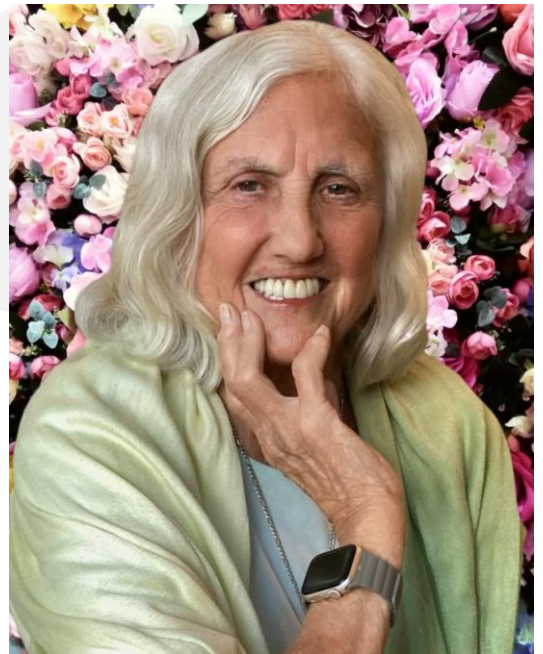


Larry Hnetka Community Builder Award 2023

Sue Wong



Sue Wong saw a need and was not afraid to roll up her sleeves and get to work on tackling a difficult and challenging issue! Together with her friend Sue Hurd, they had a vision for a small home-away-from-home hospice with a holistic approach to death and dying that would care for the dying person and their families before, during, and after death. They worked together to create the Vancouver Hospice Society and to making the dream of providing compassionate end-of-life care for those facing death and bereavement a reality.

In an amazing and courageous move, Sue took on the daunting task of helping to raise the money needed to build a welcoming hospice home. This team raised millions of dollars along the way, working diligently at securing the funds needed to buy land on Granville Street. The two Sues and a small team of volunteers established two thrift stores that to this day provide ongoing funds for the hospice.

She was instrumental in co-creating the non-profit Vancouver Hospice Society to run the hospice and was a driving force in getting the new home built. Sue's vision for building a beautiful home-away-from-home hospice that could provide complete care became a reality!

Sue was a Director of the Vancouver Hospice Society until completion of the project. In addition to raising three children, she did all this while being a part-time, then a full-time caregiver for her husband Dr Tony Wong who had suffered a series of increasingly limiting strokes.

Sue's generous gifts of time and compassion have given dying people a safe and home-like place where families have access to a playroom, a garden, a living room with a cozy fireplace, and feel supported. She played a big part in bringing in many volunteers to support the work at the hospice and gave them a sense of community too.

Sue Wong is a true community builder who has made a real difference in people's lives. Active, brave, innovative, and humble, she is a champion for the bereaved and grieving community. The very first program that Sue co-founded was the Bereavement Walking Program. Through the weekly Grief Walks in Kitsilano, she provides support to the grieving community with the opportunity to gather with others who have lost a loved one and are experiencing grief. These are supportive spaces to walk, talk, and share, while receiving fresh air and gentle exercise.

Sue is a Healing Touch practitioner, and this is a big part of her current volunteer activities. Healing Touch is a complimentary energy-based technique that helps promote relaxation, harmony, and a sense of well-being. Healing Touch is available through the hospice on Granville Street offering to assist families in balancing physical, emotional, mental and spiritual energies.

Aware of the strength and importance of community, she remains very committed to nurturing these connections. She believes in walking alongside people to help them find the strength they need. She believes that when community comes together to support each other that eventually people will go on to help others where they can.

She saw a need and took action to do something very tangible about it - raising millions and building community along the way. Sue is 80 this year and is nothing short of remarkable!

Congratulations to Sue on being chosen as the 2023 recipient of the Larry Hnetka Community Builder Award!