A guitar. A butterfly. A pair of roses. A garden. Breakfast in bed. A bottle of perfume. These are just a few of the images that Jessica De Leon, 31, thoughtfully pieced together into a collage—a work of art that brings her comfort by evoking fond memories of her late mother. “There is something about putting images together on paper,” Jessica said, “It just draws out feelings that maybe you couldn’t articulate.”

This collage is one of the many pieces of art Jessica has created as a member of the expressive arts group at Hospice of the Valley.

At just 52, Jessica’s mother Thelma was diagnosed with incurable colon cancer. “That year was filled with so many bittersweet conversations and memories and going places and trying to get the most out of what time she had left,” Jessica remembered.

Hospice of the Valley was called to provide care for her mother, Thelma. “It was the first time my mom told me, ‘I’m free of pain.’ That was a new feeling for her because she had been in pain all year.”

Collage is one of Jessica De Leon’s favorite media to convey her feelings in the expressive arts group.

Continues on page 4
Hospice of the Valley has named Linda Kramer, JD, MBA, RN, managing partner of Kramer Radin, LLP to its Board of Directors. Kramer’s law practice concentrates on estate planning, charitable giving, tax planning, and business succession planning.

“Linda’s experience in the medical and legal professions is a perfect asset for Hospice of the Valley,” said Sally Adelus, president and CEO of Hospice of the Valley. “We are delighted to have her on the board.”

“My legal practice compels me to be aware of support networks that are available for my clients and their families, who are frequently in desperate need of support at their most vulnerable time,” Kramer said. “I have found that Hospice of the Valley can be a critical part of that support and am excited to be a member of the Board of Directors.”

In an effort to fulfill Hospice of the Valley’s vision to build strategic relationships and partners, Elizabeth Darrow, CEO of Santa Clara Family Health Plan, has been named to its Professional Advisory Board. Darrow has been CEO of Santa Clara Family Health Plan since 2009 and is a national expert on health plan management and Medicare and Medicaid managed care program administration.

Darrow’s extensive managed care experience will help Hospice of the Valley navigate the radically changing healthcare market resulting from the passage of the Affordable Care Act. One example is the creation of the Cal MediConnect program, which promotes coordinated health care delivery to seniors and people with disabilities who are dually eligible for both Medicare and Medi-Cal. Santa Clara Family Health Plan is one of two plans selected to provide care to this population.

“Elizabeth is very knowledgeable in this arena and, as the vast majority of the patients we serve are Medicare eligible, she will fulfill the role of Professional Advisory Board member admirably,” said Sally Adelus, president and CEO of Hospice of the Valley.

“I am honored to have the opportunity to support such an important partner in the community,” Darrow said.

Hospice of the Valley is pleased to welcome RJ Toguchi, a financial advisor for Wells Fargo Advisors, to its planned giving committee. A Bay Area native, RJ attended and graduated from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, Michigan. He lived and worked in New York City and Tokyo before returning to the Bay Area in 2006. RJ lives in San Carlos with his wife Suki, two daughters Emma and Lani, and his dog Hoku.

“I am delighted to join the planned giving committee because Hospice of the Valley is an important organization in the community. I’ve had family members go through hospice and I have seen and heard how it has helped not only those who are ill, but those family members left behind as well,” said RJ.

If you are interested in leaving a planned gift, contact Kathy Phelan, vice president of development and communications at 1.408.559.5600.
NO PLACE LIKE HOME

By Sally Adelus, President and CEO

“There’s no place like home,” said Dorothy from the Land of Oz. Home may be your place of comfort, the place you long for, or perhaps just a familiar feeling. When we travel, there is nothing quite like that feeling of returning home at the end of the journey.

Patients nearing the end of life’s journey feel that same longing for home—that place of comfort, familiarity, and love. It is our privilege at Hospice of the Valley to provide the care and expertise to help patients and families find home again.

For nearly 35 years, Hospice of the Valley has listened intently to the needs of our community to build a full spectrum of services to help individuals with serious illness remain at home with their families. One such innovation is the Palliative Care Center Silicon Valley. With its opening, patients with advanced illness have access to outpatient services that relieve pain and symptoms and provide emotional and practical support—allowing them to spend more meaningful time at home, rather than in the hospital. I hope you will read more about the Center on pages 7 and 10.

Even with our longstanding history in Silicon Valley, many people are unaware of the broad array of services Hospice of the Valley provides and the choices that exist when faced with a serious illness. Through our new Community Life program, we are reaching community members long before they are coping with a crisis of serious illness to educate them on advance care planning, life transitions, and much more. I invite you to join us for an upcoming Community Life program, found on page 11.

As a non-profit, community-based organization, we rely on the support of community members like you to make home a reality for individuals with serious illness. I hope you will consider supporting Hospice of the Valley. Because, while we don’t have ruby slippers to take us home, we do have Hospice of the Valley.

“Patients nearing the end of life’s journey feel that same longing for home—that place of comfort, familiarity, and love.”
“As hard as it is to do anything after the loss of a loved one, push yourself a little to get any form of help, whether it’s individual counseling, a support group, or the expressive arts group.”

Following the loss of her mother, Jessica sought out individual grief counseling. When her grief counselor suggested that Jessica explore Hospice of the Valley’s support group options, the expressive arts group seemed like a perfect fit. “I love doing anything creative, and it was appealing to me to explore different ways to work through grief,” said Jessica.

The expressive arts group is one of several grief support groups offered by Hospice of the Valley and is unique in its approach. “I’ve been to other support groups before, but the art group is more of a non-verbal, creative time,” said Jessica. Group participants may have experienced a loss of any kind but come together to create and explore their feelings of grief.

The expressive arts group at Hospice of the Valley is the only group of its kind in Santa Clara County, facilitated by licensed marriage and family therapist Debra Melmon. Debra opens each session with a meditation to allow participants to ground themselves, gain distance from the stress of their day, and prepare to let the creativity flow.

Through artistic media like paint, clay, or paper maché, participants channel whatever they may be feeling into works of art.

“Ninety percent of communication is non-verbal,” Debra said. “Words alone are inadequate to express ourselves fully, especially when grieving. The medium of art has the potential to help clients move through their grief in profound ways.”

For Jessica, the expressive arts group has done just that. “It’s really opened this other world of creative expression for me. I think every piece of art we create is another outlet for grief, an expression of ourselves, and a mini-accomplishment. I’m proud of what I’ve made,” Jessica said.

To others experiencing grief, Jessica shared these words of wisdom, “As hard as it is to do anything after the loss of a loved one, push yourself a little to get any form of help, whether it’s individual counseling, a support group, or the expressive arts group. It’s just so invaluable. It’s a community of people that understand exactly what you’re going through. That’s priceless.”

The expressive arts group meets for six weeks and the next session begins on June 23. No artistic talent or experience is needed. For more information or to schedule a pre-screening interview, please contact Becky Gomes at 1.408.559.5600.

Support Groups Schedule

BEGINNING THE WEEK OF JUNE 23

WEEKLY— Mondays:
Partner Loss, Parent Loss

Wednesdays:
Kids Group, Senior Partner Loss, Expressive Arts, Suicide Loss

TWICE MONTHLY—
2nd and 4th Mondays:
Step by Step (Second Year Partner Loss)

Hakone Gardens Annual Memorial

June 11, 2014, 6:00-7:30 pm
Individuals whose loved ones received care from Hospice of the Valley in the past year are encouraged to attend.

For more information, please contact Becky Gomes at 1.408.559.5600.
Hospice of the Valley’s commitment to ensuring veterans in Silicon Valley have access to quality end-of-life care was validated recently when the organization achieved Level 1 status with the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization’s (NHPCO) We Honor Veterans Program.

Hospice of the Valley is the only hospice in Santa Clara County to achieve Level 1 and plans to continue working toward the highest rating of Level 4.

“One in four people dying in America is a veteran.”

The experience of military service may significantly impact and shape a veteran’s perception of serious illness and the end of life. Hospice of the Valley’s goal is to meet the unique needs of veterans and link them to all the services and resources to which they are entitled.

The We Honor Veterans program encourages cooperation and collaboration among organizations serving veterans to improve their end-of-life experience. Hospice of the Valley is partnering with the Veterans Administration (VA) and other community agencies such as the Campbell Veterans Memorial Foundation to learn how to best support veterans with the challenges they may be facing from illness, isolation, or traumatic life experiences.

For John Thompson, 92, a World War II Veteran, losing his independence has been the biggest challenge. John said, “When you’ve been independent all your life the hardest thing in the world is to give up your independence. But as time goes on, you know you can’t do it by yourself. I’m getting to be at the critical point where I really appreciate Hospice of the Valley’s help.” Hospice of the Valley was there to support John while he lived independently and coordinated John’s transfer to the VA inpatient hospice when living alone became too difficult.

Another aspect of Hospice of the Valley’s commitment to serving veterans is its Veteran to Veteran Program, which provides trained veteran volunteers to accompany and guide veterans and their families as they reflect on their life stories and move toward a more peaceful end-of-life experience. “Veteran volunteers have a unique ability to relate to and connect with veteran patients and their families due to their common life experiences,” said Victoria Wild, director of volunteer services.

Sally Adelus, president and CEO, added, “No one is better equipped to understand the experiences of a veteran than a fellow veteran. We continue to affirm the gratitude and respect our veterans deserve for their service to our country.”

If you’re a veteran interested in volunteering or know of a veteran needing end-of-life support, call Hospice of the Valley at 1.408.559.5600 or visit hospicevalley.org.

Gary Bertuccelli, MDiv, MSW, LCSW, manager of social work and spiritual care presented veteran John Thompson, 92, with an American flag, a card, and a flag lapel pin in recognition and gratitude for his military service on Veterans’ Day in November 2013.
At the age of 87, Russell “Russ” Gerrits was diagnosed with prostate cancer. “The oncologist told me that it had already migrated to my other organs. And, if I didn’t do anything, I’d be dead in two years,” said Russ. Despite forgoing treatment, two and a half years later Russ is still walking, driving, and even getting out for an occasional round of golf. Though Russ is still around to talk about it, his journey from diagnosis to present day has not been an easy one.

Transitions offers emotional and practical support, education on living with a serious illness and care coordination.

Just a few months prior to Russ’ diagnosis, his brother and last living sibling passed away. “Then I got this diagnosis, and I was kind of devastated. It was a low point in my life,” said Russ. He started visiting assisted living facilities, assuming he would have to leave his home to find the care he would need as his health declined. He also started to prepare his finances and will for his death.

While working to set up a charitable remainder trust with Guide Dogs for the Blind, Russ heard about hospice care for the first time. “The director of development had recently lost his father. He was extremely appreciative of the care hospice provided,” said Russ. “That’s when I decided I wanted to stay home.”

With the same methodical approach he applied to researching assisted living facilities, Russ began investigating hospice services in our community. The Transitions program set Hospice of the Valley apart.

Now a program of Palliative Care Center Silicon Valley, Transitions is able to serve community clients facing a serious illness. Transitions offers emotional and practical support, education on living with a serious illness, and care coordination to help clients find and utilize community resources and navigate the healthcare system.

For Russ, the companionship of Transitions volunteers has been the most meaningful. “With one of the volunteers, Vivian, we’ve done more talking than anything. And played golf a couple of times. The other volunteer likes to do things, so he took me to a fancy restaurant and a basketball game,” said Russ. “I’d just like to say how much it has changed my life having these volunteers. It’s kind of become my social network.”

Russ has always been a “giving guy” and supported organizations he feels are worthwhile, like the aforementioned Guide Dogs for the Blind. After receiving the support and companionship of the Transitions program, Russ generously made a gift to Hospice of the Valley this past December and also intends to name Hospice of the Valley in his estate plan.
Russ believes in supporting Hospice of the Valley because he wants to ensure others in the community living with a serious illness have access to the same quality care he is receiving. Indeed, it is the generosity of donors like Russ that enables Hospice of the Valley to continue providing exceptional care and support through an array of programs and services that go above and beyond basic hospice care.

If you would like to learn more about the Transitions program, please call the Palliative Care Center Silicon Valley at 1.408.277.7777, and for information on how you can leave a planned gift to Hospice of the Valley, contact Kathy Phelan, vice president of development and communications at 1.408.559.5600. ■

The Adaptive Business Leaders (ABL) Organization presented Hospice of the Valley with the 2013 Innovation in Healthcare ABBY Award, in honor of the opening of its Palliative Care Center Silicon Valley (PCCSV) last summer. The Center is the first licensed independent, community-based, outpatient center of its kind in California specifically dedicated to providing palliative care to patients and their families living with serious illness.

Sally Adelus, president and CEO, accepted the award on behalf of the PCCSV in the “Innovative Approach to the Delivery of Healthcare” category during the ABBY award event held on December 4 in Long Beach.

“We are truly honored to be one of this year’s esteemed ABBY Award recipients and pleased with the recognition of our Center,” Sally said.

For more information on Palliative Care Center Silicon Valley, visit pccsv.org or call 1.408.277.7777. ■
The sign on the door said “Please Enter,” so I let myself in to the home of Ed and June Updegraff, tucked high into the east hills of San Jose. I found June, 79, sitting in the sunshine near the window, reading Steve Jobs’ biography by Walter Isaacson. The weight of the 650-page hardcover book was nearly too much for her to hold.

A once vibrant and active woman, June’s thinning frame was revealing the effects of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, better known as ALS or Lou Gehrig’s disease.

Life with ALS has certainly presented its challenges for June and Ed, who have always remained active. In 1965, the Updegraffs moved from Saint Louis, Missouri, to Cupertino seeking a better education for their children. After founding the Santa Clara County chapter of the Association for Retarded Children, June, a certified water safety instructor and synchronized swimmer in high school and college, began a program at her home to teach special needs children how to swim. “They loved it and I did too,” June said.

Swimming remained an important part of June’s life. Throughout the years, their homes always had pools, and she’d swim often. Ed and June were also avid tennis players until their knees couldn’t keep up. Then they learned to golf. It was June’s illness that took away the last of their activities, singing in their community singing group, the Village Voices. “For a while the ladies on either side of her would grab an arm and help her up when it was time to sing and help her get seated again. But it got to the point where that was an imposition,” Ed said.

At the recommendation of her doctor, June entered Hospice of the Valley’s care in August 2013. “I’ve been losing my strength quite a bit lately,” June said. “It’s part of this disease.”

Ed added, “You really have to work on keeping a positive outlook.”

That positive outlook received a boost from Hospice of the Valley volunteer and aquatic therapist Jeanne Caton. Massage therapy is just one of the many complementary services Hospice of the Valley offers its patients. When Jeanne heard about June’s love for swimming, she was determined to get her back in the pool. San Jose State University’s Timpany Center offers the perfect facility, a therapeutic pool with adaptations for wheelchairs. “Other people had recommended the Timpany Center to us, but it was Jeanne who really encouraged us to do it,” Ed said. “Then Amanda, our social worker, helped us set up the transportation.”

“…Which was amazing,” added June. “I couldn’t believe that I could stay in the wheelchair and roll right up into the van. And then to have the special wheelchair go right into the water—it was wonderful.”

In addition to volunteer support, the in-home care June has been receiving from Hospice of the Valley has been a great help. “Brenda, the hospice aide, comes three days a week to give her a bath and the nurse comes on Fridays. We’re so thankful for the help and support of Hospice of the Valley,” Ed said.

At this point in their lives, Ed and June’s attitude is one of acceptance. “We’re so glad that we did what we could when
The seventh annual Compassion in Action conference, presented by Hospice of the Valley and Santa Clara University School of Education and Counseling Psychology, was held on Friday, March 28 at Santa Clara University.

“Once again, we are honored by the overwhelming support for Compassion in Action from the 200 attendees, generous community sponsors, and preeminent thought-leaders in palliative and end-of-life care who gathered to not only examine best practices, but to connect medicine to the narrative of the human experience,” said Sally Adelus, president and CEO of Hospice of the Valley.

We would like to thank our generous sponsors for their support of this inspiring educational conference. Gold Level: El Camino Healthcare District. Silver Level: California Healthcare Foundation, Mission Hospice. Bronze Level: Coalition for Compassionate Care of California, Hospice of Santa Cruz County, Leiter’s Pharmacy, Santa Clara Family Health Plan. Copper Level: Alameda Family Funeral & Cremation, Brannons Medical, Chinese American Coalition for Compassionate Care, Kara. Endorsed by: California Hospice & Palliative Care Association.
CALIFORNIA EXPANDS PALLIATIVE CARE EFFORTS THROUGH THE STATE’S FIRST OUTPATIENT CENTER

By Linda Childers (Article First Appeared in California Health Report on February 14, 2014)

When Janna Woods was diagnosed with ovarian cancer last May, the Cupertino resident was unsure how she could possibly cope with the chronic back pain that had plagued her for years, combined with the onset of cancer pain. Fortunately, a friend told Woods about the new Palliative Care Center Silicon Valley (PCCSV) in San Jose.

“Palliative medicine offers a different model of care, focusing on a patient’s relief and prevention of suffering,” says Sally Adelus, president and CEO of Hospice of the Valley. “Our team of doctors, nurses, social workers, and other staff work to support the physical and emotional needs of seriously ill patients and their families.”

While most palliative care programs are offered in hospitals, PCCSV provides outpatient care for patients with serious illnesses such as congestive heart failure, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), cancer, kidney failure, and Alzheimer’s disease. PCCSV services include expert medical care, pain and symptom management, emotional and practical support, counseling to help adjust to life with a serious illness, and complementary therapies including Reiki and massage.

The center contracts with most insurance providers, Medicare, and Medi-Cal. As a nonprofit organization, PCCSV also relies on community fundraising.

Two months after her cancer diagnosis, Woods met with Dr. Rakhi Yadav, medical director for the PCCSV, to formulate a treatment plan for her chronic pain.

“My first appointment with Dr. Yadav lasted two hours,” says Woods who recently learned her cancer is in remission. “She was very thorough and followed up with me through phone calls and appointments to ensure I was getting the right mix of therapies to keep my pain under control.”

Palliative care services offer tangible relief.

For the thousands of Californians like Woods who are living with serious illnesses, palliative care services offer tangible relief. Often called “care that goes beyond cure,” palliative care services are on the rise across California and the rest of the country, as healthcare professionals focus on supporting the best possible quality of life for the patient and their family, regardless of prognosis.

Palliative Care Center Silicon Valley is a division of Hospice of the Valley, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization serving Santa Clara County for nearly 35 years.

Your support offers tangible relief for individuals like Janna. Visit pccsv.org/give or call the development department at 1.408.559.5600 to make your gift today.
Hospice of the Valley’s Community Life Program provides education and outreach on end-of-life care, life transitions, advance care planning, estate and financial planning, and more. The Community Life Program relies on the generous support of our community to meet the needs our aging population. Please consider making a donation in support of the Community Life program. To make your gift, visit hospicevalley.org/spring14 or call 1.408.559.5600.

LIFE TRANSITIONS WORKSHOPS OFFER WIDE RANGE OF SUPPORT

Hospice of the Valley has been a leader in supporting individuals grieving the death of a loved one for nearly 35 years. However, persons grieving other losses also experience challenges. In an effort to deliver our expertise to those experiencing other types of loss, Hospice of the Valley’s Center for Grief & Loss has launched a new four-part series.

Please join us for the third program in our series, Grief in the Workplace: How do we support our employees? As a result of attending this workshop, participants will be able to recognize symptoms of employee grief and take appropriate action. In addition, participants will gain practical tools and insights into emotion in the workplace and organizational behavior resulting in maintaining a healthy work environment.

- Wednesday, August 27 from 6:00–7:30 pm

PLANNING FOR YOUR FUTURE: ADVANCE CARE PLANNING

If you had a medical emergency, who would you want to speak for you? Would that person know what is important to you about your care and quality of life?

Please join Hospice of the Valley for a free community workshop on advance care planning to help you learn how to start the conversations with loved ones, how to select the most effective health care agent, and the do’s and don’ts of completing an advance directive form.

- Monday, May 19 from 1:00–3:00 pm or 6:00–8:00 pm
- Thursday, June 12 from 2:00–4:00 pm or 6:00–8:00 pm

To register, visit hospicevalley.org/communitylife or contact Jeanne Wun at 1.408.559.5600. Events are complimentary. Donations to Hospice of the Valley are gratefully accepted.