

HOPE QUARTERLY

Sharing the stories and celebrating the work of the Georgian Bay Cancer Support Centre

2026 - ISSUE 3



THE HEALING POWER OF MUSIC IS HELPING MEMBERS FACING CANCER

The Georgian Bay Cancer Support Centre (GBCSC) recognized in early 2024 that the power of music can be a positive force as people cope with cancer. It prompted the launch of our Music is Therapy program. Today, it's an ongoing program at our Penetanguishene location and sessions are now also part of the program mix at our Collingwood location.

Music is Therapy sessions are led monthly by Jeff Callender in Collingwood. He's a retired caregiver and lifelong musician, who has been playing guitar since the age of 8 with a background performing in several bands.

"I have lots of great memories growing up with Dad on the violin, Uncle Harv on the guitar, banjo, and violin, and Grandpa on the harmonica."

As a guitar player/ singer/songwriter, he has performed both classic rock and country. Though he did play piano a bit in his 20s, guitar is his instrument of choice.

Jeff recognized music could be impactful for those fighting cancer when his wife was going through her journey in 2024.

"Playing for her from time to time seemed to help her spirits. I hope I can now do the same for others," says Jeff. "Music can provide comfort during difficult times. It helps people process emotions, reduce stress, and find peace when life feels overwhelming. Sometimes the right melody can say what the heart is unable to put into words."

Not only is he passionate about the healing power of music, he's also excited to bring comfort, connection, and joy to others.

"I hope this program gives membership something to enjoy and creates happiness, memories and even a tear or two if a song touches them deep down inside."

Ted Voelker came out for the the first session of Music is Therapy. For him, music is an important way to cope with this cancer journey.

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MEMBERSPEAK

What is the single most significant way the GBCSC has helped you during your cancer journey to date?

The GBCSC supports individuals fighting cancer as well as their caregivers. We asked some of our Members how they have felt supported by the Centre



Elizabeth Matos

As a Thanatologist and EOL Doula, I was thrown a real curveball with my cancer diagnosis. My role is to help others, and now I needed help.

As I navigated my treatment, the GBCSC has been supporting me every step of the way with warmth, compassion and understanding. I will be forever grateful for the programs, participants, facilitators, therapists and donors who support this amazing, valued organization.”



Sandy Stringer

The GBCSC is recognized as a place of hope, comfort, strength and courage for those battling with cancer.

These inner tools help us get through hard times by taking things one day at a time, and leaning on your support system.”



Ted Voelker

I have benefited from numerous activities that are offered at the GBCSC. The single most significant impact has been the many people I have interacted with whether it has been with staff, volunteers, or other cancer survivors and caregivers.

Just knowing there is a place where you can go to share experiences and challenges we face is a comfort in itself.”

A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As the summer unfolds, I'm reminded of just how much can be accomplished when a community comes together with purpose. In mid-August, hundreds of riders, volunteers, sponsors, and supporters will gather for our annual Georgian Bay Cycle for Hope. Our goal is to raise \$210,000 to ensure individuals and families facing cancer continue to have access to the compassionate support they need, close to home.

This year also marks a significant milestone as the GBCSC celebrates 15 years of supporting individuals and families across our region. We hope you'll join us on September 12 as we

celebrate this incredible milestone and recognize the people who have shaped our journey.

I am filled with gratitude for the volunteers, donors, community partners, staff, and Members who have built the legacy we celebrate today. As we continue to grow and expand to meet the increasing needs of our community, your ongoing support remains the foundation of everything we do. Thank you for being part of our story and helping us build an even stronger future filled with hope.

Dylan Lalande



Healing Power of Music Continued from Page 1

“Playing guitar gives you satisfaction to work on new songs with others who share your interest. It's a nice distraction from the day-to-day dealing with cancer. You can focus on what you are playing or trying to play.”

Jeff says he's excited to watch the program in Collingwood grow as more Members take part and enjoy having fun with music.

SHARON PETTIGREW

COMMUNITY:

Penetanguishene

MEMBER SINCE:

July 2025

UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL

How did you find out about the Georgian Bay Cancer Support Centre?

My family doctor recommended I contact GBCSC for support, so I called and set up an appointment with Bronson Black, the Member Services and Programs Coordinator. He gave me a tour of the Centre and talked about all the programs, activities and support groups available.

I received a wonderful comfort kit filled with very useful products, and I was lucky to be there on a Monday when the amazing volunteer bakers were making muffins and baked goods for the Members to have with coffee.

What was your first encounter or experience with the Centre?

My first program was Chair Yoga and the people I met were really friendly. It helped to talk to those who have gone through similar cancers and procedures.

When my appointments allowed time, I also enjoyed Yoga for Breast Cancer, Body Balance, Qigong, Yoga Nidra and Seated Massage. You always feel so much better after exercising, visiting, and just getting out of the house.

How has being a Member supported you through the ups and downs of your cancer journey to date?

Being a Member has helped to keep my mind and thoughts positive. Keeping active and talking to other Members is so important.

You have taken advantage of several GBCSC programs and services. Does anything stand out to you about these interactions?

All the program facilitators were so helpful in recommending exercise movements, breathing exercises, and ways to help my body and mind to feel better.

If someone asked you why they should become a GBCSC Member, what would you say?

Any person who has been diagnosed with cancer would definitely feel better with the support of all the friendly staff and programs geared to help you while sharing your journey with others.

Did You Know...

The GBCSC's annual Georgian Bay Cycle For Hope has raised close to \$900,000 over 14 years. This year over \$50,000 of the total funds raised is thanks to the generosity of numerous local businesses who support the event as sponsors.





The 1st Cycle for Hope Ride in Collingwood - 2024

CYCLE FOR HOPE MAKING INROADS AROUND THE BAY

The GBCSC 's largest fundraiser is the Georgian Bay Cycle For Hope, now in its 15th year. When services began to be offered in the Collingwood area in 2024, it only made sense to launch a west side of the Bay event.

Scott Metcalfe, a GBCSC Member and avid cyclist, was keen to be a part of the Collingwood organizing committee. To him, the event has become a great way to connect with the broader community. "This event has the ability to unite everyone in the community in a fun activity the entire family can enjoy at any level of experience."

The event has grown significantly in Collingwood since 2024 when a smaller-scale event had 23 cyclists. Last year it attracted close to 100 cyclists raising over \$40,000. Scott attributes to this growth in part to the cause.

"Direct personal experience to cancer is likely the main factor along with contributing to the support of programs and services for those in the local community."

Scott admits his personal journey dealing with cancer has been a big part of getting involved with the event.

I've had cancer and understand it takes something from you.

Cycling was my way to finding 'normal' in the chaos that cancer brings.

A personal cancer journey is also what attracted longtime participant, fundraiser, donor, and GBCSC Member Bill Furse to get involved.

"I see firsthand the importance of having a group where cancer patients can express their feelings amongst others who share the same disease," he explains. "There are so many worthwhile causes in the Collingwood area but this one is personal for me."

Bill was among the top Cycle For Hope fundraisers in 2025 raising thousands of dollars. The 83-year-old is taking on the 100 km route in 2026 and looking forward to cycling with two friends. "The encouragement that we give each other is my favourite part."

Several local businesses have stepped up to support the event. The 2026 Collingwood event has seen sponsorships triple from the previous year.

"For families navigating the overwhelming realities of cancer, community support acts as a vital anchor," says Bruce Zigman of Summit Social House. "Supporting the GBCSC means a lot to us!"

To Scott, the community response for the Cycle For Hope has been amazing.

"Being part of something that is groundbreaking, seeing it grow, and knowing the impact it will have on our Members and the community has been profoundly humbling."



**Georgian Bay
Cancer Support Centre**

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