

A Risk of Grief

I went looking for some specific information I could share with you on the topic of dealing with grief, but, as usual, I couldn't find it. I wanted to talk about the unique and often painful experience of losing the senior you volunteer with, but all my searches just uncovered more stories about how to deal with grief by going out and volunteering. There was nothing on how to deal with grief when you ARE a volunteer.

One might think that the popular wisdom about how to deal with grief would be just as valid to a volunteer as it is to anyone else, but there's a hitch...

Many times, a volunteer will become a very important part of a senior's life; visiting, driving them to get groceries, even the recurring visits to mow a lawn or shovel a walk can create a very special friendship. However, the family of the senior may not realize that this relationship even exists and that can create a special kind of pain for a volunteer.

Imagine a senior passing away, a grieving family faced with a long list of arrangements to make, people to contact, and paperwork to deal with. The volunteer is forgotten. No one has informed her/him. The senior they visited, laughed with, and cared about is gone and no one is acknowledging their bereavement.

Although we contact our volunteers as soon as we become aware of a senior's passing - sometimes we don't hear either. I have more often than not

found out about a senior's passing via the 'grapevine' than through being informed by family.

And that's not to fault the family - we understand that they have a lot on their shoulders and are coping with their own grief. But it happens. And we have to deal with it.

We know that volunteering with seniors brings with it the risk of loss; the risk of grief. And even if no one else knows how important your relationship with that senior was, we do. We will grieve with you. If you need to talk about it - come and talk to us.



We are thrilled to Welcome **SIX** new volunteers since the last newsletter went out! A big shout out to ARC Resources Ltd. who are being so supportive of their employees volunteering with Better at Home. Now THAT'S Community Spirit!

Dawson Creek Better at Home Contact Info:

250-782-2341 | Istudley@spcrs.ca or athorpe@spcrs.ca | www.dcbetterathome.org | located



Volunteer Drop In

Tuesday, August 18th
2:00 - 3:00 pm
Better at Home Office
in the Co-op Mall



Our Volunteers Speak...



Thank you to everyone who took the time to complete our on line Volunteer

Satisfaction Survey. We appreciate your comments and your input.

We were very pleased by the overwhelmingly positive feedback and we will do our best to continue to provide the support and services you need to make your volunteer experience fulfill your expectations.

If you didn't get a chance to participate in the survey, please remember that you can complete a 'Volunteer Assignment Assessment' at any time, and we will value that feedback.

You can get a copy of the Assignment Assessment form at the office or you can download it from the DC Better at Home website (on the Volunteer Page).



... We Listen!



Photos from the Better at Home Bus Tour July 14th 2015

Thank you to all the people who welcomed our senior tour participants; The DC Art Gallery, Tourist Centre, Library, The Old Fashioned Bakery, and Faking Sanity Café .

Thank you BC Transit and City of Dawson Creek for making the tour possible.

Thanks to the volunteers—especially Crystal, our official photographer.



Better at Home is funded by the Government of British Columbia.



South Peace Community Resources Society