HOPE & COPE
Support for every age and every stage of cancer
Jewish General Hospital

A VOLUNTEER SUPPORT SYSTEM FOR CANCER PATIENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES MADE POSSIBLE THROUGH THE GENEROSITY OF DONORS

Peer Mentoring · Professional Consultation · Support Groups · Resource Centre · Patient Education · Library · Palliative Care

Celebration and Transition

Volunteer Reception celebrates 10 years of cancer wellness and 36 years of Hope & Cope



Two-thousand-and-seventeen was a very special year as we celebrated both the 36th anniversary of Hope & Cope and the 10th anniversary of our Cancer Wellness Centre. In honour of these milestones, Hope & Cope held a special Volunteer Reception at the Shaar Hashomayim synagogue on June 21st, treating 175 volunteers to an elegant buffet dinner, music, and of course, volunteer recognition.

Masterfully emceed by Hope & Cope Board member Eden Polansky, the evening also featured a warm welcome and heartfelt praise for volunteers by Co-Chairs Marlene and Joel King, a trip down memory lane by Executive Director Suzanne O'Brien, and an inspiring address by our illustrious Founder, Sheila Kussner.

The spotlight of the evening was on the instrumental contributions of volunteers to Hope & Cope's success, locally, nationally and internationally. This was reinforced by the long service recognition ceremony, where volunteers were presented with certificates for 5 to 35 years of service. Jeannette Valmont received a standing ovation as she collected her 35-year certificate, with Barbara Klineberg acknowledged for her 30 years, while the trio of Harriet Apple Cymbalista, Joan Michetti and Sheila Pearl proudly celebrated 25 years of service.

A highlight of the evening was the presentation of specially designed 10:36 awards recognizing program leadership, innovation and staying power. Winners were both surprised and delighted by these awards, which were kept secret until the reception. Those not in attendance received their awards at a later date. For example, Yvon Patry, founder of the Men's Club, was fêted by grateful members of the club at their annual barbecue, held on the Wellness Centre lawn in mid-July.

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Congratulations to all the 10:36 award winners!

- **Elaine Dubrovsky** and **Joanne Litvack** – Program Leadership, Art, for developing and sustaining the Art program at the Hope & Cope Cancer Wellness Centre
- **Michele Hekimi** and **Ginette Quintal Solomon** – Program Leadership, Choir, for foundational roles in establishing the Voices of Hope Choir
- **Alice Lehrer** – Program Leadership, Mourning Walk, for innovation in grief support
- **Kerry Kaufman-Paperman** – Program Leadership, Kerry's Kitchen/En famille, for helping families in treatment with home cooked meals and for engaging the community in the En Famille program
- **Julie Szasz** and **Aleksey Cameron** – Program Leadership, Young Adult Cooking Club, for making the cooking club the heart of the CancerFightClub community
- **Joan Michetti** – Program Leadership, Look Good, Feel Better, for making Look Good, Feel Better a core program at Hope & Cope
- **Mariam Bowen** and **Darline Rosenhek** – Versatility Award for leadership in multiple projects over many years
- **Chris Latchem** – Committee's Choice Award for single-handedly maintaining the patients and caregiver support group program
- **Simone Naccache** – Committee's Choice Award for grief support over many years
- **Yvon Patry** – Program Leadership, Men's Club, for the development and leadership of the Men's Club
- **Jean Remmer** – Program Leadership, Research, for making research a core part of Hope & Cope
- **Eric Gralnick** – Inspiration Award for "When Daddy Got Sick", the book and story which inspired the En Famille program
- **Laurie Galletti Greenspoon** and **Susan Toth**, Inspiration Award, for their foundational role and ongoing support of Breast Friends

— Gayle A. Shinder, Ph.D



35 years – Jeannette Valmont



30 years – Barbara Klineberg



25 years – Sheila Pearl, Harriet Apple Cymbalista, Joan Michetti



20 years – Front row: Sarah Victor, Deena Garfinkle, Diane Guerrera, Sandy Schreter. Back row: Sal Guerrera, Joey Basmaji, Sylvia Vogel, Leon Carson, Francine Cherry, Suzanne O'Brien



15 years – Mariam Bowen, Bernie Aronson, Marianne Pham, Ida Rouben



10 years – Front row: Brenda Gewurz, Edith Werk, Marlene King, Joel King, Bryna Hersh, Frances Roth, Bobbie Schreter. Back row: Miriam Schuster, Issie Malamud, Ginette Quintal Solomon, Gayle Shinder, Susan Raymer, Aria Schifman



5 years – Front row, left to right: Nadia William Gad, Elaine Herold, Rose Soroka, Kerry Kaufman Paperman, Mackenzie Fleetham, Michael Oleschuk. Back row: Celeste Alberga, Michelle Jacques, Lillian Vineberg, Carmen Loiselle, Lisa Levett, Archie Fineberg

Celebrating the past with an eye toward the future

Nearly 1 in 2 Canadians is expected to be diagnosed with cancer in their lifetime

% of Canadians who survived cancer in the 1940s = 25%

% of Canadians who survived cancer in 2017 = 60%

The year 2017 was one of celebration as we marked two major milestones in Hope & Cope's history: the 10th anniversary of our Cancer Wellness Centre and 36 years of Hope & Cope. As you will see within the pages of this 18-month review, we hosted a wide variety of celebratory events, all of which combined fun with nostalgia, and several of which included an educational and/or fundraising component.

Much has changed since Hope & Cope first opened its doors in 1981. Yet the core of our mission has remained unchanged: to help people cope with cancer. As our Founder Sheila Kussner noted in June 2017 when she accepted a community service award from Federation CJA, "Hope & Cope helps people overcome adversity by providing them with the guidance, the programs, the tools and the knowledge to live fully and well, with and beyond cancer. There is no better feeling than knowing that we put people on the right path, that we ease their burdens, that we are a lifeline, particularly for those who are isolated and alone… In 36 years, we have travelled very far. We went from a time when the word cancer was barely spoken in public to a time when cancer is considered a word, not a sentence; a time when living well with cancer is a perfectly reasonable and attainable goal. Hope & Cope played a decisive role in this transformation."

Proud of our past, we remain fully grounded in the present and keenly aware that much work remains to be done. As the above statistics show, while close to half of all Canadians will be diagnosed with cancer, the 5-year survival rate for many cancers has increased dramatically due to better screening, earlier diagnosis and more effective treatments. This makes the need for Hope & Cope's innovative services, particularly around survivorship and wellness programming, more timely and relevant than ever before.

Two-thousand-and-eighteen has been a year of leadership transition as Suzanne O'Brien retired after 21 years with Hope & Cope, the past 15 as Executive Director, and we welcomed our new Executive Director, Danielle Leggett. It is to our good fortune that Suzanne will remain on board – literally! She has assumed the role of Chair of Hope & Cope's Executive Advisory Board, where she will continue to work closely with our Founder, Sheila Kussner, and a group of committed leaders who have Hope & Cope's best interests at heart.

As a grassroots organization, Hope & Cope continues to rely on the passionate commitment and enthusiasm of our volunteers, staff, lay leaders and donors who come together with one goal in mind: to alleviate the burden of cancer in our community. We invite you to join us as we help shape the future of compassionate cancer care while writing the next chapter of Hope & Cope's history.

In 36 years, we have travelled very far. We went from a time when the word cancer was barely spoken in public to a time when living well with cancer is a perfectly reasonable and attainable goal.

1,424
new referrals to Hope & Cope in 2017



Danielle Leggett brings passion and purpose to her new role as Executive Director

In its 37-year history, Hope & Cope has been blessed with exceptional leadership both at the level of the Board and the administration. This tradition continues with the appointment of Danielle Leggett as Executive Director, who joined our team on May 22, 2018.

What motivated you to apply for this position?

After over 20 years working in the field of human resources, I was ready for a change. In recent years, I have been doing increasing work in the not-for-profit sector and found the experience to be very fulfilling on so many levels. Every day, I come into work grateful for the opportunity to use my skills and experience in a way that will ultimately have a positive impact on patients and families affected by cancer.

What was your impression of Hope & Cope before you joined? How did that impression change, if at all, once you took over the position?

I knew right out of the gate that I was joining a winning team! Hope & Cope has an outstanding reputation. This reputation reaches well beyond the patients and families who have benefitted from its services. Within the not-for-profit sector and among cancer related agencies, Hope & Cope is widely respected for setting high standards and instituting best practices that are backed by research. After meeting with dozens and dozens of people who make up this incredible organization, it quickly became clear that everyone, from volunteers to donors to lay leaders and staff, is 100% committed to the mission and vision put forward 37 years ago: to create and sustain a volunteer-led, evidence-based, professionally managed organization that provides support for cancer patients and their caregivers. Many organizations, for profit or not, try in vain to align their teams and stakeholders to a common vision – they could certainly learn from Hope & Cope!

What key strengths, experience and lessons learned do you bring to Hope & Cope?

I truly believe that any organization's most important asset is its people – it's really the foundation on which success is built. This is particularly true in the not-for-profit sector. To be a successful leader, you have to understand what makes your teams happy, what makes them excited to come to work every day. I bring a professional background of motivating people to perform at their best with a focus on collaboration, discipline, evaluation and continuous improvement. I also bring my personal values – integrity, compassion, honesty, courage and friendship – these traits are at my core. I have found that these are also traits that define Hope & Cope, so I believe this is a great fit!

What are your goals for the next 12-18 months?

I want to continue meeting and getting to know as many Hope & Cope volunteers, donors and other stakeholders as possible. I am excited to grow and evolve the skills and capabilities of our team of volunteers and staff so that, together, we can align our services with the needs of the community, continue developing and offering best-in-class programs, and enhance our external visibility, all while ensuring that we remain financially viable. As an organization that relies entirely on donor support, we owe it to our donors and the community we serve to be fiscally responsible and accountable for the choices we make. Much as we would like to be all things to all people, this isn't realistic or feasible.

What brings you joy and what do you like to do in your spare time?

Life is good – there are so many things big and small that bring me pleasure. My family (including my husband, my 11 year-old son, my dog and two cats), a sunny morning, smiles, laughter, the beach, a long bike ride, good food and wine, Montreal in the summer, the sense of fulfillment when I cross something off my "to-do" list. I love being active outdoors in all seasons – running, biking, gardening, skiing, hiking. And it's even better when I can do any or all of these things with my family.

Do you have a favourite expression or quote that best defines your philosophy and your way of being in the world?

Carpe Diem – seize the day! Ever since I heard Robin Williams say those words with such conviction in the movie Dead Poets' Society, I have tried to live by this motto. We don't know what the future holds, so we need to make the most of what we have today. In essence, this wraps up how we started this discussion with what motivated me to apply – I seized the day and it paid off!



Message from the Chair

The theme of "Celebration and Transition" which runs throughout this issue of our annual review echoes my own professional and personal journey these past 18 months. It was a journey of planning for my successor as Executive Director and my transition to the role of Chair of the Board of Directors. It was a journey of reflection, celebration, gratitude and of enormous optimism for the future of Hope & Cope – an organization that has become so much a part of me. I welcome Danielle Leggett as our new Executive Director and look forward to working with her.

My 21 years at Hope & Cope have seen great change. I have been proud and privileged to be part of the amazing growth of Hope & Cope and its stellar reputation as a leader in peer-based support for those living with cancer. Last year we celebrated two important milestones – 10 years of the Hope & Cope Cancer Wellness Centre and 36 years of Hope & Cope as a community organization. These two milestones represent the tens of thousands of people we have helped over the years, the stories we have heard, the lives we have impacted, the laughs, tears, and sheer exuberance for life we have witnessed as people seek to live well with a life-threatening illness.

I have been blessed to work with talented and committed volunteers and colleagues who have challenged me, motivated and inspired me and worked creatively with me to create programs of excellence. Hope & Cope is like a finely tuned orchestra of individual talents and strengths. Each of my colleagues is a soloist in his or her own right, and this newsletter shines light on some of those individual talents and projects. But the real magic of Hope & Cope is when we all work and play together to help people cope with cancer. That is our mission. It is clear. It is simple. It permeates everything we do and when we do it right, it is total magic!

There are not enough words to thank you all, but please know you will always hold a special place in my heart. I am humbled by what I have learned from each of you.

I thank everyone for their kind wishes on my retirement as Executive Director and for their pledge of support in my new role as Chair. I look forward to working closely with our Founder, my friend and mentor, Sheila Kussner, our past Chairs, Lillian Vineberg, Marlene and Joel King, our Board members, Past Presidents, Trustees and friends. This is a new chapter for me and for Hope & Cope. Let the fun begin!

With love and thanks,
Suzanne

Triple crown for Sheila Kussner

It was an exciting spring for Hope & Cope's dynamic founder, Sheila Kussner, who added two more medals to her collection, which includes the Order of Canada and the Ordre national du Québec.

On May 17, 2017, Sheila was appointed Commander of the Order of Montreal – the highest rank within the Order. At the official ceremony, which took place at City Hall as part of the city's 375th anniversary celebrations, Mrs. Kussner was lauded for profoundly shaping the development of cancer care in Montreal and beyond.



Great Montrealers Aldo Bensadoun (left) and Alvin Segal (right), are welcomed to the Order of Montreal along with Sheila Kussner, who was appointed Commander of the Order of Montreal in May 2017.

"I am deeply touched by this wonderful honour," Sheila said, when informed of the award. "I've been privileged to call Montreal home all these years. It's a city with character, charm and heart and it's been the perfect place to create and sustain a compassionate community of cancer survivors from all walks of life."

"Sheila embodies courage, compassion, commitment and caring," noted Hope & Cope Co-Chair Marlene King when the Order of Montreal recipients were announced. Added Co-Chair Joel King, "Sheila is a tenacious, passionate and tireless fundraiser, an unbelievably generous human being, a role model and an inspiration."

Less than a month later, in June 2017, Mrs. Kussner was honoured by Federation CJA with the RBC Tikun Olam Award for Service to the Broader Community. The award was presented during Federation CJA's very special centennial year. Upon receiving this award, Mrs. Kussner expressed her admiration for the thousands of volunteers, lay leaders and advisors who have contributed so much over the years to the vitality of Montreal's Jewish community.

Reflecting on the lessons learned throughout her lifetime as an advocate for cancer patients, Mrs. Kussner concluded, "There is no greater satisfaction than seeing the transformation that occurs when patients become survivors, and when those survivors pay it forward by becoming volunteers."



Ida Teoli presents an update on volunteer engagement at the volunteer reception in June 2017.

Having their say:

Volunteer engagement process well under way at Hope & Cope

385 service volunteers

55 fundraising volunteers

48 governance volunteers

Sharing the wisdom of the lived experience is at the heart of Hope & Cope's philosophy. In fact, from the moment it was founded in 1981 by consummate volunteer and patient advocate, Sheila Kussner, Hope & Cope has always recognized, appreciated and validated the outstanding contributions of its dynamic volunteers.

As part of a comprehensive strategic review undertaken in 2016, Hope & Cope's Executive Advisory Board approved the establishment of a Volunteer Engagement Steering Committee. Chaired by Ida Teoli, this committee consists of Suzanne O'Brien and Hinda Goodman as well as volunteers: Aleksey Cameron, Charlene Freger, Sylvie Grégoire, Sonia Hazan, Barbara Hops, Fran Roth and Jeannette Valmont. Their mandate was to evaluate the volunteer experience and make recommendations for improved volunteer management and engagement.

As a first step, a detailed volunteer satisfaction questionnaire was developed with the assistance of the Jewish General Hospital's Quality Program, which helped to manage the process and to compile and analyze the results. The survey was sent out to 339 volunteers in March 2017. A total of 224 completed surveys were returned, representing a remarkable 66% response rate. "This high response rate speaks to the commitment of Hope & Cope volunteers," noted Ida Teoli in a presentation to the volunteer body last June.

In addition to basic demographic information, the survey looked at specific areas such as motivation for volunteering, levels of satisfaction with training, feedback, recognition and communication. Volunteers also were asked to rate their knowledge of Hope & Cope and their overall satisfaction with their volunteer experience. Ninety-four percent said they felt supported by Hope & Cope and 90% felt like valued members of the team. A whopping 97% indicated a desire to continue volunteering.

While the responses were positive overall, the survey identified areas where we can be even better. Believing that solutions should come from the volunteers themselves, the Steering Committee invited all volunteers to a Town Hall on September 17, 2017, at Hope & Cope's Cancer Wellness Centre. Twenty-five volunteers joined forces for a classic Montreal breakfast of bagels and coffee, and tackled the following questions:

- What type of training would be useful and how can more volunteers be encouraged to attend?
- What is the best way for Hope & Cope to demonstrate appreciation and recognize volunteers for their efforts?
- What is the best way to provide feedback?
- What are the most effective ways to communicate with volunteers and keep them informed?
- And, finally, how can we do a better job of matching volunteers' specific skills with the needs of the organization?

As a result of their input, three sub-committees have been established: volunteer recognition, volunteer training and volunteer communications. Each committee attracted volunteers who have been meeting over the past several months to make recommendations for the development and implementation of concrete action plans. At the same time, the Steering Committee is finalizing a governance framework that will help the organization continue to identify, mentor and encourage volunteer leadership.

All of these recommendations will form the basis of a volunteer management strategic plan to be presented to the Executive Advisory Board for approval.

Concludes Ida Teoli, "The input of volunteers is crucial to this entire process. Ultimately, our goal is to create a well thought-out plan that will bring out the best in our volunteers and deepen their connection and commitment to Hope & Cope."

45% of our volunteers have been active for 6+ years

67% are bilingual (English/French)

Innovative Breast & Bone Health Program shares tools through newly developed web site

Clinical care for breast cancer patients has improved dramatically over the years. Unfortunately, breast cancer treatment can put women at much higher risk of developing osteoporosis – bone loss that can lead to pain, fractures and dramatically reduced quality of life.

However, with its focus on living well through all stages of cancer, its active research program and its commitment to promoting and teaching lifestyle modifications, Hope & Cope was uniquely positioned to address this challenge. Thanks to the generous financial support of the Quebec Breast Cancer Foundation (QBCF), we developed and implemented an innovative Breast & Bone Health Program over a three-year period (2014-2017).



Marize Ibrahim and Garnett Lau provide information about the Breast & Bone Health program to participants in the CIBC Run for the Cure.

Under the supervision of Dr. Carmen Loiselle, Scientific Director for Hope & Cope, nurse Garnet Lau and physiotherapist Marize Ibrahim developed a comprehensive toolkit which they provided to 430 women who participated in the clinical phase of the program. Hope & Cope's ActivOnco team provided such unique interventions as a tailored Osteoporosis Prevention/Management Home Exercise Plan and pre-surgical teaching sessions for women awaiting breast cancer surgery. Patients received detailed information on risk assessment, bone-strengthening exercises, lists of calcium-rich foods, visual aids, a home safety checklist to reduce the risk of falls, and an action plan to help manage bone health during and after breast cancer treatment.



Exercise Coordinator Anouline Sinthara-phone demonstrates the correct way to perform exercises for optimum bone health.

All of these tools – and more – can be accessed through a newly created, user-friendly, attractive, bilingual web site called Breast and Bone Health. (**breastandbonehealth.ca**)

"One of our key goals was to raise awareness not just among patients, but also among health care professionals," states Dr. Loiselle. In addition to teaching sessions for patients, the team presented the Breast and Bone Health Program at several professional conferences including Conférence nationale pour vaincre le cancer (Montreal, 2015), Journée de la recherche en sciences infirmières Chantal-Caron de l'Université de Sherbrooke (2014), and the Canadian Association of Nurses in Oncology (Toronto, 2015). Currently, three manuscripts describing different aspects of the program are in progress and will be submitted for publication in peer-reviewed scientific journals.

"We are proud of our partnership with Hope & Cope and admire their community engagement. Thanks to the admirable work of Dr. Loiselle and her team, the Breast and Bone Health Program sensitized the health care team to the potential side effects of treatment and developed effective tools for the diagnosis, prevention and management of the risks of fracture due to bone fragility in women treated for breast cancer. With the creation of this new web site, these tools are now available to all women in Quebec."

— Nathalie Tremblay, MBA
Chief Executive Officer
Quebec Breast Cancer Foundation

430
women benefitted directly from the clinical phase of the Breast & Bone Health Program

Praise, awards and celebration at Annual General Meeting



On October 3, 2017, Board members, trustees, donors, volunteers and staff gathered at the Wellness Centre for an Annual General Meeting that showcased the exceptional dedication and leadership at the heart of our organization.

Along with reports highlighting the achievements of the previous year and a frank discussion of the challenges ahead, the event featured a tribute to outgoing chairs Marlene and Joel King for their extraordinary leadership, the presentation of the Distinguished Leadership Award to Ida Teoli, and an emotional farewell to outgoing Executive Director Suzanne O'Brien, who was presented with the coveted Founder's Award.

On behalf of everyone at Hope & Cope, Sheila Kussner thanked Marlene and Joel for "bringing heart to our mission" with their unique combination of leadership, problem-solving and fundraising skills as well as their grace, flexibility and good humour.

The Distinguished Leadership Award is presented annually to a volunteer who has shown remarkable dedication, commitment, initiative and leadership to Hope & Cope in multiple roles over a period of several years. Ida, who started out in 2008 as a member of the Main Office Team, has also served as a peer mentor and a member of the oncology clinic team. Where she really shone, however, was in her three-year tenure as President of Hope & Cope and her superb leadership of our Volunteer Engagement Steering Committee.

The Founder's Award is not necessarily given each year but only when there is a suitable candidate. Suzanne was presented with this award in recognition of her inspirational leadership, innovative and impactful programming and passionate commitment to Hope & Cope's mission during her 14-year tenure as Executive Director. The staff of Hope & Cope were honoured to participate in the presentation of this award, holding up cards with 12 words that best defined Suzanne's character and personality: advocate, compassionate, calm, available, fearless, articulate, dedicated, original, tireless, tactful, creative, and PERFECT.

In her last report as Executive Director, Suzanne reflected on the passion, commitment and support of volunteers,



Suzanne O'Brien (seated, right), displays the Founder's Award in the presence of (left to right) Hinda Goodman, Marlene King, Sheila Kussner and Joel King.



Marlene and Joel King present the Distinguished Leadership Award to Ida Teoli.

fundraisers, lay leaders and staff, recalling with fondness the fabulous fundraisers she attended and helped to plan, Survivorship Day events, public lectures, volunteer orientation sessions, governance meetings and open houses. She expressed her gratitude at being witness to the "countless ways staff and volunteers have rallied around each other in times of sickness and loss." As well, she expressed her appreciation to the staff of Hope & Cope who made coming in to work each day a joy, and thanked the Board, our Past Presidents, Team Leaders and donors for stepping up and giving back. She announced that while she was retiring from her position as Executive Director, she was eager to transition into her new role as Chair and thrilled to be working closely with her mentor and inspiration, Sheila Kussner.

In her closing remarks, Sheila referred to the Invictus Games, Latin for unconquered. Founded by Prince Harry after his two tours of duty in Afghanistan, the games feature athletes who were wounded in combat and who overcame tremendous challenges not just to compete in the Games, but also to reclaim their lives.

"**Unconquered** is a good word to describe the people we serve and the families we support at every age and every stage of cancer. They come to us with their own personal scars and wounds, trusting that our compassionate, cancer-experienced volunteers will help them to feel whole again. **Unconquered** is also a good metaphor for Hope & Cope. Despite the challenges we have faced these past 36 years, despite the obstacles in our path today, we look forward to our future, confident that we will remain undaunted and **unconquered**."

Generating and sharing knowledge

It was a busy year for Hope & Cope's research division with numerous conference presentations and the publication of three papers in peer reviewed scientific journals. Our three-year Breast and Bone Health research project, funded by the Quebec Breast Cancer Foundation, resulted in a model of care that is accessible to all through a recently launched web site (see story, page 7).

Volunteer based e-distress screening and support system for patients with cancer: an implementation study

Hope & Cope volunteers played a key role in a unique pilot study by Dr. Carmen Loiselle's research group. This study examined patients' informational needs and preferences, how best to meet these needs and the impact that receiving timely information had on patients' distress levels. Topics of concern included fatigue, worrying about the future, exercise, and how cancer was affecting their family and friends.

The study relied heavily on our volunteers who helped recruit participants and provided supportive follow-up phone calls to patients who requested this form of support. Results indicated that patients who requested and received information on the topics they identified as important to them and who received support calls experienced less distress than patients who did not request support.

Publications

Dalzell, M.A., Smirnow, N., Sateren, W., Sintharaphone, A., Ibrahim, M., Mastroianni, L., Vales Zambrano, L.D., and O'Brien, S. "Rehabilitation and exercise oncology program: translating research into a model of care." Current Oncology 24, no. 3 (2017): e191.

Ibrahim, M., Muanza, T., Smirnow, N., Sateren, W., Fournier, B., Dalzell, M.A. "A Pilot Randomized Controlled Trial on the Effects of a Progressive Exercise Program on the Range of Motion and Upper Extremity Grip Strength in Young Adults With Breast Cancer." Clinical breast cancer (2017).

Ibrahim, M., Muanza, T., Smirnow, N., Sateren, W., Fournier, B., Kavan, P., Palumbo, M., Dalfen, R., and Dalzell, M.A. "Time course of upper limb function and return-to-work post-radiotherapy in young adults with breast cancer: a pilot randomized control trial on effects of targeted exercise program." Journal of Cancer Survivorship (2017): 1-9.

Presentations

Blondin, Sophie. Moderated presentations and round table at the Quebec Breast Cancer Foundation's Annual Forum, May 2018, Palais des congrès de Montréal.

Szasz, Julie. KIDSGRIEF.ca / DeuilDesEnfants.ca : modules de formation en ligne pour les adultes qui doivent accompagner des enfants endeuillés, Association Québécoise des soins palliatifs, May 2018.

Other

Goodman, Hinda, Hanfling, Rifka, Lipkus, Sandy. Reviewed abstracts and submissions to the 22nd International Congress on Palliative Care, scheduled for October 2-5, 2018, Montreal.

KidsGrief.ca
helps caregivers support children through their grief

For many of us in western societies, death and dying are taboo subjects. Imagine, then, how difficult it is to help children deal with their grief when a close friend or family member dies. This task is now much less daunting thanks to a unique web site called **KidsGrief.ca**

The site, developed by Canadian Virtual Hospice with funding from Hope & Cope and the Canadian Internet Registration Authority, is a free, bilingual (English and French) interactive, on-line learning platform providing practical strategies, talking points and video clips of families sharing their personal stories. Geared towards parents, guardians, caregivers, teachers and health providers, the site addresses a wide variety of topics such as how to recognize the common signs of children's grief, how to start conversations about a serious illness, dying and death, which words and phrases to use, how to prepare kids for funerals, memorials and other rituals, and when to seek additional assistance.



A hug goes a long way in helping children cope with grief.

"Kids do best in families where there is open, honest communication," explained Andrea Warnick, a children's grief counsellor and the project's co-leader, who spoke at a press conference launching the site on November 21, 2017, at Manor Park Elementary School in Ottawa. The date was chosen to coincide with Canada's First National Bereavement Day. The roster of speakers included Suzanne O'Brien, Executive Director of Hope & Cope; the Honourable Sharon Carstairs, former government minister with special responsibility for palliative care; Shelly Cory, Executive Director of Virtual Hospice; 10-year-old Mae-Doull Hoffman, whose younger sister, Phoebe Rose, died two years earlier of cancer, and David Stark, whose wife was killed by a distracted driver.

"Supporting KidsGrief.ca was a natural fit for Hope & Cope, which is committed to helping people cope with every stage of cancer," noted Suzanne O'Brien. She told the assembled crowd that "so many of our patients live with metastatic illness – the biggest lesson is that we need to do more when it comes to providing grief support." Funding generously provided to Hope & Cope by The Azrieli Foundation was used to translate all of the site's content into French. Sandy Lipkus, Coordinator of Hope &


Suzanne O'Brien, Sandy Lipkus and Andrea Warnick celebrate the launch of the Kidsgrief web site.

Cope's En famille program, reviewed the modules, making suggestions and recommendations for improvement, and identified French-speaking patients willing to share their stories on video. As Suzanne observed, "Illness knows no language and neither does grief."

As David Stark explained, the most difficult thing he ever had to do was to tell his three children, then aged 11, 9 and 6, that their mother, who had gone out to walk the family dog, was dead. Lost in the throes of his own grief, in agony and in shock, unable to focus or to concentrate, he found it impossible to read long articles or books. His story is featured in one of the videos. "I am really excited about this project, especially the videos, which are a wonderful resource, easily digested, even at the most vulnerable hours in the middle of the night when intense grief keeps you awake."

Diagnosed with cancer as a baby, Phoebe died when she was five years old, her sister Mae-Doull by her side. "Phoebe was my best friend," said Mae-Doull. "My family has been very sad. We do golf tournaments and I organize a bake sale every year at Manor Park School," she explained. These rituals help keep Phoebe's memory alive, and the support and compassion from the school community has been exceptional.

The press conference concluded with the launch of the Hugs for Kids memory scarves – knitted scarves designed as a symbolic hug, with hands that reach down the back. Patterns can be accessed here:
ravelry.com/patterns/library/warm-memories-scarf

Annual Cancer Survivorship Day 2017

Honouring the memory of Jessica Miller with an informative and entertaining lecture by Dr. Joe Schwarcz



Dr. Joe Schwarcz

Hope & Cope Annual Cancer Survivorship Day, on June 12th, paid homage to Jessica Miller, who passed away on June 21, 2016. The driving force behind the Annual Cancer Survivorship Day for 29 years, Jessica was also one of Hope & Cope's original volunteers, the founder of the lending library and a Past President. In her opening remarks, Barbara Hops, the Education team leader, lauded Jessica as a mentor, guide and teacher to patients, staff and volunteers, and a champion for accessing information. Jessica's son, Farrel, talked about his mother's commitment to Hope & Cope and how she found it most rewarding to develop relationships with patients. "She always made a conscious decision to focus on the positive," he said.

Hope & Cope's Past President and volunteer Jeanette Valmont introduced the guest speaker, Dr. Joe Schwarcz, Professor in the Department of Chemistry at McGill University and Director of the Office for Science and Society. Dr. Schwarcz's newspaper columns, radio shows, blogs and books help demystify science and separate sense from nonsense in science and health. His presentation, entitled "Separating fact from fiction: cancer cures and treatments", shone light on the long history of cancer cure quackery.

Dr. Schwarcz stated emphatically that he did not believe in homeopathy and proceeded to outline homeopathic treatments touted as cures for cancer without any scientific evidence backing up those claims. He named the Hoxsey cancer treatment – herbal treatments he called the cure in a bottle. Harry Hoxsey opened clinics all over the United States. Despite the fact that his treatment is now known not to cure cancer, Hoxsey clinics still exist. Dr. Max Gerson offered a special detoxification diet of juice and pills with coffee enemas as part of the regimen. The notion that this is a successful therapy is based on anecdotes and selective follow-up rather than on scientific studies. Closer to home, Canadian Renée Caisse developed Essiac tea (her name spelled backwards) as a cure for cancer. Although there is no scientific basis for this claim, Essiac is still sold in stores. Finally, there is John of God, a Brazilian faith healer, who claims that he can cure cancer by pushing surgical forceps up the nose!

On a positive note, Dr. Schwarcz introduced the audience to the Blushwood plant whose berries may be useful in the treatment of cancers. There has been success in animal studies for various types of cancers and clinical trials are currently underway, with early results looking promising. However, Dr. Schwarcz cautioned the audience that simply ingesting extracts of the berries would not be very helpful. While many pharmaceuticals are derived from plants, it is a complex process to extract, purify and manufacture the actual component in the plant that is responsible for its beneficial effect.

In closing, Dr. Schwarcz advised the audience that there will be no single breakthrough to cure cancer as science progresses in small cumulative steps rather than in leaps and bounds. Many books pedal quack treatments for cancer, and in the words of Benjamin Franklin, "Quacks are the greatest liars in the world – except their patients."

Hope & Cope's Executive Director, Suzanne O'Brien, thanked Dr. Schwarcz, telling the audience, "The lecture you just heard speaks to Jessica Miller's philosophy which was to encourage people to challenge what they hear, ask questions, read and believe in facts."

— Gayle A. Shinder, PhD



Jessica Miller's family proudly attends the Survivorship Day celebration, left to right: Samantha Adessky, Lisa Singer Miller, Farrel Miller, Mark Adessky, Sheryl Miller Adessky, Sean Adessky.

250
people attended Hope & Cope's Cancer Survivorship Day event in 2017

31
the number of years we have hosted this annual event

Twenty-one years of principled leadership

– Suzanne O'Brien retires as Executive Director and transitions into new role as Chair of Hope & Cope

In reflecting on her 21-year association with Hope & Cope – 15 as Executive Director – Suzanne O'Brien attributes the organization's phenomenal growth and development to one of its core values: listening. "What makes our community so special is that everyone has a voice. Everyone is heard," she says emphatically. "We listen to the needs of our patients and their families, to our volunteers, our donors, our colleagues. And then we develop programs that are responsive, relevant, timely and sustainable."



The release of monarch butterflies was one of the highlights at the official opening of the Hope & Cope Cancer Wellness Centre in 2007. Left to right: Suzanne O'Brien, Sheila Kussner, Dr. Gerald Batist, Director of the Segal Cancer Centre, Joëlle Berdugo Adler, Principal Benefactor, Henri Elbaz, Executive Director of the Jewish General Hospital.

In a career filled with many highlights and achievements, Suzanne is particularly proud of Hope & Cope's focus on survivorship-oriented programs for patients with metastatic illness. These include Breast Friends, a support group for women with metastatic breast cancer. Launched 16 years ago, it is the longest continuous support group of its kind in Canada. "Thanks to this group, so many women have learned to live well despite the uncertainty and the side effects and the challenges that come with managing metastatic illness," explains Suzanne. The success of this group became the model for Hope & Cope's mini-retreats for young adults with metastatic cancer – another Canadian first. "We are there at every stage – we hold people's hands all the way through," she notes.

Suzanne's tenure as Executive Director has been defined by Hope & Cope's determination to meet the needs of young adults (18-39) with cancer – a vulnerable, often neglected demographic with unique challenges. Over a period of 30-plus years, our young adult program – now called CancerFightClub – has undergone dramatic transformation, changing with the times and incorporating new methods of connection and communication to create a tight-knit, supportive community that is locally based, yet has a broad reach.

In 1998, in conjunction with the establishment of the Palliative Care Unit at the Jewish General Hospital, Suzanne oversaw the recruitment, training, support and continuing education of Hope & Cope's specialized team of Palliative Care volunteers. Subsequently, Hope & Cope was invited to join the McGill Council on Palliative Care (which Suzanne now Co-Chairs) and Suzanne was invited to join a Canadian Task Force developing standards for volunteers in Palliative Care. Suzanne has been an invited speaker at national and international conferences and Hope & Cope is well positioned as a leader in volunteer training and management because of her work in this area.

Another milestone occurred in 2007, when Hope & Cope opened Quebec's first hospital-affiliated Cancer Wellness Centre. Greeted with great fanfare, the opening was the culmination of countless hours working with community members, donors – including Joëlle Berdugo Adler and the Board of Gilda's Club – architects, contractors and interior designers to create this beautiful, warm and welcoming facility that offers a home-like environment for cancer survivors and their caregivers. "Hope & Cope's Cancer Wellness Centre is a magical place where we help empower patients to live well with cancer in mind, body and spirit," says Suzanne.

The expansion of Hope & Cope's formal research division is yet another source of pride. As Suzanne points out, the establishment of the Christine and Herschel Victor Hope & Cope Chair in Psychosocial Oncology at McGill University – the first of its kind in Quebec – resulted in new partnerships as well as multiple research grants and publications in peer reviewed journals. Through the creation of ActivOnco, our novel approach to cancer exercise and rehabilitation, and the Breast & Bone Health project for breast cancer survivors, we have had a direct and lasting impact on patient care, not just at Hope & Cope, but also throughout the province and beyond. "I'm very proud of the fact that we continue to generate new knowledge and to share it widely," she notes.

As an organization that does not receive funding from the government, Hope & Cope has always relied on the generosity of Montrealers. The growth of "third-party"



At the reception announcing the establishment of the Christine and Herschel Victor Hope & Cope Chair in Psychosocial Oncology at McGill University, left to right: Suzanne O'Brien, Dr. Jimmie Holland, Sheila Kussner, Christine and Herschel Victor.

fundraising, exemplified by events such as the Linda Saab Golf Tournament, which had an impressive 25-year run, the Dorval, Sources and St-Henri Auto Parts Walk-a-thon (now in its 11th year), the Antony Proteau Fund, Hope for Life, Un pas pour la vie and the Bridge Luncheon, has had a major impact on our bottom line. "We are so grateful to the dynamos behind these events. By giving back and championing our cause, they raise funds and awareness, allowing us to reach out to even more people who may one day require our services. Their impact cannot be overstated and we are proud to consider them a part of our Hope & Cope family," she concludes.

There is a theme to Suzanne's passions. She loves to teach, to develop new and innovative programs for those she sees as having under-served and unique needs, like young adults, those living with metastatic illness and those nearing the end of their lives, and she loves training volunteers to lead these programs. "Volunteers bring a magic to everything they do. It's the Hope & Cope way."

As she settles into her new role as Chair of Hope & Cope, Suzanne's primary goal is to keep donors, volunteers and lay leaders engaged while recruiting new people who will champion our cause in the broader community.

> "Hope & Cope's greatest strength is our team. We are all united in service of Sheila Kussner's original vision – to help people cope with cancer. And while how we do this keeps changing, requiring us to be reflective and accountable, why we do it is very clear. We make an impact and we make a difference."

In Memoriam

We sadly mourn the passing of Dr. Jimme Holland, (1928-2017), recognized world-wide as the founder of psychosocial oncology, and her husband, Dr. James Holland (1925-2018), a trailblazing cancer researcher and pioneer in chemotherapy. Jimmie had the distinction of establishing and leading the Division of Psychiatry at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York City – the first full-time psychiatry service in a major oncology hospital. Hope & Cope Founder Sheila Kussner consulted with Jimmie extensively over the years, nurturing an enduring friendship on a personal and professional level with both Jimmie and James, who remained enthusiastic champions of our organization throughout their lives.





Jennifer McKenzie speaks to guests at the Antony Proteau Winter Classic about her experience at the Young Adult retreat.

Meet Jennifer MacKenzie

– Forever changed by Hope & Cope

Every year, young adults from all over Quebec, parts of Ontario, and this year, even Newfoundland, come together for a weekend away from it all. It's a retreat they never thought they would be on but one that can literally change the course of their lives. These young adults have one thing in common – in the prime of their lives, they were diagnosed with cancer. This retreat is where they can spend time with people like themselves who "just get it".

Young adult cancer survivor Jennifer MacKenzie attended the retreat for the first time. Here is what she had to say.

Hi Jennifer. Can you tell me a little about yourself and how you came to learn about Hope & Cope?

I am 36 years old and was diagnosed with stage 2 breast cancer last February. I was followed at the Jewish General Hospital and was informed about Hope & Cope just after my diagnosis.

"This retreat has been one of the best things to come into my life in the past year ... It is important to know that you are not alone."

Please describe the Winter Weekend Retreat from the perspective of a young adult who attended for the first time.

Post-treatment, I was a little lost and needed to connect with people who understood. I reached out to Hope & Cope and they suggested I apply for the Winter Weekend Retreat, which took place from February 23rd to 25th of this year. It was for young adults with cancer.

The quiet bus ride up was filled with 31 young adults who were all a little nervous about the weekend. Once we arrived at Jouvence, we received our rooms and roommate assignments. We all met in the foyer and it felt like we already knew each other. You could feel the connections in the air. It was very easy to talk to people and share our stories. The feeling of "you are not alone" was so comforting. In the afternoon, we socialized and connected with all the other young adults. I immediately knew this retreat could not have come at a better time. The relationships and connections created were just what I needed.



The retreat offers a combination of relaxation in nature, conversation and workshops designed to help young adults cope with cancer.

Were your expectations met?

I was not sure what to expect from this weekend, but I came away with way more than I ever thought. I have a loving family and amazing friends, but no one can understand you the way other young adults facing this life path can. As much as you want to be the same person you were prior to your cancer diagnosis, you are not. It was very comforting to share my story and feelings with these wonderful people. The weekend was like a refueling of the soul. It is not a club you want to be part of but once you are and see the beautiful community into which you are welcomed, it is overwhelming and

124
young adults participated in CancerFightClub events held between January 1, 2017 and June 30, 2018

2,400+
followers on CancerFightClub Facebook page

Social media is a major component of the program, connecting young adults provincially and nationally not just through our official social media channels, but also throughout multiple private and community pages created among young adults.

very enlightening. I came home with wonderful new relationships and a new understanding of myself. I felt normal again.

What were the topics of discussion?

This retreat allowed me to share my experiences and feelings. We talked about family, our past and future. I think talking about our future is something we stop doing once diagnosed. This was a major realization for me on this weekend. It is normal to be scared but we must keep living. I met some of the most amazing people and made friendships that will last forever.

Have you attended other Young Adult programs as a result of this retreat?

This retreat has also allowed me to become more involved in the fundraising for Hope & Cope's young adult program and to attend other social events I would not have known about had I not reached out. Finding a community that understood me, changed how I approach my life every day.

Would you recommend the retreat to others?

This retreat has been one of the best things to come into my life in the past year. I recommend any young adult facing this path to reach out to Hope & Cope and other young adults in similar situations. It is important to know that you are not alone.

— Mireille Alvo

2,700+
followers on CancerFigthClub's Twitter account

A step in the right direction



The movements are fluid, the steps perfectly timed, the music and rhythm all intertwined – this is the beauty of dance.

The art of dance can be expressed in front of a room full of spectators or in the privacy of one's home. No matter where, dance has the ability to infuse life with joy and pleasure as well as relieve stress.

A Step for Life (Un pas pour la vie) held its annual fundraising event on June 8, 2017 at the Rialto Theatre. Four hundred people attended this must-see show featuring 100 of the top dancers in Quebec who showcased marvelous routines of styles including ballroom, Latin, hip hop, ballet and contemporary dance. A total of $37,000 was raised for Hope & Cope's CancerFightClub program for young adults.

Event organizers François Sauro and Johanna Michalowski, who are both young adult cancer survivors, spent time together at Hope & Cope's young adult retreat, where they put their dancing shoes together to come up with this beautiful event for the cause.

"After experiencing my first retreat with my friend Johanna, I wanted to contribute and help other adults share this wonderful experience," explains Sauro. "Dance is the art that mixes interpretation, emotions, rhythm and physical strength and flexibility. You have to dedicate a lot of effort to master all of these in order to become a professional dancer."

Michalowski, who benefited from Hope & Cope's wonderful services, felt that getting involved was only natural. "Now that I am better," she explains, "I want to ensure that support continues for others who need it."

The uniqueness of Hope & Cope is that when you go through the cancer experience, you are suddenly part of a special community of people who understand what you are feeling, thinking and physically going through, says Michalowski. "Hope & Cope has carried me through the hardest of times. I never felt alone. Before being diagnosed with cancer, I had no idea support for young adults with cancer existed as we usually only hear about foundations for kids or older generations."

So why dance? "Dance is one of the greatest forms of expression, both physical and emotional. When we dance, whether on stage in front of hundreds of people, or in the kitchen in our pajamas, it sweeps our troubles away," says Michalowski.

— Mireille Alvo

Big hearts raise big funds



Heart Courage

On February 18, 2017, Exit 22, a talented tribute band that plays the music of The Tragically Hip, headlined **Heart Courage**, a sold-out event at Bar Chez Maurice that raised close to $10,000 for Hope & Cope's CancerFightClub program. The affordable ticket price, laid-back vibe and great music attracted an audience of more than 300 people who proudly showed their support for young adults with cancer.



Hope for Life

Anastasia (Daisy) Lappos is a proud member of Montreal's dynamic Greek community, a dedicated volunteer with our Peer Mentor and Palliative Care teams and a tireless fundraiser for Hope & Cope's young adult programs. Through her Hope for Life fund, Daisy solicits funds throughout the year and, for the past several years, has organized a Greek-themed December holiday party for young adults. On April 15, 2018, Daisy hosted yet another fundraiser – a beautiful luncheon at Le Chateau Royal that raised close to $8,000.



McGill's South Asian Gala

Our thanks to the members of the Tamil Association of McGill (TAMill), @Bengali McGill and ISA McGill: Indian Students Association who hosted a fundraiser for CancerFightClub last September. Pictured here, Hope & Cope Board member Deborah Bridgman gratefully accepts a cheque in the amount of $2,000 from Virgule Maheswarn, Nivatha Balendra and Meena Kandiah.



Lia's Cancer-Free Fundraiser

Lia celebrated life as a cancer survivor by throwing a party, with proceeds going to Hope & Cope as well as the research of her oncologist, Dr. Cristiano Ferrario. Held on April 21, 2018 at Le Chateau Royal, the event featured a buffet dinner, entertainment and a silent auction and raised $4,000 for Hope & Cope. Pictured here, Dr. Cristiano Ferrario, Suzanne O'Brien and Dr. Thierry Muanza are enjoying Lia's fundraiser.

Antony Proteau Fund

has major impact on young adult cancer patients

The Antony Proteau Fund (AP Fund) was established six years ago by a dynamic group of young men with amazing spirit, energy and drive. Their mission is to honour the memory of their childhood friend, Antony, who passed away from cancer at the age of 23, by supporting Hope & Cope's CancerFightClub program for young adults.

Since 2012, James Lavinskas, Timothy Schiavi, Matthew Chaussé, Keif Orsini and Richard Ribaya have devoted countless hours of their time to organize and host a total of 12 events that have raised $300,000 (net) for Hope & Cope. The funds have been designated towards annual weekend retreats that offer much needed support for young adults who often feel deeply vulnerable and isolated from their peers [see story, page 14]. Mini retreats for those with metastatic and advanced cancer are also offered throughout the year. As well, funds raised supported the production of a video called The Power of Me, the Power of We, which is used as a teaching tool to help health care professionals understand the specific challenges of living with cancer as a young adult.

Given Antony's love of sports, particularly hockey, the AP Fund's signature fundraiser is a boisterous, action-packed, family-friendly ball hockey tournament. Held the first weekend in June, the tournament attracts a loyal and growing following that gathers each year to cheer on their favourite teams as they vie for the trophy. Interest and participation in the tournament have risen substantially, necessitating a move to a much larger venue this year – Le Rinque in TMR.



Proteau winter classic

During the winter season, the AP Fund kicks things up a notch with an elegant Winter Classic featuring cocktails, dinner, dancing and poignant testimonials from young adults who have benefitted from the money raised by the AP Fund. The 5th edition of this gala, held in March 2018, was the best yet.

"It's incredibly motivating for us to know that the AP Fund is having such a positive impact on people's lives," explains Tim, noting that he and his friends have attended several young adult programs and have been moved by the experience. Adds James, "When we invite young adults to give testimonials at our events, it brings home the importance of supporting Hope & Cope's innovative and often life-changing programs for cancer survivors."



The tight-knit group of friends behind the Antony Proteau Fund, left to right: Richard Ribaya, Matthew Chaussé, Tim Schiavi, Keif Orsini, James Lavinskas.

CancerFightClub

Redesigned web site draws rave reviews

In September 2017, we were pleased to launch the redesign of our CancerFightClub web site. The result of extensive consultations and months of work, this easy to navigate, user-friendly site was built with the needs of young adults (18-39) in mind. It features a fresh design, testimonials and blogs by young adult cancer survivors, and a comprehensive list of resources at Hope & Cope, within the city of Montreal and on the web. Categories such as Newly Diagnosed, Living It Solo, Metastatic and Advanced Cancer, and Young with Children make it easy for visitors to find the information and support they need based on their personal situation.

Check it out at: cancerfightclub.com

Ten years and counting...

Dorval, Sources and St-Henri Auto Parts Walk-a-thon earns respect and a loyal following



It's been 10 years since Alex Trichas and his cousins, Nick, Chris and Andre Dimopoulos, and their right-hand man, Gus Anagnostaras, staged their first Dorval, Sources and St-Henri Auto Parts Walk-a-thon on behalf of Hope & Cope's cancer exercise program. Yet, despite the passage of time, both their enthusiasm and their commitment to the welfare of cancer patients have remained as strong as ever.

Thanks to their annual walk-a-thon, which has raised in excess of $580,000 (net), that commitment is now shared by the 400 people who attend the walk every year without fail. The family atmosphere they work so hard to create during the leisurely 7 km walk, followed by a delicious BBQ capably manned by Gus and great raffle prizes, all help to draw in the crowds. The location – Parc St-Maxime in Chomedey, Laval – provides a scenic, relaxing backdrop to the walk. "It's a happening," says Alex.

"We always tell people, you don't even have to finish the walk – just come and enjoy yourself," Chris explains. While people come for the family atmosphere and the free food, after so many years, they are familiar with Hope & Cope and pleased to support the cause.

Clearly, the respect earned by this successful family-owned business plays a key role in the walk-a-thon's enduring popularity. "We're transparent about how much is raised and our event is very cost-effective. That's why our customers, suppliers, employees, corporate sponsors, family and friends are always there for us," says Alex.

Bringing small groups of donors to the Wellness Centre to see the impact of the funds raised has been a big part of their strategy as well. "Everyone is amazed by how good a job you do here," says Nick.



Another resounding success! The organizers of the Dorval, Sources and St-Henri Auto Parts Walk-a-thon proudly presented a cheque to Hope & Cope's Executive Advisory Board, where they were praised and thanked for their outstanding support of our cancer exercise program.

Having met with grateful participants in the Wellness Centre gym, the family is profoundly moved by the courage of cancer survivors, who often train for the walk. "Knowing that patients are motivated to do the walk spurs us on even more," notes Andre.

After hosting a very special 10th anniversary walk-a-thon last September, Alex, Nick, Chris, Andre and Gus proudly presented a $69,000 cheque to Hope & Cope's Board. Speaking on behalf of the entire Hope & Cope family, Board Chair Suzanne O'Brien thanked them for their outstanding and sustained commitment to our cause.

327 new patients participated in our exercise program in 2017.
In a 10-year period, thanks in part to the support of this walk-a-thon, more than **3,000** patients benefited from Hope & Cope's cancer exercise program.

A tale of two knitters



Lisolette wrapped up in one of her blankets.

Lisolette Ivry is a woman of many talents. A writer and an artist who waited until her children were grown before going to university at the age of 40 to obtain her Bachelor of Fine Arts, Lisolette is a Holocaust survivor – she prefers the term "witness to history". In fact, as a volunteer with the Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre, she has told her story countless times to school children across the city. It has been her way to honour the memory of family members who perished and to ensure that we remain vigilant against hatred and bigotry.

As a patient undergoing treatment for cancer of the blood, Lisolette understands the need to keep warm, both literally and figuratively. At 93 years of age, her public speaking days may be over, but she has found a new way to give back – knitting individual squares to create warm, colourful blankets for cancer patients.

Her partner in this endeavor is Edna Janco, who routinely visits Lisolette with an armful of wool and collects the finished squares, putting them together to create the blankets and dropping them off at Hope & Cope for distribution to patients undergoing chemotherapy treatment. In fact, it was Edna who initially contacted Hope & Cope volunteer Sonia Hazan to offer her services as a knitter and it was Edna who recruited Lisolette.

"Knitting relaxes me," said Lisolette, surrounded by samples of her work in the comfortable den of her home. She learned to knit as a child, and her fine eye for colour and her artistic touch are clearly evident not only in her knitting, but also in her paintings that adorn the walls of her home. Lisolette estimates that in the past year, she has knitted 100 squares (each blanket consists of 16 squares), and health permitting, has every intention of keeping up this pace.

Being visually impaired hasn't stopped Maria Friazzi, a dedicated member of the Montérégie West Community Network (MWCN) in Chateauguay, from knitting the most beautiful blankets imaginable. Maria lost partial sight due to glaucoma in 2011 and full sight two years later. "I had to relearn everything all over, even putting toothpaste on my toothbrush," she recalls. With the help of her trusty guide dog, five-year-old Paz, Maria is able to get around and enjoy many activities. When knitting, she counts stitches out loud, relying on her sense of touch to feel the fabric and visual aids that read patterns. She receives additional help from other members of the group who describe the colours of the fabric so that she can visualize them. "It takes a lot of focus and concentration," Maria admits, adding that she can knit but can no longer crochet.

Every few months, two-time cancer survivor Susanna Langevin, accompanied by other members of the MWCN, drops off several large bags filled with colourful blankets, Afghans, socks and even bed jackets, all of which are distributed by Hope & Cope to patients undergoing chemotherapy treatments.



Bringing bags of hand-knitted blankets on behalf of the Montérégie West Community Network, left to right: Susanna Langevin, Maria Friazzi and Mary Egan.

A total of 260 blankets were distributed to patients in 2017, thanks to the generosity of so many individuals who enjoy knitting for our cause.

1,481
practical resources provided to patients in 2017,
including blankets, wigs, head coverings, bras and prostheses.

A bridge to compassion



Once again, Beverley Friedman and Hainya Wiseman repeated their winning formula for a highly successful fundraiser: 1) take two extraordinarily generous hostesses with a talent for party planning and an eye for exquisite décor, whose homemade cakes and pastries are out of this world; 2) invite avid bridge players for an afternoon of delicious food and challenging games; 3) recruit the talented Norman Cohen as tournament director; and 4) raise much needed funds to help people struggling to cope with one of life's biggest challenges – a cancer diagnosis.



Beverley and Hainya



Norman Cohen

On October 19, 2017, these superbly elegant hostesses treated their guests to a glorious Bridge Luncheon that raised close to $19,000 for Hope & Cope's Compassionate Fund. Board member and cancer survivor Sylvie Grégoire explained to the assembled guests that for those who are economically disadvantaged to begin with, or who can no longer work due to the effects of treatment, cancer can be a financial blow from which it is difficult to recover. For these families, the Compassionate Fund, which helps pay for one-time, urgent expenses, is a godsend. "It is obvious that the hosts of this fine event understand compassion and live by it," said Sylvie. "This is why Hope & Cope is so very grateful to Beverley and Hainya for organizing this event year after year and to all of you for being here."

66
people were helped by the Compassionate Fund in 2017

There is always so much going on at Hope & Cope, from a wide variety of regular weekly classes at our Cancer Wellness Centre to new programs, lectures and special events!

For up-to-date news and photos, check out our web sites and our social media channels. Please feel free to like, comment and share!

hopeandcope.ca
cancerfightclub.com

facebook.com/hopecopemontreal
facebook.com/thecancerfightclubcommunity

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The power of laughter:

Comedy show has become an annual tradition at Hope & Cope



As a general rule, stand-up comics are thought of as cynical. It says something when some of the biggest names in the business agree to perform in the middle of the day for an audience of cancer patients and survivors. And it says even more when they express their gratitude for the opportunity to share their talent, free of charge, with people who really need to laugh.

On July 27, 2017, stand-up comics Ryan Hamilton, Godfrey, Vlad Caamano, Gina Yashere and Jimmy Carr performed in front of a standing room only crowd at the Hope & Cope Cancer Wellness Centre.

"There is such purpose to doing a show like this," said Godfrey, a physically energetic and highly entertaining performer. "What's great about this audience is that they are completely open; they get it." A native of Chicago, Godfrey revealed that when his mother was going through cancer treatment, she called him frequently to make her laugh – it was the best therapy she could ask for.

Brilliant British wit Jimmy Carr, a master of word play and one-liners, gleefully made "cancer jokes", knowing full well that the audience would laugh with him. He opened with, "We'd best get on with it. We don't have much time. [Pause] Well I do." And later, "I'm worried about dying up here, but given the context, that wouldn't be so bad."

Vlad Caamano, whose routine focused on what it was like growing up in the Bronx as the son of Spanish-speaking immigrants, and laid-back Idaho native Ryan Hamilton who had the audience in stitches describing a date in a hot air balloon, agreed that it was gratifying to perform for such a receptive audience.

"No one ever says 'no' to me. Every comic who's done it has been moved by the experience," commented Jodi Lieberman, who, along with partners Zoe Friedman and Amber J. Lawson, produced the show under the auspices of their social benefit company, Comedy Gives Back, in association with Just for Laughs. In fact, Jimmy Carr was making his third appearance at the Wellness Centre, while London native and transplanted New Yorker, Gina Yashere, whose imitations of her Nigerian-born mother elicited side-splitting laughter, was back for a second time.

Currently based in New York, Jodi is a native Montrealer who previously worked for 10 years as Program Director at Just for Laughs. "We created Comedy Gives Back to help the world heal through laughter. Our goal with this show at Hope & Cope is to help elevate the spirits of cancer patients and raise awareness for this wonderful organization in my hometown," she explained. Added her partner, Zoe, "Of all the events that we do, the one here is my favourite. It's a transformative experience for the audience and for the comics."

After the show, the comics graciously signed autographs and posed with audience members for "selfies". Fittingly, the last word went to Jimmy Carr, who said, "Laughter is the shortest distance between two people."

COMEDY GIVES BACK

"I never laughed so much for so long. Each comedian gave it their all. It is nice to see people giving their time for such a good cause."

— Giovanna, cancer survivor

"Laughter has been a really important part of my healing process. This was such a treat – I felt like a five-year-old at Christmas."

— Corie-Jay, cancer survivor

Volunteer perspective

Grace Davis provides calm, comfort and compassion



For Grace Davis, the most rewarding part of being a Hope & Cope volunteer is the feeling of accomplishment that comes from knowing she has lightened someone's load. "Often, patients come in looking like a deer in the headlights, but after 15 or 20 minutes, they are smiling, sometimes even laughing," notes Grace, who has been a Registration Volunteer at the Cancer Wellness Centre since the fall of 2014.

Every Wednesday afternoon, Grace meets one-on-one with patients and/or caregivers who have expressed an interest in joining the Wellness Centre. "The key to creating a successful wellness plan, asserts Grace, "is to determine what a patient's needs are and how we can best help them." After learning more about their cancer diagnosis and treatment, as well as their likes, interests and needs at that particular moment in their cancer trajectory, Grace takes prospective Wellness Centre members on a tour of the Centre, highlighting programs that she believes might interest them the most. She also explains the documents available to them in the registration kit, directs them to the web site (www.hopeandcope.ca), which they are free to consult at their leisure and contacts other members of the Hope & Cope professional team who may be of additional service.

"In general, people are extremely surprised by the variety of services offered here free of charge. And they are in awe of how beautiful the facility is," Grace says. She adds that she derives profound satisfaction from knowing she is having such a positive impact on cancer survivors by providing a sense of calm, compassion and comfort.

Grace knows from firsthand experience how much devastation cancer can cause not only for the patient but also for his or her entire social circle. "My mother had two separate cancers five years apart, and I received so much support, especially bereavement support, from Hope & Cope. I decided that once I had come to terms with my grief, I would volunteer," she explains. It was Hinda Goodman, Hope & Cope Oncology Coordinator, who suggested to Grace that the Wellness Centre would be a good fit for her. In addition to being part of the registration team, Grace, who speaks six languages, helps out at the reception desk and assists with special events such as conferences and workshops.

As an added bonus, volunteering with Hope & Cope has changed Grace's perspective on life. "I try to live more authentically, to indulge in what makes me happy and to be present in the moment," she concludes.

Simone Naccache – the Princess Elizabeth effect

As a child, Simone had the facility to empathize and listen to people's sorrow. Inspired by Princess Elizabeth's visits to hospitals, Simone vowed to do the same when she got older.

Years later, she very much appreciated the support that she received from Hope & Cope when grieving the loss of her husband and she became a volunteer a year after his passing. Utilizing her language and coping skills, she now provides peer mentoring/grief support for a client in Arabic. For approximately a year after the passing of clients' loved ones, Simone telephones them on a weekly basis, slowly transitioning from crucial intervention to more of a timely check-in.

Simone is very pleased to play a key role in the shift from devastating grief to hope of a new normal to finally a more peaceful reality. Having lost her mother to cancer when Simone was young, she is proud to assist people in this journey but admits to being disappointed when, despite her best efforts, a client is not able to progress out of a dark place.

"Just listening is enough," is Simone's motto. Human connection is her priority. Nothing gives her more pleasure than to provide compassion and eventually hear laughter. For her, this is the true measure of a positive intervention; accompanying the grieving at their own pace. She mentions that often clients are hurt by the lack of empathy from family and friends who believe they help by putting a timeline on grief.

— Grace Davis

150 people reached through our bereavement programs including the Mourning Walk (weekly walks on Mount Royal), and the Mourning Café, a twice monthly drop-in for those grieving a loss to cancer

Wanda Jaslinska – The gift of reciprocity; "It feels good to give back"



As a breast cancer survivor, Wanda was overwhelmed by the amount of support and the sheer number and variety of services that Hope & Cope offered during her time of need.

After completing her treatments, she decided to share the gifts that she received from Hope & Cope with other cancer patients. For the past eight years, on Friday afternoons, you can find Wanda at the Hope & Cope main reception desk on the 7th floor of the Jewish General Hospital.

"No shift is the same," says Wanda. Her afternoon often consists of, but is not limited to, the following tasks: greeting and providing information to patients and caregivers; publicizing upcoming courses/workshops; assisting with accessories (wigs, scarves, prostheses, etc.); answering the phone; sorting the mail; administering the lending library and preparing oncology kits.

Her passion is to provide compassionate care while also learning from the resilience of the diverse people that she meets. She gains a sense of appreciation and encouragement to persevere through the various challenges that she may face in her own life.

As a part of her own cancer journey and now assisting those who are walking a similar path, Wanda remains open to all points of view. "It's not all about me," she says. Although there sometimes is an emotional reaction to a particular story or a feeling of fatigue after a trying day, by focusing on the client's needs, Wanda feels that she is returning the gift of compassion that she received.

— Grace Davis

Ryan Knobovitch



At 24 years of age, Ryan Knobovitch displays the maturity and the wisdom of someone twice his age. So it is not surprising that he is able to connect easily with patients of all ages and from all walks of life. "My goal," says Ryan, "is to help people feel a little less lonely by listening to them and letting them know they are understood."

Ryan was just 17 years old when his father passed away from lung cancer. Unable to concentrate on his studies, he put his education on hold and pursued opportunities in the Canadian Armed Forces, which opened doors for him in the private security industry. These experiences taught him a great deal about discipline, leadership and how to function in high stress environments.

In January 2017, with the encouragement of his stepfather, Ryan went back to CEGEP. He is currently completing his science pre-requisites with the intention of pursuing a bachelor's degree in biomedical sciences.

Six months after he had returned to CEGEP, Ryan's stepfather became seriously ill with a transformed version of leukemia secondary to myelodysplastic syndrome. After deteriorating rapidly, his stepfather was given a dire prognosis of just days to live. The family took him home, where, after a couple of weeks, he made a miraculous recovery. "That experience changed my view on everything," Ryan explains. He realized the effects that diseases can have on the patient and their families and appreciated how fulfilling being a physician would be in such circumstances. He became more committed than ever to his studies and improved his grades dramatically, all while working part time in a pediatric clinic and deciding to get involved in his community. His ultimate goal is to become a medical doctor, specializing in pediatrics.

Hope & Cope was a natural choice for Ryan, who joined the organization in September 2017. He looks forward to his weekly shifts in the Radiotherapy Clinic and also visits patients undergoing chemotherapy as well as those who are hospitalized on the 7th and 8th floors of Pavilion K. Empathy comes naturally to Ryan and he enjoys the challenge of meeting new patients. No two shifts are alike, and "the approach you take with one person is not necessarily how you would approach another one," he notes. Working at Hope & Cope has heightened his appreciation for life. "Illness affects so many people. If I can make someone's journey a little easier, I know I've accomplished something important," Ryan concludes.

26,000
hours of service provided by Hope & Cope volunteers on an annual basis

Celebrations drew large crowds

From May through September of last year, we celebrated the 10th anniversary of our Cancer Wellness Centre and 36 years of Hope & Cope with a wide variety of activities that put the spotlight on what it means to live well in mind, body and spirit, with cancer. We threw a big birthday bash at a lively Open House attended by 250 people, hosted BBQs in our beautiful garden, shared Wellness Wednesday tips on our social media channels and even partnered with the Montreal Alouettes for a White out to Wipe out Cancer football game that raised close to $1,000 for Hope & Cope.



Voices of Hope Choir

Since its inception 11 years ago, the Voices of Hope Choir has offered cancer survivors a place where they can raise their voices together in song and experience the transformative power of music. Rehearsals take place weekly in preparation for two inspirational and moving annual concerts, one held in the spring and the other just before the end of the year. Kudos to all the singers and to the multi-talented and dedicated volunteers who keep this program going strong: choir director and pianist Manuel Blais, and assistant directors Ginette Solomon and Michèle Hekimi. In 2017, both concerts raised $3,700 for our Wellness Centre programs.

1,267
total attendance at lectures, conferences and special events throughout 2017

Working with our community partners:

Wellness Centre hosted a variety of successful conferences and educational workshops throughout 2017

Offering a warm, welcoming environment as well as kitchen facilities, Hope & Cope's Cancer Wellness Centre proved to be the ideal venue for several educational events during our special 10:36 anniversary year.

On May 12th, in association with Ovarian Cancer Canada, we hosted a day-long conference entitled *You Are Not Alone: a day of learning and sharing about ovarian and other gynecological cancers.* Oncologists Dr. Walter Gotlieb, Dr. Susie Lau and Dr. Shannon Salvador provided up-to-date information on topics such as robotic surgery, precision medicine and genetics. Suzanne O'Brien, Hope & Cope's Executive Director, and Susan Wener, Hope & Cope Board member, author and cancer survivor, spoke about the importance of creating personalized wellness plans. Conference participants also learned how to manage the fear of recurrence and enjoyed the stretching, mindfulness and laughter breaks throughout the day.



Delegates at the RPOGECO Conference enjoy a coffee break at the Wellness Centre.

Also in May, we welcomed Dr. David Praill, a well-known expert in palliative care who is based in the United Kingdom. Over breakfast at the Wellness Centre, Dr. Praill engaged palliative care physicians, nurses and fundraisers from across the McGill network in a discussion on the best ways to explain the philosophy of palliative care to other members of the health care team, the general public and potential donors. At lunch time, Dr. Praill led a thought-provoking conversation among palliative care volunteers about the various challenges and rewards of working in a field that focuses on symptom control, pain management and quality of life rather than active treatment.



Wellness Centre Manager Marcelle Kecman welcomes attendees at the ovarian cancer day of learning.

L'union fait la force (Together we are stronger) was the theme of a conference held on May 25th by the Regroupement provincial des organismes et groupes d'entraide communautaire en oncologie (RPOGECO). Conference sessions and workshops explored models of partnerships, benefits and pitfalls, providing attendees with stimulating new ideas and food for thought. The RPOGECO groups together more than 70 cancer-related community groups, with a mandate to advocate for the needs of cancer patients and their families throughout Quebec.

On August 4th, 30 people attended a powerful theatrical performance featuring dramatic vignettes about dying, based on interviews with 13 palliative care patients and their caregivers. Called PEACE (Palliative Education through Art, Communication and Engagement), the play was a joint project of the Nova Scotia Health Authority, Dalhousie University, Transitus and Hope & Cope. As explained by Principal Investigator, Dr. Brenda Sabo, Professor of Nursing at Dalhousie, the goal was to partner with artists in order to present research findings to the general public in a unique, accessible and memorable way. The play incorporated a rich variety of voices, relationships and experiences, and the performance elicited open, honest conversations about the many social stigmas and stereotypes surrounding palliative care, death and dying. After premiering in Halifax, the play's director and actors took the show on the road, with performances in Toronto and Montreal. The play was filmed as well, serving as an educational tool for nurses and other health care professionals.

"This is a phenomenal way to spur discussion about a difficult topic," noted one audience member after the performance at Hope & Cope. A retired cancer surgeon who explained that he has watched the evolution of palliative care with great interest said, "It's exceptionally important for surgeons to learn how to tell people in a sensitive way that they have cancer."

To learn more about PEACE visit transitus.ca/Connect/11-The-PEACE-Project

LCC students perform community service at Hope & Cope

Last fall, LCC (Lower Canada College) students Jamie Mendel, Sofia Meier and Alesa Zadeh approached Hope & Cope with a proposal we simply could not refuse – they wanted to perform community service with us.



LCC students bring baked goods.

Under the supervision of Hope & Cope Palliative Care Coordinator Rifka Hanfling and Office Coordinator Lora Tombari, the girls participated with great enthusiasm in two holiday-themed annual traditions – our Palliative Care holiday gift-giving program and our holiday cart. Throughout November and December, Alesa, Jamie and Sofia diligently collected dozens and dozens of gifts from their schoolmates, families, friends and neighbours. They then spent an afternoon in the Hope & Cope satellite office on the Palliative Care Unit where they wrapped the gifts that patients had chosen to give to their loved ones. This heartwarming program enables patients to experience the joy of giving during the holiday season.

"The students did a beautiful job," said Mrs. Hanfling. "They really took our mission to heart and proved to be great ambassadors for Hope & Cope."

A week later, the students brought home-baked goods for Hope & Cope's holiday cart. Coordinated by Hope & Cope's main office team, who cheerfully bake up a storm, the cart, loaded with homemade treats, juice boxes and candy canes, was brought to cancer clinics and waiting rooms throughout the hospital. This demonstration of holiday cheer was a wonderful gesture deeply appreciated by patients and their caregivers.

24
patients benefitted from the gift-giving program in 2017

102
gifts were distributed

Gifts are always needed for this much appreciated program during the holiday season. For more information, contact Rifka Hanfling at 514 340-8222, ext. 23985



Talking to Children about Cancer

We are pleased to introduce this great new Hope & Cope resource for young families in which a parent has cancer.

To download your free copy, visit our web site:

hopeandcope.ca/young-adults-young-families/en-famille

For more information, call Sandy Lipkus, 514 340-8222, ext. 22591

Art for Healing Foundation brings beauty and inspiration to the Wellness Centre

In conjunction with the Wellness Centre's 10th Anniversary, Earl Pinchuk and Gary Blair, Founders of the Art for Healing Foundation, installed a magnificent art collection at the Centre, showcasing renowned Quebec artists. The project is in memory of Earl's late mother, Miriam Pinchuk, a generous and loyal donor to Hope & Cope who passed away in August 2016.

The installation took place over a period of several days in June 2017, and both Earl and Gary were thrilled with the results. "My mother's spirit lives within the walls of this house," said Earl. Added Gary, "The Wellness Centre is such a beautiful space, allowing the art to live, to breathe and to be appreciated by so many people with cancer."

Earl and Gary are avid art collectors who believe passionately in the power of art to positively impact healing. Through their Art for Healing Foundation, a not-for-profit organization they founded in 2002, they transform drab, blank walls commonly found in hospitals and other health care settings into areas of beauty and inspiration.

Since its inception, the Art for Healing Foundation has installed over 10,500 works of art in 76 institutions in Quebec, Ontario, Newfoundland and Labrador, Manitoba, British Columbia, Nova Scotia and Paris, France.



Artist Mel Boyaner.

Art has always been an important part of Hope & Cope's Cancer Wellness Centre. "We've been blessed from the beginning," notes Marcelle Kecman, the Centre's manager. "When the Centre opened 11 years ago, we received beautiful art work generously donated by Montreal-based artists and the Board of Directors of the former Gilda's Club."



Art for Healing Foundaton Board, left to right: Dawna Lazare, Kathy Osgood, Earl Pinchuk, Founder, Margaret Trudeau, Honorary Chairperson, Gary Blair, Founder, Sheila Segal and Marlene Levine.

The new collection was unveiled officially at a vernissage on September 14, 2017, attended by donors, members of the Boards of the Art for Healing Foundation and Hope & Cope, as well as friends and family of the late Miriam Pinchuk. Artists in attendance included Rita Briansky, Mel Boyaner, Nycol Beaulieu, Burt Covit, Jackie Cytrynbaum, Marilyn Gelfand, Michel Piquette, Bernard Rajotte, and Sue Rusk, who is also a volunteer yoga instructor at the Wellness Centre.

> "The Wellness Centre is such a beautiful space, allowing the art to live, to breathe and to be appreciated by so many people with cancer."

Ultimately, Earl & Gary are motivated by their belief that everyone deserves to be nurtured by their environment. "It's so gratifying to share our passion for art and to bring beauty and joy into people's lives when they need it most," they concluded.

Earl was so taken with the Wellness Centre that he became a volunteer, planning events such as an "Art and Conversation" series in which invited artists attend the Centre's art classes and speak to participants about their craft. After a summer break, the series will resume this fall.

Tell Cancer to Take a Hike

"There is no greater high than reaching the top of a mountain – and if we can raise money for Hope & Cope to help as many cancer patients as we can while enjoying the thrill of hiking, that's even better!" explains Howard Stotland, Board member and Chair of Tell Cancer to Take a Hike, Hope & Cope's first foray into adventure fundraising.

Tell Cancer to Take a Hike's initial offering was a fundraising climb on Mount Kilimanjaro in Africa, which took place in March 2018. While this climb attracted great interest, there were many hiking enthusiasts in the community who could not travel to Africa but, nevertheless, wanted to indulge their passion for the outdoors while supporting Hope & Cope. So when volunteers Alice Lehrer, Sharyn Katsof and Lisa Boucher approached Howard with a proposal for Kili chez nous, he knew it was a winner. Kili chez nous offers a series of 10 monthly hikes throughout 2018 in the panoramic mountain regions of Quebec, offering breathtaking vistas, with trails of varying difficulty to appeal to all fitness levels. Hikers are required to raise a minimum of $2,000 per individual or $3,000 per household, with the flexibility of participating in as few or as many of the hikes as they wish. Shortly after this option was launched, an additional spinoff was offered to Montrealers with homes in Vermont: a morning of hiking on Mount Mansfield in Stowe, Vermont, followed by an afternoon pool party hosted by our Kili chez Stowe co-chairs Elaine Dubrovsky, Sheryl Miller-Adessky, and Janice Heft-Sheiner.



Kili chez nous en famille at Parc régional de la Forêt Ouareau in the Lanaudière region.

Power couple Bernard Voyer, noted author, philosopher and explorer, and the equally dynamic Nathalie Tremblay were on hand to officially launch the campaign in early 2018. It was no coincidence that March 17, 2018, was the date of the first Kili chez nous hike – this was the same day as our Kilimanjaro climbers made their final push for the summit. Although the two groups were continents apart, they shared a love of hiking and a determination to enhance the lives of cancer patients by supporting Hope & Cope's unique programs and services. Successive monthly hikes were held in April, May, June, July and August, while September's hike in the Charlevoix region included an optional overnight stay for those who wished to enjoy the spectacular fall foliage in the region.

Alice Lehrer, who runs Hope & Cope's Mourning Walk, a weekly bereavement walk on Mount-Royal, is a firm believer in the healing power of being outdoors in nature. "Knowing that cancer patients will benefit from the funds raised through our Kili chez nous hikes has made the experience that much more memorable and rewarding," she comments.

Sharyn Katsof is equally thrilled to be co-chairing Kili chez nous. "Hiking amid the gorgeous mountains of Quebec is nature's tonic and the fact that we can come together to challenge ourselves physically while raising funds to support the transformative programs offered by Hope & Cope is truly amazing," notes Sharyn.



Kili chez Stowe with pets in tow, hiking on Mount Mansfield in Vermont.

1,587
active donors
(2015-2018)

500
new donors brought in through
Tell Cancer to Take a Hike



March 2018 featured the launch of the first Kili chez nous hike at Mont-Tremblant.



Springing into action with the Kili team at the McGill Gault Nature Reserve.

Co-chair Lisa Boucher, who is hiking in memory of her mother, knows from first-hand experience how much of a positive impact Hope & Cope has on patients and their caregivers when cancer challenges them to their core. "Organizing these hikes and meeting so many like-minded people in the community who want to do good for others has been a wonderful experience," says Lisa.

Noting that there are three more hikes to go before the end of 2018 and inviting the community to sign up for this fun, family-friendly fundraiser, Howard concluded, "We are grateful to all of our climbers, hikers, sponsors and donors for responding with such enthusiasm to Tell Cancer to Take a Hike and hope to see you on the trails!"

To sign up, visit: tellcancertotakeahike.com



Beating the summer heat with the Kili team at Mont-Tremblant.

TOP FUNDRAISER



Joy Bultz $25,000

"Be the type of energy that no matter where you go, you always add value to the spaces and lives around you," says Joy Bultz. Joy certainly has added value to Hope & Cope and the lives of the participants who rely on its programs and services – exceeding $25,000 worth of value, in fact! Unquestionably, her energy, zest for life, dedication to the cause, and fundraising acumen have propelled Joy to the top of the leaderboard. Her enthusiasm is contagious, inspiring others to do likewise.

For more information, contact Annette Novak, fundraising specialist, at 514 340-3616, ext. 220.

Kilimanjaro climb metaphor for the challenges of cancer

Last March, seven brave souls signed up for Hope & Cope's first ever foray into adventure fundraising – a 12 day trip to Africa to climb Mount Kilimanjaro. Board member David Martz and his son, Richard, were among the first to sign up, attracted by the challenge and the chance to bond during this unforgettable journey.



David Martz and his son, Richard, bond during their Kilimanjaro climb.

> "Things don't always go as planned, there are obstacles in your path and you have to adjust, regroup and cope as best you can."

Under the guidance of enthusiastic expedition leader Terry Soucy, the climbers began training – individually and as a group – in the fall of 2017. Terry organized weekend climbs of local mountains such as Mont St. Hilaire with a dual purpose: to help the climbers get in shape and to allow them to get to know each other better. "The group bonded beautifully," noted David. "There was no tension or interpersonal conflict throughout the trip. We all encouraged each other."

Although he was in excellent physical condition, David stepped up his training regimen in order to have the necessary endurance to climb five-to-eight hours a day at high altitude. "I was in the gym a few times a week working out with a backpack with extra weights to simulate actual climbing conditions," he recalled.

David had nothing but praise for Tusker Trail, the outfitter that provided exceptional logistical support and guidance, both before and during the climb. Tusker supplied three first-class, highly experienced guides and almost 30 local porters with incredible stamina and spirit. The group enjoyed ample fresh food served in heated tents and an unlimited supply of fresh water, including hot water for washing up. To ensure their safety, two medical exams were performed per day and all necessary medical and safety equipment was provided. "It was like the Hilton of the outdoors," David remarked. "The porters would sing to us in the morning. After we left the campsite, they would clean up and then get to the next campsite long before us, so that when we arrived, everything was set up for us."



While his intensive training prepared him well for the physical challenges of climbing the highest peak in Africa, one unknown remained – how he would react to the high altitude, where oxygen deprivation can lead to a condition known as altitude sickness. Other than the occasional headache, David and Richard were fine. "The 360 Northern Circuit takes longer but it was the smart choice because this route allowed us to acclimatize gradually to the higher altitude," he explained.

The weather turned out to be their biggest obstacle. The group was met with intermittent and sometimes heavy rain from the second day on, which was nothing compared to what awaited them on their final push to the summit. They departed at 1 a.m. in blizzard-like



conditions, with gale force winds, huge snow drifts and very little visibility. After 7½ hours, they finally made it to Gilman's point – at 18,650 ft. above sea level – only to discover that the path to the summit (at 19,300 ft.) was closed due to the dangerous weather conditions and a wall of snow.

"We were a bit disappointed that we couldn't reach the summit, but that didn't take away from the tremendous feeling of accomplishment in reaching as far as we did under very challenging conditions," said David, who sees the experience as a metaphor for cancer. "Things don't always go as planned, there are obstacles in your path and you have to adjust, regroup and cope as best you can."

David, who personally raised $25,000 for Hope & Cope as part of a larger on-going Kili fundraiser, is justifiably proud of his successful efforts. As a Board member, he was gratified to see what a great reputation Hope & Cope has in the community. "It was an easy sell. So many people are touched by cancer and they know how much good Hope & Cope does," he noted.



Gilman's point.

TOP FUNDRAISER



Nicki Lang, centre.

Nicki Lang $84,000

When Nicki Lang signed up for the Mount Kilimanjaro climb, he set his personal fundraising goal at $100,000 – much, much higher than the $6,000 minimum commitment. As he noted in his personal letter to potential donors, his motivation for participating in the Tell Cancer to Take a Hike campaign was personal. He experienced first-hand the significant impact Hope & Cope had on helping his wife Helen's recovery when she was diagnosed 26 years ago with a brain tumour. Despite a poor prognosis, she is a survivor. Nicki's motivation was twofold: to raise $100,000 so that Hope & Cope can continue to provide exceptional programs for cancer patients and their families; and to satisfy his personal taste for adventure, zest for life as well as the challenge of climbing Mount Kilimanjaro in the hopes of making it to the top "in solidarity with everyone who has faced the challenges and obstacles of living with cancer head-on, with courage, resilience and hope." Nicki's personal call to action is: "If you don't like it, change it, and if you can't change it, don't worry about it!" Nicki's actions speak volumes – clearly, he is a change-maker!

$500,000
raised as of
August 31, 2018

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