

Local author releases book on caring

David Feil
Cochrane Times

Having relearned the importance of caring in his own life with his brother's cancer diagnosis, local author David Irvine has written a new book sharing his experiences in the hope that his readers will rediscover what it means to care for others in their own lives, whether it be for family or a stranger at the grocery store.

"I used to think you had to know about something to write a book but if you want to know something, write," said Irvine, who wrote *Caring is Everything* as a departure from his usual topic of corporate culture after he started to reexamine his life following his brother's cancer diagnosis in 2013.

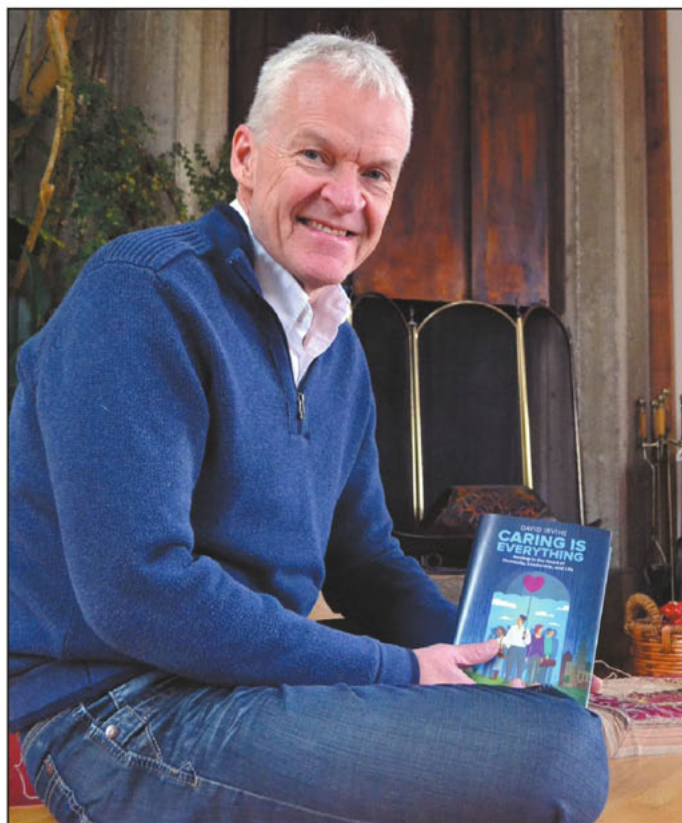
"I've spent more time with him in the last three years than the last 30," said Irvine, who began to make weekly trips to Sundre after learning that his brother, Hal, had an inoperable brain tumor and it was during these visits that he was inspired by his brother's own work as a family physician to write a book about the role caring plays in our lives.

While spending time with Hal, Irvine gradually noticed how people at the hospital would respond to his brother from the staff to his colleagues to his own patients, all of whom genuinely cared about Hal's well-being.

"He was so loved and I asked him what made him such a good doctor," said Irvine.

Hal told him that being a good doctor was the same thing as being a good person: caring. From there, the seed was planted for Irvine to write a book about what it is that calls people to care for others and how important it is to be present in a person's life, whether for a person who had a bad day or someone who knows that cancer will take their life in the near future.

"I'd like to shine a light on the undervalued virtue of human goodness," said Irvine, who has noticed a growing deficit as the younger generations are expected to have spent four years texting over the course of their lives and busy lifestyles where every moment must be accounted for have started to take a toll on the empathy and kindness of people not so much in their ability to be kind but to put in the effort to make it more than a gesture. "It's easy to find a lack of car-



David Irvine will be reading from his new book *Caring is Everything* at Heritage House on Nov. 12 at 2 p.m., which he hopes will help to remind people what it means to be kind in all facets of our increasingly busy and complicated lives.

ing stories and it's my job to find the stories of caring."

While much of the book focuses on Hal and his own personal experiences, including a period of depression, Irvine pulls from experiences that go beyond their lives as a doctor and family therapist turned organizational consultant to exemplify how genuine acts of caring can change a peoples' lives regardless of the individual context.

"Caring enriches every facet of our lives. It renders workplaces worth working in, schools worth learning in, our relationships worth being in, and the world worth living in," said Irvine. "Caring guides us toward our authentic selves, to the lives we are meant to live. It makes us better people."

As an example, Irvine recalls a time nearly a decade ago when he was pulled over by a police officer for doing a rolling stop at a four-way intersection and fully expected he was going to get a ticket. Instead, he was

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shown the difference between doing your job and wanting to make a difference.

"He could have just written me a ticket but he told me how he'd been at a fatal accident weeks before and he told me he didn't want that to happen to me," said Irvine, noting that if he had been given a ticket or warning the incident would have held far less power than that story that still comes to mind every time he approaches a stop sign. "That's the power of somebody caring instead of just doing a job."

"This is not a [written] from a sociological or academic perspective, it comes from my own story," said Irvine, whose desire in publishing *Caring is Everything* is to begin a national conversation that reminds people to look beyond themselves to make our local and global community as strong and supportive as possible. "Caring is who we are [but] it takes courage to care. Caring isn't an act when things are going well, it's how we respond to others when we're exhausted and can barely keep our heads up."

"Anybody who cares and wants to learn the value of caring will want to read this book," said Irvine, who believes the stories he tells, from his own to that of a single mother supporting her daughter when she came out as transgendered in a strongly religious community, to a woman fleeing an abusive relationship in her own country only to be left apart and suicidal coming to Canada, to the trials faced by his niece trying to bring education to girls and women in Afghanistan.

"I'm not writing this book to sell it. [Caring is Everything] is a very personal book that reaches the heart of humanity."

Those interested in reading *Caring is Everything* can pick up a copy at Tea/Books and Other Things or attend a reading and book signing Irvine will be holding at Heritage House Coffee Co., 214 1st St. W., on Sat. Nov. 12 between 2 and 4 p.m.

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