



# The VNA Voice

Edition 20 - Summer 2018 - [www.kansasvna.org](http://www.kansasvna.org)

## *From Our House to Yours*

It's been an exciting and rewarding spring at Visiting Nurses! For those of you in or connected to healthcare, you're aware one of the opportunities afforded to us is to have a regulatory survey every three years. Some organizations are accredited by The Joint Commission (not common in Home Health/Hospice) and have a triennial survey by that institution. As a Medicare-certified Home Health and Hospice agency, Visiting Nurses has surveys conducted by individuals who are contracted through the State of Kansas to validate our compliance with federal and state rules.

I am so very proud to let you know both our Home Health and Hospice programs had



deficiency-free surveys, Home Health in February and Hospice in May. This is a significant accomplishment, especially for the Home Health program, which was surveyed under regulations that took effect January, 2018, and included substantial changes from previous requirements. Both sets of regulations include new emergency preparedness guidelines necessitating Visiting Nurses community integration for disaster response. Our

survey is not just "checking the boxes" on paper, but incorporates visits with our staff to evaluate our care of patients.

I, and our staff, take a great deal of pride in the quality of care offered to our patients and their families. A deficiency-free survey is objective validation of that goal and our mission to "provide excellent community-based health care."



*Cynthia Lewis*  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

### **OUR MISSION**

To provide excellent community-based health care and support services throughout the continuum of care.

### **OUR VISION**

To be the home health and hospice provider of choice to our community through continued excellence in health care service and business practices.



# VISITING NURSES

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## *Volunteer Spotlight: Caring Canines and their Helpful Human*

Volunteers come in a variety of shapes, sizes, ages, and in this case, species. Regardless of those details, the important thing is how those volunteers impact the lives of those they help. As volunteers through VNA, Katy Maxon and her furry friends, Foxy and Ralphie, make a big difference in the lives of Hospice patients and residents of local senior living facilities.

***“When people see Foxy and Ralphie, they light up,” Katy says. “Someone who seemed sad, depressed, or lonely all of a sudden feels joy.”***

Katy and her dogs bring smiles to the residents of Pioneer Ridge and Neuvant House every other Sunday. They also visit individual Hospice patients when they are able to. Foxy and Katy started volunteering with VNA in September 2017 to give back to the community. Ralphie only recently joined in on the altruism in May of this year. Katy understands the importance of volunteering from her experience

as a former Director of Operations at the Lawrence Humane Society. Foxy and Ralphie may or may not understand the impact that their volunteer activities have on those they visit, but they both enjoy their visits to the facilities and Hospice patients. “Foxy gets very excited when she sees me getting her supply bag ready. She loves prancing around the facilities and being told how pretty she is,” Katy says. “Ralphie loves meeting all the people!”



Pictured above: 13 year old Pomeranian, Foxy, and 6 month old Chihuahua, Ralphie.

Katy says one of the best things about their volunteer work is the impact that it has on the families of those they visit. “They get to see their parent or loved one smile and be happy,” Katy says. These moments are especially meaningful to the families of

Hospice patients who are not fully responsive. For these families, a joyful expression on the face of their loved one may be something they don’t get to see very often and may lift their spirits during a challenging time.



Pictured above, from left to right: Ralphie, Katy, and Foxy

Fortunately for VNA and for those they visit, this volunteering trio loves to help and plan to continue their philanthropy for years to come!

***If you are interested in volunteering with VNA, please contact Sarah Rooney at (785) 843-3738 or visit our website [www.kansasvna.org](http://www.kansasvna.org) and click on the volunteer tab at the top for more information.***

## *Calendar of Events*

### July

- Cord Blood Awareness Month
- Juvenile Arthritis Awareness Month
- 4<sup>th</sup>: Independence Day
- 28<sup>th</sup>: World Hepatitis Day

### August

- National Immunization Awareness Month
- Psoriasis Awareness Month
- 12<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup>: National Health Center Week
- VNA Hospice Celebrates 37 years

### September

- Healthy Aging Month
- National A-Fib Awareness Month
- Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month
- Prostate Cancer Awareness Month
- World Alzheimer’s Month





## *The Heart of VNA: Family, Fun, Faith, and Fred*

Pat Hollomon thinks of her husband, Fred, as a navigator. Not only because he was a navigator in the Navy, but because he navigated through a number of challenges throughout his 92 years of life. Despite growing up in the south in a time of segregation and discrimination, as a pastor, Fred worked to bring people together, regardless of the color of their skin. Although Fred was a very conservative Republican, as the Kansas Senate chaplain for 30 years, his powerful, poetic prayers transcended political stances to bring people together.



Pictured above: Pat and Fred Hollomon.

His prayers were so impactful they prompted standing ovations on some occasions. When Fred and Pat got married, they both had children from previous marriages. Fred navigated the challenges of bringing these two families together to make one family with a total of nine children, seven girls and two boys. Fred navigated himself and his family through a great deal in his life, including Alzheimer's disease until he and Pat were unable to handle it alone anymore. When it was time for Pat to have some help in caring for Fred, Visiting Nurses helped her navigate the final stages of

Fred's Alzheimer's disease, just as Fred had navigated through so much during his life.



Pictured above: A painting by Pat Hollomon of a senior couple.

Fred was diagnosed with early onset Alzheimer's in 2009, but that had little effect on his life initially. He continued to work as the Kansas Senate Chaplain until he retired in 2012, at age 87. Fred was a runner in college and continued to run until the final months of his life. He also maintained an excellent sense of humor throughout his disease process. "He was very humorous, he made me laugh, even up until the end," Pat said. He also continued to cherish his time with their very large family. "Fred said we don't have a family, we have a dynasty, because now we have 19 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren," Pat said. While Fred kept doing many of the things that he loved as his Alzheimer's disease progressed, eventually his memory faded drastically and he needed more care. In the final days of his life, there were times he was unable to remember that Pat was his wife. "I didn't think I could take it, that he would forget who I was, but he did," Pat said. In the final months of his life, Fred spent

very little time sleeping and was always on the move. This meant that Pat was unable to get the rest she needed and the growing fatigue made it more difficult for her to properly care for him. It was time for some additional help.

Pat was familiar with Visiting Nurses after receiving Home Health services following a gall bladder surgery and knew they would provide quality care for Fred as well. Fred received Hospice care from Visiting Nurses, which greatly helped both he and Pat and allowed them to make the most of their time together.

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***"I've seen several people from Visiting Nurses, and they've all been so thoughtful, kind, and caring. I really didn't feel alone because I knew they were a phone call away if I needed them," Pat said.***

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Pat admits that it was difficult to ask for help, but knew she needed it and was glad that she did as it allowed Fred to remain at home for his final days. "I'm just so impressed with all of the things that you (Visiting Nurses) do, if I needed something or I was worried or questioned something, I could call and I knew I would get exactly what I needed. The last week or so of his life it was just amazing. I was amazed at how well you all helped me to get through that. I was at the point that I thought I was going to have to put him in a nursing home and I didn't want to do that," she said.

## Development Corner: 3.d 2019 - How to Help

VNA's 3.d Casino Night Fundraiser on May 3, 2019 will help celebrate 50 years serving Lawrence and Douglas County, and will provide much-needed funding. We hope you will come celebrate with us!



*we need  
your help*

Have a vacation home/  
timeshare? Donate time  
there to our silent  
auction!

Donate your  
time by joining  
a 3.d committee!

Donate items or  
gift baskets to our  
silent auction!

Call (785) 843-3738 or email  
[lorim@kansasvna.org](mailto:lorim@kansasvna.org) to  
volunteer/donate

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