

# Cornerstone

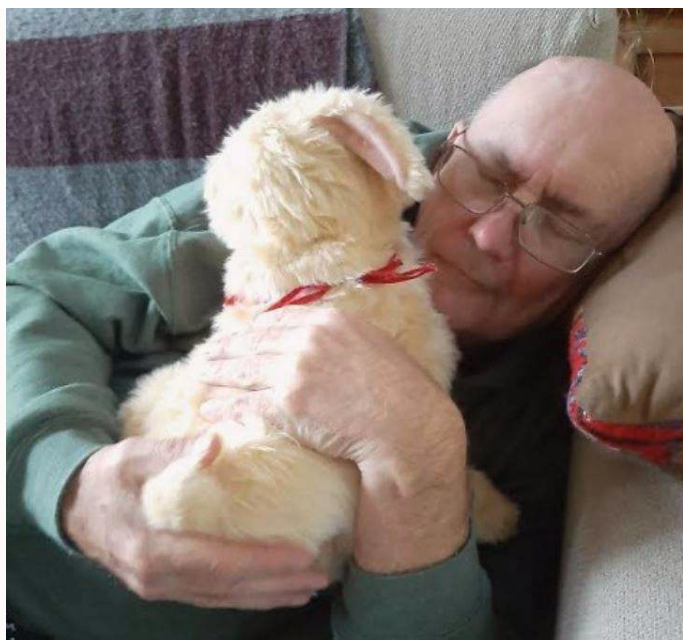
## ELDERCARE FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER

EVERY SENIOR DESERVES THE CHANCE TO AGE WITH DIGNITY

### Supporting seniors and their caregivers in Cowichan

Through Eldercare's partnership with Cowichan Family Caregivers Support Society and Our Cowichan Communities Health Network your support is helping to provide robotic companion pets in the Cowichan Valley. Backed by research, the pets are geared for caregiving families who are supporting seniors with dementia and other life-limiting diagnoses.

Thanks to your generosity, so far 35 pets have been distributed in the Cowichan Valley. This new pilot project is part of our commitment to support aging in place for seniors across Vancouver Island. So far, the feedback has been incredibly positive.



Cowichan resident, Don, recently adopted a Golden Pup and promptly named him Andy. Here is what his spouse and caregiver, Gerri, had to say about the experience:

***"Don has adopted his companion pet in the true sense of the word. He treats Andy like a live animal, yet I'm sure he knows he is not alive. Regardless, he finds incredible comfort and joy from Andy. We are so grateful to all who helped us adopt him."***

Adopt a pet for a local senior today!

Visit [gvef.org/companion-pet](https://gvef.org/companion-pet) or scan the QR code



## Your support brings comfort to long-term care residents around end-of-life

Your support of Eldercare enhances comfort and care for seniors in our communities and in long-term care. At the Priory long-term care home, a recent initiative supported by Eldercare pays special attention to the comfort and care of residents during their end-of-life journeys.

Gabrielle Kropf, a recreation therapist at the Priory, is part of their interdisciplinary end-of-life care committee. They aim to attend to the psychosocial needs of residents during this poignant time of transition and to increase death literacy within the care team.

One of their initiatives is a practice to support residents in their grief. They surveyed residents on how they would like to be remembered after they die. One of the options was to add an “In Memory” frame in each cottage at the Priory’s Heritage Woods campus.

**“Yes, it is a way that I would like to be honoured,”** responded resident Maxine Erikson (pictured here) unequivocally. In fact, 100% of the residents loved the idea of having a dedicated place where they would be remembered in their Priory home.

“We are grateful to Eldercare Foundation for funding the purchase and installation of these In Memory frames,” says Gabrielle. “They allow residents, family members, and even staff a chance to pause and remember their friend who has died.”



When a resident dies, their photo is placed in the frame and a candle is lit, giving space for others to acknowledge their passing and to honour them. The frames not only help staff to support a resident’s grieving journey, but they also help to reassure family members and other residents that after they die, they will indeed be remembered and missed.

## Supporting staff who deliver care



When you support seniors through Eldercare, you also support the incredible staff members who deliver the care. Eldercare has several awards to help further the education of eligible Island Health staff working towards improving care for seniors. These social workers play a vital role in long-term care as part of an interdisciplinary team. We showed our appreciation for them during Social Work Week last month.



# Minimizing loneliness: how your donations help the work of recreation therapists

Staff like Jenna Buckham, a recreation therapist at Aberdeen long-term care, provide a holistic approach to care, looking after residents' social, physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health.

"Our goal is to minimize loneliness through increasing opportunities for social connections and physical activity," she says. "But not all programs and enhancements can be accommodated by our budget."

**"Having additional resources from Eldercare to help us fill gaps, and purchase extras, makes a big difference,"** says Jenna. Here are just some of the ways that your donation to Eldercare can help to improve residents' quality of life:



- ✓ An ad-free Spotify account enables the team to look up a song that really resonates with a resident on demand – as opposed to riffling through an old CD collection. "It's a little thing but it makes our jobs a lot easier," says Jenna.
- ✓ An art group connects residents with local artist from the community who support residents to independently complete art projects. "Gaining that extra skill helps them feel inspired and boosts their confidence."
- ✓ Eldercare purchased an accessible bus that allows for outings in the community. "It takes a lot of time and effort to plan outings but once you get out and you see how much the residents enjoy it, it's worth all of the effort."



Jenna says recreation therapy can sometimes be misunderstood because it's a newer profession. "Some folks think we're just the 'fun people'," she says. "But we're not just planning parties for the sake of planning parties. We help residents build healthy routines and regain a sense of purpose through regular, individually tailored programs and activities."

"There is a lot of behind-the-scenes work with our colleagues to assess a resident's suitability for certain programs, to support accessibility, to help residents connect to their community, and to adjust as needs change – and they change often!"

Jenna treasures the unique opportunity to build deep connections with residents and enrich their quality of life. Thank you for supporting enhancements to the important role of recreation therapy in long-term care.

# Every Gift Makes a Difference



Enclosed is my cheque payable to **Eldercare Foundation**

- ☐ I would like to make a single gift of: \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ I would like to make a monthly gift of: \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Starting on date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Please charge it to my credit card:

Card number: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry: \_\_\_\_\_ CVV: \_\_\_\_\_

Name on card: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## Please send my tax receipt to:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

Province: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Subscribe to Eldercare's monthly eNewsletter\*: \_\_\_\_\_

\*by providing your email above you are giving Eldercare permission to send you email communications.

CSP2025

## Enhancing space and improving safety at the Priory long-term care home

Thanks to donors like you, the walls at the Priory have been spruced up! The bathing room is now less sterile and the beautiful door decals enhance the space and aim to improve safety and reduce attempts to wander, which is a common behaviour for people with dementia. Thank you for improving quality of life!



## Paying Tribute to Someone Special

The individuals listed below have been remembered by friends and loved ones with a donation to Eldercare Foundation, made in memory or in honour, between January 14 and March 13, 2025. Eldercare is grateful to receive such meaningful gifts that, in paying tribute to someone special, help enhance care and quality of life for other seniors in need.

**In Honour:** Linda Jones

**In Memory:** Arlene Galloway Ford, Elizabeth Mill, Elspeth R. Coverett, Gail M. MacDonald, Louise Baril, Low Pong Soen Yin

