

FALL 2011



HOSPICE
OF SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

COMPASSIONATE connections

The Greatest Adventure — embracing the end of life with courage and an open heart

Louise Wollenberg was 89 when she took a tumble. She was fairly independent until then, making her own meals and comfortably living next door to her daughter and son-in-law, Joyce and Barry Vissell. But after the fall, Louise's health began to decline. "You hear that typically when an older person falls or breaks something, it's the beginning of a downward spiral," Barry says.

Weight slipped from her frame rapidly, and the Vissells needed assistance caring for her. "I used to wake up in the morning and challenge myself not to cry that day," Joyce says. "I desperately needed some support."

A phone call went out to Hospice—a step that is often scary to make, but which opens the door to accessing comfort, compassion and extraordinary support, often available within hours.

When a receptionist answered the phone, "I said I wanted to talk to someone about my mother," Joyce says. "And then the nurse came on and said, 'Tell me all about your mom, I have time.' I started to cry. She was amazing and perfect with me and we talked at length. A nurse came the next day."

Hospice of Santa Cruz County provided end-of-life care to Louise until her death, four-and-a-half months later. Services included a volunteer visitor who took Louise for walks on the beach and enjoyed ice cream with her. When Louise was no longer able to leave her apartment, the volunteer sat by her side and kept her up-to-date on the golf tournaments she so loved. An aide and a nurse provided personal and medical care and a chaplain visited weekly to support Louise spiritually. A social worker provided support as well.

"Because of Hospice and their involvement in her day-to-day care, it freed us up to be with her



on a deeper level, to actually be there for her, and that made all the difference," Barry says.

And even though Louise was slipping away, she retained an unusual and upbeat attitude about death—she felt it would be her greatest adventure. Louise didn't want her family to be unhappy, Joyce says. When Louise took her last breaths, her family played the Hallelujah chorus by Handel's Messiah—and Louise took a triumphant exit from this world.

Following her passing, the Vissell family wrote a book about Louise's life and death, called "A Mother's Final Gift," which tells the story of Louise's tender approach to death and dying, and offers insight into the care and services provided by Hospice.

"Hospice are really like angels," Joyce says. "They set the bar very high for patient care, beyond anything I could ever imagine."



The Vissells' book "A Mother's Final Gift: How One Woman's Courageous Dying Transformed Her Family" is a touching and uplifting account of Louise's end-of-life journey with her family. Ten percent of the proceeds from the book will be donated to support Hospice of Santa Cruz County programs. The book can be purchased on the Vissells' website, www.sharedheart.org, or from Amazon.

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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Dear Friends,

Five short years ago Hospice of Santa Cruz County moved to our Scotts Valley location. Since then the number of people we support through the end-of-life journey has doubled to over 140 per day.

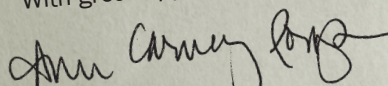
Our dedicated professional care teams travel the county from Davenport to Aromas and back delivering compassionate, personalized end-of-life care to patients and their families. In recent months we have diligently updated and streamlined our systems to allow us to be the most effective and responsive hospice we can be. To serve at this momentous time in so many people's lives is an honor. It deepens our commitment to wise stewardship of the resources and contributions that make our work possible.

Later this month, we will bid farewell to our Chief Medical Director, Dr. Phil Yule. After guiding our clinical practice for over seven years, Dr. Yule plans to retire, spend more time with his family, and travel. We have been so fortunate to have his adept wisdom and heartfelt commitment to our patients and families. Dr. Vanessa Little joins our team as Chief Medical Director. A Santa Cruz resident, Dr. Little served as a hospice physician at Pathways Hospice in Sunnyvale. She brings an expertise of hospice and palliative care and a deep compassion for those facing the end of life.

Our fall newsletter highlights some of the many ways our community participates in sustaining the Hospice mission. The generous work of hundreds of volunteers expands and energizes our resource base every day. Special events like Tandy Beal's upcoming benefit show HereAfterHere support both our work and core value of bringing greater community awareness to end-of-life issues. It is a gift when art helps us explore important and difficult topics. Tandy's show is beautifully thought-provoking and stimulates rich conversations about what happens at the end of life and beyond.

This ongoing partnership with the larger community has helped our agency sustain itself through the tides of change. As the economic and healthcare landscapes continue to shift beneath us, our gratitude for the generosity and support of each of our community contributors only deepens. In turn, our commitment to being here for every person and family facing end-of-life decisions far into the future remains unwavering.

With great appreciation,


Ann Carney Pomper





Embracing the Mystery “Here After Here”

“Hospice is an organization that I really love. They are the people at the gate. I am so grateful that they exist.”

—Tandy Beal

It's the here after here that people often wonder about. What happens when we die? Will I see my loved ones again? Answers to these questions are varied and often depend on someone's faith, tradition, or culture. Santa Cruz choreographer and renowned dancer Tandy Beal has long been curious about what happens when we die. While she doesn't claim to know the answers, Tandy will create a conversation with the production of her multi-media performance in which Beal and company will explore the wonders and mystery of life after death.

Last year was the first time she staged this sold-out production, which combines acting, documentary video work and dance. This year, audience-goers will have another chance to see “Here-AfterHere” when it shows at Cabrillo College's Crocker Theatre for three showings at 7:30 p.m. on Sept. 9 and 10, and at 3 p.m. on Sunday, Sept. 11. Tandy has made tickets available as a benefit to Hospice of Santa Cruz County for the Friday show.



“Hospice is an organization that I really love,” Tandy says. “They are the people at the gate. I am so grateful that they exist.”

Since she was a child, and her kitties died, Tandy began ask-

ing existential questions about what happens when we die. “It's a big mystery, and as an artist, it is the ultimate imaginative leap, because whatever you believe, nobody can say you're wrong. One of the reasons for doing this work is that the more I hear what people say, the more open I get, and the more that I'm interested in, ‘How do we move toward our death without fear?’”



“HereAfterHere” is a two-hour abstract show that combines various art forms in an expression of asking questions about what might happen when we die. Jon Scofield, Tandy's husband, created the musical score.

As for Tandy and what she thinks happens to us in the here after here, she says, “I hope I'll embrace the dying process and be ready. I think it will be astonishing. ... I think we're all part of something gigantic. An amazing event.”

“HereAfterHere” will show Sept. 9-11 at the Crocker Theatre at Cabrillo College. Hospice benefit tickets for the Friday show at 7:30 are \$50 and include a pre-show reception. Call Monika at (831) 430-3082 or visit hospicesantacruz.org.



is Coming!

Sunday, October 2nd
Noon-4pm at the Santa Cruz Elks Lodge

HSCC's largest fundraising event of the year is coming and the Friends of Hospice are busy putting the final touches on this great day. The family-friendly event features a huge live and silent auction, and authentic Oktoberfest food and drink for purchase. Admission is FREE.

The Friends are still collecting auction items.

Call 430-3000 to make a donation.

Medical Decisions and Documents Every Family Should Know About



Health Care Directive lets us make known what kind of health care we want — or do not want — if we become too ill to speak for ourselves. It also appoints a healthcare agent who will speak for us when we cannot represent ourselves. Every adult should have one.

Few of us would want our families to experience the stress of having to guess what medical intervention we would want if we were unable to speak for ourselves because of an accident or serious illness. Yet how many of us have planned ahead and completed the documents that would support our family at such a time? When a patient's wishes are not known and he or she is unable to participate in making decisions, the default is to do everything, which may be the very opposite of what the patient wanted.

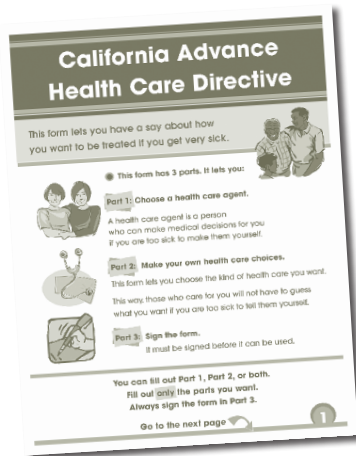
Here are a few questions to consider: Could a loved one correctly describe how you want to be treated in the case of a life-limiting accident or illness? Have you appointed someone you trust to advocate on your behalf if you are too ill to speak for yourself? Do you have this information in writing?

There are two very important forms that can help guide family members through these important decisions. An Advance

Health Care Directive lets us make known what kind of health care we want — or do not want — if we become too ill to speak for ourselves. It also appoints a healthcare agent who will speak for us when we cannot represent ourselves. Every adult should have one.

For people who are seriously ill or medically frail, a Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (POLST) form can also be completed to help ensure that care wishes are clearly communicated and honored. POLST records choices about treatments such as CPR, feeding tubes, and breathing machines. Signed by both the patient and doctor, it is a medical order, meaning that paramedics, nurses, and doctors in any setting are required to honor it. POLST is bright pink and easily recognized and travels with the patient if he or she moves from home to the hospital or nursing home.

These documents help us have these crucial conversations before there is a crisis. So ask the above questions of yourself and those you love. Educating ourselves and communicating our wishes is one of the greatest gifts we can give our families. For more information about Advance Directives or POLST or to order a form in English or Spanish, call Julie Boudreau, Education and Outreach Coordinator, at 430-3078.



We Honor Our Grantmakers

- Bright Horizon Fund at the Community Foundation
- California HealthCare Foundation
- Catholic Healthcare West
- Children's Miracle Network
- City of Capitola
- City of Scotts Valley
- The Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County
- Driscoll's Charitable Fund at the Community Foundation
- Finkelman Family Charitable Foundation
- Hospice Foundation of America
- Hospice Foundation
- Italian Catholic Federation
- Kiwanis Club of Surf City
- Monterey Peninsula Foundation
- Newman's Own Foundation
- The Nicholson Family Foundation
- Palo Alto Medical Foundation
- Plantronics
- R-H Santa Cruz Youth Foundation
- Rotary Club of Capitola/Aptos
- Sharanam Foundation
- St. John the Baptist Church Helpful Shop
- Richard and Mary Solari Charitable Trust
- TouchPoint Foundation
- United Way of Santa Cruz County
- Wells Fargo Foundation

On Monday, September 12th join us for a free community forum on planning for your future financial and healthcare needs. 7-9 pm at Inner Light Center, 5630 Soquel Drive, Soquel. For more information call Julie at 430-3078.

Meet Pat O'Brien, Hospice Volunteer



There's a dying woman that Pat O'Brien goes to visit every week. All she wants to do is talk and have some mental stimulation. Pat provides that for her by offering support, compassion and empathy.

A man that Pat used to visit had Parkinson's disease. They watched *Law & Order* together, she made him lunch, and then transferred him to his bed for his nap.

Another woman she assisted was dying from cancer and had two 20-something children who were caring for her. "Her children were so devoted to her," Pat says. "I told them how impressed I was with their care and concern and what a great mother she must have been for them to give back to her so lovingly. I've always remembered that situation and that family."

In fact, if you ask her, Pat could probably recall all of the nearly 50 families that she has warmly cared for as a volunteer

visitor for Hospice of Santa Cruz County over the past 11 years. Pat also volunteers as a speaker for Hospice, and she helps people prepare Advance Healthcare Directives—paperwork to ensure that their final wishes and medical preferences are carried out.

Pat is one of 300 volunteers who help support Hospice of Santa Cruz County. To become a volunteer visitor, she underwent 36 hours of training and made a one-year commitment, which includes logging in at least four hours of volunteer service per week. That was 11 years ago, and the 75-year-old Pat continues to help make dying a graceful process for Santa Cruz County residents.

"It's our volunteers that back up our staff in every way," says Volunteer Services Manager Radha Mallery. "We're very fortunate. It's a special person who

wants to volunteer with people at the end of life."

"There's a tremendous personal reward in serving others, particularly at the end of life," Pat says. "It's such a sacred time and to be able to share that with someone is a very serious and trustful thing to do. It's a special opportunity to travel that road with someone."

Interestingly, doing this work for over a decade has made Pat more comfortable as she thinks about her own death. "I feel I understand the dying process a lot better than I did," she says. "I really know what's going on with people physically and emotionally when they come to the end of life, and I think having that knowledge is going to make my own passing easier."

Hospice of Santa Cruz County can use more patient care volunteers like Pat O'Brien. Volunteer Visitor Training starts Thursday, September 22. This eight-session training prepares volunteers to support patients and their families both practically and emotionally. Interested potential volunteers should contact Volunteer Services Manager Radha Mallery at 430-3006 or rmallery@hospicesantacruz.org, or download the volunteer application from the Hospice website, hospicesantacruz.org.



We thank our Legacy Circle members who have planned for a financial gift that honors their values and establishes a living legacy of end-of-life care in our community for generations to come.

Charles S. Adams Family Trust
Lani (Snyder) & Richard Adams
Toby & Michael Alexander
Judith Allen & Susan Seaburg
Jacquie Baker
Marie Barnett
John P. Barrett Trust
Estate of Greta Bell
Estate of Ralph H. Brailsford
Anne & Gerald Brown
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Ida Toth & Ann B. Hickman Trust
Estate of Susan Hinz
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Marcia Keith
Estate of William M. Kelly
Miguel Korzeniewicz Trust
Mary Laznibat Trust
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Elizabeth McBain Trust
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Estate of Cynthia Mitchell
Gertrude Faye Moore Trust
John F. Morgan Trust
Estate of Anna Marie Nelson
Estate of Paul O'Toole
Sharon Parker
Estate of Dorothy Perry

Ann Carney Pomper
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Ruth Revol Estate
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Gloria Jean Stefani Trust
Stephanie A. Suglian Trust
Edith Trembley Trust
Monte Tudor-Long
Michael D. Waitzman Trust
Edward E. & Mary I. Webber Trust
Rachel Wedeen

If you would like to learn more about joining the Legacy Circle, or if you have already provided for Hospice in your estate plans, please contact Kathleen R. Hughes at 430-3033.

COMMUNITY BOOK DISCUSSION

Tuesday, August 30th - 7:30 pm

Bookshop Santa Cruz

An exploration of themes from Stephen Levine's book *Meetings at the Edge*, featuring Tandy Beal and HSCC chaplain Emmah Smyth. Call Julie at 430-3078 for more information.

HEREAFTERHERE HOSPICE BENEFIT SHOW

Friday, September 9th - 7:30 pm

Cabrillo College Crocker Theatre

Call Monika at (831) 430-3082 or visit hospicesantacruz.org for more information.

ALWAYS BE PREPARED

Monday, September 12th - 7 to 9 pm

at Inner Light Center

5630 Soquel Drive, Soquel

A free community forum on planning for future financial and healthcare needs.

For more information call Julie 430-3078.

GOURMET GRAZING ON THE GREEN

Saturday, September 17 - noon to 5 pm

Aptos Village Park

Santa Cruz Cancer Benefit Group's annual Food & Wine Festival benefitting Hospice and organizations supporting people living with cancer. www.sccbg.org

OKTOBERFEST!

Sunday, October 2 - noon to 4 pm

Santa Cruz Elks Lodge

150 Jewell Street (off Graham Hill Road)

The Friends of Hospice present this annual family-friendly event featuring live and silent auctions and authentic Oktoberfest food and drink.

DINING AT SHADOWBROOK

Tuesday, November 1st - first seating at 5:30

Shadowbrook Restaurant, Capitola

Enjoy dinner with friends on this night and Shadowbrook will donate 1/3 of your total dinner bill to Hospice. Call 475-1511 to make reservations and mention you are dining for Hospice.

GRIEF & THE HOLIDAYS

Wednesday, November 30 - 6 to 8 pm

Hospice of Santa Cruz County

Holidays once filled with joy can be a painful time when someone we love has died. This workshop introduces tools for coping during the holidays and difficult winter months. All ages are welcome. Call 430-3000 to pre-register.



Find us on Facebook!

CELEBRATING THE STARS

Saturday, October 22 - 11 to 2 pm

Peachwoods

This not-to-be-missed fifth annual fundraiser fashion show luncheon features models from The Healthy Way Program who have successfully maintained their weight loss - some have lost over 100 pounds! All proceeds benefit HSCC programs. Call (831) 462-5900 for more information.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Volunteer Visitor Training starts Thursday, September 22. This eight-session training prepares volunteers to support patients and their families both practically and emotionally. Please call 430-3000 for more information about the application process.

GRIEF COUNSELING & SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Individual support and grief support groups for adults, children, and teens are offered throughout the year to all members of our community. A drop-in group is held every Tuesday in Aptos. Call 430-3000 for more information.

For a complete calendar of upcoming events, information on our services, and employment opportunities, visit www.hospicesantacruz.org.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

