PALLIATIVE CARE CENTER
SILICON VALLEY NOW ACCEPTING PATIENTS

By Kathy Bentaieb

Years in the making, the vision is now a reality. The Palliative Care Center Silicon Valley is open and accepting patients.

A division of Hospice of the Valley, the Palliative Care Center Silicon Valley™ is the first and only independent, community-based, licensed outpatient palliative care center of its kind in California.

Palliative care is expert medical care dedicated to relieving the pain, distress, and other symptoms that can accompany serious illness. It is specialized and holistic care aimed at treating the way a serious illness impacts patients and their families—including the physical, emotional, social, and spiritual aspects.

Patients treated at the Center may have one or more of a number of serious or chronic life-threatening illnesses, such as cancer, congestive heart failure, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, kidney failure, or Alzheimer’s disease, among others.

Physicians may refer patients to the Center for consultation at any stage of a serious illness, including at time of diagnosis. The Palliative Care Center works collaboratively with other healthcare practitioners to provide the extra layer of support that patients and families often need while undergoing other treatments. While others are working to treat the disease, palliative care focuses its efforts on relieving the pain and emotional distress caused by the disease.

“Significant changes are happening in the way we care for patients with chronic conditions to best meet their needs and support their caregivers,” said Sally Adelus, president and CEO of Hospice of the Valley.

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Hospice of the Valley welcomes Chuck Toeniskoetter, chairman and CEO of Toeniskoetter Construction, to its board of directors.

Chuck has 35 years of experience in commercial construction and development in Silicon Valley. He founded Toeniskoetter Construction in 2009. He also is co-founder and chairman of Toeniskoetter Development. He earned his bachelor’s degree in mechanical engineering from the University of Notre Dame and has an MBA from Stanford.

Chuck is very active in the community and serves on several boards. Hospice of the Valley worked with Toeniskoetter Construction on construction of its new Palliative Care Center Silicon Valley, the first free-standing outpatient center of its kind in California.

“We look forward to having Chuck’s leadership and expertise on our governing board,” said Sally Adelus, president and CEO of Hospice of the Valley. “Undoubtedly, Chuck’s outstanding community service and sound business acumen will serve Hospice of the Valley admirably.”

“The Hospice of the Valley mission is something I believe in and am pleased to support,” Chuck said. “It will be exciting and rewarding to be involved in the organization.”

COMMUNITY FORUMS MAKING STRIDES IN ADVANCE HEALTH CARE PLANNING

By Jeanne Wun

In January 2013, Hospice of the Valley introduced Planning for Your Future: Advance Health Care Directives, a free community education forum on the importance of advance health care planning, in partnership and collaboration with the Bay Area News Group and key community organizations.

This timely forum features national award-winning San Jose Mercury News science and medicine reporter Lisa Krieger, author of the Cost of Dying series, and Gary Bertuccelli, MDiv, MSW, LCSW, manager of social work and spiritual care with Hospice of the Valley.

To date, Hospice of the Valley has hosted seven forums and has collaborated with Avenidas Senior Center, Palo Alto; the Campbell Community Center; Yu-Ai Kai Japanese American Community Center, San Jose; and the American Association of University Women, San Jose, to bring this timely topic to the community. As a result, the advance health care planning forums have made a positive impact on more than 750 people and encouraged them to start the conversation about their health care wishes.

“We are pleased to present Planning for Your Future programs that matter to our community,” said Sally Adelus, president and CEO of Hospice of the Valley. “The response from the community has been overwhelming, which speaks to the growing interest and need for these forums.”

“This was an outstanding presentation,” a recent participant said. “Lisa and Gary were very informative, compassionate, and insightful. This has motivated me to complete these important documents for my family.”

For more information or to arrange a Planning for Your Future program on advance health care planning or other related topic for your group, please call Jeanne Wun at 1.408.559.5600 x5423 or email jwun@hospicevalley.org.
IMPROVING CARE FOR CALIFORNIANS ONE STEP AT A TIME

By Sally Adelus

At Hospice of the Valley, we are feeling the momentum for change. Throughout the pages of this newsletter, you will read about our innovative leadership transforming the way we talk about health care, grateful patients and clients whose lives have been impacted by our services, overwhelming support from our community, and Hospice of the Valley’s new venture—Palliative Care Center Silicon Valley—which celebrated its grand opening in mid-September.

We’re proud to have been selected by the California HealthCare Foundation to share ideas and the lessons learned in bringing independent, community-based, outpatient palliative care to California for the very first time with the Palliative Care Action Community, a one-year learning collaborative of palliative care providers throughout California. The desire to live each of our days to its fullest and according to our wishes is growing in our community. Yet, we have a long way to go.

In August, the Dartmouth Atlas of Health Care released a report on trends in cancer care near patients’ life end and found sharp variation in the care patients were receiving. While research has shown that most patients with cancer who are approaching the end of their lives prefer supportive care that minimizes symptoms and their days in the hospital, the care patients receive is likely to be exactly the opposite, especially in California. (Trends in Cancer Care Near the End of Life: A Dartmouth Atlas of Health Care Brief).

The California HealthCare Foundation reported, “Compared to the country as a whole, in 2010 California’s patients with advanced cancer were more likely to die in the hospital, spend time in an ICU, receive life-support procedures in the last month of life, and receive chemotherapy in the last two weeks of life.”

So what can we do to assure our families, our friends, and ourselves that we get the best care possible? We look to you, our friends and supporters, to spread the word. Attend one of Hospice of the Valley’s Planning for Your Future workshops, or host one at your club, church, or organization. Tell your doctor about the Palliative Care Center Silicon Valley. Make a donation to Hospice of the Valley to ensure that we can continue to offer these vital services to our community.

Together, we can make a real difference in the lives of patients and families facing serious illness.

OUR MISSION

We affirm dignity and hope for those facing serious illness by providing comfort through compassionate palliative, hospice, and grief care.

We strengthen our community through advocacy, education, research, and volunteerism.
Congratulations!
Today is your day.
You’re off to Great Places!
You’re off and away!
You have brains in your head.
You have feet in your shoes
You can steer yourself
any direction you choose.
You’re on your own. And you know
what you know.
And YOU are the guy who’ll decide
where to go.

— Dr. Seuss

Tonisue was first introduced to Hospice of the Valley when her mother died from breast cancer in 2004. Although her mother was on hospice for only two days, “the bereavement care that both my father and I received was so helpful in processing the feelings we were experiencing,” she said.

As her father’s health declined, Tonisue naturally fell into the routine of caring for him, bathing him, and feeding him, but it was not without stress.

“As a caregiver, you want to be the one that does everything just right, just enough—not too much, not too little, but just right,” she said.

The reality of losing her father and adjusting to her new role in life seemed almost too much to bear. “I was the adult caregiver who was burned out, the business person in charge of all the details of running the household, and the little girl whose daddy was dying. Then the hospice care team came in and that sense of me carrying it all began to lighten.”

A turning point for Tonisue was when Chaplain Pam Nates brought a copy of Dr. Seuss’s Oh! The Places You’ll Go to her visit.

“A whimsical children’s book by Dr. Seuss may hardly seem the place to start a story about hospice care. But for Tonisue Fagundes, 60, it was just what the doctor ordered.

Living in her childhood home in Campbell, Tonisue had spent much of her adult life caring for others, including her grandmother, grandfather, and mother. When her father, Anthony Fagundes, entered Hospice of the Valley’s care in 2011, the 22-month-journey would be as much about getting the best medical care for her father as it was about emotional and spiritual healing for her.

now I think I’m learning about my own existence,” she said.

Two months after her father’s passing, Tonisue said she is overwhelmed with gratitude at the perfect balance of medical expertise and spiritual and emotional support that Hospice of the Valley provided to her and her father.

“If I had not had the hospice care team, there would have been no way I could have done this on my own,” she said. “Each team member had a specific role that encompassed every aspect of what we needed here in our home—from the medications, doctor’s advice, and nurse’s care, to giving us the freedom to feel different things, to understand the feelings, and to be grateful for life.”

For each of us, no matter which of life’s journeys we are on, there is wisdom in Seuss’ parting words: “So...be your name Buxbaum or Bixby or Bray or Mordecai Ali Van Allen O’Shea, you’re off to Great Places! Today is your day! Your mountain is waiting. So...get on your way!”

For more information on support for caregivers, call Hospice of the Valley at 1.408.559.5600 or visit our e-library at seriousillness.org/santaclaracounty for resources, tips, and articles for caregivers.
JANE GARRISON RETIRES AFTER 15 YEARS AS CHAPLAIN

By Chelsea Byom

For Jane Garrison, the biggest hurdle in landing a job at Hospice of the Valley was her outfit. A Mission San Jose Dominican since graduating high school, Sister Jane previously wore a nun’s habit every day. The patient services director told Jane that it would present too many barriers to have a chaplain dressed in a habit, a garment associated with Catholicism, when meeting patients and families of all faith backgrounds.

With blessings from her community of sisters, Jane donned street clothes for the first time in more than 30 years for her interview in a roomful of 25 employees, as was the custom at Hospice of the Valley in 1998. “Forget the crowd, I think I was more nervous about being in regular clothes!” Jane said with a laugh. The next day, the patient services director called to offer her the job.

“As a chaplain, I believe our mission is to bring hope to patients and families,” Jane said. “It’s helping a patient accept that maybe they can’t go out and golf any more, but maybe they can sit in the living room and watch the game on TV. Setting those small goals helps patients see hope and make the most of every day.”

Jane retired from Hospice of the Valley in July, yet she feels her work helping people at the end of life is not over.

“Hospice has certainly been the perfect channel for connecting with families, and on some level I still want to do that. But I also look forward to reading and having more quality prayer time…and just resting!” said Jane.

The staff would like to extend their warm wishes and gratitude to Jane for her friendship, gentle guidance, and peaceful presence at Hospice of the Valley these last 15 years.

WESTERN GALA ROUNDS UP SUPPORT FOR HOSPICE OF THE VALLEY

By Amy Ramsey

On June 1, more than 300 guests saddled up for Hospice of the Valley’s 33rd annual Western Gala ~ Boots & Banjos at the historic Coyote Ranch in Morgan Hill. The gala raised more than $200,000 benefiting Hospice of the Valley’s programs and services.

One of the evening’s highlights was a video featuring a mother’s poignant story: the loss of her son to suicide. Hospice of the Valley is known for its expert hospice and palliative care, but offers many other programs and services through the generous support from the community.

One such program is specialized counseling services for individuals and families grieving the loss of a loved one by suicide.

Hospice of the Valley appreciates the generosity of longtime and new Western Gala donors, sponsors, and guests, and the community for their ongoing support of the organization’s mission.
Our Palliative Care Center Silicon Valley provides expertise in pain and symptom management, along with emotional and spiritual support for patients and caregivers. We work in tandem with patients’ doctors to prolong and improve their quality of life,” continues Ms. Adelus.

The Palliative Care Center Silicon Valley offers an expert care team, including physicians, nurses, social workers, and volunteers. Individualized care is focused on the needs and goals of patients, their families and caregivers.

“In many ways, palliative care is the ‘Zen of medicine,’ helping patients and families find that difficult but achievable balance between efforts to prolong life and those necessary to prevent and relieve suffering,” said Neal Slatkin, MD, vice president of medical services and chief medical officer for Hospice of the Valley. “Palliative care is about comfort, options, good decisions, and living the best life possible.”

The specialized team at the Palliative Care Center Silicon Valley addresses the many needs of seriously ill patients and their families by providing:

- Expert and proactive pain and symptom management to improve comfort, quality of life, and daily function.
- Care that is individualized and focused on the needs and goals of patients and their families.
- Counseling by social workers and other team members to provide emotional, spiritual, and practical support on adjusting to living with a serious illness.
- Case management services that provide assistance in navigating the healthcare system and in improving the coordination of care across healthcare settings.
- Caregiver support through training and practical assistance as provided by Center staff and specially trained volunteers.

PHYSICIAN SPOTLIGHT: RAKHI YADAV, MD

Rakhi Yadav, MD, joined the Palliative Care Center Silicon Valley team this summer. She joins us after completing a fellowship in Hospice and Palliative Medicine at Stanford University and a fellowship in Geriatrics from Loyola University. Her residency in Family Medicine was at Jackson Park Hospital and Medical Center in Chicago. She received an MBBS (bachelor of medicine and a bachelor of surgery) from Maulana Azad Medical College in New Delhi.

“I am excited and thrilled to be starting a new chapter in palliative care in the Bay Area,” Dr. Yadav said. “It is seldom that you get to do what you love while making a profound difference in people’s lives, and I find myself in that fortunate position. I look forward to humbly serving the Bay Area community in its palliative care needs.”

Welcome, Dr. Yadav!
Complementary therapies, such as music and Reiki, as well as massage, art, and aroma therapy, for added comfort and relief.

The majority of patients are referred for palliative care by their physicians. Self-referrals are also accepted.

The Palliative Care Center Silicon Valley provides a place to turn for exploring options, sharing information, keeping patients in control of choices, and enhancing the quality of life to make the most of each day. Living as best you can with a serious illness takes a concentrated effort from a variety of specially trained professionals — people who know how to work together.

We help improve the quality of communications and connections between patients, their loved ones, and their healthcare providers. In managing the symptoms we work to enhance the quality of a patient’s life and provide meaningful relief.

The Palliative Care Center Silicon Valley contracts with most insurance providers, as well as Medicare and Medi-Cal. The Center is located at 455 O’Connor Drive, Suite 300, in San Jose.

If you or a loved one would like to get help from the Palliative Care Center Silicon Valley, call 1.408.277.7777, email info@pccsv.org, or visit pccsv.org.

ARE YOU READY FOR PALLIATIVE CARE?

You and your family may get help from Palliative Care Center Silicon Valley if you have been diagnosed with a serious, life-threatening illness and your goals are to:

• Live as long as reasonably possible.
• Receive more than current treatments have to offer.
• Obtain relief from distressing symptoms (such as pain, breathlessness, anxiety).
• Be in control of your own healthcare decisions.
• Be able to consider all reasonable treatment options.
• Have everything done that will help you and your family.
• Plan ahead believing that this usually leads to the most successful outcomes.
• Gain support for loved ones and family members.
• Improve your quality of life and day-to-day function.

From left, Hospice of the Valley President and CEO Sally Adelus, San Jose Mayor Chuck Reed, Hospice Board Chairman Euan Thomson, PhD, and Hospice VP of Medical Services and Chief Medical Officer Neal Slatkin, MD, celebrate the Palliative Care Center Silicon Valley’s ribbon-cutting on September 13.
Ella Hoyle, whose husband died, writes in the Bereavement Care journal, “In the university of life, loss is not an elective course; it is part of the core curriculum. And how we learn the lessons of loss, personally and collectively, shapes who we become.”

One way to contribute to this process is through narrative therapy. Narrative therapy brings together the counselor and grieving client in a collaborative role. The counselor provides a safe place for the client to feel the emotions of loss and explore the story that gives meaning to the loss. The use of narrative or story is a useful vehicle for making meaning and sense of challenging situations.

Clients at Hospice of the Valley’s Community Grief & Counseling Center have found narrative tools such as journaling and letter writing especially helpful on their grief journey. Clients process the pain of grief in one-on-one counseling sessions, reliving the most difficult time of their loved ones’ illness and death.

Journaling between sessions allows the client to write without judgment or interruption. Such self-reflective writing allows them to tell the story of who they have been, who they are now, and who they will become.

In the end, clients feel more able to move forward in their lives while maintaining a connection with their loved one.

The following excerpts are from a writing exercise by the Step by Step group (see column at left). Group members were asked to write about what they would like to tell newly bereaved spouses or partners about their grief journey.

I have lost family members in my life, but I really didn’t understand grief until I lost my husband. Your world gets turned upside down. Trying to understand how this could happen. Family support—and coming to Hospice of the Valley for group—helped me try to understand that life can go on. Slowly you get to a point in your life where some things start to come together, and you can finally laugh and think about a future.

— Rachel
Don’t be afraid to ask for support and help. Through sharing your loss, you gain friendship and love from family and friends. You will learn that grief is not start-stop linear, but comes in waves and those waves of grief come at the most unexpected times. In time, the grief lessened — in a way that it’s not on your mind 24/7. You never forget the one you lost, but the loss and grief become more bearable in time.

— Barbara

It takes a long time to get to a place where the pain is more bearable. You learn to cope. You learn a lot about who you are as an individual. Strengths that you didn’t know were in you emerge. “Yes I can,” becomes a mantra. As time passes, the tears are less frequent, but reminders are everywhere. You learn to ebb and flow. Ask for help and support. It really does make it easier to talk to someone who understands.

— Linda

Immediately following your spouse’s passing, you’ll be overcome by difficult “floods” of emotions: memories of your loved one can be consuming and leave you feeling exhausted. As time goes by, you will find your way through the fog and begin to look forward to new experiences on your own and finding greater strength than you knew. Slowly your new world will seem to come into focus and the reality of being on your own, but surviving, will help you. Each day is difficult, but when you wake up there is less dread and more hope.

— Leslie

ANNUAL CAMPAIGN SUPPORTS VITAL SERVICES

As co-chairs of Hospice of the Valley’s Annual Campaign, we are delighted to invite you to participate and invest in our mission.

Approximately one-third of Hospice of the Valley’s budget is supported by annual gifts, underwriting, and sponsorships. Our contributors support our Annual Campaign to provide assurance that Hospice of the Valley’s important work continues for the benefit of today’s and future generations. Our goal is to raise $500,000 by December. We are just over halfway to our goal, and continued support during the next few months is critical. Hospice of the Valley has received a generous 2:1 Challenge Grant from the Sobrato Family Foundation—through the end of the year any new or increased donation will be worth twice as much.

Hospice of the Valley’s unique approach to caring for the whole person goes above and beyond the basic care covered by Medicare and private insurance. Vital services such as support for individuals living with a serious illness and their families before they are eligible for hospice services, a comprehensive grief counseling program, a rich volunteer program, and outreach to underserved populations are possible only with generous support from the community.

Please join us in reaching our goal. Gifts of any amount to Hospice of the Valley are welcome and deeply appreciated—please make your gift today. If you would like more information, please contact Darcie Kiyan at 1.408.559.5600 or dkiyan@hospicevalley.org or visit hospicevalley.org/how-you-can-help.
COMMUNITY PARTNERS TO HOST PROGRAM TO ENHANCE CARE FOR VETERANS

By Chelsea Byom

One out of every four dying Americans is a veteran. The rigors, values, and experiences of military service may significantly impact and shape a veteran’s perception of serious illness and the end of life.

In honor of Veteran’s Day, Hospice of the Valley and Dignity Memorial are pleased to present Hospice Foundation of America’s annual program from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. on November 7 at Xilinx Corporate Headquarters in San Jose. Registration is $75 and includes lunch and the companion book, Improving Care for Veterans Facing Illness and Death.

“Improving Care for Veterans Facing Illness and End of Life” will assist healthcare professionals in enhancing their sensitivities and understanding of veterans and provide them with new interventions to better serve dying veterans and their families. The program will also explore the traditions and sensitivities of grieving families and resources that can assist them.

Three continuing education credits are available online through the Hospice Foundation of America for nurses, social workers, counselors, funeral directors, clergy, and nursing home administrators.

“We thank Dignity Memorial and Xilinx for partnering with us to meet the unique needs of veterans at the end of life and affirm the gratitude and respect veterans deserve for their service to our country,” said Sally Adelus, president and CEO of Hospice of the Valley.

As a partner in the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization’s We Honor Veterans program, Hospice of the Valley is committed to providing this veteran-centered education to help enhance the care provided to the veterans at the end of life.

For more information or to register, visit hospicevalley.org/hfa2013 or call 1.408.559.5600.

PRACTICAL CAREGIVING TIPS DIRECT TO YOUR EMAIL INBOX

By Chelsea Byom

Hospice of the Valley proudly offers a free educational resource to caregivers called, Living with Serious Illness. This comprehensive website offers sound advice on a variety of caregiving topics, from medical concerns to emotional and spiritual issues and important decisions. A monthly e-newsletter brings topical articles with information that will make a caregiver’s life easier. From travel tips for family caregivers to coping with depression, we provide up-to-date advice from national experts. Visit seriousillness.org/santaclaracounty to subscribe to the e-newsletter.
POODLES ON PARADE

On July 21, more than 90 pups and their owners converged on Santana Row in San Jose, where they strutted their stuff at the eighth annual Poodle Parade. Hosted by LB Steak, proceeds benefited Hospice of the Valley’s Pet Companion program.

Some canines came dressed in their finest costumes and accessories, while others performed on command to a delighted crowd, which enjoyed delicious treats appropriate for pets and humans, courtesy of LB Steak.

HITS FOR HOSPICE

More than 100 spinners, yoga enthusiasts, pro-am tennis players, and their guests enjoyed a fun-filled day of activities August 17 at Courtside Club in Los Gatos for the fourth annual Hits for Hospice Pro-Am Tennis Tournament benefiting Hospice of the Valley. The tournament raised more than $55,000.

We are grateful to our generous sponsors, including: Courtside Pacific Sports Resort, CMT, Transcend, Gutenberg Communications, Cosmopolitan Catering, Modus Test, ISC, A Party Place, Barry Swenson Builder, Nordic Naturals, and O’Connor Hospital.

CHRISTMAS IN THE PARK

Visit the Hospice of the Valley and Palliative Care Center Silicon Valley trees at Christmas in the Park from November 30 – January 1 at Plaza De Cesar Chavez in Downtown San Jose. For more information, visit christmasinthepark.com.

GRIEF SUPPORT

Support Groups Begin the Week of November 4

Weekly—
- Mondays: Partner Loss, Parent Loss
- Wednesday: Kids Groups, Senior Partner Loss, Expressive Arts, Suicide Loss

Twice Monthly—
- Second and fourth Mondays: Step-by-Step (Second Year Partner Loss)

Getting Through the Holidays Workshop
November 7, 6:30 pm
Hospice of the Valley

International Survivors of Suicide Day
Grief Support Program
November 23, 8:30 am
Hospice of the Valley

Wings of Remembrance Memorial Event
December 8, 2:00 pm
Hospice of the Valley

For more information on bereavement events and support groups, call Becky Gomes, bereavement office manager, at 1.408.559.5600.
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