

Palliative & Supportive Care of Nantucket

For Patients, Families, and Caregivers Touched by Life-Threatening Illness and Grief

Currents

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Hope on the Horizon

This year has been hard for everyone. Of course, it has been harder for some in our community than others, including many of the people we serve who cannot put chemo, radiation, disease progression, or medical trips to Boston on hold until safer times. While we hunker down for an unusually distanced holiday season and new year, and hold fast for the vaccines that we know will come, I would like to share my gratitude for the inspiring people of Nantucket, where community and hospital leadership have worked together to help keep us safe, and for the incredibly resilient people we serve. I would also like to share some of that inspiration, some of the hope they have given me.

Perseverance, isolation, distance, and patience are nothing new for this island. For hundreds of years, Nantucketers have had to work together and take care of one another, in good times and bad, but especially during the hard times. Every year, we not only survive, but we find ways to thrive through desolate winters on Melville's blustery "mere hillock and elbow of sand" in the North Atlantic. This year is unusual, but I know we are tough enough to handle it, and we are already finding ways to thrive again.

Many of our supporters, including summer residents, year-rounders, patient volunteers, hospital staff, and PASCON board members, continue the job of raising funds so our services can remain free to everyone. These individuals continue to "Swim Across America," auction off beautiful art, and donate contents of their sold homes, albeit in new and creative ways, which all provide funds for the

care of those with life-threatening, life-changing illness that has been our focus over the last thirty-eight years.

As for waiting in isolation at the mercy of forces beyond our control, we do that year-round on Nantucket, and we are very good at it. There are not many people on this planet who are as regularly sealed off from the rest of the world due to wind, fog, high seas, or even a rare frozen Nantucket Sound. While technology had begun to erode the sense of being a community apart from the world before the pandemic, that same technology now allows us to remain better connected to each other here on the Island. A year ago I would not have believed we could carry on through a pandemic in the way we have. Our staff has learned to hold Zoom and Team meetings for private counseling sessions as well as support groups for cancer patients, caregivers, and those in bereavement. Although most of our work has been carried out remotely since COVID-19 surfaced, we have continued to connect to patients in the hospital, in homes when necessary, and from our kitchen counters.

At PASCON, we are used to working with an especially tough, resilient, and brave group of Nantucketers. They are also some of the most vulnerable. The people we serve are often facing the greatest challenges of their lives, the greatest hardships, the worst heartbreaks, but they do so with such strength, determination, and grace that I often find myself awestruck. These people, and the professionals I have the privilege of working with, are my heroes. While the pandemic has thrown



its fair share of additional challenges our way, our patients, volunteers, and staff have taken each one in stride, even with the added fear, danger, isolation, and loneliness. Collectively, they remind me of the capacity for goodness and compassion and perseverance and courage that we all must have but are often in danger of forgetting. In short, they give me hope.

In his acceptance speech for the 1949 Nobel Prize in Literature, William Faulkner spoke to this quality that I often see in my work, and in words I dare not paraphrase:

I believe that man will not merely endure: he will prevail. He is immortal, not because he alone among creatures has an inexhaustible voice, but because he has a soul, a spirit capable of compassion and sacrifice and endurance.

As we head into an unusual and trying winter, there is hope on the horizon. Please remember how courageous, strong, kind, compassionate, and good we can be. Please do all that you can to help others while remaining safe yourself, not only for your benefit, but also for the benefit of others. We will get through this together.

With gratitude,

Dianne Bein, FNP
Program Director

Our Services at a Glance

Individualized Comprehensive Care

Through consultations and follow-up care, we offer a broad range of physical, psychological, social, and spiritual care for persons with life-threatening illness and their families. Services are provided by our interdisciplinary team of professionals and volunteers and are aimed at providing education, support, and symptom control from the time of diagnosis through cure or, if cure is not possible, through advancing illness and end-of-life. All of our services are provided in the most appropriate setting for our patients' needs – in our office, at home, in the hospital, in the nursing home, or virtually via ZOOM.

Caregiver Support*

- Coaching for Caregivers – one-on-one consultations with our Nurse Practitioner and Palliative Care Counselor on any aspect of care; individualized assessment of needs and individualized plans for support
- Time Out – a professionally led group providing education, support, and socialization with other caregivers – held on the 1st and 3rd Friday of each month from 1-2 pm via ZOOM. Call for details
- De-Stressing to Cope – a group or private educational session focusing on caregiver issues and stressors, positive self-care, and techniques for coping
- Lending Library of caregiver-related topics.

Children's Services

- Direct care to children with life-threatening illness and family support
- Guidance for parents of children coping with the illness of a loved one
- Education and support for families of children grieving
- An extensive library of resource materials available for loan.

Cancer Survivorship Program

Working collaboratively with a person's physician(s) and other health care practitioners, we provide an extra layer of support to help deal with the cancer and its impact on body, mind, and spirit through:

- Education, counseling, and support
- Patient navigator services
- Pain and symptom control
- Stress/distress management
- Mind/Body education and care
- Advance care planning
- Comprehensive care as needed
- Coping with Cancer Support Group held every Monday from 1-2 pm via ZOOM. Call for details
- Marla Ceely Lamb Cancer Fund
- Survivorship Services
- Referrals as needed
- End-of-life care as needed

Grief and Bereavement

Education, basic counseling, and referral for persons coping with the death of a loved one.

- Private individual sessions
- Grief Support Group - led by Palliative Care Counselor Bonnie Fitz-Gibbon, Ph.D. - held every Wednesday from 1-2 pm via ZOOM. Call for details.
- Focus is on:
 - Understanding the grief process
 - Actively doing one's grief work
 - Optimizing wellness through diet, exercise, stress reduction, mind/body modalities, coping strategies
 - Coping healthily and effectively.

Volunteer Aid/Companionship

Trained volunteers are available to help patients and families. Volunteer services are currently limited due to COVID-19. Please check with our office for updates.



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Bonnie Fitz-Gibbon, Ph.D., LMHC

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**The Caregivers' Connections Program of PASCON is funded in part by the MA Executive Office of Elder Affairs and the Federal Administration for Community Living by a contract from Elder Services of Cape Cod and the Islands.*

Grieving In a Pandemic

Courtesy of Hospice of Central Ohio

The COVID-19 crisis has created an entirely new and different world in which we all have to operate. Just like those experiencing grief and trying to adapt to a world without their loved ones in it, you also need to adapt to a new world turned upside down by COVID-19. You are anxiously wondering what your “new normal” will be like in the months ahead.

For those who were already grieving the death of a loved one, the effects of the virus on society have added new layers of complication. Many griever say they can’t escape the grief. The required physical distancing has increased feelings of isolation and loneliness as people are cut off from their usual support systems of family, friends, and faith community. They find they are having difficulty filling what seems like endless days and may be feeling an increased lack of purpose and meaning in their lives. Furthermore, routine tasks and errands, like buying groceries or picking up prescriptions, have become stressful and more difficult because of fear of infection.

In spite of all this, there are things you can do that could help you through these unsettling times.

Practice self-care.

Eat a well-balanced diet and stay hydrated. Try to get enough rest and maintain good sleeping habits. In addition, exercise as you are able, even if it’s just a few minutes of deep breathing or walking around the house. All of these things enhance the ability of the body and mind to cope with painful grief emotions.

Be patient with yourself and know your feelings are valid.

The difficult feelings that wash over you like waves are normal, but you can’t be in the waves all the time without feeling like you are drowning. So, take a break from your grief by watching a movie, cleaning out that closet you’ve always said you were going to do, taking a walk, or reading a good book. Looking at family photo albums helps to reinforce happy memories. This may be a very bittersweet experience

but pushing through the “bitter” allows the “sweet” to come to the forefront over time.

Make an extra effort to reach out to family and friends.

Make sure to ask your family and friends for the support you need. Modern technology and social media have made it easier than ever to stay in touch. So, make a phone call or have a family gathering on a tele-video platform.

Try to find a way to help others in order to find a sense of purpose and meaning.

Call others you know who may also be having a hard time just to check in or write cards or letters to send the old-fashioned way. Many people have made face masks or care packages to donate. If you are able, volunteer to run an errand for an elderly neighbor or family member or drop off a home-cooked meal or baked goods. Giving to others is a win-win situation. It helps others and it helps you to feel good about yourself.

Tree of Remembrance



JC House Gazebo Garden

All are invited to place ornaments on the tree in memory of loved ones throughout the holidays.

Many have found this special way to remember and honor loved ones provides some comfort and a treasured opportunity for reflection.

Scallop shells on which to write your loved one’s name are beneath the tree in individually wrapped bags along with markers and prayer/meditation cards.

Please retrieve ornaments you wish to keep by January 1st when shells will be returned to the sea.

Annual Daffodil Planting



Champoux Landscape and J&M Landscape Services planted daffodils in four spots along Milestone Road on Nov. 5th. Dave Champoux and Mike Misurelli lead this tremendous annual planting in honor of PASCON’s patient care volunteers and all caregivers. They donate the bulbs, materials, and labor. **THANK YOU!!** Looking forward to seeing the brightened up bus turnout spots along Milestone come spring.

Fundraising Looked Very Different This Year

Dreamcatcher turned into the virtual Sunset Hour (and a half!).

Swim Across America's Island Swim became the Coast to Coast Challenge.

The Stroll Art Show went online.

Like most charities, we've had to change the way we raise money this year due to COVID-19. We've spent more time on video calls than ever before. We've gotten to work with some new collaborators like NCTV18 and have received funding from new sources like the Community Foundation for Nantucket which offered grants through its Nantucket Fund for Emergency Relief to offset fundraising losses.

It's been a challenge, but the community stepped up to help every step of the way. Most of our Dreamcatcher underwriters continued to give even though we cancelled the planned dinner and auction. We didn't want to solicit auction items in the spring when there was so much uncertainty, but we still received donations. We got to work with a lot of people we hadn't known as we sought talent to entertain during our hour-long virtual event. More than 50 people submitted sunset photos for a chance to win a sunset painting by Board President and local artist Sharon Woods Hussey and Caleb Cressman and Tessa Cressman donated \$100 for every sunset photo submitted.

The night was especially successful thanks to the Felch family's tremendous \$50,000 matching challenge gift in memory of our beloved Board member Marianne Felch. So many people dedicated sunsets and donated money towards the match, and then Fritz McClure surprised us all with a generous \$20,000 gift in memory of his wife Bay to complete the match!

Swim Across America's Island Swim was wildly successful even though it never happened! Thanks to the dedicated work of Co-Chairs Jim Pignato and Jill Roethke, their committees, and amazing supporters from all over, they nearly reached their goal.

Instead of one big swim, SAA Nantucket joined other swims in a 7,686 mile cross-country challenge. Participants could swim or walk or bike and log their miles towards a common goal. Nantucket completed the challenge in 10 weeks - and then turned around for a return trip!

This year saw all sorts of creative fundraising. There was a walk/run in early May with 300 participants! Branded gaiters were sold all summer. And the fundraising was bookended with another event in August in which 124 people participated. Cyclists rode 30 miles while runners did a half marathon.

Swimmers braved jellyfish and more than 20 people completed the Island Challenge of a 1-mile swim, a 30-mile bike ride, and a half marathon run.

And then there was the awe-inspiring 10K across Vineyard Sound completed by Tyler Roethke and Grant Wentworth in under 2 hours. These amazing athletes raised nearly \$120,000! Money raised by SAA Nantucket benefits both PASCON and Nantucket Cottage Hospital.

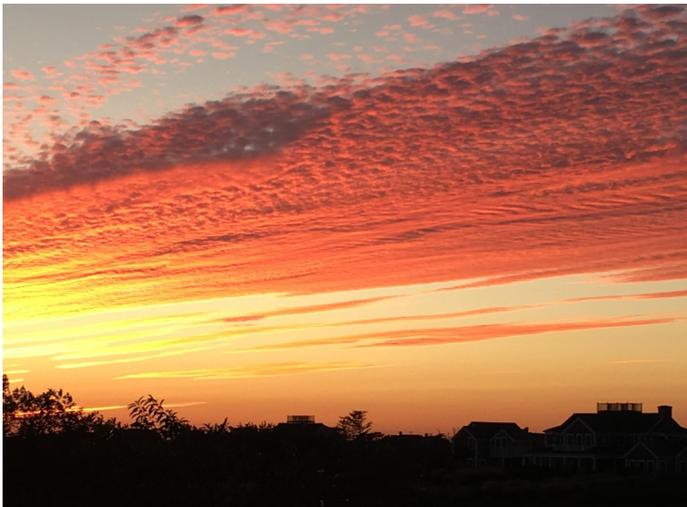
We weren't sure about asking artists to participate in our Annual Art Show usually held at Quidley & Co. on Main Street over Stroll weekend. We knew that they'd been asked to donate to countless virtual events over the past 6 months. But we took a chance and were delighted by the result. We had even more contributors than last year - 64! Combined with donations from private collections, our online auction showcased over 100 pieces. The auction had not happened as of press time, but we're confident it'll be a big success.

Thank you to everyone who participated in, helped with, or donated to any of these events this past year. And thank you to those who sent donations in honor or memory of someone or just because you wanted to help. We're humbled by the generosity, especially in these uncertain times.



"I don't know how it happens, exactly, but by the death of those we love, by their homegoing, the sunsets somehow are made more glorious...all the aspects and motion of nature more intimate, tender and affecting.

- Rev. Ted Anderson,
eulogy for Nantucket
poet Eleanor Phinney,
May, 1982



Photos by Sharon Woods Hussey and Carrie Riden

Sunset photos were submitted and sunsets were dedicated to raise money during our virtual Sunset Hour on June 7th, the day we had hoped to be together at the Nantucket Yacht Club for the 27th Annual Dreamcatcher Dinner & Auction.

Thank You, Community Foundation



THE NANTUCKET FUND™
FOR EMERGENCY RELIEF

The Community Foundation for Nantucket awarded PASCON a generous \$10,000 grant from the Nantucket Fund for Emergency Relief to help with revenue loss due to the difficulty fundraising this past year.

Marla Ceely Lamb Fund

Last month would have been the Fund's 28th Annual Fundraiser. Like so many other events, it had to be cancelled due to COVID-19. We thank everyone who has donated to and attended the event in the past, and we look forward to seeing you all next year.

Thank you to all the donors and volunteers who have sustained the fund since the list we published last year:

- Rogers & Gray Insurance for last year's Pinktober Breast Cancer Awareness fundraiser
- The Downyflake for donating proceeds from dining room sales on closing day back in January - and to the diners!
- Whaler teams and coaches, Booster Club, and donors contributing to the Play in Pink Games last October
- Jane Anzovino and Tracy MacDonald for donating and selling yard sale items
- NAREB for donating a full page ad in their Nantucket Home publication
- Poets Corner Press
- Hyline Cruises
- all of the artists contributing to the 11th Annual Art Show and all of the shoppers who purchased art in the virtual sale
- Chris Quidley and Adam Sodofsky of Quidley & Co., Kathleen Walsh of Old Spouter Gallery, Bobby Frazier and Tracey Sears of Artists Association of Nantucket, and Annabelle and Olivia Giletti for help soliciting art and promoting the event
- families who named the fund as a beneficiary
- generous unsolicited individual community gifts

The Marla Ceely Lamb Fund is managed and administered by PASCON so that every dollar raised and donated can go directly to patient travel expenses. We urge anyone who is a cancer patient or who knows a cancer patient to call 508-825-8325 and arrange to take advantage of this special fund.

Serendipity Home Sale



Volunteers pause from sorting and pricing items at the Lenzner home for a photo opp from above. Twenty-two volunteers helped make the sale a success.

By Nancy Newhouse, PASCON volunteer and Board member

My friends, the Lenzner family, had a buyer for their wonderful Shimmo summer home and the closing was less than a month away. The new owner was going to demolish the two houses on the property and Margaret was at a loss about disposing of the contents. I was there and offered to take care of everything if she would be willing to give the proceeds, or a portion thereof, to PASCON. "Great, and of course you may keep all you make," Margaret said. The challenge was on.

I am always optimistic that I can achieve anything if I have my friend Nancy Moylan as my partner helping. Having had years of experience together at the Hospital Thrift Shop, we felt well-trained and able to cope. Nancy brought items that were not going to be sold at the HTS with Manager Mary Casey's blessings. She set up those wares in the garage. We called many of our friends/volunteers

from the Thrift Shop and PASCON volunteers and board members and staff. We were on a roll.

Tracy MacDonald helped us greatly by posting items on Facebook and various island websites. A team of volunteers helped price and display the household goods - furniture, linens, kitchen items, and books which were donated to us by a family of a Sherburne Commons resident - a beautiful collection of art books. Our book expert arranged for the unsold books to be bought by Tim for his Used Books store in Provincetown. We also called friends and got the word out to bring any items people would like to donate for sale for PASCON'S benefit.

We assembled quite an impressive collection. Word had gotten out on the pervasive grapevine that a great sale was going to be held on Oct 23 and 24. People trickled in at all times over the weekend.

The family had left boats and bikes and all manner of recreational equip-

Selling Your Home and
Need to Clean it Out?



Let PASCON Help.

Our dedicated team of volunteers, led by Nancy Newhouse and Nancy Moylan, will take care of everything.

You get a nice tax write-off, and PASCON benefits from all the proceeds.

It's a WIN-WIN!

Call or email us for details.

ment which we were able to sell. Items were purposely priced to sell and the buyers were happy. We were especially careful, letting in only 6 people to the house at a time, one entrance and one exit. Lots of things were spaced all over the yard as well. Since the home was being demolished, appliances, patio stones, deck benches, outdoor lights were all sold. Our motto was NO STONE UNTURNED AND UNSOLD - literally.

We netted almost \$7,700 and the Lenzners donated \$3,000 on top of that to PASCON. The generosity of the family and our 22 volunteers made this an event in the time of COVID-19 that was greatly satisfying, fun and reaped an abundance of funds for PASCON.

There is no challenge too big when there are willing and able friends in our community who volunteer for a good cause. And many thanks to the shoppers who made this a great success. We hope to see everyone again soon.

Caregiving During COVID-19

6 Tips to Stay Well

Courtesy of VITAS Healthcare

During periods of crisis like this, family members and close friends continue to provide daily care.

Caregivers should develop habits and strategies to maintain their own health and well-being. This helps to both limit viral transmission and to avoid the ever-present risk of caregiver burnout.

Here are some key strategies and tips for caregiving in the era of COVID-19.

1) Reduce Coronavirus Transmission

Follow CDC-recommended protocols for personal and patient hygiene.

Wash your hands often for at least 20 seconds, especially:

- Before, during, and after food prep
- After using the toilet, blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- Before and after treating someone who is ill

2) Stay Informed about COVID-19, But Don't Overdo It

Keep up to date on the state of COVID in your area, but don't obsess - and don't mistake social media opinion for fact.

- A constant barrage of pandemic-focused news can be mentally and emotionally overwhelming, so try to limit your intake to a certain time or times each day.

3) Take Care of Yourself

Your patient's well-being relies on your ability to maintain your own. To be at your best, be sure to:

- Eat healthy, balanced meals
- Maintain a regular sleep routine
- Find chances to exercise whenever possible

4) Watch for Signs of Burnout

Caregiver burnout can happen in any caregiver-patient relationship, but the risk is heightened in times of increased stress.

You may be suffering from caregiver burnout if you experience any of these problems:

- Hopelessness
- Overwhelming anxiety
- Sleep problems
- Difficulty coping with everyday tasks

Consider making more time for yourself when possible. PASCON's volunteer services are limited, but please call our offices to see if we can help.

Over any amount of time, caregiving can be physically, mentally and emotionally exhausting. Learn how to HALT if you're feeling caregiver burnout.

5) Find Opportunities to Relax

Caregiving is a major responsibility, but it shouldn't completely overtake your life. Use spare moments to listen to your favorite music, read, or work on a hobby.

Here are some other options:

- Try mindfulness exercises such as meditation or creative visualization.
- Engage in prayer.
- Spend some time outside by taking a walk around the block (stay at least 6 feet away from others) or working in the garden.

6) Stay Connected

Social distancing doesn't have to mean total isolation:

- Reach out to friends and family regularly for casual chats and wellness checks.
- Consider spending time together virtually, whether by watching a movie over a video chat session or playing games together online.
- If you live with loved ones, find ways to help and support each other.

During these uncertain times, caregivers remain a valuable constant for patients and the teams that care for them. Please stay healthy and safe as you perform your crucial role, and PASCON will support you in every way we can.



Don't Stress About Gifts This Year!

Make a donation for everyone on your list! We'll send them a card to let them know what a generous person you are. And you'll get a tax receipt. Two Birds.



If your Secret Santa really wants something on their wishlist, shop through AmazonSmile to raise \$\$ for PASCON at the same time.

You could also spare your friends and family the stress of finding you that perfect gift by asking for donations to PASCON. It's easy to set up a fundraiser on Facebook or JustGiving. We can help.



Got Red Tickets? We'll take them off your hands.



Home care for people with suspected or confirmed COVID-19

Take care of yourself and your family

For caregivers

Ensure the ill person rests, drinks plenty of fluids and eats nutritious food.



Wear a medical mask when in the same room with an ill person. Do not touch the mask or face during use and discard it afterward.



Frequently clean hands with soap and water or alcohol-based rub, especially:

- after any type of contact with the ill person or their surroundings
- before, during and after preparing food
- before eating
- after using the toilet



Use dedicated dishes, cups, eating utensils, towels and bedlinens for the ill person. Wash dishes, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedlinens used by the ill person with soap and water.



Identify frequently touched surfaces by the ill person and clean and disinfect them daily.



Call your health care facility immediately if the ill person worsens or experiences difficulty breathing.



Please consider donating to PASCON this year. Every dollar makes a difference as we work to provide **FREE** programs and services to all those who need us.



PALLIATIVE & SUPPORTIVE
CARE OF NANTUCKET
FOUNDATION

A Partnership in Caring



NANTUCKET
COTTAGE HOSPITAL

Funded by the Palliative & Supportive Care of Nantucket Foundation, the palliative & supportive care program is operated as a department of the Nantucket Cottage Hospital, which is an affiliate of Massachusetts General Hospital, and a member of Partners HealthCare, Inc. Palliative and Supportive Care is a specialized health care program, dedicated to providing excellent physical, psychological, social, and spiritual care to persons with life-threatening illness and their families.