

COMMUNITY FOCUS NEWS

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A newsletter of Visiting Nurse Service & Hospice of Suffolk • Spring 2020



Kathy Martin and her granddaughter, Julianna Martin at the VNSHS 5K

Visiting Nurse Service & Hospice of Suffolk turns annual 5K into a virtual run

Visiting Nurse Service & Hospice of Suffolk is proud to honor Kathy Martin, of Signature Premier Properties at our VIRTUAL 5K to benefit Hospice House. As the 2017 World Female Masters Athlete of the Year, Kathy remains unbeaten in her age group world-wide. Martin started running at the age of 30 for fitness, then realized if she could not run a mile, it did not bode well for longevity. Running became her passion. Kathy runs pretty much every day, some days for sanity, other days for the sheer beauty of being outside. Since turning 60, Martin has broken 6 out of 13 Female World Masters Athletics records. Kathy runs to be an example to others including future generations and to be an encouragement to just get up and go!

In 2000, Kathy helped launch the VNSHS 5K and has been a driving force behind it since. The number of participants has increased, teams, a kids run and a family festival have been added, and it is now part of the USATF-LI Grand Prix Individual and Team Series. Kathy has led a 5K team of colleagues and family, including her granddaughter Julianna. Giving new meaning to "Running Realtor", Kathy immediately offered to run errands for our patients who are homebound due to COVID-19 restrictions.

"Kathy Martin is a leader in the running world, business and our community. Her humility and passion are an inspiration. When we decided to convert our 5K to a VIRTUAL event, Kathy said 'Let's make this the most successful year

yet. What can I do to help?'" said Linda Taylor, CEO, Visiting Nurse Service & Hospice of Suffolk

Held annually during National Nurses Week, the 5K is the largest public event of VNSHS. VNSHS is humbled by the many runners who participate year after year to pay tribute to a loved one who we have cared for. Instead of cancelling or postponing the event this year, it is now a VIRTUAL 5K in which participants may run or walk from anywhere during National Nurses Week, May 6-12, 2020. 100% of every registration fee supports Hospice House. Plus if you fundraise more than \$100, your donations will be matched 1:1. More important than your time or distance is coming together to support a critical community resource. Can we count on you to participate in the VIRTUAL 5K to benefit Hospice House? Please register at elitefeats.com

"I have witnessed firsthand the compassionate care that Hospice House provides families in need. Hospice helps the patient as much as their loved ones with bereavement programs and memorial ceremonies for survivors of any age." Kathy Martin



HEART TO HEART



Linda Taylor, MA, BSN, RN
Chief Executive Officer

The generosity of donors enables VNSHS to provide quality healthcare to patients regardless of their ability to pay. Please consider making a gift at visitingnurseservice.org or in the enclosed envelope to help local families facing a healthcare crisis.

Dear Friends,

I hope that this note finds you and your loved ones safe and healthy. Providing charitable, compassionate care of the highest quality to families facing any healthcare crisis has been the cornerstone mission of Visiting Nurse Service & Hospice of Suffolk (VNSHS) since we were founded in 1952. The current COVID-19 crisis demands dynamic and unprecedented adaptations in our practice to enable us to respond to its impact in our community. Enhanced or newly implemented agency processes to ensure safety and well being of all – our employees and our patients – are shared with you here.

- VNSHS nurses, rehabilitative therapists and aides use meticulous infection control measures and personal protection equipment to treat patients with pre-existing conditions as well as COVID-19. Patient visit frequency is closely monitored with consideration of care plan and limitation of outside visitors. As always, we teach families to participate in patient care and provide the enclosed guidelines for caregivers to ensure safe COVID-19 patient care for your reference at home.

- VNSHS greatly enhanced application of telehealth software that enables us to conduct a “virtual” visit that can include family members who may not even live in the patients household. This benefits our ability to safeguard our patients and staff by minimizing face to face contact in between home visits and maximizing our ability to monitor patient symptoms and progress while enhancing educational resources that include review of medication actions, side effects, interactions and effectiveness.

- Hospice House continues to provide the best possible inpatient end of life care. Hospice House remains open and staffed 24/7 providing for enhanced patient screenings, appropriate visitor limitations and infection control measures compliant with CDC guidelines. Four of the eight rooms at Hospice House have been converted to negative pressure rooms for COVID-19 patients to provide for maximum patient, family and staff safety, while enabling hospice to safely meet the needs of the non COVID patient in the remaining four rooms.

I am indebted to our skilled and dedicated staff who are the core of our existence. Their commitment, compassion, and professional expertise enables day-to-day operations and patient care to continue with necessary modification, but without interruption. We - like you - have been impacted by this devastating viral infection and want you to know that while feeling isolated especially under this stay at home directive, we are all in this together. Should you or a loved one need home health care or hospice services, VNSHS stands ready to assist. I hope you will reach out to us as we support each other.

Stay safe, stay connected, and stay well!



THANK YOU

We are touched and inspired by this kind message left by the community at our VNSHS HQ. We thank you and share your wishes with healthcare professionals across the globe.



COMPASSIONATE CARE SINCE 1952

NUTRITION AND FOOD PREPARATION TIPS

By Eileen Kane-Gemmell | VNSHS Registered Dietitian

These useful everyday tips will help keep you and your family safe while eating healthy.

- Plan your shopping to last 1-2 weeks. Keep a supply of non-perishable foods such as canned goods, shelf stable dried oats, grains and beans and frozen vegetables, fruits, meat and seafood.
- Shop with a list to minimize time at the supermarket.
- Practice social distancing and safety guidelines while shopping.
- Wash all fruits and vegetables with edible and inedible peels with cool tap water.
- Never wash raw chicken as it can spread salmonella and other bacteria. Washing fish increases cross contamination. Do not rinse eggs after purchasing.
- Keep your refrigerator below 40 degrees and your freezer at 0.
- Wash hands thoroughly after putting away groceries and before and after meal preparation. Disinfect all surfaces during clean up.
- Vitamin A and C rich foods such as fruits and vegetables boost immunity.
- Protein foods also boost immunity and recovery.
- When ordering in, fried, crunchy, crispy, breaded or batter dipped foods can be high in carbohydrates and fat. Healthier options are baked, grilled, roasted or steamed.
- Ask for sauces and gravies on the side.
- Serve your food on a plate as the take-out container may be larger than what you would ordinarily serve.
- Don't drink your calories. Avoid sugar sweetened drinks, shakes or specialty drinks.

GRIEVING DURING SOCIAL DISTANCING

By Joan Lewis | VNSHS Bereavement Coordinator

Grief comes in many forms. During social distancing, we may grieve the loss of our lifestyle, camaraderie, special celebrations, faith and routines.

- Stay informed about what's happening in your community and follow the directions of state and local authorities.
- Media is a wonderful tool to stay connected but if social media or the news cause anxiety, take a break from it.
- Adhere to a routine similar to your schedule before social distancing with set times for sleep, eat, work, socializing, entertainment, spiritual, exercise, education and reflection.
- Schedule blocks of time for phone calls or Facetime, just as you would schedule a lunch date. If you live alone or are used to dining out with others, Facetime or call friends during meals.
- Enjoy a movie with friends by streaming the movie simultaneously.
- Maintain a sleep schedule as if you were going to the office or appointments the next day. Nap if your body needs it but not as a replacement for a solid 6 to 9 hours of sleep per night.
- Stay active by taking a daily walk or run in your neighborhood. Download an exercise app, watch an exercise show on TV or dust off your treadmill!
- Tackle an item on your to do list, read a bestseller you haven't had time to read or learn a new skill. Keep a journal to remember what is most important to you.
- Reflect upon what we have and hold most dear. Start and finish each day with a positive thought.
- Most importantly, don't be too hard on yourself. Grieving comes in waves with ups and downs. Ride the wave instead of fighting it.

Go to visitingnurseservice.org for information on VNSHS services and COVID-19

NATIONAL SOCIAL WORK MONTH

During National Social Work month in March, we celebrated social workers – our advocates, champions and leaders who make the world a better place.

Knowing that schools and businesses would be closed and many patients homebound due to COVID-19, VNSHS Medical Social Worker, Mary Denning, created an emergency food and essentials pantry for patients and their families. Mary and her colleagues prepared kits to distribute to those in need.



MESSAGE FROM MEDICARE

If you need to see your doctor, please call them first. Medicare has expanded their ability to use telehealth during the COVID-19 emergency for common office visits, mental health counseling, and preventive health screenings.



UPCOMING EVENTS

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Linda Taylor, MA, BSN, RN

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SUPPORT HOSPICE HOUSE AT OUR VIRTUAL 5K

WHO: Anyone can participate

WHAT: Run or walk 5K in your neighborhood, on your favorite course or trail or even a treadmill

WHERE: Anywhere

WHEN: Anytime during National Nurses Week, May 6 through 12, 2020

WHY: To honor a loved one, special nurse or caregiver while supporting Hospice House

HOW: Register at elitefeats.com: \$25 per adult and \$10 for age 12 and under. Your swag bag will be mailed and you will be entered to win one of more than 50 gift cards. You may track your distance on strava.com, mapmyrun.com, a GPS watch, a treadmill, do 12.5 laps around a track or run the 5K course posted on the registration page

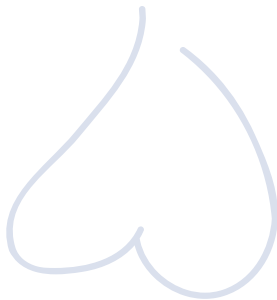
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