Accomplishments in 2020

Successfully navigated the COVID-19 pandemic by securing necessary Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), incorporating telehealth visits, creatively serving patients and families through porch and window visits, and caring for staff who performed at extraordinary levels.

Expanded medical leadership and oversight by employing four full-time providers (a Hospice & Palliative Care Board certified physician and three doctorate-prepared nurse practitioners).

Developed and launched a comprehensive home-based Palliative Care program, providing specialized medical care for those living with serious illness.

Launched a rebrand, including a refreshed logo, website, collateral and an “I am Good Sam” outreach campaign.

Increased availability of nurse aide services to seven days a week.

“We are Good Sam.”
Letter from Board Chair Kay Hix

As we closed 2019, the Good Sam Board of Directors embraced a new five-year Strategic Plan. In our estimation, the plan was progressive and forward thinking, embracing a vision for the future that would ensure Good Sam's position as the leader of advanced illness care throughout southwest Virginia. We elected this approach in response to the ever-changing landscape of healthcare across the country as well as the continued growth of for-profit hospices across our service area. We didn't know, however, that over the next few months, the world as we knew it would come to a halting stop at the hands of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite the challenges that 2020 presented, the Good Sam team adapted and creatively found ways to not only maintain care for our patients and families, but to expand our reach and do even more to serve our community. The creativity and ingenuity at all levels made way for successes that will propel this organization forward. As you will see throughout this report, we made great strides in carrying out Good Sam's mission last year; however, we cannot stop and rest on these successes alone. If Good Sam is to fulfill its vision to be a leading advanced illness provider in Roanoke and the New River Valley, we need your continued help and support. YOU are why we are here, and together we will continue to build a bright future for advanced illness care in southwest Virginia.

Aaron Housh, CEO

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- Scott Berglund – Elk Hill Advisors
- Bev Bonderman – Central United Methodist Church
- Sandra Davis – Anchor of Hope Foundation
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Our mission is to honor what matters most to each person and family served.
There is nothing — I mean nothing — stopping this man! Randy Vest is an army veteran. He served in Vietnam, operated his own business, and endured a triple bypass, multiple nerve issues, eight surgeries for blockages in his legs, and even a diagnosis of pancreatic cancer. None of which has prompted him to hit pause.

You may know Randy from Randy’s Auto Works, a car dealership that operated on Melrose Avenue in Roanoke for 35 years. Known for his precision in both mechanical and body work, Randy never compromised quality. He also had a reputation for being unashamedly straightforward. His wife, Linda, remembers the first time she overheard his full transparency when he said to a prospective customer, “Well, she ain’t a pretty car… but she runs!”

Randy’s auto passion and free spirit translate to regular rides on his Harley-Davidson Softail around town. He is particularly fond of taking it to Myrtle Beach for spring March Madness and Bike Week. He is an adventurer. It’s not unusual for Randy to travel 350 miles in a single day, making pit stops at his favorite food places, regardless of whether they are anywhere near his intended route or not.

This past September, heading to Myrtle Beach, he was driving his motor home on the interstate and pulling a tow dolly that carried both his truck and his motorcycle. At 70 mph, the dolly detached from the ball, dramatically weaving and swerving as you might expect at high speed. “The chain held,” Randy said, “so I was able to pull over and lift the dolly (and truck and motorcycle) back into place.”

**Single-handedly? You bet!**

That same trip, he drove 25 miles just to get a hotdog (they were out of buns) and got sick... due to nothing other than eating too many oysters!

He and his daughter, Annette, recently took a dad/daughter trip to Gatlinburg. “Hot Rod,” he affectionately calls her, or “Baby.” While Allie had a Kentucky hospice on standby for their trip, too, the two of them navigated just fine.

“We had made arrangements with the hospice in Myrtle Beach in case he had any needs, but he handled everything,” explained Allie, his social worker. “He keeps us on our toes!”

**Family Feature:**

The Vest Family

Randy, Linda, Allie, and Venessa at VFW

Randy with his daughter at the top of Appalachian Mountain looking into Kentucky

Randy, Allie, and Venessa at VFW

2020 Fall Bike Week

Randy, Linda, Allie, and Venessa at the Vest house

Randy and daughter at Charlotte 600 in 2017

“WE ARE GOOD SAM.”
“After Gatlinburg, we went to Lynch, Kentucky, where I was born,” Randy said. “It was good to be there, but a lot had changed. We did a lot of riding around, talking, eating and watching movies. It was a great time.”

When not on one of his excursions, Randy is active in the community and likes helping others. He particularly enjoys time at the VFW Post 1284, where he has served in a variety of leadership positions. He says he really enjoys the people and the natural camaraderie. He recently nominated Good Sam for a generous donation from his Post. He said the support he received from Venessa, his RN care manager, Allie and his Good Sam team inspired the nomination.

Venessa and Allie think the world of Randy and his family. That is clear. “He is so resilient,” Allie said. “We’ve been through a lot together!”

They recently celebrated his birthday with balloons, singing and — not cake. Randy, instead, asked for fruit cups and black licorice. And before they started with the “happy birthday” song, he straight-up asked if singing lessons were in order. He endured it and found himself pleasantly surprised, quickly retracting the offer for lessons. It was a simple morning of easy laughter and fun reflection.

Randy is a humble and welcoming presence. He is funny and insightful. His devotion to his family, friends and community is evident, and whether cruising the open road, living local or simply chatting in his family living room, you can bet Randy Vest is 150% invested, fully embracing opportunity, genuinely caring for others — and most likely making jokes along the way.

Venessa and Allie think the world of Randy and his family..."He is so resilient," Allie said. "We've been through a lot together!"

You helped us comfort 720 patients who were admitted into our care in the Roanoke and New River valleys. Over the past year, Good Sam had an average daily census of 175 patients with an average length of stay of 98 days.

You aided Good Sam in providing:

- 17,226 Nursing Visits
- 5,568 Social Work Visits
- 2,171 Spiritual Care Visits
- 12,535 Hospice Aide Visits

Characteristics of Patients Served:

- Most Prevalent Diagnosis:
  - 30% Cancer
  - 18% Heart Failure
  - 14% Alzheimer’s and Dementia
  - 3% Lung Disease

- Patient Coverage:
  - 95.2% Medicare
  - 2.6% Medicaid
  - 1.8% Commercial
  - 0.3% Self Pay
  - 0.1% Charity
Our volunteers dedicated 1,951 hours to furthering our mission.

Referral Sources:
- Patient Home: 68%
- Facility: 31%
- Hospital: 6.3%
- Nursing Home & Assisted Living Facilities: 15.2%
- Physician: 17.9%
- Self/Family: 22.2%
- Community: 38.4%

In 2020, Good Sam provided approximately $295,135 of uncompensated care to our patients and families. Good Sam is able to offer unparalleled levels of care and extra services because of the support from our community. Contributions and grants enable us to continue our promise to provide hospice and bereavement services to anyone needing them, regardless of ability to pay.

In 2020, Good Sam saved over $53,067 thanks to volunteer hours.

How Good Sam Served:
- 800 Individuals received counseling services to support them in coping with loss and grief.
- 230 Palliative Care visits were made to assist patients and families in their homes with advanced illness.
- 98 Integrative Therapy visits were made to patients and family members to ease stress and provide relief.
- 69 Education Programs provided to professionals on life-limiting illness management, grief counseling and caregiver support.

Patient Care Rating:
- Rating of patient care from this hospice (9/10 and 10/10)
  - Good Sam: 90.2%
  - National Average: 85.4%

In accordance with our commitment to transparency and excellence, every aspect of our hospice care program is assessed by objective third-party reporting services and the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services. In 2020, Good Sam achieved a five-point increase in the favorable responses to this key quality indicator question from families who received our services.

Where Good Sam Served:
- 230 Palliative Care visits made to provide quality care at the bedside on average:
  - 33 miles per day in the Roanoke Valley
  - 53 miles per day in the New River Valley

Although, on average, 97% of patients are over 60 years old, Good Sam serves patients of all ages with advanced and life-limiting illness.
We have come full circle in the year of the COVID-19 pandemic, and it seems as though there is some light at the end of this tunnel. Good Samaritan has been a pioneer in the challenges that this past year has delivered. We have been blessed with health, supplies and, as always, dedicated staff to provide excellent care to our patients and families.

We provided many telehealth visits, connected loved ones to family members through video, dedicated certain staff to COVID-positive patients, provided creative window visits with fun costumes and music, advocated for families to have access to their loved ones when death was near and sat with patients when restrictions prevented families from being there. Staff, volunteers and grief support groups continued outreach through phone calls, mail and video.

Once rapid testing became available, we were one of the first hospices to begin testing our field staff twice a week. This opened doors for Good Sam to be one of the very first hospices allowed back into facilities. Our CEO, Aaron Housh, worked tirelessly to obtain vaccines for our staff. As healthcare providers, we were among the early groups to have access to the vaccine. Many of our staff elected to receive the vaccine, which not only provided more peace of mind for them, but has also allowed us to go into more facilities where restrictions are still in place so that we can directly care for our patients. Despite our staff being vaccinated, we will continue to wear all the proper protective equipment (PPE) recommended by the CDC — mask, eye protection and gloves at every visit. Good Sam will continue to set an example to keep our patients safe with the PPE until the state or CDC make changes to the current recommendations.

We all have experienced this new void in our lives of the social norm that we once took for granted. There will be much mourned and learned over this past year, but in all that we have been through, we can be more appreciative of the special moments in our lives — a hug, going out to eat, attending church and sitting at the bedside of a loved one. Thankfully, each day we get closer to seeing the end of this pandemic. The advances in medicine have allowed so many people to already be vaccinated, and there are plans for many more. As we await the official lift of restrictions from our state, we do need to continue to follow direction from the CDC. Certainly, we do need to recognize those around us who may be immunocompromised or have significant illness and continue to take precautions to keep them safe. This may mean keeping a distance when you are not feeling well, wearing a mask or waiting to visit. Handwashing will always be a good practice to continue. Since our vaccine status is not visible to others and our communities continue in the process of aggressively providing vaccinations, it is still recommended by Virginia to continue to wear a mask. I am hopeful that in the near future many of these
restrictions will be lifted. When we return to life without restrictions, it will be new because we each would have known and experienced a life where there was formerly a void. We can now emerge from this time to appreciate all that we have in a new light of understanding, and most importantly, treasure the time that we spend with those we love.

Throughout 2020, PPE was a highly sought-after resource, which led to difficulty acquiring supplies, even for healthcare organizations such as Good Sam. The scarcity also drastically increased the cost for routine PPE such as masks. During this past year, Good Sam experienced a 35% increase in the cost of providing adequate PPE per visit to keep our clinicians and patients safe while direct care was provided in homes and facilities. We are so grateful for the support of donors who contributed over $12,000 to our COVID-19 Medical Supply Fund throughout this pandemic period to help ensure that PPE shortage and cost never compromised our commitment to compassionate care.

Making a Difference

Sue Ranson, founder of Good Sam, retired as President/CEO shortly before the pandemic changed the landscape of our world. Like others, she unexpectedly found herself spending her days far differently than what she had imagined.

‘After retirement, I think there’s always a period of time when you wonder, ‘O.K., now, what am I going to do to make a difference?’ At the beginning of the pandemic, when you couldn’t get masks, I started seeing all these patterns pop up online and I thought, ‘You know, I used to sew, I can do that.’ So I started to experiment. As people heard I was making masks, I would get requests for them and it just sort of grew. I’m really grateful to be able to help people and, in some ways, I think masks will become a part of our everyday lives for quite a long time. We know that they help reduce the spread of airborne diseases, so when the next flu season or some other airborne illness comes around, I’m pretty sure that I’ll be putting on a mask. When I wear a mask, it’s to protect somebody else and when somebody else, wears a mask, it’s to protect me. That’s a sign of love, caring and compassion for our neighbors.”

Care team, Toni Scott and Venessa Stosser visiting patients

Lyn Mowles, Assistant Director of Nursing, and Ashley McPherson, LPN, getting ready to administer vaccines to Good Sam staff

Sue enjoying retirement with her husband, Michael
“I just want people to know that there really are those who love and care for others,” said a strong, misty-eyed Veneda Leslie. Veneda embodies spunk, savvy and finesse... a spitfire who has embraced life fully and, even more so, the people in her path.

While Veneda was referring to her hospice care team as those ‘loving and caring for others,’ she has been the source of much love and care herself. She has the best stories — funny, unbelievable, inspiring.

Her husband of 71 years has witnessed it all (well, much of it). “We make banana pudding together, custard from scratch, and Ralph stacks the wafers,” she grins.

Veneda’s favorites: cooking, bowling, playing with grandchildren, great-grandchildren... and the slot machines! She is a mischievous delight! She shared a story of buying a single raffle ticket for a Shriner’s auction in 1977. The prize — a green and black Honda motorcycle. Could she ride? No!

Unfortunately, she was sick the night of the New Year’s Eve Ball where they would draw the winning ticket.

“I was greased up with Vicks, no make-up and wrinkled clothes when a man called at 12:45 a.m.,” she said. “He told me my name had been drawn and I had fifteen minutes to be at the event if I wanted the prize.” It was a wintery mess outside, but she and Ralph climbed in the car and headed toward the ball — as is!

“Fortunately, the lights were low in the room,” she said, “that is, until the drum roll started, the winner announced, the applause erupted and the spotlight focused on our table!”

People offered to buy her new motorcycle, but as you might guess, she had other plans. She learned to ride it, graduated to a 750 red Suzuki and joined a motorcycle gang called Retreads. “You have to be over 45 to belong,”she laughed. “We’ve had a good life!”

She’s also had an active life. Veneda was a basketball standout at William Fleming. She graduated in 1948 and remains active in the William Fleming Golden Colonels, an alumni group that meets quarterly for lunch.
She is a wife and mother, first and foremost, but she also found success in the business world. She started her career with American Chemical, a janitorial supply company, and moved from a clerical position to outside sales where she flourished — no doubt due to her gregarious and warm personality.

In addition, she served as President of the American Women’s Business Association, Hollins chapter, and led fundraisers to establish scholarships for girls to attend college. In 1973, she was honored as "Woman of the Year" by the business association.

It’s hard to imagine that this high-spirited, bigger-than-life person was in the hospital just two months ago. With CHF (congestive heart failure), she had lost 23 pounds and her kidneys were failing. She came home and Good Sam became involved in her care. "I’ve just never been treated so well! I’m flabbergasted," she exclaimed. "My hair has never looked better!"

Veneda says she has adopted each person on her Good Sam team. She tells her son in New Mexico that he has a lot of new sisters he needs to meet.

She sends Kelley, her RN care manager, home with banana nut muffins and chocolate and says Niki has given her the best bath ever. "I feel great," she says! "These people care," Veneda smiles and nods toward Kelley, "but they also understand how to let you know they care!" "We love you," Kelley responds softly... and she means it.

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Palliative Program

In August 2020, Good Sam established a specialized palliative care program to serve patients living with chronic or serious illness. This was a significant step for an organization that has been solely focused on hospice care since 1992. The decision was based on an assessment of our community’s healthcare needs, and what has not wavered since Good Sam’s inception is the commitment to provide what is needed for our community. Palliative care is a type of specialty care that promotes quality of life. In addition, palliative care can be provided at any stage of an illness along with curative or disease-modifying treatment.

“For almost 30 years, we have carried out our mission to meet the advanced illness and grief needs of our communities. Unfortunately, we so often see patients who have ‘fallen through the cracks’ as they’ve navigated serious illness,” explains Aaron Housh, Good Sam’s CEO. “As a non-profit, community-based organization, we chose to develop home-based palliative care, a unique service in our area, to focus on improving quality of life for these patients and their families.”

Good Sam’s palliative care team provides in-home medical care. It is a consulting specialty that works...
Palliative care is specialized medical care for people living with serious illness and can be provided at any stage of an illness along with treatment meant to cure. The focus is to provide relief from the symptoms and stress of the illness. A patient may receive palliative care from the time of diagnosis onward. Benefits of palliative care include improved enhanced quality of life, alleviation of suffering, lower risk of depression, and a greater sense of independence and control. Families and caregivers also benefit from the social and emotional support of palliative care.

Karen Miller, Chief Strategy Officer for Good Sam, explains, “For people suffering from fatigue, pain, anxiety or other distressing symptoms due to a serious illness, palliative care may be the right solution. Palliative care offers expert symptom management and extra time to discuss preferences, goals and treatment options to help people better understand their condition and choices for medical care. In addition, palliative care helps people manage their care at home and avoid unwanted ED visits and hospitalizations.”

The palliative care program is led by two doctorate-prepared nurse practitioners with oversight by Good Sam’s Medical Director, a Hospice & Palliative Board certified physician. The program also offers the availability of social work and chaplain services as needed.

“Our palliative program offers patients additional support in navigating a chronic illness,” explained Dr. Jennifer Easterday, Good Sam’s Medical Director. “The medical system can be overwhelming, especially when there is a life-altering health condition. The palliative team’s time and efforts are dedicated to helping families navigate these important aspects of care and prioritizing the patient’s individual goals.”

The expansion of Good Sam’s services to include palliative care is a tangible demonstration of the agency’s longstanding dedication and faithful service to our community.

Good Sam provides hospice care regardless of a patient’s ability to pay. Research demonstrates that patients often live longer and with better quality of life after being admitted to hospice care. The earlier hospice becomes involved, the better the patient and family are served.
How You Can Help:

As a community-based, non-profit organization, we are committed to providing the right care for the right reasons. All of our resources and revenue are channeled back into our services so that we can provide the highest quality and compassionate care possible to those who need our specialized support. We are able to offer extra, non-reimbursable services to enhance the benefits of our care for both our patients and their families. These uncompensated programs and services include our bereavement and grief counseling program, Integrative Therapies (massage, music, pet, etc.), community education, and caregiver support. Good Sam is also committed to providing care to anyone in need, regardless of ability to pay. This is why your donations are so important and very much appreciated.

There are many ways that you can designate your charitable contribution. We can customize an opportunity to meet your specific philanthropic goals. Please contact the Good Sam Development Department at 540.776.0198 or email development@GoodSam.care for information.

Make a Gift

- Make a donation online by visiting our website, GoodSam.care
- Mail a donation to Good Sam’s office by sending the contribution in the form of a check or money order to:
  Good Samaritan
  Attn: Development
  2408 Electric Road, Roanoke, VA 24018
- Make a donation over the phone by calling: 540.776.0198.
- Make a gift through your workplace! Many companies match employees’, retirees’ and employees’ spouses’ donations. With a matching gift, your donation to Good Sam may be doubled or even tripled in value, thereby maximizing the impact of your support. Check with your Human Resources Department to see if your gift to Good Sam can go even further with an employer match.

Good Samaritan Hospice is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. All donations made to Good Samaritan Hospice are fully tax deductible.
“We are Good Sam.”

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