Comfort Care Passion for excellence. Compassion for people.

A newsletter for family and friends of Aspirus Comfort Care and Hospice Services

Spring 2018

Thank You Hospice Volunteers!

National Volunteer Week - April 15-21

"Hospice volunteers give their time and talent because they truly care about people in the community," said Tasha Stencil, Manager of Hospice House and Volunteers. "Volunteers tell me that it brings them great joy and they feel so much reward from serving others. Their generous gift of time enhances the patient and family experience and represents the phenomenal caring spirit of our communities."

In 2017, volunteers provided approximately 6,300 hours of service to support hospice patients and family members served by Aspirus Comfort Care and Hospice Services. One of these very special hospice volunteers is Mary Ventzke from Kronenwetter.

"I have met so many wonderful people through volunteering for hospice – patients, family members and staff," said Ventzke recently. "It's hard to believe how small our world actually is. It's surprising how many people I've met who know someone that I know."

Mary Ventzke began volunteering as a homecare volunteer about nine years ago. Currently, she spends a few hours each week visiting a patient in their home setting. Ventzke had family members who used hospice care services in Minnesota.

"Hospice offered a variety of different types of care for my family members, including chaplain services," said Ventzke. "I thought it was wonderful."

Ventzke spent 31 years employed in a variety of roles for North Central Health Care in Wausau.

"As my children grew up, I had more time available," Ventzke said. "What is one or two hours out of a week? There are many great service organizations out there that need volunteers. I feel that it's important to give back to the community."

Three years ago when Ventzke retired, she decided that she would like to get more involved with hospice care. In addition to making weekly home visits, two mornings a month she assists with clerical office tasks. Last November, Ventzke and her grandchildren volunteered for Festival of Trees, a community event that supports hospice care.

There are many different ways to volunteer for hospice. To find out more, visit Aspirus.org/volunteers or call Tasha at 715.847.2705.



Mary Ventzke and Dawn Merriam assist with office clerical tasks.



Grieving and Balance

by Amy L. Kitsembel, M.Ed., CSW, FT Bereavement Coordinator



The human condition is fraught with circumstance which pulls us in many directions and then calls us to again find 'balance'.

We are inundated with concepts of work/life balance, eating a balanced diet, emotional middle ground – the elusive state of balance. We have highs and we have lows, ups and downs,

joys and sorrows. Christian scripture speaks of a 'time' for everything. Hindu's have the symbol of yin and yang. Conceptually appealing – a state of equilibrium.

It has become clearer to me that balance is not necessarily a sustained "state of being" but something we strive for. It is not a held 'state' of balance in the lessons. It is not so much the falling out of balance but it is the moving toward balance that is the wisdom. It is our actions to return to that which is more steady, and it is by our falling over we are provided the opportunity to pull ourselves back up that we are more full in our humanness.

It is not what happens to us – it is our reactions that define, strengthen and teach us. It is seeking balance that may be the lesson.

Often in grief the teachings are about finding a 'new normal', which may be as elusive as balance and it is tough work. Now, what to do on her birthday, how to celebrate the fourth of July without them, or Father's Day? All of this takes work to figure out what feels more balanced.

Getting back up – that is what we strive for. While you may find yourself leaning to try to stay "upright," it takes intentional, deliberate practice to find a new normal. You may fall over several times.

Gravity and grief are a part of life. You will get back up. For it is in the seeking, remembering, loving, storytelling, crying and laughing that we heal.

Wishing you all the strength to seek your balance....

Camp Hope

Camp HOPE (Helping Others' Pain End) is a wonderful place in central Wisconsin where children and teenagers gather to work through the grieving process after a loved one dies. The camp gently guides the children and teenagers through the complex emotions by showing them that they are not alone.

Fun is the top priority at Camp HOPE. The children and teenagers learn that it is okay to laugh and play and that to do so is not disrespectful to the memory of the person

who died. Through playing, sharing, and being together with peers and staff who know the pain, the children and teenagers realize that the emotions they are feeling are a normal part of grief.

Because of the generosity of many individuals, groups and businesses, Camp HOPE is offered free of charge. The next camp dates are May 19-20 and Sept. 29-30. For more information, visit www.camphopeforkids.org.

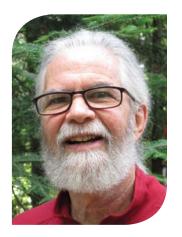
Understanding Grief — Spring Seminar 2018

Ben Wolfe, M.Ed., L.I.C.S.W., Fellow in Thanatology

(Seminar Presenter)

Ben Wolfe is a grief, loss and trauma trainer and consultant. He served for 28 years as the founder, program manager and grief therapist for St. Mary's Medical Center's Grief Support Center in Duluth, Minnesota. Ben provided life-threatening illness and bereavement counseling for people from pre-school to senior citizens. He has given over 2,000 presentations at the regional, state, national and international levels, taught university graduate courses for over 25 years, and a course on life-threatening illness at the University of Minnesota, Duluth School of Medicine for 23 years.

Ben is former president of the international Association for Death Education and Counseling (ADEC) and for 24 years served as chair of the 300 member Minnesota Coalition for Death Education and Support. In addition to chapters in books, he has authored numerous articles related to grief and loss and received numerous awards for his service.



SEMINAR ONE

Hanging On or Letting Go? Rebalancing Our World After Death or Loss

A community seminar for grieving families

Thursday, April 19, 2018 | 7:00 – 9:00 pm Free of charge and open to the public

How do individuals and their families "rebalance their lives" after a loss, be it a death, traumatic event, or any crisis? And, how can one live with a "Yes I can" attitude... not only helping themselves, but in turn, also others. This program will provide strategies and interventions to help individuals, their families and friends trying to cope with the opportunities and struggles on the "loss journey," and examine how individuals live their lives, Hanging On or Letting Go?

Both seminars will be held at:

Holiday Inn & Suites – Cedar Creek 1000 Imperial Avenue, Rothschild, WI

For more information or a program brochure contact:

Wings—a Grief Education Ministry
Nan or Gary Zastrow 715.845.4159 or nanwings1@gmail.com

Or Aspirus Comfort Care and Hospice Services Amy Kitsembel 715.847.2703

Professional CEU's available for both programs.

SEMINAR TWO

Helping Individuals and Families Move from Coping and Surviving, to Being Transformed and Thriving

A seminar for clergy, hospice, and others who care for the bereaved

Friday, April 20, 2018 | 9:00 am – Noon Fee: \$50 | Open to the public

Situations concerning loss of any type, are a part of life and occur on a regular basis in the lives of individuals and their families. However, how is it that one can "grow" after a devastating and life-changing crisis or traumatic event? How can one in their "new normal" at some point see the world as still a bright place to live? And, what is the difference between persons who move from coping and surviving, to being transformed and thriving? This workshop will provide strategies and clinical interventions to help individuals and families trying to cope with the opportunities and struggles on the "loss journey."

Presented by Wings™-a Grief Education Ministry who partners with Aspirus Comfort Care & Hospice Services to provide these seminars as a community service.

Other major sponsors include Brainard Funeral Home, Helke Funeral Home, and Peterson/Kraemer Funeral Homes & Crematory. For a complete list of sponsors, visit www.wingsgrief.org.

Support for this project was provided through the B.A. & Esther Greenheck Foundation.

Festival of Trees Raises \$214,000

Thanks to our community and wonderful volunteers, this year's Festival of Trees event was a great success! Thousands of guests attended Festival of Trees during the week of Thanksgiving. Guests viewed more than 130 holiday trees, wreaths, mantels, and specialty items at Stoney Creek Inn in Rothschild, that were donated by people in our community for raffle and silent auction.

The Aspirus Health Foundation surpassed this year's goal of \$180,000 by raising \$214,000 to support Aspirus Comfort Care and Hospice Services, including two community bedrooms at Aspirus Hospice House for patients with identified financial need.

"This level of support speaks volumes to the value that our community places on our hospice program at Aspirus," said Aspirus Health Foundation Executive Director, Kalynn Pempek. "We're grateful for the support of businesses, individuals, and volunteers who helped make this community fundraising event a success!"

Thank you to all who supported Festival of Trees with time, talent, and donations. We could not do it without you!





To commemorate their 20th consecutive year of decorating an item for Festival of Trees, the Area Hairdressers decorated an emerald green and silver tree with a quilted tree skirt — Sometimes Money Does Grow on Trees! (L to R) Barbara Van Slate, Ruthie Perry, Bev Scheffler, Sharon Ostrowski, Mary Hermes, Kay Paul, Audrey Sann.

Hospice House Renovation Complete

With the support and gifts of many individuals, organizations, and groups, the interior renovation project at Aspirus Hospice House is complete. The project included eight patient bedrooms with private bathrooms and space for families and friends, along with a main kitchen, sub-kitchen, dining room, great room, meditation room, and guest bathroom.

We are grateful to our community for making this important renovation project possible. It will touch the lives of thousands of people who need hospice care in the comfort of a home-like setting for decades to come. For more photos visit aspirus.org/foundation.

A special thanks to: Aspirus Volunteers, B.A. & Esther Greenheck Foundation, Community Foundation of North Central Wisconsin, Dudley Foundation, Festival of Trees, and Run for Hospice.



Hospice House kitchen after recent renovation.



Hospice House volunteers, Reese Aarthun and Barb Breese, planned and prepared the New Year's Eve Buffet annual party at Hospice House for residents and family members.

Thank You for Your Generous Community Support

Your donations are used to support our work beyond the reimbursement provided by insurance and other sources. This important funding is critical to meeting the needs of patients suffering from life-limiting and terminal illness and providing comfort for their families and friends.

Thank you! We are grateful to the many individuals, organizations, and corporations that help us fulfill our mission to provide compassionate hospice, palliative, and grief care for people in north central Wisconsin.

Partners in Health donors

We are grateful to you and the following individuals who have chosen to celebrate the life of another through a memorial or an annual gift. This list represents gifts from September 1, 2017 to January 31, 2018. All attempts are made to accurately recognize donors. If you notice a misspelling, error, or omission, please contact the Aspirus Health Foundation at 715-847-2470.

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Eric Weaver shares his gift of music at Hospice House.

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Hunter Krautkramer of Marathon Boy Scout Troop 458 created and donated to Aspirus Hospice House the raised bed garden that was his Eagle Scout project. Hunter's grandma lived at Hospice House and this was his way to give back for the excellent service and hospitality received during her stay. Hunter is pictured with Tasha Stencil, Manager of Hospice House & Volunteers.

Amita Lofgren



Hospice House volunteers, Susan Aho, Marilyn Worden, Carol DeBauche, and Sandy Welbes gather in the recently renovated kitchen.

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Thank you to the many individuals and businesses that have provided important support for hospice through special events from September 1, 2017 to January 31, 2018.

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Grief Support Opportunities

Memorial Services

Open to all community members.

Tuesday, May 15 - 6:00 pm, Aspirus Wausau Hospital, Medallion Rm. **Wednesday, May 16** - 6:00 pm, Bell Tower Chapel, Merrill

Living The New Normal After Loss - Part 2

Designed for those who have done some grief work and are ready to move forward.

Tuesdays - May 22 & 29 and June 5 & 12

6:00-8:00 pm, Aspirus Wausau Hospital

No Charge. Pre-registration required. Space limited.

Contact: Nan & Gary Zastrow, 715-845-4159

Family Memorial Art – "Treasuring Memories"

An art project for children (of all ages) and their families to memorialize a loved one.

Wednesday, July 25

1:00 – 3:00 pm, Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum Registration required. Please call 715-845-7010

Community Memorial Walk

Open to all. No cost.

Thursday, September 27

4:00-6:00 pm

St. Anthony Spiritualty Center, Marathon

The Compassionate Friends

A self-help support group for parents, grandparents, and adult siblings.

Meets the third Wednesday of the month

7:00-9:00 pm

Contact: Pamela at 715-581-4343

If you would like to speak to someone about your grief, please contact: The Grief Center at 715-847-2703 or toll free at 1-866-331-2467.

Please notify us if you change your address, or if you prefer not to receive *Comfort Care*.

715.847.2470 - ahf@aspirus.org