



# The VNA Voice

Edition 34 - Winter 2022 - kansasvna.org

## From Our House to Yours

It's again that time of year when we celebrate the gift of giving. As COVID continues to impact our daily lives, I'm continuously humbled by our staff's resilience to give their best to patients and families daily. Yes, it's their "job," but going above and beyond to ensure everyone is and remains safe, including themselves and their own families, is a humbling experience. I return their benevolent compassion with respect and gratitude. One of our staff whose generosity is a light to many was recently acknowledged by her peers. Nancy Lee is our 2021 Marceil Lauppe Employee of the Year, and her story is in this edition of The VNA Voice.

This issue also has a special contribution from another generous spirit, Dr. Barbara Watkins. She was an educator at the University of Kansas for decades, but is well known for

her many contributions across our community as well as nationally. We are honored to have Barbara share her story in this edition.



Pictured above: VNA Home Health Physical Therapist, Libby, and Nurse, Nancy, sit with Barbara Watkins and her dog, Sara, at her home.

It's also at this time that we ask you to remember Visiting Nurses in your charitable giving. It is our mission as a non-profit Home Health and Hospice agency to provide care to anyone regardless of their ability to pay. For myself and our staff, it's one of our values to affirm the dignity and worth of human life by ensuring all who

want our services have access. We are diligent about effectively and efficiently managing the resources available to do so, but in an environment in which payers are reducing reimbursement and staffing costs are rising, it is an increasing challenge. Information about gift opportunities through both our annual appeal and the "Merc Change" program is included in this issue. We are a proud member of the Lawrence healthcare community and strive to always be worthy of your generosity.

I wish you and yours a joyful and blessed 2022!



Cynthia Lewis  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

## OUR MISSION

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



# VISITING NURSES

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## *Development Corner: VNA's 2021-22 Annual Appeal*

*"Only in darkness do we see stars..."*

*they shine bright and help us find our way through the dark."*

*"VNA Hospice helped us see the beauty in life, like the stars in the night sky."*

*"VNA made our remaining time with Anthony sacred and precious, every last moment!"*



## VISITING NURSES HOSPICE

**Help VNA's patients and their families make the best of EVERY moment.**

**Donate today at [KansasVNA.org/donate](https://KansasVNA.org/donate)**

### *Staff Spotlight: Marceil Lauppe Employee of the Year*

**E**very year VNA's staff selects the individual or individuals who best exemplify the mission and values of VNA. This year, they selected one of VNA's amazing Hospice Nurses, Nancy Lee, as the 2021 Marceil Lauppe Employee of the Year. Excerpts from the nomination forms explain why Nancy is so very deserving of the award. **"She is Amazing! Her passion for her patients is obviously heartfelt. She**

**is genuinely a caregiver in its finest definition."** Another staff member noted, **"she goes consistently above and beyond to provide comfort and support to VNA's patients and their families. She genuinely cares."**

The award winner was announced to staff via a video that can now be viewed on VNA's Facebook page (@kansasvna).

**Congratulations to Nancy on this well-deserved honor!**



Pictured above: VNA's 2021 Marceil Lauppe Employee of the Year, Nancy Lee.



## *In Her Own Words: Barbara Watkins' Experience with VNA*

**D**r. Barbara Watkins is a very accomplished woman. In 1973, she received an Outstanding Young Woman of America Award and has continued to earn many awards since then. Throughout her life, Barbara has remained dedicated to education and her community. She received multiple national and regional awards for her work as co-director of the Langston Hughes National Poetry Project. In 2001, she was the recipient of the Bert Nash Community Mental Health Center Lifetime Achievement Award for Community Service. The following year, she was inducted into the KU Women's Hall of Fame. Barbara's life has been filled with impressive accomplishments. Her most recent accomplishment was recovering from some medical challenges, with a little help from VNA's Home Health program. Here is her account of her experience with VNA:

*"I have lived in Lawrence, Kansas, for more than 50 years and am a long-time supporter of the Visiting Nurses Association (VNA). This year I have dealt with several medical issues and treatments—retinal occlusion treated by left-eye shots over several months, cataract surgeries in both eyes, a sinus surgical procedure (turbinate reduction) and finally, an infection that caused me to spend 2.5 days in Lawrence Memorial Hospital. And for the first time in my adult life, I fell twice, both in October.*

*A dear friend and neighbor, Jan Dean, suggested that I contact the VNA to help me recover and improve my health. At the end of October, I had my first meeting with Nancy, a nurse, who came to my house to take my vital measurements. We bonded immediately, because we are both left-handed. In my sessions with VNA nurses, I didn't have "white coat syndrome." Instead, my blood pressure levels were good, about 125/65.*

*Also, another nurse, Sarah, recommended that I use carpet tape to secure my living room rugs and help prevent me from falling. It works well. She suggested I add a bedroom commode and a railing to my bedside to help me sleep securely, prevent falls, and getting in and out of bed. I have installed both.*



Pictured above: VNA Home Health Nurse, Nancy, takes Barbara's vitals.

*Nancy set me up with Libby, a VNA physical therapist. Libby came here several times to work with me to learn a protocol for doing several leg exercises. I started them immediately—six different exercises, 15 repetitions of each exercise twice a day. I have done them virtually every day.*

*The results have been amazing. I have more energy, less fatigue and less lower-back pain. I use my walker less often and am now cooking regularly and enjoying it immensely. My appetite isn't completely back to normal, but I hope it will be soon. My long-term goals are to return to working in my beloved hosta beds (I have more than 100 varieties—the Lawrence Journal World did an article on my "hosta heaven" several years ago) and walking my dog regularly around our beautiful Westwood neighborhood. Realistically, since I am now eighty, I will not be able to climb mountains and go on twenty-mile hikes. But they are fond memories.*



Pictured above: VNA Home Health Physical Therapist, Libby, guides Barbara through rehab exercises.

***I highly recommend the VNA and will use its services the rest of my life. I am very grateful."***

***-Barbara Watkins***

## Donor Spotlight: The Merc Co-op Change for Our Community

VNA is pleased to announce its partnership with The Merc Co-op as the January Change partner.

The Change for Our Community program gives Merc shoppers the opportunity to donate their spare change to local organizations every time they shop. Each month, a different organization is featured as the recipient, and 100% of all donations collected go to that specific organization.

The Change Program offers three methods of giving: Round up to Create Change - a way for customers to round up their purchase to an even dollar amount, Bags for Change - a way for customers to redirect the five

cents given for bag reuse, and the Spare Change Jar - a simple way for customers to donate spare change or add to their purchase.



In the Merc's fiscal 2021 year, the co-op community raised a whopping \$81,530. In the program's lifetime, they have raised over \$500,000! That is a lot of change, and so much good

for the community.

**"What the Merc Co-op has done is extraordinary, using spare change to make such a big difference in our community! This just shows how a drop can create a ripple, and that ripple can create a wave."**

**-Lori McSorley, VNA's Business Development Manager**

VNA hopes you will join in creating this wave by shopping The Merc Co-op and participating in the Change for Our Community program in the month of January!

**Connect Online!**



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## VISITING NURSES



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