



Willamette
Vital Health

Previously known as Willamette Valley Hospice

journeys

winter 2024

Looking Back at 2023 and Moving Forward in 2024

Recapping the successes and challenges and sharing exciting new services and programs has become a tradition for the Winter Journeys newsletter. It also feels important to express our gratitude for the support we received from our first-time donors and those who give year after year.

Advancing DEIB: 2023 Achievements and a Vision for 2024

Our community has experienced remarkable diversity growth over the last decade. In 2023, Willamette Vital Health took significant steps to enhance end-of-life care and support for grieving individuals in underrepresented communities. Nearly a year ago, our board of directors committed to a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) statement, fueled by your support.

Our leadership, alongside dedicated teams, diligently integrated DEI principles into hospice and supportive care services. Initiatives included providing community grief support in Spanish, engaging additional interpretation services, and presenting programs in English, Spanish, and American Sign Language.

As we look to 2024, internal measures will be implemented to enhance inclusivity, foster belonging, and introduce new services, ensuring our commitment to meeting the evolving needs of our diverse community.

Harmony in Transition: Updates on Music Therapy Staff and Welcoming New Faces

In 2023, there were a series of staff changes in our Music Therapy team due to family relocation and changing family needs. We were sorry to see music therapists Ivan and Jillian depart from WVH. While searching for qualified replacements, Jessica

Patton stretched herself to meet the clinical needs of patients and their families. Due to strong support from our Music Patron Circle members and one-time donors, we were able to hire a full-time, board-certified music therapist Tonya Fisher. With more than six years of professional experience, Tonya quickly jumped in providing

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Veteran patient receives certificate.



Experience.
AT YOUR SIDE.

Moving Forward in 2024

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services to those with a clinical need! Upon completion of the orientation process, Tonya went right to work seeing patients and families independently. Last month Gwen Wolfenbarger joined our Music Therapy team in a part-time capacity. With the addition of Gwen, this team is now fully staffed.

Filling the open positions was challenging. We require our music therapists to complete the necessary clinical educational requirements and to become licensed Oregon board certified music therapists (BC-MT). Our therapists utilize treatment modalities that ease emotional and physical pain for our dementia patients, collaborate with families in the creation of legacy projects with their loved ones, and work with pediatric patients and their families – especially patients with young children. Since music therapy is not reimbursed, we rely on our donors on a monthly and yearly basis to support this program. To learn more about our music therapy services and how to support their work, go to our website: wvh.org/music-therapy.

Enabling Harmony by Keeping Hospice Patients and Their Pets Together

Willamette Vital Health supports the needs of hospice patients as well as their families. Pets are a beloved member of that unit and are often one of the most important sources of comfort to a patient. WVH goes to great lengths to keep patients and pets together through various pet programs, including our robust Pet Peace of Mind® program.

When someone is experiencing a life-limiting illness, their pets may not receive the care they need to flourish. Vaccinations, routine veterinary visits, and groomings are often put off. When a patient becomes bedbound, pets may miss walks with their companions, have full litter boxes, and experience food insecurity.

In 2023, our devoted pet volunteers provided 248 hours of support to 27 pets. This includes walks, boarding, litter cleanings, and deliveries. Services provided included: 38 veterinary care visits, 39 groomings, including for one pony and two goats; eight received food and supplies, and seven were spayed/neutered. Last year we rehomed four dogs and 11 cats. Check out our Facebook page for occasional posts regarding pets that need new homes.

More than \$14,500 was spent directly for pet needs, thanks to faithful support of pet lovers in our community. Spending on pet needs increased 43% last year. Volunteer Coordinator Shelley Wagener says, “We look forward to sharing our services even further in 2024 so that WVH Hospice and Supportive Care patients are assured that their pet friends will get the care they need to thrive, alongside the expert support Willamette Vital Health provides to the patients themselves and their human family members.”



Grief Care Reaches Out in 2023

The Willamette Vital Health Grief Care Team experienced incredible change in 2023, and with it tremendous accomplishments.

We welcomed three new staff members: Grief Care Coordinator Kate Falby, along with the support of volunteers, ensured the smooth operation of the Grief Care office. Bilingual Grief Counselor Luz Rivera began providing individual grief counseling in English and Spanish early last year. Christopher Smith, LMSW, CSWA, who joined us in July just in time to help with Camp Mighty Oaks, also instigated after-work counseling sessions and a drop-in group.

In 2023, WVH provided 559 individual counseling sessions, marking a remarkable 374% increase from the previous year!

This year The Dougy Center, an internationally known grief resource for children, will bring a three-day training to Salem for staff and volunteers that will allow us to strengthen our offerings for children's grief needs.

We are currently engaged in a community needs assessment to determine gaps in services, the creation of a plan of action to address gaps, and the development of collaborations with community partners.

As we move forward into 2024, we remain dedicated to enhancing and expanding our services, ensuring that compassionate care continues to be at the heart of everything we do.



Leave a Lasting Legacy with Willamette Vital Health

Join us as a charter member of Willamette Vital Health's Legacy Society and become a beacon of hope for the future. By including Willamette Vital Health in your estate plans, you become part of a special group of supporters dedicated to shaping the well-being of our community for generations to come.

As a charter member, you'll be among the first to be recognized and celebrated for your commitment to our mission. Enjoy exclusive updates on our programs, invitations to special events, and the honor of being listed prominently as a contributor to the legacy of care on our website.

Your generosity echoes beyond a lifetime, leaving an enduring impact on the lives of those we serve. Consider your legacy and the mark you want to leave on the world. After ensuring your family's needs are met, think about the organizations that have touched your life, and make a lasting gift that transcends time.

Whether it's a gift now or a planned gift after your death, every contribution makes a meaningful difference. Contact our Community Development Manager, Theresa Hart, at donorservices@wvh.org, for more information about the types of cash and non-cash gifts you can contribute. Contact your financial advisor with questions and to put your plans into action.

To guide you through the estate planning process, download our free Estate Planning guide at wvhlegacy.org. By joining the Legacy Society as a charter member, you not only secure a meaningful legacy for yourself but also inspire others to follow suit.

A gift of any size is appreciated. For those who make a gift of \$10,000 or more, your contribution is added to our Dave Moss Endowment Fund, ensuring the future of our non-reimbursable services like music therapy, grief care, pet programs, and community education. Your support directly impacts these vital services that touch the lives of our community members.

Together, let's create a legacy of compassion, care, and support for the future. Join the Legacy Society and become a part of a community dedicated to making a lasting difference.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Some events require registration. For more information on any events or to register, visit wvh.org/news-events or call 503.588.3600.

6-Week Grief Support Group for Adults

Tuesdays, Feb 27 – April 2
1:00 – 2:30 pm

7-Week Grief Support Group for Families with Children 6+

Tuesdays, April 2 – May 14
6:00 – 7:30 pm

Weekly Drop-In Grief Discussion Groups

Wednesdays, 5:30 – 6:30 pm
Thursdays, 1:00 – 2:00 pm

Drop-In Creatively Expressing Grief Group

2nd Wednesday of the month 1:00 – 2:00 pm
Explore your grief through a variety of creative activities when words alone seem inadequate.

SAVE THE DATE: 12th Annual Walk-n-Wag

Saturday, June 1, 1:00 – 4:00 pm
Minto Brown Island Park

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

Board of Directors

Andrew Bone, *Chair and President of the Board*
John Moody, *Co-chair and Vice President*
Betty O'Brien, *Treasurer*

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Chad Campbell
Michael Cherry
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Naomi Hormann
Wayne Kinkade
Camille Mercier
Miriam Scharer
Carolyn Van Otten

Editor

Theresa Hart

Journeys is a publication of Willamette Vital Health, a non-profit agency, serving our friends and neighbors in the communities of Marion, Polk, Yamhill, Benton, Linn and parts of Clackamas Counties.

Our Mission

We are a community owned, not-for-profit organization providing innovative, personalized, and compassionate care to patients and families facing serious illness.

We care about your gift. A thank you letter or email will be sent within 48 hours of receipt of your donation.

To make a gift today, scan the QR code or use the enclosed remittance envelope.

To volunteer, contact Volunteer Services at 503.588.3600 or go to wvh.org/volunteer.



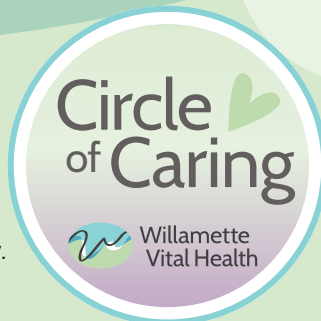
wvh.org/donate

Monthly Giving

Join our monthly giving programs for \$5 or more per month. You can help hospice patients and their families and receive benefits.

Visit wvh.org/donate and click the circle you'd like to join.

You can also become a member by completing the form on the enclosed envelope and mail it today.



Shape the Future: Become a Legacy Society Member!

Join our Legacy Society and leave a lasting impact on our community. Your commitment to include Willamette Vital Health in your estate plans makes you a valued charter member. With your membership, you will enjoy exclusive updates, event invitations, and recognition on our website. Contact Theresa Hart at donorservices@wvh.org to join today and create a legacy of compassionate care. Inspire others to follow suit and ensure the future of vital services for our community. Make a lasting difference with the Willamette Vital Health Legacy Society!



PPOM Rehomes Veteran's Pets

By Shelley Wagener, WVH Volunteer and PPOM Coordinator

This summer Willamette Vital Health provided hospice care for a veteran living alone in a mobile home park in Salem. The main thing that worried him was what would happen to the three cats that brought him so much enjoyment in his last years. All had come to him as strays, and only one would go inside the house. The other two were friendly and had been coming to his porch to feed for several years, but preferred to stay outdoors, and would run away if he or his mother attempted to pick them up.

He died after only a week in hospice care, so the Pet Peace of Mind program sprang into action. After many visits to his mobile home park collaborating with his mom, a series of neighbors, and local cat organizations, we were able to fulfill his wishes!



Marnie (gray) with new sibling

- The indoor gray kitty was adopted by a family who had another cat, after being boarded at Penelope Pawprints Cat Boarding, and getting a veterinary exam and shots.
- The PPOM coordinator was able to trap first the black & white cat, and then the tortoise-colored tabby, and transported them to a volunteer foster with the non-profit group Meow Village.
- Meow Village found a home for them together on a farm in Silverton, through their barn cat program. They lived in a large "Acclimation Crate" for a month to get used to their new setting, and now are free to wander, and be cared for by the landowners.

Oftentimes, these supportive services allow a hospice patient to keep their pet in their home with them throughout their illness and maintain the hospice patient's quality of life. If after a patient's death, the family is unable to take the pet, WVH works with no-kill shelters and others to rehome them.

Wishlist

WVH is in need of some specific supplies to help Veteran patients, Grief Care clients, and those at the Tokarski Home. You can help by purchasing one of these items or any item on our Amazon Wishlist, found at <https://bit.ly/WVHwishlist>. It's easy and the items come directly to us after you order. Be sure to include your name in the note, so we can thank you! Amazon doesn't automatically tell us who the gift is from.



Hanycon 50PCS Artificial Orchid Flower Heads, Fake Orchid Flowers Head Silk Bulk Flower for Craft Bridal Hair Clips Dress Party Supply Table Decorative (Mix Colour)
★★★★☆ ~ 2
\$8.99 **prime** FREE One-Day
Save 5% with coupon
Compare with similar items



Aleene's Turbo Tacky Glue, 4 FL OZ - 3 Pack, Multi
★★★★☆ ~ 1,799
Business Price ~ \$11.46
prime FREE One-Day
Size : 4 FL OZ - 3 Pack | Style : Turbo Tacky Glue
Compare with similar items



Neon Metallic Glue with Glitter Bottles for Arts and Crafts (20 ml, 12 Pack)
★★★★☆ ~ 283
\$13.99 **prime** FREE One-Day
Compare with similar items



Crayola Broad Line Markers (12 Count), Washable Markers for Kids, Assorted, Great for Classrooms & School Supplies, Ages 3+
★★★★☆ ~ 15,614
\$6.69 **prime** Today 2 PM - 6 PM
Price dropped by \$0.01 (was \$6.70 when added to List)
Pattern : Single
Compare with similar items