

Coming Home



A Publication of Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County



Physical Therapist, Joan Dodds, at home with Judy Higby.

Getting Back on Her Feet Again in the Comfort of Home

Judy Higby had her knee replaced this winter at Danbury Hospital and, after a two-night stay in the hospital, she was back in Wilton with nursing care and physical therapy in the place where she felt most comfortable – at home.

“I did not want to run the risk of

infection,” said Judy. “I wanted to come home.”

“I was pleased when both my surgeon and the discharge planner at Danbury Hospital agreed and highly recommended Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County for home care nursing and physical therapy

because I know how caring and wonderful everyone there is.”

“I’ve been a long-time volunteer at the agency and have worked on many fundraisers over the years but this was the first time I’d ever needed their clinical services. The nurses and therapists were amazing. They were professional, efficient, knowledgeable and caring. They were compassionate and encouraging. They fully understood what I was going through and they were sensitive to what my family was experiencing. They were friendly, supportive and always on time. And while they worked me hard, they were always a pleasure. I looked forward to their visits.”

With the help of her nurse and physical therapist, Judy is back on her feet now. So much so that she actively served on the agency’s Benefit Committee for the spring fundraiser and helped raise nearly \$80,000 for patients in need.

“I now know firsthand the difference it makes to receive skilled nursing and physical therapy services at home. My experience was so completely positive that I can heartily recommend it to anyone needing help following a joint replacement.” ■



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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 excerpts from two 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,

My brother and I would like to express our gratitude to your hospice staff for the wonderful care that they gave our family during the last few weeks of our mother's life. You helped me clearly understand my mother's situation when she became a hospice patient. You responded to my questions about Mom's condition and reviewed everything with me. You explained what was happening and helped me to realize how short time was with her. That knowledge helped us to be better prepared for her death and I appreciate that. I dealt with many doctors relating to Mom's care but only you gave me the information I needed to know to understand that we made the right choices for her. You gave us peace of mind.

Sincerely,

Lucille and Joe

Dear All,

Words cannot express how grateful I am to Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County for the fabulous care you took of my husband. The nurses who cared for him were incredible and I thank you all for helping to restore him to health.

May God bless you all - and keep up the great work!

*Best Wishes,
Leslie*

Spotlight on Grantors

Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County wishes to recognize two organizations whose generous grants will help to fund our *Hospice and Palliative Care Programs*. **The New Canaan Community Foundation** awarded Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County a grant of \$11,000 and **The New Canaan Artisans** awarded the agency a grant of \$4,500.

The *Hospice and Palliative Care Programs* provide care to all patients in need who are facing life-limiting and terminal illnesses

such as cancer, end-stage cardiac and respiratory diseases, ALS/Lou Gehrig's disease, Alzheimer's and other dementias, and other serious illnesses. Hospice care focuses on providing comfort at the end of life, while palliative care helps patients who may be in the process of seeking curative treatment.

Due to the limitations of numerous insurance plans, many families and individuals in need of this advanced level of clinical care face serious financial hardship related to the costs of care not covered by insurance.

We thank the New Canaan Artisans along with The New Canaan Community Foundation, and The Worden Family Fund, which provided a portion of this grant, for their dedication to assisting the community and our agency in helping to cover the cost of care for patients and families in need.

We extend our deepest gratitude to these and other grantors for their exceptional generosity. It is with your help that we are better able to serve our community with compassionate home health and hospice care services. ■



A Celebration of Life

Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County honored the patients and families it served during the past year with an ecumenical *Celebration of Life* memorial service in the Great Hall at Christ and Holy Trinity Church in Westport.

The *Celebration of Life* included poetry, readings, acts of remembrance and music as well as a candle-lighting ceremony conducted by the Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County team of nurses, therapists, counselors and caregivers.

"It is important to celebrate the lives of our loved ones and to give thanks for all they have meant to us," said Christine Pfeffer, Hospice Director at Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County. "We wish to express our gratitude and to acknowledge that our loved ones remain in our hearts." ■



Reverend Marti Bishop and Christine Pfeffer light candles at the *Celebration of Life*.

The Magic of May Raises Funds to Benefit Patients

On Sunday, May 1st, friends and supporters of the agency gathered to enjoy *The Magic of May* and raise funds for the patients of Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County.

The magic-themed benefit was held at the magnificent home of Liz Fox in Southport and raised \$80,000 for the Agency's patients in need. Highlights of the event included live and silent auctions, a giving tree, the wizardry of celebrated magician, Bill Herz, the musical mojo of Chris Coogan at the keyboards, and mesmerizing views of Southport Harbor and Long Island Sound.

A former patient, and long-time Benefit Committee member, Judy Higby, spoke to guests from the podium about the physical therapy

services that she received from the agency's skilled caregivers when she had a knee replaced earlier this year. She expressed gratitude for the exceptional care she was given and delight at the ability to remain at home while she recovered from surgery and underwent intensive physical therapy.

The Bauer Foundation was the title sponsor of *The Magic of May* benefit as was Liz Fox. Other event sponsors were Janet and Peter Lebovitz, Ken Edgar and Denise Harvey, Day Pitney LLP, Louise B. Goodridge, Sara and Dave Hunt, and Ellen and Scott Lewis.

Members of the volunteer benefit committee were Carol Bauer, Carol Boehly, Judy Higby, Janice

Hess, Ellen Lewis, Janet Lebovitz, Carlyn Tiefenthaler, Dawn Jeffrey and Ken Edgar.

"We are thankful for the friendship and support of so many in the community who share in our mission to bring healing and comfort to the patients and families in our care," said Sharon Bradley. "We are enormously grateful to Liz Fox and the Bauer Foundation for their exceptionally generous support as well as all our corporate and individual sponsors. We also want to thank our volunteer Benefit Committee, our in-kind donors and everyone who contributed to this very special evening. The funds raised at this event will touch the lives of the many patients in need in our community and we extend our deepest thanks." ■



Title Sponsor, Liz Fox, with Sharon Bradley.



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Village Market of Wilton
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The Whitney Shop of New Canaan

The Power of Pets

Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County has launched its new Pet Therapy program and welcomes two new volunteers, Kimberly Lewis and Harvey Kravetz, to the agency. Certified Therapy Dogs, *Scooter* and *Sophie*, provide affection and cheer to patients in their homes, at nursing facilities or in the hospital.

“The goal of the program is to bring comfort to our patients and to lift their spirits,” said Volunteer Coordinator, Laurie Petrasanta.

Pet therapy provides many benefits to patients including a decrease in anxiety and depression and an increase in energy, mental stimulation and optimism. A visit from a friendly pet can alleviate loneliness and isolation, reduce blood pressure and improve overall cardiovascular health. It can produce a soothing effect which helps to ease pain, reduce stress and improve one’s



Kimberly Lewis and Sophie



Harvey Kravetz and Scooter

overall outlook and emotional state.

In addition to their specialized training in pet therapy, Sophie and Scooter love human contact and lots of petting. They are gentle and friendly and affectionate.

It is not just the patients who reap the rewards of pet therapy. Family

members and friends say that they too feel better after having participated in a visit from a therapy dog.

For more information about the Pet Therapy Program at Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County, call Laurie Petrasanta at 203-834-6341, ext. 316. ■



Hope in Motion



Mary Kocum, RN, represented Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County in the Hope in Motion bicycle race for Stamford Hospital’s Bennett Cancer Center. Thanks, Mary!!

Happy Birthday at Home



Verna Battaglia of Wilton is 103 years young! She is pictured with her devoted home health aide, Toni Bodor, and home care nurse, Mary Kocum. Happy Birthday, Mrs. Battaglia!

Spring Cleaning with the New Canaan Thrift Shop

Are you planning on doing some spring cleaning? Are the attic and the garage in need of a little organizing? Or maybe you're finally ready to part with some of those old clothes that are cluttering up your closet. Whatever your spring cleaning project, the New Canaan Thrift Shop is here to help!

The New Canaan Thrift Shop accepts donations of gently-used articles of clothing, accessories,

jewelry, books, sporting goods, small appliances, housewares, china, silver, paintings, crockery, 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 whether ordinary or offbeat, your donated items can make a real difference in someone's life. It's the perfect way to recycle!

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. To volunteer, or to donate to the New Canaan Thrift Shop, call Susanne Palmer at 203-966-2361. ■



*Your generosity can live on through a bequest to Visiting Nurse
& Hospice of Fairfield County. For more information call:
800-898-HOME*





SUMMER SCHEDULE OF SUPPORT GROUPS FOR GRIEVING ADULTS



at the Health & Wellness Center at I-Park, 761 Main Ave., Norwalk

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.

Loss of a Spouse with Nan Cook, LCSW for those grieving the loss of a spouse	Weekly on Tuesdays 7/12/16 - 8/30/16	6:00 – 7:30 pm
Loss of a Parent with Rev. Marti Bishop, MA for adults grieving the loss of a parent	Weekly on Thursdays 7/7/16 - 8/25/16	6:00 – 7:30 pm
Loss of a Child with Laurie Petrasanta, MS, BSW for adults grieving the loss of a child	Weekly on Thursdays 6/23/16 - 8/11/16	2:30 – 4:00 pm
Caregiver Support with Laurie Petrasanta, MS, BSW for those who are caring for an ill loved one	Weekly on Tuesdays 7/12/16 - 8/30/16	1:00 – 2:30 pm
Loss of a Loved One with Rev. Karen Judd, LCSW for adults grieving the loss of a loved one	Weekly on Mondays 7/11/16 - 8/29/16	6:00 – 7:30 pm
Loss of a Pet with Rev. Karen Judd, LCSW for adults grieving the loss of a beloved pet	Weekly on Thursdays 6/30/16 - 7/14/16	1:30 – 3:00 pm

These programs are free-of-charge and open to the public but pre-registration is required.
For more information, call Rev. Karen Judd at Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County at 203-762-8958, ext. 255.

Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County



Bringing Healing and Comfort to Our Community for 100 Years

P.O. Box 489 • Wilton, CT 06897

www.visitingnurse.net



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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