising events. In addition, the NLCSA has had a team of volunteers walk in Steps for Life since its inception in the St. John’s metropolitan area in 2010, and the team has raised more than \$20,000 over that time.

Across the country, other provincial construction safety associations – like the ACSA in Alberta and the IHSA in Ontario – have also been key supporters of Threads of Life’s volunteer base, providing chairpeople and volunteers for walk committees, and organizing events like the annual Day of Mourning ball hockey tournament in Edmonton.

Threads of Life is a volunteer-powered organization, and we are so grateful to all our partners for making our work possible!



The Leavitt Lagers, division winners of the annual Day of Mourning ball hockey tournament and fundraiser in Edmonton Alberta. The Pylons team won the other division. The tournament is organized by the Edmonton Regional Safety Committee of the ACSA.



How you help

Our partners work side-by-side with Threads of Life to achieve our mission of helping families heal and preventing future life-altering workplace injuries, illnesses and deaths. Here’s how:

Growing awareness: Partners help to spread the word so everyone who could benefit from Threads of Life’s programs will be aware of what we have to offer.

Growing our volunteer base: Partners organize events or support their employees’ volunteer efforts.

Growing our participation: Partners help Threads of Life to get more people involved.

Growing our revenue: Partners sponsor events or programs, hold fundraisers, make donations and name Threads of Life as their Charity of Choice.

Creating hope **one step at a time**



It's not just the cheerful yellow t-shirts – although those help! Steps for Life – Walking for Families of Workplace Tragedy 2018 generating a whole lot of hope and optimism, thanks to the volunteers, walkers, teams and sponsors who all united for a single cause.

Hope came in the form of two dozen-plus stories, shared by family spokespeople across the country – spokespeople like Hayley Lampard in Sarnia Ontario, who told the story of her stepfather Shane Hackett. He worked at an auto wrecking yard and was crushed when the car he was working under fell on top of him. Hayley, 14, said “Steps For Life is important to me because my goal is to raise awareness of the importance of workplace safety to the younger generations so they will be more educated on workplace hazards and safe workplace practices.”

Steps for Life 2018 broke records for fundraising, topping \$700,000 for the first time ever!

Those funds will make a huge difference in the lives of those affected by workplace fatalities, life-altering injuries and occupational disease. Thanks to your efforts, more families can attend family forums to learn healthy coping skills, more people can be paired with Volunteer Family Guides so they know they're not alone, more people will hear about the support available through Threads of Life, and more speakers can be trained to share their message about health and safety.

In a newspaper interview, Hayley told the reporter that workplace tragedy simply “needs to be stopped”. Then she cut into a cake that said “Everyone deserves to come home safe from work”. Together, Hayley and all this year's Steps for Life supporters helped Canada take a step closer to realizing that vision!



Steps for Life is important to me, not only because I was injured on the job, but because throughout my career I have treated injured workers, investigated serious incidents, and I have been involved in workplace tragedies that ultimately resulted in someone's loved one never returning home. With each step we take, together we raise funds and awareness of the importance of safety in the workplace. As a safety professional, and Steps for Life spokesperson, I speak on behalf of those who need a voice so that everyone's someone makes it home safely at the end of each and every work day."

-Wynny Sillito, Red Deer Family Spokesperson

Teams *pay it forward*

This year's Steps for Life team challenge proved what your coach always told you – we can get further when we all work together. An incredible 337 teams participated in walks across Canada this spring! They included dozens of teams representing our national sponsor companies, and six teams who planned their own event through Your Walk Your Way. Working together, these teams raised thousands of dollars to raise awareness about workplace health and safety, and to support people affected by workplace tragedy. Thanks teams! You're all champs in our books!



Congratulations to the winners of the 2018 Steps for Life Team Challenge:

NATIONAL TEAM WINNER	COMMUNITY	TEAM NAME	TEAM LEADER
	St. John's	Dragon Lady	Dayle Biggin
NATIONAL INDIVIDUAL WINNER	COMMUNITY	TEAM NAME	INDIVIDUAL
	St. John's	Dragon Lady	Dayle Biggin

ATLANTIC CANADA	COMMUNITY	TEAM NAME	TEAM LEADER
TEAM Winner	Halifax	Livin' the Dream in Memory of Kyle J. Hickey	Estella Hickey
INDIVIDUAL Winner	Halifax	Livin' the Dream in Memory of Kyle J. Hickey	Estella Hickey

CENTRAL CANADA	COMMUNITY	TEAM NAME	TEAM LEADER
TEAM Winner	Barrie	Relax Guys	Rose Wilson
INDIVIDUAL Winner	Virtual Walk, Ottawa	Voyageur Challenge - Ottawa Race Weekend	Diana Devine

WESTERN REGION	COMMUNITY	TEAM NAME	TEAM LEADER
TEAM Winner	Winnipeg	Team Helgy	Tami Helgeson
INDIVIDUAL Winner	Fort MacMurray	SASS	Paddy Leaman

Coming Events

Please let us know if you'd like more information or would like to get involved!

Central Family Forum – September 28-30, 2018 – Nottawasaga Inn, Alliston ON

Prairie & Western Family Forum – October 26-28, 2018 – Saskatoon, SK Saskatoon Inn & Conference Centre

2018-19 Training

Volunteer Family Guide Beginner training – 2019 date to be announced

SHARE THIS NEWSLETTER!

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



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How to reach us

Toll-free: 1-888-567-9490

Fax: 1-519-685-1104

Association for Workplace Tragedy Family Support – Threads of Life

P.O. Box 9066
1795 Ernest Ave.
London, ON N6E 2V0

contact@threadsoflife.ca
www.threadsoflife.ca
www.stepsforlife.ca

EDITOR Susan Haldane,
shaldane@threadsoflife.ca

DESIGNER Chris Williams
chriswilliams@rogers.com

GUEST CONTRIBUTORS

Pamela Baker
Tracey Mino
Jess Peat



Association for Workplace Tragedy Family Support

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 that:

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.



Yes I will, help bring hope and healing to families

Gift Payment Options

- I'd like to make monthly gifts
 \$25 \$50 \$100 \$ _____
- I'd prefer to make a one-time gift
 \$25 \$50 \$100 \$ _____
- I've enclosed a void cheque to start direct withdrawal for monthly giving
- You may also donate to Threads of Life online at www.threadsoflife.ca/donate
- Please send me updates about Threads of Life events via email at: _____

Visa MasterCard

_____ account number _____ expiry

NAME ON CARD _____

SIGNATURE _____

PHONE NUMBER _____

ADDRESS (for income tax receipt) _____

Threads of Life, P.O. Box 9066 • 1795 Ernest Ave • London, ON N6E 2V0 1 888 567 9490 • www.threadsoflife.ca

All donations are tax deductible. Charitable Registration Number #87524 8908 RR0001