



## Son Competes to Honor His Mother's Memory

*On June 11, 2013 at 1:02pm my mom, Allison Downs, passed away after a long and courageous battle with ovarian cancer. Minutes before this, I was given the chance to kneel down beside her, hold her hand, and to tell her everything a son could ever tell his mother.*

*I vowed to continue the fight against this disease any way that I could. I also told her about a 24-hour endurance race I would compete in on November 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> of this year. I promised to exhibit the same fight, determination, and strength that she had throughout her bout with this disease. My mom was calm, comfortable, and proud at her time of passing. I knew at that moment that she had in fact beat cancer, and it was only when I told her she could rest and relax, that her fight ended. Without the loving care from the Hospice team at VNA Northwest, I would never have gotten this invaluable opportunity to speak to my mom one last time. More importantly my mom was able to spend her last moments with us comfortable and pain-free. On November 16<sup>th</sup> I will be competing in the World's Toughest Mudder, a 24-hour obstacle race in Englishtown, NJ. This course is meant to push my mental, physical, and emotional state to the limit.*



Allan Darrow with his mother, Allison D. Downs

*I will be running in support of the staff at VNA Northwest, whose time, love, and care was crucial for our family in our time of need. I will also proudly be running in loving memory and honor of my mom and hero, Allison Downs.*

*Please help support my run, the VNA for all that they have and will continue to do for our community, and my beautiful mother, Allison Downs. Thank you so much.*

— Allan Darrow, New Milford

**Your tax-deductible donations to VNA Northwest enable the agency to provide hospice and home care to local patients who are uninsured or underinsured. You may donate online at [www.vnanw.org](http://www.vnanw.org), or use the enclosed envelope.**

### Online Donors-- Please save these dates: 11/12-11/13



Every penny of every dollar raised for VNA Northwest during the Connecticut Community Foundation's 36-hour campaign\* will be amplified by matching funds and prizes donated/secured by Connecticut Community Foundation. CCF will also cover the processing fees.

The Give Local Greater Waterbury & Litchfield Hills campaign is being offered to the community by CCF in celebration of 90 years of giving. This campaign falls during National Philanthropy Week and culminates during the 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration for the Connecticut Community Foundation (Nov. 12 - 13, 2013).

\* 7AM on November 12th through 7PM on November 13th.

On Saturday, November 30th, the public is invited to a community tree lighting ceremony starting at 1:00 p.m. at the agency office, 607 Bantam Road. Ornaments for the Holiday tree, in which personal messages may be placed, can be purchased now for \$10 each. Messages may celebrate the lives of cherished individuals or simply express a holiday greeting. Following the tree lighting, a brief memorial service will be held. For more information, please call Elizabeth Tanner-Horn, LCSW, at 860-567-6000, extension 113. All funds raised from the sale of the ornaments will benefit VNA Northwest's Hospice Program.



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## Patient and His Wife Spent Years Adding to Cherished Raggedy Ann and Andy Collection

Lucien DeLisle of Bantam and his devoted wife Lois shared many interests in their 45 years of marriage. When Lois was turning 40, she mentioned to Lucien that she had wanted a Raggedy Ann or Raggedy Andy doll when she was a child, but had never received one. He saw one for sale at a nearby antiques shop and gave it to her as a birthday gift. That started the couples' prolific collection of all things "Raggedy."

Lucien, 76, received hospice care from VNA Northwest until his passing on October 20th of this year. During a visit last month with Elizabeth Tanner-Horn, LCSW, they recalled the many places that they had purchased trademark pieces at bargain prices for their collection: flea markets, tag sales, and thrift stores, not only in northwest Connecticut, but in locations throughout the United States.

Once an avid motorcyclist, Lucien took many cross-country motorcycle trips with one of his sons. He eventually built a special trailer for his motorcycle so that he could carry more Raggedy Ann and Andy treasures home. Hundreds of the items are displayed in glass-enclosed shelves that span an entire wall of their home.

"We had many finds throughout the years," said Lois. Not only dolls, but "a musical Raggedy Ann, glassware, tea sets, a baby high chair, a watering can...some pieces from the 1940s, in mint condition," she added.

Lucien DeLisle was a U.S. Army veteran and the founder of Tender Car Care in Bantam. Known as someone who was always willing to help those in need, he will be greatly missed in the community.



*Above, Lucien DeLisle with his wife, Lois (R) and Elizabeth Tanner-Horn, LCSW. Right, a section of the shelves that display some of the Raggedy Ann and Andy collection.*



*I...want to express our appreciation to the VNA Northwest Hospice program and to all those who have helped me to care for my husband, Tony. I received wonderful suggestions from them to help with feeding, transferring and other needs [Tony has] when no one is here to help me. Also, having them come has allowed me to go for groceries, have dentist appointments, go to the bank and other things I need to do because I can't leave him alone.*

*Of course the nurses have been such a wonderful help – both to Tony and to me by their expertise and encouragement. The...volunteer program is also a great help. It would be difficult for me to care for Tony without help from hospice. To have to hire help is very costly. I certainly would need to curtail many of the services I am now receiving. I probably could only have someone once a week and would need to do all the rest of his care by myself. I know this would take a toll on my own health. Again, I want to give a big THANK YOU to all."*

*— wife of patient from Morris*

### *What is Hospice Care and How Does it Work?*

VNA Northwest is a nonprofit, Medicare-certified and state-licensed home care and hospice agency. Hospice is a special concept of care designed to provide comfort and support to patients and their families when a life-limiting illness no longer responds to cure-oriented treatments. At VNA Northwest, each hospice case is managed by our team of dedicated professionals, including nurses, physicians, home health aides, therapists, social workers, clergy and trained volunteers.

Patients who have been receiving home care from our agency can retain many of the same caregivers they have already come to know and trust, since many of our home care nurses are also certified in Hospice and Palliative Care. VNA Northwest Nursing Registry can provide additional services to hospice patients and their families.

The hospice team works together to meet the unique needs and wishes of patients as they near the end of life. We are dedicated to ensuring that patients live their final days with dignity, without pain and in a loving environment.

For more information, please call VNA Northwest Hospice Director Joanne White at 860-567-6000.