

You can give more families peace of mind...



My husband Michael and I never had an empty house.

From our three beautiful children to our combined 15 siblings and an endless number of friends, cousins, and their partners and kids, our home was always bursting at the seams with love, joyful chaos and lots of food! Never was that more true than with the arrival of our precocious granddaughter, Kitanna, who has spent much of her life under our roof.

To call us a tight-knit family would be an understatement. So although not unexpected, Michael's death at the end of December 2019 came as an especially devastating blow.

We met when I was just 17 and were married with our first child by the time I was 20. We were blessed with three children: our two sons, Stephan and Brian and our daughter, Jennelle. We always agreed that our children would be the center of our lives and they certainly were!

We took our kids just about anywhere their hearts desired, following their interests and travelling together as a family. We share so many beautiful memories from our biannual family trips to Florida, to road trips to Cape Cod, the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown and a local favourite, Niagara Falls, and Michael was particularly excited when they joined us for Carnival back in Trinidad where we were both born.

Michael was such a joy-filled man, and he loved nothing more than sharing his good fortune and spirit with others. We were completely blindsided when Michael was diagnosed with bile duct cancer in 2017, at just 64 years old. After what initially seemed like a successful surgery that fall, we were told Michael's chances of survival were still only 1 in 4. We were devastated when the cancer returned only a year later – and it returned with a vengeance.

One of our few points of solace during those last heartbreaking days was the exemplary care we received at Margaret Bahen Hospice. At a time when we felt completely untethered, the calm and compassionate attention of the care team made such an important difference for our family.

<Salutation>, that's why I'm hoping you'll show your support of Margaret Bahen Hospice by making a donation of \$x, \$xx, \$xxx or even \$xxxx today. The high quality of care my husband received at Margaret Bahen Hospice was such an unexpected blessing. Every dollar you are able to give translates into peace of mind for a family in their most difficult times.

...please turn over



We knew we were nearing the end of Michael's life during the 2019 holiday season, though none of us could have predicted how soon his journey would come to an end. Michael was too weak to travel so Michael's siblings and their large extended families surprised us by packing the house one last time to be in his presence, knocking at the door to announce they had brought Christmas to us that year.

I'll always cherish that beautiful memory. **But only two days later, Michael's condition rapidly deteriorated.**

When we brought him to his last visit to the hospital, the oncologist on duty gently told us he wouldn't be returning home. Instead, he suggested that we consider Margaret Bahen Hospice which happened to be just across the street, and we did. We had been so focussed on keeping Michael with us that we'd never really considered where he'd spend his last days. Fortunately, we couldn't have asked for anywhere better.

The hospice truly feels like a miracle in retrospect. Despite the high demand for their services, there was a bed available for Michael. It was an unseasonably warm winter day as we wheeled him straight from the hospital to Margaret Bahen Hospice – and the warmth didn't go away as we walked through the hospice doors.

Instead, we were immediately comforted by a genuine welcome and outpouring of support from the hospice staff. They ensured Michael could rest without pain. He was given warm blankets, his favourite music played over the speakers, and a constant stream of family trickled in and out to say their goodbyes. Kitanna, who had just turned five, referred to the hospice as "Papa's hotel". She never felt afraid there, and a play area meant she had somewhere to go when she needed a break.

Margaret Bahen Hospice really considers the whole family. **So it was a shock to learn that so many essential aspects of the hospice – building operations, repairs, food and activity supplies and support staff – depend on donations from people like you and me!**

Michael's end-of-life care has led my family to advocate for the unparalleled services of Margaret Bahen Hospice whenever we can. We fundraise and participate in the annual Hike for Hospice so that more families can benefit from their exceptional care.

My husband lived his life to the very fullest, and I could not be more grateful for its peaceful conclusion. Our time at Margaret Bahen Hospice truly touched my heart. **I hope you'll make a gift today and support this important place for our community.** Together, we can bring compassion, dignity and love to more families' final days together.

Sincerely,

Sue Jaggernauth

P.S. It's truly an honour to continue supporting Margaret Bahen Hospice in Michael's memory. Whether or not you've also been impacted by the hospice's wonderful care, I hope you'll join me in donating today!