



San Jose Mercury News and Hospice of the Valley Host Two Free Community Forums on Advance Health Care Planning

San Jose, Calif., –February 7, 2013 – Hospice of the Valley, a leading provider in advancing palliative, hospice care, community grief support and education in Northern California and in collaboration with the San Jose Mercury News will host two free community forums on February 25 from 1:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M. and February 25 from 6:00 P.M. – 8:00 P.M. at Hospice of the Valley, 4850 Union Avenue, San Jose CA.

The advance health care planning community forums will feature award-winning *San Jose Mercury News* science and medicine journalist Lisa Krieger of the Cost of Dying series and Gary Bertucelli, MDiv, MSW, LCSW, manager of social work and spiritual care with Hospice of the Valley. Sally Adelus, president and chief executive officer of Hospice of the Valley will serve as host and moderate the panel Q&A.

Attendees will receive a complimentary copy of an advance health care directive as Lisa and Gary explain and discuss each section of the document while sharing their respective insights and perspectives on advance planning and more.

The advance health care planning forums will help community members:

- Understand the importance of Advance Health Care Directives
- Make informed choices about their medical care
- Learn how to choose a health care “agent”

According to the California HealthCare Foundation, while 82% of Californians say it is important to have end-of-life wishes in writing, only 23% have done so.

“As a leading provider in advancing palliative, hospice care, community grief support and education in Northern California, we encourage these invaluable conversations and are honored to collaborate with the San Jose Mercury News to bring the conversation to our local community,” said Adelus.

“An advance health care directive lets your physician, family and friends know what your health care preferences are,” said Neal Slatkin, MD, vice president of medical services/chief medical

officer with Hospice of the Valley and medical director of palliative care at El Camino Hospital, Mountain View. "This includes the special treatment you want or don't want at the end of life, your desire for diagnostic testing, surgical procedures, CPR and organ donation."

"By considering your options and having the conversations early, you can ensure your wishes are honored and avoid having your family make critical medical care decisions for you under extreme stress," added Adelus.

The general public is encouraged to attend this free community forum and bring a friend or family member. To register, visit hospicevalley.org/ahcpforum or call Jeanne Wun at 1.408.559.5600 x5423 or email jwun@hospicevalley.org.

About Bay Area News Group

The *San Jose Mercury News*, a part of the Bay Area News Group (BANG) is committed to the health and vitality of our local communities. BANG believes in social responsibility and community involvement and promotes these values not only in their coverage of the community, but also by their active support for organizations and causes which serve the public interest and well-being. For more information, visit mercurynews.org or medianewsgroup.com.

About Hospice of the Valley

Based in the heart of California's Silicon Valley, Hospice of the Valley provides end-of-life care and services, including hospice, palliative care and counseling for adults and children. The Transitions Program offers emotional support, education, and practical assistance for families facing serious illness. Hospice of the Valley's Community Grief & Counseling Center provides individual counseling and loss-specific support groups to anyone who has experienced the loss of a loved one. Hospice of the Valley publishes a community website for caregivers and families at seriousillness.org/santaclaracounty. A nonprofit organization serving Santa Clara County since 1979, Hospice of the Valley honors all cultures, beliefs, values, and traditions and is committed to serving its diverse community and providing equitable access to care for all regardless of financial ability. For information, call 1.408.559.5600 or visit hospicevalley.org.

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