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Newsletter September 2015

Dear Friends,

Welcome to our September Newsletter just in time for Spring! This newsletter is full of information and news on what we have been up to recently as well as details of events in the near future. In this issue:

- **Welcome to our new Chairperson**
- Fun at our **Annual Golf Day** and at **The Bagdad Farmers Market**
- **Civvies Day** Fundraiser at Uplands Prep
- We Need to Talk About Death
- **Summer Sundowners** Fundraising Event 29th October 2015
- **Carols by Candlelight** and the **Candle of Compassion** appeal



Please enjoy this newsletter! Your feedback and constructive criticism are always most welcome!

Welcome to our new Chairperson

Hospice White River is delighted to welcome our new Chairperson, Mrs Marina Erasmus.

Marina has agreed to take over the role from Gary Duke, our Chairman for the last 3 years, as Gary is moving back to Johannesburg. We are going to miss Gary, and we wish him and his family all the best in his move back to the 'big smoke'!

Marina is a social worker by trade as well as a qualified life coach. For the past 2 years she has served as director at SANCA Lowveld (South African National Council on alcoholism and drug dependence). SANCA is an out-patient treatment centre. Marina has worked for many years in the field of child protection (Child Welfare White River) as well as working with law offenders at NICRO.

Her relationship with Hospice White River started in 2005, working at Child Welfare as a stakeholder in the community. Marina's interest in bereavement and palliative care stems from personal experience when her own father passed away unexpectedly in 2004. Marina believes that 'by giving and involvement we receive more than just playing it safe and staying in a comfort zone'.

Hospice White River is looking forward to having Marina at the helm of our Governing Board.



Chairperson Mrs Marina Erasmus



We're back online!

Our website has been under construction for a few months and we're now 'up and out there' once again! Our fresh new look is simple and our site easy to navigate. The best part is that we can maintain it ourselves which will save on website update costs.

Our web address remains as www.hospicewr.co.za



Golf Day 2015

Our annual Charity Golf Day held on the 5th August was a great day and we were blessed with the perfect weather for golf. The field of 84 golfers enjoyed the sunshine and many turned out for the occasion wearing a touch of orange.

Once again, we were grateful to the Rotary Club of White River for setting up a stall and selling for donation boerewors rolls to the hungry players.

The golf day was a success due to the organisational skills of Mads Warrener who managed to bring in some lovely prizes and donations from individuals and companies in our community. The prize-giving had many golfers walking away with super prizes. As always Trevor of the White River Country Club was such a help and he and his grounds men went all out to make the day a special one.

In total this event brought in R32 508.60, funds which are hugely appreciated and much needed.

Fun at the Bagdad Farmers Market!

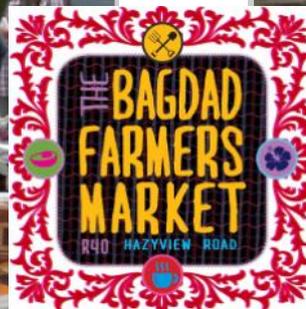
Sue Butowsky and Rowena Kirk, the organisers of the Bagdad Farmers Market invited Hospice White River to be the charity of the day at the market on Saturday 12th September. It was a cold and wet day but that didn't deter market goers and a lot of fun was had engaging with the public and spreading awareness about Hospice White River. Two youngsters were selling iced tea kindly donated by Magnolia Restaurant, and they were so good at their job, engaging with people and persuading them to buy raffle tickets or make a donation to Hospice. It was a day of enjoying the community spirit and we are grateful to Sue and Rowena for inviting us to be there!



Renata our Brand Ambassador, and Andrea our Marketing Coordinator at the market



Macayla and JP sold iced tea and raffle tickets on behalf of Hospice, and what a great job they did!



The staff of Uplands Prep wearing orange in support of HWR



Renata Stewart, our brand ambassador and Hospice fairy for the day!

Civvies Day at Uplands Prep



Renata tells the children all about Hospice

At Uplands Prep the week of September 7th to 11th was a week devoted to raising awareness of Hospice White River. We are indebted to our creative and enthusiastic brand ambassador Renata Stewart for all she did to inform the children about 'what Hospice is'. The younger that children can learn about palliative care and what our organisation does, the greater awareness there will be in the community as children are wonderful conveyors of information. Already we have had some contributions to our Candle of Compassion campaign as a result of this week. In particular Civvies Day, in which everyone wore a splash of orange, raised nearly R8000 for our organisation. Each child dressed in orange and contributed R5 to charity. A huge thank you to Dave Ernstzen, headmaster of Uplands Prep, for agreeing to devote a Civvies Day and in fact a whole week, to Hospice White River.

We are proud of Sr Elsa Swanepoel!

Hospice is proud of our Nursing Services Coordinator, Professional Nurse Elsa Swanepoel.

She is responsible for all our patients and family members on our palliative care programme, with the help and support of our volunteer professional nurses and members of the Inter- and Multidisciplinary Team.

Presently she is busy completing the 'Short Course in Palliative Care' which started in February and ends with her final exam on 23 September. Every second month she has had to attend a week of lectures at the Mpumalanga College of Nursing. The course entailed eighty hours of practical / clinical work which included home base care, oncology, HIV and TB clinics, paediatric and geriatric clinics, stoma and wound care, support groups, in-service training and team building.

All this whilst making sure the 26 patients on our programme have optimal care and support, and her family duties did not waiver. Especially as Elsa is kept busy with 2 young children, their school work and sporting activities. To date we have not had a complaint from her very supportive husband!

Elsa, we think you are amazing and we wish you all the very best with your exam!



We Need to Talk About Death

(adapted from an article which appeared in the Daily Telegraph, 26 July 2015)

It might sound shocking when Sacha Langton-Gilks describes her teenage son David's death as 'absolutely fabulous'. But as his story emerges, it makes perfect sense. David, known as DD, was diagnosed with a brain tumour in 2007 at the age of 11. Over the next five years he endured 20 months of chemotherapy, six weeks of radiotherapy and 11 brain operations; an experience his mother says was a 'living hell' for her son.



16 year old David (DD)

Then in May 2012, the cancer re-appeared for the third time. It was clear DD could not be cured. People advised the family to stay positive and try everything to keep DD alive. However, the teenager and his parents decided to be positive in a different way - by rejecting the powerful medication that might prolong his life by a very short time, and by focusing on enjoying the time he had left.

'He'd already suffered high dose chemotherapy and it hadn't worked,' says his mother. 'Rather than trying to prolong his life with all that entailed, we chose maximum *quality of life* in a shorter time because that was right for our child.'

Mrs Langton-Gilks who lives near Shaftesbury, Dorset, with husband Toby and children Rufus, 17, and Holly, 12, says that without doubt the way her son died 'is going to be the single biggest achievement of my life. Instead of going back and forth to hospital hoping he was going to be cured and putting him through more suffering, we focused on keeping him calm and comfortable at home. He had a good party with all his friends. But mainly we just chilled out and kept things as normal as possible.' David died three months later at the age of 16. His last lucid words were 'I love it here'.

Mrs Langton-Gilks is keen to help other families think positively about end-of-life preparation and in May she gave a powerful talk about her son's death at an event for parents run by the Brain Tumour Charity. She is part of a growing movement of professionals, carers and patients in Britain who say we should approach death the same way as we do that other important and universal rite, birth – with *ante-mortem* classes, groups and end-of-life midwives.

'You wouldn't dream of giving birth without some idea of what to expect and a birth plan,' says Mrs Langton-Gilks. 'Yet we face death with no equivalent preparation. We need to get to the point in society where it is as acceptable to talk about a death plan as it is a birth plan.'

The British government is also keen to get people thinking about the end of life. Its Advance Care Planning initiative, introduced nationwide in 2008, is similar to a birth plan – only it enables people to communicate their dying wishes rather than what they want for the birth. For example, one person might want to refuse treatment and to die at home with only close family nearby and the cat on the bed; another might want to go and watch Manchester United, have lots of visitors and die in a hospice.

US research suggests that making such wishes known may even help us live longer! And in a UK study of almost 1,000 patients in North Somerset, three-quarters of those who had completed advance care plans died in their preferred place, which was usually at home. Just one in 10 died in hospital – this is significantly fewer than the national average of 50 per cent.

Making ones needs and desires known is certainly helpful for all concerned and that entails having a **conversation** about it. This is a conversation which palliative care professionals encourage, support and assist with in their work with patients who are facing important issues at the end of their lives. It seems that as the taboo of talking about death is slowly lifting amidst western society, people are experiencing a gentler and less frightening experience of the dying process. ♥

HOSPICE SUMMER FUNDRAISER

Summer Sundowners

**Join us
for a good cause!**

We invite you to wear a 'touch of orange' in support of Hospice!



Hospice White River

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Date	29 October 2015
Time	17h30 for 18h00
Venue	Nut Grove Manor, White River
Cost	R150pp (includes welcome drink & snacks)
Contact	Brenda Archdeacon 082 820 9855 or E-mail brenda@performancebooster.co.za
Format	Sundowners with live music followed by auction to raise funds for HOSPICE WHITE RIVER
Cash Bar	Profits split with Hospice

Nut Grove Manor

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A note for your diary

It's almost that time of year again!

Hospice White River will once again be bringing to the community a Christmas Carols Concert, in conjunction with the Lowveld Community Orchestra.

Date: Sunday 29th November

Time: 5pm

Venue: Casterbridge Theatre, White River

Tickets at the door: R50 adults, Children under 10 free



29th
November



Carols by Candlelight

Our Candle of Compassion campaign continues and to date we have 82 people contributing; this brings in an average of R8 000 a month for our organisation. This is a big help certainly but it is not nearly enough to cover our running costs of R60 000 per month. We invite people to pledge R50 per month (or more if affordable) to Hospice White River on an ongoing basis. Your contribution will be invaluable to us.

If you are already contributing, our heartfelt thanks!



*Alone we can do so little
..but together we can do so much!*

To pledge your R50 per month please set up a **recurring payment** with your bank, to the following account:

Hospice White River, FNB White River, Branch Code 270 552, Account Number 6202 566 8304

Please use your name in the reference field with the letters CoC so that we may acknowledge you.

NB Your donation is tax deductible. Every end of the financial tax year you will be issued with a tax receipt



As always, our gratitude to all those people within the community who continue to support us, to help us, and to offer their expertise. Whether you be an individual, a school, a community organisation, or a company we couldn't do our work without your wonderful generosity and support.

A big THANK YOU to all of you.

Until next time, warmest regards

All at Hospice White River