

CROSSINGS

Giving Back in a Variety of Ways

Volunteer ambassadors of 2008 show how you can make a positive impact in different roles.

Kansas City Hospice & Palliative Care announced its Volunteer Ambassadors of the Year in April at an appreciation event. The gathering recognized the more than 400 volunteers who serve in homes and nursing homes, Hospice House, the Top Drawer upscale resale shop, or the offices. They donated nearly 27,000 hours of service in 2007.

VOLUNTEER AMBASSADORS OF 2008

- **Thurman Oliver, Patient Care:** Since training in March 2001, Thurman has been assisting patients as a respite volunteer and providing a presence during a patients' final hours. Although primarily assisting in Wyandotte County, he has driven many miles reaching out to some patients in outlying areas. He's helped 30 to 40 patients over the years. Caring for his own parents at the end of their lives inspired him to become a hospice volunteer. "It's much in memory of my own parents," he said of his work.
- **Ralph Gundelfinger, Hospice House:** Although Ralph started volunteering in patient care in February 2005, he has been assisting at Hospice House since pre-opening events in 2006. He's known for giving excellent tours of the facility, attention to patients' special wishes, willingness to help in any capacity, positive spirit and friendly smile. "I always get more than I give," he said.
- **Carol Polson, Top Drawer:** Carol has been part of the Top Drawer before it opened more than five years ago. She continues to volunteer there five days a week and is described as running circles around everybody. "Each day is new and different," she said. "I believe in the cause."



Hospice House Volunteer Ambassador of the Year Ralph Gundelfinger visited with patient Ann Halpin recently.

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One of Many Extraordinary Moments

Friends,

Because we have the privilege of hearing of so many extraordinary stories, we'd like to share this one with you.

Ceslie Fisher was a patient at Kansas City Hospice House in March. In her final moments, a group of about 10 family, friends and staff were gathered around her bed. Music therapist Emily Olschki was playing hymns on her guitar and all were singing and holding hands.

Remembering Ceslie's life, they talked about how she rescued and cared for injured birds, and the flying bird theme took hold. They sang "His Eyes on the Sparrow." Then they sang "I'll Fly Away." As they sang "I'll Fly Away" a second time, Ceslie's breathing became slower and slower, and finally she took her last breath.

It was an unforgettable moment to all present, and it was our great honor to have shared it with Ceslie and those who loved her. Even after years of experience in hospice, some days and some stories, like Ceslie's, just take our breath away.



Elaine McIntosh



Steve Jones

Elaine McIntosh
President and CEO

Steve Jones
Chair, Board of Directors

Board Adds New Members



Several people have recently joined the Kansas City Hospice Board of Directors. Board members volunteer their time to ensure that Kansas City Hospice & Palliative Care is in tune with the needs of the community and can meet those needs. The board members are pictured. Back row (from left to right): Keith Ashcraft, Barrett Hatches, Bob Wood, Michelle Stark-Kaufman, Bill Tammeus, Mike O'Flaherty. Middle Row: Al Biggs, Sherman Steinzeig, Freda Mendez-Smith, Nancy DeBasio, Steve Jones, Lynne Brown, Lee Stanford. Front Row: Graciela Couchonnal, Fran Martinsen, Elaine McIntosh. Not pictured: Bob Hill, Marjorie Sirridge.

Donate Items to Hospice House

You can help Kansas City Hospice House by donating the following items.

- New music CDs: soothing, peaceful, easy listening.
- New DVDs.
- New hardcover books: novels, mysteries, classics, spiritual, reference, humor. (No paperback books, please.)

Drop off any of these items between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m. daily at the front desk at Hospice House, 12000 Wornall Road, Kansas City, Mo.

Leaving a Legacy and Helping Future Patients

Personal experiences inspire donor to name Kansas City Hospice in her trust.

For Jane Krakauer, giving back to the community is simply part of life. Her giving includes supporting Kansas City Hospice by naming the organization as a beneficiary in her trust.

She became aware of the need for specialized end-of-life care as the first volunteer in the oncology department at an area hospital.

“It was really kind of like hospice then,” she said.

She started that volunteer job after coming home from visiting her son in the Washington D.C. area, shortly after he was diagnosed with brain cancer in 1963.

When she came home, she knew she had to work with cancer patients.

Later she fought her own cancer in 1994 and 1995. “That’s when I began thinking a whole lot more about hospice,” she said.

Every time she had a good checkup following her diagnosis with cancer, she wrote a check to Kansas City Hospice and continues that tradition today.

She also has seen how hospice has helped her friends over the years, and has great respect for the work of hospice: “I think it’s the most important thing in the world.”

When she and her husband made estate plans about 20 years ago, long before her husband died, they named Kansas City Hospice as a beneficiary of their estate in their trust. She will have the comfort of knowing her gift will help patients and families for years to come, even when she is no longer here.

Planned gifts like the Krakauers’ and other contributions help Kansas City Hospice & Palliative Care provide services to the uninsured and the underinsured; help cover services such as art and music therapy and spiritual support that typically aren’t covered by insurance; help provide needed programs to the community, such as free grief support groups and education; and assist with many other important projects.

Please consider following in Jane’s footsteps and leaving a legacy for Kansas City Hospice & Palliative Care. For more information and assistance, contact Mary Zahner Bauer, planned giving and major gift specialist, 816-276-2625, mbauer@kchospice.org.



Volunteering with cancer patients and her own experiences with cancer influenced Jane Krakauer to name Kansas City Hospice as the beneficiary in her trust.

Events That Make a Difference Include Birthday Party Fundraiser

When Walter Isenberg’s wife organized a surprise birthday party for him, she asked guests to make donations to Kansas City Hospice in lieu of gifts. The guests made donations totaling \$8,000 in memory of Walter’s dad, Ernest Isenberg, who was served by Kansas City Hospice & Palliative Care.

“For me, it was the perfect gift,” Walter said. Although Walter lives in Colorado, he was in Kansas City during his father’s illness and praised the services provided by Kansas City Hospice & Palliative Care.

This is just one example of an event that can raise needed funds to help provide care to patients and families. Kansas City Hospice & Palliative Care thanks the Isenbergs and the additional groups listed below for making a difference with an event. If you are interested in fundraising, please call 816-363-2600.

- Idiots’ Open Golf Tournament, \$21,691
- Focus Healthcare, \$950, in honor of a current pediatric patient
- Coins for Carousel Fundraisers:
 - First Impressions Preschool and Parents Day Out, \$758.65
 - Crème de la Crème, \$593.83
 - Salem Christian Union Vacation Bible School, \$921

Booklet Addresses End-of-Life Issues of African Americans

Partnership to distribute booklet strives to increase access to hospice and palliative care.

According to a recent study, long-held cultural beliefs and a historical mistrust of the health care system are the major reasons hospice and palliative care are used far less by blacks than by whites. To close this gap, Kansas City Hospice & Palliative Care and African-American author and social worker Gloria Thomas Anderson have joined forces to provide education, better understanding and greater access to end-of-life care options for African Americans.

They're offering Anderson's booklet, *What Y'all Gon' Do With Me? The African-American Spiritual and Ethical Guide to End-of-Life Care*, free to anyone in the metropolitan area. Aptly, "What Y'all Gon' Do With Me?" is a quote from one of Anderson's elderly relatives who had questions about her end-of-life care.

"I hope the information in this booklet empowers African Americans to make the best health care decisions before they are unable to communicate what they want for themselves," said Anderson, who was inspired by her family's experience. The booklet includes advance directive forms, so readers can make their wishes known to loved ones and care providers.

"Our partnership to make this booklet available has deepened our knowledge, and we hope it will help African American families understand what hospice and palliative care can do to help when a family member is very ill," said Elaine McIntosh, president and CEO of Kansas City Hospice & Palliative Care.

For a free booklet or to schedule a presentation about end-of-life care with your group, call 816-363-2600. Request a speaker online at www.kansascityhospice.org/Education-SpeakerRequest.



Author Gloria Thomas Anderson and Elaine McIntosh, president and CEO, hope that distributing a new booklet by Anderson will help African Americans make end-of-life decisions and help increase understanding of hospice and palliative care.

Green House: Students Help Hospice House Recycle



A group Rockhurst University MBA students worked with Kansas City Hospice House on a new recycling plan as part of a class project. Sara Cockrell, Rebecca Muller and Matt Pestka, pictured, along with Justin Hamilton and Chuck Murray, developed and implemented a plan that includes recycling bins for paper and glass at nurse's stations, bins for paper in office areas, a bin for plastic and aluminum by the kitchen, and a container for corrugated cardboard in the garage. Thanks to their efforts, waste has been reduced at the facility. Volunteers sort the items for pickup by the recycling company. If you or your group is interested in volunteering to help with recycling, call Allison Fisher, 816-941-1058.

Go to the Movies with the Hospice Hop

Be a star when the Kansas City Hospice Hop Goes to the Movies on Saturday, August 23, at the Hyatt Regency Crown Center. At the fifth annual signature fundraiser for Kansas City Hospice & Palliative Care, attendees are encouraged to dress using inspiration from their favorite movies or movie stars, and enter a contest for the best dressed.

The event includes dinner, dancing, live music, and silent and live auctions. Fran and Arnie Martinsen and Rosemary Wayne are the auction co-chairs planning silent and live auctions to include great trips, dining, a great wine selection and art.

Thanks to your support for this event over the past four years, the Kansas City Hospice Hop has raised a net total of more than \$1.3 million for Kansas City Hospice House. Funds from this year's event will help ensure that Hospice House will be here for many years to come and be able to provide services to all in need.

For more information, call Bee Haley at 816-363-2600.

First Annual Walk to Remember Nets More Than \$8,000

At the first annual Walk to Remember on Saturday, June 7, 2008, about 130 people walked in memory of their loved ones, and enjoyed live music, games and activities for the whole family. Participants wore the name of their loved one on a sign on their back and walked through the Avila University campus in south Kansas City, Mo.

With the help of all of the generous sponsors, all of the walkers and volunteers, the event raised a net total of more than \$8,000 to help Kansas City Hospice & Palliative Care serve people of all ages and at any stage of serious illness, regardless of their financial resources.



Walkers included Susan Witcher, president and CEO of Faultless Laundry; her daughter Katie Witcher; and friend Joni Burroughs. Faultless was a major sponsor of the event. The company donated the t-shirts in memory of Susan's father, Jack Spence. Photo courtesy of Blacktie Kansas City.

Golf Tournament Raises Funds to Help Pediatric Patients

The fifth annual Georgia Dalton Memorial Classic to benefit Carousel, the pediatric program of Kansas City Hospice & Palliative Care, is Thursday, September 11 at Ironhorse Golf Club.

Scott and Melanie Dalton organize the annual event in memory of their daughter, Georgia, who was a Carousel patient during her life of 6 and a half months. The golf tournament includes lunch, dinner, and silent and live auctions.

Lunch is at 11 a.m., tee off is at noon and dinner is at 5:15 p.m. To sign up to golf, to be a hole sponsor, to donate auction items or for more information, call 816-363-2600 or visit www.kansascityhospice.org. If you are unable to golf but would like to attend the dinner and auction, you may purchase a ticket for \$30.

Coming Events

SEPTEMBER

Camp Carousel

Weekend retreat for families who have lost a loved one. September 12 through 14. Heartland Presbyterian Center, 16965 NW 45 Highway, Parkville, Mo. Call 816-363-2600.

Patient Care Volunteer Training

September 22, 25 and October 2, weekdays at Providence Medical Center, Kansas City, Kan. Call Kathy Fetters, 816-276-2640.

OCTOBER

Men's Workshop on Grief

Tuesdays, October 7 through November 4, 6 to 7:30 p.m. Kansas City Hospice & Palliative Care Main Office, 9221 Ward Parkway, Suite 100, Kansas City, Mo. Free. Call 816-363-2600.

Estate Planners' Seminar: Medical Decisions

October 10, 7:30 to 9 a.m. Kansas City Hospice House, 12000 Wornall Road, Kansas City, Mo. Free. Call 816-363-2600.

Planning Your Estate: Wills and Trusts

October 10, 11 a.m. to noon. Kansas City Hospice House, 12000 Wornall Road, Kansas City, Mo. Free. Call Mary Zahner Bauer, 816-276-2625.

Hospice House Volunteer Training

October 11, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Kansas City Hospice House, 12000 Wornall Road, Kansas City, Mo. Call Allison Fisher, 816-941-1058.

Patient Care Volunteer Training

October 13, 15 and 20, weekdays at Centerpoint Medical Center, Independence, Mo. Call Kathy Fetters, 816-276-2640.

Managing Early Grief: The First Nine Months After a Loss

Mondays, October 13 through November 10, 4 to 5:30 p.m. Pleasant Heights Community of Christ, 4341 Blue Ridge Boulevard, Kansas City, Mo. Free. Call 816-363-2600.

NOVEMBER

Grief Workshop: Coping With the Holidays

Tuesday, November 18, 6 to 8 p.m. Kansas City Hospice & Palliative Care Main Office, 9221 Ward Parkway, Suite 100, Kansas City, Mo. Free. Call 816-363-2600.

Visit www.kansascityhospice.org for more information or to register for events.



**Kansas City Hospice
& Palliative Care**

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www.kansascityhospice.org.*

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If you would like your name removed from our
newsletter mailing list, please contact Kansas City
Hospice at 816-363-2600.

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