

Perspective

Winter 2020

A support community publication
from Northern Illinois Hospice



40
years

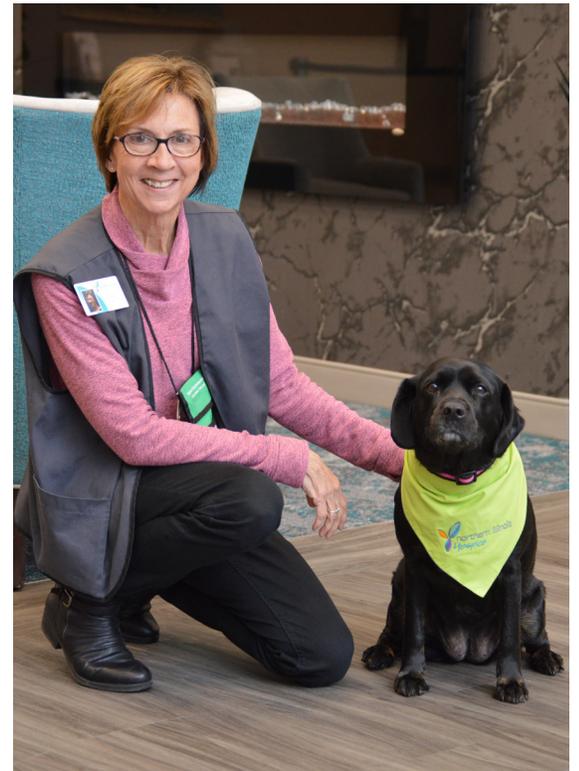


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Best Friend to Therapist: Pet Therapy Positively Effects End of Life

Companionship and comfort are what eight-year-old Brynn brings to Northern Illinois Hospice patients and families. Brynn, a Labrador mix, makes special visits weekly with her handler, volunteer Libby Knopp. Libby and Brynn have been Northern Illinois Hospice Pet Therapy volunteers for more than five years and the duo enjoy it just as much as the patients. "I feel so lucky to have the opportunity to make a difference in someone's life. You can just see the joy Brynn brings to the patients and their caregivers," said Libby.



Northern Illinois Hospice Pet Volunteers Libby Knopp and her pup Brynn get ready for a visit.

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First in *caring* for life's final months



MISSION

Northern Illinois Hospice is a trusted community partner dedicated to:

- providing extraordinary and dignified care, comfort and compassion to individuals and families at the end of life;
- removing barriers to care access so all eligible individuals, regardless of ability to pay and payment source, receive exceptional care and support; and
- educating others about end-of-life planning and hospice and palliative care.

VISION

Our vision is to be a local and national leader in hospice and palliative care and to enrich end-of-life experiences through our quality, innovative approaches, and supportive education.

CORE VALUES

- COMMUNITY
- COMPASSION
- EXCELLENCE
- GRATITUDE
- INTEGRITY
- QUALITY
- SERVICE
- STEWARDSHIP
- VISION

From the Chief Executive Officer

We were invited to speak recently to a local P.E.O. chapter, where one of Northern Illinois Hospice's founders, Melinda Hagerman, was in attendance. What should everyone know about the early years of Northern Illinois Hospice, I asked Melinda. She responded, "How so committed everyone was."



Imagine a small group of people meeting in church basements in 1978-79 to discuss a concept called "hospice." End-of-life care outside the hospital setting, in the patient's home. Compassionate, interdisciplinary care for the whole person - mind, body and spirit. Symptom and pain management, and care and support tailored to an individual's needs and wishes. Support for the whole family. Hospice was quite a wild concept in the Midwest in the late 70s, known primarily in England and the East coast at that time.

By 1979, Northern Illinois Hospice Association was incorporated. Volunteers did everything A to Z, operating out of a room in the old Rockford Dry Goods building. Community donations underwrote all expenses, and the first executive director, Judy Carra Engblom, worked for three months without pay for there was no pay to be had. By 1980, the first patient was accepted. Melinda Hagerman was a member of that first care team, which provided 106 hours of hospice care and support. Team meetings were held at 8:00am on Sundays at SwedishAmerican.

By 1981, it was full steam ahead in Winnebago and Boone Counties, yet it took another three years before The Medicare Hospice Benefit was established, which provided Medicare beneficiaries with access to high-quality end-of-life care and Northern Illinois Hospice with much-needed revenue to offset escalating expenses. By 1984, 178 patients were supported for an average of 52 days.

Commitment, vision, selfless and singular dedication to mission. Our Northern Illinois Hospice pioneers got the ball rolling in a very big way!

These are the shoulders on which Northern Illinois Hospice was built, and we'd like to think the commitment, moxie, and passion modeled by our hospice pioneers continue to define us. We've changed with the times, but we will never forget "whence we came," still making good on that brilliant, heartfelt mission promise created so long ago.

Make today the BEST day!

Lisa Novak
Chief Executive Officer



Northern Illinois Hospice Pet Volunteers Libby Knopp (left) and her pup Brynn spend an afternoon visiting patient Lori Higgins.

Best Friend to Therapist

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Pet Therapy can reduce anxiety, ease depression, and encourage more communication, and Libby witnesses this firsthand. “Having a pet visit brings a spot of sunshine in a patient’s day. The positive impact Brynn has is so rewarding,” says Libby. While spending time with a furry friend has many social and emotional advantages, there are physical benefits as well. Pet Therapy can lower blood pressure, help reduce pain, and increase overall comfort.

In addition to Pet Therapy, Northern Illinois Hospice offers the Pet Peace of Mind® Program. This national initiative provides direction to hospices on how to care for pets of hospice patients. The purpose is to keep pets and people together during a time of transition. Through this unique program, Northern Illinois Hospice volunteers are able to provide pet food, litter, flea, tick and heartworm medication, and basic veterinary care. If a patient’s pet needs a walk, volunteers can provide that, too. Libby says, “Our families have a lot of stress, and if we can help relieve some of that stress by helping their pets, we do it.” The Pet Peace of Mind® program is 100 percent funded by grants and donations.

Pet Volunteers Needed!

The Volunteer Department is seeking additional Pet Therapy and Pet Peace of Mind® volunteers. Pet therapy dogs are required to be certified and each (human) volunteer would undergo Hospice 101 training before visiting with patients. For more information, please contact our Volunteer Department at 815.398.0500 or hjohnson@niha.org.

Foundation's 'Wish' Program Spreads Joy

Helping those on our care continue cherished family traditions is one of the ways Northern Illinois Hospice Foundation's "Wish" program makes a difference. Granting a wish for someone on our care is made even sweeter when we can partner with a business in our community to accomplish it. This is just what happened when Don "Wally" Walraven told his Northern Illinois Hospice Care Navigator, Linda Baumert BSW, that he would like to go to Edwards Apple Orchard one more time.

Edwards Apple Orchard is a family business that is built around creating fun fall memories, drawing families back year after year. Founded in 1964 by Robert Edwards on the site of his parent's dairy farm, Edwards Apple Orchard is now operated by Robert's children and grandchildren. When Northern Illinois Hospice reached out to the Edwards family, asking if they would help us fulfill a patient's wish, their response was an enthusiastic yes. Andy Smith, grandson of Robert Edwards, explained why they were so eager to help, "We are so incredibly blessed to do what we do, we are more than happy to share our tradition with others."

Wally visited Edwards Apple Orchard along with his wife Jackie, and members of his Northern Illinois Hospice care team. They were greeted by Andy, who gave everyone the red-carpet treatment, allowing Wally to select items from their store, treating the whole group to fresh apples, their famous apple cider donuts and more, telling the history of the orchard and answering



Northern Illinois Hospice patient Don "Wally" Walraven, along with his care team, were treated to some Fall fun at Edward's Apple Orchard East. His visit was made complete with lots of samples, apple pie and of course, apple cider donuts! Andy Smith, Edwards Apple Orchard manager (left) was the tour guide for Wally and his Northern Illinois Hospice care team.

“ I know one thing: you guys have spoiled me. ”

- Don "Wally" Walraven

questions about how it is operated. Andy shared that this was the 55th season of the orchard his grandfather started when he planted 3,000 trees, adding that it "is the first year without him." Robert Edwards died in January 2019. Andy also shared how his close-knit family works together to run the orchard and listened to Wally's stories about his upbringing on a local farm.

Wally estimated that he had been visiting Edwards Apple Orchard for 23 years, but this most recent visit was something special, an experience that only happened because Edwards Apple Orchard went above and beyond to make his day. As Wally was finishing eating his apple pie, he said to Andy, "I know one thing: you guys have spoiled me."

UPCOMING GRIEF SUPPORT GROUPS

Open to anyone who has experienced the death of someone close to them, our groups and workshops focus on learning, healing and encouragement. Conversation topics include: understanding grief and mourning, common myths about grief, available resources, the importance of community, helping others to heal ourselves, and self-care. All are welcome. Pre-registration is required for groups and workshops. Call 815.398.0500 or email avitale@niha.org for more information.

“Lunch and Learn” in collaboration with OSF Healing Pathways

“Grief, Mindfulness and Resiliency”

Tuesday, February 18, 2020

11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Call OSF Healing Pathways at 815.977.4123 to RSVP for this event.

March Mindful Activities (Grief March Madness)

Tuesday Mornings

March 3 - March 31, 2020

10 - 11:30 a.m.

Join us as we delve into the month learning and practicing different opportunities to create resilience in our lives. Creative writing, mindful coloring and doodle art for relaxation, breathing exercises, chi-gong, and others.

6-Week Bereavement Support Group

An afternoon group will begin after Easter. More information will be shared at a later time.



NORTHERN ILLINOIS
HOSPICE IN THE
community

Our Northern Illinois Hospice team donated more than 40 items in honor of our 40 year anniversary to residents of Rocvale Children's Home. In January, we delivered goodies including art supplies, nail polish, movies, and more! Thanks to Arles Hendershott Love (pictured) and the staff at Rocvale for all you do!

Year-End Campaign Raises Record Amount

As we reflect on 2019, we are filled with gratitude for you, our donors, who again responded with such amazing generosity to the Northern Illinois Hospice Foundation year-end annual fund campaign. Our 2019 campaign raised a record amount of over \$50,000 to fund programs like Pet Peace of Mind®, ensuring that patients' companion animals are well-cared for, our Volunteer Program, training volunteers to be an additional resource for the families we serve, and We Honor Veterans, recognizing the service of the Veterans on our care.

We are also pleased to welcome over 30 new, year-end donors and supporters. Thank you for bringing comfort, relief, and caring to the patients and families we serve. Your gifts, friendship, and support enable us to provide the services those on our care rely on every day.

Thank you!

5



40 Volunteers for 40 Years

As part of our 40th anniversary celebration, the Volunteer Department has made a “40 for 40” goal for this milestone. The plan is to recruit 40 new volunteers in 2020 and they are off to a great start! Training just concluded for a group of 17 new volunteers and another group is ready to begin Hospice 101 in the coming month.

The Northern Illinois Hospice Volunteer Program is successful because of the people who come forward to participate. Volunteers come from all walks of life: recently retired individuals, folks who were profoundly impacted by the hospice experience through a friend or family member, and even medical students from the University of Illinois College of Medicine.

There are many opportunities to volunteer in hospice. In order to meet the needs of the community we serve, we are always seeking more direct patient care volunteers. These individuals assist patients and families in their home or facility with a variety of tasks including running errands, offering respite time for caregiver and more. In addition, there are volunteer positions open that provide help in our building - kitchen clean-up, completing small projects, filing, making phone calls and data entry.

For more information, please contact the Volunteer Department at 815.398.0500 or hjohnson@niha.org.

DONOR GATHERING



Last October, Northern Illinois Hospice Foundation held its Annual Fall Donor Appreciation event at our new headquarters. Approximately 65 longtime donors attended this stewardship event and heard remarks by Lisa Novak, CEO; Gary Tiffany, Foundation Board President; and a presentation by Susan Lundin, Director of Northern Illinois Hospice Foundation, who highlighted the programs and services funded by donor dollars. The event concluded with staff conducting informal tours, as this was the first time many of the supporters had visited our new headquarters.

WHAT OUR PATIENTS & FAMILIES ARE SAYING

“Caring, empathetic and compassionate during our family’s difficult loss and time of need. They were always responsive, thoughtful, comforting, professional and available when we needed them most. God bless them all for the comfort they provided to our family during this journey.” — Nicole K.

“If you are needing to pick a hospice, I highly recommend Northern Illinois Hospice. They are the most caring group of individuals that put you and your family first. Never have I found such amazing people with such huge hearts. We love them as family, we are so blessed I chose them for our family.” — Christine L.



northern illinois

Hospice

First in *caring* for life’s final months

SAVE THE DATE

April 16-17, 2020

Live Well Die Well

Speaker: Kimberly Paul, Author

Save the date for an evening with Kimberly C. Paul, author, host of Death by Design, podcast and TedX speaker, as she shares personal stories and life lessons she learned while working with hospice patients for 17 years. Her Live Well Die Well Tour is designed to educate communities about end-of-life options to empower individuals to reclaim death as a human experience and not a medical event. More details on her visit coming soon!

May 7, 2020

Soul Injury, Dying Healed and PTSD

Speaker: Deborah Grassman, Author, Opus Peace Founder

The mental and emotional injuries that accompany trauma are readily identified. Less recognized are the insidious wounds that occur with trauma and, indeed, with all of us when we become separated from our real self. Whether traumatic or insidious, Soul Injuries cut us off from the energy of our deepest self, robbing us of the essence of our being. The basis for addressing Soul Injury originated with a group of VA hospice nurses who cared for 10,000 dying Veterans. The nurses witnessed Soul Injuries firsthand as they surfaced unbidden on combat Veterans' deathbeds. Let "warrior wisdom" show you how the heart can be disarmed from fear and revitalized through love, forgiveness, and self-compassion – a process that "restoreth the soul." Continuing education opportunity for local health care workers. More details coming soon!



Pictured is Try-Beta member Bill Geist with Northern Illinois Hospice Foundation Specialist, Holly Sammons, at the grant presentation reception.

Grant Funds New Drums for Music Therapy Program

On November 12th, Northern Illinois Hospice Foundation was presented with a check from the Try-Beta Club, a service organization dedicated to raising funds for area non-profit agencies. The grant was used to purchase portable drums and additional instruments for our music therapy program, widening the range of musical interactions our staff music therapist can offer those on our care. Thank you to the Try-Beta Club for your continued commitment to brightening the lives of those we serve!



Northern Illinois Hospice Music Therapist Mallory Panell, MT-BC plays a Hapi Steel Tongue Drum purchased with the Try-Beta Club grant.





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A couple of Santa's elves, volunteers Pat Olafson (left) and Jean Fransen (right), wrapped presents that were then delivered to some of our families facing challenges this past holiday season.