

the **Scrivener**



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Eldercare Supporter Heals a Heart

➔ **Each month, broken hearing aids, dead batteries, empty PolyGrip tubes, and lost glasses—seemingly simple issues for most of us—become major life events for some of Vancouver Island’s most vulnerable residents.**

Longterm care costs up to 80 per cent of a senior’s after-tax income, but does not include vital items like clothes, medications, dentures, hearing aids, glasses, outside health visits, personal care items (shampoo, deodorant, razors, etc.), wheelchairs, entertainment, and more. Seniors who have only their pension, Old Age Security, and Guaranteed Income Supplement payments for income, often can’t afford the things they need.

Eldercare Foundation’s Resident-in-Need Fund helps restore dignity and quality of life to seniors who find themselves in such circumstances. One example is a Victoria care resident named Faye who had to cancel multiple healthcare appointments because she had nothing to wear. Due to her lack of income, her wardrobe had been reduced to just a hospital gown. “I feel like I’ve moved back into the world,” said Faye upon receiving three new dresses thanks to Eldercare donors.

While Eldercare receives many requests for practical items like clothing or toothpaste, sometimes requests are more emotional in nature.

A recreation therapist at The Summit care home in Victoria recently reached out to Eldercare about a resident receiving palliative care. The resident, who goes by the name Ghost, has been playing guitar for 65 years. When his

powerchair accidentally crushed his beloved acoustic guitar, one of his few possessions, he was devastated.

The therapist asked if Eldercare could help reconnect Ghost to the healing power of music by donating a new or used guitar. That request was outside of the regular scope of our Resident-in-Need Fund so we harnessed the power of social media to put a call-out to our supporters. Within minutes we received an outpouring of generous offers.

Retired music teacher Trent Ingram was the first to reach out. “When I saw the post on Facebook, I thought *the sooner you could replace a guitar the sooner you could heal a heart.*” The next morning, Trent drove from Duncan to Victoria to purchase a brand-new Epiphone acoustic guitar from Long & McQuade. He brought it to the Eldercare office and Eldercare staff delivered it to Ghost.

As he unboxed the guitar, tears began to stream down Ghost’s face. He was floored. “I’m not usually at a loss for words,” he said. “But I’m speechless. This is the nicest thing that’s ever happened to me.” Ghost then delivered an impromptu bedside concert of original folk songs.

Trent and his wife, also a former music teacher, were touched. “My wife and I are so happy the guitar brought him some joy,” Trent said. “I’d like to think if I were in the same shoes, someone would do the same for me. I know how much the connection to music matters. Music has not only provided me with a career, it has saved my life more than once.”



Ghost with his brand-new Epiphone acoustic guitar

Eldercare is incredibly grateful to donors like Trent who support seniors in maintaining their dignity, independence, and quality of life. Each month, more than 1,500 local seniors turn to us for help in the form of special equipment, exercise, and therapy support or needed items like clothes, hearing aid batteries, and more.

Eldercare raises funds to provide equipment and therapy support for seniors living in longterm care, assist seniors living at home with chronic illnesses, and fund research and education programs aimed at improving the care available to seniors everywhere. We invite you to learn more at www.gvef.org/. 🍷

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