



AMH Nurse's Spirit is In the Wind

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ALTON MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

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It was a muggy, overcast day as friends and family gathered in the Alton Memorial Hospital Healing Garden recently to remember Ann Wiltshire. Ann, a much-loved nurse, passed away last October. Visible in the background was a kinetic wind sculpture created by Andrew Carson of Seattle – a tribute to Ann’s compassionate spirit.

Former co-worker Danny Hoog felt honored to share his memories of Ann at the service.

“Ann taught us to be better nurses, better people and better friends,” Hoog said, “For this we owe her a huge thank you.”

Lynna Humbert remembered Ann’s work ethic and how she gave 100 percent everyday.

“During the crazy, hectic shifts, if Ann was working alongside you, you knew that everything would be okay,” Humbert said. “Ann was a wonderful teacher. Those of you who continue to be caregivers at this special place need to be role models to those who never had the chance to work with Ann. Be fair, be kind, be a teacher and give your all everyday.”

Chaplain Bruce Baumberger shared that the biblical word for wind is interchangeable with the Greek word for spirit.

“When the wind moves the sculpture, we’ll know that Ann is with us,” Baumberger said.

At that moment, on what up until then had been a still day, a breeze started up, which set the wind sculpture spinning. A murmur went through the crowd as people noticed the movement.

The poignant ceremony ended with the powerful voice of Ann’s granddaughter, Sarah Dawson, singing an emotional rendition of “Over the Rainbow” as the sculpture continued spinning in the background.

As the group began to disperse, AMH nurse Donna Bizaillion was surprised that no one mentioned Ann’s hugs.

“Somehow,” Bizaillion said, “Ann always knew when you needed a hug.”

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