

HOSPICE HAPPENINGS

Summer 2016

Compassionate care for the terminally ill, their caregivers and their family

Serving our community since 1978



A Report From the President of the Board

I was asked to write some notes as chair of the BOD – a “President’s message” if you will. One might speculate that working with a group of very successful “mature” adults who have developed deeply ingrained life philosophies might be quite trying. Reality is quite the contrary. Shining through all the above is the willingness to step forward and work for others – a genuine love for others – and, in most cases, agape for each other. Another way of putting it is that working with this BOD and all of the VHOCC volunteers is no task at all – quite easy in fact, and I am the one who is honored to be working with you.

There have been some significant accomplishments these past couple of years. The first I would mention is that requests for “our hospice” services are at an all time high and continue to steadily increase. While our nursing staff has had some turnover, our nursing director insists the current staff is the best group “ever.” VHOCC needs to continue to be visible in the community and depends for much of its support on the community. We also recognize that “bequests” are a significant contribution as well. I feel these are largely due to the love and kindness showered by our volunteers and nursing staff upon patients and their families.

Over the past couple of years we have changed from a BOD consisting of four men to eleven members, fairly evenly balanced between men and women, all of whom are actively involved in hospice activities. We welcome a few more BOD members, as we will need to replace those who are retiring.

We have revised our monetary appeal letters from several per year to once a year with great success, both in numbers of contributors and total amounts donated. Our community outreach committee has been reinvigorated and is increasing our community visibility.

Hospice House (the roof was in danger of collapsing) was remodeled through the intense efforts of (mostly) retirees (some highly skilled), community grants and business donations, so the remodeling cost of approximately \$70,000 ended up costing VHOCC nothing.

Also, a number of bequests and financial windfalls have substantially increased our endowment fund, though we still need to rely on consistent community support.

My deepest gratitude goes out to all of you – volunteers and contributors – for making this position as chair so rewarding!

Sincerely, Ed Hopfner



The mission of the Volunteer Hospice of Clallam County is to provide free around-the-clock registered nursing availability to terminally ill patients, while supporting them and their families emotionally, physically and spiritually with a team of trained caregivers and volunteers.

Volunteer Hospice of Clallam County (VHOCC) is a 501(c)3 non-profit charitable organization, whose service area stretches from Diamond Point to Joyce. Our organization provides support and care for terminally ill persons, enabling them to live out their final days as fully and comfortably as possible.

Since its inception in 1978, all services have been provided free of charge to patients and their families; VHOCC does not bill any government agency for its services.

HOSPICE HUGS

Gift Certificates for Volunteer of the Month:

- * Darla K. Workman, LP, Willow Massage Therapy Port Angeles
- * Alder Wood Bistro Sequim
- * Port Angeles Symphony Orchestra
- * Bella Italia Restaurant Port Angeles

Volunteers of the Month: January: Jan Yates, February: Midge James, March: Galen Yanagihara April: Gail Banwart May: Colleen Cunningham

Our entire nursing team for their hard work and long hours

Sequim Sunrise Rotary Club for their generous support

H2O Plumbing Contractors for donating materials and labor to renovate our Sequim office bathroom

“The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched. They must be felt with the heart.”

Helen Keller

RESPIRE SERVICES - WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

VHOCC provides respite services to our hospice patients. The dictionary defines respite as “a short period of rest or relief from a difficult task.” Respite workers substitute for primary caregivers, typically for a couple of hours at a time, in the hope that short periods of relief will help the caregiver. The respite worker accepts the trust of the primary caregiver and temporarily takes on the responsibility of caretaker.

How is this trust generated? The respite worker is given the assignment by the volunteer service manager after a phone call to the patient’s caregiver. The respite worker then calls the caregiver to set up a time for an initial visit. The caregiver will have already been introduced to VHOCC through a nurse’s visit and the crew who have delivered a hospital bed and other equipment from VHOCC. The respite worker establishes a workable relationship with the caregiver and schedules future visits to the patient’s home. Because of the intense situation, patients, caregivers, and respite workers often develop close bonds in a very short time.



The interactions between the respite worker and the patient are endless and largely unpredictable depending primarily on the needs, competence and personality of the patient. Here are a few examples of what a respite worker might encounter: the patient is unresponsive, so the respite worker will sit by the bedside; the patient is somewhat mobile, which allows the respite worker to listen and respond to the patient, helping the patient to move around the room or, if needed, get to the bathroom. In other cases, the respite worker could read to the patient, accompany the patient outdoors or play competitive games such as chess or cribbage.

The respite worker can expect to meet many types of patients; however, the overall goal is to be present and undistracted, alert to any possibilities to help the patient, which sometimes can be daunting. The professional nursing staff of VHOCC is on call if the respite worker needs help. Nevertheless the respite worker will usually feel the responsibility is intensely personal. It is not an easy job, but most caregivers are extremely grateful for the VHOCC volunteer who is willing to share their time to help alleviate some of the difficulties the family is experiencing.

Events and Programs

Events:

- August 18 - 21 VOCC Booth Clallam County Fair Port Angeles
- August 27 Air Affaire, Sequim Valley Airport
- December VHOCC Holiday Annual Business Meeting
- December Radiant Light Christmas Tree - VHOCC Office

Programs:

- Community & Volunteer Education Series Sept/Oct
- May-June *Sequim Grief Support Series Mon 1- 3 pm
- *Port Angeles Grief Support Series Mon 6:30 - 8:30 pm
- *Survivors 4-Week Workshop twice yearly
- *Drop-In Grief Support Groups (after the Grief Support Series)
- One-on-One Bereavement Support (Available on request)

*For locations, times and directions

Check our web calendar www.vhocc.org/calendar

Call the VHOCC office 360-452-1511

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- President: Ed Hopfner, M.D.
- Vice-President: Dave Gilbert,
- Secretary: Ann Thomas
- Treasurer: Nancy Bargar
- At Large: Ken Brown
- Michael Bucierka
- Sandy Hutter
- Mary Sherwood, RN

Class II & Staff:

- Patient Care Manager: Bette Wood, RN
- Office Service Manager: Lyn Gilbert
- Volunteer Services Manager: Astrid Raffinpeyloz

Do You FACEBOOK?

Did you know Volunteer Hospice of Clallam County has a FACEBOOK (FB) page?

We use our page to share information about VHOCC with articles, commentaries and stories from our own area as well as from the global community. Hospice is more than just dealing with death but is also about those left and the grieving process. "LIKE" us and become our FB friend.

To access the VHOCC Facebook page, do the following if you are already a member of Facebook:

- At the top of your FB page in the search field, type "VHOCC." When the name comes up, click on it for the VHOCC home page.
- Click on the "Like" button below the background photo. The articles posted on the VHOCC page will appear on your home page news feed.
- Below the VHOCC logo picture, you will see "Invite friends to like this page." Click on it for your Friends list which gives you the option to invite them to "Like" the VHOCC page. They will receive a notification they can accept or ignore.

Your Facebook friends can now see articles on the Hospice Facebook page which they can share with their friends. This information will give Facebook friends a better understanding of VHOCC.

WISH LIST CORNER

Opportunities to be a VHOCC Volunteer:

- * Drivers and helpers: Deliver/pickup/clean loaned equipment using VHOCC trucks
- * IT group needs database assistance in Access or SQL
- * Office workers. Reception and other light office work
- * Ongoing need for respite and bereavement volunteers

“Hello, Voluntary Hospice of Clallam County (VHOCC), Michael speaking, how may I help you?” With those thirteen words I started my office volunteer work as a receptionist and joined a cadre of volunteers who perform a myriad of jobs to provide free hospice care in our community.

HOSPICE CARE: AN ANCIENT PRACTICE

Each society throughout history has evolved special ways for caring for the dying and bereaved. The concept of hospice care descends from medieval times when it referred to a place of shelter and rest, especially one run by a religious order, for weary or ill travelers. The word hospice comes from the Latin words hospes/hospit, meaning to host a guest or stranger. Hospice is a modality to keep the terminally ill patient and their families comfortable, replacing curative treatment with palliative care or pain management and addressing the recipient’s social, spiritual and emotional needs. Hospice is not a place, but rather an ideal and philosophy of care for the patient and their loved ones. Hospice care is more than “home” health care and probably the most compassionate level of care for the dying and their families.

HOSPICE CARE FROM 1948 EUROPE TO POST 1963 UNITED STATES

In 1948 Dame Cicely Saunders, M.D., started working with the terminally ill and in 1967 established the first modern hospice—St. Christopher’s Hospice in London. Saunders introduced the concept of hospice to the US during a 1963 lecture at Yale University. In 1969 Elizabeth Kübler- Ross, M.D. wrote a book, On Death and Dying. She gave the public first-hand insight into the emotions and stages that people face when they are terminally ill and pleaded for better home care as opposed to institutional care. Saunders, Kubler-Ross and others launched a series of events which resulted in the development of hospice care as we know it today. In 1974 a hospice nurse and volunteer in Connecticut made the first Hospice Care visit to a hospice patient in their own home. Four years later in Port Angeles, Rose Crumb, RN founded VHOCC in February 1978.

Hospice started out as a VOLUNTEER service in the US and in 2014 there were approximately 3,200 different hospice programs. Sixty-eight percent are for-profit and 28% are not-for-profit; VHOCC is in the latter category. All agencies, with the exception of VHOCC, do accept Medicare, Medicaid, private insurance or government funds. Although VHOCC employs a Patient Care Manager, Registered Nurses and a Volunteer Services Manager, it is primarily run and operated by VOLUNTEERS. Thanks to the generosity of volunteers, private donations, memorials and endowments from people like you, VHOCC has been able to provide free high quality hospice care to our community for the past 38 years. Without your financial and volunteer support, VHOCC would not exist.

VHOCC is more than the sum of the services we offer: patient care, hospice nurses, an equipment loan program, respite care, grief and bereavement support for the community, a speakers’ bureau and community & volunteer education. It is difficult to precisely convey the essence of what we do and who we are in a brief article. If you have questions, call our office, visit our web site or email us.

