



Providence Willamette Falls Medical Foundation

Gail Johnston and her husband Eric gave generously to create a new cancer treatment center at Providence Willamette Falls Medical Center because of the treatment her mother received from Providence Cancer Institute. Gail is pictured with a collage her mother created after her treatment at age 85.

Gift honors the care her mother received

Until cancer took her in 2007, Andean Gerber lived life to its fullest. A lifelong artist, after receiving her

diagnosis in 2000, she spent the next seven years creating colorful collages using images cut from magazines. She held her first public exhibit in 2005 at age 85 and had four more exhibits before she passed.

Throughout her treatment, Andean was insatiably curious. "Mom loved going to see Dr. Urba," said her daughter Gail Johnston. "She just reveled in talking with him about the science, and he would delve into it with her and, ease her way, is how I would describe it."

Walter J. Urba, M.D., Ph.D., director of Cancer Research at the Earle A. Chiles Research Institute at Providence Cancer Institute, was equally passionate about Andean's care. "A famous clinic back east said mom's tumor was untreatable," said Gail. "But, Dr. Urba didn't accept that."

Gail credits Dr. Urba's creativity for giving her mother seven more years of life. So when Providence Willamette Falls Medical Foundation launched a campaign to create a new cancer treatment center at Providence Willamette Falls Medical Center, it was an easy decision for Gail and her husband, Eric, to give in Andean's honor.

"We would have loved to have this center at Willamette Falls," said Gail. "This campaign will allow people in Clackamas County to have a treatment team like Mom's right at Willamette Falls, close to home."

2020 Highlights

Therapy dog program restarts

The young patient didn't speak for days. But when Maggie, a visiting Golden Retriever, greeted the stuffed dog clutched in the patient's arms, she burst out laughing, and healing began. Providence Willamette Falls had a thriving therapy dog program until COVID-19 made it impossible for volunteers to enter the facility. Now, with a grant from the Chamberlain Foundation, two volunteers, Pam and Tony Helbling are helping to rebuild it. The grant will pay for training, tests and supplies for new dogs and their handlers. "It's a simple way to give back," said Pam. "Whether it's a teenager who's having challenges or someone who's been through a tough surgery, it's so rewarding to see the dogs help them."



New knees lead to gift

Gerry Tyson will tell you: recovering from knee surgery is no walk in the park. The recipient of two knee replacements, Gerry knows that rehabilitation is key to calming tender tissues, limbering stiff joints and regaining movement. That's why he and his wife, Carolyn, decided to make gifts to purchase equipment for the Providence Willamette Falls rehabilitation clinic. "It means a lot to get this service without having to go downtown for it," he said. "The therapists helped me conquer my situation. It feels good to help them get new machines."

2020 total dollars raised by fund

- Area of Greatest Need | 4%
- Behavioral Health | 16%
- Cancer Care | 68%
- Hospice/Palliative Care | 2%
- Women and Children's | 2%
- Other Funds | 8%

