

# THE GIFT OF GOODBYE

**A**t the young age of 12, Daniel's life was forever changed as he lost one of the most important people in his life, his father Lance. Daniel always looked up to his dad as his role model, a respected high school teacher, wrestling coach and an active member of the community. Never had he ever imagined the difficult journey he and his mother would face as they watched their loved one slip away from them. Lance was 48 years old and was generally healthy other than a hoarse throat. After visiting his doctor and some testing, the news they learned left them stunned and uncertain as to what their future held. Lance was diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS).

Lance began to have symptoms very quickly, losing his ability to speak and walk. As he continued to decline, his wife Sandra and son became more fearful and struggled to take care of him at home. With the guidance from a family member, Sandra reached out to Community Hospice for support. Upon admission to services, Community Hospice staff made the recommendation to transfer Lance to the Alexander Cohen Hospice House for a short stay, providing Sandra and Daniel some much needed rest; their first break from care in almost a year.



**L**ance returned home with his family for three months prior to returning to the Hospice House for his remaining days. The homelike atmosphere made Daniel feel comfortable enough to fall asleep on the couch while visiting his dad daily. Daniel shared, "It was good to know my dad was getting the kind of care we could not give him at home. My dad was comfortable and at peace."

Prior to Lance's passing, Daniel was connected to Karina, a Grief Support Specialist with the Community Hospice Children's Grief Program. Karina embraced Daniel preparing him for the difficult days ahead and accompanied him to the pre-funeral viewing. "Having Karina there to support Daniel in that moment was amazing. Knowing he had a safe place to turn meant the world and was reassuring as a mom," said Sandra. Lance passed away at the Hospice House almost one year to the day after his initial diagnosis.



Support did not stop after Lance passed away. Daniel attended Camp Erin® of the Central Valley, a grief camp for children and teens this past summer. For the first time Daniel was able to share his journey with peers that had experienced similar losses. He was able to say his final goodbyes, and discovered the tools needed to continue to honor his beloved father. He and Sandra know going forward that whenever they need support; Community Hospice is near.

*Like the Campbell family, Community Hospice is always there when life's journey takes an unexpected turn. When precious time is limited, our team helps patients and families navigate the difficult decisions ahead, providing compassionate care, education and support.*

*For nearly 40 years Community Hospice has been dedicated to the patients and families in our community, providing guidance and resources as they faced their end-of-life journey. Your gift today means Community Hospice is ready to help thousands of friends and neighbors each year during their time of need. Please ensure that we are able to answer the needs when a family calls by making your gift today.*

**WITH A GRATEFUL HEART,**

**C. DESHA MCLEOD  
PRESIDENT/CEO**

**IT WAS GOOD  
TO KNOW HE  
WAS GETTING  
THE KIND  
OF CARE WE  
COULD NOT  
GIVE HIM AT  
HOME**