

The *Caring* CONNECTION

VNA Care NETWORK & HOSPICE

Fall 2009

FAMILY CREATES CHERISHED MEMORIES AT HOSPICE RESIDENCE

The red brick house at 920 South Street, Needham, became “Heaven on Earth” for Elizabeth “Betty” Drew and her family.

Betty was widowed twice, raised three children on her own, and worked hard to take care of her family. Even though she had a difficult life, she never complained and always had a smile on her face. At the age of 77, she was diagnosed with myelodysplasia, which left her body unable to produce a sufficient supply of blood cells. The coming months brought frequent blood transfusions and knowledge that at any time she could develop a fatal infection or bleed.

Although she was able to remain active, daughter Susan Brouillette said, “She was dying on the inside.” Susan clearly remembers the day her mother ran a 103-degree temperature that caused her to be hospitalized. For the next three weeks, Betty was in and out of the hospital.

The eight months of frequent doctor’s visits, transfusions, and hospitalizations began taking their toll. During one of Susan’s

visits to the hospital, she knew her “Mom was sick of it.” Betty’s IV was missing. Susan asked her mother how it felt without the IV, and she responded, “It feels great.”

Susan was already familiar with hospice, a specialized type of care for terminally ill patients and their loved ones. The combination of physical, emotional, spiritual, and practical support helps patients and families focus on life. VNA Care Network & Hospice provides this care in patients’ homes, nursing homes, and assisted living and other facilities.



Betty Drew (center) with her grandchildren Jared (left) and Erica Brouillette.

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VNA CARE NETWORK & HOSPICE OFFERS HOLIDAY GIFTS WITH A PURPOSE



If you’re struggling to find a gift that’s sure to fit, consider a unique present that also supports compassionate home health and hospice care in local communities.

LIGHT A LIFE/HOSPICE TREE OF MEMORIES

Light A Life and the Hospice Tree of Memories programs offer a meaningful way to honor

caregivers, friends, family, and loved ones or memorialize those who are no longer with us.

Donors to these campaigns honor a wide range of people — spouses, parents, children, teachers, and even pets. VNA Care Network & Hospice will notify the honorees or other designees of the generous gift or donors may choose to receive cards from the agency to present to the honorees themselves.

For more information or to make a gift to either program, please visit www.vnacarenetwork.org or contact Jodi

Vigneron, development associate, at 888-663-3688, ext. 1363 or jvigneron@vnacarenetwork.org.

HOLIDAY POPS

Celebrate the season with tickets to the 12th annual Holiday Pops featuring Dirk Hillyer and the Hillyer Festival Orchestra on Saturday, Dec. 12, in Abbot Hall, Marblehead.

This holiday tradition benefits VNA Care Network & Hospice and the Rotary Club of Marblehead Harbor. Nearly \$300,000 has been given back to the community through the charitable mission of both organizations.

Doors open at 7 p.m. for a dessert reception, and the concert begins at 8 p.m.

Tickets go on sale Thursday, Nov. 12, and cost \$50 for a table seat and \$35 for a balcony seat. Table seats are limited and can only be purchased through the mail. An order form will be available on Nov. 12 in the *Marblehead Reporter* and online at www.vnacarenetwork.org and www.rcomh.org. Balcony tickets may be purchased by mail or by calling Jodi Vigneron, development associate, at 888-663-3688, ext. 1363.

HOSPICE RESIDENCE A “HEAVEN ON EARTH” AND INSPIRES DAUGHTER TO VOLUNTEER *...continued from front cover*

The agency also offers three homelike hospice residences for people who want hospice care but are unable to continue living in their own homes. Susan’s research on how to best help her Mom led her to the Tippet Home in Needham. (VNA Care Network & Hospice also includes Chilton House in Cambridge and the Rose Monahan Hospice Home in Worcester.)

“I spent five minutes walking around the house and knew this was the place,” said Susan. Tippet’s homelike atmosphere and supportive staff made it a welcoming spot for family and friends to spend time with Betty and create memories they still cherish.

There were lazy Saturday mornings when you could smell eggs cooking down the hall, sunny days sitting in the garden, and the evening a harpist played at Betty’s bedside while Susan held her mother’s hand.

One of Susan’s favorite times at Tippet was her daughter Erica’s ninth birthday party. Erica and her Gram had always

been inseparable. The family celebrated with pizza and cake. “It was a great atmosphere. Everyone was so happy. It was beautiful,” said Susan.

A week later, Betty passed away with Susan, devoted son-in-law George Brouillette, 84-year-old sister Mary Allen, and niece Fluffy Fisher by her side. Their time together at Tippet was “Heaven on Earth. ...My mother loved it here,” said Susan.

She now volunteers for the hospice program, helping staff with administrative projects. Her visits to Tippet have a “healing effect” and she loves seeing the VNA Care Network & Hospice staff who cared for her mother.

Take a virtual tour of the Tippet Home or VNA Care Network & Hospice’s other residences at www.vnacarenetwork.org. Learn more about how VNA Care Network & Hospice can help you or a loved one with a terminal illness by contacting 800-728-1862 or info@vnacarenetwork.org.

GLOUCESTER OFFICE MARKS 95TH WITH WELLNESS EVENT, SPECIAL GUESTS

VNA Care Network & Hospice’s Gloucester office recently celebrated 95 years of caring for Cape Ann residents with a reception and wellness screenings at the Rose Baker Senior Center in Gloucester.

State Senator Bruce Tarr was on hand to present a citation “in recognition of 95 years of dedicated, remarkable, and caring service to the citizens of Gloucester and Cape Ann.”

He told the crowd, “We all know by picking up the newspaper or watching the television or listening to the radio just how much of a debate is going on in our country right now about making our health care system better. I would suggest that folks in Washington would do well to be informed by the

model that’s occurring right here and has been working well for 95 years.”

Door prizes went to Josh Brackett of Rockport and Shirley French, Mary Gabry, and Lee Harty, all of Gloucester.



Vicky Klibansky, RN, admissions director, (left) welcomed guests including Gloucester Mayor Carolyn Kirk.



Jane Woodbury, vice president of business and fund development, presented the first Anchor of Support Award to Sen. Tarr for his tireless efforts to promote home- and community-based health care that helps seniors live independently.



Nurses from VNA Care Network & Hospice conducted free blood pressure, bone density, and blood sugar screenings. Betsy Jordan, RN, liaison nurse, (left) checked the blood pressure of Jean Ryan, a former clinical services assistant at the agency’s Gloucester office.

BUSINESSES HELP PATIENTS ACHIEVE OPTIMAL HEALTH AT HOME



Helping people remain at home despite illness or injury has been the priority of VNA Care Network & Hospice for over a century.

Whether it is a frail elder with heart and lung disease, a cancer patient receiving an infusion of chemotherapy, or a premature infant in need of feeding tubes and other interventions to get through that first year of life, it is VNA Care Network & Hospice's skilled and compassionate clinicians who deliver this vital care in patients' homes across Eastern and Central Massachusetts.

This care would not be possible without the generous support of our donors, including corporate sponsors. The following businesses have contributed to the 2009 Business Campaign:

GOLD

The Protector Group Insurance Agency, Inc.

SILVER

Gorton's Seafoods

BRONZE

Abbott Bioresearch Center
Cape Ann Savings Bank
Robert Reiser & Co.
Specialty Medical Equipment, LLC

CONTRIBUTION

Dedham Savings
KCB Solutions, Inc.
Rockport National Bank

OTHER

Bainbridge International, Inc.
Barry Equipment Co., Inc.
Brodney & Sons, Inc.
Cape Ann Insurance Agency, Inc.
Cape Ann Marina Corp.
First Parking Corp.
Good as Gold Coffee Systems, Inc.
Keating Enterprises, Inc.
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New England Mechanical Services, Inc.
Nichols Candies, Inc.
Pine Brook Landscaping
Ransford Pest Control, Inc.
Secured Self-Storage, Inc.
Vita Needle Company

HOME RUN USES WIDE SPECTRUM OF SERVICES TO AID SENIORS IN MANAGING CARDIAC AND OTHER DISEASES *...continued from back page*

Home Run not only offers in-home care, but other services to promote wellness, including telephone calls to see how patients are doing, medication reviews, referral to community services such as Summit ElderCare, and monthly gatherings featuring guest speakers about ways to stay healthy.

Minnie's Home Run services include telehealth. The technology allows VNA Care Network & Hospice's clinicians to know how patients are doing between in-person visits. The small, easy-to-use telehealth unit takes measurements and asks questions that are important to patients' health. The information is sent over a toll-free telephone line where it is reviewed by VNA Care Network & Hospice staff. Potential problems can be spotted early and changes made quickly to patients' care plans.

"I thought I wouldn't be able to use the equipment, but my nurse said, 'It'll be a piece of cake.' She was right," said Minnie, who now takes 10 minutes out of each day to check her blood pressure and more. The unit even reminds her to take medications.

Barbara Brooks, vice president of clinical services, said, "Home Run's a hit with patients. It helps people stay out of the emergency room and hospital, and be where they most want to be — at home."

For more information about Home Run or VNA Care Network & Hospice's home health care, telehealth program, and other services, contact the Referral Center at 800-728-1862 or info@vnacarenetwork.org.

TWELVE WAYS TO HELP SOMEONE COPE WITH GRIEF DURING THE HOLIDAYS



The holidays are quickly approaching and, while many people look forward to yearly traditions and the general good feelings associated with the season, some people dread the holidays. For those who have lost a loved one during the past year, the holidays may emphasize their grief.

The holidays, especially the first ones after losing a loved one, can be particularly difficult for one who is grieving.

Often, friends and family members of those affected by a loss are unsure how to act or what to say to support their grieving loved one.

VNA Care Network & Hospice's bereavement coordinators and hospice chaplains recommend the following 12 ways to help a friend or loved one cope during the holidays:

1. Be supportive of the way the person chooses to handle the holidays. Some may wish to follow traditions; others may choose to change their rituals. Remember, there is no right way or wrong way to handle the holidays.
2. Offer to help the person with baking and/or cleaning. Both tasks can be overwhelming for one trying to deal with raw emotions.
3. Offer to help him or her decorate for the holidays.
4. Offer to help with holiday shopping or give your loved one catalogs or online shopping sites that may be helpful.
5. Invite the person to attend a religious service with you and your family.
6. Invite your loved one to your home for the holidays.
7. Help your loved one prepare and mail holiday cards.
8. Ask the person if he or she is interested in volunteering with you during the holiday season. Doing something for someone else, such as helping at soup kitchens or working with children, may help your loved one feel better about the holidays.
9. Donate a gift or money in memory of the person's loved one. Remind the person that his or her special person is not forgotten.
10. Never tell someone that he or she should be "over it." Instead, give the person hope that, eventually, he or she will enjoy the holidays again.
11. If he or she wants to talk about the deceased loved one or feelings associated with the loss, LISTEN. Active listening from friends is an important step to helping him or her heal. Don't worry about being conversational ... just listen.
12. Remind the person you are thinking of him or her and the loved one who died. Cards, phone calls, and visits are great ways to stay in touch.

In general, the best way to help those who are grieving during the holidays is to let them know you care. They need to be remembered, and they need to know their loved ones are remembered, too. VNA Care Network & Hospice's bereavement coordinators emphasize that friends and family members should never be afraid of saying or doing the wrong thing, because making an effort and showing concern will be appreciated.

VNA Care Network & Hospice offers free bereavement support groups in Cambridge, Danvers, Needham, Northborough, Spencer, and Worcester that are open to the community. To learn more, visit www.vnacarenetwork.org or call 800-728-1862.

HOW TO REACH VNA CARE NETWORK & HOSPICE:

Service Information

800-728-1862

Mailing List and Donations

888-663-3688, ext. 1370

Web Site

www.vnacarenetwork.org

Bequests

888-663-3688, ext. 1360

Hospice Volunteer Opportunities

Central Massachusetts/North Shore:

888-663-3688, ext. 6887

Eastern Massachusetts:

888-663-3688, ext. 4271

ANSWERS TO COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT YEAR-END DONATIONS AND TAXES

Last minute shopping, planning time with family and friends, and thinking about those New Year's Resolutions aren't the only things keeping people busy during the holidays. This time of giving and celebrating is also when many people make year-end donations to VNA Care Network & Hospice. Gifts support the agency's mission of caring and help us bring comfort to those dealing with illness or injury during the holidays and beyond.

Making a charitable gift at the end of the year sometimes raises certain tax questions and financial considerations. Here are some of the most frequently asked questions and answers. If you have concerns not addressed here, please contact Susan Young in our Fund Development Office at 888-663-3688, ext. 1370 or syoung@vnacarenetwork.org.

Q: I have heard there's a law that allows donors to make a gift directly from their IRA to a charity. Is this true?

A: If you are age 70½ or older, you can exclude up to \$100,000 per tax year from your gross income for IRA distributions made directly to a qualified charity like VNA Care Network & Hospice. This tax benefit is in effect through Dec. 31, 2009. For more information, please contact your professional advisors or call our Fund Development Office at 888-663-3688, ext. 1370.

Q: Can I use my credit card to make my gift to VNA Care Network or VNA Care Hospice?

A: Yes. We accept MasterCard, Visa, Discover, and American Express. You can make your credit card gift in four ways:

1. Online: www.vnacarenetwork.org
2. By phone: 888-663-3688, ext. 1370
3. By mail: Send your name and address along with the name on card, card number, expiration date, amount of gift, and signature to VNA Care Network & Hospice, Development Office, 5 Federal St., Danvers, MA 01923 or VNA Care Network & Hospice, Development Office, 120 Thomas St., Worcester, MA 01608. A printable donation form is available at www.vnacarenetwork.org or call for a donation envelope.
4. By fax: Send the information listed above to the attention of the Fund Development Office at 978-777-0308. A printable donation form is available on our Web site.

Q: If you receive my gift after Dec. 31, can I still deduct it on my 2009 federal tax return?

A: It depends. If your gift is postmarked in 2009, it is considered a 2009 gift by the IRS. For gifts we receive just before and



Donations support compassionate health care in local communities.

after New Year's Day, we will include the postmark date in the acknowledgement letter we send to you, because this letter also serves as your tax receipt.

Q: If I don't mail my gift on time, is there any other way I can make a donation and still take the deduction in 2009?

A: You can make your gift using a credit card on our Web site, www.vnacarenetwork.org. The system documents the date and time the gift was made, and gifts made through 11:59 p.m. on Dec. 31 will be considered a 2009 gift by the IRS. We will include this information in acknowledgement letters for gifts completed just before and after New Year's Day.

Q: I have a relative who has everything and says she does not want any gifts. Yet, I still want to do something for her. If I make a gift in her honor instead of sending her a present, will you notify her?

A: Yes. We will send your relative a letter indicating that you have made a gift in her honor. We do not notify honorees of the gift amount. This type of honorary gift also can be given at any time of year to recognize significant milestones, such as birthdays or anniversaries.

Q: I know there are certain tax advantages to giving shares of stock instead of cash. Can I do this at the end of the year?

A: Yes, you can, but it is best to initiate the process early. If you are mailing paper certificates (by certified mail), the postmark will be used as the gift date. If your broker will be making an electronic transfer, it can take several days for him or her to gather the necessary information and complete the transfer. Please call our Fund Development Office at 888-663-3688, ext. 1370 for more information and assistance with gifts of stock.

HOME-BASED HEALTH CARE A “HOME RUN” FOR SENIORS WANTING TO STAY ACTIVE, INDEPENDENT



Minnie Morgan

She may not be quite ready to run the bases at Fenway Park, but 76-year-old Minnie Morgan is back to walking to her local shops and living independently thanks to an innovative new program known as Home Run.

A partnership between VNA Care Network & Hospice, Fallon Clinic, and Fallon Community Health Plan, Home Run is an extension of the primary care physician’s practice into a patient’s home. The

Home Run team includes a gerontologist from Fallon Clinic and nurse practitioner, cardiopulmonary clinical nurse specialist, and social worker from VNA Care Network & Hospice.

Participants receive a general health assessment during the first visit and then monthly visits from a nurse to help them stay as healthy as possible.

Minnie was hospitalized three times within three months for pneumonia and cardiac problems, and had a pacemaker put in during her last stay. She began receiving home health services between hospitalizations from VNA Care Network & Hospice. “She was quite a sick lady,” said Tracy Gamble, RN.

When Home Run became available to Minnie after her third hospitalization, she signed on. The partnership meant Minnie could continue receiving care from VNA Care Network & Hospice while getting the additional benefit of a broader, coordinated approach to her overall medical care that works in combination with regular office visits to her primary care physician.

“I feel good now,” said Minnie. “The staff really are helpful. I’m not a nurse. I don’t know all these things. They’ve helped with my medicines. They watch me take my blood pressure and blood sugar. If something doesn’t look right, they’ll call my doctor.”

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