

# Caring Matters

Winter 2016-2017

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*"Palliative care is often confused with hospice or end-of-life care ... Hospice focuses on aiding those facing a terminal diagnosis. Palliative care helps individuals and families dealing with advanced or serious health issues at any point in their lives."*

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## **Palliative care makes world brighter for couple facing cancer**

Gerry Marini managed to get one of the last two spots in a clinical trial for a drug that had the potential to help his battle against cancer. But soon after starting, he was forced to drop out.

"My body couldn't accept the drug," he remembered. He lost weight and became so weak that he had to rely on a wheelchair. "I was really in a bad way. My doctor said, 'I think you need some help.'"

The doctor "prescribed" the new Palliative Care Program established by VNA Hospice & Palliative Care, part of VNA Care. The service helps people with advanced or serious health issues achieve the best possible quality of life.

Robin Wilson, RN, MSN, CHPN, director of palliative care services, said, "Palliative care is often confused with hospice or end-of-life care. While hospice care incorporates palliative care's pain and symptom management, there's an important distinction. Hospice focuses on aiding those facing a terminal diagnosis. Palliative care helps individuals and families dealing with advanced or serious health issues at any point in their lives."

The palliative care team includes a physician and nurse practitioners with expertise in pain and symptom management. Additional home health care clinicians may be involved in a patient's care, including nurses, rehabilitation therapists, social workers, and nutritionists.

Kerry O'Connor, APNP, palliative care nurse practitioner, began caring for Gerry at home and providing support to Lois, his wife of nearly 50 years. Kerry reviewed Gerry's medications and advised him on the best times to take each and how to handle side effects, like digestive problems and rashes. Kerry prescribed a pain medication, and counseled Gerry on everything from keeping up his energy to medical equipment to completing a MOLST (Medical Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment) form.

"Her advice was spot on," said Gerry. He slowly became stronger and re-gained his ability to walk. Without the palliative care program, "I probably would have had to suffer through," he said.

Lois added that when Kerry and the Palliative Care Program came into their lives, "It felt like a load of bricks came off of me. I saw such an improvement. Gerry looked better, and he felt better. The world looks a lot brighter."

For more information about the Palliative Care Program, please visit [www.vnacare.org](http://www.vnacare.org) or call 800-728-1862.



Robin Wilson, RN, MSN, CHPN, director of palliative care services



Louise Condon, event sponsor and member of the Community Cabinet, (left) and Mary Ann O'Connor, president and CEO



From left: Cat Mayo, member of the Needham Area Community Cabinet; Mary Ann O'Connor, president and CEO; Kerrie Patten and Christine Paul Tetreault, both members of the Community Cabinet; and Jane Woodbury, vice president of fund development



Harding Ounanian, Jr., member of the Community Cabinet, (left) and Jack Cogswell, longtime board member

## More Cool Hot Jazz supports home health and hospice care

Henri Smith New Orleans Friends and Flavours returned for the Needham Area Community Cabinet's third annual benefit for VNA Care Network, VNA Hospice & Palliative Care, and the Stanley R. Tippett Home in Needham. The volunteer group raised over \$40,000 in essential funding for home health and hospice care during the benefit at the Needham Golf Club.



From left: Elaine Oppenheimer, Rebecca Wilson, and Katie Doonan, all from the Needham Women's Club, an event sponsor

### Our appreciation to the corporate and individual sponsors of More Cool Hot Jazz:

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Henri Smith got the crowd dancing.

### Needham Area Community Cabinet

Suzanne Comer  
Louise Condon  
Deborah Corkum  
Harold Galberg  
Priscilla Galberg  
Cat Mayo

Harding Ounanian, Jr.  
Kerrie Patten  
Stephanie Perkins  
Mike Razza  
Jack Rooney  
Elizabeth Sobezenski

Christine Paul Tetreault  
Beverly Van Orman  
Kathy Whitney  
Barry Whittaker  
Laura Wise  
Jane Woodbury

## Volunteer brings kindness to hospice patients and families

Linda Romano has had her share of loss, most recently her husband Albert Romano, Jr., who passed away three years ago with his family by his side.

"I wanted to make things better for those losing brothers, sisters, and spouses," said Linda. She began giving her time as a volunteer at the Rose Monahan Hospice Home in Worcester two years ago.

The residence is one of three hospice homes operated by VNA Hospice & Palliative Care. (The Elizabeth Evarts de Rham Hospice Home is located in Cambridge, and the Stanley R. Tippetts Hospice Home is in Needham.) Hospice care, as well as support from our volunteers, is also provided to patients receiving care in their own homes throughout Eastern and Central Massachusetts.

Every shift is different. Linda may sit by a patient's bedside, bring coffee to visiting family, help train a new volunteer, or arrange bouquets of flowers to brighten the home.

"Any touch of kindness I can bring to a patient or family member, that's what I like to do," she said.

Linda has found her time at the Rose Monahan Hospice Home the most rewarding of her volunteer work. "It's a peaceful house filled with warmth, serenity, kindness, and compassion – a place where I would want to be if I was on my final journey," said Linda.

VNA Hospice & Palliative Care's volunteers gave nearly 10,000 hours of support last year to terminally ill patients and their loved ones. To learn more about becoming a hospice volunteer, call 781-569-2811 or visit [www.vnacare.org](http://www.vnacare.org). To make a donation in support of hospice and our volunteer program, please use the enclosed envelope or visit [www.vnacare.org/donors](http://www.vnacare.org/donors).



Linda Romano, hospice volunteer

## How to reach us

### Service Information

800-728-1862

### Donations and Mailing List

888-663-3688, ext. 1365

[giving@vnacare.org](mailto:giving@vnacare.org)

### Online

[www.vnacare.org](http://www.vnacare.org)

[www.facebook.com/vnacare.org](https://www.facebook.com/vnacare.org)

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## Gifts of stock and other securities offer tax savings

Donating long-term appreciated stocks and other securities can bring even greater tax savings than traditional cash gifts.

"The key is being able to take the charitable deduction and avoid paying taxes on the unrealized capital gains," said Jane Woodbury, vice president of fund development for VNA Care.

Donors may claim the full value of the gift as a charitable deduction. This option for supporting VNA Care Network, VNA of Boston, and VNA Hospice & Palliative Care allows people to make a larger gift than if they first sold the stocks or other securities and donated the net proceeds to the agency.

### Different strategy for depreciated securities

Donors looking to eliminate depreciated securities from their portfolios would do better to sell the securities first. That enables the donor to claim a capital loss. Cash from the sale could be donated to VNA Care, allowing for a charitable deduction as well.

### Assistance donating stocks and other securities

Donors should initiate gifts of appreciated securities to VNA Care Network, VNA of Boston, or VNA Hospice & Palliative Care by Dec. 28 to ensure the transfer is completed in time for a deduction on their 2016 tax return. For more information and transfer instructions, contact Jane Woodbury at 888-663-3688, ext. 1360 or [Jane\\_Woobury@vnacare.org](mailto:Jane_Woobury@vnacare.org)



*This information is intended for educational purposes only. For legal, tax, or financial advice, please contact your professional advisors.*





Margaret and Joseph McDonough, Jr., co-chair of the Woburn Friends



Tracey White, secretary of the Woburn Friends, (back, left) and Marshall White, owner of event sponsor White Builders, (back, second from left) joined in the walk with their family.



Kids had their own race at Step Out for Hospice, the annual Fun Run.

## Hundreds Step Out for Hospice during 19th annual benefit

The Woburn Friends of VNA Hospice & Palliative Care got area residents to put on their sneakers and Step Out for Hospice. The 3-mile walk, 5-mile road race, and 1-mile Fun Run for children around Horn Pond in Woburn raised over \$50,000 for end-of-life care. The Woburn Friends organized the event with the Irish American Club of Woburn and the Shamrock Running Club.

### Our gratitude to our Step Out for Hospice sponsors:

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### Woburn Friends

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Co-Chair  
Tracey White, Secretary

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Carol Flaherty  
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Susan Jamieson  
Jamie Kelley  
Kathy Lucero  
Doris T. Lynch  
Ed Maguire

Barbara McElhiney  
Ann Mooney  
Joanne O'Brien  
Mary Santo O'Connor  
Carole Torrice



From left: Members of the Worcester Area Community Cabinet include Linda Maykel, DDS, Liisa Holm of Platinum Sponsor Marsh & McLennan Agency, Lenore Monahan, Robin Spaulding, Linda F. Haddad, and Janet Birbara.

## Worcester area volunteers spearhead fourth annual Halloween fundraiser

The volunteers on the Worcester Area Community Cabinet raised nearly \$60,000 for home health care, hospice care, and the Rose Monahan Hospice Home in Worcester. The evening at the Beechwood Hotel in Worcester featured music by Dale LePage and The Manhattans, dancing, and live and silent auctions.

### Thank you to our Halloween Cocktail Party sponsors:

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### Worcester Area Community Cabinet

Janet Birbara  
Eric M. Dunphy  
Deborah Freeman  
Maureen Gray  
Linda F. Haddad  
Liisa Holm

Linda Maykel, DDS  
Lenore Monahan  
Beth Sobezenski  
Robin Spaulding  
Jane Woodbury



Peter McFarland of sponsor The Allied Group and Mary Ann O'Connor, president and CEO



Board member Elizabeth Chen with her "patient," Richard Edminston



Jane Woodbury, vice president of fund development, (center) with Joe Gerardi (left) and Chris Bailey (right), both of Platinum Sponsor Mutual of America



From left: Karen Chirsky, vice president of transitional care and business development; Carole Murray; and Jeanne Callahan-Lydon, senior vice president of clinical services, quality, and risk management





Daiva Braunfelds, vice president of advanced illness management, hospice and palliative care, (left) and Louise Bray of the Hospice of Cambridge Development Committee



From left: Gene Kalaw and Elaine Arsenault, both of Cambridge Trust Company, Legacy Sponsor of the benefit, and Joe Roller



From left: Rufus, Lizzie, and Jerry de Rham, children of the hospice residence's namesake

## State's first hospice residence celebrates 25th anniversary

A Toast to Hospice of Cambridge at the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, Cambridge, recently marked the 25th anniversary of the Elizabeth Evarts de Rham Hospice Home, the first hospice residence in the Commonwealth. Organized by the volunteers on the Hospice of Cambridge Development Committee, the evening raised vital funds to support the residence, which provides end-of-life care in homelike surroundings. Nearly \$150,000 in donations were made this year in honor of the anniversary.

### A Toast to Hospice of Cambridge was generously sponsored by:

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Jane O. Woodbury

We are also grateful for the support of individuals and business at the Friends level as well as our auction and in-kind donors.

### Hospice of Cambridge Development Committee

Louise Bray, Co-Chair  
Tamasin Johnson, Co-Chair  
Lizzie de Rham  
Susan Good  
Elizabeth Goodfellow  
Jan Kinasewich  
Carol Monica  
LuAnn Polk  
Ann Riker  
Wendy Squires  
Pat Thornton  
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#### *Emeritae:*

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Karen Davis  
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Pauline Olsen  
Helen Pounds  
Joanna Scott  
Loring Stevens  
Pamela Turner  
Kristen Wainwright

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## From your letters

*Thank you to our donors, volunteers, and friends for supporting our mission of caring. You are helping us make a difference in the lives of our patients and their loved ones. These are excerpts from just a few of the many thank you notes we've received.*

"Watching anyone you care about decline due to an illness isn't easy for either the individual or the family, but we were comforted knowing that Mom was always happy to see anyone from your team... Mom was a very kind and compassionate person; we thank you and your staff for demonstrating the same kindness and compassion that Mom deserved."

"I wanted to take the time to let you know how wonderfully we thought (your staff) worked with our family, and how thankful we are that we decided to bring my Dad home with the help of your services. At such a delicate time for our family, you all walked us through everything, and taught us the skills we needed, to provide my Dad with the best possible care we could provide."

"(My physical therapist's) bedside manner and kind, understanding personality helped me in more ways than I'm sure she realized. Whenever I thought I couldn't do my PT, she could convince me I could. When I got hit with a bit of post-op depression, she was so helpful in reassuring me it was all normal. I can't say enough about her."

## We can't do it without you!

Donors like you are making a difference in local communities by planning fundraisers and other events that gain vital support for home health and hospice care. Learn more about volunteering on a Community Cabinet or Friends group.

Contact Jane Woodbury, vice president of fund development, at 888-663-3688, ext. 1360 or [Jane\\_Woodbury@vnacare.org](mailto:Jane_Woodbury@vnacare.org).

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## Reflect before trying to break a habit's hold on your life

Horace Mann, an education reformer in the 1800s, once likened habits to a cable: "We weave a strand of it every day and soon it cannot be broken."

"In other words, habits have great strength," said Molly Lukason, LICSW, behavioral health manager for VNA Care. "The more positive our habits, the more enjoyable aspects of our life will be."

VNA Care's Behavioral Health Program helps people learn about the connection between their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors to help them make positive changes. The program serves homebound older adults with depression, anxiety, and/or early onset dementia.

Before using a long list of New Year's resolutions to overhaul your life, Molly recommends taking stock first. Ask yourself:

- What aspects of my life are working?
- What parts of my life aren't working as well?
- How do my thoughts about a particular aspect of my life influence how I respond to certain situations? In turn, how does my response influence how I think about a situation?
- Are there habits or automatic thoughts that I feel like I can't get away from, that are so ingrained that I feel like I can't change or can't think of other options to change the situation?

Understanding what's behind a negative habit, whether an action or feeling, is key to replacing it with something positive.

Change isn't easy. If you are having trouble when facing a habit you want to change, like eating sweets to comfort yourself instead of dealing with the problem at hand, Molly suggests you:



1. Take a step back. Detach for a moment.
2. Breathe deeply. Use your breath as your anchor and talk to yourself in a rational way.
3. Ask yourself what you would say to a friend who experienced the same thing.
4. Consider the worst-case scenario, and then think of alternative possible outcomes.
5. Enable your mind and emotions to be in this particular moment while using your breath.

"Each time you take a positive step, you're fraying that cable's hold on you, building a happier life and stronger future," added Molly.



VNA Care Network  
VNA of Boston  
VNA Hospice & Palliative Care

### Fund Development Office

199 Rosewood Drive, Suite 180  
Danvers, MA 01923



Michael Minogue, CEO, president, and chairman of Abiomed, gives Mary Ann O'Connor, president and CEO of VNA Care, a tour of Abiomed's headquarters where they produce the world's smallest heart pump. Michael is one of our Heroes in Health Care. *Photo by Roger Farrington.*

## Honoring three Heroes in Health Care

As we went to press, VNA of Boston was gearing up for the 11th annual Heroes in Health Care Gala. The event celebrates three leaders who have had a profound and sustained role in shaping the community while also raising essential funds for the nonprofit's Maternal Child Health Program and Charitable Care Fund.

This year's Heroes are Diane Bergeron, former vice president of hospice and advanced illness management for VNA Hospice & Palliative Care; Michael R. Minogue, CEO, president, and chairman of Abiomed; and Mutual of America (accepted by John R. Greed, president and CEO). Amy and Joshua Boger are Presenting Sponsors of the Gala.

Visit our Facebook at [www.facebook.com/vnacare.org](http://www.facebook.com/vnacare.org) for our Gala photo gallery. Read more about Heroes in Health Care in our next issue of *Caring Matters*.



## State Senate salutes you!

Our donors, volunteers, and other supporters play a vital role in promoting the health and wellbeing of the community. The State Senate recently recognized your contributions with a special citation. Pictured, from left: Jane Woodbury, vice president of fund development, and John Archer, co-chair of VNA Care's North Shore Community Cabinet volunteer group, accepted the citation from State Senator Joan Lovely.