

# BANGOR DAILY NEWS

## Students at Mountain View Youth Development Center learn value of philanthropy with gift to Pine Tree Hospice

By Diana Bowley, BDN Staff

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DOVER-FOXCROFT, Maine — They willingly offer people with a life-limiting, progressive disease and their families a hand to hold, a shoulder to cry on, a home-cooked meal, or an ear to listen to concerns or memories they wish to share.

For nearly 25 years, Pine Tree Hospice and its volunteers have provided countless hours to help ease the pain and concerns of those who are in the last phase of their lives, not through counseling but by performing simple deeds from the heart. A lawn party is planned to celebrate the milestone on July 15 at [Mayo Regional Hospital](#).

“Pine Tree Hospice can’t put days in your life, but we can put life in your days,” Jane Stitham, the hospice’s executive director, said Wednesday.

The hospice — which serves all of [Piscataquis](#) County and parts of Somerset and [Penobscot](#) counties and is based in Dover-Foxcroft — is one of about 70 volunteer hospices in the nation and one of seven in the state. Unlike [Medicare](#)-certified hospices, volunteer hospices receive no federal or state funds; rather, they rely on fundraising and philanthropic support to provide the entirely free services.

Of the hospice’s \$150,000 budget, about \$40,000 is from in-kind support — such as the donation given Wednesday by the [Jobs for Maine Graduates and Mountain View Youth Development Center](#) youths, who made and presented a large wooden storage unit to the hospice.

The center’s JMG students participated in “[Jumpstart our Youth](#),” a program funded by foundations and a corporation to teach young people about the value of community commitment and philanthropy. With \$1,000 of private funds to award in grants, the students solicited nonprofit proposals, interviewed applicants and reviewed their budgets.

Based on that information, the students voted to donate \$500 to the Ronald McDonald House in [Bangor](#) and \$500 to Pine Tree Hospice for its Evergreen program for grieving children and adults. Recognizing that Evergreen also needed a storage unit for its supplies, the students extended their philanthropy further by building a storage unit in the facility’s workshop and donating it to the center Wednesday.

JMG donated the money to purchase the materials for the unit and Crescent Lumber Co. of Corinth provided the materials at less than cost. Overseeing the project was Scott DeMoranville, Mountain View Youth Development Center’s building trades instructor.

Eric Hansen, superintendent of the youth center, said the project “fits in perfectly with restorative justice efforts at the youth center that teach residents victim empathy and how to give back to those in the community who are in need.”

“It’s an amazing gift to our children,” Stitham said Wednesday of the cabinet. Currently, all of the materials for the children’s program are stored in totes in a back room in a West Main Street building shared by the Piscataquis Public Health Council. “It’s going to be like Christmas here.”

The Evergreen program, begun in 2008, is a children’s bereavement support program that meets on a regular basis. A minimum of two trained facilitators work with children who are grouped according to age. The program includes arts and crafts, games, someone to confide in and information on how to work through the grieving process. At the same time, parents or guardians can get support.

In addition to the children’s program and other bereavement programs, the hospice has a team available 24 hours a day to go to Mayo Regional Hospital for families in need of support. It also has programs for people in their own homes or in other facilities, and offers caregiver support.

The hospice, whose services have increased by 76 percent since 2007, has about 90 volunteers who either provide direct care to patients or indirect care such as cooking meals, respite care, helping to plan fundraising events and working on newsletters, Stitham said. There is a need for more men to serve as volunteers, she said.

“I have the privilege and honor almost daily of seeing how volunteers touch and enrich the lives of our families,” Stitham said.

Regional hospice teams are being formed in Milo, Dexter, Guilford, Greenville and Dover-Foxcroft to help identify the needs in those communities. The next meeting is set for 6 p.m. May 19, at DKB’s Catering in Greenville. A meeting also is planned for June 9 in Dover-Foxcroft, time and place to be announced.

Stitham said hospice is ready whenever anyone needs the support.

*For more information on hospice and its programs, call 564-4346, email at [wecare@pinetreehospice.org](mailto:wecare@pinetreehospice.org) or visit [www.pinetreehospice.org](http://www.pinetreehospice.org).*

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