

Coming Home



A Publication of Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County



Bruce Ando with Marguerite Benoit, RN.

Getting Back on His Feet in the Comfort of Home.

Bruce Ando had knee replacement surgery recently and after a brief stay at Norwalk Hospital he was back in Weston with nursing care and physical therapy in the place where he was most comfortable – at home. "I didn't want to run the risk of infection," said Bruce. "And I definitely didn't want to go to

a rehab facility. I wanted to recover from surgery and do my rehab at home."

"I was happy that my surgeon referred me to Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County because I know how skilled and caring everyone there is," said Bruce. "I am a professional photographer and have done projects for the agency over the years but this was the first time I needed their help. My nurse and therapists were fantastic. They were knowledgeable and caring and always encouraging. They've had a lot of experience with joint replacements and they knew just what I was going through. They were always supportive, but they worked me hard and challenged me. Believe it or not, I actually looked forward to their visits!"

With the help of his nurse, Marguerite, and his physical therapists, Robin and Liz, Bruce is back on his feet now and doing fine.

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VISITING NURSE & HOSPICE OF FAIRFIELD COUNTY

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Agency Welcomes a New Board Member

Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County welcomes a new board member, **Michael Connor, DPM.**

Dr. Connor attended the University of Buffalo where he received a B.S. in Physical Therapy. He received his Doctor of Podiatric Medicine degree from the New York College of Podiatric Medicine and completed a one-year Podiatric Orthopedic Residency at the New York College of Podiatric Medicine. His program affiliates included Coney Island Hospital, North General Hospital, Manhattan VA Hospital and Montrose VA Hospital.

Dr. Connor is a member of the American Podiatric Medical Association, the Connecticut Podiatric Medical Association, and the Fairfield County Podiatric Medical Association. He was President of the Fairfield County Podiatric Medical Association from 2004-2005 and Vice President from 2002-2003. He served as Secretary of the association



Michael Connor, DPM

from 2000-2001 and as its Treasurer from 1999-2000.

Dr. Connor is Board Certified by the American Board of Podiatric Surgery. He has been on staff at Norwalk Hospital Department of Surgery since 1991 and has been in private practice in Wilton for 28 years.

Originally from East Islip, New York, Dr. Connor plays soccer and has run many marathons. He is a former five-year board member of the Fairfield Travel Soccer Association. He currently resides in Fairfield with his wife, Kitty, and their three children.

Welcome! ■

Getting Back on His Feet in the Comfort of Home.

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“I now understand what a difference it makes to get skilled nursing care and physical therapy at home,” said Bruce. “My experience was entirely positive and I highly recommend it to anyone needing help following a joint replacement.” ■



Cleaning Up with the New Canaan Thrift Shop



Photos by Bruce Ando

If you are planning to clean up the house or yard this summer, don't forget to include the New Canaan Thrift Shop!

The New Canaan Thrift Shop accepts donations of gently-used articles of clothing, accessories, jewelry, books, sporting goods, small appliances, housewares, china, silver, paintings, toys, games, and small home furnishings.

All proceeds from the sale of

donated items directly benefit the patients of Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County so you know that your donated items will make a real difference in someone's life.

The New Canaan Thrift Shop is located at 2 Locust Avenue in New Canaan. It is open from 12 noon until 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday, and from 10:00 AM until 1:00 PM on Saturdays. Donations are accepted from 9:00 AM until 12 noon,

Monday through Saturday.

And don't forget to stop by the New Canaan Thrift Shop at the New Canaan Village Fair and Sidewalk Sale on Saturday, July 13th for extra special bargains on all merchandise.

To inquire about volunteer opportunities, or to donate items to the New Canaan Thrift Shop, call Ulrike Bell at 203-966-2361. And make sure to follow us on our new Facebook page. ■



Create an Enduring Memorial Tribute

Celebrate the life of a loved one who has died and create a lasting tribute in their memory by sharing your thoughts on our website's Memorial Tribute page. We invite you to visit our website at www.visitingnurse.net and simply click on the Donate Now button to make your donation, light a candle and add a personal sentiment or message. ■



Volunteers Honored

The volunteers of Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County were honored recently at an awards ceremony and luncheon at Bernard's Inn. Eight individuals received special recognition for their outstanding commitment, compassion and dedication to volunteer service.

Janet Karabin received an award for her work as a Hospice Volunteer; Macgregor Onderdonk received an award for her volunteer work at the Turnover Shop of Wilton; Hal Higby received an award for his volunteer work on the Agency's Board of Directors; Marty Clancy received an award for his work as a Good Samaritan Volunteer; Janice Hess received an award for her volunteer work in Development; Deirdre Kjørlien received an award for her volunteer work at the

New Canaan Thrift Shop; Paul Cahill received a Special Achievement award for his 15 years of volunteer work.

Deb Rakich received the Agency's highest honor -- *The Carol B. Bauer Community Spirit Award* -- for her outstanding service as a Hospice Volunteer.

"This award was established in honor of Carol Bauer, whose

spirit and devotion to volunteerism is unsurpassed in the community," said Sharon Bradley. "The Carol B. Bauer Award is presented each year to that special individual who embodies the ideals of volunteerism. In the time that she has been volunteering with our agency, Deb has demonstrated a commitment to helping patients and families at the most vulner-

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Deb Rackich won the Agency's highest award, the Carol Bauer Community Spirit Award. She is pictured here (third from left) with outgoing Volunteer Coordinator, Laurie Petrasanta, Jennifer Toll, Sharon Bradley, Christine Pfeiffer and incoming Volunteer Coordinator, Laura Rundell.



Pictured here (from left) are Marty Clancy, Paul Cahill, Sharon Bradley, Hal Higby, Macgregor Onderdonk, and Janice Hess.



Volunteers Honored

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able time in their lives. She has said that what she loves most about volunteering is just being there for someone and helping them, or holding their hand. Deb is a kind and ener-

getic person and we are grateful for her service.”

“Deb Rakich exemplifies the true spirit of volunteerism,” said Jennifer Toll, who is Carol Bauer’s daughter and was present at the

awards ceremony. “It is with deep gratitude that we recognize Deb for her compassionate contribution to the mission of Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County.” ■



Save the Date for Pitch Perfect

It’s never too early to save the date! Please join us in 2020 for fabulous food, friends and fun as we gather for Pitch Perfect and raise funds for Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County!

This special benefit will be held at Woodway Country Club in Darien on Saturday, February 8, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. The event will feature a seated dinner, an extraordinary



auction and a delightful collegiate a cappella performance.

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

To inquire about tickets, tables and sponsorship opportunities for Pitch Perfect, please call 203-834-6341, ext. 304. ■

Donor Profile – Sara and Dave Hunt

Sara and Dave Hunt are devoted to their community and committed to giving back. The couple has been married for 49 years and they have lived in New Canaan since 1976. Both are involved in a variety of local non-profit organizations.

Sara is a member of the New Canaan Beautification League and the League of Women Voters.

Since retiring from Hewitt Associates, Dave has served the community in many capacities including at the United Way of New Canaan, the New Canaan Community Foundation, CERT of New Canaan, and Inspirica among others.

Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County is fortunate to have had Dave on its Board of Directors since 2010.

“I’ve always respected the agency, but I had no direct experience with them until I became a patient,” said Dave. “A while ago, I was recovering from surgery and having a tough time. I needed IV therapy and was told I had to remain at a skilled nursing facility. I called Visiting Nurse & Hospice



Photo by Bruce Ando

of Fairfield County and they assured me that I could be cared for at home. I was able to come home and receive the same level of care that I would get at a facility. I was so impressed and so happy to be able to come home. The agency’s mission now resonates with me in a very meaningful way.”

“I enjoy contributing to an organization that I care deeply about,” continued Dave. “The agency provides more than \$1 million a year in free care to those who are unable to afford the services they need, and that’s really important.”

“Healthcare should be accessible to all,” said Sara. “It’s comforting to know that the Visiting Nurses are here for us and for the members of our community.”

“We support the agency because we know how important it is,” added Dave. “If we want it to be there for others in the future, we have to pay ahead for that.”

“We’ve been lucky and we care about others who are less fortunate,” said Sara. “By supporting the agency, we feel like we can make a real difference in other people’s lives, and that feels good.” ■



Your generosity can live on through a bequest to Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County. For more information call:

800-898-HOME

Celebrating our New Home

Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County has a new home in Wilton. After leasing space at the I-Park office complex in Norwalk for ten years, the agency recently moved to its new offices at 22 Danbury Road in Wilton and celebrated with an Open House reception in May.

Last summer, the agency purchased a former retail furniture store in a highly visible, free-standing building located on Route 7. The two-story structure, on just shy of an acre, sat vacant for nearly a decade. There was very little in the way of recoverable materials and, as such, the building had to undergo an extensive renovation to provide 8,000 square feet of space to house the agency's clinical and administrative offices.

"The project presented innumerable challenges," said Sharon Bradley.

Working with Pustola & Associates Engineers / Constructors and EBH Interiors, the agency set about to convert the dilapidated building into a light-filled contemporary office space that would be highly functional and flexible and designed in such a way as to convey the caring mission of the organization in a welcoming atmosphere that would accommodate the needs of staff, volunteers and community members. This was no easy task considering the non-profit agency's constrained budget, the necessity of strict adherence to all public space building code requirements and a project completion deadline of six months.



"As might be expected, I, as the client, was apprehensive about our ability to meet even a measure of these requisites," said Sharon. "I was concerned that our desire to create a residential-looking design would be eclipsed by the functional requirements of modern commercial office space. As it turns out, my concerns were completely unfounded."

"Happily, Elizabeth Hourihan, of EBH Interiors, and architect Bruce Hollis of Pustola & Associates, understood exactly what we were hoping to achieve," said Sharon. "They brought their unique blend of architectural knowledge and design capability to the project to create a beautiful and extraordinarily comfortable space."

The result is a delightfully designed office building that combines contemporary and traditional elements in lighting, color, and texture. Ms. Hourihan and the

Pustola team utilized fabric, wood, stone and various other materials to create an environment that is warm and inviting.

"Project leader, Mike Trombetta of Pustola & Associates ensured that our building met the highest level of construction standards," said Sharon. "And it was completed within our specified time requirements. The building is very much in keeping with our agency's mission to bring healing and comfort to the community."

"We are grateful to Elizabeth Hourihan of EBH Interiors, Steve Pustola, President of Pustola & Associates and his team, and all who worked in creative collaboration to bring about this major endeavor," said Sharon. "We are thrilled with our beautiful new home which has exceeded all expectations and will endure and enable us to serve the community for decades to come." ■

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 Friends,

I want to thank you all for the superb care you took of my dear friend, Ann. I was humbled to see the compassion and competency of your staff. Every detail was attended to with efficiency and a total focus on Ann's wishes. Your staff honored Ann and they were a constant source of knowledge and comfort to her. They showed genuine regard for her. There was never a rushed approach even though I know they must have been caring for many other patients.

Even after Ann passed, each of your staff members followed up to offer grief support for all of us who were at her side. Your service was comprehensive and exemplary.

Hospice was a spiritual life raft for Ann as she made her last journey on earth. We will always be profoundly grateful to you for this supreme quality of care.

I extend my heartfelt appreciation for making Ann's path comfortable and pain free.

*Kindest regards,
Vera*



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.

Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County



Trusted care. When you need it most.

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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.

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