

Pathways Hospice®

Community Care for Northern Colorado

InTOUCH

NEWSLETTER



OUR MISSION

Honoring every moment of life, Pathways Hospice provides compassionate, excellent, comprehensive care for those who have an advanced medical condition and those who are grieving.

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A NEW PATHWAYS HOSPICE PROGRAM TO HONOR AND SUPPORT MILITARY VETERANS

Pathways Hospice is pleased to announce our partnership with the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO) to offer a local program which focuses on providing respectful, compassionate care to military veterans in Larimer and Western Weld County, recognition of their service and specialized support for their families. Approximately 23,000 Larimer County residents are Veterans, accounting for 10% of the 2009 adult population (www.co.larimer.co.us).

While we anticipate continued expansion of this program the first phase includes:

- Identification of patients and immediate family members who've served our country enabling us to provide individualized meaningful assistance
- Veteran specific training for Clinical Staff on medical and cultural concerns and Veterans benefits
- Strengthening our relationship



with both Larimer County Veterans Services and the Cheyenne VA Medical Center

- Partnering with community veteran's organizations
- Adding veteran resources to our community library, such as *Chicken Soup for the Veteran's Soul*, *Peace at Last: Stories of Hope and Healing for Veterans*, *War and the Soul: Healing our Nation's Veterans from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder* and many more
- Expansion of the Pathways Hospice veterans to veterans volunteer program, which pairs a veteran

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Peace at Last

*by Deborah L. Grassman
Reviewed by Patty Nichols,
Clinical Records Lead at
Pathways Hospice and
military family member*

A must read for anyone caring for a veteran at the end of life, *Peace at Last* brings enlightenment to their journey. Whether you are part of the core care team, a caregiver, a family member or a volunteer, Karen brings forth a guide to understanding veterans and how many factors may affect them at the end of life. Karen has extensive insight into helping veterans deal with issues that are unique to them and she has shared those with us in *Peace at Last*. The greatest lesson I took away was this beautiful statement, "We heal our nation one soldier at a time... one gratitude at a time... one apology at a time."

PROGRAM FOR MILITARY VETERANS

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patient with a veteran volunteer who provides companionship and support

- Creation of an on-site Veteran's Garden featuring an American flag to recognize all military veterans

By recognizing that veterans who face a life-limiting illness may have unique

needs, we will be better able to support and guide those veterans and their families toward a more peaceful ending. We are proud to partner with NHPCO, the Veteran's Administration and many other local agencies to ensure that all veterans receive loving, quality care.

FAMILIES PARTICIPATE IN CREATING MEMORIALS FOR LOVED ONES

As a way of remembering loved ones and providing support for Pathways Hospice programs and services, families frequently request donations to be made in our behalf. Often, as a tangible way of honoring their loved one, families will use these gifts to install a brick or leaf, inscribed with the person's name, in our Pathways Memory Garden or on the Pathways Memorial Tree.

For our patients who have died at the Pathways Hospice Care Center, we have "planted" Memorial Trees. The trees are located at the Care Center, on the third floor of McKee Medical Center in Loveland. Any



Kathryn Blehinger at the Memorial Tree

loved one can be remembered through the installation of a brick in the Pathways Memory Garden located at our main office in Fort Collins. Families are invited to participate in the installation of a leaf or brick. For more information about these memorial programs, please call Kathy Anderson, Community Relations Representative, at (970) 663-3500.

AN ORIGINAL HOSPICE NURSE RECEIVES CARE WITH OUR GRATITUDE

In 1978, a group of nurses came together in Loveland to voluntarily care for a friend in the final months of her life. This group of special volunteers was the beginning of the hospice movement in Larimer County. In 1979, with support from community members and leaders, Pathways Hospice became a non-profit organization.

In the first year of operation, the all-volunteer staff at what was then known as Hospice of Larimer County, now Pathways Hospice, served 17 patients. Based on the unwavering dedication and belief in the service they were providing, Pathways Hospice grew to meet the needs of the community. We now have over 120 professional staff, more than 200 volunteers and serve approximately 1000 patients each year. Pathways Hospice has a nationally recognized grief support program for families of hospice patients and all members of the community. Our locations include our main office in Fort Collins, our satellite office in Windsor, and the Hospice Care Center in McKee Medical Center.

This year we have the honor and privilege to provide hospice service to one of the original volunteers who helped bring hospice to Larimer County. **June Sullivan** began volunteering with hospice as a Registered Nurse in 1979 and continued to provide loving and compassionate care to community members until 1984.

June still speaks with love and conviction about the early days of hospice care. "Most everything starts with a dream or a thought. Elizabeth Kubler-Ross came up with the first thought of taking care of people in their homes." She put her hand to her heart. "It rang a bell in here somewhere with me. There's always so many needs in the world. That was one that wasn't being met." Her goal then was the same as the goal Pathways Hospice has now. "We wanted to make (our patients) as comfortable as we could and as happy as we could."

June reminisced about how those original volunteers worked with a bare minimum. Poudre Valley Hospital saw value in the service she and her fellow volunteers were providing, and supplied them with a basement office and a phone. She didn't realize at the time that they would have also given her a desk; they made good with a makeshift desk her husband created out of an old door! There were many supportive people in the community, including local physicians. She particularly remembers the wives of the physicians actively promoting hospice work. She also recalls with affection the other nurses who worked with her, the original Music Therapist, the community clergy and the volunteers who provided loving support and comfort to the patients.

June watched Pathways Hospice grow over the years, and is aware of the impact she and her fellow pioneers



June Sullivan

had on the way people now receive end-of-life care. When asked about the difference she made in so many lives, she said, "If you know what you did made a difference, what could be a better epitaph?"

Now June is on the receiving end of hospice care and expressed how that feels. "It warms the cockles of your heart, wherever they are." She laughed with warm humor. June became quiet for a moment and said, "It's a complete circle. Wonderful... wonderful... knowing that something that was so important to me then could be so important at the end of my life."

With great respect and gratitude Pathways Hospice thanks June Sullivan for her commitment to loving service to others, her willingness to advocate for those who sought to spend their final days at home with loved ones, and her belief in the future of hospice.

PATHWAYS HOSPICE THANKS COMMUNITY FUNDRAISERS



Womens Golf Tournament Participants

The Fort Collins Country Club Women's Golf Tournament has been supporting Pathways Hospice since 1997, raising over \$40,000 for the grief and loss program. At the 16th annual event participants gathered to enjoy a luncheon and continue their tradition of community giving. We are grateful to be the recipient of this generosity for so many years.

The National Association of Insurance and Financial Advisors (NAIFA) held its second annual NOCO Casino Night; a portion of the proceeds were contributed to Pathways Hospice. NAIFA has supported us through the years and continues to be instrumental in helping us meet the needs of those seeking end-of-life care and grief support. Our heartfelt

thanks to all of you who have helped make this possible.

If you would like to host an event or fundraiser on behalf of Pathways Hospice, please contact Kim Mueller, Marketing and Outreach Executive, at 970.663.3500.



Gamma Chi Members present Pathways Hospice with generous gift.

CAREGIVERS PAMPERED AT PATHWAYS HOSPICE

In 2006 the Office on Aging, the Alzheimer's Association and Pathways Hospice joined together to create Caregiver Pampering Day to honor and support those dedicated to providing care for a loved one. On April 16th, 2011 this free event was held for the fifth year.

Over the years this event has grown, with increasing community support from Volunteers of America, Elderhaus, Eldercare Network and CSU Center on Aging. Amazing volunteers, including the 20-25 "pamperers," make it

all possible. Over 60 caregivers participated in a variety of activities and classes, all designed to allow them to relax and be treated to a spa-like experience. Pathways Hospice supplied the breakfast and the building and the Office on Aging provided the catered lunch. Generous community members donated items for gift bags and a raffle.

Pathways Hospice became a spa facility with every available room transformed to accommodate activities and classes ranging from

reflexology to massage to meditation. Before dispersing to receive some TLC for themselves, the caregivers had a light breakfast and met others who understand in a very real way what they do on a daily basis. Facilitators led discussions on a variety of topics, including healthy eating, humor, and stress reduction. In the art room, caregivers spent time with quiet music and an opportunity for artistic expression. Those who found themselves with free time could walk the labyrinth, spend time talking with
continued on next page

CAREGIVERS PAMPERED *continued*

other caregivers, or learn about the therapeutic use of the bond between people and animals.

Margaret "KT" Smith attended Caregiver Pampering Day for the second time. Not only was Margaret a caregiver to her husband for many years, she also found time to be a volunteer for Pathways Hospice. Her husband, Herman, died recently after dealing with multiple health issues, so taking time for self-care had new meaning for her. Margaret took advantage of chair massage and healing touch, as well as some of the other break out sessions. Volunteers also talked about what a wonderful experience this was for them, and how happy they were to be part of such an important occasion. One volunteer summed it up when she said that she received at least as much from the experience as the caregivers she was assisting.

Pathways Hospice looks forward to the next opportunity to support our amazing community of caregivers.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Summer Grief Education Series

Thursday afternoons,
1:00 PM – 2:30 PM
June 17 through August 11
Pathways Hospice
All are welcome to attend an educational series of topics on grief and loss. Persons interested may attend any or all of the sessions. No registration or fee.

Community Memorial Service

Monday, July 11 at 5:30 PM
Pathways Hospice
The community is invited to join us at Pathways Hospice for an evening of remembering loved ones. The service will include a message from a hospice staff member and special rituals of remembrance. No registration or fee.

Living Well Series

Tuesday evenings,
6:00 PM – 7:30 PM
Pathways Hospice
July 12 - Change & Resilience
July 19 - Living Your Best Life
July 26 - Hospice Myths: Setting the Record Straight
Everyone is invited to a thought provoking and insightful series. Come to any or all. A light snack will be provided. No registration or fee.

Breakfast in the Park

Saturday, July 23
8:30 AM – 11:00 AM
Please see the back page for details.

A Vintage Affair® - Celebrating the 10th Anniversary of this popular classic wine tasting!
Friday, September 23

6:30 PM – 9:00 PM
Drake Centre, 802 West Drake Road,
Fort Collins
Presented by Wilbur's Total Beverage, this event offers attendees the opportunity to taste an extensive selection of wines and local microbrews while sampling delectable foods in an intimate setting. Tickets available beginning August at www.pathways-care.org and Wilbur's Total Beverage.

Veteran's Day Recognition Event

Friday, November 11 at 3:00 PM
Pathways Hospice
Please join us on Veteran's Day as we recognize the contributions made by all veterans of military service. Weather permitting, a portion of the afternoon's event will be held outside; please dress appropriately. Open to all members of the community, no registration required.

Abby's Signature Concert Series Christmas Concert

Monday, December 19
10:00 AM and 5:30 PM
First Presbyterian Church
531 South College Avenue, Fort Collins
This Concert Series is a wonderful opportunity to experience a selection of seasonal pieces performed by talented local musicians. Free-will offerings will be accepted for Respite Care and Pathways Hospice. Special thanks to our series sponsors Allnutt, Fort Collins Sertoma, Gina & Dan Schwartz, and Shauna & Dary Southwick, as well as our Christmas Concert Sponsors, Dellenbach Motors, Carole Egger, and Jean & Tom Sutherland.

PATHWAYS HOSPICE - INVOLVED IN OUR COMMUNITY

Without the generosity of our community, it would be much more difficult for Pathways Hospice to provide such extensive services. From volunteers to donors, we are supported by a community that values giving time and dollars to ensure that care is available to those who need it. We have an amazing volunteer Board of Directors, incredible volunteers, and many individuals and businesses who generously support us through donations of all kinds.

Knowing first hand how important it is to be supported by our community, Pathways Hospice makes it a priority to be engaged in community activities. We provide sponsorship, outreach and education to help others, many of whom offer invaluable services of their own.

Pathways Hospice provides sponsorship for other organizations serving our community, including the Alzheimer's Association, local hospital

foundations and community centers. We are involved with Senior Law Day and the Rocky Mountain Conference on Aging. To honor our military veterans, we have sponsored a tree at the Veterans Plaza of Northern Colorado in Fort Collins. Recently, Pathways Hospice committed to Adopt-A-Highway in the Windsor area and we look forward to doing our part to maintain the beauty of Weld County roadways. We are involved in the business community and are active members in area Chambers of Commerce and Be Local Northern Colorado.

REMEMBERING A COWBOY

by Amy Graver-Beers, Social Worker, Pathways Hospice



Don, a cowboy at heart.

With a love for open land and animals, horses in particular, **Donald Stoner** lived to share his experience with many of us at Pathways Hospice. Don was one who wore his cowboy boots at all times, even as his health declined. Over the years he felt most comfortable in his boots and the angle it provided in his gait. Growing up, he was the proud owner of Trigger, his horse, whom he loved and adored. He found solace in escaping to the fields at night on Trigger to watch the stars glow in the open country.

During his visits with hospice staff, he reminisced about Trigger and the joy

she brought him. He also expressed a deep desire to pet a horse one last time before departing from this life. With help from a friend, family was able to bring a mini Satin Doll horse into his home at his bedside the day before he died. His beloved daughter, Holly, remembers that even though he wasn't able to engage with others he found the strength to reach out his hand and pet the horse. This experience brought tears to his eyes. Knowing that being in his boots was his place of comfort, Holly asked the hospice team to help Don put them on as he grew weaker. Family told him it was "time to go dance with Mom".

With "cowboy" listed as his occupation on his death certificate, he was able to die at home with his boots on. Holly shared, "He enjoyed the reminiscing, companionship, and socialization that were available to him in his home over the last few months of his life." And, "He never felt like a patient; he felt like a friend."

Pathways Hospice offers free educational opportunities on a wide range of topics to a variety of audiences. We provide information about end-of-life care and bereavement services at events such as 9 Health Fair and the City and County Employee Health Fair. Grief education and support is available for schools and businesses to help in times of distress following a loss. We offer no-cost education to staff at Skilled Nursing Facilities and Assisted Living Residences and are actively educating about end-of-life concerns, such as advance directives and hospice care, to congregations, employee groups, clubs and service organizations. Our "Living Well" and Summer Grief Education series are available to any interested individual.

We continue to show our great appreciation and share a commitment to contributing to the well-being of our community members.

PATHWAYS HOSPICE VOLUNTEER RECOGNIZED



*Volunteer Cathy Sloan (right)
with Sarah Van Etten,
Volunteer Services Director*

Each year Thompson School District, McKee Medical Center and the City of Loveland jointly host a special event to honor volunteers who make a difference. This year **Cathy Sloan** is recognized by Loveland Honors as one of our community's outstanding volunteers.

Providing companionship and comfort for people in their last weeks and months of life would be difficult for many, but it suits Cathy Sloan perfectly. One recent situation exemplifies her creativity

and dedication. Jack is a Pathways Hospice patient who recently made the hard choice to move into a skilled nursing facility due to an increase in care needs. Cathy started out visiting Jack at home, giving family a chance to run errands. When Jack moved into the nursing facility, Cathy continued to visit him there. Their visits broke up his long days and Jack's wife appreciated the extra attention he got from Cathy's visits.

Over time it became clear that one of the things Jack missed most was the Texas Hold'em games that brought him so much pleasure in the past. Cathy helped to find a time when they could bring Jack home for the big game, and found other players because as Jack said, "you can't play poker without at least 5 people." Now, each Wednesday the group meets for popcorn and poker. Jack's wife commented, "It is so nice to have laughter in the house again!" And it is so nice for Jack to experience, if just for the afternoon, the thrill of the competition that he had so enjoyed during his earlier life.

Cathy has dedicated over 17 years to her volunteer service at Pathways Hospice and is one of our agency's longest serving volunteers. She is a shining star in a constellation of over 200 Pathways Hospice volunteers. As a horsewoman, she's helped with Kids, Horses and Healing, a day-long retreat for grieving children. She is always willing help with administrative duties and fundraising events. Sarah Van Etten, Volunteer Services Director for Pathways Hospice, comments that "Cathy is able to walk into any situation with an open-heart and a non-judgmental spirit. Her flexibility and consistency is so important to families and she is able to bring a sense of humor just when it is needed most."

Please join us in honoring Cathy Sloan's contributions to the many individuals in our community she has cared for throughout the years. She truly exemplifies the giving spirit that makes our community second to none.



JOIN US FOR BREAKFAST IN THE PARK!

Always a family favorite, Pathways Hospice invites you to our 14th Breakfast in the Park. At this green event we offer a delicious breakfast of pancakes, sausage, eggs and other good things. There will be fun for the whole family, including kids' activities and a butterfly release. Butterflies can be purchased for \$10 each at www.pathways-care.org or on a limited basis at the event. Live musical entertainment will be provided by The Holler! We will offer valet service for those who ride their bikes to the park. All proceeds will benefit our Grief and Loss programs for children and teens. Ticket price is \$7 for adults and \$5 for children.

GOLD SPONSORS



Breakfast in the park

Saturday, July 23, 2011,
from 8:30 AM – 11:00 AM

City Park (Shelter #7),
1599 City Park Drive, Fort Collins

Tickets available at
www.pathways-care.org
or on the day of the event at the
breakfast.

HEART SPONSORS

