



Family's touching story highlights history, compassion of hospice care

This is the story of Michelle (Dowie) Friedly, a Cedar Valley Hospice patient, as told by her caregiver and mother, Pam Dowie.

Our story began on an ordinary winter day in January 2001. I was babysitting my new grandson, Tate, while my daughter (his mother Michelle) headed off to her doctor's appointment. He was 5 months old, and nursing was not going well. Michelle had been treated for an infected milk duct gland that was getting worse.

From that doctor's appointment on, there were no more ordinary days. Michelle was immediately sent to a surgeon and her breast was biopsied. We waited on pins and needles, and then, the dreaded diagnosis came. She had stage 4 metastatic breast cancer, and her prognosis was one year. She was 29 years old.

For over three years, she courageously battled the disease, receiving treatment. Eventually, the cancer spread to her brain. I remember Sept. 11 for a different reason than most people. Michelle had her first brain surgery that day. When Michelle developed bone cancer, we knew it was time to call Cedar Valley Hospice. It was her time to take control, and she did. Looking back, it could have been a sad time, but it wasn't. Our days were no longer filled with endless doctor appointments, tests and chemotherapy sessions. Instead, they became moments of love and connection.



Michelle (Dowie) Friedly was only 32 years old when she died at the Hospice Home in Waterloo.

Honoring Loved Ones

Stories were a predominant theme at this year's Release & Remember event. Thirteen storyboards highlighted people's loved ones there. Six of those families chose a person to open a butterfly box in their honor. Board members and four members of the audience (chosen through a raffle) rounded out the rest of the box openers. From left: Board member Rick Morris, family member Nancy Jensen, board member Vicki Parsons and family members Wendi and Lyla Goetsch, Roxanne Kolder, Pam Dowie, Chris Schneider and Ruby Burgart and Lynette and Emery Koch.

Inside
Tree of Love
ornaments,
pages 4-5



Continued on page 8



**CEDAR VALLEY
HOSPICE®**

Making Each Moment Matter.

Our Mission

To enrich lives with knowledge, respect and compassionate care.

Our Locations

Central Office

900 Tower Park Dr.
Waterloo, IA 50701
319.272.2002, 800.626.2360

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 2880, Waterloo, IA 50704

Grundy Center Office

310 East G Ave.
Grundy Center, IA 50638
319.824.3868

Independence Office

801 First St. East
Independence, IA 50644
319.334.6960

Waverly Office

209 20th St. NW
Waverly, IA 50677
319.352.1274

Hospice Home

2001 Kimball Ave.
Waterloo, IA 50702
319.272.1771

Our Board of Directors

Rick Morris, President
Bryan Earnest, Vice President
Craig Coffman, Treasurer
Deb Burger, Secretary
Deb Niermann, Friends Representative

Tammy Acuff	Matthew Sojka
Carolyn Ayers	Tracie Spencer
Bryan Burton	Candy Steele
Vicki Parsons	Michelle Steffe
Chris Schildroth	Lisa Wall

Message from Michaela

Executive Director Michaela Vandersee

Crisp mornings and the color in the leaves reminds us that we are in the final quarter of this year.

At Cedar Valley Hospice, we continue to work hard to ensure that we are always delivering the highest quality of care to our patients, families and clients. It's always nice to be recognized for our efforts, again being voted Best of the Best and Employer of Choice by our community through the Waterloo-Cedar Falls Courier. We've also earned CAHPS honors for the second year in a row, which is a prestigious annual review that recognizes agencies that continuously provide quality care as measured by the patients' experiences and those of their caregivers.

Recently, I spent some time in Washington, D.C. attending a conference held by the National Partnership for Healthcare and Hospice Innovation (NPHI). I am so proud to represent Cedar Valley Hospice at these meetings. During the conference I was able to connect with non-profit hospice CEOs from across the country to discuss best practices. We also spent time learning about program integrity efforts and the future of hospice payment reform from CMS policy advisors, legislative directors and elected officials. Cedar Valley Hospice is committed to ensuring that we are at the forefront of changes happening in the hospice industry.

Thank you for choosing Cedar Valley Hospice to care for your family, friends and neighbors.



Executive Director Michaela Vandersee attended a conference in Washington, D.C. recently, where she met National Partnership for Healthcare and Hospice Innovation CEO Tom Koutsoumpas and President Carole Fisher.

Michaela Vandersee

SPOTLIGHT ON 45TH

• *Looking Back* •

ANNIVERSARY

Executive Director Michaela Vandersee and former Volunteer Coordinator Paula Steimel welcome people to an event in the early 2000s. At the time Michaela was the director of finance.



Celebrating #CareHeroes

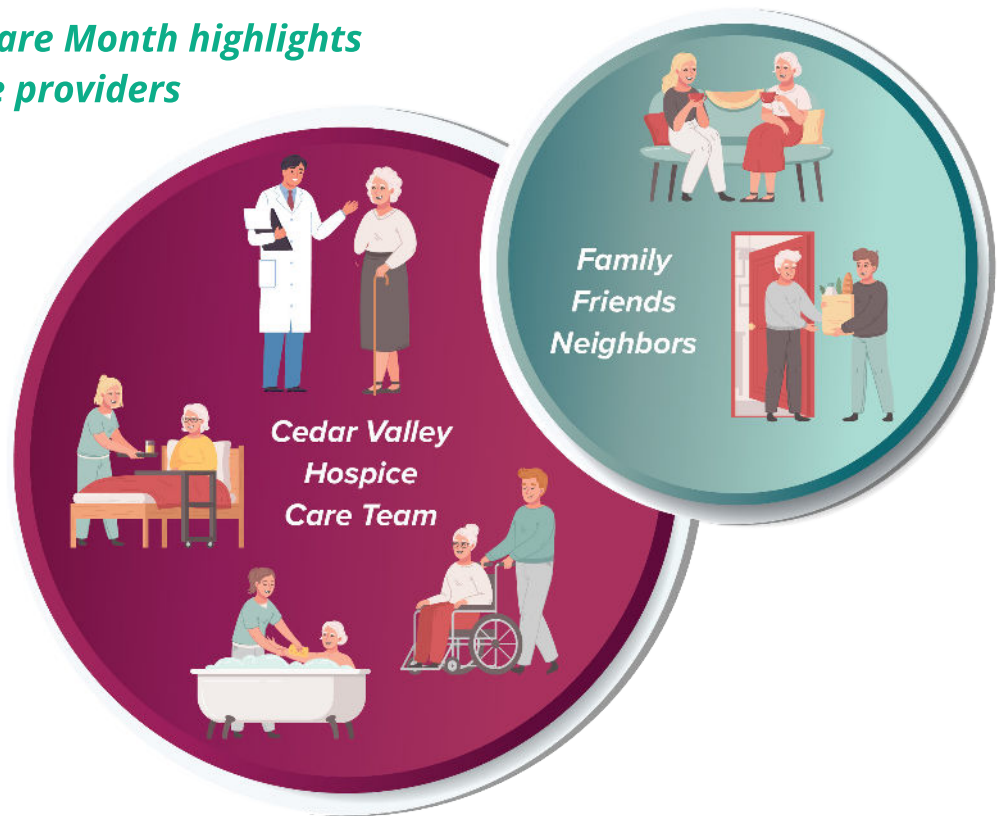
National Hospice & Palliative Care Month highlights the work of caregivers and care providers

When facing a serious illness, it's important to have a support system.

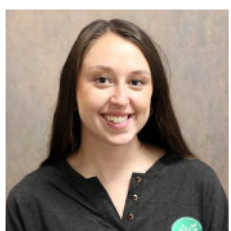
At Cedar Valley Hospice, our team of experts work alongside your loved ones and caregivers to ensure the highest quality, compassionate care.

Together, we work to help patients and families **Make Each Moment Matter!**

Throughout November, we encourage you to engage on social media by celebrating the enormous contributions of our staff, volunteers and family caregivers.



Left: John and Judy Focht used to love going for drives. After moving into a long-term care facility, the two began to miss their adventures in Cedar Falls, as Judy uses a wheelchair. Our staff worked to line up a "day date" experience for the two at Wilbo Burgers, Brats and Beers in Cedar Falls. The two enjoyed a delicious lunch with their favorite music playing in the background. "I'm so grateful for this day and to be able to go on a date. Cedar Valley Hospice has been so helpful for both of us," said John.



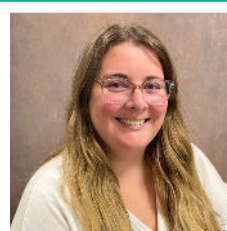
ALLISON CAPPER
Grief Counselor
All Locations



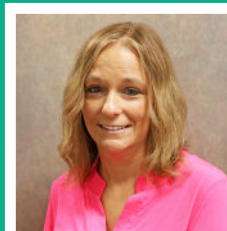
LILLY USHER
Hospice Nurse - RN
All Locations



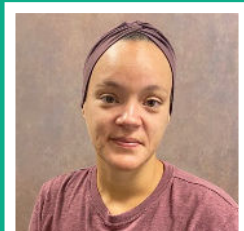
TARYN WILLBEE
Hospice Nurse - RN
All Locations



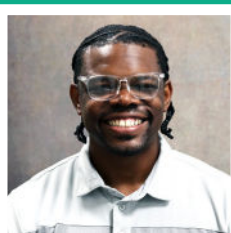
MELISSA ROTZ
CASS Case Manager
Waterloo



ANGIE BRINCKS
Hospice Nurse - RN
Hospice Home



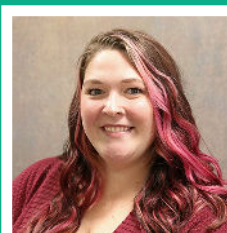
ALYSSA KINNEY
Hospice Aide
Waterloo



TIM HARDIN
Spiritual Care
Counselor
All Locations



AMY DETERDING
Hospice Nurse - LPN
Waverly



KAYLA BOLEYN
Hospice Nurse - RN
Hospice Home

Welcome to the team!

We would like to introduce the newest members of our team. We are continuing to welcome the best staff to help us **Make Each Moment Matter** for our patients and families.

VIEW JOB OPENINGS
cvhospice.org/careers



Glittered Crystal Pinecone
Giving Level:
\$35



Painted Cardinal Disc
Giving Level:
\$75

Tree of Love tradition honors loved ones with ornaments and tribute wall

Cedar Valley Hospice is proud to announce the launch of our 2024 Tree of Love campaign — a cherished tradition that offers a meaningful way to honor and remember loved ones.

This year, we are excited to introduce beautiful new ornaments available at various giving levels, along with a special opportunity to celebrate those who have touched our lives in an unique and heartfelt way.

With every donation, you will have the opportunity to honor your loved one by adding their name, a cherished photo and a short story to our tribute wall. This online memorial will be a space to share with families and friends and celebrate the lives of those who have made a lasting impact.

This holiday season, we invite you to be part of the Tree of Love tradition by giving a gift and creating a lasting tribute to those we hold dear while supporting the care Cedar Valley Hospice provides to families in the 15 counties we serve.

To learn more, visit cvhospice.org or call 319.272-2002.

Tree of Love Tribute Wall

With the purchase of an ornament, you are able to create a tribute for your loved one on our website by sharing their name, a photo and a memory. Once approved, you will be able to SHARE it on social media.



Jeweled Glass Snowflake
Giving Level: \$200

*Sponsored by
Facets by Susong - Waterloo*



Lennox Porcelain Angel Bell
Giving Level: \$500

*Sponsored by
Tenenbaum's Jewelry - Waverly*



Reed & Barton Silver Star
Giving Level: \$1000+

*Sponsored by
Roth Jewelers - Waterloo*

Yes, I wish to support the 2024 Tree of Love fundraiser!

Your gift to Cedar Valley Hospice, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, is **100% tax deductible** to the extent allowed by IRS regulations. Please use the envelope provided for your donation.

Visit cvhospice.org for easy access to order an ornament & upload your tribute!



My gift is in memory of (deceased): _____

My gift is in honor of (living): _____

My name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email (required for Tribute) _____ Phone _____

Tribute Wall

We encourage you to purchase your ornament(s) through our secure website. If you choose to mail in this form, we will send you an email to gather information for the Tribute Wall.

Levels of Giving

☐ Yes, please mail my ornament(s). (add \$6 S/H)

☐ I will pick up my ornament. Circle office location: **Waterloo** Waverly Independence Grundy Center

☐ No, I do not need an ornament, but please accept my donation.

☐ \$35: Glittered Crystal Pinecone ☐ \$75: Painted Cardinal Disc ☐ \$200: Jeweled Glass Snowflake

☐ \$500: Lennox Porcelain Angel Bell ☐ \$1000+: Reed & Barton 2024 Silver Star

Charge my Visa/Mastercard/Am Ex. Amt: \$ _____ (include an extra \$5 per ornament to have it/them shipped to you)

Card number _____

Exp. Date _____ CVV/CVC Code _____ Signature _____

OR Make check payable to: **Cedar Valley Hospice**

Please mail your gift and this form to: **Cedar Valley Hospice • PO Box 2880 • Waterloo, IA 50704**

(Feel free to use this form and the envelope provided for your gift.)

By providing your email, you are consenting to receive marketing emails from: Cedar Valley Hospice, 900 Tower Park Drive, Waterloo, IA 50701, US.

Stories bond families at Release & Remember

Every family has a unique story to tell, especially at our annual Release & Remember event. Held on Sunday, Sept. 8, people gathered to honor their loved ones and celebrate their lives. The event brought together families, staff and supporters for a meaningful afternoon of music, fun and connection.



Live music by Flatland Ridge, sponsored by Lost Island Parks and the entire Bertch Family, entertained guests as they found their loved ones' name(s) at the dedication station or taking a selfie at the photobooth. In addition, we proudly showcased 13 storyboards detailing individual's stories of Cedar Valley Hospice's impact over the past 45 years. The highlight of the day was the release of 1,000 butterflies.

A heartfelt thank you to all who helped make Cedar Valley Hospice's Release & Remember possible, including our incredible volunteers, donors and community partners. We are also deeply grateful to everyone who joined us for our event this year. Your presence, participation and support made this special day truly memorable.



Families came dressed in the newly designed event T-shirts, as well as those from last year, to enjoy the day's festivities and see the butterflies take flight.

Left: Cedar Valley Hospice Nurse Angie Mohn wells up with tears as a butterfly lands on her hand, signifying the bond she had with coworker Andrea Burgart, who died this last year at the age of 37.





Sponsor Kathryn Thede, second from right, brought her family to the event to honor her friend, Sidney, who died in 2019.



Michaela Vandersee smiles at one another as they talk about their loved one's hand.

Left: Cedar Valley Hospice Executive Director Michaela Vandersee chats with Craig Goetsch as they look at the storyboard honoring his beloved wife, Judy.

Right: Kids enjoy Black Hawk County Sheriff Deputy Mary, the K-9 therapy dog, who attended with her handler, Karla.



Release & Remember



The Link family gathered together, as they do every year at Release & Remember, to honor their loved one Karen Link. This year, her story was one of 13 showcased on storyboards around the venue. To read Karen's story and others featured that day, scan the QR code at right.



KID'S KORNER



Katie Koala visits with guests and hands out hugs in the kid's activities area, a popular place for fun.



Caregivers help *Make Each Moment Matter*



"I'll never forget it, we were getting ready to eat cake for Michelle's 30th birthday survivor party, and I asked her, 'Where do you want me to serve it?' And she said, 'I don't want to serve it, I want you to throw it at me.' I thought, 'What?' So I did anyway, and the whole family got involved – it was perfect!"

– Pam Dowie, Michelle's mother

Continued from page 1

Michelle cherished and adored her hospice caregivers and eagerly anticipated their visits. The staff quickly became part of our family. At first, I felt a bit of jealousy, realizing I wasn't needed in the same way. But as hospice took over her medical care, I found that my role was transformed in a beautiful way. I was able to simply be her mother, grandmother to her boys, her friend and her support – exactly what she needed me to be. I was there for the moments that truly mattered.

Her aide really loved Michelle and provided her companionship and almost anything Michelle wanted – from manicures and foot rubs to plenty of Diet Coke or her favorite foods. To see her cared for in that loving way by a total stranger meant so much to all of us who loved Michelle.

During her battle, she was taken to the Cedar Valley Hospice Home to manage her pain and symptoms. We appreciated the comforts provided to us and especially Michelle's two sons. The home was a calm and peaceful place; we all had our space and place to share in the journey with her.

As the cancer progressed, breathing became extremely difficult. One episode led to an emergency room visit, and Michelle was severely agitated. She kept requesting to go "home" as she didn't like the cold, sterile hospital room. When we expressed that wasn't possible due to her care needs, she gently corrected us saying, "Not home... the Hospice Home."

We had all been with her from the start, so it was natural that we would all be with her at the end. For two days, people were everywhere – on couches, chairs and sleeping on the floor. The staff was so sweet and talked to us, cried with us, and explained what was going on. Even though it was awful, it felt peaceful and right. We embraced each other and supported one another. Having everyone there gave us the strength to see her through the last days.



Pam opened a butterfly box at Release & Remember. Before the release, she wiped away tears as Michelle's story was told as part of the day's program. Then she was able to celebrate her life as she helped the butterflies take flight. "It was just wonderful," she said.

I can't imagine having gone through this experience without Cedar Valley Hospice. They took away some of the fear and anxiety, comforting us through the unknown. They truly understand the dying and grieving process and turn it into a beautiful memory.



Michelle's family attended Release & Remember this year to watch Pam open a box of butterflies in honor of her daughter, whose story was highlighted in the day's program. Michelle's sons, Tate and Tanner, especially enjoyed the day.



"At Cedar Valley Hospice, our goal is to make sure every day is as good as possible for the patient. Families are often amazed at what we can do for them.

I will miss patient contact the most, as we give a lot of ourselves to them and their families, but they also give us a lot in return."

– Michael Deters, MD

Moments that Matter

*With Michael Deters, Hospice Physician and former Medical Director, started Sept. 1, 2008
Retired end of September 2024.*

Describe your position with Cedar Valley Hospice.

I am a team physician for Cedar Valley Hospice. I am available to fill positions when the other team physicians are absent or ill and help with the teams, on-call and at the Hospice Home – where I work one weekend a month.

I started at Cedar Valley Hospice 16 years ago as the first staff medical director because it was required by Medicare to have one on staff versus volunteer team physicians. It was part-time initially, but turned into full-time. At that time, we had no computerized charting and everything was on paper, including paper charts. I was initially on call 24/7 for any problems that needed help solving from a physician's standpoint.

How does your position support our mission?

I have had two goals in mind as I worked for Cedar Valley Hospice. I always wanted to help provide the best care possible to patients, caregivers and families. As part of the team, I wanted to provide the best knowledge I could to help them handle death and dying in a dignified way. We want to demonstrate how much we care for them and would do all that was necessary to give them the best days that they had left.

What are the most enjoyable aspects of your job?

There are so many rewards in this position. I love working with patients and families to help them during such a difficult time. In turn, we also learn so much about life and values from them. I also enjoy being a part of the team of specialists who all share a common goal to serve the patient and family. I am no more important than any other member of my team.

What makes Cedar Valley Hospice stand out above other hospice providers in the area?

Cedar Valley Hospice stands out as the premier organization in their league. I can say this honestly since I referred patients to them when I was in practice. I have also experienced firsthand the compassionate care Cedar Valley Hospice provides. I was a patient many years ago, but was able to recover. The entire team demonstrates concern while delivering the best quality of care. In my career, I've been blessed to have worked with so many great coworkers as well as families.

Share a story that has impacted you.

Every family with whom I work with leaves an impact on me, but I do remember one patient specifically. She had a deep faith and was so well adjusted to her terminal illness, which is uncommon. She had so much concern for her loved ones over herself. She told me, 'I am the lucky one, I am not the one left behind.' It was very inspiring.



For our Patriotic Nights event in 2016, Dr. Deters showed in up as Uncle Sam with his wingman, his son-in-law, who dressed up as a bald eagle.



Family Ties

Seiberts give back for care they received

Note: This is Part 3 of 3 of the series featuring volunteer teams who make a difference.

The Seibert Family, including Dr. Cecil Seibert, Beth Seibert and Bill and Marty Seibert, have all been served by Cedar Valley Hospice. Bill and Marty are also an important part of Cedar Valley Hospice history, having volunteered for over a decade.



Dr. Cecil Seibert



Beth Seibert



Marty Seibert



Bill Seibert receives a Distinguished Service Award from Cedar Valley Hospice for his commitment and dedication as a volunteer on our Governing Board. His wife, Marty, above left, also served on our Governing Board.

"I am honored to have served on the Cedar Valley Hospice Board of Directors for over 14 years. From a distance, Marty and I have always admired how Cedar Valley Hospice helped families in need. Having experienced Hospice services ourselves, we now fully understand the incredible difference hospice makes in lives every single day."

– Bill Seibert, longtime volunteer

"For 40 years, the Cedar Valley Hospice angels have been there for us in our time of need. My first memory was in 1984 when my grandfather, Dr. Cecil Seibert, was suffering from leukemia and our parish priest suggested Cedar Valley Hospice come to help. My father, Bill, struggled with the idea, but as soon as the hospice volunteers arrived, my father was instantly at peace, as was Cecil. After grandpa's death, my father began volunteering in various capacities for Cedar Valley Hospice. He was instrumental in fundraising for the Hospice Home. I knew that their mission was extremely near to my father's heart, and he continued to volunteer, not knowing how they would help us again many times in the future.

"In the spring of 2000, my sister Beth was also diagnosed with leukemia, and it rocked our family. Beth fought harder than any

At the end, she went to the Hospice Home, and as soon as the loving nurses put her in the room, I realized why my dad was so passionate about it getting built.

"My father and hero, Bill Seibert, became ill in the summer of 2010. When we walked into his room at the Hospice Home, he looked like he was completely restored to health by the Cedar Valley Hospice nurses! He was washed, fed a chocolate milkshake (his favorite!) and was resting comfortably under a beautiful quilt handmade by a volunteer.

"Mom [Marty] fell ill in the summer of 2023 and fought as long as she could. It was such beautiful moment to see mom's reaction when I told her that she was in the same room that Beth was when she passed at the Hospice Home... an incredible sense of peace enveloped her."

– Steve Seibert, grandson, son and brother

BECOME A SPONSOR!

A 2025 sponsorship helps support patients & families

As we look ahead to 2025, Cedar Valley Hospice invites YOU to join us in making a difference through our sponsorship opportunities. Whether you're a business or an individual, your support helps ensure we continue providing the highest quality, compassionate care to patients and their families. We offer a range of sponsorship levels, each with its own unique benefits (*see below*). No matter the size or type of contribution, your sponsorship has a direct impact on the care we provide to our patients and families.

Interested in learning more? Contact Suzanne Benda at 319.272.2002 or sbenda@cvhospice.org.

TYPES OF SPONSORSHIPS

ANNUAL:

- Diamond: \$10,000
- Premier: \$6,000
- Champion: \$3,000
- Hero: \$1,500
- Leader: \$500



OTHER:

- In-Kind: Donate items or a service. *i.e. printing, advertising, food or beverage.*
- Specific Event: Dollars go toward venue, food or entertainment. *Events to sponsor include: Grief Camp, Celebration of Life, Nights, Release & Remember & Tree of Love (ornaments).*



2024 ANNUAL SPONSORS

Thank you to this year's sponsors.

DIAMOND

Cedar Valley Medical Specialists
KWWL
POS Professional Office Services, Inc.

CHAMPION

Accel Wealth Management
Bergen Plumbing, Heating & Cooling
Bill Colwell Ford • Farmers State Bank
Hagarty-Waychoff-Grarup Funeral Service
Hilton Garden Inn • David & Gail Huser
Grant & Nancy Jensen • Locke Funeral Services
Casey & Laurie McLaughlin • Burk & Julie Miehle
Scheels • Kathryn Thede • The VGM Group

HERO

Action Garage Builders
Cardinal Construction
Craft-Cochran Screenprint & Embroidery
C.R. Clark & Co.
Creative Planning
Financial Resource Advisors (FRA) – Mike Hulme
Gordon Flesch Co.
Huff Contracting
Kaiser Corson Funeral Home
Karen's Print-Rite
Magee Construction
PDCM Insurance
Print Innovations
Transport Permits
UAW #838

LEADER

Cedar Falls Community Credit Union
Edward Jones – Garrett Akins
First Bank Waverly
Geater Machining & Mfg.
GNB Bank
NuCara Home Medical & Pharmacy
In Memory of Patricia Eystone
Lincoln Savings Bank
Peoples Savings Bank
Ryan Pharmacy – Independence
The Sinnott Agency
Tyson Fresh Meats

GRIEF CAMP SERVES YOUTH, GIVES THANKS TO VOLUNTEERS, STAFF & SPONSOR



Event Sponsor:
Cedar Valley
Catholic Schools



On July 21, Cedar Valley Hospice held our annual Grief Camp. Nearly 40 youth attended the Olympics-themed day, which included peer sharing and activities designed to help youth better understand their grief.



**CEDAR VALLEY
HOSPICE®**

Making Each Moment Matter.

PO Box 2880
Waterloo, IA 50704-2880

Non-profit
Organization US
Postage Paid
Waterloo, IA
Permit No. 238

2024 Calendar of Events

*Mark your calendars for these upcoming Cedar Valley Hospice happenings.
You can also stay up to date by visiting cvhospice.org or our Facebook page.*

November

National Hospice & Palliative Care Month
National Children & Teens' Grief Awareness Month

*To schedule a presentation for your group,
call Annika Wall at 319.272.2002.*

Thursday, Nov. 7

Funky Zebra Fundraiser

Funky Zebra, Cedar Falls, 2-6 p.m.
Help raise funds for us by shopping for a cause or online.

Thursday, Nov. 14

Strictly Business

Bien VenU, Cedar Falls, 4-7 p.m.
Join us at the Grow Cedar Valley annual business expo.

Tuesday, Nov. 19

Navigating Grief and Loss During the Holidays

Tendrils Rooftop Gardens, Waverly Health Center
and via Google Meet (virtual), 6-7 p.m.

Thursday, Nov. 21

Children's Grief Awareness Day

Wear blue to show your support!

Sunday, Dec. 1

World AIDS Day

*Donate a gift card to help our CASS clients
living with HIV during the holidays.
Call 319.272.2437 for more information.*

Tuesday, Dec. 3

Giving Tuesday

*Help us reach our goal by giving a donation, watch our
progress on our Facebook page throughout the day.*

Thursday, Dec. 12

Christmas Greetings on Main, Waverly, 6-8 p.m.

*Walk down Bremer Avenue and enjoy live window scenes,
an ice carver, Nestlé hot chocolate and plenty of holiday
fun! Look for our window and Katie Koala at the
Edward Jones office.*

*If you no longer wish to receive our newsletter or prefer to receive
our eNewsletter instead, please call 319.272.2002 or email us at hello@cvhospice.org.*

GIVING TUESDAY

December 3, 2024

*Show your charitable spirit and
make a donation to Cedar Valley
Hospice on this special day
recognizing non-profits!*

cvhospice.org