

# Coming Home



A Publication of Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County



## Trusted Care. When you need it most.

Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County recently launched its annual appeal for funds to support the vital programs and services of our non-profit agency and we need your support.

For more than 100 years we have provided compassionate home health and hospice care to children and adults in the heart of Fairfield County. We ask for your generous support to help us continue this important work.

We are committed to providing care to all those in need, regardless of their financial circumstances. Last year alone, we provided more than \$1 million in charity care.

If you haven't done so already, please consider making a gift to our annual appeal. Your tax-deductible donation will enable us to help keep you, a neighbor or a loved one cared for and comfortable at home – and out of the hospital.

Thank you for helping us to bring healing and comfort to our community for more than a century and please accept our warmest wishes for your health and happiness throughout 2018.



*The following is the story of Jason, a young man whose life was touched by Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County. Thank you for helping us provide compassionate care to those in need.*

Jason has no memory of the horrific car accident that almost took his life three years ago. Now 18, Jason continues to recover from the catastrophic injuries he sustained that terrible day with courage and determination and the help he receives from the caregivers

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## Thank You for Sharing

At Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County, we are grateful for the privilege of caring for our patients and their loved ones. It is gratifying to receive letters from those who have been touched by our care and we'd

like to share an excerpt from one of these letters so that you will know the difference your support makes in the lives of our patients and their families. Thanks for joining in our mission to bring healing and comfort to our community. ■

Dear Ones,

*I am grateful to Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County for helping my mom and our family through her passing.*

*On the day that my mother died, we were all gathered around her bed. By God's grace, Karen Judd, a chaplain from Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County, appeared in the doorway. We all held hands and she led us in prayer. We said our tearful goodbyes and my mother died shortly thereafter.*

*My brother is a deacon and I am a pastoral minister but we were paralyzed in the moment of our own mother's death. Reverend Judd released us into prayer and we are so grateful. My mother had a holy death thanks to Reverend Judd and the hospice team of nurses and caregivers.*

*Thank you and God bless you all.  
Joan*



## Save the Date and Laugh Out Loud

Please join us for fabulous food, friends and lots of fun as we "Laugh Out Loud" and raise funds for Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County!

This special comedy-for-a-cause benefit will be held at the Westport Women's Club on Saturday, May 5th at 6:30 p.m. It will feature the stand-up com-

edy of Lisa Blythe Perlman, Ellen Loyd and Kevin Flynn.

Mark your calendar for this funny fundraiser and help us bring compassionate home health and hospice care to our community.

To inquire about reservations or sponsorship opportunities for Laugh Out Loud, please call 203-834-6341, ext. 305. ■



## Nurses Receive Advanced Training

Congratulations to the 15 registered nurses at Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County who recently completed the End-of-Life Nursing Education Consortium's Core Training Course.

Fran Buono, Anne Cofone, Gina Jontos, Barbara Kiviat, Jean Lauenceau, Dede Locke, Nitra Oliver-White, Christine Pfeffer, Mary Ross, Debra Serowik, Ruthann Shapiro, Rachel Stanzione, Karen Tiberi, Teresa Wojnoski and Theresa Zeta-Garcia all successfully completed the rigorous ELNEC advanced education training course at the Marion Peckham Egan School of Nursing & Health Studies at Fairfield University.



# ELNEC

END-OF-LIFE NURSING EDUCATION CONSORTIUM

*Advancing Palliative Care*

This advanced training provides a rich and deep foundation in the skills and knowledge necessary to deliver expert symptom management, grief and bereavement counseling and direct clinical services to those facing life-limiting illness.

The End-of-Life Nursing Education Consortium is a national education initiative to improve nursing

education on end-of-life care. The project to Advance Palliative Care is administered by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing and City of Hope. The course was approved by Connecticut's Nurses' Association which is an accredited approver by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation. Well done! ■



## With Our Thanks to the New Canaan Artisans

The New Canaan Artisans held their festive Holiday Boutique recently at The Roger Sherman Inn in New Canaan. It was a very special day and the Boutique was brimming with beautiful, handcrafted merchandise!

The New Canaan Artisans are cherished in our community. We thank them for their devotion to their craft and their uncommon generosity to Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County and to so many other non-profit organizations in our area. ■



## Telehealth Technology helps improve patient care

**A**t Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County, we continually strive to find ways to improve the quality of the care we provide to our patients. As such, we are delighted to introduce the new HRS Telehealth Tablet.

This innovative technology from Health Recovery Solutions provides seamless communication and remote monitoring to enhance support for patients, clinicians, caregivers and families. The small, easy-to-use, in home communication system facilitates the reduction of hospital readmissions and enhances the quality of care.

The Telehealth 4G Tablet makes it easy and convenient for patients to stay in daily touch with us from the comfort of their own homes. Through this advanced monitoring system we are able to manage high-risk patients and communicate with



them through video chat, wound imaging and text messaging. The electronic stethoscope enables us to listen to heart and lung sounds in real time. FDA-approved biometric devices monitor a range of values including blood pressure, weight, oxygen level and blood glucose. The software provides daily symptom questions and instructions specific to the patient's condition. Findings

from the telehealth visits can be communicated to physicians immediately, when indicated.

This special technology is provided at no additional cost to patients and all information is kept secure and confidential.

For more information, please call us at 203-762-8958. ■



## A Festive Holiday Event at the Christmas Barn

**W**e wish to thank the Historical Christmas Barn for hosting a festive shopping event during the holiday season and donating a percentage of the proceeds from all sales that day to benefit the patients of Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County.

Housed in the beautiful Lambert House, which is the oldest house in Wilton, The Historical

Christmas Barn is a charming shop set amid a cluster of exquisitely restored antique houses and shops at Lambert Corner.

It was a lovely event and we are most grateful! ■



Sharon Bradley, Peg Gavin, and Ken Edgar at the Historical Christmas Barn fundraiser for Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County

Photo: Jemmette Ross



## Bereavement Support for Grieving Adults

Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County is committed to providing bereavement support to grieving individuals and families during the first year following the death of a loved one. Our compassionate grief and bereavement coun-

selors provide comfort and promote healing after a loss.

One-on-one support is available during this time as are bereavement support groups. Bereavement support groups are open to anyone who has experienced a

loss. Participation offers the opportunity to grieve in a supportive and therapeutic environment with others who have also suffered a loss.

Check our website for periodic updates to our schedule of bereavement support groups. ■

### WINTER SCHEDULE OF SUPPORT GROUPS FOR GRIEVING ADULTS

*at the Health & Wellness Center at I-Park, 761 Main Avenue, Norwalk*

#### Loss of a Spouse

*for those grieving the loss of a spouse with Nanette Greene, MA, LPC*

Weekly on Wednesdays  
1/17/18 - 3/7/18

1:30 – 3:00 pm

*with Rev. Karen Judd, LCSW*

Weekly on Thursdays  
2/1/18 - 3/22/18

6:00 – 7:30 pm

#### Loss of a Parent

*for adults grieving the loss of a parent with Rev. Karen Judd, LCSW*

Weekly on Tuesdays  
1/23/18 - 3/13/18

6:00 – 7:30 pm

#### Loss of a Child

*for adults grieving the loss of a child with Laurie Petrasanta, MS, BSW*

Weekly on Thursdays  
1/18/18 - 3/8/18

2:30 – 4:00 pm

#### Caregiver Support

*for those who are caring for an ill loved one with Laurie Petrasanta, MS, BSW*

Weekly on Tuesdays  
1/16/18 - 3/6/18

1:00 – 2:30 pm

#### Loss of a Loved One

*for adults grieving the loss of a loved one with Bonnie Verses, BS, MA*

Weekly on Saturdays  
1/13/18 - 3/3/18

12 noon – 1:30 pm

#### Loss of a Pet

*for adults grieving the loss of a beloved pet with Rev. Karen Judd, LCSW*

Weekly on Thursdays  
1/11/18 - 1/25/18

1:00 – 2:30 pm

These programs are free-of-charge and open to the public but pre-registration is required. For more information, call Rev. Karen Judd at 203-762-8958, ext. 255.



*Helping others – now and forever.*

*A charitable gift in your will could be the most important, and lasting, gift you ever make. For more information about how your generosity can live on through a bequest to Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County, call 203-834-6341, extension 305.*

## Become a Hospice Volunteer

**D**o you have time to do something meaningful this winter? Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County is seeking caring and sensitive individuals to serve as hospice volunteers. Those who are interested may register to participate in a five-session hospice volunteer training course beginning Monday, February 5 and continuing through Friday, February 9. Training will be held from 10:00 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. each day at the offices of Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County in Suite 114 at the Health & Wellness Center at I-Park, 761 Main Avenue on the Norwalk / Wilton town line.

Hospice volunteers visit terminally ill patients and their families and provide emotional support, respite care and companionship. In training, hospice volunteers develop the skills they will need to work with patients and families and are provided with ongoing support and supervision.

“Hospice volunteers play a vital role in supporting our patients and their families,” said the agency’s Volunteer Coordinator, Laurie Petrasanta. “They help patients live their last days in



peace, with dignity and grace. Hospice volunteers also work closely with grieving families to help them through the bereavement process,” continued Laurie. “There is a great sense of satisfaction in becoming a hospice volunteer.”

Please note that individuals are required to wait at least one year after the death of a family member

or loved one to be eligible to serve as a Hospice Patient Care Volunteer.

For more information, or to register for the five-session training course to become a hospice volunteer, contact Laurie Petrasanta, Volunteer Coordinator for Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County, at 203-834-6341, ext. 316. ■



### BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUPS



*Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County is committed to providing bereavement support to anyone who is grieving the loss of a loved one. Participation in a support group offers the opportunity to grieve in a supportive and therapeutic environment with others who have also suffered a loss. For more information, contact our Bereavement Coordinator at 203-762-8958, ext. 255.*

## Many Thanks to the Turnover Shop of Wilton

**W**e wish to extend our wholehearted thanks to The Turnover Shop of Wilton for their exceptionally generous gift of \$46,000 to support the work of Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County.

The Turnover Shop was founded in 1950 to benefit Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County and the Wilton PTA. Over the years, The Turnover Shop has grown and flourished and is now a beloved fixture in the

heart of Wilton Center with an ever-expanding following of loyal donors, satisfied customers and dedicated volunteers.

The Turnover Shop welcomes donations and consignments of clothing, jewelry, accessories, collectibles, antiques, art, small furniture, housewares, silverware, china, small appliances, toys, games, books and sporting goods.

Each year, we have been the fortunate beneficiary of increasing support

through the enduring success of the Turnover Shop. This most generous charitable donation will make it possible for our agency to continue providing compassionate home health and hospice care to those in need and we are immensely grateful.

“The Turnover Shop is a treasure in the Wilton community and a source of pride to all who live and work here,” said Sharon Bradley. “We thank them for their dedication, community spirit and extraordinary generosity.” ■



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at Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County.

“Jason suffered traumatic brain injury in the accident and was paralyzed on one side of his body,” said his mother, Janelle. “We weren’t sure he would make it but he is strong. He’s a fighter.”

After an extended stay in the hospital and several months in a rehab facility, Jason was finally able to come home with the help of Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County.

Along with the love and support he receives from his family, and the assistance of his rehab team of physical, occupational and speech therapists, and his home care nurse and home health aide, Jason has made remarkable strides in his recovery. He even hopes to go to college next year.

“Never underestimate the power of motivation,” said Cathy, a nurse who has cared for Jason at home since the accident. “Jason is amazing. His spirit is indomitable. He has worked hard and accomplished so much. If anyone can make it to college, it’s Jason.”

Terry is Jason’s devoted home health aide who works with him four days a week. “Jason wants to be independent and I help him with that,” said Terry. Jason is very smart and very motivated. I respect him and admire how hard he works in his recovery. I encourage him and make sure to keep him safe.”

“Independence is the most important thing to me,” said Jason. “I want to go to college, and maybe become a doctor someday. I want to help other people like me.”



“Jason really loves his caregivers,” said Janelle. “They are like family to all of us.

They give him the confidence to deal with the challenges he has to face and enable him to remain positive. We are so grateful to the team at Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County for all the help and care that they provide to Jason and our whole family.” ■

## Safety Tips for Shoveling Snow and how to avoid back pain!

### The Basic Scoop

- Be heart smart! Don't eat or smoke before shoveling snow. Avoid caffeinated beverages.
- If you experience pain of any kind, stop immediately and seek assistance.
- Pace yourself. Take frequent breaks and drink plenty of water.

### Dress for Success

- Dress in layers and wear a hat.
- Proper boots will keep feet warm and dry and will provide traction.
- Good gloves will keep hands warm, dry and blister-free.

### The Right Stuff

- Choose a shovel that is ergonomically correct – one with a curved handle.

### It's all in the Technique!

- Warm muscles work better -- so take the time to stretch.
- Think about good posture and maintain the natural curve of your spine.
- Stand with your feet at shoulder-width apart to maintain balance.
- Tighten stomach muscles as you lift the snow.
- Bend at the knees – not at the waist or back.
- Lift with your legs – not your with your back and do not twist your body.
- Fresh snow is lighter in weight so clear snow as soon as it has fallen!

## Have your Blood Pressure Checked!

**H**ave you had your blood pressure checked lately? About one in every ten Americans has high blood pressure. High blood pressure is a uniquely silent disease — most people do not know they have it. Uncontrolled, high blood pressure can lead to a heart attack or stroke. Fortunately, high blood pressure is highly treatable and can be controlled with diet, exercise and medication.

Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County offers free blood pressure screenings each month at various times and locations. Please visit our website at [www.visitingnurse.net](http://www.visitingnurse.net) for a complete schedule. ■

*Coming Home* is a publication of Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County. We welcome your comments and suggestions. Please write to Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County, P.O. Box 489, Wilton, CT 06897.

*Editor:* Alice Mulligan

# Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County



*Trusted care. When you need it most.*

PO. Box 489  
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[www.visitingnurse.net](http://www.visitingnurse.net)



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of healthcare  
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