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Hospice of the Valley to Present 2 Free Community Forums Aug. 22 on Advance Health Care Directives

Forums a collaboration among Hospice of the Valley, Yu-Ai Kai, and Bay Area News Group

SAN JOSE, Calif., –July 31, 2013 – Hospice of the Valley, a leading provider in advancing palliative, hospice care, community grief support and education in Northern California, will present two community forums on “Planning for Your Future on Advance Health Care Directives” in August.

Produced in collaboration with Hospice of the Valley, Yu-Ai Kai Senior Center of Japantown, and Bay Area News Group, the forums are free and open to the public and will be held from 10 a.m. to noon Aug. 22, and repeated from 6 to 8 p.m., at Yu-Ai Kai, 588 N. Fourth Street, San Jose.

The forums will feature Lisa Krieger, national award-winning San Jose Mercury News science and medicine journalist and author of “The Cost of Dying” series, and Gary Bertuccelli, manager of social work and spiritual care at Hospice of the Valley.

Attendees will receive a complimentary copy of an advance health care directive as Krieger and Bertuccelli 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 the public:

- Understand the importance of an advance directive.
- Make informed choices about their medical care.
- Discover what palliative care is.
- Learn how to choose a health care “agent.”

“According to the California HealthCare Foundation, 82 percent of Californians say it is important to have end-of-life wishes in writing. However, only 23 percent have done so,” said Sally Adelus, president and CEO of Hospice of the Valley. “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.”

“We are pleased to bring this timely and invaluable advance health care planning forum to Yu-Ai Kai and to our local community and provide this much needed community service,” said Sophie C. Horiuchi-Forrester, executive director of Yu-Ai Kai.

“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. “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.”

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

About Hospice of the Valley

Hospice of the Valley is a nonprofit organization in Silicon Valley that provides serious illness and end-of-life care programs and services, including palliative and hospice care, grief counseling for adults, children and families, and emotional support, education and practical assistance. The organization also provides individual counseling and loss-specific support groups to anyone who has experienced the loss of a loved one. Established in July 2013, the Palliative Care Center Silicon Valley™, the first independent, community-based, outpatient center of its kind in California for seriously ill patients and their families, is a division of Hospice of the Valley. Hospice of the Valley also provides a community resource website for caregivers and families at seriousillness.org/santaclaracounty. 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 more information, call 408.559.5600 or visit hospicevalley.org.

About Yu-Ai Kai

Serving the community with friendship and love, Yu-Ai Kai Japanese American Community Senior Service is a nonprofit senior center located in Japantown San Jose. Founded in 1974, Yu-Ai Kai is committed to serving seniors with an array of activities, programs and services. Yu-Ai Kai offers a well-balanced senior day care program, a nutritious lunch service, social services, and a variety of classes, activities and trips for seniors, designed around their Healthy Aging Initiative. For more information, visit yuaikai.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.

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