



Remembering them all

At Allina Health Hospice, our teams care deeply for their patients. We care for over 4000 patients every single year and when they pass, our nurses, social workers, chaplains and aides grieve with family and friends. Often, the pain gets deeper during the first year of our loss.

Allina Health Hospice is creating a way to help everyone heal. Construction is underway for 4 metal trees that will stand in the lobby of our Westgate Offices surrounded by windows, sunlight and peace. These trees will be a visual representation of the 4 seasons. When a patient dies, a glass leaf will be placed on the tree of the season in their memory. The leaf will hang on the tree for the 13 month bereavement period and on the anniversary of the patient's passing ... the leaf will be sent to the family as a gentle reminder that we remember their loved one and that we join them in their grief and healing.

As hospice workers pass these trees each day, we hope that these trees, these leaves, will help them heal too and find strength to continue delivering compassionate care to all our patients.

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Shared Journeys

We serve patients and families by raising funds for end-of-life care that provides peace, dignity and comfort.

[Visit allinahealth.org/hospicedragonflygala](http://allinahealth.org/hospicedragonflygala) to learn more.

Silent auction, Fund-A-Need and Live Auction open May 4th!

Dragonfly Gala on May 7th!

Join us online at the

The annual Dragonfly Gala is going virtual!



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Shared Journeys

Honoring a Military Veteran with Music



“We don’t know them all, but we owe them all.”

In September 1944, Rev. Maynard Johnson was flying planes in the 50th Troop Carrier that dropped paratroopers into enemy territory post D-Day. On one particular occasion, he dropped paratroopers into unexpectedly hostile

territory in Holland. Maynard was forced to use evasive measures to avoid anti-aircraft fire and get his plane and crew out of the area. Maynard remembers “dropping altitude to just above the trees” but then saw a machine gun positioned just ahead on a hill. To pull up would mean certain death. To escape he aimed the plane directly at the machine gun and passed directly overhead. It was a miracle they were alive.

Using a direction finding radio, Rev. Maynard headed home over the North Sea. On one particular station, he heard the hymn, “Jesus Paid It All.” Overwhelmed by the terror of the flight and a moment of relief, he listened intently to the hymn until the sound faded and he was able to lock on to his home base beacon and successfully fly home.

“Jesus Paid It All” was both familiar and emotional. It reminded Rev. Johnson of his childhood in North Dakota as well as his experiences in World War II. It also brought him back to Ethiopia where he provided ministry, guidance and care.

Fast forward 80 years and Rev. Maynard entered his end of life journey. His family gathered at his bedside offering support and comfort. His son, Tim and his wife, both RN’s, served as Maynard’s main caregivers until they could

no longer provide the care he needed. Rev. Maynard Johnson transitioned to the J.A. Wedum Residential Hospice and Tim and his family transitioned to being just family – a change that made a profound difference in the end-of-life experience for the entire family.

As Rev. Maynard continued to near the end, he remained largely unresponsive to the loving touches and words of comfort offered by his family. Music changed that. An Allina Health Hospice Music Therapist visited with the family to better understand Rev. Maynard’s life and what kind of music would provide the most comfort. Without hesitation, Tim, Rev. Maynard’s son, asked for “Jesus Paid It All.” Tim knew that the lyrics were filled with words of redemption and grace and meant a lot to his father. As the music therapist sang the hymn, Tim looked at his father’s face for a reaction. During this peaceful and reverent moment, tears ran down Maynard’s cheeks.



Maynard’s family had tried reciting prayers and reliving memories to elicit a response during the final week of his life. However, nothing came close to the impact of music. Rev. Maynard Johnson passed away peacefully, with his family at his side comforted by music and surrounded by love.

**If you do not send us your email address but we already have it on file you will still receive the Shared Journeys newsletter electronically unless you contact us and request not to.*

current email address.

hospicefoundation@allina.com and update us on your

website. Please make sure to email us directly at

also posted on the Allina Health Hospice Foundation

The newsletter will be sent out quarterly via email and

allina health hospice foundation.

work of allina health hospice and

have access to the important

Now more people than ever will

We are excited to announce that Shared Journeys is transitioning from print to electronic.



The Mortality experience

By: Sheila M. Duddy RN, M.Ed., Hospice Nurse Educator,
Allina Health Hospice & Palliative Care

The following essay is written by Sheila Duddy who has worked with Allina Health for over a decade as an experienced Hospice Admissions Nurse, Learning and Development Specialist, and Hospice Nurse Educator. Utilizing her experience and knowledge she shares with us how the entire hospice team works together to serve our patients and families and how this area of care came to be. This essay has been broken into three parts – part one begins below.

PART 1: “Dying, according to Seneca, is one of the essential functions of living, and the only one that could not be learned or refined through repetition.” This profound lesson of life and living being influenced by death and dying was also one of Dr. Cicely Saunders’ seven principles upon which she built the field of Hospice Care. Accepting and acknowledging our mortality is a recognition of how much is at stake in navigating this essential and final rite of passage. Unfortunately this complete life-cycle concept is generally missed by the vast majority of patients, so when the specter of death is pronounced by the provider, most people are frozen in shock, and few know much about the hospice resources available to them to help navigate through this final passage. It is time to reframe this last leg of the journey as a time not of defeat

or failure, but rather as a forging of a legacy, a time for reconciliation with family and friends, and then perhaps arriving in peace with their life’s fulfillment and an ability to let go.

We need to recognize that there might be many different paths to life’s ending, but hospice care is an excellent option for those who are fortunate enough to have had a serious conversation with their doctors early, and to have had those conversations with their family often! As challenging as it may be, any patient should be able to talk about their medical condition, and the impact it has on their life and family, to their doctor. The doctor should then be able to introduce them to the hospice benefit and the full six months of supportive, individualized and clinically relevant care that is available for the patient, family, and caregivers. This moment warrants a compassionate review of the patient’s values, and an exploration of what is most important to them at this point. There is so much that can be done regarding quality of life and comfort at this stage of life’s journey, but we have to be able to talk about it honestly.

These final months, weeks, and days require a positive approach to living life that hospice can provide. Our multidisciplinary care empowers and supports patients

seeking comfort in the place they call home, and with the people they call family and friends.

Dr. Cicely Saunders pulled together all the elements that created a vital bridge between the art of empathy and the science of symptom management. She truly listened to those living with a terminal illness, and she heard them speak of their multifaceted fears and concerns. She created an infrastructure that would provide support and, according to Cicely Saunders, a “Full-Time Concern” for the patients and their families in the face of physical deterioration and decline. She invested a great deal of her time, energy, and divine inspiration so that we all could cross that bridge in the future. In the 1940’s and 50’s Dr. Saunders invested in her education to be a nurse, a social worker, and ultimately the physician who manifested a new field of medicine, devoted solely to the end of life. She put system to her ideas and broke down barriers that seemed insurmountable at the time.

To continue reading this essay by Sheila Duddy please look for the summer issue of the Shared Journeys newsletter!

BOARD MEMBER HIGHLIGHT

Why I Give: Tiffany Zitzewitz

Allina Health Hospice Foundation Board member and Hospice volunteer

How long have you served on the Allina Health Hospice board?

I have served on the Allina Health Hospice board since 2018, after attending the Dragonfly Gala that year and experiencing how special this organization is.

How long have you been involved with Allina Health and in what capacity?

I started my career at Abbott Northwestern Hospital 25 years ago and I have been involved with Allina Health ever since in different capacities at different points in my life... as an employee, a patient, a volunteer, a donor and a foundation board member. Allina Health is an organization that is near and dear to my heart in many different ways.

Why do you give to Allina Health Hospice Foundation?

I experienced hospice care for a close friend that died while we were in our early 30s. Ever since that experience I have had a deeper understanding of the amazing support, grace and peace that hospice care can provide to not only the patient in hospice, but also to the loved ones around that patient in their final weeks of life. I want to make a positive impact on the lives of others going through this.

What do you want others to know about Allina Health Hospice Foundation?

The Foundation is led by a governing board that have all experienced hospice care in their lives and are passionate about making this time of life better for patients and loved ones. We work



hard to provide additional services that make a meaningful impact on patients and their loved ones in the final days of life. We also provide hospice care to many people who are unable to afford it otherwise.

Through the Eyes of a Hospice Volunteer

On a mild March day back in 2018, Andrea King felt a tug at her heart and a calling in her soul. She longed to provide comfort and serenity to those who were in hospice care. Andrea is well suited for this type of volunteer role – her smile is unmistakable and she lights up a room with a presence that is bold, authentic and warm. Spend a few minutes with her and you’ll feel her passion and love for life – whether she’s traveling, racing cars, playing cribbage or spending time with friends and family – Andrea makes the most out of every single minute. Andrea’s life is full. But this work is what feeds her soul. She finds a deeply personal connection to her patients and considers it an honor to be at their side.

Andrea was assigned her first volunteer shift at Gable Pines as a Companion Care Volunteer, and also joined the volunteer team for 11th Hour. This means she provides extra support for patients and their families when the end is near. She is specially trained through Allina Health Hospice to provide comfort and

compassion to both patients and families when they need it most.



As she prepared for her first shift, she imagined she would see dramatic deaths, experience a range of emotions and more. In reality, the environment was much different than she expected. One of her early patients was a gentleman in his 80’s. She sat with him for three nights in a row providing comfort. Each morning she would hand off the torch to the man’s wife. Andrea and the wife became so close that when the wife entered hospice care, she requested Andrea by name. They sat together singing hymns and praying together. Andrea provided companionship as the end neared. Andrea

became so close with this patient that she put a sticker in her memory on her race car.

Practically, Andrea’s volunteer role means that patients (and their families) can have support at that 11th hour anywhere and anytime. Emotionally, it means the family has someone they can rely on while they take a much deserved break to eat or sleep. Families feel comforted knowing that the patient has someone there in the darkest and loneliest times. For Andrea, this volunteer role has made her feel at peace knowing she is making an impact during one of the most fragile times in life.

Andrea would say that this experience has changed her life and made it richer.

If you would like to volunteer with hospice patients or with the Allina Health Hospice Foundation, please visit our website: <https://www.allinahealth.org/volunteer> and click on Allina Health Hospice.

Allina Health’s We Honor Veterans Committee

One out of every four dying Americans is a Veteran. Each deserves compassionate care at end of life.

Allina Health Hospice is proud to be a Level Four Partner of We Honor Veterans—a program developed by the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to honor and meet the unique needs of dying Veterans.

Allina Health’s We Honor Veterans Committee exists to further Allina Health Hospice’s goal of honoring and providing compassionate care to those who have served our country when they reach the end of their lives. The Committee is composed of members of hospice care teams—all dedicated to honoring our veterans.

This committee works to educate hospice staff about the very individualized needs of veterans at end of life. This education enables caregiving teams to understand the special needs of each veteran and how their military service integrates into who they are and what their needs are.

The We Honor Veterans Committee also facilitates Pinning Ceremonies for the veterans we care for, to thank them for their military service on behalf of our country.

And for those veterans who are too frail to fly to Washington D.C. on an Honor Flight, the Committee offers an opportunity to have the veteran’s photo pictured in front of the Washington D.C. Memorial for their time of service.

The Committee also recruits veterans to serve as volunteers for our veteran patients. Veterans often value time spent with other veterans at end of life—it provides an opportunity to talk about experiences that only veterans have experienced.

After a veteran’s passing a Valor Quilt is draped over the body as it is wheeled out of the facility to go to the funeral home. The Valor Quilt distinguishes the honor of their service and are created by volunteers coordinated by the committee.

From caring for our veterans the best we can to recognizing their service and honoring them during and at the end of their life journey, the We Honor Veterans Committee is there every step of the way..

On behalf of the We Honor Veterans Committee, “Thank You” to each and every veteran who has served the U.S.A! We are forever indebted to you!

If you would like to support veterans in hospice care please visit [allinahealth.org/give](https://www.allinahealth.org/give) and click on Allina Health Hospice.

