



ANDROSCOGGIN
HOME CARE & HOSPICE

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Home Care Today

AHCH IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER AND EMPLOYER

AHCH SPRING 2007 COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Julie Shackley RN MSN

Julie Shackley, RN, MSN
AHCH President/CEO

Community service has been a hallmark of AHCH since its founding in 1966.

For many this commitment is most visible in our growing Volunteer Program that is extending needed support to patients and their families and in our longstanding tradition of subsidizing care for hundreds of patients each year who lack insurance coverage.

The growth of our hospice program has also allowed us to add a new dimension to our mission of service by offering community

bereavement support programs that are facilitated by trained volunteers.

In this issue of *Home Care Today*, we are pleased to highlight the extraordinary work of our dedicated volunteers and the important contributions they make to the Agency's community service mission.

Personal Stories of Volunteer Service

AHCH is very fortunate to have more than 300 dedicated volunteers supporting agency activities. More than 250 of these volunteers are providing direct patient support.

We are frequently asked what makes volunteering with AHCH so rewarding.

We can think of no better way to answer this question than by sharing the experiences of two volunteers—June McGinley an active volunteer with AHCH for five years and Marge Kennedy a new hospice volunteer.

June McGinley, a Poland resident, experienced firsthand the care and support offered by AHCH while her husband was ill. After he passed away, June looked for a way to give back to AHCH for all the help the agency had provided



June McGinley

during her husband's illness. A call to Nancy Greene, AHCH Volunteer Supervisor, was all it took.

June has now been an active AHCH volunteer for five years. During that time, she has offered support to more than 20 home care patients: visiting, providing transportation to appointments, and grocery shopping.

When asked about her volunteer experiences, June states "there hasn't been one person I haven't enjoyed. In most instances, I am visiting or grocery shopping for them only a short time until they can get on their feet. But it's still hard not to get attached."

After a thoughtful pause June comments, "I would have to say my most memorable patient had to be my very first match. We were together for three years."

"She was elderly, lived alone, and her family lived quite a distance away. I started just grocery shopping once a week. This grew to transporting her to appointments when we

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- ▶ Pathways through Grief
- ▶ Hospice Volunteer Opportunities
- ▶ The Program for Grieving Children & Teens
- ▶ AHCH Expands Service Area

would frequently stop for coffee on our way home. I knew with her family living so far away that she enjoyed the time out. Our visits continued even when she was admitted to the hospital."

June says she gets more out of volunteering than she gives "Having been in their situation, I know patients really appreciate the support. But when I volunteer, I feel I have accomplished something. It feels good to do something for some one else."



Marge Kennedy

Marge worked as a CNA many years ago and really missed the contact with older patients. After a family member received hospice care, she felt that becoming a hospice volunteer would be the opportunity she needed. Marge was so committed to becoming a volunteer that she traveled the 2-hour round trip to Lewiston for six weeks to take the training course. "I didn't want to wait," explains Marge. "I know how important it is for families and patients to have that

Marge Kennedy of Dixfield completed the 27-hour hospice volunteer training class last winter. Since then, Marge has been actively volunteering for AHCH by visiting our hospice patients at Rumford Community Home.

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support. I felt that I could offer something to others."

Marge visits patients twice a week for about an hour, usually in the late afternoon or early evening. "Because I work full time, I needed a volunteer job that was flexible. Hospice has been great to work with that way," explains Marge.

Marge has found her hospice volunteer experience to be very rewarding. "No two visits are the same, says Marge. "Some days I sit quietly holding the person's hand and other days we talk up a storm. What I try to do is make the most of each visit. I look for ways to communicate with the patient, even if we aren't talking."

Marge offers the following advice to anyone who is thinking of becoming a hospice volunteer. "First, really think about your time commitment. You need a couple of hours each week to devote to volunteering. Second, because you are working with people who are dying and it is a difficult time for family members, you need to be comfortable talking about the subject."

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Volunteer Leadership Makes Community Support Possible

Pathways through Grief

Bereavement support for the family members of our hospice patients is an important component of AHCH's comprehensive hospice program. A bereavement plan is developed for every family as soon as the patient is admitted to hospice care. This plan is followed for 13-months following the patient's death and is unique to each family's need.

Along with a bereavement newsletter series, many families receive telephone follow-up or home visits by Hospice bereavement staff or trained volunteers.

Recognizing the need for additional community bereavement support, a committed group of Bridgton area volunteers helped launch Pathways through Grief in 2004. The initial program was funded in part with a grant from the Kendal C. and Anna Ham Charitable Foundation.

The program represented a new model of offering grief support in the community using trained volunteer facilitators. Facilitators who complete 27 hours of training, provide education and discussion over a six-week period on

topics such as understanding the grieving process, managing stress and pain, and finding hope and comfort. The program is offered at no cost to anyone in the community who has experienced a loss.

"The program gave me hope. It gave me a place to express my feelings and the tools to cope with my grief."

2006 Pathways through Grief Participant

Since its inception the program has successfully helped 39 individuals. Today, Pathways through Grief is offered several times a year in Bridgton plus a special Coping with the Holidays series in November and December.

This January, Pathways through Grief achieved another milestone with the expansion to the Oxford Hills area. A total of seven volunteers completed training last fall to make this possible. Plans are also

underway to offer the program in the Wilton/Farmington area in the fall of 2007. Facilitator training in Franklin county will be offered this summer.

To learn more about AHCH Bereavement Services contact Jim Douglas at 777-7740 ext. 1462

Hospice Volunteer Opportunities

With the growth of our hospice program, there are always opportunities for those interested in becoming a trained volunteer. The 27-hour training program explores a range of topics including the philosophy of hospice, pain management, communication, spirituality, grief and bereavement, and the role of a hospice volunteer in supporting patients and their families.

Training classes are held throughout the year at convenient locations in Bridgton/Oxford, Farmington/Wilton and Lewiston.

Scheduled Spring Trainings:

Oxford Area

April 10-May 8 held Tuesday and Thursday afternoons
2:30pm - 5:30pm at AHCH Oxford Office, Pottle Road

Lewiston

May 29-June 26 held Tuesday and Thursday evenings
5:30pm - 8:30pm at AHCH Lewiston Office, Strawberry Avenue

For more information on becoming an AHCH volunteer contact the Volunteer Services Department at 777-7740 or 1-800-482-7412.

A Program for Grieving Children & Teens

Grief and loss take on a different dimension when it impacts the lives of children and teens. Since 1998, a dedicated group of volunteers working on behalf of The Program for Grieving Children and Teens has created a safe and comforting environment where young people between the ages of 3-18 can express themselves, share their feelings of grief and learn new coping skills.

The Program sponsored by AHCH, St. Mary's Regional Medical Center and Franklin Community Health Network, has grown to include 46 trained volunteers who facilitate 8-10 week support group sessions in Auburn, Mexico and Farmington throughout the year.

During each program session, children and teens are divided into groups by age and work with trained volunteers on activities and discussions involving writing, drawing, music and art. At the same time, adult caregivers participate in their own support group session.

Upcoming Programs

Auburn	Mexico	Farmington
Tuesday, April 10 7:00-8:00 pm St. Philips Church (10 weeks)	Wednesday, April 11 7:00-8:00 pm Meroby Elementary School (8 weeks)	Thursday, April 12 7:00-8:00 pm Franklin Memorial Hospital (8 weeks)

There is no cost to participate, however pre-registration is required.

To learn more about The Program for Grieving Children and Teens or register for a session contact, Joan Spitzform, Bereavement Assistant at 777-7740 or 1-800-484-7412 ext. 1460

AHCH Expands Service Area

At the close of last year, AHCH formally notified the Maine Department of Health and Human Services that it was extending its services to a dozen communities under its home care and hospice licenses.

"Each year we evaluate requests for services to see if there are significant trends indicating an increasing need for our patient care programs", states Julie Shackley, AHCH President/CEO. "When we completed this analysis in November, it became clear that we have seen a larger number of requests from patients and families in several communities bordering Androscoggin and Franklin Counties and within Cumberland County. The timing was right to include those communities in our designated service area."

Newly added communities to the AHCH service area include:

Kennebec County

Litchfield
Readfield
Wayne
Winthrop

Sagadahoc County

Bowdoin
Topsham

Somerset County

Anson
Mercer
Starks

For the added **Cumberland County** communities of **Pownal, Standish, and Windham** the ability to accept referrals is subject to staffing availability.

Following the notification to the state, AHCH communicated with hospitals, nursing facilities and physicians who cover these communities to inform them that the Agency was prepared to accept referrals for in-home care on a more routine basis. This notification was particularly important for hospitals, which are required under the Medicare program to share a list of available service providers with patients as part of the discharge planning process.

A Heartfelt Gesture of Thanks



Priscilla Rideout

"Hospice came into our lives in the final two months of my husband's life," explains Priscilla Rideout of Hebron. "It was a real blessing, not just for my husband, but for our entire family. They took extra time at each visit to talk, and more importantly to listen."

Priscilla was looking for a way to show her appreciation for the support hospice had offered her during her husband's illness.

Shortly after he passed away, Priscilla and her daughter toured the new Hospice House. "It was beautiful and welcoming, says Priscilla. "I knew it would be a comforting place for many people." During her visit, Priscilla learned a



With the opening of the Hospice House in November 2005, AHCH established the Hospice House Fund as a vehicle for ongoing community support.

Gifts to the Fund support care needs of those served at the facility, specialized equipment and facility enhancements, onsite services and amenities for families, and ongoing education

special Hospice House Fund had been established to support care and operations at the facility.

Priscilla took the unusual step of deciding to make monthly gifts to the Hospice House Fund. "My husband and I always supported organizations at different times throughout the year," explains Priscilla.

"Hospice was so important to me. I wanted to make sure others would have that opportunity as well. My ongoing gifts to the Hospice House will help do that."

for Hospice House staff and volunteers. Since its creation in January 2006, more than 1,500 gifts have been made to the Hospice House Fund.

For more information about the Hospice House Fund, contact Teri Blaschke, Development Coordinator at 795-9428

2007 Annual Fund Appeal

Each and every gift makes a difference.

NAME (MR./MRS., MS., MISS, ETC) _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____ PHONE _____

MAY WE LIST YOUR NAME(S) IN OUR PUBLICATIONS? [] YES [] NO

GIFT LEVELS: [] \$5000+ - Ambassador [] \$250 - Sponsor
[] \$1000 - Patron [] \$100 - Associate
[] \$500 - Founder [] \$25 - Friend

GIFT AMOUNT: \$ _____

This gift is [] in memory of [] in honor of _____

Please notify the following person(s) of my gift _____

Name _____

Address _____

[] Please contact me to discuss my interest in making a planned gift to AHCH.

Checks are payable to Androscoggin Home Care & Hospice. You may make your gift by VISA or MasterCard (courtesy of TD Banknorth).

[] VISA [] MasterCard

Amount: _____

Account #: _____

Expiration Date: _____

Signature: _____

Call in your gift amount along with the above information to Bobbi Kimball in the AHCH Lewiston Office, 8:00 - 4:30 pm at 1-800-482-7412.

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 819
Lewiston, Maine
04243-0819

You may also make your gift online through our website at www.ahch.org.