

# Community of Caring

News for Friends of the VNA & Hospice Foundation



## The Importance of Advance Care Planning

While advance care planning is useful for anyone, it's particularly important for those looking for the best end-of-life care experience and anyone considering hospice. "Advance care planning invites consideration of if and when a patient would desire hospice," says VNA Advance Care Planning Specialist Genevieve Introcaso, LCSW. "Although hospice can be perceived as scary, it is what I have found to be the best way to help ease the fears related to end of life."

At VNA, we understand that this process may initially seem daunting, which is why we've made it as seamless as possible through our home health

program. Established VNA patients can inquire about advance care planning with any of their home team clinicians. Community members may inquire about formal advance directives with their attorney and/or medical provider and additional information and resources may be found on the CDC website.

So, what exactly does advance care planning entail? At VNA, you meet with a nurse practitioner and licensed clinical social worker in your home, both who are certified in palliative and hospice care, where they will evaluate your health and educate you on available services and treatment options. This

information session includes supportive literature and tools to empower informed decision making and self-advocacy after the visit. "Advance care planning is so important because it plants the first seed of thought about health care wishes. It serves to invite open conversation and consideration of what are often deemed uncomfortable topics, and, if appropriate, affords the opportunity to receive accurate education about hospice philosophy and services, to dispel myths and breakdown barriers to what is the only service that can support the needs of the dying," says Genevieve.

Advance care planning not only provides the opportunity for choice and active participation in a patient's plan of care, but it is a way of planning proactively rather than reactively - before a health crisis occurs. It's also a way of saying 'I love you' to your family; having an advance directive in place will alleviate the burden of decision-making for them. "Advance care planning affords the greatest opportunity to have a peaceful and positive experience of navigating illness and eventual dying process," says VNA Advanced Certified Hospice and Palliative Nurse Abaco Binkley, MSN, ACHPN, APRN-C. "Having spent a decade working as a nurse practitioner in the acute care setting, I've seen the drastic contrast of the dying experience when advance care planning does not occur."

# Message from the Director



Michelle Deschane

The past two years have brought to the fore front many challenges for the residents of our community. Although difficult, these challenges were a call to action for

nonprofit partners, businesses, volunteers and donors who came together in support of one another to meet the needs of our most fragile residents.

At the VNA, we often reflect on the transformational impact the home health and hospice care that we provide has in the lives of our patients, caregivers and the community. This impact would not be possible without your ongoing support. Support comes in many forms. Whether you gave monetarily, donated time and energy as a volunteer or offered a kind word, you made a difference in someone's life.

We look forward to the days ahead as we celebrate our success as a community. Together we each make a difference one day at a time in the lives of those we touch. For the VNA that means providing a hospice patient's last wish, ensuring the Mobile Health Clinic can provide care to the uninsured, supporting bereavement services for those grieving the loss of a loved one, keeping patients safely at home with the Telehealth Program and so much more. Your support is truly transformational in the lives of our patients and their families, and we are very grateful!

Michelle Deschane, Director  
VNA & Hospice Foundation

# Welcome New Board Members



Lynde Karin

The VNA & Hospice Foundation is happy to welcome new board member Lynde Karin. Lynde is well acquainted with VNA as she was the first

Director of Development of the VNA & Hospice Foundation in 1994 and remembers her time affectionately. "It was an exciting time to be part of an extraordinary organization," says Lynde. During the three years she spent working at the VNA & Hospice Foundation, Lynde helped raise funds for the first Camp Chrysalis, opened the landmark Hidden Treasures thrift store, initiated the Nightingale Society and began the capital campaign for the VNA Hospice House. "I also fondly remember the Golf-A-Thon, the Father-Son golf tournament at



Susan Rodgers

New board member Susan Rodgers has a robust background in geriatric health care, a vocation that began in high school. "As a teen I always

volunteered at the hospital. I enjoyed working with older people, I liked listening to them," she says. So, it's not surprising she successfully pursued a three year nursing diploma at Rhode Island Hospital in Providence and completed a Nursing Leadership program at Georgetown University.

In 1976 Susan founded Capital City Nursing Registry, a private health care referral agency. About a half decade later she opened Capitol City Nurses Health-care Services, a private home health care company that her son took over in

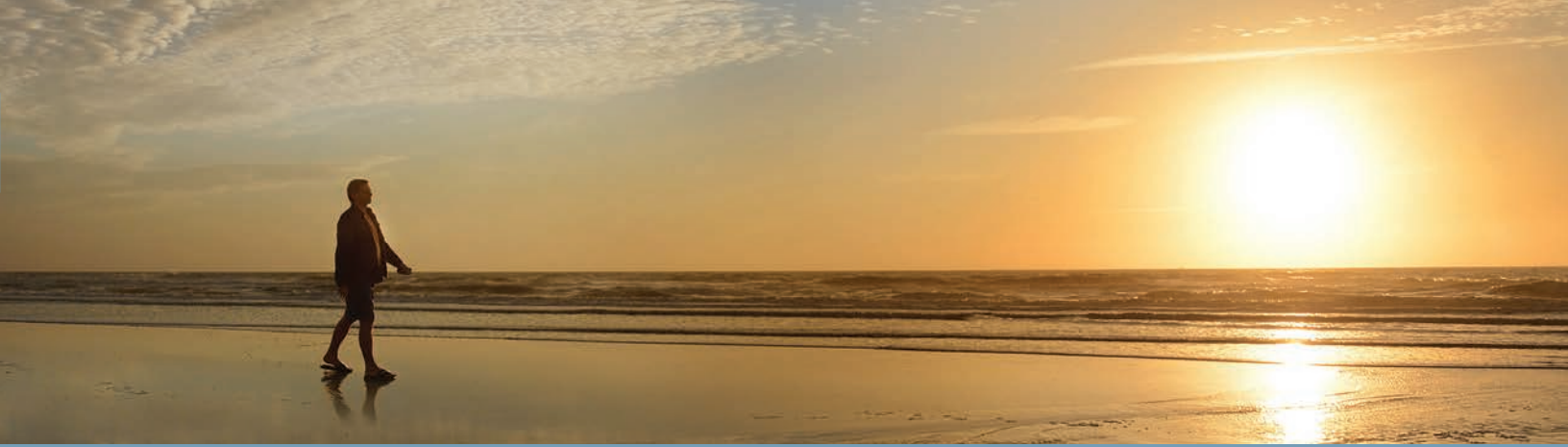
Windsor and the VNA Travel Series," she adds.

And she is thrilled to be back. "Being on the VNA & Hospice Foundation board is an honor and I hope to contribute with the all-important fundraising effort. The challenge is to always support the underserved population who need our services. It is great to say the VNA provides health care to all, regardless of one's ability to pay," she says.

Lynde and her husband, Mike, moved to Vero Beach in 1989 from Middlebury, Vermont where she was Associate Director of Admissions at Middlebury College, to work as Associate Director of Development at St. Edward's School. She and Mike have been married for 60 years, have two children, six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

2013. But Susan wasn't ready to retire. She opened a small assisted living facility, The Cottage at Curry Manor Court, in Bethesda, Maryland, in a large beautiful home with eight bedrooms, each with a beautiful view of the surrounding bucolic landscape. By that time her husband, Billy, was retired and they decided to move to Vero Beach. Susan commuted every four to six weeks to Bethesda to help keep things running at Curry Manor Court until August 2020 when she closed the facility.

As a board member, Susan's main goal is to make people in the community understand how helpful hospice can be in their lives and "to help them look on hospice not as the end of their lives, but as another chapter where they're still making decisions," she says.



## Learning How to Navigate the Journey of Grief

Last May, when Jenifer Mina's husband passed away, she had never felt so alone. "You just walk out of the hospital all by yourself and that's the end and everything falls in a hole," she says. And then a day or a week later – Jenifer doesn't remember precisely when or where - she was introduced to VNA Bereavement Counselor Mary Beth Introcaso, a turning point in her grieving process.

Initially, the two would meet in person at Jenifer's home in Sebastian when COVID-19's restrictions were briefly loosened. But, when numbers began to spike again, they started to meet virtually via Zoom or would simply chat on the phone, something they still do, talking about once every two to three weeks for an hour. The sessions, which VNA offers free of charge, are relaxed yet focused. "Mary Beth will pick one thing that she thinks you need to work on," says Jenifer, "and then she'll talk about it, then she'll say at the end of the session... 'here's what I want you to work on.'"

But regardless of what Jenifer is asked to work on, there is one consistent underlying subject matter, notes Mary Beth. "The main 'theme' is always grief. The subsets are conversations about how to move through it," she says.

And Jenifer has found zeroing in on these various "subsets" to be incredibly healing, and cites a recent example of

how this approach helped her when she was having visual illusions of her late husband. "I kept seeing his dead face... I was frantic," she says.

But the waking nightmare subsided after Mary Beth suggested to Jenifer to pretend she was watching a slideshow, and when a 'slide' of her late husband's visage appeared, to 'push it away' and 'put on a different slide.' "I did that, and it worked...and then she gave me some mantras where I repeat something like 'I am fine, I am well and good things are going to be happening to me.'"

Mary Beth also likes to help clients by playing to their strengths. For Jenifer, who has a Master's Degree in poetry, this meant encouraging her inner bard. "Mary Beth knew the way I expressed myself is through poetry, so she asked me to write one... and she said, 'Let's think of the title right now,' and so I did, and then I said, 'I am on the ladder of grief,' and that was the name of the poem."

The next time the two women spoke, Jenifer read her new poem. "It was good," says the poet. "And after I read it, Mary Beth said, 'You express it, and it gets out of here, and you can move to the next step.' And she was right."

Gratitude has also helped Jenifer move to the next step. Despite losing her beloved husband, which also meant losing half her income – something that

hasn't been easy – she has consciously been focusing on everything she still does have, including her house, four children, eight grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

She also pays attention to kindness from others. "That's the only medicine there is really," she says. And someone who has offered her a lot of kindness has been Mary Beth, a sentiment that Jenifer makes a point of passing on, and that's key to her healing.

Nearly a year later, Jenifer feels she's made great strides with Mary Beth's help, but still has a ways to go. "Grieving is an ongoing process," she says, which is why she's very appreciative of Mary Beth's no term-limits approach to it. "She said 'You can have a counselor for as long as you feel like you need it.' That's wonderful, another great comfort to me. She's never gonna say 'you're fixed' because I'm not fixed.

"Grief is like a big wheel, and you're tied to it. And then there is someone running the motor of this wheel, but off stage, and the wheel will have to complete itself before you can get off. And there's nothing you can do about it 'cause you're not running the motor. And then, when you finally are able to reach out to somebody else, that's when you start to go forward. But you can't until you're off that wheel," says Jenifer.



# 32nd Annual Golf-A-Thon Teeing Off May 2nd for Another Successful Year



VNA & Hospice Foundation's 32nd annual Golf-A-Thon is being held on Monday, May 2 at The Moorings Yacht & Country Club and will be hosted by the Moorings' golf pro Bob Gruber. He will be joined by pros from 12 other local clubs who will tee off at 7 a.m. in an attempt to play 135 holes of golf. Hopefully, the event will be as fruitful as last year's, which despite the pandemic, raised over \$464,000 – a record.

The other 12 golf pros contributing their time and talent to the cause are Matthew Challenor from Windsor Club; David Champagne from Orchid Island Golf Club; Drew DiSesa from Riomar Country Club; Troy Pare from Grand Harbor Club; Pat Gorman from Bent Pine Golf Club; Randy Hedgecock from Vero Beach Country Club;

Steve Hudson from John's Island Club; Ian Killen from Indian River Club; Don Meadows from Quail Valley Golf Club; Frank Mentzer from Oak Harbor Golf Club; Bela Nagy from Sandridge Golf Club; Ryan Zug from Pointe West Country Club.

We hope you'll support the event! A day, that's sure to be wonderful, rain or shine! To learn about all that's taking place on this special day, please visit [www.vnadc.org/golf-a-thon](http://www.vnadc.org/golf-a-thon). To view livestream segments the day of the event, please visit us at [Facebook.com/vnahospicefoundation](https://www.facebook.com/vnahospicefoundation)

**To support of one of your favorite golf pros, or make a donation to this worthy cause, please visit our secure website at [www.vnadc.org/golf-a-thon](http://www.vnadc.org/golf-a-thon) or call 772.978.5568.**

## 2022 Golf-A-Thon Golf Pros



Matthew Challenor  
Windsor Club



David Champagne  
Orchid Island Golf Club



Drew DiSesa  
Riomar Country Club



Troy Pare  
Grand Harbor Club



Pat Gorman  
Bent Pine Golf Club



Bob Gruber  
The Moorings Yacht & Country Club



Randy Hedgecock  
Vero Beach Country Club



Steve Hudson  
John's Island Club



Ian Killen  
Indian River Club



Don Meadows  
Quail Valley Golf Club



Frank Mentzer  
Oak Harbor Golf Club



Bela Nagy  
Sandridge Golf Club



Ryan Zug  
Pointe West Country Club

## Thank You to Golf-A-Thon Grand Sponsor Proctor Construction

Family owned and operated Proctor Construction Company was founded in 1976 and has always been supportive of the VNA's mission of providing compassionate care for patients and caregivers. From Linda Proctor serving on the VNA of the Treasure Coast Board,

to the naming of a VNA Hospice House room after Donald Proctor's mother, Sarah Proctor McCarthy, to being a Golf-A-Thon Grand Sponsor in 2011, they have made giving back to the community a priority. Proctor Construction is grateful to partner with the VNA &

Hospice Foundation once again as the Grand Sponsor for the 32nd Annual Golf-A-Thon. We appreciate the relationship that has been built over the years.



# Local Artist Sharon Sexton Creates New Thank You Patron Plaques for Refurbished VNA Hospice House

It only seems appropriate that renowned Vero Beach artist Sharon Sexton would be asked to create the hand sculpted tile plaques thanking major donors for funding the recent renovation of Hospice House. After all, she made the first ones 22 years ago for the VNA Hospice House Endowment Wall. But this time, it was more personal for Sharon, who took care of her dying mother five years ago with the help of VNA home hospice staff. "I love [VNA] Hospice House ... It's the nicest group of people and any contact I've had with anybody, they've all been just so wonderful," says Sharon. "And I was really honored to be asked to participate again."

Sharon's inspiration for the newest beautiful tile plaque, which measures three feet by four feet and is the first thing you see on the foyer wall when you walk through the front doors of VNA Hospice House, was two-fold. She wanted it to be similar to the design from years ago while also incorporating a new fabric pattern she'd been given by the interior designer to draw inspiration from, replete with birds and a very tropical look. "I'm really pleased with how it turned out. I had no idea what the background wall color or furniture [in Hospice House] was, but somehow miraculously it all works together," she says.

A self-taught artist, Sharon, who became part of the iconic Sexton family of Vero Beach by marrying Sean Sexton, an artist in his own right, began to paint when she was 18 while working with her father, an interior designer. It was also the age she moved to Vero Beach full-time. Prior to that, she would spend every August with her family beachside in Vero. She met Sean when she was 25 and taking a



ballet class that he was invited to attend so he could paint the dancers. "There weren't any live models in Vero then," quips Sharon, who has been married to Sean now for 41 years and shares two children and three grandchildren with him.

For 30 of those years, Sharon co-owned a popular artist studio, Tiger Lily, in Vero's arts district on 14th Avenue where she showcased her work. But it wasn't Sharon's art in the studio that initially caught someone's eye from VNA 22 years ago, but rather an outdoor installment she had just completed at the end of Royal Palm Point: four ten-foot pillars that she hand carved using over 900 tiles that are still there today. Soon after completion, someone from VNA walked into Tiger Lily and asked her if she was interested in creating another work of art hand sculpted of tile, only vastly different than the pillars; a tile plaque for VNA Hospice House. Sharon says she was honored to do it then and equally as honored to do it a little more than two decades later. "I was so touched they would ask me to come back again," she says.

# VNA & Hospice Foundation Receives Grants from Walmart, Florida Blue and John's Island Foundation

The VNA & Hospice Foundation was recently awarded \$5,000 in grant funding from both the Walmart Foundation and the Florida Blue Foundation and a \$40,000 grant from the John's Island Foundation.

The grant award from the Walmart Foundation will help support the VNA Hospice Project Wish program. This program is dedicated to providing wishes to hospice patients during their end-of-life journey.

The grant funding from the Florida Blue Foundation, as part of their 'Build Healthy Strong Communities' initiative, will help support the VNA's Medicaid Eligible Patient Program. This invaluable VNA program continues our mission in the community of providing health care for everyone regardless of their ability to afford the health care they desperately need and deserve.

And the grant from the John's Island Foundation paid for renovations and the new "wrapping" of the VNA Mobile Health Clinic, which also supports VNA's mission to provide affordable health care to those in need in our community.





# Proud Partner in the We Honor Veterans Program

VNA is a proud participant in the We Honor Veterans Partner program (We Honor Veterans - Caring Professionals on a Mission to Serve), an initiative of the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO) in collaboration with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). The purpose of the program is to recognize the unique needs of veterans and their families and help guide them through their end-of-life period toward a more peaceful ending.

The We Honor Veterans Partner program has five levels of participation. Currently VNA is at level two, and full participation is level five. Some of the activities VNA has done to date include recognition ceremonies where hospice veterans are presented with red, white and blue blankets hand-crafted by volunteers as well as pinning ceremonies.

VNA currently meets the veterans' physical needs through referrals to the VA in West Palm Beach. Hospice counselors also refer these patients and their families to the VA for assistance with their benefits as well as to a local agency, Indian River County Veteran



Services. These referrals are particularly important because veterans are entitled to extra hospice benefits, including assistance with medical costs, caregiver support and more.

The VNA also addresses the veterans' emotional needs through volunteer services that include socialization for loneliness and respite for veterans' caregivers. "In addition, we are building education into new staff orientation and ongoing annual education for current staff," says VNA Volunteer Services Manager Sara Bumgarner. "The purpose of this is to ensure that staff understand the unique physical and emotional challenges veterans face at end of life."

# Community Health Services Helping to Make Positive Changes

The Positive Change Program is offered both on an individual and group basis. The one-on-one program is managed by APRNs from the VNA Mobile Health Clinic who work with individuals to create a personalized program. For some this might mean a weekly visit to the mobile health clinic to review their goals, get their vital signs checked (including blood pressure and blood sugar), and discuss relevant health issues. For others it might mean a visit once every few months for a comprehensive review of their health status and progress in reaching their goals.

The group Positive Change Program is in partnership with other community non-profits such as United Against Poverty, the Substance Awareness Center and Behavioral Health Center at Cleveland Clinic Indian River Hospital. At these organizations, for example, VNA nurses and staff lead educational discussions on health topics, including nutrition and exercise. For more information about both programs, please call 772.978.5524.

## Introducing Our New Sustaining Champions Monthly Giving Society

VNA's Sustaining Champions Monthly Giving Society ensures everyone in our community receives the high-quality home health and hospice care they deserve and desperately need. This group of dedicated monthly donors impacts the lives of the most vulnerable in our community by supporting:

- VNA Mobile Health Clinic, which provides invaluable health services

to the uninsured and underinsured residents in our community

- Hospice House
- VNA bereavement services for those grieving the loss of a loved one
- Free flu shots and wellness screenings throughout Indian River County

Sustaining Champions member benefits include inclusion in the Honor Roll of Donors featured on the VNA & Hospice

Foundation's website and exclusive insight into upcoming VNA happenings. In addition, members receive a 'Welcome Member' certificate as well as the convenience of having their donation automatically deducted from their credit card every month if they choose.

If you'd like to become a Sustaining Champion or for more information, please visit [www.vnadc.org/monthly-giving/](http://www.vnadc.org/monthly-giving/)

# Ways to Give to VNA

Thank you to our donors who generously give to the VNA & Hospice Foundation to ensure that everyone will have access to compassionate care when they need it most.



**Annual Giving** - Contributing to the annual fund supports non-reimbursed programming and charitable patient care ensuring that everyone receives the care they need and deserve.



**Monthly Giving Society**  
As a Sustaining Champion, your tax-deductible monthly donations help provide the resources needed to support home health, hospice and community health services to patients and families in our community.



**Memorials/Honorariums**  
These contributions are a meaningful way to celebrate those who are living or to memorialize a loved one.



**Tribute Plaque** - Messages of commemoration are etched into granite plaques, which are displayed at A Place For Remembering in the VNA Hospice House landscape. These donations support the hospice house endowment.



**Honor a Caregiver**  
The Honor A Caregiver Program allows you to celebrate VNA caregivers who provided care and comfort during a difficult time.



**Golf-A-Thon** - Support one of the many local golf pros who are committed to playing countless holes of golf from sun up to sun down at this annual fundraiser.



**Hidden Treasures Thrift Stores** - Proceeds support the VNA Hospice House and our mission of providing compassionate end-of-life care. Donations of gently used items also accepted.



**Legacy Gifts** - Secure your legacy and create a long-lasting impact in our community by including the VNA & Hospice Foundation in your will.



**QCD** - A qualified charitable distribution (QCD) allows people 70½ years of age to make a charitable gift directly from your IRA any time of year while avoiding paying taxes on the amount gifted.



**Vehicle Donation Program**  
Donate your unwanted cars, boats or motorcycles to benefit hospice. Simply call 855.500.RIDE to donate your vehicle to the VNA today!



**VNA Hospice House Endowment Fund**  
Your contribution to the VNA Hospice House Endowment Fund will ensure future generations will have access to this important community resource for end-of-life support.

**For more information about ways to give, please contact the VNA & Hospice Foundation at 772.978.5568.**

# VNA's New Major Gifts and Planned Giving Officer



Manon Bone

Please welcome Manon Bone who joins the VNA family with over 30 years of experience, largely in business management in the emerging digital

media and technology fields in New York, with award winning successes at Microsoft and NBC as well as Salesforce.

Manon has led nonprofit organizations as director of development and alumni relations for a preeminent university's law school and large athletic department, as well as director for a business school before coming to VNA. She is known for achieving 'firsts' and surpassing a campaign goal a full year ahead of the end date.

A strategic leader, Manon's forte is launching new entities with win-win groundbreaking agreements.

New to Florida, Manon recently moved to Vero Beach with her husband, Jamie. "We're gradually getting used to being empty nesters as our young adult children live too far away," she commented. "Fortunately, Vero is paradise and the VNA is a highly respected organization to be a part of in the community. We are grateful on both counts.

"With a major gifts program being introduced by VNA & Hospice Foundation, I welcome meeting with our philanthropic VNA family members to help elevate our development gift revenue and set us up strongly for the next 45 years of growth."

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## Wish List

*The VNA & Hospice Foundation seeks contributions to support ongoing priorities*

*If you would like to contribute to the purchase of these items, please call Michelle Deschane at 772.978.5568.*

### Equipment Needed

Used to monitor bleeding and clotting for anyone taking blood thinners

PT/INR kit - \$995.00

PT/INR meter - \$525 each

Test strips box of 48 - \$258 each

### Project Wish Program Funding

**Average Wish - \$300**

This program has already made an impact by making hospice patients' final wishes come true. Additional funding will help ensure that more hospice families who do not have the financial means to grant their loved one's final wish – like paying for transportation to visit their favorite beach spot – can turn to the VNA for help.



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