



# The VNA Voice

Edition 43 - Spring 2024 - [kansasvna.org](http://kansasvna.org)

## *From Our House to Yours: 55 Years of Douglas County Visiting Nurses*

Douglas County Visiting Nurses started in 1969 in the unfinished basement at 342 Missouri St. to meet a need in the community. It started with Home Health, then Hospice, and later Help at Home to continue to meet the evolving needs of family, friends, and neighbors. During the last 55 years, Visiting Nurses has made more than **1.7 million visits** to over **forty-five thousand patients**.  
Thank you for trusting us to care for our community for the last 55 years!

Your local,  
not-for-profit  
homecare  
provider since  
1969



## OUR MISSION

Improving quality of life through  
**compassionate patient care**  
wherever you call **home.**



# VISITING NURSES

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## *A Legacy of Care: VNA Celebrates 55 Years of Home Care*

### **A need is identified and a foundation formed**

In 1968, Lyn Rothwell, a registered nurse from Vermont, recognized the need for home care in Lawrence after moving from the east coast. Her vision has since grown and transformed to continue to meet the home care needs of the community.



### **Humble beginnings**

Lyn Rothwell enlisted friends, Dr. Ralph Reed and the Honorable Fred Six, to create the framework for a home care organization that would fill a gap in the healthcare sector. Together with the community, they raised \$5,000 in order to obtain a \$20,000 Federal Government grant which assisted in the opening of the organization. What started as a dream became a reality on February 2, 1969. The not-for-profit home care agency, Douglas County Visiting Nurses Association, Inc. (VNA), opened a small office in an unfinished basement at 342 Missouri Street and began seeing patients. That first year, VNA provided 2,624 visits to patients and families who often did not know where to turn for assistance.



### **Growing and moving**

VNA experienced significant growth over the years and moved to several different office locations in an attempt to accommodate that growth. In addition to the original location, VNA had offices at 701 New Hampshire Street, in the remodeled south wing of the old hospital at 336 Missouri Street, and 2901 Lakeview Road before moving into a long-term home, the Community Health Facility, with Bert Nash Community Mental Health Center and Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department in 1999.



# VISITING NURSES



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## *A Legacy of Care: VNA Celebrates 55 Years of Home Care*

### **Adapting to meet the community's needs**

After recognizing a need for end-of-life care in the community, Hospice care was added to VNA's services in 1981. In 2009, VNA's non-medical care program, Help at Home was launched to provide support services to help community members age in place. This enhancement to VNA's continuum of care inspired the slogan, "all your home care needs under one roof."



# VISITING NURSES



### **A lasting impact**

In more than 55 years of caring for Douglas County and the surrounding areas, VNA has made more than 1.7 million visits to over 45,000 patients. VNA has touched the lives of countless family members and friends, as well as employing hundreds of staff since 1969. VNA will continue to provide care for years to come, thanks to committed staff and generous community support.

## Volunteer Spotlight: A One-of-a-Kind Volunteer

On November 8th, 2023, the VNA family lost someone very special. Beverly Cates is the mother of long-time VNA employee, Janice White, as well as a VNA volunteer of 35+ years. In addition to being Janice's mom, Beverly was also like a mom to all of VNA's employees. Beverly consistently kept up to date with their families, enjoyed talking KU Basketball, among other sports, in the hallways and breakroom, and always made everyone laugh with her caring, but feisty nature. During the pandemic, since she couldn't volunteer in the office, Beverly baked more than 6,000 cookies for VNA employees to help keep their spirits high. As



and she will always be a part of the VNA family. Her warm heart and hugs will not be forgotten, and she will be undoubtedly missed by all who loved her!

a result, she was dubbed "The Cookie Lady," even earning her very own super hero cartoon character. It was a fitting tribute to a woman whose kindness and generosity was like a superpower.

Beverly's commitment to supporting VNA was incredible



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# All Your Home Care Needs Under One Roof

## VISITING NURSES



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