During This Year of Challenges, You Have Responded with Love and Support to Help People in Need

by Scott Blades, Executive Director

It’s been a challenging year in so many ways for all of us. Isolation, stress, economic impacts, concerns about the physical and emotional health of ourselves and our family and friends, and experiencing deaths of people we love. For many of our CarePartners (clients) living with HIV, the challenges have been more severe. With a compromised immune system and additional underlying health concerns, the risk is greater, especially when you are over the age of 50, as most of our CarePartners are.

TIHAN’s support programs have undergone major changes to adapt to the needs we see, and our supporters have stepped up to help us respond. Thanks to significant support from key foundations, a $50,000 bequest left to us from Paul DeLair when he passed away, major gifts from a number of our supporters, and a loan from the Payroll Protection Program, we have been able to continue to serve without staffing reductions, allowing us to continue our programs and services through 2020.

Even though our signature fundraising event, Treasures for TIHAN, and our Swinging@AIDS golf tournament/concert and other benefits this year were canceled early in the pandemic, and our Turnabout for TIHAN event is transitioning from an in-person event to a virtual benefit, many of our event sponsors and supporters have stepped forward to continue their support, because they know that these events are integral to us being able to serve the needs of people living with HIV in our community.

Because of you, we’ve provided record numbers of prepared meals, grocery store gift cards for food, and CarePackages filled with toiletries and cleaning supplies. Because of you, we’ve made sure that all of our CarePartners without a cell phone have one, and enough minutes to keep in touch with their doctors and support system. Because of you, we’ve been able to stay more connected to provide emotional support.

As we enter November and December, we are working to provide support to our CarePartners during this holiday season. We need your support with gifts and contributions to make sure no one is left alone.

As we enter fall, we are concerned about increasing COVID-19 cases in our area, and also influenza. We’re also concerned about the toll that isolation is taking on all of us, especially our CarePartners.

“An aloneness that feels forced upon me like punishment.” This is how one of the women living with HIV who we serve describes the isolation she feels. And in this newsletter, you’ll hear from John, one of our CarePartners, about the isolation, and how his HIV and depression impact his life.

A 2016 abstract published in The Center for AIDS Information & Advocacy reported that major depression is experienced by more than one-third of all people living with HIV, although only 45% of those with symptoms are “officially” diagnosed with depression.

Two-thirds of people with newly diagnosed HIV infection experience depression. And just as in the general population, depression during this COVID-19 pandemic is even higher. And we know that rates of depression increase around the holidays—even in a good year. Unfortunately, depression often goes undiagnosed or untreated, especially among people living with HIV.

Because of your support of TIHAN, we know that John and hundreds more people living with HIV will feel the love and receive the gifts of care and companionship that can help us get through these tough times. Thank you for what you make possible.
The Season for Giving: Even More Important This Year

A gift can be so much more than the object that is found within the wrapping. At TIHAN, our ability to give gifts to CarePartners living with HIV and their families lets them know that someone is thinking about them and wants to share with them the warmth of the season.

This year, as loneliness and depression have already greatly increased due to the losses and isolation from COVID-19, there will be no festive holiday gatherings. People’s need for support services has skyrocketed, and we need your help more than ever. We want to spread more light and offer more support in order to lift the spirits of people who are hurting, grieving, or feeling alone. And we can only do it because of you.

Please help us make the holidays a bit more special for CarePartners and their families. We are asking for donations of gifts for adults (with a value of $15-$25 each) and also $25 gift cards to stores like Target, Walmart, and Fry’s. Gifts should be new and unused, and should be delivered to us unwrapped, please.

Donations can be brought to the TIHAN office Monday through Friday, between 8:30am and 4:30pm. Thank you for helping us to boost spirits at the end of a rough year. Please plan to bring all donations in by Wednesday, November 25, so that we have time to organize and distribute the gifts.

Thank you for sharing your blessings with our CarePartners living with HIV.

For holiday gift suggestions for our CarePartners, visit www.tihan.org, go to the “Donate” tab, then click on “more donation options” and then “holiday gift list” for gift ideas for people living with HIV.
John’s Story of Living with HIV and Depression

Depression is prevalent among people living with HIV. It’s something John deals with every day. “I live with HIV and I also live with depression. With medication and therapy, it’s gotten much better, but with COVID and the isolation I’m having to experience, it’s definitely become a bigger challenge for me again.”

John wants people to know what it’s like to live with depression. As challenging as it is, you can get through it, he assures us. It’s something he has dealt with since 2004 when he received the news about his HIV diagnosis. “It was a shocker,” he says. “I didn’t consider myself at risk for HIV. I wasn’t with a lot of people, but I realize now that it only takes one person. Looking back, I had dated someone who had some symptoms, but I didn’t know that, and I’m not sure he did either.”

John remembers being “shocked and dazed” for a week, feeling hopeless and thinking he was going to die. “I didn’t feel I could share anything about this with anyone,” he recalls. “People were wondering what was going on with me, but I couldn’t tell them. I was trying to cope with it all on my own.” Soon, John found out that there was effective medication to treat his HIV. “It wasn’t like the 1980s anymore like we remember,” he says. “One day this info was sprung on me, and I went home and didn’t know what to do. I wasn’t educated about it myself, and I didn’t feel I could trust anyone with this info about me. I thought it was a death sentence. When I found out it could be treated, I felt better. At some point, I decided I had to tell someone.”

John eventually told three people: two friends, and his mother. The betrayal he felt was immense when the two friends both shared the information about his HIV with others—without John’s permission. “Some people I told and shouldn’t have. I was very depressed, because I trusted these friends, and they shared this information with others.” Fortunately, John’s mother was supportive, and told him, “We’ll get through this together.” Together, they set about to learn more about HIV. They found books on HIV and read. “We got educated,” he shares.

15 years later, John’s HIV level is now undetectable. His takes medication for depression. “It does take a toll on me,” he explains. “I take my medication for depression, and it does make me feel better. But then something else happens and my depression seems to relapse.” Over time, John’s memory has been getting worse, perhaps related to his long-term HIV. It’s been a huge stressor to him, and contributes to his depression.

“My memory,” he says, “isn’t as good as before. Sometimes I realize I repeat things that I have just said. I have to write things on calendars, and make notes. I’m forgetting things. It makes me upset because I think I am going to remember, but then I don’t.”

“My memory loss might be because of my HIV, but it might also be worse because I don’t get enough sleep. It’s hard for me to sleep and I have insomnia due to depression and anxiety. I overthink. My mind is always going. They’ve prescribed sleeping pills, but I don’t like taking those because of how they make me feel.” John also doesn’t like how the pain pills prescribed for his chronic pain make him feel, so he doesn’t take them either.

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic has greatly increased John’s stress and anxiety. “COVID has affected me a lot. Sometimes I get overwhelmed when I’m around people, especially now with COVID. I’m avoiding being around people since March. I’ve known a few people who got COVID, and they’ve recovered. But I don’t want to get it. I stay away, even though people wear their masks -- it’s just not worth the risk to me right now. Other than for a doctor’s appointment, I don’t go out. I only see my mom now twice a month, instead of every week. She’s 87 years old. I only go to the grocery store very early, when no one is there.”

TIHAN’s support services have helped John, especially these past seven months. “I don’t have any income – only food stamps. I’m still waiting for my interview to get my disability income. I have chronic pain from a herniated disc, and arthritis. So the meals you provided helped a lot. They were great,” he tells us. Courtesy of an emergency grant from AIDS Healthcare Foundation this summer, TIHAN was able to partner with local restaurants to purchase discounted prepared meals, delivered to CarePartners like John by a corps of TIHAN volunteers. Then the funding was exhausted, and our volunteers and staff became exhausted, too. Now, TIHAN provides only one meal a month, and because of limited staff and volunteers, the meals are only available to CarePartners who are able and willing to get to one of our two pick-up locations.

• Depression is an ongoing low mood which interferes with your everyday life.
• Depression occurs more frequently in people living with HIV than in the general population.
• It is a recognized illness and is treatable, either with ‘talking therapies’ or antidepressant medications, or both.
• Causes of depression vary, but can involve biological, psychological and social factors.

—AIDSmap.org
John doesn’t have transportation, and he’s not comfortable taking the bus right now. Fortunately, TIHAN is able to continue delivering CarePackages, which John greatly appreciates. “I love it when you drop off a CarePackage at my door. I need those items, the shampoo, everything. It’s a great help.” Since July, TIHAN has been offering a monthly $50 grocery store gift card to the 200 CarePartners most in need of food support, courtesy of a grant from the Community Foundation for Southern Arizona and gifts from generous TIHAN donors. “While I am waiting for my disability appointment in December, I have zero income, so that $50 really helps me be able to purchase food and other needs I have. And with $50, I can get a lot, and that way I don’t have to go to the store as often.”

John loves it when TIHAN delivers coloring books and color pencils along with his CarePackage and gift card. He loves art, and the coloring helps with the boredom and isolation.

“All this support I receive from TIHAN, it helps me out a lot,” John shares. Even as it changes due to available funding and personnel, he’s grateful for what we’re able to offer. And he’s looking forward to the time when there’s a vaccine for COVID, and one of his favorite TIHAN programs can start up again. “Those luncheons at Poz Café have helped me – helped me find a new comfort zone so I can meet people and begin to trust. That helped me a lot. Sure, it took me out of my comfort zone – to expand my horizons and meet new people. I loved being able to see everyone and say ‘Wow, these people are all like me.’ So I will wait for things to get back to normal. But I do like what you are doing to help right now.”

Depression and anxiety. Concerns about COVID. Physical pain. Trouble sleeping. Memory problems. Not being able to work. Having no income while he waits a few more months for his appointment with Social Security. “I know this is not a happy story to tell,” he says. “But I hope there’s a happy ending. I’m just living day by day. I’m undetectable. My HIV right now is good. I hope it stays that way. Sometimes, I do doubt it and wonder if it’s going to change. ‘What if…?’ My doctor and therapist keep telling me not to worry about it, but sometimes, I wonder if it will continue. Every morning when I take my meds, it reminds me that I have HIV.”

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John hesitated for a while about telling his story. And he changed his mind about whether or not to use his real name and photo with this article. The stigma – of HIV and of depression – cannot be minimized. “I trusted two people and told them about my HIV, and they betrayed me. That backfired. They told others. That made me not want to tell anyone else. Now, though, I’m thinking, ‘Who cares if people find out? It’s not a death sentence. I don’t deny it. Now today if someone were to ask me if I have HIV, I’d say, ‘Yes. So what?’ I don’t want any pity. This is just my reality. I take medication; I’m healthy; and I look good. I’m trying my best to take care of myself. And soon, I’ll be turning 51.”

When asked what message he has for someone newly diagnosed with HIV, John didn’t hesitate. “Seek out support. Get educated and find out the facts. You don’t have to tell anyone, unless you want to. There’s a time and a place to share, but you get to decide that. Educate yourself and make yourself feel better. Don’t panic. Get educated and learn so you can realize it’s just something that you will have, but medication can help you have a long and better life.”

Last Chances for Volunteer Orientation in 2020:
Saturday, November 14th and Tuesday, December 15th

Are you thinking about getting involved as 2020 wraps up? There’s still time to sign up for the virtual TIHAN Volunteer Orientations on either Saturday, November 14th from 8:30am-11:00am or Tuesday, December 15th from 2:00pm-4:30pm. These sessions are done via Zoom.

We have volunteer opportunities for both administrative and direct service support roles, including:
* Link Specialist Volunteers (especially Spanish-speaking)
* Operations Assistants (Front Desk Receptionist)
* CarePartner Program Support Volunteer
* Marketing Committee Member (with marketing/PR background)
* Program Committee Member (with program administration/evaluation background)
* Data Entry Volunteer
* Finance Committee Member (with accounting background)
* Food Resource Navigator (helping people access food support)

You can also find the complete list of our current volunteer openings by visiting TIHAN.org, clicking on “Volunteer,” then on “Volunteer Opportunities.” One of these roles might be just right for you! Contact Maggie McCann at 520-299-6647 ext 204 or VolunteerCoordinator@tihan.org

NAMI’s Crisis Line is available 24/7 by calling (520) 622-6000 or 1-866-495-6735

For 24/7 treatment referrals for depression or substance abuse concerns, call 1-800-622-4357.

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End-of-Year Raffle: $25 Gives You a Chance to Win Three Great Prizes!

Two First Class Airline Tickets to Anywhere

$5,000 Cash!

Raffle Tickets Only $25 each, or 5 tickets for $100

Ticket Purchase Deadline: December 4
Public Raffle Drawing: December 11

2020 Ford F-150 Platinum

Jim Click Millions for Charity Raffle

Your odds are much better than the lottery—fewer than 100,000 tickets will be sold.

Buy Your tickets through the TIHAN office, or online at www.tihan.org (go to the “DONATE” tab and then click on “Jim Click Raffle”)

Raffle Tickets Only $25 each, or 5 tickets for $100

Ticket Purchase Deadline: December 4
Public Raffle Drawing: December 11

Proceeds from all tickets sold by TIHAN will support our programs and services!

Honoring Volunteers Who Have Helped Us Continue to Serve During COVID-19

To keep our volunteers, staff, and CarePartners safe, we’ve had to limit the number of volunteers, and the in-person engagement they offer during the COVID-19 pandemic. But working remotely, and with social distancing, TIHAN’s programs and services—and our operations—continue on, thanks to outstanding volunteers!

Agie O  Cathy D  Gael S  Katalina R  Peter H  Ted A
Ahinvala E  Cecilia C  Gary G  Kate M  Phyllis O  Terry B
Alan T  Cha-Cha A  George V  Katherine G  Rabbi Helen C  Tim C
Alicia D  Corina G  Gwen E  Katie R  Ramses G  Tim D
Allen K  Craig H  Ian S  Kay H  Rex C  Tim H
Amber N  Curt B  Irlanda C  Kelly V  Roopal B  Tina B
Amy D  Dale J  Iva T  Laura S  Rose C  Tina R
Anthony J  Dan U  Jake R  Leslie K  Rose D  Tom M
Araceli O  Dave I  James C  Linda G  Ruben P  Traci H
Arlan C  Dave P  James K  Lorel D  Ruth G  Vanessa Q
Ashley A  David B  Jane H  Maddie M  Sally L  Vicki M
Barbara J  David C  Jane P  Maggie M  Sam C  Vicky B
Barbie A  David Z  Janice M  Maria H  Sam S  Waylan R
Beau F  Denise N  Jef M  Mark R  Sandy B  
Bev M  Diane P  Jeff S  Mary A  Sandy C  
Bill D  Diane T  Jenny H  Mattea T  Sara B  
Bob L  Donna B  Jerrell H  Melinda D  Scott T  
Bobbie P  Dorothy C  Jerry C  Melody H  Shanna C  
Bobby D  Doug W  Jess L  Mike H  Sharon H  
Bonnie S  Ed C  Jill R  Mike L  Soozie H  
Brent M  Ed C  Jill R  Missy D  Stephanie H  
Byron B  Ed E  Jim F  Murry H  Stephen H  
Carol B  Ellie J  Jim R  Noel F  Stephen M  
Carol S  Frank M  Joel G  Nur D  Stone T  
Caroline L  Frank S  Judy R  Pastor Karla S  Stuart M  

THANK YOU!

If we inadvertently omitted your name, we apologize, and ask that you please contact scott@tihan.org to let us know so that we can acknowledge your contributions!
TIHAN joins the local commemoration of National Philanthropy Day to honor two groups that make a tremendous difference in the lives of those living with HIV/AIDS and so many people in our community.

The Stonewall Foundation

The Stonewall Foundation has been a godsend to TIHAN and people living with HIV. Since the inception of the foundation in 1977, they have donated over $20 million support to a variety of nonprofits. TIHAN is honored to be among The Stonewall Foundation’s family of 23 arts, health, and education nonprofits that they support each year.

The Stonewall Foundation has made a major sustained commitment to TIHAN, supporting our Poz Cafe lunch and social program, as well as our Living Well with HIV series of classes. We are grateful for CEO Rick Small and the board of the foundation for their annual support, as well as for a major emergency grant that The Stonewall Foundation provided to support TIHAN during the COVID-19 pandemic, helping our organization, our programs and services, and our people.

SíCharro! / Flores Concepts

For almost 100 years, the Flores family has been feeding Tucson with great food through their iconic El Charro Cafe in downtown Tucson. Under the leadership of award-winning chef Carlotta Flores and her son Ray, the SíCharro! family of restaurants has expanded greatly, with several locations, and now includes Charro Steak, Charro del Rey, Charro Vida, and Carlotta’s Kitchen, their catering component.

The SíCharro!/Flores Concepts family give back generously to TIHAN and other schools, groups and nonprofit organizations that serve people in need. They know that the basic act of providing food cooked with love and serving it to someone in need is a powerful way of reminding them that they are cared about. Good food is medicine, for the body and for the soul. TIHAN and the people living with HIV who we serve have been fortunate to be among the hundreds of groups that have been blessed by the generosity of the SíCharro!/Flores Concepts family.

With gratitude, TIHAN is recognizing the two groups with our 2020 Spirit of Philanthropy Awards, to be presented at the National Philanthropy Day event held virtually this year. “The Spirit of Philanthropy Award recognizes people for their generous spirit, evidenced in their contributions of time, efforts, and/or resources. These people demonstrate extraordinary leadership and vision in support of charitable agencies’ goals. Their contribution makes a better community a reality. We honor them and are grateful for their spirit of giving. They truly inspire us all.”

Thank you for changing the world with your giving hearts!
Please note that the TIHAN office will be closed on the following days:

Wednesday, November 11th, in observance of Veterans Day
Thursday, November 26th and Friday November 27th, in observance of Thanksgiving
Friday, December 25th, in observance of Christmas
Friday, January 1st, in observance of New Year's Day

This holiday season, if you are looking to donate items to support the people and programs of TIHAN that help people live well, we’d greatly appreciate your consideration of donating any of these following items:

- Private, secured storage space – 10’ x 10’ or larger
- Avery 5160 laser address labels
- 8.5” x 11” multi-use copy paper, white or colors (pastel green, yellow, or orchid)
- Rolls or booklets of ‘Forever’ stamps (first-class) and postcard stamps
- 10- or 13-gallon waste basket liners (trash bags)
- Facial tissues, toilet tissue, paper towels, cleaning supplies (for office use)
- #10 security envelopes
- Rolls of plastic packing tape (the type that fits packing tape guns)
- 1” white, 3-ring, binders with transparent overlay cover
- Cross-cut paper shredder
- Desktop laser printer (black and white)
- 2-, 3-, or 4-drawer fireproof filing cabinet
- Air purifiers
- Grocery store gift cards (for purchasing food for trainings/events/meetings, etc.)
- Toiletry items for CarePackages (shampoo, soap, cleaning supplies, and other items that cannot be purchased with food stamps)
- 2 padded tablecloths to fit 8-foot tables
- 10’ x 10’ pop up canopy (such as: Lowe’s Z-shade item #806328 model #ZSB1010ALBL )
- Convertible hand truck / platform dolly (such as Home Depot—model #DC35081)
- Bankers boxes with lids (new or gently used)
- Hand sanitizer, Clorox wipes, Lysol spray, gloves (nitrile or vinyl), and cloth masks
- Newer model laptop computer with Windows operating system
- Adult coloring books, colored pencils and/or puzzles for CarePartners

If you have any questions about contributing items to TIHAN, please contact our Operations Manager, Maggie McCann, at OperationsManager@tihan.org or 299-6647 ext 204.

We are especially grateful for the major sponsors of our 2020 events, Treasures for TIHAN—our largest event which was canceled due to COVID-19, and Turnabout for TIHAN, which is now a virtual fundraising event. Thank you to these major sponsors for supporting our benefits!

616 GC, LLC
Aflac / Cathy Davis
Ted Adams
Aunt Rita’s Foundation
Carol Bogg
Kimberly Bond and Patti Haring
Dr. Kevin Carmichael and Dr. Tejal Parikh – in memory of Anthony Edward Stafford
Cat Hospital of Tucson / Dr. Minta Keyes
Centra Realty / Colette Barajas
Coalition for African American Health and Wellness
John Consedine
Dr. Seth Dubry and Mr. Todd Colwell
Friends of Jess Losoya
Roger Funk and Doug Noffsinger – in memory of Noel Matkin, James Sincox, and Myron Morris
Donita Gross – in memory of James David Stobaugh
Jenny and Mike Hartung
Susan Heinrich and Leslie Kahn
Elvor and Kay Hopper
Shirley and Phil Kananen – in memory of Philip Jr
Tina MacBeth
Stuart Meinke
Tom and Cheryl Muller
The Petroni/Laws Family – in memory of Lacey Laws
Jill and Jim Rich
Dr. Gary and Diane Smith
Speedway Veterinary Hospital / Dr. Kayla Boyer
Kim and Dan Talerico – in memory of Steve Trujillo and Myron Morris
Ryan Thomsen and Darrion Brown
Timothy Olcott, PC

Thanks for Taking a Look

This holiday season, if you are looking to donate items to support the people and programs of TIHAN that help people live well, we’d greatly appreciate your consideration of donating any of these following items:

Do You Need Your Mailing in a Plain, Unmarked Envelope for Confidentiality?

TIHAN understands that address confidentiality can be critical to our CarePartners and important to our donors and volunteers as well. To ensure confidentiality, TIHAN offers you the option of receiving agency mail in an unmarked envelope.

While we are happy to offer this option, we do want to let you know that there are substantial added costs associated with unmarked mailings. In an effort to keep our administrative mailing costs down, if you are currently receiving TIHAN mail/newsletters in an unmarked envelope but do not need unmarked mailings, please contact TIHAN Operations Manager Maggie McCann at (520) 299-6647 ext 204 or OperationsManager@tihan.org so we can update your mailing preferences.
Acknowledging Gifts Made to TIHAN in Honor of and in Memory of Loved Ones
(Gifts received August 1—October 15, 2020)

Gifts Received in Honor Of
Scott Blades *
Calimmune
Linda Girard
Leslie Kahn
Barbara Kaller-Cohen and Kenny Cohen *
Steven Laguna *
Maggie McCann
Jill Rich
Claudia Svarstad and Beckie Harkey

Gifts Received in Memory Of
Al Adami, OTR
Dr. Terry Anspach
Anthony James Apodaca *
John Avcott
Ann Baldwin
Debbie Barnette *
Jerome Beillard
Patty Blanco
John Cannell
Bruce Corey
Curtis Davis
Carl Lewis Druckman
Derek Fowler *
Gary
Tom Ham *
Ron Holland
Jay Johnson
Bill McManus *
Terry Meinhardt
Dr. Myron Morris *
Maria Nagy
Butch O'Daniel *
Donald Paugh
Ronald Schuyler
Anthony Edward Stafford
Steve Trujillo *
David & Anita Wade *
Tom Walker

* denotes those for whom multiple gifts have been received during this period of time

Helping Us Stay In Touch the Way that Works Best for You!

TIHAN has two publications:
1) A monthly e-flash with brief announcements and late-breaking news and events we send via email, and
2) A quarterly newsletter that is more in-depth, that can be sent via email or a paper copy mailed to you

Let us know if you’d like to receive our monthly enews flash, and also if you’d like to receive this quarterly newsletter by email.

To share your wishes, contact Maggie McCann at (520) 299-6647 ext 204 or OperationsManager@tihan.org. Thank you!

CarePartners Living with HIV Will Appreciate Your Donations of Laundry Detergent!

We’ve received generous donations of cleaning supplies thanks to so many fantastic TIHAN supporters, but one thing we are running low on right now is laundry detergent. Having fresh clean clothes and linens are always important, and now having laundry detergent is even more critical so that our CarePartners can launder their face masks after every use. Can you help make sure we can offer laundry detergent to every CarePartner who needs it? Please consider picking up an extra bottle on your next outing. Donations can be dropped off at the TIHAN office during the following times: Monday through Friday, between 8:30am and 4:30pm. Thank you!

2020 Support from Corporations and Foundations

In addition to individuals and faith communities, TIHAN is grateful to have the generous support of corporations and foundations so we can carry out our programs and services. Thank you!

616 GC, LLC
AIDS Healthcare Foundation
Alfred and Harriett Feinman Foundation
American Family Insurance Dreams Foundation
Arizona Bowl
Aunt Rita’s Foundation
Broadway Cares / Equity Fights AIDS
Center for Health and Hope
Citi Business Services
Coffee Times Drive-Thru
Community Foundation for Southern Arizona
Jewish Federation of Southern Arizona
Long Realty Cares Foundation
Morris A. Hazan Family Foundation
Ralph L. Smith Foundation
Speedway Veterinary Hospital / Dr. Kayla Boyer
The Stonewall Foundation
The Sundt Foundation
Timothy Olcott, PC

Remembering Supporters We’ve Lost

Tom Kerrigan
Helen “Robbie” Dick