



# Living Every Moment

with Care, Comfort and Hope

## Once a Veteran, Always a Veteran:

Respect, Honor, & Appreciation for  
Those Who Have Served



Hospice patient George Comert being honored for his service in the United States Navy.

George Comert was determined to live independently forever, but that was not to be. As his health declined, he grew weaker and less steady on his feet. After a bad fall, even he had to agree the time had come for him to move in with his daughter, Lynn Besch, and her family.

Despite Lynn and her family's best efforts to engage and reassure him, George grew quieter and more withdrawn by the day. Physically, he was losing ground as well. On George's primary care doctor's recommendation, his family reached out to Frederick Health Hospice to learn more about the comfort-oriented care we offer for patients and the family services available for caregivers.

Lynn remembers the day Frederick Health Hospice's care team came to her home to talk about the services that were available. She was relieved to hear that her Dad could remain with them, but that there would be medical care to relieve his symptoms and make him more comfortable. Hospice would provide home health aides to help with George's personal needs, and—if requested—social workers, grief counselors, and a chaplain would also be available to visit.

**Beyond medical care and emotional support, Lynn learned that Frederick Health Hospice offered several additional support programs. She was especially intrigued to hear about Hospice's Veterans Program, designed to recognize and support those who had served in the US Armed Forces.**

"My dad was very proud of his military service," said Lynn. "He had served aboard ships in the US Navy during the Korean War and, although he



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Keith proudly displaying the quilt in front of our Hospice Veteran Wall.

didn't talk about it a lot while we were growing up, we all knew that he was honored to have done his part to serve and protect the United States."

Lynn requested that visits from Hospice's Veteran Liaison, Keith Midberry, be included in her father's plan of care.

"For the past three years, I've had the honor of visiting hundreds of Frederick Health Hospice patients who have served in the US Armed Forces," says Midberry. "I recognize them for their service and thank them for their sacrifice...and each visit has been unique and deeply rewarding in its own way."

In almost all cases, he says, no matter how advanced their illness is or how disengaged the patient may have been previously, they will sit up straighter, look him in the eye, and return his salute. "I usually conduct a short ceremony. We play their service song, and I give them a hat and a pin. Most importantly, I say "thank you" to them on behalf of a grateful community and nation. Whether they speak or not, the look in their eyes speaks volumes."

On the day he visited George Comert, however, Midberry got a surprise. After an upbeat, dynamic conversation that left the 89-year-old veteran's family pleasantly flabbergasted, Keith was making his way to his car when George's daughter caught up with him. Touched beyond words by the interaction she had just witnessed between her father and his new friend, Lynn said "thank you" to Keith in a way he never expected.

"Several years ago, I made a quilt through the Quilts of Valor Foundation," said Lynn. "These are special quilts that are not supposed to be "gifted" but rather "awarded" to veterans, and then registered and recorded at the Foundation in perpetuity. I made the quilt to the organization's very specific standards, and then just put it away. I didn't know who I was supposed to give it to, but once I met Keith, I knew."

**"In the days leading up to Keith's visit, Dad had been very withdrawn," said Lynn. "After talking to Keith, he changed completely. Keith gave my sisters and me our Dad back, and our kids their grandfather back...for a short time at least. It was a gift beyond measure, and one of the many things for which I will always be grateful to Frederick Health Hospice for."**

George Comert died at home surrounded by his family on December 5, 2020.

**Carlos Graveran**  
Frederick Health Hospice  
Executive Director

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## Director's Corner

Carlos Graveran, Executive Director

I think it is safe to say that this has been a particularly challenging year for most of us. If anyone had predicted that we would be trapped in a perpetual state of loss, worry and isolation for this long, I would not have believed them. I am grateful that, at long last, a return to-- dare I say it?-- "normal" is close at hand. Both figuratively and literally, spring is finally here.

While our collective nightmare may be nearing an end, I hope that the spirit of cooperation and willingness to help one another that we have witnessed will live on. Other losses will inevitably come to each of us in our lives. Long after the surgical masks are put away, your friends will still have need of your support despite the masks they don to hide their pain. For those of us who work in hospice, these are masks we know too well.

Our staff is often asked how they can work in hospice. "Isn't it sad to work there?" they ask. While it's true that suffering and loss are part of the job, so are hope, charity and compassion. Rather than focusing on the pain, our caregivers dedicate themselves to relieving it. Rather than focusing on the end that will face us all, they strive to make each moment of their patient's life the best it can be. Rather than simply extending condolences after the fact, they hold the trembling hands and ease the grief of those who will be left behind. There are lessons for all of us in their example.

In life, pain and loss will always be with us. While there is no cure, we should take comfort in knowing that, much like a vaccine, the love and compassion we show each other at the darkest moments can help to ease the suffering. Through sincere empathy and kindness towards one another, we can break the cold grip of despair and usher in the healing warmth and hope of spring.

**"All the world is full of suffering.  
It is also full of overcoming."**

– Hellen Keller



## Saying Thank You to Those Who Have Served

March 29th was National Vietnam War Veterans Day. Our Veteran Liaisons were busy putting up signs all around Frederick County to show our appreciation of those who served during the Vietnam War era.



Veteran and Hospice supporter George Bowling proudly standing with sign at his residence at Homewood.



**Don't Miss This Annual Sellout Event!**

# Frederick Health Hospice Annual Golf Classic

**Thursday September 30, 2021**  
**Maryland National Golf Club**  
8836 Hollow Creek Road, Middletown

Join us for a day of fun on and off the greens, including 18 holes of golf, a full breakfast, gifts and door prizes, contests, lunch served on the course, complimentary beverages and snacks throughout the day, ending with a dinner and an awards ceremony.

**Registrations and sponsorships are accepted by phone, mail, and at [FrederickHealthHospice.org](http://FrederickHealthHospice.org).**

## Become a Sponsor

Help support patient care, Kline Hospice House and our bereavement, veterans, and music therapy programs.

- Associate your business with one of the most highly attended golf events in Frederick.
- Advertise your organization and network with other sponsors.
- Receive a tax deduction for your organization.

**For more information, call 240-566-3036 or email [ACasterlin@Frederick.Health](mailto:ACasterlin@Frederick.Health).**



**2020 First Place Team**  
**J Shell Construction**

## In Memoriam

We are grateful to the following individuals and families who donated to Frederick Health Hospice in memory of their loved ones during the last quarter:

Susanne M. Aschenbach  
Earl "Rick, James" T. Brown  
Ronald D. Butler  
Ron C. Chalfant  
Robert L. Cline, Sr.  
Nancy L. Conner  
David M. Denton, Sr.  
Anna M. Emmons  
Bernard J. Fink, Sr.  
Anna M. Fogle

Raymond F. Gafney  
Robert "Bob" E. Gearinger  
Harry "Bas" Gosnell  
Janet Hanson  
George C. Henry  
Shirley J. Hildebrand  
Marjorie L. Hoy  
Joan M. Kirk  
Richard T. Kreuzburg II  
Linda J. Magaha

Helen E. Miles  
Kathleen A. Milne  
Barbara J. Molcan  
Winter K. Moore  
Beverly Mulligan  
Betty Lou Myers  
Betty Jane Reed  
Edward E. Rice  
Glenn O. Rickard, Jr.  
Glenn P. Rippeon

John D. Rowe, Sr.  
Joseph M. Rowe, Sr.  
Reba L. Shobe  
Vivian E. Snyder  
Vera Joanne Spiller  
Madeline R. Thompson  
Maurice W. Thompson  
Michael R. VanSant  
Frances "Mel" V. Wolz  
Charles "Corky" H. Zeigler



# When a Friend's Loved One Dies:

## Offering Care, Comfort and Compassion... ...on Facebook?

From baby announcements to wedding albums to travel photos, we stay connected to one another through our social media accounts. More and more, it is not uncommon for friends to post word of a loved one's death on a social media platform like Facebook.

When you read about the death of a friend's loved one in your Facebook newsfeed, how do you respond? If you find posting words of condolence in the comment section difficult, you are not alone. If you are not comfortable responding here, don't feel obliged. Skip the Facebook comment and go right to another type of response that feels more natural to you.

If you do decide to reply to a post of this nature on Facebook, you may find the following ideas helpful:



### Stay Focused

People post about the death of a loved one on Facebook because they see it as a way to share this difficult news widely at a time that may be emotionally overwhelming for them. Take care not to turn the focus on yourself by comparing the person's loss to one that you have experienced.



### Avoid Cliches

***Everything happens for a reason. At least you had so much time with them. God doesn't give us more than we can handle. At least they didn't suffer.***

No matter how good our intentions may be, statements like these are rarely helpful. Try not to minimize the person's grief or "make sense" of their loss. Likewise, unless you know the person's belief system, comments like "She's in a better place now," "It's for the best," or "Heaven got another angel" may not be welcomed. Finding words may be difficult, but don't rely on emojis to express your feelings. Simple, heartfelt, personal messages will be more comforting.



### Follow Up

When someone in your circle posts about the death of a loved one on Facebook, acknowledging it thoughtfully and compassionately on social media is just the beginning. Follow up with more personal gestures of support that are in keeping with your relationship with the person who is grieving. Consider making a phone call, delivering a meal, sending a card, or attending an end-of-life ritual if that is appropriate.

Learning about a death through social media became more common during the pandemic when person-to-person contact was so limited, but it is likely to continue even as life returns to somewhat more normal. Although we may continue to hear about the death of a friend's loved one through Facebook, offering care, comfort and compassion beyond the social networking platform will remain the most meaningful thing we can do for someone who has suffered a loss.



Tinker gives Frederick Health Hospice's comfort dog "Steeler" some extra attention during one of his monthly visits with our Volunteer Coordinator Dianne.

## Rest in Peace, John "Tinker" Williamson

by Dianne Elizabeth, Volunteer Services Coordinator

On December 5, 2020, my heart shattered when a very special man took his last breath. I don't anticipate the grief and sadness I feel to diminish for quite some time, but I will certainly take joy from the many wonderful memories we shared.

John "Tinker" Williamson became a Hospice volunteer in March of 2003 and stayed active with us until 2019. He was one of those people whose big, warm smile had the immediate ability to dissolve darkness and generate pure joy. I looked forward to the one Friday afternoon each month when he would come by the office with a cup of tea for me and coffee for him. The building would shake from our robust laughter, for it was his nature to find the goodness and humor in everything.

Tinker was a great advocate and supporter of Hospice and of the patients and families he served. He did many wonderful things, such as helping patients write their memoirs, initiating plans so a patient could enjoy a family reunion, tutoring a patient's daughter who was writing a book, and providing phone support to a patient's spouse who preferred not to have visitors. With love he touched many souls, and I can certainly add my soul to that list.

You are sorely missed, Tinker.



## Bringing a Ray of Light to Others

Recently, one of our patients with dementia was feeling restless, disoriented, and anxious. Thanks to the Sunshine Fund, we were able to purchase a baby doll to help soothe her. Just being able to cuddle the baby doll helped her refocus her energy, gave her a sense of purpose, and allowed her to express emotion in a new way.

This is just one example of how Frederick Health Hospice's Sunshine Fund provides for the special needs of our patients. Founded in memory of Kelly "Sunshine" Gloyd, the Sunshine Fund continues Kelly's legacy of spreading sunshine to those in need of a little extra joy and comfort.

**Donations to the Fund can be made at [FrederickHealth.org/Donate](https://www.frederickhealth.org/Donate).**





# A social worker? I might be sick, but I certainly don't need a social worker!

by Cathy Hanson, Hospice Social Worker

**The role of a social worker on the Frederick Health Hospice interdisciplinary team is often misunderstood, but most patients and families find our services to be an integral and supportive component to the array of services offered.**

As social workers, we are engaged with Frederick Health Hospice's patients and families at every level, helping to solve problems, sort out practical matters, facilitate connections with others, and encourage them to find joy in each moment.

During our first visit, we learn as much as we can about each patient and family's psychological, social, emotional, and spiritual needs, as well as their wishes and preferences regarding their care and treatment. We then work with the patient's nurses, home health aides, chaplain, veteran liaison, and music therapist to develop an effective and compassionate care plan based on this information. We stay in close contact with the patient's interdisciplinary care team to ensure that everyone's preferences are being observed and their wishes carried out.

We are familiar with the systems of care, resources, and opportunities for support that are available through the Frederick Health system and greater community. When needed, we connect people with these resources to ensure that adequate care and supervision is in place for each patient and that caregivers are receiving the support they need.

We also help patients who are having difficulty facing end-stage disease to explore their thoughts and feelings about death and dying. For those who are interested, we can facilitate a patient's "life review" during which we actively listen to them tell stories from

their life experience. Many patients tell us that sharing stories and experiences in this way is a healing process that leads them to a better understanding of the paths they have taken in their lives, bringing peace not only to them but to their families and loved ones as well.

We also take care to gently educate our patients' families, suggesting ways they can manage anticipatory grief, employ mindfulness, and most of all, provide a listening ear in these difficult days.

**We understand that a family's needs can be complicated. We also know that when a loved one is ill, emotions can run high. We believe any question, fear, or concern is worthy of compassionate attention. No matter what stage of the end-of-life journey our patients are at or where they are living, Frederick Health Hospice's social workers are there every step of the way to advise, guide, assist, and support.**



## Caring for the Chronically Ill During COVID-19: Where Do We Go from Here?

On April 8, Frederick Health Hospice joined forces with Supportive & Geriatric Care Services and the Alzheimer's Association to host a virtual community event that featured a panel of experts from each specialty. Discussion centered on lessons learned during the COVID-19 pandemic about caring for the chronically ill and the best way to apply that knowledge in post-pandemic times.

Left to right: Dr. Mary McDonald, Medical Director, Hospice; Dr. Geetha Chilakarmarri, Medical Director, Supportive & Geriatric Care; and Meegan White, Program Manager, Alzheimer's Association

### Collaboration is Key

The panel agreed that the pandemic highlighted the need for more involvement from community organizations that cater to the needs of the chronically ill in diverse settings, outside of the hospital and physician offices. The experts stressed that the sooner patients and families contact these healthcare community partners, the more helpful and valuable their services will be.

### When should families contact these different services?

- Contact the Alzheimer's Association when there is suspected cognitive decline.
- Contact Supportive & Geriatric Care upon receiving a diagnosis for a chronic condition like heart or lung disease, or an active condition like cancer.
- Contact Frederick Health Hospice to explore options for care when the symptoms of a chronic or acute condition are getting in the way of a person's everyday life.

### Questions? We're here to help.

Even if you are unsure where to start, contact any of these organizations. All will guide you through the process of finding the care that is right for the patient and loved ones.

**To view the panel discussion, visit [FrederickHealthHospice.org/Education-Resource](https://FrederickHealthHospice.org/Education-Resource).**





## Best Wishes to Kay Morrow in Retirement

by Dianne Elizabeth, Volunteer Services Coordinator

Kay Morrow is Frederick Health Hospice's longest-serving volunteer. She has been serving our patients and their families for 31 years!

In March, Kay shared with me her plans to retire from her very long-term role as a direct service volunteer. I am pleased for Kay, but to say she will be missed is the understatement of the year.

**For more than three decades, Kay has gifted Hospice with her amazing energy, uplifting personality and inspiring eagerness to serve. As a direct service volunteer, Kay always knew where she was needed most during each patient and family visit.**

Sometimes, she knew the patient needed a compassionate presence by the bedside; other times, she knew the caregiver needed a listening ear or a companion. She knew what to say, what not to say and when silence was the best option for a given moment. Lucky was the person whose path Kay crossed. I personally feel very lucky that she crossed mine.

Kay said her experience with Hospice through 31 years was meaningful and very special. We want to make sure Kay knows that she brought meaning to all of us who knew her.

We'll miss you, Kay!

**"My experience with Hospice for over 31 years was truly meaningful and very special!"**

– Kay Morrow



## Overdose Awareness and Recovery Month

As part of International Overdose Awareness Day and National Recovery Month, we have partnered again this year with Surviving Our Ultimate Loss (S.O.U.L.) to honor those who have lost their lives to addiction.

You can visit the Frederick Health Village starting August 31st through September 30th. **To participate by having your loved one honored with a banner, visit [SurvivingOurUltimateLoss.org](http://SurvivingOurUltimateLoss.org)**



2020 tribute at Frederick Health Village

# Your Gift Matters

## Does your employer have a matching gift program?

If they do, you may be able to double or even triple your gift to Frederick Health Hospice without digging deeper into your own pocket.

Matching gift programs are a great way for companies to support vital healthcare resources like Frederick Health Hospice and make the generosity of their employees more meaningful.

Why not check with your human resources department to find out if you could be taking advantage of a matching gifts program?

P.S. Some companies will even match gifts made by retirees and spouses of employees!



Frederick Health Hospice depends on the support we receive from individuals, businesses and organizations in our community. Whether your donation is a living tribute in honor of a special person or occasion, or a memorial honoring the memory of a friend, relative, or colleague, your generous support makes a difference.

### **Yes, I want to make a tax-deductible gift to Frederick Health Hospice.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Donation Gift Amount  \$500  \$250  \$100  \$50  \$25  Other \_\_\_\_\_

My gift is in memory of \_\_\_\_\_

My gift is in honor of \_\_\_\_\_

### **Please acknowledge my gift to:**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Hospice will send a card to the family you designate, acknowledging your gift made in their name or in the memory of their loved one. No reference will be made to the amount of your gift.

Check enclosed (Please make your check payable to Frederick Health Hospice)

Visa  MasterCard  American Express  Discover Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_ Security Code \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**To make a gift online, go to [FrederickHealthHospice.org/Donate](https://www.frederickhealthhospice.org/Donate).**



**Your gift to Frederick Health Hospice is deeply appreciated.**  
1 Frederick Health Way | Frederick, MD 21701

## Staying Connected...

### Surviving Our Ultimate Loss (S.O.U.L.)

This Frederick Health Hospice-supported group meets every Monday evening on Zoom and is specifically for mothers who are grieving the loss of children who have died from overdose or complications from substance use. While the group does have the support of a Frederick Health Hospice staff counselor, S.O.U.L. is “moms helping moms” and is open-ended and peer led. New members can join at any time. To register visit [FrederickHealthHospice.org](https://www.FrederickHealthHospice.org).

**Mondays 6:30-8:00pm on Zoom. This is an ongoing group and always open to new members.**



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

As restrictions related to COVID-19 begin to relax, we are starting to conduct support groups in person. Please visit our website regularly for the most up-to-date information on support groups and other events.

### Coping with Loss Due to COVID

In this one-day workshop we will discuss the impact that losing a loved one to COVID has had on individuals and families and the unique grief that has been experienced due to the ongoing pandemic. Discussion will focus around resourcefully addressing the tasks of mourning in addition to the impact of this specific grief on everyday life.

**June Workshop. Check [FrederickHealthHospice.org](https://www.FrederickHealthHospice.org) for day and time.**

### Coping with the Absence of Rituals/Services

Whether it is directly due to COVID or other contemporary circumstances, our inability to engage in end-of-life rituals and services has had an impact on the way we grieve and mourn. We will creatively explore ways in which to cope with our losses in the absence of these rituals and services.

**July Workshop. Check [FrederickHealthHospice.org](https://www.FrederickHealthHospice.org) for day and time.**

**Complete details including dates and times will be listed on our website at [FrederickHealthHospice.org](https://www.FrederickHealthHospice.org) as soon as they are available.**



Over the last year COVID-19 has brought many challenges to our Kline Hospice House. We have been under limited visitor restrictions for our patients to ensure safety of both our patients and staff. Recently we have been able to lift restrictions and two people at a time may visit a patient. **Because of the lifted restrictions, Kline House patient Margaret was able to enjoy a visit from her sister whom she hadn't seen in over a year.**

**FrederickHealthHospice.org**

1 Frederick Health Way | Frederick, MD 21701 | ph 240-566-3030

Has your address changed? Or would you prefer to get the online version of this newsletter? Email [JMitko@Frederick.Health](mailto:JMitko@Frederick.Health)

## Hospice Wish List on Amazon!

You may continue to bring donated items to our office or you can purchase them directly from Amazon.com. They'll be automatically shipped to our Kline Hospice House.

**Find our Amazon Wish list for the Kline Hospice House at [FrederickHealthHospice.org/Kline-Hospice-House/Wish-List](https://FrederickHealthHospice.org/Kline-Hospice-House/Wish-List).**

### Kline Hospice House

- Baby wipes (unscented)
- Body soap for bathing (liquid)
- Coffee
- Dishwasher detergent/dish liquid
- Gift cards: Amazon, Food Lion, WalMart
- K-cups
- Laundry detergent (HE)
- Sodas (regular, ginger ale)
- Tissues
- Trash bags (4 gallon and tall 13 gallon)
- Ziploc bags (1 gallon)

### Kline House Comfort Baskets

- Fruit snacks
- Journals
- Spearmint mints



Use [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) for extra giving to Hospice!

## Show Your Support

# Frederick Health Hospice Annual Golf Classic

**Thursday September 30, 2021**  
**Maryland National Golf Club**  
8836 Hollow Creek Road, Middletown

## Now Accepting Sponsorships and Registrations.

Help support patient care, Kline Hospice House and our bereavement, veterans, and music therapy programs. See page 4 for details.

