

# Aspirations

SPRING 2024

A PUBLICATION OF HOSPICE OF THE NORTHWEST FOUNDATION

*Funding Compassion and Dignity Every Moment of Life*

## Living Life to the Fullest A Story of Hope and Hospice

In the heart of every human, there is a longing to live life as fully as possible. Hospice of the Northwest patient Gwynn embodies this spirit. Her story captures the essence of hospice care and its purpose: to enhance a person's quality of life as they near the end of life.

Diagnosed with a life-limiting illness and told she had only days or weeks to live, her doctor gave her two options. She could start chemotherapy and radiation or pursue hospice care. Traditional treatment options offered little hope, and Gwynn worried they would only prolong her suffering.

"I was in so much pain," she recalls. "I wasn't sure I could endure the effects of chemo. All I wanted was to live the rest of my life in peace. That's why I chose hospice."

When she started hospice, Gwynn partnered with her transdisciplinary care team on a personalized care plan tailored to meet her needs and goals. The plan included pain and symptom management to help Gwynn live more comfortably. It also involved support from a social worker who provided guidance on burial options and a spiritual counselor who became a source of solace for her.

After three months of hospice care, Gwynn has outlived her prognosis and has experienced a significant improvement in her quality of life. With pain and other symptoms under control, she can now do many things she enjoys, including a daily walk on a nearby trail. "Before hospice, I was dying. Now I'm living," Gwynn said gratefully. "Hospice of the Northwest gave me my life back."

Among the many services Hospice of the Northwest offers, massage therapy holds a special place in Gwynn's heart. She emphasizes the immediate and profound impact this has on her well-being, "When I get a massage, I feel so good afterward. It's as though I've transcended beyond my physical ailments to a place of peace—peace in my body, my soul, and the peace to live."

Integrative services like massage therapy are critical components of hospice care for patients like Gwynn. However, Medicare, Medicaid, and private insurers do not cover these services for hospice patients despite their therapeutic benefits. Your generosity allows hospice patients to access integrative services, elevating their quality of life beyond the reach of conventional medicine.



*"It feels so good to be alive and happy. This is the life I wanted to live. And to live like this at the end of life? It's like I'm getting a little taste of heaven."*

**Gwynn**

Gwynn's experience with hospice care is a powerful reminder of the difference we can make in the lives of people facing life-limiting illnesses. Through your support, patients receive more than just medical care; they access services that nurture their body, mind, and spirit. Gwynn's story is a testament to the quality of life hospice care can provide, allowing patients to embrace every moment with compassion and dignity.



Learn more about how your generosity is making a difference. Visit [www.HospiceNW.org/Impact](http://www.HospiceNW.org/Impact)

  
**Hospice**  
of the northwest **FOUNDATION**



## Mission

The Hospice of the Northwest Foundation funds compassion and dignity every moment of life.

## Vision

Our vision is to transform the way dying is perceived and experienced so that everyone coping with a life-limiting illness has access to hospice care; we envision a future where no one dies alone or in pain.

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## Contact Us

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foundation@hospicenw.org

Skagit Hospice Foundation  
dba **Hospice of the Northwest Foundation**

Nonprofit Tax ID#/EIN:  
91-2094964

# Thank You

## DEAR COMMUNITY MEMBERS,

It is with immense gratitude that we share some remarkable news from Hospice of the Northwest Foundation. Just four months into 2024, we have benefitted from the generosity of 155 individuals who have donated \$31,880 in memory or honor of their loved ones. We have also been fortunate to receive four estate gifts, totaling \$224,900 – we are grateful!

These contributions are not merely numbers on a balance sheet; they represent your unwavering support and belief in our mission. Thanks to your generosity, Hospice of the Northwest Foundation can continue to provide vital funds for uncompensated care, integrated services, and patient assistance that go beyond what Medicare or other insurances cover.

As we eagerly anticipate our annual Ports of Call Gala & Auction on September 28, we extend a heartfelt invitation to each one of you to join us for an evening filled with joy, inspiration, and a shared commitment to funding compassion and dignity every moment of life.

With warm regards and deepest appreciation,

### Rhonda Tingley

*President, Board of Trustees*

*Hospice of the Northwest Foundation*

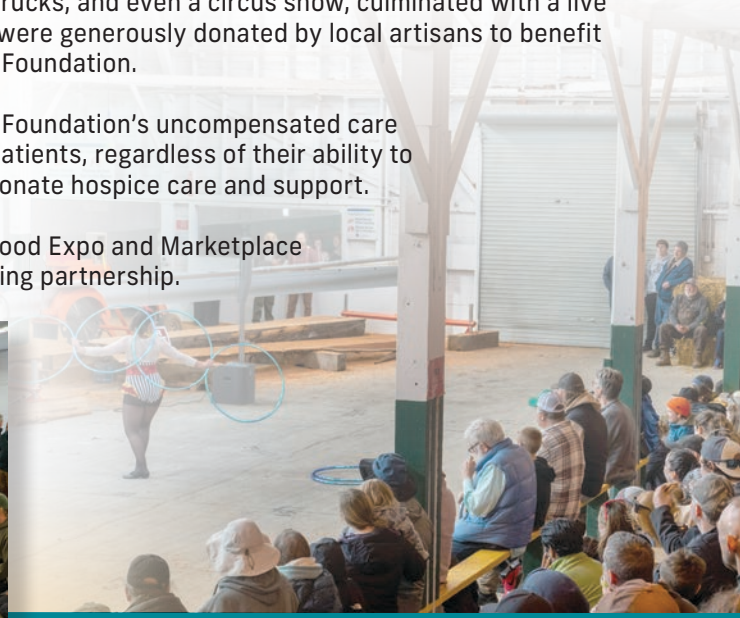
## Skagit Wood Expo Doubles Donation to Hospice of the Northwest Foundation

Hospice of the Northwest Foundation is grateful to the Skagit Wood Expo and Marketplace for their generous donation of \$10,000, which far surpasses the goal River Mitchell, a Skagit Wood Network co-organizer, set after last year's inaugural event. ***"Our goal was to double our donation from last year,"*** said Mitchell, ***"and we will keep working on ways to raise more as we get settled into running the wood expo."***

Funds were raised at the second annual event which brought together woodworkers from all over the region. The two-day event featuring wood vendors, live music, food trucks, and even a circus show, culminated with a live auction. All auction items were generously donated by local artisans to benefit Hospice of the Northwest Foundation.

Hospice of the Northwest Foundation's uncompensated care fund ensures all hospice patients, regardless of their ability to pay, will receive compassionate hospice care and support.

Thank you to the Skagit Wood Expo and Marketplace organization for this amazing partnership.





# 2023

## A YEAR IN REVIEW

What truly sets Hospice of the Northwest apart from other hospice providers in our area is the generous support from donors who give to Hospice of the Northwest Foundation. This support enables the hospice team to go above and beyond in delivering exceptional care to patients and their families, ensuring they find comfort and solace during difficult times. We are deeply grateful for your contributions, which allow us to continue our mission of funding compassion and dignity every moment of life.

### \$664,985

#### Total Funds Raised

- \$174,565 Donated In Memory of a Loved One
- \$8,504 Giving Tuesday
- \$344,633 Raised at the Auction
- \$11,684 Employee Giving
- \$48,000 Estate Gifts
- \$25,200 Bereavement Support
- \$52,399 Annual Appeal

### 0

#### Patients turned away for inability to pay

### 1,218

#### Hospice patients served

### 27

#### Families had peace of mind about their loved ones' remains

### 642

#### Community members received bereavement support

### Volunteer Services

#### 23 Veteran Pinning ceremonies

### \$238,128

#### Integrative Services funded by donors

- 1,499 Massage Therapist Visits
- 584 Therapeutic Music Visits
- 44 Aromatherapy Visits

### 525

#### Hours of volunteer education and training

## Hospice of the Northwest Foundation Welcomes New Board Member



**HEIDI TURNER** is the newest member of the Board of Trustees for Hospice of the Northwest Foundation. She lives in Marysville where she is an active volunteer and member of the Greater Marysville-Tulalip Chamber of Commerce. Heidi spent the last 20 years of her career focused on serving older adults. She is a licensed health insurance producer for the State of Washington and specializes in helping people who are new to Medicare. Inspired by her own family's journey with hospice care, Heidi joined the Board because she knows how important compassion and dignity are at the end of life.



### Memorial Honor Gifts

Making a gift in someone's memory celebrates the person's life and legacy. It is a meaningful way to express condolences to their loved ones.

To learn more about how you can make a difference, scan the QR code below or contact us at [Foundation@HospiceNW.org](mailto:Foundation@HospiceNW.org) or **360-814-5702**.



# A Vigil of Comfort and Compassion

## KELLY'S VOLUNTEER STORY

Kelly McKnight's journey with Hospice of the Northwest began during a deeply personal moment. Her mother was in her final days of life when our vigil volunteers stepped in to provide solace to her mother and her family. Inspired by the sense of peace and understanding she witnessed, Kelly decided to give back by being a quiet, loving presence for others. She began volunteering with Hospice of the Northwest in 2019, sitting vigil with a patient when he passed.

Reflecting on this powerful experience, Kelly says, "There was so much love and warmth in that space. It was such a privilege and honor to spend those last moments with him."

Over the years, Kelly has embraced a variety of volunteer roles, from providing respite and companionship to caring for beloved pets, finishing sewing projects, and even reading 'steamy' romance novels to a patient who enjoyed them. Each role has offered a unique experience, but the

moments of genuine connection and shared laughter have meant the most to her.

"I enjoy hearing about their life stories, their honest sharing of memories, regrets, and lessons learned," she says, highlighting the meaningful connections she has forged with patients and their families.

Kelly also expresses deep gratitude for the personal growth and fulfillment she has gained through volunteering at Hospice of the Northwest. 'My whole experience at Hospice of the Northwest has been incredibly rewarding and emotionally fulfilling,' she says.

Beyond volunteering at Hospice of the Northwest, Kelly volunteers for many other organizations in the Skagit Valley—a place she and her family have called home for generations. She embodies the spirit of giving, and her story highlights the meaningful difference volunteers can make when providing comfort, compassion, and dignity to hospice patients and their families.



Learn about volunteering and apply online. Visit [www.HospiceNW.org/Volunteer](http://www.HospiceNW.org/Volunteer)

# Planned Giving

## Transform Lives with Hospice of the Northwest Foundation

### Understanding Planned Giving

Planned giving lets you make a future gift to Hospice of the Northwest Foundation through your financial and estate plans. This could be a donation you leave as part of your will or trust. Planned gifts can also offer valuable tax benefits and/or provide you with life income for a period of time.

### Why You Should Consider Planned Giving

- **Leaving a Legacy:** Your gift ensures Hospice of the Northwest Foundation can continue funding compassionate and dignified care for individuals when they need it the most.
- **Estate and Tax Planning Advantages:** Depending on the nature of your gift, you may receive substantial tax benefits.

### What Your Contribution Supports

- **Increased Access to Hospice Care:** Your planned gift ensures everyone in our community has access to compassionate and dignified hospice care. When a patient lacks adequate insurance and does not have the financial resources to pay out of pocket, your generosity helps bridge the gap.
- **Enhanced Quality of Life:** Because of your support, Hospice of the Northwest is able to provide care that goes beyond traditional hospice services. Programs that greatly enhance quality of life for patients and their loved ones — like integrative services and community bereavement support — are 100% funded by generous donors like you.

### How to Make Your Planned Gift

Making your planned gift to Hospice of the Northwest Foundation is simple. To get started:

- **Contact us:** Call (360) 814-5702 or send an email to [foundation@hospicenw.org](mailto:foundation@hospicenw.org)

- **Visit our website:** [HospiceNW.org/Foundation](http://HospiceNW.org/Foundation)

We will provide you with all the necessary information to plan your charitable gift.

If you already have a plan in mind, reach out to your attorney, financial planner, or fund administrator and provide them with the following information:

Tax ID/EIN: 91-2094964

National Taxonomy of Exempt Entities (NTEE) Classification: P74 Hospice

#### Mailing Address:

Hospice of the Northwest Foundation  
227 Freeway Dr., Suite A  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

Please include your name and address so we can express our gratitude.



## Hospice of the Northwest Featured in Pediatric e-Journal

We are proud to have been featured in a recent edition of the acclaimed NHPCO Pediatric e-journal. The article highlights our partnership with Seattle Children's Hospital in providing exceptional pediatric hospice care.

At Hospice of the Northwest, our team takes time to understand each child's unique needs, creating personalized care plans that respect their family's choices and enhance their quality of life. In the article, two of our medical directors—Dr. Anita Meyer and Dr. Leslie Estep—share valuable insights to help other hospices provide successful pediatric care.

The article also explores the challenges we face caring for patients across a vast territory that covers four counties, over 2,000 square miles, and many island and rural communities. Over time, our dedicated team has developed creative solutions to ensure exceptional care reaches every patient, even in the most remote locations. According to the authors, our pioneering approach to care has put us at the "frontier of serving pediatric patients well."

We are honored to have been recognized for our dedication to pediatric hospice care. This article is a testament to our team's incredible efforts and our commitment to providing compassionate, comprehensive support for every child and family we serve.



Read the full story

## STAFF SPOTLIGHT

# Dr. Erika Pope Assumes New Role as Hospice Medical Director

Hospice of the Northwest is proud to announce the appointment of **ERIKA POPE, DO**, as the new Hospice Medical Director. In this role, Dr. Pope leads our dedicated medical team in providing exceptional care to hospice patients and their circles of support.

The hospice community has celebrated Dr. Pope's appointment, including **ANITA MEYER, MD**, who held the position for 15 years. "I am excited to pass the torch to the brilliant and energetic Dr. Erika Pope. She is uniquely qualified, and has the vision and compassion to extend our mission of providing excellent end-of-life care," says Dr. Meyer.

Dr. Pope joined Hospice of the Northwest in June 2022, bringing a unique blend of professional expertise and deep empathy to her work. She first became interested in medicine when her sister, Melissa was diagnosed with Huntington's



disease. After experiencing the compassionate care her sister received from Hospice of the Northwest, Dr. Pope realized hospice care was the best way to support individuals and families facing this incurable disease.

Her personal experience with Hospice of the Northwest has informed her leadership as the Hospice Medical Director. "Our work provides so much hope for patients and their families," says Dr. Pope. "Hope that a terrible cancer or disease will not overtake who they are. Hope that families and caregivers will have the tools they need to care for their loved one."

As Hospice Medical Director, Dr. Pope will continue to inspire hope and support patients and their families, embodying the compassionate care Hospice of the Northwest is known for.

## Thank you, Dr. Meyer!



*"I am so proud to be a part of the robust program we have built and grateful for the exceptional care our team provides. Serving as the Hospice Medical Director for the past 15 years has been my greatest honor. I will continue my work as a hospice doc for the foreseeable future and remain humbled by the kindness, integrity, and camaraderie of this amazing team."*

**ANITA MEYER, MD**

# Hospice Welcomes Dr. Lissa Anderson

**LISSA ANDERSON, MD**, joined Hospice of the Northwest's provider team as an Assistant Medical Director in January. She is a board-certified neurologist specializing in Parkinson's and Huntington's disease, and has practiced palliative and hospice care since 2015. "I was working with patients who were living with incurable, life-threatening diseases. Without an interdisciplinary team, I could only help in a limited way," says Dr. Anderson. "I transitioned to



palliative and hospice care to work as part of a team to better address our patients' holistic needs. This work allows me to be more patient-centered, focusing on what's most important to the person in front of me."

Dr. Anderson earned her Doctor of Medicine degree at the esteemed Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York City and completed her residency and fellowship in Neurology at Oregon

Health and Science University. Driven by a desire to prioritize patient needs above all else, Dr. Anderson embraced the opportunity to be part of the Hospice of the Northwest team. She says, "Hospice of the Northwest has a reputation for providing top-tier hospice care in the community. I have been awed by the quality of care provided at all levels and the quality of the organization's leadership."



Learn more about Hospice Care Teams. Visit [www.HospiceNW.org/Care-Team](http://www.HospiceNW.org/Care-Team)

# LOVE Hospice of the Northwest?

Leave us an  
online review.

Did you know that 70% of Americans use online reviews when making healthcare decisions? If Hospice of the Northwest provided high-quality, compassionate care for you or someone you love, please leave us an online review and tell us about it!



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Hospice  
of the northwest

## Grief and Loss Groups

### Open Support Groups

Open support groups allow attendees to receive peer and facilitator support and receive and discuss grief educational materials. Our support groups are open to anyone in the community who recently experienced a loss. Participants do not need an association with hospice care to participate. Contact us at [HospiceBereavement@HospiceNW.org](mailto:HospiceBereavement@HospiceNW.org) or 360-814-5570 for more information.

### In-Person Open Grief Group

Every Monday from 3-4:30 p.m.  
227 Freeway Dr., Suite A  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

### Online Open Grief Group

Every Friday from 10-11:30 a.m.



New groups will be added soon. To view the full list of groups and classes for people experiencing grief and loss, visit [www.HospiceNW.org/Bereavement](http://www.HospiceNW.org/Bereavement) or scan the QR code with your phone's camera.



## MEMORIAL DAY

Hospice of the Northwest will honor more than 1,300 U.S. Veterans this Memorial Day weekend with our annual Flags In Garden event. Organized by dedicated volunteers, this poignant field of red, white, and blue is part of our "We Honor Veterans" program. Each flag commemorates the life and service of a U.S. Veteran we were privileged to care for at the end of life.

We invite you to take a moment to honor our local Veterans and pay tribute to their courage and sacrifice.

### Memorial Day Flags In Garden May 25-27, 2024

*Volunteers play taps at 3 p.m.  
on Memorial Day, May 27*

**Hospice of the Northwest,  
227 Freeway Drive, Mount Vernon**

For more information or to participate in honoring these heroes, please contact Erin Long, Volunteer Services Manager, at [ELong@HospiceNW.org](mailto:ELong@HospiceNW.org).



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227 Freeway Drive, Ste. A  
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Hospice of the Northwest **FOUNDATION** presents

PORTS OF CALL  
**KENTUCKY**  **DERBY**  
**GALA & AUCTION** **SEPTEMBER 28, 2024**

**SAVE THE DATE!**

The Hospice of the Northwest Foundation Board of Trustees invites you to the Kentucky Derby Ports of Call Gala & Auction. Mark your calendars now and join the race to raise money in support of hospice patients and the people who love them.

Corporate Air Center  
15452 Airport Drive  
Burlington, WA

Tickets \$125  
Includes dinner, drinks,  
entertainment & auction



Purchase tickets online at  
[auctria.events/HospiceofNW](https://auctria.events/HospiceofNW)  
or scan the QR code.

*All guests must be 21 or older.*