

Volunteer SCENE

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR HOSPICE OF HAVASU VOLUNTEERS

Thanks for Team members

Many thanks to those volunteers who are participating in the additional training to become a part of the Gift of Presence team. These are volunteers who are willing to sit with patients during the Active dying process. This is a valuable service that staff and patients/families are truly grateful for. It is a wonderful Gift. If you would like to become part of the team, please call volunteer Services.

Patriotism & Pizza



On Wednesday, July 14, Volunteer Services will be hosting (for the first time) a special fun-filled get-together: "dinner and a movie". Save the date and watch for details in the July newsletter!

Know anyone to join with us?

The opportunity to win a \$25 gift certificate is still running. Refer a person to be a volunteer and once they complete training and 40 hours of service, you win!! So share with your friends and family what a rewarding experience volunteering for Hospice of Havasu can be and invite them to be a part of our team. Anyone interested can just call Volunteer Services and we will be happy to answer any questions.



*Sew wonderful...

The sewing/craft group has gone above and beyond. Each new Hospice of Havasu patient receives a small U-shaped pillow as a gift from the Volunteer Services department and as promised, when there is an excess, these pillows are "gifted" to community facilities for other patient/residents that could use one. This is Volunteer Services way to reach out to the community and help others in need when possible. Recently, a number of pillows were delivered to Lakeview Memory Terrace which is a 48 bed facility for Alzheimer's patients. Seen here, Michelle Norton, LVT Director, gladly accepts these heartfelt gifts. Along with pillows, the sewing/craft group makes walker caddies, neck aprons, shawls, lap quilts, knitted slippers, and the list goes on. All materials are donated and put to good use. You are welcome to donate material/ yarn, Velcro, and new pillow stuffing; just deliver to the main office. And if you would like to participate, contact Volunteer Services for details.

'This is why I am a volunteer ...

Inspiring

Our Hospice patients continue to amaze and inspire me. He was an elderly gentleman that reminded me so much of my Dad in so many ways. A guy with lots of talents, a long history of doing things for others, and a lot of friends. Very social. A real outdoor-loving "guy's-guy".

His daughter in law told me that they always thought of Dad as "bullet proof"; that nothing would ever happen to him. What a familiar feeling.

From early childhood many of us think our Dad's are big and strong and that they'll soldier on in life forever. It can be a blow to learn otherwise.

He was, in spite of his situation, happy and accepting most of the time. He talked frequently of the past, his love of horses, dancing, and his multitude of friends.

He had recently had a big party to "celebrate his life" and his friends came from all over the United States to be there.

The group picture taken of the guests was astounding! To have that many friends at any age is truly a gift and it was a testament to this man's extraordinary personality.

I looked at the picture and said, "Look at all these people that love you... you're a rich man, aren't you?" "That I am!" he said. He had lived a modest life, but in his eyes, and mine, he was a very rich man indeed!



My "Aha" moment....

My time as a volunteer means a great deal to me, although sometimes I wondered if it is worthwhile.

My patient does not speak much and does not like to be touched. She will draw away if she thinks you are going to hold her and or anything. Many times she would sleep through my visit. I was ready to give up, but decided to keep visiting.

One day she was awake and sitting in her wheelchair. As I was getting ready to leave, she asked me for a hug.

Amazed, the nurse and I exchanged surprised looks. I asked "You want me to give you a hug?", making sure I heard correctly.

"Hug" she said as she nodded her head.

This was my "Aha" moment. Sometimes just being there even though being silent, matters. Now my patient, who still doesn't like to be touched, gets a kiss on the cheek as I leave and I get a smile.

Politics? Yes!

I met her on August 15, 2008, my first patient after graduating from volunteer training on August 7th. I was told she was 94 and liked to discuss politics. Swell...I never discuss politics with people. That's just asking for an argument, and I sure didn't want to be arguing with a 94 year old hospice patient. But it was election year, so I suppose it would have been impossible to ignore. (Thankfully, we discovered early on that we had similar political ideas and beliefs.) Was I willing to go into a nursing home? Certainly! And so began my 18½ month journey with the most gracious lady I have ever known.

That first Friday was somewhat awkward, as is

meeting any patient for the first time, but we quickly got past our nervousness and decided to try twice weekly visits. Weekends were very lonely for her, so Mondays were a good choice. Thursdays came about just to space our visits. We chewed the fat for at least 3 hours each day, talking about politics, family, food (this lady could eat!), and anything else that came to mind. And we laughed...we ALWAYS laughed and joked. In the beginning, I teased her that I was going to make her laugh until she wet her pants, which was a joke in itself because she was catheterized. When she'd get serious, she'd pop out with a "Boy you know it" and a stern look that said it all. That always made me laugh, which got her laughing again too....

Going Postal

As the temperatures rise, for the next few months Continuing Education will be included with the monthly newsletter. Please read the training information, complete the quiz, and return the quiz to Volunteer Services before the end of the month. Keep Cool and Conserve!!

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

Soltero, Isabel - 6/1
Underwood, Susan - 6/3
Haessly, Barbara - 6/12
Mussell, Kari - 6/13
Peterson, Garnett - 6/14
Wright, Debra - 6/14
Scartozzi, Richard - 6/17
Chandler, Linda - 6/18
Rice, Dolores - 6/19
St. Clair, Thecla - 6/25

The Mission

Hospice of Havasu is a patient-centered team of volunteers and professionals, serving the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of the incurably ill in our communities and their family and friends.



A belated Happy Mother's Day AND not to miss those great guys, Happy Father's Day (June 20)