



## Excitement catching on!

You could feel it in the air this spring – there was a buzz of excitement about Steps for Life-Walking for Families of Workplace Tragedy, and it translated into incredible results.

*Read all about this year's Steps for Life events on pages 10 and 11!*

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### MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Bill Stunt

The support of family is crucial to healing, whether it's physical healing from an injury or illness, or emotional healing after a tragedy. The personal stories in this issue both touch on the impact an illness or injury had on family members. A study from Australia lays out this

role in more detail, and stresses that family members dealing with work-related tragedy need support too. Through our Threads of Life family, we do our best to be there and support one another. This spring, as every spring, our family came together to raise funds and awareness through the annual Steps for Life events. It's so inspiring to see Steps for Life continuing to grow. As a Threads of Life family member, the gift of time and energy from thousands of walkers, volunteers and donors feels like a warm hug – from people I've never even met! And I know that every yellow t-shirt worn and every message heard brings us closer to the day when these tragedies end and our vision is realized.

# NUMBER ONE DAD

Death due to occupational cancer brings family's world crashing down

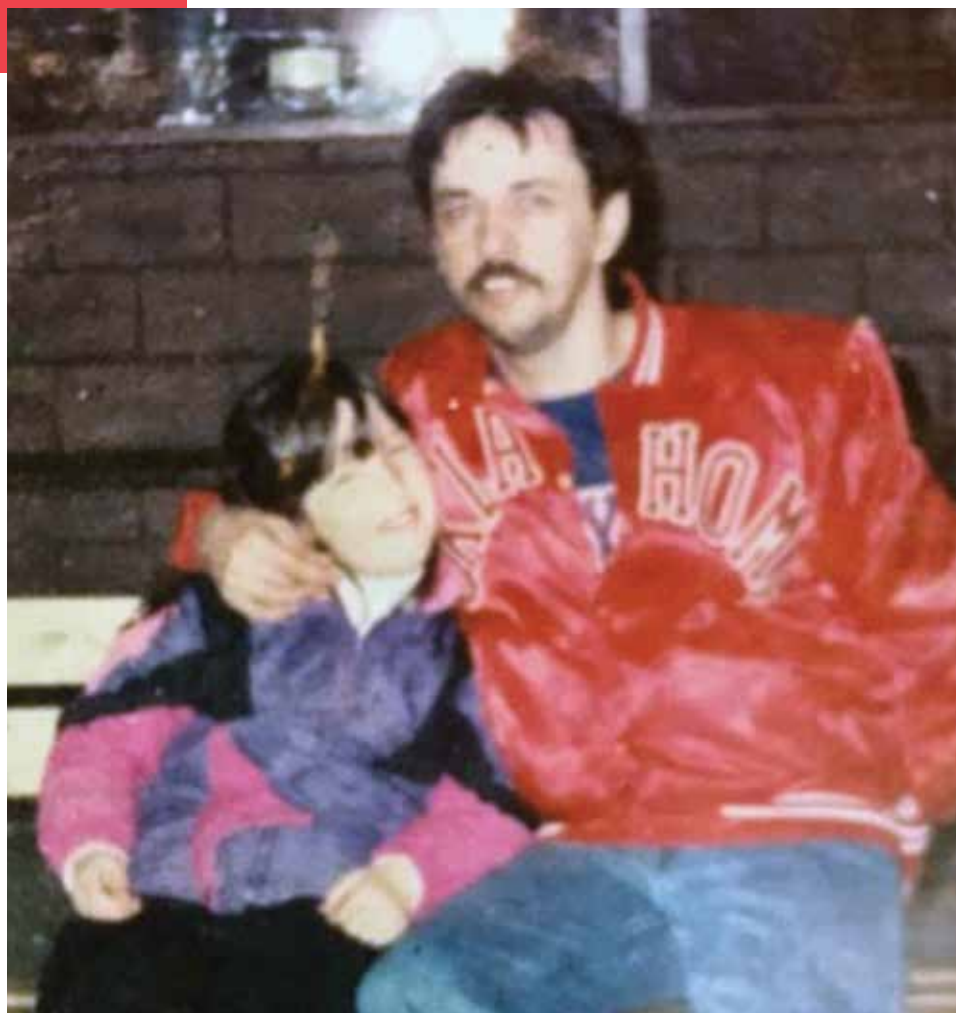
by **Shantelle Harris**

**At** a jewellery store on Father's Day back in 2001 I picked out a gold "#1 dad" necklace. I remember crying so hard the jeweller practically gave it to me for free. My first thought when buying it was, I wish I could've given this to him earlier.

My dad was a hard worker and had to be, raising four kids. When he wasn't at work, he would be watching TV, reading a crime novel, or at one of my brothers' hockey games. He was someone who was brutally honest and told it like it was. I admired him for that. I remember one saying he told us kids was, "As long as you didn't start it, you can finish it." I guess he never thought that at seven years old, I would take that advice literally. One day when I was walking home from school a girl from my class was shoving me, wanting to fight. I could hear my dad's voice saying those words ... I finished it. After having enough I used my hockey skills, put the girl into a headlock and shoved her face in the snow, told her to leave me alone and walked away.

When I got home, I was so upset and told my dad what happened. I thought I'd be in serious trouble but my dad smiled and said, "Did you start it?" ... "well, no" and that was the end of the conversation.

Over the years, my dad had many jobs, but after writing to get his welder's ticket he worked at one company for the last 15 years of his life. This company made nuclear and coal boilers to be used in the power generation



Shantelle and her dad Darcy

market. He started his career there in the welding department and moved over to the tube-bending department. He did this because there was less pressure to be laid off during slow times in the industry.

The last few years leading up to his death my dad tried to work as much as he could. My mom had been the victim of a severe rear end collision on her way home from work and hasn't worked since. She spent most of the time in bed, fighting with the insurance companies, or at doctor's appointments. This changed the dynamic in my family and left my mom very dependent on my dad. If he was in severe pain he hardly showed it, probably to stay strong for my mom who was dealing with her own world of pain at the time.

June 13th, 2001 is the day I will never forget. I was 16 and out babysitting at the time I got the call. This was before I had a cell phone so my mom called the parents where I was babysitting to ask them to send me home right away. On my arrival home I saw the front door opened with one paramedic in the doorway and two kneeling by the couch.

My dad was holding an air mask on his face

and looked quite out of it. As my mom and I followed the ambulance to the hospital, I was scared. I didn't comprehend the magnitude or severity of my dad's illness. My dad and I had actually gone hiking weeks before at Dundas peak in the Hamilton area and he seemed okay. It was only in the start of June he showed signs of being sick. My dad had taken time off work and gone to the doctors to see what was wrong. He had a pinched nerve in his leg six months back that merited a wide range of tests that had ruled out cancer or leukaemia. Our family doctor assumed he must be suffering from mono or strep and sent him home with antibiotics. Little did we know that sped up his illness and instead of having months to live he had weeks or days.

When we arrived at the hospital we were never told that paramedics had administered CPR twice on my dad because his heart stopped. My family was still under the assumption that he was having complications to mono or strep throat. My brother had come to the hospital to take me home since I had an exam the next morning. After a few hours my dad was transferred to another hospital

and finally my mom was given the diagnosis: acute myeloid leukaemia and he only had a 50/50 chance of making it through the night.

I was asleep when I was told and couldn't wrap my thoughts around this catastrophic news. My brothers and I rushed to get to the hospital. By the time we got there my dad had already passed, at the age of 42. My world had come crashing down that night.

The funeral was on Father's Day and the "#1 dad" necklace I bought was buried with him. The weeks after were a blur and it took almost a year to receive my father's autopsy report. It finally gave us some answers. He died from a type of leukaemia that is caused by benzene. Benzene is a carcinogenic chemical found in industrial cleaners, gasoline, cigarettes, and automobile exhaust, just to name a few. After speaking with a few of my father's co-workers we determined that an industrial cleaner they use to clean the tubes before they are bent contains benzene. What was also mentioned: improper personal protective equipment used and the frequency they used this cleaner. My dad along with the other employees would use rags soaked with this chemical cleaner, applying it liberally to the tubes with cotton gloves, which would be wet with this cleaner for a third of their day.

After getting the answers to why my dad had died we started our long and hard fight with WSIB, the Ontario Workplace Safety and Insurance Board. After 13 years of court and appeals, WSIB finally approved our claim that his cancer was an occupational fatality. Thankfully for others who work there, the company has also since changed cleaners and the one they use now no longer contain benzene.

For a long time after my dad's passing, I was angry and stopped caring about school; subsequently my grades slipped and I was lucky if I was actually passing. My mom was in such a deep depression that she didn't seem to notice what I was doing.

There have been countless times my mom has called an ambulance or called me to call one for her when she gets severely sick and her symptoms seem to replicate my father's last days. Almost every time she thinks 'this is it', I relive June 13th all over again. June 13th all over again. It breaks my heart every time and as much as I want to tell her no, I go. It's so hard because the person she replaced her dependence on was me. Ever since my dad's death it has been a role reversal and I have been the parent, always on call and trying to pick up the pieces when they fall. Now, I'm always thinking of

the glass as half full.

Father's Day seems to be a cruel reminder of what I've lost. I have an amazing husband and two beautiful children my dad will never meet. I have missed out on so much with my dad—having him at my high school and college graduations, being able to call him if I needed help or advice. When I am really missing him, I put on one of his vinyl records of AC/DC or Pink Floyd and imagine the times he told me to listen closely to how they changed the sound from speaker to speaker.

“ The years have brought a new sense of peace with my pain and I can share the stories of my dad without crying. I relish the times I get to pass on some advice to my children that my dad had taught me.

The Canadian government's WHMIS program, implemented in 1988, includes cautionary labeling and material safety data sheets (MSDSs). The label on the cleaner was not enough to save my dad's life. It takes accountability for your own health and that of your co-workers to make sure the proper precautions are taken with things we use at work. Don't assume the way you are shown how to use a chemical is the safe way. Be curious and read the label, request the MSD for any chemicals you come in contact with before you use them. You can be exposed to

dangerous chemicals in various ways and you should care about your life enough to want to know what you come in contact with. Wearing the proper PPE and refusing unsafe work could save your life.

As years go by, there is still not a day that a memory of my dad does not come floating through my thoughts. The years have brought a new sense of peace with my pain and I can share the stories of my dad without crying. I relish the times I get to pass on some advice to my children that my dad had

taught me... including "it's okay to finish it, as long as you didn't start it" guidance. The stories I tell about my dad to my kids or husband usually end with, "I wish you could've met him", or "He would've really liked you".

Nowadays, I feel my dad would be happy with

the way my life has turned out and the people I surround myself with. Part of moving forward was setting goals in my life, one of which was going back to school. I had recently finished college and while doing a class project I had come across the Threads of Life website.

After reading what the organization stood for and all the resources they had, I wish I knew about it sooner. Having such an amazing support network has helped me move forward in my life and I finally felt I was at a place where I could tell my dad's story.



Shantelle's father worked hard to raise four kids

# THE LIFE-LONG IMPACT OF A WORKPLACE INJURY

“I became aware of how close I was to not being here...”

by **Bob Ocrane**

**N**ine months before my incident, our family moved to a small town approximately one hour west of Saskatoon. We moved to the community so that I could start at a new job. When we arrived there we decided to build a new house. Our family was getting settled in the community and we were in the midst of the completing the finishes inside our home.

The day our family’s life changed forever was Feb. 20, 1987. That day, I went to work, and I was scheduled to work four hours and then go with my wife and son and his hockey team by bus for a playoff game.

I was working as a labourer at a grain processing company, and that day my task was to clean a six-foot diameter fan. To work on the fan, I was required to lock it out and suit up in a rubber suit, boots and gloves and a face shield, but no fall protection. Once that was all done I had to crawl through a hand-rail and mid-rail and down a stationary ladder approximately 20 feet. A water hose was then put in the area and away I went to clean the fan.

As I was cleaning it, I could smell the mold and slime and did not like that smell. So I climbed out of the area and went and put on my full-face respirator and cartridges. I was cleaning the fan for about three hours when my co-workers told me that my time was up, and I had to get out.

I started to climb up the stationary ladder. I got up to the top and put my hand on the mid-rail and my hand slipped and I fell back



Bob with his family, a few years after his injury

to the bottom of the fan area. I hit a pipe that was approximately six inches in diameter and about three feet above the floor and then I landed on the sloped floor of the fan shaft. I was lying face up, and I remember my co-workers that were on the main floor asking, “are you okay”. Not knowing the extent of my injuries, I said “yes”. One of the workers was a paramedic and he came down and was to check on me. My only fear was that he was going to fall on me and it was really going to hurt.

I was in and out of consciousness and I remember them opening a small hatch beside me with an air ratchet. The next thing I remember was being put on a stretcher. There were a lot of people around me at that time and from a little further away my supervisor said “Ocrane, if you really wanted

the day off why didn’t you ask me”. I tried to sit up as I wanted to hit him, but I could not.

An ambulance transported me to the local hospital and my wife was called to meet me there. They had told my wife that I had a little fall and hurt my leg. She was shocked to see the seriousness of the injuries. I was crying because I could not go to my son’s hockey game. I was sad because I had to tell my wife I couldn’t go to the hockey game. Do you think that she didn’t know that?

I was taken by ambulance to Saskatoon and it was a very painful trip.

While in the emergency department at Royal University Hospital I would wake up intermittently. I remember the doctor using a pin to see if I my foot had any feeling. I felt the pin and I knew that it was a good thing. We learned that I had a broken femur, separated

pelvis and minor head injuries. I required surgery to repair my broken leg.

While lying in a bed prior to the surgery, I remember one of my sons asking my wife if dad was going to be okay. I could not answer because I was sedated. I felt so helpless when I heard that comment and could not respond to my son.

They did the surgery a couple of days later as they had to fly a piece of metal in from Toronto. They installed the metal rod in my leg. My femur was broken but not sticking out of my skin. Thankfully the surgery went well.

I learned after the surgery that the full-face respirator I was wearing was smashed and saved me from serious facial injuries or even worse. I can thank the respirator for saving my life as most of the guys just wore a face shield while cleaning the fan.

While I was in a hospital bed, my wife

had to take care of three children, all teenagers, while working part time. This was a huge stress on her, especially not knowing if I would ever be able to work at my current job and our home finishing was not complete.

I spent two weeks at Royal University Hospital and then two more weeks in our local hospital. I came home in a wheel chair approximately one month after the incident. When I got home, it was also very stressful for the family to see me in a wheel chair. Everyone had to help in my care as I could not walk. It was very troubling for my wife and our children to see their dad in this condition. Our world had changed forever.

When I went to my surgeon's first appointment following surgery it was strange to me that his goal was to ensure he had lined up my leg properly during the surgery. I could not imagine going through the surgery process another time. If he had said it was not

good enough I am sure I would have said that I was not going through another surgery.

I really hated being in a wheel chair as I was not like everyone else around me. The day I got my crutches my wife and I went to a department store. I was going faster than I should have with the crutches. My wife said to slow down and I said "You have never been in a wheel chair". Boy did it feel great to be normal again.

The road to recovery was very long and painful. At times I was wondering if I was going to walk normally ever again. I had to work my way through the stages of wheel chair, crutches, walker, walking with a limp, conditioning camp and then returning to work full time. I received a great amount of support from my family and I know they were really were wondering if I was ever going to get back to walking normally.

## During my recovery:

- I became determined to find ways of preventing another similar incident happening to another person.
- I began to understand how many people were affected by my incident: my wife and three children, numerous relatives and friends. *What a ripple effect!*
- I became aware of how close I was to not being here to write this article.

Prior to returning to work, the company that I had worked for was sold to a large multinational company and they wanted a safety officer. I was offered the job and have worked in the safety field for approximately 21 years. After creating a strong safety culture with that company, we moved to Saskatoon. In Saskatoon I worked to improve the safety culture for three large companies. It still frustrates me today when I hear of a workplace death or serious injury. I am always trying to find new ways of improving safety at my workplaces and the community I am living in.

I learned of Threads of Life in approximately 2009 and got a group of safety professionals together to start a safety barbecue. The goals of the safety barbecue were to bring safety awareness to the men and women working in construction and industry and raise funds for Threads of Life. In reality I was the first volunteer for Steps for Life in Saskatchewan.

In 2012 we started our first walk in Saskatoon – actually the first walk in Saskatchewan. We formed a committee and still today, we have two members that have been a part of planning every walk. The first walk had almost 100 participants and in 2019 we had just over 150 participants.

The walk is a great way of getting the safety message out to the province. This year as the family spokesperson for the walk I was interviewed three times on the radio, two interviews on the local television and the newspapers in Regina and Saskatoon.

My message this year was for every worker to take the time to look around their work area for hazards. If you observe a hazard, either fix the hazard or report it to your supervisor and set a plan in place to fix the hazard.

**Remember:** a family member or friend is counting on you to do the right thing.



Having a new granddaughter makes safety even more important to Bob!



*The following article was first published by the Institute for Work and Health. It details an Australian study we feel is relevant to Canadian families in the aftermath of work-related tragedy.*

When an accident left Morten in a wheelchair with severe traumatic injuries, family members stepped up and offered to help. His sister Claire arranged his accommodations and looked after his finances. His 80-year-old mother did his cooking, fussed over his meal times and otherwise kept a constant watch over him.

Morten, a man living in the Australian state of Victoria, often felt lucky that his family was so willing to provide the intensive, day-to-day care he needed. But other times, he felt uneasy being so reliant on them. He could see these relationships breaking down over time. That was why he was relieved to learn that he qualified for the services of professional caregivers as part of his compensation. Getting those services was a big break for the family, said his sister.

Morten was one of the people recovering from an injury who took part in a qualitative study on the impact of the recovery and compensation process on family members. The study was part of a larger project examining interactions between key stakeholders in three compensation systems in the state of Victoria—including two workers' compensation systems and one no-fault insurance system for traffic-related injuries—to understand the pros and cons of each system's approach.

The qualitative part of the project, focused on family members, was led by Dr. Agnieszka Kosny while she was at Australia's Monash University during a sabbatical leave from the Institute for Work & Health. It included interviews with nearly 20 injured persons and nine family members. A journal article on this study was published in *Disability and Rehabilitation* in February 2017.

The study found that family members play an important role in the aftermath of an injury—one that's seldom formally acknowledged by compensation systems in policy or procedure. It also found that the

## Family members play important but unacknowledged role in injury aftermath

### A study of three Australian compensation systems recommends formal support for burdened family members

recovery and injury compensation process can have a major impact on family members, particularly in the case of prolonged and complex injuries and illnesses. As a result, compensation systems should formally consider the role of family members and develop support programs for them as a means of improving health and function among injured people, the study authors stated.

#### **Stress and strain among key themes**

Through interviews with injured participants and their family members, the study identified several themes:

**Different types of support:** The support provided by family members spanned the gamut—from personal bodily care such as giving baths or dressing wounds to household chores such as doing laundry and yard work. Family members not only shouldered the expanded burdens of child care, elder care and paid employment, they often had to take on new responsibilities related to the compensation process. These included filling out forms, following up on claims requests and getting the injured individuals to medical appointments. Family members also provided emotional support by talking with and listening to the injured person—which was especially important when they ran into difficulty with the compensation process.

**Family as a source of strain and stress:** Even when family members provided welcome help, tensions sometimes arose when the injured persons felt their privacy and independence were compromised. Sometimes the injured individuals felt this strain when they considered how much time and energy family members were spending to care for them. Other times, the feeling that family members didn't fully appreciate their symptoms and functional limitations also led to conflict.

**Financial impact on family:** Beyond changes to family roles and dynamics, the financial impact of an injury on the family could be considerable. Even when compensated, the injury often resulted in many out-of-pocket expenses. Some family members had to cut back on paid work due to the additional burden of child care, housework and medical appointments. In addition, the worry that the injured person could lose his or her employment often weighed heavily on the family.

**Family context:** Families didn't always fit the assumed model. Sometimes, family members also had pre-existing medical

*continued on bottom of pg 7* Family members play...

## It's time for YOU.

It's easy to scroll past articles on Facebook about the importance of practicing self-care. It's not always easy to practice self-care—and it can have a lot to do with time. What if you don't have time? What if everything just feels too overwhelming for you to take that time? What do I have to sacrifice in order to have time to practice self-care? Questions like this are some of the biggest roadblocks to practicing self-care. The time of year can also play a role: anniversaries, birthdays, or the holidays can all bring up emotions that make it really hard to start a self-care routine. And if self-care is something new to you, the time required to incorporate it into your life might seem daunting.

A lot of those articles you see on Facebook don't take time into account. Self-care doesn't have to be taking a day off, or going to the spa, or saying no to everyone and everything. It can be anything that makes you feel good—or better. In the early days of grief, feeling good may seem too far out of reach, so instead reach for what hurts less and what feels kindest to yourself. All it takes is noticing everyday things. Maybe that's your first cup of coffee or

your last cup of tea. Maybe that's taking your dog for a walk, even when it's raining. Maybe that's chatting with your neighbour while you're putting out the trash. Self-care can be a part of your day without adding or taking anything away. In the graphic with this article, there are a couple of ideas that take between five minutes and one hour.

Self-care may be individual, but Threads of Life is a community first. This July, we're going to come together to have a conversation about self-care—because we know that walking with others along your grief journey can make that path just a little bit brighter. Join us for a series of blog posts and discussions where we're going to explore different ways to practice self-care, how to start a self-care routine, and what self-care looks like on days when everything feels hard. We'd love for you to be a part of our self-care community this July by sharing your own experiences and challenges with self-care -- watch Facebook and Instagram for our posts. In the meantime, here are a few simple ways that you can create a little bit more space for self-care in your day.

### If you have...

Making  
self-care  
manageable  
for you...and  
you...and you



- Make a cup of tea—and drink it without looking at your phone.
- Give your pet an extra cuddle.
- Put on your favourite song.
- Move your body—do some gentle stretches, walk around the block or even just stand up a few minutes
- Write down how you're feeling.
- Call a loved one.
- Make your favourite meal (ordering in counts).
- Read a book or magazine.

*continued from pg 6 Family members play...*

conditions that hampered their ability to provide support. Other existing obligations could pose a challenge as well, such as when family members had elderly parents or children with developmental disabilities to care for. Some families were already experiencing strained relationships prior to the injury, and the aftermath only amplified these difficulties.

### The compensation context

The interactions with compensation bodies could also shape the experience for the family. One issue brought up frequently by study participants was the lack of support offered as part of the compensation process. (When available, the information about such support may not have been shared.) This lack or perceived lack of support services added to the strain experienced by the injured individuals and their family caregivers.

The compensation bodies seemed to take it as a given that the injured individuals all had family members to help with the day-to-day

activities, pick up the additional child care, or be there for financial and emotional support, says Kosny. “The study participants by and large said it was clear that this help was needed, but case managers seldom acknowledged it, and offers of formal support were rare.”

While not all injuries or illnesses will have a major impact on the family, several participants in this study were affected profoundly. And yet, while the injured individuals had access to health care and mental health services, this was not always the case for the family members. Formal services offered as part of the compensation process—such as the professional caregivers provided to Morten—could go a long way to improve the health and well-being of injured individuals and their family members, notes Kosny.

“If family members are to play an active role in assisting injured people during recovery, then support services must be available for family members who need them,” she adds.

*Source: At Work, Issue 91, Winter 2018: Institute for Work & Health, Toronto*



Jennifer with fellow Saskatoon committee member Jeff Sabine

## Jennifer Ruskowski

“Any time I feel like it’s a lot of work organizing Steps for Life, I just think of that,” Jennifer says.

She first got involved in Saskatoon Steps for Life through her membership with the CSSE (Canadian Society of Safety Engineering). Fellow-CSSE member Bob Ocrane came to a meeting and announced that he was organizing a charity walk and looking for volunteers. Jennifer had never heard of Threads of Life, but she was “between volunteer commitments” at the time and the event seemed like a great fit with her work as a safety professional. Saskatoon just completed its seventh annual walk, and she has been involved since the beginning. The committee is fortunate to have a blend of long-time members and new volunteers, and Jennifer stresses that it’s a team effort.

“I feel very fortunate to work with great, dedicated committee members, and our day-of volunteers,” Jennifer says. “I’m also grateful for the support of Lynn [Danbrook, Regional Development Coordinator] and Threads of Life in planning the walk.”

While her contribution to Steps for Life and Threads of Life is clear, Jennifer feels she has benefited from her volunteer experience as well. Hearing the stories of loss from Threads of Life family members has influenced her as a safety person, she says, helping her to stay motivated. She’s also been able to build up skills like chairing meetings, taking minutes, marketing and event planning.

Like many of Threads of Life’s supporters, Jennifer builds her community in more ways than one. She coaches women to learn to mountain bike, and gives time to Habitat for Humanity, even participating in projects overseas.

But Threads of Life is still her major volunteer commitment. The highlight from this year’s walk, she says, is the same as every year: talking to family members and volunteers about why Steps for Life is important to them. “It’s that personal element” that’s kept her involved over the years, she says.

**Helping to run a complex event like Steps for Life – Walking for Families of Workplace Tragedy** can be pretty absorbing. The day of the walk brings a million details to oversee. But for long-time Saskatoon Steps for Life volunteer Jennifer Ruskowski, taking a moment to talk to the families participating makes it all more meaningful.

“Steps for Life is about awareness and fundraising,” Jennifer says, “but it’s also about the importance for families of honouring their loved one, and witnessing the support and commitment at the event.”

She recalls one of the walks, when a family new to the event came up and shared the story of their son’s death on the job, reminding Jennifer and everyone why they do what they do. Jennifer also had the honour of attending a family forum, and was moved by the Reflections Ceremony, when all the Threads of Life family members attending share a photo of themselves or their loved one.

## Shirley Hickman receives Sovereign’s Medal for Volunteers



Before she became Threads of Life’s executive director, Shirley Hickman was the organization’s first volunteer. In recognition of that work, and the many other volunteer contributions she makes, Shirley has been awarded the Sovereign’s Medal for Volunteers. She received the medal last fall in a ceremony presided over by the Honourable Janet Austin, Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia.

The Sovereign’s Medal for Volunteers is part of the Chancellery of Honours administered by the Office of the Secretary to the Governor General. Each nomination for the award is researched and then reviewed by an advisory committee, which makes recommendations to the Governor General. The listing of recipients noted “Shirley Hickman’s involvement in the community dates from the 1970s, and includes many local and provincial organizations. In 2003, she founded Threads of Life, which supports workers and families who have been affected by a workplace tragedy.”



# HOW TO...change safety cultures and support families

Our whole Canada-wide community of volunteers and partners has been out this spring, spreading the word about Threads of Life's programs and services, raising funds to support families affected by workplace tragedy, and changing health and safety cultures to prevent future tragedies. Here are just a few of the recent events and fundraisers.



Eacom Timber Corporation hosted a series of presentations where Threads of Life volunteer speaker Joanne Wade shared her story for workers, students and the public.



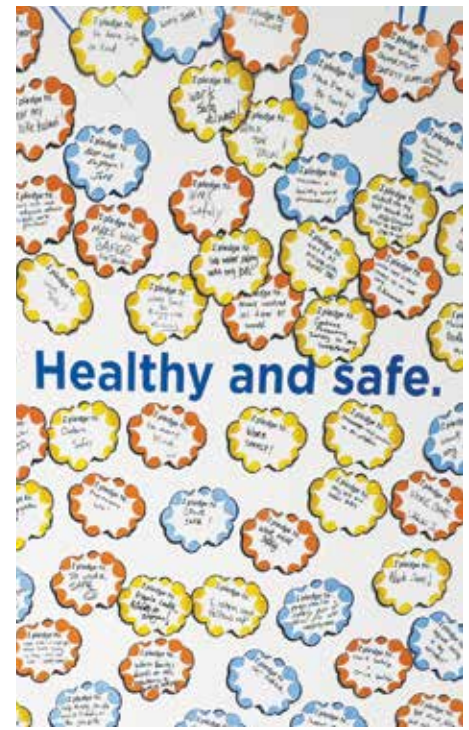
The Contractor Safety Services Threads of Life hockey tournament brought teams to the ice to raise money and have some fun. Local 27 Carpenters and Allied Workers won the cup!



Ellis Don in Edmonton held a barbecue in support of their fundraising efforts for Steps for Life, raising \$1,179.



And we always love those who are willing to go above and...below (the water that is) for safety and Threads of Life families. Walsh Canada held events aimed at awareness and fundraising during its health and safety week this spring.



Workplace Safety and Prevention Services set up a pledge wall at their annual Partners in Prevention conference. Attendees posted their health and safety promises, and WSPS donated \$1 for each pledge.

# Steps for Life 2019: 1000 Thank-yous



*Isn't yellow a beautiful colour?* It suggests life-giving sunlight, spring flowers, the shared warmth of a candle flame ... and of course the bright lights of thousands of Steps for Life walkers wearing their yellow t-shirts. Thanks to all of you—walkers, volunteers, sponsors, and donors – Steps for Life-Walking for Families of Workplace Tragedy 2019 surpassed its fundraising goal of \$675,000! That means more families affected by workplace tragedy will be able to attend family forums and have access to Volunteer Family Guides; more volunteer speakers will be trained; more people will share their stories in this newsletter; more will hear the message of safety. More hope. More healing. All thanks to you! One thousand thank yous, and more.



## Team Challenge winners

Steps for Life teams made huge strides this year, setting new markers for funds raised and levels of excitement. Our national walk sponsors truly led the way, with teams at community walks and groups of employees organizing their own events, from coast to coast. Our Team Challenge winners for 2019 are a blend of corporate teams, family members and our loyal volunteers – a perfect reflection of what Steps for Life is all about.

We wish we could give every Steps for Life participant a prize! For 2019, the Steps for Life Team Challenge winners are:

		Community	Team Name	Team Leader Name
NATIONAL	NATIONAL TEAM Winner	Toronto	One Modern Toronto	Celia Oliveira
	NATIONAL INDIVIDUAL Winner	St. John's	Dragon Lady	Dayle Biggin
Atlantic Canada	TEAM Winner	Halifax	Ellis Don Maritimes	Danielle Barnaby
	INDIVIDUAL Winner	Halifax	Ellis Don Maritimes	Danielle Barnaby
Central Canada	TEAM Winner	Toronto	Ellis Don Toronto	Olivia D'Aquila
	INDIVIDUAL Winner	Toronto	Ellis Don Toronto	Dennis Christie
Western Region	TEAM Winner	Winnipeg	Team Helgy	Tami Helgeson
	INDIVIDUAL Winner	Winnipeg	Team Helgy	Tami Helgeson

# 1000 Reasons; 1000 Stories

This year we asked you to share your **#1000ReasonsToWalk** in Steps for Life. Here are some of the ways you spread the word about why Steps for Life and Threads of Life are important to you:



**9+** news stories on radio, TV, newspapers and online



**25** family spokespeople shared their stories at Steps for Life events



**210** different Memory Lane signs at walks across Canada



## SO MANY

Facebook posts, Instagram videos, and Twitter messages!

“**Modu-Loc** is a safety-conscious company, and we pride ourselves on prioritizing the well-being of our employees. As a supplier to the fast-paced construction industry, we are well aware of the dangers faced by our customers and employees every day. When we found Threads of Life, it became clear that a partnership made perfect sense - after all, Safety & Accountability and Family & Well-being are two of our Core Values.

This year, Modu-Loc became a National Sponsor of Threads of Life. We are proud to be champions for a cause that strives to achieve workplace safety in all industries. This partnership has underscored our own commitment to safety, and helped to reinforce our internal safety initiatives and processes. This has been an incredible experience for our teams coast-to-coast, and we look forward to working with Threads of Life again in the future.”

-Modu-Loc Fence Rentals' President & CFO Jim Mitrakos

## Coming Events

Please let us know if you'd like more information or would like to get involved!

**Prairie-Western Family Forum** –  
September 27-29, 2019

**Central Family Forum** –  
October 25-27, 2019

### SHARE THIS NEWSLETTER!

Pass it along or leave it in your  
lunchroom or lobby for  
others to read.



The Standards Program Trustmark is  
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## How to reach us

Toll-free: 1-888-567-9490  
Fax: 1-519-685-1104

Association for Workplace Tragedy  
Family Support – Threads of Life

P.O. Box 9066  
1795 Ernest Ave.  
London, ON N6E 2V0

contact@threadsoflife.ca  
www.threadsoflife.ca  
www.stepsforlife.ca



*Association for Workplace Tragedy Family Support*

Threads of Life is a registered charity dedicated to supporting families along their journey of healing who have suffered from a workplace fatality, life-altering illness or occupational disease. Threads of Life is the Charity of Choice for many workplace health and safety events. Charitable organization business #87524 8908 RR0001.

### MISSION

Our mission is to help families heal through a community of support and to promote the elimination of life-altering workplace injuries, illnesses and deaths.

### VISION

Threads of Life will lead and inspire a culture shift, as a result of which work-related injuries, illnesses and deaths are morally, socially and economically unacceptable

### VALUES

We believe that:

**Caring:** Caring helps and heals.

**Listening:** Listening can ease pain and suffering.

**Sharing:** Sharing our personal losses will lead to healing and preventing future devastating work-related losses.

**Respect:** Personal experiences of loss and grief need to be honoured and respected.

**Health:** Health and safety begins in our heads, hearts and hands, in everyday actions.

**Passion:** Passionate individuals can change the world.

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## Yes I will, help bring hope and healing to families

### Gift Payment Options

- I'd like to make monthly gifts  
 \$25  \$50  \$100  \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- I'd prefer to make a one-time gift  
 \$25  \$50  \$100  \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- I've enclosed a void cheque to start direct withdrawal for monthly giving
- You may also donate to Threads of Life online at [www.threadsoflife.ca/donate](http://www.threadsoflife.ca/donate)
- Please send me updates about Threads of Life events via email at: \_\_\_\_\_

Visa  MasterCard

\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  
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expiry

NAME ON CARD \_\_\_\_\_

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Threads of Life, P.O. Box 9066 • 1795 Ernest Ave • London, ON N6E 2V0 1 888 567 9490 • [www.threadsoflife.ca](http://www.threadsoflife.ca)

All donations are tax deductible. Charitable Registration Number #87524 8908 RR0001

# Thanks to our Steps for Life sponsors!

THANK YOU! Steps for Life benefits from the support of sponsors both on a national and community level. Thank you for demonstrating your leadership and your commitment to health and safety!



Association for Workplace Tragedy Family Support

## NATIONAL SPONSORS



## Champions





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**COMMUNITY SUPPORTERS**

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 Bluewater Power  
 Canadian Society Of Safety Engineers Hamilton Chapter - CSSE  
 Canadian Society Of Safety Engineers National - CSSE  
 Carpenters Millwrights College & Local 579  
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 Gateway Safety Services Ltd  
 IBEW Local 1615  
 ICON West Construction  
 Precon Manufacturing Ltd.  
 Resolute Forest Products  
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 Trinity Safety And Training  
 United Steelworkers - Eastern Ontario Area Council

**COMMUNITY ADVOCATES**

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     London Chapter - CSSE  
 Canadian Society of Safety Engineers Northern  
     Light Chapter - CSSE  
 Carpenters' Union Local 249 Kingston  
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