



Summer 2017

A View From the Tamarisk Tree

Dear Friends and family of Tamarisk,

This is my first letter to you as Chair of the Tamarisk Board of Directors.

I "found" Tamarisk in 2015, while I supported my husband, who almost succumbed to an ultra-rare cancer. The experience of dealing with this terminal illness drove my determination to help others. I decided to take a break from corporate America and serve on a non-profit board.



Karen Ho

As I was going through local board opportunities, I happened to come across Tamarisk. Their mission - to create a caring presence and a safe haven to individuals facing long-term and the end stages of terminal illnesses - immediately resonated with me. After several meetings with the board and with Kathy Dahl, the board chair at the time, I was convinced that this was the organization that I wanted to be part of. It is especially gratifying to serve for a non-profit organization with whom you share a common life mission.

Last year, we welcomed three new board members: Lyn Stepaniak, Anna Roberts, and Charles Edge. They, too, have felt the power and significance of Tamarisk's mission to the community. I'm ecstatic to have each of them, as each brings unique skillsets, knowledge, and leadership that further strengthens our board. We are also fortunate that former board members Kathy Dahl and Shelly Palashewski will stay and serve as the Development Director and Program Director, respectively. They have been and will continue to play a critical role in helping manage our day-to-day operations.

As Tamarisk celebrates our 24th anniversary, our values have not changed. The aging population and uncertainties in the healthcare system may lead to more people in the community in need of help and support. As a result, our focus for the remainder of 2017 and beyond will continue to be on attracting and recruiting new volunteers and increasing our reach into the communities we serve.

Please continue to spread the word about Tamarisk, and consider making a gift of time to our cause. The experience of being a Tamarisk volunteer can be life altering. As one family member who benefited from Tamarisk support said, "The Tamarisk volunteer was an angel and an answer to my prayer."

Enjoy the rest of your summer.

Sincerely,

Karen Ho

Offering shade and comfort to those facing terminal illness in the spirit that Abraham did for weary travelers under the Tamarisk tree.

Genesis 18

Volunteer Opportunities

Our volunteers support families every day.

Welcome New Volunteers!



Holly Berger



Anne Brandberg



Bev Foster



Jane Schneider



Robin Dulcos

Tamarisk's "Vigil" volunteers are available on short-notice to spend time with patients who are very near the end, making it possible at times for Tamarisk to initiate support for families within 24 hours of initial contact. This important team commits to quick communication of their availability when contacted and has had the opportunity to offer a caring presence to two families so far this year. If you are interested in becoming a "vigil" volunteer, please contact our Program Director, Shelly Palashewski, at (763) 572-1950.

"Sometimes in the darkest night a little star shines. Tamarisk was a star to me. The path Mat and I walked was so very difficult, my road ahead will also be difficult but I will always remember you and Tamarisk with deep thanks."

Meredith Iken Matson

Volunteer Caregivers

Tamarisk volunteers serve families in the Anoka County area facing the end stages of life threatening illness, providing regularly-scheduled respite for caregivers and companionship for the patient. For approximately 2-4 hours a week Tamarisk volunteers assure the safety and well-being of the patient while the family caregiver is occupied or away.

Board Members

Tamarisk is looking for passionate leaders with a wide variety of skills and experience to serve a 3-year term on our board of directors:

- Non-profit / business leadership
- Fund Development
- Hospice / end-of life medical or pastoral care
- Community Relations
- Marketing
- Strategic Planning and Organizational Development

25th Gala Planning Committee

Help us plan and execute our 25th Anniversary Gala Celebration to be held in Fall 2018. Planning will start this August! We need help with all the elements of planning including:

- venue selection
- sponsorships
- entertainment
- silent auction
- theme design!

Attendance at monthly meetings required.



Caregivers Corner

**"To the world you
maybe one person,
but to one person you
may be the world"**

Dr. Seuss

National Alliance for Caregiving in collaboration with AARP reports that "65 million people or 29% of the US population provide care for a chronically ill, disabled or aged family member or friend during any given year and spend an average of 20 hours per week providing care for their loved one."

What is the caregiver? How does each of us define this word? Some of us might get paid to give care. Others choose to offer care because it is something they enjoy doing for others. For some it means wiping a runny nose and giving Tylenol as ordered. For others it may mean taking a friend to an occasional doctor's appointment. And then there are others who are defined by the 24 hours a day seven days a week caregiving they provide to their loved one.

So what are some things that we can do to support caregivers and be a healthy provider of care?

1. Take advantage of help when it's offered. This can be difficult as nobody knows what you do. Teach those who offer. **"Sometimes asking for help is the most meaningful example of self reliance"** Unknown
2. Take care of yourself physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. Remember you can't pour from an empty cup!!
3. Recognize and accept your feelings. Share this with a trusted friend. It's ok to be angry, frustrated, sad...
4. Have defined boundaries and know your limits. Have someone hold you accountable to healthy boundaries. It's OK to say "NO" without explanation or feelings of guilt.
5. Educate yourself. Make a list of questions and get the answers. Ask others to help with this task since your time is limited.

Don't lose sight of the big picture. Sometimes when we are answering the same question for the 26th time

it's easy to forget the magnitude of the good we are doing and let our frustration and grief win. You are doing what you do out of love and compassion for who you are caring for.

"Caregiving often calls us to lean into love we didn't know possible"
Tia Walker

In my past personal caregiving experiences I often felt isolated and lonely. Even though I had friends and family around I didn't always seek them for support because I was feeling too tired or didn't think they'd understand. I know now that I should have relied on those offering to help or just talk my feelings through more. If possible, have a trusted network of a few to go through this journey with you. They won't understand your caregiving story perfectly, but they can listen. Sometimes being heard is just what we need to get us through a tough day.

A wise physician said,
The best medicine for humans is
CARE and LOVE
Someone asked, if it doesn't work?
He smiles and answered
INCREASE THE DOSE!

Thank you for being a caregiver!!



Donation Form

Thank you for your tax-deductible contribution.

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Ham Lake MN 55304

Ways to Donate:

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I would like someone to contact me about Tamarisk's services.

I am interested in volunteering.



Tamarisk, Inc.

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Volunteer! We Need You!

Get involved. An hour makes a difference! The estimated value of a volunteer is \$23.07/hour.

The true value is...

- Providing non medical companionship to the terminally ill.
- Offering presence and support during a difficult time.
- Friendships & camaraderie.
- Supporting a first rate program in your own community.
- Knowing you are making a difference in the lives of those who need it most.



Who are the Friends of Tamarisk?

- Your neighbors, people just like you that want to make a difference in the quality of life in the NW suburbs of the Twin Cities for the seriously ill
- People who recognize that they can make a difference by giving regular monthly gifts of \$5, \$10, \$20 or more that are automatically paid
- People who understand the idea that many people providing a little is more sustainable than a few providing large gifts sporadically
- People who understand the principle of paying it forward
- People who recognize the value of five dollars!

If you are interested in becoming a friend of Tamarisk, visit tamarisk.org/donate/friends-of-tamarisk

email us today • programs@tamarisk.org