

# threads of life

VOL.19, NO.3 Fall 2021

PREVENTION

SUPPORT

PARTNERSHIP



## HOPING FOR ...normal

“Normal” is a slippery word. It means different things to different people and at different times. We’ve all hoped to be back to a post-pandemic normal this fall, but that seems in question. When we do get there, it won’t be the same normal we left in March 2020. Threads of Life members know the struggle to reach a new normal after tragedy disrupts all of life. This issue features a family member’s reflection on normal, and the stories of two families whose purposeful journey of many years has brought them to an inspiring new normal.

Photo by Askar Abayev at Pexels



### MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Bill Stunt

It’s hard to make plans when you don’t know what the future holds. Anyone who’s living with an occupational injury or illness knows this truth up close. For Threads of Life, it’s a challenge to predict when we might safely return to the in-person events and meetings that are so meaningful to our families, volunteers

and staff. This fall’s family forums will be offered virtually (*see page 7*). We hold onto hope that 2022 will allow for in-person Steps for Life events, forums and volunteer training. In the meantime, our online FamiliesConnect workshops are a popular way for members to meet, share and learn together. Steps for Life planning is full speed ahead, with in-person and DIY options built right in. For now, we’ll all have to keep our plans flexible. As families experiencing grief and change, we know how to do that too!

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# The gift of last words

Letting go of the questions and grabbing hold of love

by Donna Van Bruggen

I never cease to be wonder struck when life events have a thread of miraculous woven through them. Two such events occurred at the birth of my two beautiful daughters. Then on a particular April 20, a third miracle occurred when I was blessed with a son. David came into the world with a mop of dark hair, big hands and big feet. Have you ever had a puppy with large paws and knew they would grow up to be a large dog? When I saw the size of David's hands, I knew he would grow up to be a large man. And when I saw the size of David's feet, I knew it was going to be hard to find shoes that fit him.

David brought such joy and love to my family. As a baby, David was happy and easy going. At preschool age, David's career goal was to be Superman. I felt that such a helping profession was an excellent choice. David also loved to play outside. I enjoyed watching him play and noticed that when he ran, he would hold his arms motionless by his side and flap his large hands as fast as he could. When I asked him why he did that, David replied that all the hand flapping made him run faster. Who knew that big hands could be so useful? That was my David – big hands, big feet and oh yeah, a big heart. He loved helping and doing kind things for people. When he was six, David started a fly swatting business and hand printed some business cards that he passed around the neighborhood. He charged five cents for every fly he exterminated. Why become an entrepreneur at such a young age? Because he wanted to earn enough money to take me out to dinner.

David also liked sports. In Junior High, he was on the school wrestling team. In Grade 9,



David and his mom

he participated in a tournament in another community. Later that evening his coach phoned me to say that David had broken his leg during a match and was now in the hospital awaiting surgery. It was a bad break and took a while to heal. When he started high school, David informed me that he was not going to wrestle any more. He wanted to do something safer. Like play football. Where you get tackled regularly. Not only did David have a big heart, he also had a brave heart.

**My heart threatened to pound out of my chest. My breath came in agonizing gasps. I had an almost overwhelming compulsion to leave my car and run screaming in terror down the highway.**

As a young adult, David devoted two years to go to another country and serve the people there. When he returned, his heart's desire was to find his soul mate, get married and start a family. He met a wonderful young lady, they were married and over the next years they welcomed four children to their family. How David loved his family! One of David's

and his wife's dreams was to move from the big city where they lived to a small, rural town where they could enjoy a slower paced life style. Eventually, they were able to do that. They had so much to look forward to.

Then one day, everything changed. On October 17, 2012, David went to work and he did not come home. My daughter-in-law phoned to say that David had been struck by a fork lift at work and killed instantly. When I heard the words "David" and "dead" used in the same sentence, the ground collapsed under me. Breathing became excruciating and the air seemed too thick to inhale. I barely remember making some phone calls and am not sure how long I was alone before friends arrived. Because I was unable to focus, I knew it was unsafe to drive to southern Alberta that night. So after many sleepless hours of staring into the darkness, I left the next morning on the most arduous journey of my life – the journey to bury my beloved son David.

That journey was marked by my frequently checking the clock in my vehicle. My self talk went like this: "It's 9:00 a.m. Twenty-four hours ago at this time, David was still alive." "It's 10:30 a.m. Twenty-four hours ago at this time, David was still alive." This went on until it was 12:45 p.m. Then this thought came into my mind. "Twenty-four hours ago, David was in the last fifteen minutes of his life. AND HE DIDN'T EVEN KNOW IT!" Those words triggered such an intense panic attack that I had to pull the car over. My heart threatened to pound out of my chest.

My breath came in agonizing gasps. I had an almost overwhelming compulsion to leave my car and run screaming in terror down the highway. David was killed at approximately 1:00 p.m., but due to unusual circumstances, wasn't found until around 1:30 p.m. It wasn't until that dreadful time period passed that the panic finally started to subside and I could continue driving. Your brain and your body do peculiar things when you're under intense emotional distress.

I will never know exactly what happened that terrible day. There were no witnesses and the only person who could provide any information was killed. The Occupational Health and Safety investigators developed a probable scenario. David was refuelling a fork lift on his lunch break so his co-workers did not miss him until his break was over. David leaned over the front of the fork lift and turned the key in the ignition so he could check the level of gas in the tank. But he turned the key too far, the fork lift started and lurched forward. It struck David in the chest and drove him against a shed door with such force that he was killed instantly. David was very safety conscious and took workplace safety seriously. But he made a mistake that day and paid the ultimate price.

**The last thing David said to me was... "I love you." And I grabbed hold of that, and love became my anchor and my life line. Because love never dies.**

In the beginning, I kept asking myself, "David, how could you have done that? What were you thinking?" And the answers to those questions are ... I don't know. And I will never know. Was he distracted? Was he in a hurry? Did he always refuel the fork lift that way and nothing happened until his luck ran out on that particular October 17? Not having all the information and answers to my questions was eating away at me, and was making me angry and making me crazy. But I recognized it and did not like being that way. So I chose to make peace with the fact that I will never know what happened that day, and I let it go.

Instead, I chose to focus on the last words David ever said to me. We were talking on the phone a short time before his death. Just before we hung up, David spoke. One sentence.

Three words. The last thing David said to me was... "I love you." And I grabbed hold of that, and love became my anchor and my life line. Because love never dies. It only grows stronger. Anger and acting crazy could not drive out the darkness and grief that I was feeling. Only love could drive out that darkness and replace it with light. Eventually, that is. One minute, one hour, one day and one step at a time. Grieving and healing is not a sprint. It's a marathon.



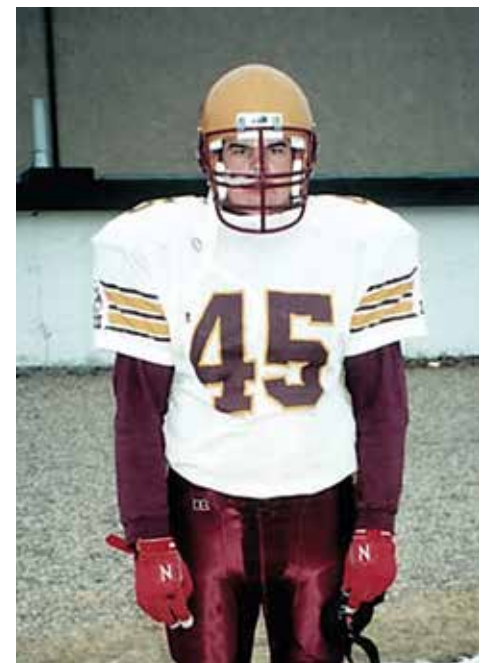
David at 10 months old

Our capacity for infinite love fills me with awe. Just because we love a parent doesn't mean we can never love anyone else. There is enough room in our hearts to love everyone who is close to us. And because we love so deeply, our hearts grieve deeply when we experience the tragic fatality of a loved one. I wanted to remember David and honour his memory with love. And in order to do that, I chose to embrace my grief. I did not deny it or try to hide or run from it. I allowed myself to feel whatever emotions I needed to feel at any given time. I also gave myself permission to cry whenever and wherever I needed to. Because the tears I shed were tears of love for David. The emotional and spiritual pain and darkness I felt during that first year was excruciating, but I clung tight to my love anchor, never doubting that eventually I would find my way back into the light. I created an arsenal of self care opportunities and ideas that I could use on the days when the grief and darkness threatened to overwhelm me. Things like write in my journal, practice yoga, watch a funny TV show, get out into nature, have a good cry, do something kind for

some one else, attend a Threads of Life Family Forum and numerous other ideas. A few months after David's death, I was watching a funny cat video on TV and I broke out into a spontaneous belly laugh. I hadn't laughed for so long that at first, I felt disloyal to my son. Then I realized that David would not want me to become stuck in my grief. I didn't want that either. And besides, that belly laugh felt so healing. So each day I would look for opportunities for a belly laugh or at least a belly chuckle. And I would look for something that filled me with wonder and amazement that I could express gratitude for. That was difficult to do at first, but became easier with time and practice.

I will never get over David's death. But after more than eight years, I have learned to cope with it. And one step at a time, I eventually emerged from that seemingly endless tunnel of pain and darkness that enveloped me at the beginning of my healing journey. I am unbroken, but I have changed. My goal is to become a better person than I used to be – stronger, wiser, more loving, compassionate and kind. And in experiencing the agony of a workplace fatality, I can legitimately pause in my own healing journey to help and lift another during theirs. For I have travelled that road and understand the terrible price that a workplace tragedy exacts. I'm still a work in progress, but I like where I'm headed.

Thank you, David, my beloved son, for the gift of your last words. Through them, I was able to reclaim love and joy in my life, and to walk through the darkness of grief and into the light of healing. I love you too, son.



David switched to football as a safer alternative to wrestling

# He made people happy

Perspective on a grief journey of 29 years

by Barry and Linda Gladstone

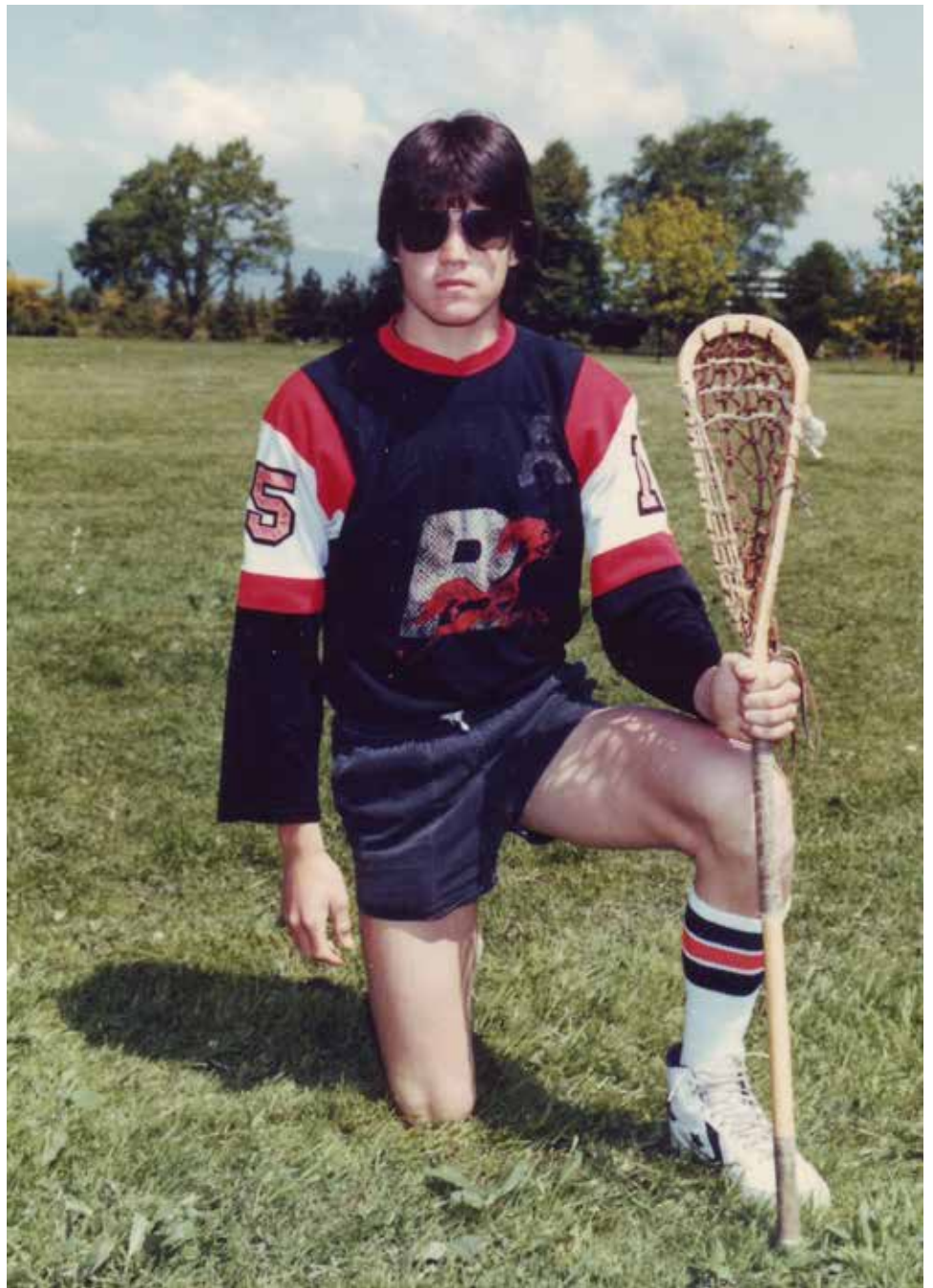
**T**wenty-nine years ago on July 17, 1992 at the age of 24, our son Donny (only mom and dad could call him “Donny” and to everyone else it was “Don”), was snatched from our lives in an instant. He was employed for five years in a wire rope facility and was operating a high speed winding machine, winding cable from a large spool onto a small one when the incident occurred. It seems his glove or sleeve got caught by a spur and this pulled him into the machine. The autopsy report calculated that given the rate of rotation of the spool, he would have died in 1.75 seconds. It takes longer to sneeze! Where was the protective shield? Why was he so close to the machine? Why was there no auto shut-off? Why was he working alone and why was there no one close by to shut the machine down?

You get the knock at the door and it is the RCMP. This is not good! But, how ‘not good’ could it be? Well of course, it was the worst. You rush to the hospital where he was transported. We were wisely advised not to view the body, so, this task fell to his uncle Gordie because he was so badly damaged. So no viewing, no kiss on the forehead, no touching of hands, no final goodbyes. He was just gone.

He left his high school sweetheart and a two-year-old daughter who never got to know her dad. You make the requisite phone calls and arrange for the service. Crowds of people at our house; hundreds at the service; flowers and cards galore, food galore. It’s a blurry and numbing experience.

And then it’s over!

People go home, people return to work, but, your family has been fractured and your lives have been shattered. You have lost your first born son. His brother Rich, 10 months



A field lacrosse tournament and scholarships were named in honour of Don

**We reclaimed our lives in his memory. Are we making a difference in other people’s lives? Hopefully.**

**Do we feel better for trying? Definitely! He wasn’t perfect, no one is, but he was some version of it.**

younger, has lost his best friend and a little girl has lost her father. How do you move on when all future birthdays, anniversaries, Christmas, Easter, Valentine’s Day, family dinners and family get-togethers will never be the same?

We knew from the get-go that Donny would be very upset if he thought our lives would be defined by his last 1.75 seconds, rather than how he lived his life in the 24 years that preceded them, i.e. how he lived his “dash.” What did he cram into his 24 years that we could emulate and adopt so we could feel better about ourselves, help us to heal, and maybe help others?

We decided to focus on his whole life and

not how it ended.

As a proud member of the Gitga'at First Nation of Hartley Bay, B.C., Donny learned early to be respectful of others and especially his elders. But, he took this concept to another dimension to include all family, friends, teammates, classmates, and work mates regardless of who they were or where they came from. There was zero tolerance for bullying and racism in his realm. Okay, we'll make a concentrated effort to do a better job in that area.

Now, we work on our anger--it doesn't help anything or anyone. Hockey, basketball, lacrosse, football, rugby—refereeing, playing, and coaching, there was never an angry moment in any of his activities or personal interactions. We can do that!

Criticism and cynicism of others? This is not right on so many levels. He knew it; he practised it. It's very hard to walk back hurtful comments. Okay, maybe that needs more effort. It's a continual work in progress.

Smile, be honest, be sincere and truthful. These were his calling cards. Simple acts that all members of society should adhere to become responsible members of that society. He made us aware of these through his deeds and actions and we're trying to pay that forward.

He was a registered organ donor, so, his eyes were donated to the eye bank and we encourage those who are capable and qualified to consider this option. He was a regular blood donor, so are we. Giving to others made his life fuller and we want to continue that legacy.

The community has done so much to honour Donny's memory. For years after his death an annual Richmond, B.C., old boys'



Don's graduation photo holds a place of honour on a cedar bentwood box made by George Hiet

field lacrosse game was played in his honour and the game trophy was given to: "The player who most enjoyed the game".

Also for years, the Honolulu International Field Lacrosse Tournament was dedicated to his memory. Two cash scholarships were given to academic achievers in the Richmond Minor Lacrosse Association.

There were numerous good happenings that we remember and cherish to this day. There's also numerous grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Industry-wide changes have been made to

ensure these types of preventable industrial tragedies never occur again. We emphatically preach safety. If it's heavy, it can hurt you. If it rotates, moves rapidly or is automated, it can hurt you. If it floats or flies, it can hurt you. If it's overhead or far below you, it can hurt you. No shortcuts. Be acutely aware of your surroundings and be ever-cautious.

As I write this, July 16, 2021, Kelowna BC and indeed the country is learning of the deaths of five construction workers due to a high rise crane collapse. The response is always the same: "this should never have happened". But it did. The madness and insanity continues for other families.

So how did it all work out for us after these 29 years and counting?

We reclaimed our lives in his memory. Are we making a difference in other people's lives? Hopefully. Do we feel better for trying? Definitely! He wasn't perfect, no one is, but he was some version of it.

Sure, we have our moments. We still cry but not as much as yesterday. Of course we still miss him, but he gave more than he ever knew during his short stay with us and hey, he's going to be 24 forever.

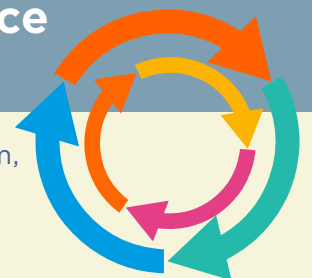
At his service his minor league soccer coach approached us, tears flowing down his cheeks, and he could only utter four words, "he made people happy." This phrase resonated with us and we've never forgotten it.

Donny's friends funded a memorial bench for the seawall in Vancouver's iconic Stanley Park. The plaque states his name, his "dash", with dates on either side and those four precious words, "he made people happy."

We can all do that. That's an easy one!

## 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](https://threadsoflife.ca/news)), or share your full story as two family members have in this issue. To learn more, email: Susan at [shaldane@threadsoflife.ca](mailto:shaldane@threadsoflife.ca).





## Reflection: Change and the new normal

by Candace Palumbo

Very few things are the same after tragic loss. Adjusting to the uncertainty and changes that happened to me and that I had to make was fully disorienting after my husband died. I needed to be safe, find peace, stay healthy and engaged, be thankful and help others, learning new things for my family's wellbeing and my own. These truths remain so for me, and I'm sure for others affected by tragedy, even after months of pandemic chaos. Moving with hope from emergency toward calm, we are changing again to avert another outbreak as we reconnect.

While we grieve, the global community has suffered fatalities, survivors endure severe health problems and workers in all sectors face extraneous conditions due to COVID-19. Their pain deserves recognition with compassion and dignity. My heart is heavy for people who have lost so much. Protecting us, our safety measures have also caused social, financial and health problems, polarizing us as we discourse about the nature of the threat and what action to take. Thinking about what is normal I wondered what it is about modern life that gave the whole world a lethal virus. I archived that hard question and turned to what I could do and what I hope for.

How in the world would I fare as we distanced, masked and stayed home? I really tried a TV curfew. Recovering from injury, I read more, wrote more, baked, (ate everything) took lessons, gardened, hiked, sang, cried, zoomed, shopped and thought. We all devised ways to come through a big storm that everyone was in and, good or bad, it was normal. Our personal and collective histories combined are also moving stories of how to heal, lend a hand to others and challenge ourselves ... the better normal. They are the most worthy misadventures and experiences to share.

### What if...

I always believed designating time for critical inspection and problem solving was missing in the midst of constant unrelenting change especially in workplaces. Words can foil safety and damage; as well

or better, they can clarify and uplift. "Change is good" echoes back at me, never encountering out loud the plea in my mind: "could we think about what we're doing, how will it affect us? Can we change the change if we have to?" "Could we convey the message with fair intention?" There it is ... a motion to reflect, re-evaluate, consult, research and discuss that helps forge better safety standards, codes of conduct, personal protective practice and future action. I feel a part of these connected layers of cooperation yet struggle with profound loss at the same time. I think many of us do in our way.

### A wish list with room to grow...

Without knowing if it's better for students to return to school, if it's safe to join large gatherings and open the world for business, I know the decisions are seldom made unilaterally; it would be good to see the whole discussion (with a view to understanding) and add our voice; we can be certain there are advantages and problems to sort. Among many proposals it's encouraging to think of a possible four-day work week. We are also craving closeness with loved ones and to be social again but I'm compelled to wait until it is safe. I found lockdown separation the hardest as did many I have spoken to. Certainly our family is very thankful for all of us (more hugs, I love yous and pictures!). I do want to see superior long term care conditions and more substantive help for populations in need very soon. Like many people, I have a heightened appreciation for those we see every day working in the community. I like to think I always did but a crisis can bring new awareness.

A valued membership in Threads of Life is a steady reminder for me that we are not isolated and can share, guide and accept help—but we also want the kind of change that prevents life-altering injuries, illnesses or fatalities. Difficulty, adversity and losses continue while we grieve and honor our close ones. We do need comfort, doing what we know, meaningful deliberation and achievable challenge; these things help sustain our energy when the ground shifts below us.



## Connected in support: Virtual Family Forums this fall

Family Forums are the cornerstone events in Threads of Life’s family support calendar. Family forums are where strangers become friends, grieving families discover they’re not alone, and everyone learns new ways to cope and to heal. In September and October we will host the Western and Central Family Forums online. The virtual events are now open for registration and we hope to “see” you there!

### What does the virtual Family Forum offer?

Just like the traditional version of the event, the Virtual Family Forums offer a supportive experience and opportunity to connect with other families who are living with the outcome of a workplace injury, illness, or death. Family members find connection through our varied experiences as all have known deep loss and the way it affects every aspect of our lives.

Both virtual events will begin with a Reflections Ceremony -- just like we do at the traditional event. The Reflections Ceremony offers us

the opportunity to collectively honour our loved ones, injured family members, and those living with an occupational disease. We take time out of our busy lives to reflect on the past and present, so families can move further into their futures. The ceremony will also include a powerful presentation by one of our Threads of Life family members, sharing their experience of workplace tragedy.

The remainder of the weekend features workshops developed specifically for those affected by work-related injuries, illnesses and deaths. Topics range from finding happiness to listening skills to music therapy and yoga.

The virtual format makes joining easier — and more flexible — than ever before. Review the agenda and sign up for the sessions that interest you! If you have questions or would like to discuss, please reach out to Kelley at [kelley@threadsoflife.ca](mailto:kelley@threadsoflife.ca) or 1-888-567-9490.

### Western Virtual Family Forum September 24-26

For families in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, Yukon and Northwest Territories

### Central Virtual Family Forum October 22-24

For families in Ontario and Nunavut

Register at <https://threadsoflife.ca/programs/upcoming-family-forums/>



Team EllisDon participates in Steps for Life 2019

## RECOGNIZING a few of our volunteers and partners

by **Lorna Catrambone**, Regional Development Coordinator and Manager Volunteer Resources

Threads of Life is very fortunate to have a team of wonderful volunteers who support the delivery of our programs, events, speaker presentations, and help guide the organization into the future. And we have dedicated partners, who offer financial support, and work to spread the word about Threads of Life to their stakeholders.

Each and every volunteer and partner plays an important role in what we do. And we know we couldn't continue to exist and grow without the unique contribution of all who support us. We would like to take this opportunity to recognize a select group who were nominated to receive one of our 2020 Volunteer and Partner awards.

We thank the volunteers and partners listed below for their dedication to the Threads of Life mission: *to help families heal through a community of support and to promote the elimination of life-altering workplace injuries, illnesses and deaths.*



**A COMMUNITY BOARD MEMBER OF THREADS OF LIFE**  
 Peter Deines    Eleanor Westwood

**10-YEAR RECOGNITION AWARD**  
 Tami Helgeson    Lisa Kadosa  
 Joe Legge    Jackie Manuel

**A PARTNER OF THREADS OF LIFE**  
 Safe Work Manitoba  
 Workplace Safety and Insurance Board, Ontario

**PROGRAM ADVANCEMENT IN FAMILY SUPPORT**  
 Donna Green    Rebecca Orr  
 Wynny Sillito    Charmaine Salter

**PROGRAM ADVANCEMENT IN COMMUNITY ACTION**  
 Treena Dixon    Karen Hermant  
 Lee-Anne Lyon-Bartley                                      Tracey Mino  
 Erin Pitruzzella    Veronica Suszynski  
 Elaine Keunen  
 Don Neville  
 Donna Wilkie

**CORPORATE COMMITMENT**  
 EllisDon



## WHAT WILL BE YOUR LEGACY?

Kristopher Tuff died working as a welder in 2013. His brother, Alex, has never been the same.

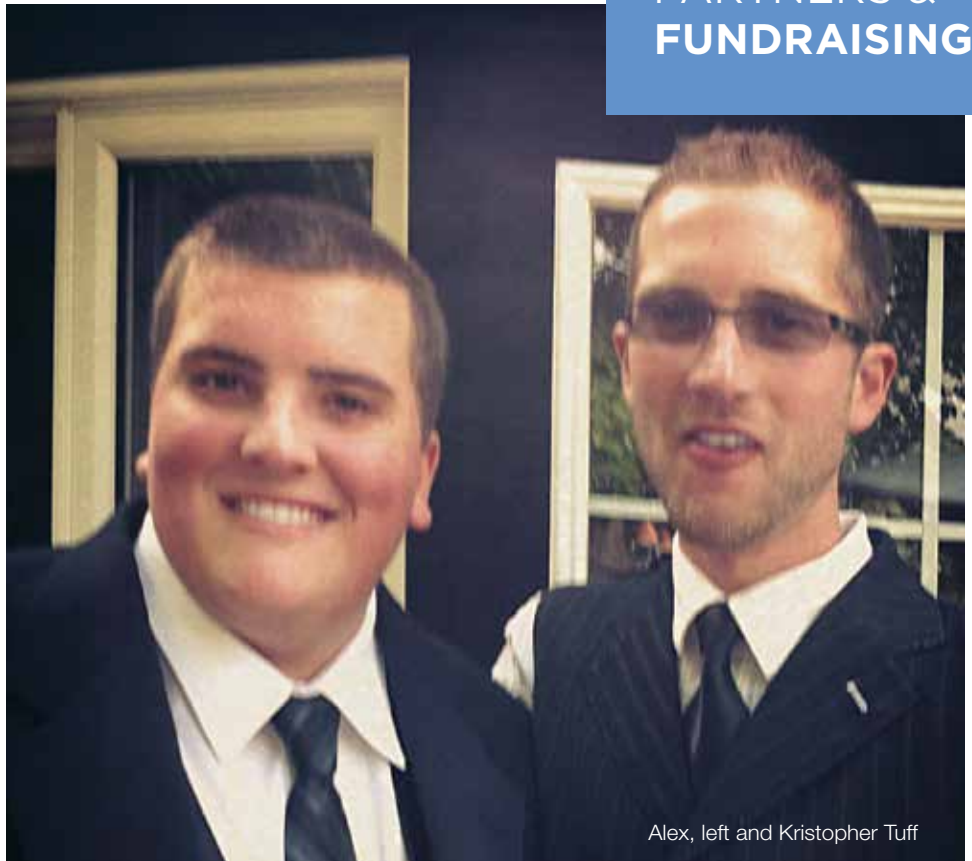
Alex and Kristopher were tied at the hip as brothers. They had great birthday parties, attended fun wedding dances; they roughhoused and goofed around as brothers do when they are young. Alex wanted to do so much more with Kristopher when they got older. He wanted road trips, beers, nieces and nephews. But, Kristopher died in a workplace accident and that future Alex wanted was lost.

Through Threads of Life, Alex found healing and gained a passion for speaking to others about preventing workplace tragedy.

To help more families like Alex's, Threads of Life has partnered with Will Power, a national movement that encourages more people to consider their legacy. A legacy is a gift left in your will, but it can be much more than that. Your legacy is what you leave behind, something that summarizes what your life meant and the impact you've had on the world.

Will Power aims to educate Canadians on the power they have to make a difference through their wills. By leaving a gift to Threads of Life in your will you can make a bigger contribution than you ever thought possible to families forever changed by workplace tragedy.

Research shows that only five percent of Canadians leave a charitable gift in their will. The goal of the Will Power campaign is to work closely with Canadian donors to raise that figure to 8.5% by 2030, which could translate into as much as \$40 billion to advance



Alex, left and Kristopher Tuff

the causes Canadians care about.

Many donors believe that they cannot support both their loved ones and Threads of Life with their will. The truth is, just a small percentage of your estate left to our organization can have a big impact, while still leaving the majority for loved ones. Choosing to support Threads of Life can also reduce and, in some cases, even eliminate the taxes to be paid.

No matter the size of your estate, you can be a part of this powerful movement for change. Wondering how your future gift would be used? Find out about how we use legacy donations here.

[www.willpower.ca/charities/threads-of-life/](http://www.willpower.ca/charities/threads-of-life/)

Take a look at the free resources and tools on the Will Power website to learn about the common myths surrounding gifts in wills, the potential tax benefits, and more.

If you have questions about leaving a gift to Threads of Life in your will, please do not hesitate to contact us by e-mailing Scott McKay at [smckay@threadsoflife.ca](mailto:smckay@threadsoflife.ca) or by calling our toll-free number 888-567-9490 and asking for Scott McKay.

## Need a pair of work boots? Consider Mark's

Looking for a pair of anti-slip footwear? Be safe AND support families with Mark's! This large Canadian retailer will donate a portion of proceeds from the sales of the antislip Tarantula line of work boots. Look for our logo on the boot tag.

**A portion of your boot purchase will be donated to Threads of Life.**

Smart  
Clothes.  
Everyday  
Living.

# Mark's





## SPEAKERS BUREAU *Back to (new) Normal*

**As Canada approaches** – we hope – a post-pandemic normal this fall, the Threads of Life speakers' bureau is ready to meet workplaces and businesses where they are.

For speaker volunteers, trained to share their personal stories of work-related injury, illness or death, the greatest impact and reward comes from standing in person face-to-face with an audience. As restrictions lift, Threads of Life will be happy to accept invitations for in-person presentations, depending on requirements in the jurisdiction. We have protocols in place both for speaker volunteers and for workplaces and venues, to ensure everyone's safety.

At the same time, we'll continue to offer virtual presentations for regions where in-person visits aren't possible, either because of pandemic restrictions or because we have no volunteers in the area. Virtual or online presentations were added to the speakers' bureau in 2020 after COVID-19 put an end to all in-person events. This option isn't for everyone – some speaker volunteers don't have the internet speed to share their story online, or simply prefer not to. Currently there are more than 20 speaker volunteers willing and trained to tell their personal stories through virtual platforms.

To book a speaker for your health and safety event – whether in-person or virtual, visit [www.threadsoflife.ca/speakers](http://www.threadsoflife.ca/speakers) or call 888-567-9490.

Training for new speaker volunteers has been on hold since February 2020, when our newest group of volunteers completed training just before the pandemic hit. While we hope to be able to hold training for new speakers in 2022, it's a challenge to make plans with the current uncertainty. Please stay tuned for news, and if you are a Threads of Life family member interested in joining the speakers' bureau to share your own story, contact:

Susan Haldane at [shaldane@threadsoflife.ca](mailto:shaldane@threadsoflife.ca) or 888-567-9490.

### Growing the Threads of Life Team



Threads of Life's regional development coordinators build relationships with partner organizations, support volunteers and fundraisers, and find ways to expand the organization's reach. This fall, we will be hiring for two coordinator positions: in Atlantic Canada and Western Canada. The vacancies are posted on [www.charityvillage.com](http://www.charityvillage.com).

The deadline for applications is October 11th. Please spread the word to others you think may be interested!

# How Steps for Life defines “Together”

The 2021 version of Steps for Life-Walking for Families of Workplace Tragedy was a resounding success in the face of huge challenges. As we gear up for Steps for Life 2022, we're looking at all the ways we define “Together” when #WeWalkTogether through Steps for Life.

## to-gether: in company or in conjunction; simultaneously

One thing we all learned from our pandemic experiences is that there are many ways to be together, and for Steps for Life 2022, that means options, options, options! Communities across Canada will plan traditional in-person Steps for Life walks in parks and on trails. Participants can also choose a walk or activity solo, meet up with their family or team to walk together in person, or be entirely virtual and participate in company with others online. As always, we'll focus our efforts simultaneously (more or less) on the first week of May.

## to-gether: well organized or controlled

An incredible troupe of volunteers pull together to organize Steps for Life events coast to coast. There's a role for anyone on a Steps for Life committee, including you! There's training and lots of support for volunteers. A few examples:

- approach local sponsors
- promote the event in the community
- coordinate event logistics
- recruit day-of-event volunteers
- oversee day-of-event participant registration
- chair meetings and provide guidance to the committee

To learn more about Steps for Life volunteer opportunities, visit [stepsforlife.ca](http://stepsforlife.ca) or contact National Steps for Life Manager Heather Lyle at [hlyle@threadsoflife.ca](mailto:hlyle@threadsoflife.ca) or 888-567-9490.



Socially distanced walk in Saskatchewan



Taking Steps for Life in Durham Ontario

## to-gether: one with another; so as to unite

Each year, walkers, sponsors, volunteers, teams and partners unite to express their passion for health and safety, and their compassion for people affected by work-related fatalities, life-altering injuries and occupational disease. They raise their voices for prevention and they raise funds to ensure that families touched by tragedy will be supported and will know they're not alone. Money raised through Steps for Life provides peer support, information and volunteer training to the thousands of family members Threads of Life serves. No matter who you are, we are all united one with another to achieve this crucial goal.

However we participate, wherever we walk, in #StepsforLife2022 #WeWalkTOGETHER!

## Upcoming Events

### Western Virtual Family Forum

September 24-26, 2021

For families in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, Yukon and Northwest Territories. Register at [threadsoflife.ca/wvff](http://threadsoflife.ca/wvff)

### Central Virtual Family Forum

October 22-24, 2021

For families in Ontario and Nunavut Register at [threadsoflife.ca/cvff](http://threadsoflife.ca/cvff)

### Families Connect online workshops

[https://threadsoflife.ca/prog\\_rams/families-connect-workshops](https://threadsoflife.ca/prog_rams/families-connect-workshops)

- **Finding meaning in the story in the photograph** - October 28
- **Ask a therapist** - November 17
- **Reflecting back & looking forward together** - December 8

## 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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**Threads of Life** is a registered charity dedicated to supporting families along their journey of healing who have suffered from a workplace fatality, lifealtering 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.



# 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](http://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](http://www.threadsoflife.ca)

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