



Photos & Memories

The reflections ceremony, displaying photographs of those directly affected by workplace loss, is one of the most powerful and emotional moments of every Threads of Life family forum. Photographs are like time machines, able to carry us to the past, and sometimes to the future too. They become an important part of sharing our stories, and of healing.

Read Susanne Wilson's reflection about a photo on page 6.



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Eleanor Westwood

One of the things Threads of Life is known for – and one of the things this newsletter exists for – is sharing stories of loss. But there can be no meaningful sharing without listening. Listening is one of our values – we say that “listening can ease pain and suffering.” Our volunteer family guides learn how to listen without judging or offering advice, and so many of our family members are skilled at listening to another’s experiences. This issue of the newsletter focuses on occupational disease. While traumatic injuries and work-related fatalities are often obvious and sudden, occupational disease may sneak up; the result of exposures over years, or a one-time exposure decades before. The disease may not strike down a new worker in his or her early career, but it still steals away a family’s dreams. We all need to be sure we listen – not just with our ears but with our hearts – to understand the impact an occupational disease can have on the person who is sick, on the care-givers, and on those left behind.

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“ALL THE CONVERSATIONS WE NEVER GOT TO HAVE”

Asbestos exposure at a client's site led to mesothelioma

Interview by **Maryanne Pope**



Dolli and Tony Schneider.

Tony Schneider died of mesothelioma on January 14, 1997, at the age of 63. Tony was exposed to asbestos during his career as a salesman in Calgary, Alberta. Dolli is Tony's widow. Kristin is one of Tony's daughters. This interview took place on Jan 10th, 2017.

Q: Tell me about Tony.

DOLLI: Tony was very dynamic, very much a personality. When you met him, you knew you had met someone you would remember. He was a very loving husband and good father. Because Tony was nine years older than me (when we married I was 21, he was 30), I think he sometimes felt more like a dad than a husband! But as the years went on, the relationship became more equal. We were married for 33 years.

I knew he was “the one” for me right from the start. In fact, after our first date, I went home and told my Mom that. We were married in less than a year.

Family was very important to Tony. It

meant everything. He was always very grateful that he was able to have a family of his own because growing up, he didn't have the greatest home life.

Q: Tell me about your dad.

KRISTIN: He loved us dearly. As a dad, he could be strict. He expected us to respect him. He was a good provider and was always willing to give us what we needed. He had a serious side but he also had a goofy, fun side to him.

His role in raising us kids was to provide for us and make sure we were doing the right thing and had good values and morals. But his goofy side came out on weekends and we had lots of fun.

Q: Tell me about Tony's death.

DOLLI: Tony died in 1997. He was 63. I had just turned 55. Tony died from mesothelioma, which is when the cancerous tumors are outside of the lung. They are in the fluid that surrounds the lung. At the time he was diagnosed, we knew nothing about mesothelioma...never heard of it. But the Tom Baker Cancer Centre was very good about giving us information. There was very little research being done at that time. All we knew was that it was caused by exposure to asbestos – and that there was a zero percent survival rate.

Tony was diagnosed with Stage 4 cancer. He survived 18 months. The doctors felt the cancer had been dormant for about 10 years.

Q: How do you think Tony was exposed to asbestos?

DOLLI: After Tony's death, I got a call from WCB. They wanted to interview me about where he may have been exposed to asbestos. So we went back through Tony's work history and figured out that when Tony had gone from sales to management, he had given his sales contacts to someone else in the company – and WCB was able to follow-up with that person. And they determined that one of Tony's best customers – a fertilizer company – had had all their boilers encased in asbestos.

So if that casing had ever been slashed or got a hole in it or had been disturbed in some way, the crystals would've gone into the air – and he'd breathed them in. Because that workplace fit the 10-year timeframe, WCB suspects that is likely where Tony was exposed to asbestos.

As a salesman going into all sorts of different workplaces on a regular basis, Tony was told to wear steel toed boots and hardhats when necessary. But they never thought to tell him to wear something over his mouth to prevent what might be going into his lungs.

Q: What was it like caring for Tony when he was sick?

DOLLI: Actually, Tony was easy to care for. But he had great difficulty eating and everything tasted weird to him. I made him Cream of Wheat every morning, as he seemed to like that. He lost an awful lot of weight. The food issue was tough because he loved his food! At the end it was very difficult to feed him.

But his spirits were really quite good. He wanted me to keep working, so I did. He would get dressed and sit in the living room and wait for me to come home in the

afternoon. It was only towards the very end that he got more lethargic. He loved the visits from his kids. Kristin and her sister, Ali, would bring donuts. Our son, Tony Jr, would take him for car rides.

Personality-wise, Tony was easy to look after. He didn't complain. He said to me once that he wasn't afraid to die. He just didn't want to. He had a lot to live for. Kristin was expecting her first child. Ali was expecting her second. Tony was hurt that he knew he was going to die. He wanted to be there for his kids and grandkids.

Q: What was it like for you when Tony was sick?

KRISTIN: It was really hard to watch him lose the weight and not do all the things he enjoyed doing. He stopped driving. He stopped golfing and that was a real enjoyment that he'd had. Seeing all that happen was tough. He actually had surgery to remove a lung but when they went in, they found the cancer was too far along.

He sat and thought a lot. He would sit in the same spot on the couch in the living room and think. We talked a lot and he told me he had no regrets in his life except not going to university. He really enjoyed learning. He was also a professional hockey player at one point. He could have played for a college or played pro – and that was a bit of a regret that he didn't.

My dad was actually very calm about his illness. He never lashed out and never said "Why me?" He kind of accepted what was happening and went along with it. It was hard to see him change but I also think he made it easier on us because he didn't have any self-pity about the situation. He accepted his fate. He didn't like it but he accepted it.

As things started to go downhill at the very end, nine times out of ten he would be in bed. But he had a tough time sitting up on his own. That's when we knew things were starting to go downhill.

Q: What age were you when your Dad died?

Kristin: I was 28. My daughter, Harleigh, was born two months later.

Q: What do you remember the most about Tony?

DOLLI: How handsome he was and how lucky I was to have met him.

Kristin's first son, Sam, looks very much like Tony, so that's really nice. As a child, Kristin actually looked quite a bit like Tony. And she understood her dad very well. Tony had a bit of a temper. When he got mad, he got mad. He didn't lash out at me or the kids

but we knew when he was angry. To calm him down, we would send Kristin in!

Q: What do you miss the most?

DOLLI: What I miss the most about Tony is his affection. He was a very affectionate person...loved to give me a big hug and put his arm around me. I miss his presence. He was a big presence in all our lives and I really miss that. We all do.

I relied on him for everything. After he died, I had to learn how to make the decisions. But I miss him as a sounding board. Tony was very sensible and I miss that.

On Saturdays, the two of us used to sit in the living room, drinking coffee and chatting

loved to work outside in the yard all day on the weekend. He would always wait until 5 p.m. to have a beer. Then that was his time to relax and BBQ dinner. We would all sit around and talk and he would drink his beer. He loved that. We all did. Those were really happy times. Oh, and the milk chute was right near the BBQ, so when my dad wanted another beer, he would tap on the milk chute and one of us kids would put a cold beer in the chute – and he would reach in and get it!

DOLLI: And Tony loved it when the kids were older and he could have some beers with them. He loved to chat with them as he cooked the burgers.

“ I miss his presence. He was a big presence in all our lives and I really miss that. We all do.

for hours on end...about all sorts of things. Sometimes three hours would go by and we would still be sitting in our housecoats, talking away.

What I miss the most is the fact that Tony never got to be a grandpa. My biggest regret is that he never got to meet all eight grandchildren. He only got to meet the first as a very young child.

But my kids have done an amazing job of letting their kids know who their grandfather was – and I am very thankful for that.

Q: What do you remember the most about your dad?

KRISTIN: I would say the memories I think of the most are the summertime ones. My dad

KRISTIN: I miss chatting with him. I miss all the conversations we never got to have when I was old enough to appreciate his wisdom as a parent. I miss the friendship that I think I could have had with him as I got older. I also feel that my kids missed out on the opportunity to have their Grandpa Tony in their lives.

Maryanne Pope is a close family friend of Kristin and Dolli. Maryanne's police officer husband died in the line of duty as the result of a preventable fall at an unsafe workplace. Maryanne is the author of A Widow's Awakening, Chair of the John Petropoulos Memorial Fund (www.jpmpf.ca) and a member of the Threads of Life speakers bureau.



The family has tried to ensure Tony's grandchildren know who their grandfather was.



Bob with his new granddaughter Skya.

I was overwhelmed with emotion as I gazed at the picture of Bob and our first granddaughter, Skya, on the screen at the Reflections Ceremony at the Central Family Forum. The little baby girl gazing into Bob's eyes is now 17 years old. How did that happen? She is now a loving and caring young woman with an exciting future ahead of her.

After years of pain and trouble breathing, Bob was given a diagnosis of mesothelioma, cancer of the plural sac caused by an exposure to asbestos, when he was working at a summer job. He was

17 at the time of his exposure. Doctors were very emotional when delivering the news. Bob was relieved that he finally knew the dragon that he had been fighting for many years. He was given a few months to live.

We were blessed with four more years during which we made memories with family and friends that we would hold dear after Bob was gone. It was not an easy time while we watched a once healthy man whom we all loved, be savaged by cancer. Bob often was the one who showed us how precious life was. Little problems seemed insignificant when compared to

Bob's fight for his life.

We had dreamed of walking hand in hand into old age, surrounded by grandchildren. That was not meant to be.

When our daughter told us that she was expecting, we were so delighted. However, in the back of my mind, I wondered if Bob would live to hold our first grandchild. His health was deteriorating quickly. I prayed for the chance to see Bob hold the new baby.

Our daughter had asked me to be at the birth, which was to take place in Toronto. We were living in Guelph. Bob said that he could be sick in Guelph or sick in Toronto. He chose Toronto to be near our daughter. In January we moved to Toronto for two weeks to await the birth. We arranged for two large tanks of oxygen and a nurse to come to stay with Bob when I had to leave for the hospital.

Our beautiful baby granddaughter was born January 27th! Bob got to hold her! Bob's birthday was less than two months later, in March. He was very weak, but so fulfilled that he was able to cradle Skya. Bob died surrounded by love ten days after the picture was taken.

Being and playing with Skya one day a week after Bob died kept me sane. I was exhausted. My dreams were shattered. Sometimes the tears would well up when I was suddenly aware of a precious memory. For the next year, I tried to go forward step by step, sometimes so slowly others had to hold the light for me.

That is the picture that I saw on the screen. He looks so happy as he looks into her eyes. I was hit by the realization that Skya is the same age now that Bob was when he was exposed to that sinister fibre, asbestos. In my ongoing journey of grief, sometimes thinking about her future triggers moments of distress remembering Bob's illness.

As I lovingly watch her go out into the world I pray that she will be able to fulfil her dreams. I want her to be safe from all of the hazards in the workplace. My desire is that Skya and all workers are able to return home every day without contracting a disease or injury from their work.



“I am at peace with myself”

These are the thoughts that Bob wrote near the end of his struggle. It is both the agony and the hope that he felt.

He died surrounded by love on March 28, 2000, two weeks after his 51st birthday. The picture of Bob holding his first grandchild was taken on his last birthday.

I am a survivor. I have fought cancer for nine long and painful years. Throughout this nightmare I have loved my family, built a career and tried to keep my sanity. I sank to the depths of depression when the pain was overwhelming and I fought my way back. Throughout this ordeal I have fought for life with a passion. It has been worth the fight.

I have learned the humility of knowing that I have limitations. I know that I have to pace myself. Whereas once I thought I would live forever and without constraint I now know that I have limitations and that my life is finite. I have learned that doing is not everything just being is enough. We are human beings not human doings. I have learned the value of relationships and I am profoundly grateful that I have the opportunity to build relationships.

I have a wonderful family. It always amazes me that I am loved. Susanne has loved and supported me through everything. We are soul mates and always will be. Rob and Catherine are mature and loving individuals and I am so proud of them. I feel that our family is complete.

I love being at home and the freedom that I have. I have not been this free since I was a child. I am at one with the universe and at peace with myself.

Bob's granddaughter helps to remember his story.

When You're Gone

We miss you when you're gone.

We miss the sparkling light you shine into the shadowy corners of our days. You're not up to being your amazing self, and although we know this is temporary, we selfishly want you back, right now.

We need your bright spirit, your love of life to lift us up, as you always do, effortlessly, just by being you.

Please take care of yourself and recover soon. We miss you when you're gone.

By Joanna Fuchs

What is an occupational disease?



Occupational disease can be caused by exposure to certain biological and chemical agents

AN OCCUPATIONAL DISEASE is a health condition or disorder (e.g., cancer, musculoskeletal disorders, post-traumatic stress, etc.) that is caused by your work environment or activities related to your work. In general, health conditions or disorders that occur among a group of people with similar occupational exposures at a higher frequency than the rest of the population are considered to be occupational diseases.

What factors may contribute to the development of occupational diseases?

Occupational diseases can be caused by:

- Biological agents- bacteria, viruses, fungi, parasites, insects, plants, birds, animals, humans, etc.
- Chemical agents- beryllium, lead, benzene, isocyanates, etc.
- Ergonomic issues- repetitive movements, improper set up of workstation, poor lighting, poor design of tools, etc.
- Physical agents - ionizing and non-ionizing radiation, magnetic fields, pressure extremes (high pressure or vacuum), extreme temperatures, noise, vibration, etc.
- Psychosocial issues- stress, violence, bullying, harassment, lack of recognition, etc.

There are other factors that determine the development of an occupational disease, including:

- Amount of exposure or dose entering the body

- Duration or length of exposure
- Route of entry into the body
- Toxicity of the chemical
- Removal from the body
- Biological variation (individual susceptibility)
- Effects of interaction, such as synergism (e.g., smoking, alcohol use, exposure to other chemicals).

Exposure to the hazardous agent may occur only once in a while or only in very small amounts, or the exposure may be daily and/or to very large amounts. The number of weeks or years on the job may provide an estimate of the degree of exposure. In general, the higher the exposure (duration and/or amount), the higher the risk of developing a health effect.

How do I know what is considered as an occupational disease?

Some agencies create general documents, such as the International Labour Organization (ILO)'s List of Occupational Diseases (revised 2010).

As indicated above, it is often difficult to determine if exposure at the workplace may result in an occupational disease. The worker's compensation boards across Canada each maintain criteria about what conditions may be work-related and therefore covered by compensation. It is recommended that you contact the compensation board in your jurisdiction directly for more information.

How can an occupational disease be prevented?

Use the information from CCOHS and other health and safety agencies and providers to learn about how to eliminate the hazards and control the risks in your workplace. Some hazards and their controls will be specifically outlined in legislation. In all cases, the employer has a duty of due diligence and is responsible for 'taking all reasonable precautions, under the particular circumstances, to prevent injuries or accidents in the workplace'.

In situations where there is not a clear way to control a hazard, or if legislation does not impose a limit or guideline, you should seek guidance from occupational health professionals such as an occupational hygienist or safety professional about what is "good practice" or "standard practice" when working in that situation.

In general:

- Learn about the hazards at your workplace (e.g., find out what products are being used, understand how actions such as heavy lifting can affect the body, etc.).
- Employers should develop - and employees should follow - systems, programs, procedures, and practices that are designed to protect people from workplace hazards.
- Communicate all health hazards and exposures to employees. Provide the appropriate information and training for the hazards present.
- Work with health professionals to investigate injuries or illnesses that may have characteristics that suggest it may be work-related. (e.g., tell your health professional where you work, what you do, and what products you work with). Keep a list of all jobs and industries you have worked in.



https://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/hsprograms/occ_hygiene/occ_disease.html, OSH answers, Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS).
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Family forum plans for 2018

This year more than 250 family members and friends attended the family forums across the country. There were tears, laughter, learning, sharing and new friendships made. We are grateful for all of the feedback from family members as we want to ensure that the forums are meeting your needs. Each year we evaluate the forums to look for ways to improve, to provide the best experience possible for family members, and to ensure we make the most efficient and effective use of funds. For 2018 there will be three family forums as the western and prairie families will reunite in Saskatoon. Stay tuned for further details!

- Atlantic Family Forum – June 1-3, 2018, Atlantica Resort, Chester NS
- Central Family Forum – September 28-30, 2018, Nottawasaga Inn, Alliston ON
- Prairie & Western Family Forum – October 19-21, 2018, Saskatoon, SK



There are many milestones in life when we question our identity and really contemplate who we are, who we were and who we hope to be. Adolescence, education and career choices, moving out on our own, marriage, having children, retirement – for the most part we expect these and have a framework from society to try to understand our options, possibilities and ultimately our choices. However sometimes life throws curves at us that we could never have expected and have absolutely nothing to prepare us for.

The sudden, life-altering workplace injury, death or diagnosis of illness changes everything. It impacts every aspect of your life. The future that you expected and planned for is gone along with your bubble of safety. There is a loss of dreams, loss of heart, loss of confidence and loss of self. Some of the people in your life will completely disappear and of those who stay many will ask when are you going to get back to being yourself? What they do not understand is that person no longer exists. Who you were is no longer a possibility. Because when someone has died how do you answer the question of how many children or siblings you have? Or explain that you are not a single parent, rather you are a sole parent? Or answer what you do when you are no longer able to work and that piece of your identity has been taken away from you?

“ Our individual tragedy is a piece of who we are but does not have to define us. We each have to come to terms with rediscovering who we are and letting go of some of the pieces of who we were. It isn't easy.

Somehow you need to figure out your 'new normal' and a way to incorporate your loss into your life. There will be change and the life you had will not be the life ahead. However time will help, you just have to keep trying. You will cope and you will adjust. As one family member shared, she had a choice to become bitter or to become

Who am I?

Loss forces a re-evaluation of everything, including all that you took for granted.

better. She actively made the choice not to be bitter. Like many, her experience made her have a change in perspective about what is really important to her. Our individual tragedy is a piece of who we are but does not have to define us. We each have to come to terms with rediscovering who we are and letting go of some of the pieces of who we were. It isn't easy. Loss forces a re-evaluation of everything, including all that you took for granted. Ultimately, we all make choices and over time some familiar pieces of ourselves do come back and new ones emerge. Eventually, although never the same, one does feel human again.

For a school assignment, 17 year old Burton Reimer had to write a composition based on the question 'Who am I?' He was still at a time in life that he was trying to figure that out. Burton wrote, "As much as I'd love to tell you exactly who I am, I can't. I can't because I don't know yet. I'm still waiting for the day when it all comes together; I wait not anxiously but patiently." He ended his wise words with "So who am I, I'm still not sure, ask me again tomorrow." Burton didn't get to discover any of the answers as just three weeks later on his first day of a new job he died. He had not been provided with the proper safety equipment.

His death profoundly impacted his mother, Lynda Kolly. "Our lives were forever changed. I was changed. When I look back on the years as new parent and as the years passed as a more experienced parent, I was learning and growing along with my children."

"Now 18 years after the death of my young son Burton, I still continue to grow. I feel more empathy for people who have experienced grief and suffering. Burton has taught me how to enjoy the simple pleasures in life even though I need to remind myself of this at times. He made me laugh and he was kind to people. These are traits I try to bring into my own life even when it seems the world is cruel and unkind."

"The years have passed and I miss my son but I feel that he has given me a lifetime of lessons and wisdom with the short life he has lived. For that I will be forever grateful."

Lynda made a choice not to be bitter. To be grateful for what she had learned from the time she shared with her son. He will always be a part of her, just as her love for him will never end.

Change in life will continue to happen whether we want it or not. It is our choice how we meet those new challenges. Choose to be better.

Mary Lou Gormley

People choose to volunteer for a variety of reasons. For some it offers the opportunity to give something back to their community or make a difference to the people around them. For others, it provides a chance to develop new skills or build on existing experiences and knowledge. For our volunteer Mary Lou Gormley, both of these reasons are true.

Mary Lou first heard about Threads of Life from a nurse who helped to care for her husband Robert while he was in the hospital. After Robert died in February 2007, the nurse handed Mary Lou a Threads of Life pamphlet. It took Mary Lou over a year to attend a Family Forum as she worked through her grief and adjusted to life without her husband. She and her young son Andrew attended their first Family Forum in September 2008. While she only stayed a short time she knew she'd found a place where she could grieve openly and honour Robert's life. Threads of Life has been a huge part of her survival for the past ten years.

She lead her first workshop for other families at the September 2009 Family Forum, entitled Masks of Grief. She then went on to lead the Spirituality and Loss Workshop at both the September 2012 and 2013 Family Forums.

Mary Lou completed her Volunteer Family Guide Training in January 2013 and works primarily with families whose loved one has suffered an occupational illness, but has not yet died. She wants to be there for those families while their loved one is still alive. She wishes she had found Threads of Life prior to Robert's death and wants to give back in the way she wished she had received.



Mary Lou and Robert

By volunteering, Mary Lou is able to maintain a relationship with Robert. She feels this way he will never be forgotten. Her favourite part of helping other families is that she understands their struggle and what they go through on a daily basis in caring for their loved one. No explanation is needed; she gets it; she can just be there for them. "To give back is to get some value from the loss and the grief," she says.

Mary Lou wrote a piece for our blog "Witnessing Mirrors", released September 19th, 2017. This has fuelled her to write her own story for others. Mary Lou is working on a book entitled Lessons from the Garden.

ONE stop SHOP for Volunteers

If you're an active Threads of Life volunteer, we're always reminding you to report your hours and submit your expenses. Tracking your hours is important because it shows that Threads of Life has a committed community – something that partners and granting organizations like to see. And submitting your expenses is important because we don't want you to be out-of-pocket for the volunteer work you're doing.

So we've tried to make it easy for you – all the forms you need are now in one place on the Threads of Life web site.

Go to: <http://threadsoflife.ca/get-involved/volunteer/volunteers-corner/>, or just click the green "Volunteers" button at the top of the web site, and then go to the "Volunteers' Corner".

REPORT
VOLUNTEER HOURS

SUBMIT IN-KIND
CONTRIBUTION



Thank you!

Thank you to all our partners and supporters who raised funds for Threads of Life this fall. Because of you, a dark and difficult time is a little brighter.



Thank you, TriWest Capital Partners! Through your annual golf tournament and leadership forum, you have made a huge contribution over the past five years to sustain Threads of Life programs like our family forums. Here, Memory Lane signs are set up along the golf course in Banff Alberta.



Thank you, Irving Tissue! You made a splash through your Splashworks event to help those affected by workplace tragedies.

Special thanks to:

- The Sprackman family who hosted the 2nd Annual Cade Sprackman Memorial Golf Tournament, a fundraiser for Threads of Life
- Wellpoint Health Ltd. Saskatoon for donating the proceeds from the Work Better Safer event this fall
- Ontario Petroleum Contractors Association (OPCA) for dedicating your fourth annual golf tournament to help those affected by workplace tragedy!
- Bird Construction for giving the proceeds from your annual golf tournament
- SaskPower Safety Days Organizing Committee for raising funds in memory of John Boxall

NOVA Chemicals joins the Threads of Life family

Threads of Life is pleased to introduce our newest corporate partner, NOVA Chemicals. NOVA Chemicals will be a national sponsor for Steps for Life – Walking for Families of Workplace Tragedy, and will support our other programs including family forums, volunteer family guides, and the speakers bureau.

NOVA Chemicals is a leading manufacturer of plastics and chemicals, with locations in Ontario, Alberta, and the United States.

“Threads of Life is truly honoured to begin this partnership with NOVA Chemicals,” says Executive Director Shirley Hickman. “It’s a company that believes, as we do, in the elimination of workplace tragedies, and demonstrates that commitment through its actions. The investment by NOVA Chemicals and its employees will help to ensure Threads of Life’s programs are there for people when they need them most.”



Let's get things *started!*



Steps for Life events will be happening in 30 communities across Canada in late April and early May. But why wait for spring to get started on your plans? Here are some ways you could get a step up on Steps

for Life right now! Many communities and teams hold events through the winter months to jump start their fundraising – how about a Christmas craft or bake sale, or a paint night?

Committees are working now to make all their walk arrangements – you can help by volunteering. Roles include everything from taking minutes at meetings to official walk photographer. And registration opens February 1, so why not be first in your community to sign up for your local walk? For more information on teams, fundraising or volunteering, see the walk web site at [HYPERLINK "http://www.stepsforlife.ca"](http://www.stepsforlife.ca)

Steps for Life 2017 raised an incredible \$690,00! That will go a long way to support Threads of Life's programs and services. But there are so many people who've never heard of Threads of Life and need the hope and healing our programs can offer – you can help pay it forward by making your plans now for the 2018 Steps for Life – Walking for Families of Workplace Tragedy. Don't forget, if you can't attend a walk near you, you can still get involved through Your Walk, Your Way.

\$690,000!



STEPS FOR LIFE

10

Tips to find more sponsors than ever for your Steps for Life walk!

- 1 START EARLY**
Companies are making decisions at year end for the following year. They will need time to consider how it aligns with their mission & vision.
- 2 DESIGNATE A LEAD BUT HAVE A COORDINATED EFFORT**
Each committee needs a sponsorship lead, but all committee members can play an active role in identifying and reaching out to potential sponsors.
- 3 WORK YOUR NETWORKS**
The old adage "people give to people" is true. Work together at a committee meeting to compile a list of possible sponsors, include past sponsors, network connections, local businesses.
- 4 MAKE A PLAN**
With your list in hand, decide who will approach each prospective sponsor, and when.
- 5 RESEARCH YOUR PROSPECTS**
Sponsorships are not just philanthropic, but marketing opportunities. Show them how Steps for Life fits their objectives, and understand who makes their decisions.
- 6 DECIDE HOW TO MAKE THE 'ASK'**
The face-to-face, personal ask is generally the best, but not always possible. Make the ask convenient for the prospect - their schedule, their preferred mode of communication, etc.
- 7 PREPARE!**
Know your sponsorship package and levels. Plan what you want to say to the sponsor prospect. And be prepared to speak to Threads of Life's mission and vision – appeal to both their head and their heart.
- 8 FOLLOW-UP, FOLLOW-UP, FOLLOW-UP**
Following up after an ask is key. Ask when would be the best time to follow up with the company, and remember to follow through. Provide them with any additional information they need.
- 9 KEEP TRACK OF SPONSOR ACTIVITY**
The committee's sponsorship lead needs to ensure all asks and follow up activities are recorded. Plan to discuss sponsorship activity at each meeting - make it a priority.
- 10 "NO" DOESN'T ALWAYS MEAN NO**
If a potential sponsor turns down the request, they may be willing to support at a different level, or make an in-kind donation. Even though it may be a no for this year, ask if you can approach them again next year.

Watch for the new Steps for Life website in 2018!

Coming Events

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

Atlantic Family Forum – June 1-3, 2018 – Atlantica Resort, Chester NS

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

Prairie & Western Family Forum – October 19-21, 2018 – Saskatoon, SK

How to reach us

Toll-free: 1-888-567-9490

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www.stepsforlife.ca



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.

SHARE THIS NEWSLETTER!

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



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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

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