

A Tribute to a Past Board Member- Janet M. Hooper

When the Board of GCC&H, voted to honor Janet this year in our newsletter, I immediately volunteered to write the article. Why?? Because I feel blessed to have worked with Janet and call her my friend, but more because I find the stories about her life fascinating. So here goes.....

Janet was born on December 29, 1941 to parents Don McLaughlin and Mary Prugh. She was the middle child of 3 and has an older and younger brother. She was born in Norwalk, CT. and grew up in Darien till 9th grade when her family moved to Vermont (1956). Her dad was an actor in radio and television dramas and her mom was a housewife, owned an antique store/gift shop and a lending library. Her dad would stay in New York during the week for work and come home to Vermont for the weekends. A favorite childhood memory is playing baseball/soft ball with her Dad and despite the fact she had 2 brothers, it was Janet that preferred sports.

Her education post high school began at Middlebury College in Vermont where she received her B.A. in history. She then pursued an M.A in African history at Columbia University in New York city. While in New York, she met her husband, Carl and they had 2 children, Carla in 1972 and Britton in 1974. Her parents had moved to Goshen in 1969 and bought the home that the Hooper family still inhabit. In 1974, Janet lost her Mom so Carl, Janet and the girls moved to Goshen to join her dad in his home. Carl was working with a methadone maintenance program in Hartford and Janet started getting some pre-requisite classes toward her new dream of becoming a nurse. She entered nursing school at Mattatuck Community College 1977 (Naugatuck Valley College now) and graduated with an associates degree in 1979. Along the way thru her education and careers, she realized what she really wanted to do was something that would help people more. As an asthmatic child, she developed a perspective as to how health could alter one's life but did not allow this to keep her out of sports. Perhaps it changed her game from the aggressive positions to the more stationary but still vitally important roles such as in hockey playing goalie not being the aggressive front line. In 8th or 9th grade, she thought she would be a doctor but several courses into college, she realized that she still needed to do more for people. To me, this explains who Janet is, she doesn't need to be up front in the lime light, but she will be that consistent person in the back keeping everything together and running perfectly.

Janet began her nursing career at Charlotte Hungerford Hospital in 1979. She continued to go to school in the evenings and graduated from the University of Hartford with a BS in nursing in 1985. She was a staff nurse, a head nurse, a cancer care coordinator, ran the breast cancer support group and became the champion for cancer care at the hospital during her career. She retired from CHH in 2011 after 32 years of nursing but continued with her support group till 2017. Janet brought her passion for cancer care to Goshen, when Barbara O'Leary started planning for hospice care in Goshen. In 1988, several town leaders Father Proulx, Reverend Stuart Charter, Barbara O'Leary, Janet Hooper formed the organizing committee for Goshen Hospice which is celebrating it's 31st year. Janet attributes her passion for cancer care came from her decision to change careers so she could "do more for people" and reading a book where an end stage lung cancer patient made the decision to stop treatment and be cared for under the philosophy of hospice. As we spoke on the phone, Janet said, "you know, Deb, oncology is special because you have to consider the whole patient from head to toe".

Janet has served Goshen Community Care & Hospice in many capacities over the last 31 years. She has served on the board four times, she has held multiple different positions including president, vice president and secretary. You can continue to catch her during the Goshen Fair serving at our water booths. She has also volunteered with the American Cancer Society, founding committee of Cancer Survivors Day, the Tour of the Litchfield Hills, Susan B. Anthony project and her breast cancer support group.

So Janet is retired and sitting out on her porch, rocking in her rocker chair.....Nope! First and foremost, she is helping care for her 3 beautiful granddaughters that live in the front house that her Dad and Mom originally bought and Janet and Carl now are in the back house. She continues with her garden and is active in the community garden. She serves her church, Church of Christ Congregational, thru their environmental issues, work with refugee families, food pantry and more. She enjoys traveling including her 5th trip to Africa with her entire family in 2017 and her recent trip to Washington, D.C. with Carl.

So what do I want you to remember about Janet Hooper, she is smart, funny, well educated, passionate about African culture and political-socio-economic issues that impacts it, loves her family, is a great nurse who made oncology care better in our community in many ways, concerned about environmental issues, can grow things and has been my friend for 37 years and hopefully many, many more!

Written by- **Debra Nadaskay**



Janet M.
Hooper



Our Seniors
Enjoying
the Senior
Lunch
Program!

Medical Loan Closet

Contact our office if in need of medical equipment such as canes, walkers, wheelchairs, commodes, shower chairs and portable wheelchair ramps.

Thought about the Senior Socials and Lunch

"I wouldn't miss a senior social, the lunches and the topics are excellent,"
Carol S.

"I would like to compliment the volunteers who setup the social. The food is excellent and our new caterer for the meals is doing a great job."
Jack K.

"Timely topics enjoyed by all. I love coming here, it's wonderful."

Josephine S

"It keeps my motor working and everyone is so helpful and wonderful. The meals are very good and the topics are all very important." Julie M.

"The senior social helps keep my mind going. The food is very good with many varieties and the topics are all necessary and important." Katie C.

"Very friendly, cooperative and delicious meals and the topics are very good." Jean K.

"The comaraderie that says it all."
Barb B.

"The meals are very good and nutritious." Pauline A.

"The topics are helpful and informational." Pat W.

