



# The VNA Voice

Edition 22 - Winter 2019 - [www.kansasvna.org](http://www.kansasvna.org)

## *From Our House to Yours*

In 1968, Marilyn (Lyn) Rothwell, RN, launched a vision to provide care to people in their homes. With the support of Dr. Ralph Reed, Fred Six, and innumerable others, her dream was realized! Visiting Nurses officially opened in February, 1969, with a small staff based at 342 Missouri. In our first year, we provided more than 2,600 visits to 89 patients. Over the course of our 50-year history, Visiting Nurses has cared for more than 38,000 patients in the Lawrence/Douglas County area, providing nearly 1.6 million visits. I hope you will join us in celebrating the ongoing realization of Lyn's vision, and that you enjoy this newsletter dedicated entirely to VNA's 50th anniversary!



*Cynthia Lewis*  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

## *Celebrating 50 years!*

You're invited to an open house at  
**Douglas County Visiting Nurses Association**

**Thursday, February 21, 2019**  
**4:00 - 6:00 p.m.**

**200 Maine St., 3rd Floor**  
**Lawrence, KS**

Cake and Punch will be provided

### **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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## Development Corner: VNA's 50th Anniversary Appeal



# FIFTY for



2019 marks the 50th anniversary of Douglas County Visiting Nurses opening its doors.

*You have played a crucial role in our history by allowing us to care for those who would not be able to afford this necessary care without your donations. Thank you!*

We invite you to continue on this journey through our **FIFTY for 50** campaign by donating in increments of \$50 to celebrate 50 years of care and service to our community. Your donation makes a difference!

Donate by visiting [KansasVNA.org/Donate](http://KansasVNA.org/Donate)  
by mail to 200 Maine St., Suite C, Lawrence, KS 66044 (notate annual appeal)  
or call (785) 843-3738



## *The Heart of VNA: 50 Years of Care*

**“We don’t have any money, and the idea is a dream. It’s just out there and it has to be created, molded, and developed,”**

said retired Justice Fred N. Six, recalling the words of Lyn Rothwell and Dr. Ralph Reed in their pitch to acquire his assistance with starting Douglas County Visiting Nurses Association (VNA). Six, an attorney with Barber, Emerson, and Six at the time, couldn’t say no when his friends approached him for help with incorporation and other aspects of starting a nonprofit organization. Rothwell, an RN, was the founder of Douglas County Visiting Nurses and called upon Ralph Reed, a physician, Six, and others to help bring her idea to life in the late 1960s. Rothwell, Six, and Reed started to meet regularly to take the first steps in founding VNA. Others gradually joined the process and Douglas County Visiting Nurses Association was incorporated in April of 1968. At that time, “the difficult task of funding and credibility started,” said Six.



Pictured above: Lyn Rothwell with a painting given to her when she left VNA in 1970.

Six recalled Rothwell’s determination being vital to the creation of VNA. “Lyn worked on this grant,” he said, “I just remember her tirelessly knocking

on doors, writing letters, not taking no for an answer.” Rothwell’s dedication to the success of VNA was clear as she worked relentlessly to raise the \$5,000 required for a matching grant from the Kansas Department of Health. Thanks to her extraordinary efforts and the support of the community, VNA was awarded that grant and a federal grant for \$22,000. VNA then opened an office in an unfinished basement at 342 Missouri, on February 2, 1969.

In VNA’s first year of operation, 2,624 visits were made to patients in need of home care. VNA provided an incredibly valuable service that had previously been lacking in Douglas County. The words of VNA’s longtime employee and Executive Director, Marceil Lauppe, describe how the organization gained a foothold in the community. “I think Visiting Nurses continued to grow and the need continued to grow. It became part of the health care system, so that hospitals and physicians finally realized that there was a gap in their care. Visiting Nurses helped fill that gap.”

VNA’s growth and development into a valued part of the community was not without challenges. Funding and facilities were the most common reoccurring obstacles for VNA. As a nonprofit, there were occasions when VNA relied on the generosity of donors to make it through tough times. At other times, staff members had to visit payers to make sure VNA had necessary funds. Lauppe recalled one such occasion when Janice White, longtime VNA employee



Pictured above: (Left) Dolores Palmer and Marceil Lauppe in VNA’s early uniforms. (Right) Retired Justice Fred N. Six.

and current HR Manager, had to make such a trip to get money owed by Medicare. “Janice even had to make a trip to Iowa to get money before payroll,” Lauppe said. The various facilities that housed VNA’s offices over the years provided difficulties as well, ranging from no running water to no temperature control. The one common problem with each facility was a lack of space, but that changed when VNA moved into its home of almost 20 years now. The third floor of the Community Health Facility has made a wonderful home for VNA’s office. As Lauppe put it “after being in four places for our quarters, it was like we’d died and gone to heaven.”

Now, approaching 50 years of service to Douglas County, VNA has enjoyed a period of stable growth. Many challenges still lie ahead for VNA with drastic changes to Medicare reimbursement coming soon, constant changes in technology, increasing demand for indigent care and other unknown obstacles that may arise in the future. Fully aware of these potential threats, VNA will continue to treat them as opportunities to become a better, stronger organization and with the continued support of the community will be around for another 50 years and beyond.

## Volunteer Spotlight: Keeping It in the Family

“My whole family, at one time or another, practically has worked at VNA or volunteered at VNA,” said Janice White (Cates), VNA’s HR Manager and longest serving employee. The Cates family has worked or volunteered for Visiting Nurses for a combined total of more than 115 years. Janice’s 48 years of employment accounts for a large portion of the time members of the Cates’ family have served VNA. She was also the first member of her family to serve the organization when she started working at VNA at age 16. Janice’s involvement with VNA then prompted her parents’ involvement, first as volunteers in helping the office relocate for the

first time, and then later as regular volunteers. Janice’s mother, Beverly, has volunteered in the VNA office for over 30 years. Her father, Richard, volunteered for VNA in numerous capacities for many years.

Her daughters were the third generation of the Cates family to serve VNA. Both Kristina and Larissa volunteered and worked for VNA over the years. Kristina, Janice’s older daughter, helped with VNA’s medical supplies and records for a brief period of time. Larissa, Janice’s younger daughter, worked for VNA as a Home Health Aide and as an RN in two separate stints. Several family members have

also volunteered at VNA’s 3.d Casino Night Fundraiser, including Janice’s brother, nephew, and her husband.

It is clear that the Cates family have been invaluable to Visiting Nurses. They have contributed in a variety of ways, but no matter what the contribution, it has always been important to the success of the organization over the last 50 years.



Pictured above: (Left) Janice White being recognized for 45 years at VNA with VNA CEO, Cynthia Lewis. (Right) Beverly and Richard Cates, Janice’s parents, on their front porch.

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# All Your Home Care Needs Under One Roof

## VISITING NURSES

