



GIFTS THAT KEEP ON GIVING

Donations to All Care provide patients with needed services

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

As the saying goes, it's better to give than to receive. But at All Care VNA & Hospice, it's often necessary to receive in order to give.

Each year, All Care provides more than \$250,000 in support of services and community programs. This includes the cost of home health care and hospice care for those without adequate insurance or means, patient and family education, community health clinics, volunteer training, holiday outreach and bereavement support programs.

As a not-for-profit community agency, All Care relies on the generosity of the 53 communities it serves. The organization is able to offset its costs through a combination of monetary and stock donations, memorial gifts, bequests and the funds raised at its two major events – an annual golf tournament in the spring and wine tasting and auction in the fall. In the past year, the All Care Charity Golf Open raised more than \$65,000 and A Matter of Taste wine tasting and auction raised a record-breaking \$90,000.

"As much as we try to give back, we're always humbled by the generosity of those who give to us," said All Care Director of Development Justine Chamberlin. "We couldn't do what we do without their support."

Lynn residents Gary and Ann Robinson understand what the All Care community support for hospice means. The couple's son, Matt, was diagnosed with stage IV melanoma in the spring of 2009. He had been living in San Diego for nine years and returned home to his family last summer. In late September, following a visit to Massachusetts General Hospital, the family knew his final days were approaching.



Top photo, Mariah Dooley, Kate Dooley, Ann Robinson, Gary Robinson, Joe Robinson and Winnie Robinson participate in All Care's Cherish the Children Walk of Remembrance. Above, Nurse Maria Primiterra with All Care patient William Adario.

"The doctors told us to go home and contact hospice," said Ann. "He only had weeks or maybe days to live. It was a shock to us, but I think Matt had come to terms with it. He had lived his last six months the way he wanted to and was pretty accepting of the process. We had to catch up."

Turning to All Care Hospice, the Robinsons found solace in the services that the team of nurses, aides, social workers, volunteers and medical director were able to provide.

"They put us at ease and made it more comfortable to talk about what was going on," said Ann. "It's a real gift to do what they do – to walk into homes that are in chaos and calm things down."

The hospice team was able to optimize Matt's time with family and friends, while managing his pain.

Because he was uninsured, all costs were covered by All Care.

"Having come from California, Matt was still applying for MassHealth when all this was going on," said Gary. "All Care told us that wasn't an issue, the care would be there. It was a burden we didn't even have to think about."

Matt was in the care of hospice for nine days. He died at home on October 3, at age 32, on the morning of his sister's wedding. He was the oldest of the Robinsons' five children. In lieu of flowers, the family requested all donations in memory of Matt be made to All Care Hospice.

Following Matt's death, the Robinsons remained involved with All Care and visited the organization's Center for Grief and Loss, which provides a comfortable environment for one-on-one counseling and support groups, as well as an extensive library of grief-related books, brochures, magazines and handouts. They also participated in All Care's Cherish the Children Walk of Remembrance, a Mother's Day walk for families and friends to remember the children they have loved and lost.

In addition to the walk, All Care annually hosts a Lights of Remembrance ceremony, at which friends and families are invited to help illuminate the holiday tree in memory of loved ones. All Care staff also delivers Thanksgiving dinners and holiday gifts to hospice families to create a semblance of normalcy during an emotional time. All of these programs are made possible through gifts of time, talent and financial support.

For information on giving opportunities or to make a donation to All Care, please visit www.allcare.org or call 781-246-8988 x119.



SAVE the
DATES

Community Night
at the Tides Restaurant
Thurs., Sept. 9, 6-9 p.m.
10 percent of all sales
benefit All Care

All Care VNA & Hospice 9th annual A Matter of Taste
wine tasting and auction
Thurs., Nov. 18, 6-9:30 p.m.
Danversport Yacht Club.
Sponsors and auction
donations are welcome.
"Getaway of a Lifetime"
raffle tickets available
(to win a one-week stay at
luxurious Trinity Villa
resort in Jamaica).
Details at www.allcare.org