The memories and stories we gather in our lives are the things we hang onto the tightest.

For Steve Kuchta, the stories never dulled and were told to anyone who had a spare minute. Gary, Steve’s oldest son, knows his dad’s stories by heart. To Gary, his dad was always the provider – the strong presence in his life and his role model.

“Dad was always independent,” Gary said. “He even drove until he was over 100.”

After an incident following a family member’s birthday celebration, the family decided Steve, 103 years old, could no longer live on his own. Gary was suddenly a caregiver to his father.

“It was tough on us,” Gary said. “We wanted to do what was best for dad, but I was spending all my time with him. I didn’t see my wife much.”

In June, Steve knew it was time to take that burden off Gary. “I remember him looking at me and asking ‘is it time?’ I just told him ‘yeah dad’ and we cried together,” Gary said.

In July of 2014 Steve moved to an assisted-living facility in Green Bay where he was referred to Unity.

On the day Steve died, Gary opened his Bible to Psalm 146 and read verses 1 and 2. The last sentence read, “I will sing praises to God with my dying breath.” After the reading Gary looked down and his father had stopped breathing.

“We really didn’t know what to expect,” Gary said. “But the Unity nurse came to our home and basically said ‘We’ll take it from here.’ It was truly amazing. Unity was always there to care for him and make him comfortable. They truly took over all the duties we could not handle. I was able to spend more quality time with him instead of just caring for him.”

DONORS AND VOLUNTEERS
Vital to Unity’s Mission
As a not-for-profit 501(c)(3), Unity relies on the generosity of community members and organizations to enrich the lives of our patients and families. Support our mission by joining your friends and neighbors who made monetary gifts or shared their time and talents as volunteers.

$699,238  Value of gifts received from 2,202 generous donors
15,928  Hours of service provided by 299 volunteers
$346,912  Value of services provided by 299 volunteers

WHY YOUR ONGOING SUPPORT IS NEEDED
9,054  Number of lives touched by Unity’s programs
$1.2 million  Value of services provided to under- and uninsured patients
$18.6 million  Total operating expenses
0  Number of people turned away due to their limited ability to pay for services

2014 FINANCIAL CHALLENGES
• A Medicare imposed 2% cut to reimbursement rates began in 2011 and continues to negatively impact Unity’s net revenue. This impact resulted in a $350,000 revenue shortfall.
• Medicare expanded their interpretation of hospice covered services to include medication for all diagnoses and conditions that contribute to a patient’s terminal prognosis. The expanded interpretation resulted in $200,000 of additional medication costs for Unity.
• Referrals to hospice care later in a patient’s disease progression has resulted in a decrease in the average length of hospice service by 3 days per patient, thus reducing annual revenue by $750,000.
HOSPICE CARE QUICK FACTS

1,631 Number of our family, friends and neighbors who received hospice care

175 Number of our family, friends and neighbors cared for at Unity’s Meng Hospice Residence

490 Number of patients who died at home per their wishes

98% Percentage of families who would recommend Unity’s hospice care to others

100% Percentage of families who would recommend the Unity Meng Hospice Residence to others

EXPERT END-OF-LIFE CARE
Benefits All Conditions and Age Groups

Hospice Admissions by Diagnosis

- CANCER: 35.1%
- DEMENTIA/ALZHEIMER’S: 3.7%
- ULCER/INFLAMMATION: 3.8%
- DEBILITY: 4.0%
- LUNG DISEASE: 9.3%
- PARKINSON’S/ALS: 9.7%
- OTHER: 10.6%

*Per CMS guidelines, debility can no longer be used as a primary diagnosis for hospice care.

Age Distribution of Patients Served in 2014

800
700
600
500
400
300
200
100
0

0-24 25-34 35-64 65-74 75-84 85+

Years

PALLIATIVE CARE QUICK FACTS

401 Number of our family, friends and neighbors who received palliative care

$1.1 million Value of palliative care services not reimbursed by private insurance plans or private pay

89% Percentage of families who would recommend Unity’s palliative care to others

GRIEF SUPPORT QUICK FACTS

7,022 Number of individuals who benefited from Unity’s grief support services

$275,000 Value of mandated but unfunded grief support services provided to children and adults

97% Percentage of families who reported their bereavement needs were met

Debi Schultz’s children were her life. She was born to be a mom.

In 2010, when her children were 4, 7 and 10 years old, Debi was diagnosed with breast cancer.

After three years of aggressive treatment, Debi passed away before enrolling in hospice care. Through hospice care the family would have received spiritual and grief support during Debi’s illness and after her death.

Although Debi’s children knew the severity of her illness, they were still in need of support following their extraordinary loss.

Debi’s mother, Barb Fitzpatrick, learned that Unity’s grief programs were open to anyone in the community. Unity’s Generations program, which supports grieving families with children and teens, seemed like a perfect fit.

During monthly meetings, participants share a meal. Parents and guardians then meet to discuss their grief and share experiences while children interact through games and activities.

Barb’s grandchildren were skeptical when asked if they would like to attend a session. Her youngest granddaughter agreed to participate and eventually convinced her older brother to join.

“I think it was the fact that there were other kids going through the same thing,” Fitzpatrick said. “It really helped them know they weren’t alone.”

Although there are still sad moments, Generations has given Debi’s children the tools to cope with their emotions in a positive way.
Dear Friends,

This past year, Unity touched the lives of more than 9,000 individuals through unprecedented levels of comfort, care and compassion. Despite several financial setbacks shared by hospices across the U.S., Unity maintained our commitment to provide care to ALL individuals, regardless of financial means or case complexity. This has been the foundation of Unity since we began more than 35 years ago.

I invite you to review our Annual Report to learn how your generous support through monetary gifts, volunteerism and referrals can continue to meet the growing end-of-life care needs of our friends and neighbors throughout Northeast Wisconsin.

With Gratitude,

Unity Executive Director

UNITY’S SPEAKER BUREAU

By educating residents throughout Northeast Wisconsin on topics regarding the end-of-life journey, Unity seeks to touch the lives of more friends and neighbors earlier in their disease progression ensuring awareness of and access to beneficial comfort care services.

Call today to schedule an expert speaker for your club, organization or employer.

- Advance Care Planning
- Grief in the Workplace
- Self-Care for Family Caregivers
- Children and Grief
- Hospice 101 and Unity’s Continuum of Care
- The Journey of Grief

Unity
Strength at Your Side

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