



MEDIA RELEASE



DIE-ALOGUES: AN EVENING OF DESSERTS AND DISCUSSIONS ON LIFE AND DEATH

And in the end, it's not the years in your life that count. It's the life in your years.

May 29, 2014 – Two local organizations have joined forces to encourage a difficult but important conversation within our community about living life to the fullest. Death and planning for death is something that people are often uncomfortable talking about; however, it is an inevitable part of each person's life and it needs to be discussed.

Leadership Thunder Bay, through a Community Action Project, partnered with Hospice Northwest to bring the first of a new event series aimed at educating and raising awareness of end-of-life issues in the Thunder Bay community. Funding for the event was supplied by Tbaytel.

"As an organization, Hospice Northwest strives to provide better access to quality end-of-life care within our community; Die-alogues is our most recent effort to achieve this through education and awareness," says Joan Williams, Executive Director for Hospice Northwest. "Most of us feel unprepared and helpless when someone we care for is facing an illness with no known cure. Our goal is to support people to find or rediscover ways to respond with compassion and understanding to the universal experiences of illness, death and loss."

The first in a series of events was held tonight and was centred on the topic of "Bucket Lists in Everyday Life". The group of 70+ participants was encouraged to acknowledge the fact that death is a part of life and that each of us should live our lives accordingly. Over the course of the evening, participants had the opportunity to hear firsthand experiences of accepting the fragility of life and living more purposefully because of it. Community members who attended the event were also able to engage in respectful and thought provoking *die-alogues* with fellow participants over refreshments and desserts.

"We are really proud of the turn-out to the first event of this kind in Thunder Bay and are glad to have been part of making this a reality for Hospice Northwest," says Cynthia Olsen, a member of the Community Action Project with Leadership Thunder Bay.

This community-minded event was free to attend and registration, once open, filled up quickly.

Stay tuned for future *Die-alogues* events that will focus on a variety of carefully selected themes designed to initiate thought-provoking conversations on end-of-life care. For more information, or to be added to a contact list for upcoming *Die-alogues* events, please contact Hospice Northwest.

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