



HOSPICE *Happenings*

Building on more than four decades of hospice experience and generous community support, VHOCC provides industry-standard hospice care at no cost to the patient or to government programs. Our services include professional 24-7 nursing availability, grief support, medical equipment lending, and education.

A Guide for Grieving During the Holidays

1. Make a list of the people you might want (or need) to discuss the holidays with. Don't worry about whether you'll ultimately reach out to them, and don't worry about whether the individuals are also grieving the same loss. Just a list.

2. Examine your list and decide who should be involved in planning for the upcoming holidays. If possible, try and come together for a face-to-face discussion. There may be people who aren't in your immediate family but who you wish to reach out to.

3. Identify your holiday values. A flood of unwanted changes threatens to alter or destroy your holiday traditions, and tradition is important; it bonds families together and creates a sense of comfort and security. Though many details may have to change, the values of your traditions are most likely still intact and give you a foundation to build on. Family, generosity, faith, togetherness, home, friendship and community are some common holiday values.



4. Decide what to do about tradition. Identify the rituals and traditions you anticipate will be the hardest. Discuss whether there are ways to make these elements easier. Decide whether you will keep it the same, change it, or skip it this year.

5. Discuss new roles and responsibilities. Consider the roles your loved one filled during the holidays. Their absence in these roles is likely to evoke a sense of loss that should be acknowledged, supported, and grieved. Make sure new holiday roles and responsibilities don't fall too heavily on one person.

6. Communicate with children affected by the loss. Holidays are hard for children because they may be excited for holiday celebrations although they are sad for the loss. Let them know they don't need to feel guilty about enjoying themselves. Reassure them that it's okay to feel sad.

7. Plan to take care of yourself during the holidays. Make a plan for how you will cope when things get tough. For example, will you go to a support group, call a friend, go to church, exercise, write in a journal? Permit yourself to cry, even in public. Don't feel bad when you find yourself sobbing because you saw a gift that your loved one would have liked. Set aside time for self-care.

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VHOCC: A Unicorn in Hospice Care

In the landscape of American hospice care, VHOCC is truly one of a kind. Out of nearly 2,500 hospices nationwide, only a handful operate as we do — without billing Medicare, Medicaid, or insurance. That means no patient or family ever receives a bill for our nursing care, medical equipment, or support programs.

When Rose Crumb started VHOCC in 1978, she believed that compassionate end-of-life care should not be constrained by finances, insurance, or bureaucracy. In an era when hospice care was just emerging in the U.S., Rose pioneered a model that focused on the best possible journey for the patient and family. That vision still shapes VHOCC today: patient choice, dignity, and holistic care are woven into every service we provide.

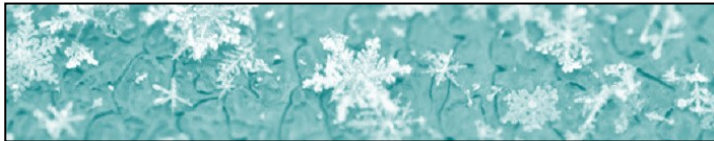
VHOCC is distinct from most Medicare-funded hospices in several ways. We do not take over a patient's medical care; instead, our team comes alongside a patient's existing providers (primary care physicians, specialists, and therapists). Patients and families are allowed to pursue therapy options, if it allows them to achieve their goals. Nurses and CNAs can spend much more time at the bedside. Beyond hospice care, we provide free medical equipment lending, grief support, and community education — all funded by donations and supported by more than 180 volunteers.

The impact is real and appreciated, as evidenced by the gratitude expressed in so many of the letters, surveys, and other communications we receive. Thank you for helping us remain a community-funded, compassion-driven hospice where care is always free, and dignity always comes first.

Notes to VHOCC from Grateful Families

"I did not understand all that Volunteer Hospice did for its community, but now I do. I will always support your organization in word and deed. Thank you for your kindness and understanding during this time of saying goodbye to my beloved sister."

"We felt such love, support, and reassurance from the VHOCC staff and volunteers! Like being in the company of angels!"



VHOCC Resources & Program Calendar

All programs are free of charge. Registration is required for all except Follow-Up Grief Support Groups and Death Cafés. All programs are subject to cancellation. Call 360-452-1511 or email reception@vhocc.org.

COMMUNITY ORIENTATIONS

In-Person: Port Angeles First Wednesday of each month, 11 a.m.–noon. VHOCC office, 829 E. 8th Street, Port Angeles.

In-Person: Sequim First Tuesday of each month, 11 a.m.–noon. Location given at time of registration.

GRIEF SUPPORT GROUPS

Online: Spousal Loss Mondays, Dec. 15–Jan. 12, 6–8 p.m.

In-Person: Port Angeles Fridays, Jan. 9–Feb. 6, 2–4 p.m.

In-Person: Sequim Mondays, Mar. 16–Apr. 13, 1–3 p.m.

FOLLOW-UP GRIEF SUPPORT GROUPS

Drop-in groups open to those who have attended a VHOCC grief support group.

In-Person: Port Angeles

First Thursday of each month, 4:15–5:15 p.m.

In-Person: Sequim

Fourth Monday of each month, 1–2 p.m.

EMPOWER YOURSELF: ADVICE FOR LIVING ALONE

A practical, 4-week series on Home Maintenance, Cooking for One, Household Finances, and Self-Care. Tuesdays, Mar. 10–31, 2–4 p.m. in P.A. Come to one or all!

HEALING FROM GRIEF WORKSHOP

4-week series with images, words and sounds. Wednesdays, Apr. 8–29, 1–3 p.m. in Sequim.

ONE-ON-ONE GRIEF SUPPORT

For anyone in the community grieving a loss. Call 360-406-4439 and ask for bereavement support.

SOUL CARE

SPEAKER SERIES

Offered every other month on the second Wednesday.

Wednesday, Jan. 14, noon–1:30 p.m. via Zoom

Topic and speaker to be announced.

DEATH CAFÉ 'TEA TO DIE FOR'

Open, casual, freeform discussions relating to end of life, death, and dying.

Port Angeles: Third Thursday of each month, 5:30–7 p.m. at Studio Bob, 118½ E. Front Street.

Fourth Wednesday of each month, 4–5:30 p.m., VHOCC Conference Room, 829 E. 8th Street.

Sequim: Second Monday of each month at KSQM-FM, 609 Washington Street, #17.

Our Mission Statement Is Evolving

A mission statement is more than words on paper. It is the compass that communicates who we are, what we do, and why we exist. For VHOCC, our mission statement must capture not only the heart of our care but also the unique model that has sustained us for more than four decades.



Our Board of Directors recently updated VHOCC's mission statement to reflect both our legacy and our future:

"Building on more than four decades of hospice experience and generous community support, VHOCC provides industry-standard hospice care at no cost to the patient or to government programs. Our services include professional 24-7 nursing availability, grief support, medical equipment lending, and education."

Our previous statement emphasized compassion and support for patients and families. While meaningful, that version no longer fully represented our mission and the breadth of services we provide. We've grown to include grief support for the wider community, education for families and providers, and an extensive medical equipment lending program. These essential elements are now reflected in the new statement.

The revised mission statement highlights what makes VHOCC unique nationally: our commitment to providing hospice care at no cost — not to patients, and not to government programs such as Medicare or Medicaid. This independence is central to who we are, allowing us to remain focused on patient choice, family needs, and community support. Equally important, the new statement affirms that while our services are free, quality is never compromised. By emphasizing industry-standard hospice care, VHOCC combines professional excellence with compassionate, community-driven values.

This updated statement honors our history while articulating who we are today. It also sets the stage for tomorrow, ensuring patients, families, donors, and partners understand exactly what makes VHOCC both remarkable and sustainable.

Priya Jayadev, Executive Director



This is the 38th year for this event, and the 14th as a VHOCC fundraiser. Join us as a donor, volunteer, spectator, or one who takes the plunge!

Death Cafés in Sequim and P.A.

"Good afternoon and welcome to the Sequim Death Café. We are here to normalize speaking about death and its surrounding topics. While not a support group, we ask for confidentiality and respect for these conversations."

Before my co-facilitators and I offer the above greeting at our Sequim meeting, we get the cookies, coffee and hot water ready. Our meetings never have an agenda or a presenter, and everyone in attendance has equal standing and is encouraged to express their wishes and concerns about death and dying.

The Death Café idea 'crossed the pond' from England a dozen years ago. Monthly Sequim and Port Angeles gatherings are sponsored by VHOCC and adhere to the founding principles of providing safe and confidential forums for open discussions about death and dying. Time is taken for brief introductions and for hearing the interests of all. Our discussion usually begins with one of the issues expressed. It may be someone's musings about how to prepare for end of life, what occurs after death, or queries about body disposition. Sometimes there is humor and laughter about our inevitable event of death, and sometimes there are tears. We gather to listen and explore without dogma, promotion of ideas or businesses, or the need for conclusions.

Visit www.volunteerhospice.org for monthly locations and times, and come join us for an interesting discussion.

Gale Emigh, Volunteer

Thank You, Sequim Bay Yacht Club!



As of Sept. 30, 2025, the Sequim Bay Yacht Club, our faithful and generous community supporter, has raised almost \$33,000 this year for VHOCC. The SV *Litonya* alone raised almost \$14,000 of that during the Sept. 20 Sailing Regatta. Pictured here is her captain, Mike Kalahar, on Sequim Bay.

Volunteers of the Month



OCTOBER: What once seemed impossible was accomplished this past summer by **Jess Donaldson**. A member of the Sequim delivery team, Jess took on the extra challenge of removing invasive ivy from the trees in Rose's Garden near our P.A. office. Her dedication and hard work will make a lasting impact! We're pleased to recognize her efforts with a gift certificate to Traylor's Restaurant. We thank Jess for her dedication, and Traylor's for their generosity.

NOVEMBER: Although new to VHOCC, Chaplain **Mike Milward** has quickly gone above and beyond expectations — visiting patients for needs assessments, officiating a funeral, responding to an end-of-life visit on short notice, initiating the Ethical Wills panel, and volunteering for our fundraising event at the Crab Festival. Thanks to Mike and to Airport Garden Center for donating his gift certificate.



DECEMBER: All active volunteers were invited to VHOCC's annual Holiday Luncheon.

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8. Finalize your plan. Schedule a follow-up time to talk. Discuss support needs you think you will have and any help you can offer to others. Let others know the things you can't muster up the energy to do this year.

9. Find ways to incorporate your loved one throughout the holidays. Continued bonds with the loved one can be a source of deep comfort and connection, and part of healthy grieving.

Sourced from whatsyourgrief.com

HOSPICE HUGS: Thank You to These Generous VHOCC Supporters!

General Fund

Angeles Concrete Products
Anne E. Albin
Anonymous (2)
W. Ron Allen
Eric R. Bjork
Rosemary Brauningner
David A. Carlquist
Colette A. Cavaleri
D. Thompson Challinor
Kaitlin T. Cherf
Chris Coolures
Clyde Cowan
Janet Culver
Carolyn DeSalvo
Brian Dougherty
Mindy Einarson
Eve Farrell
First Presbyterian Church of Port Angeles
Stanley J. Forsell

Beth Garifalos
Annie Gilbert
Marie Goin
Forest Gouin
John Griset
Judith Hanson
Deborah Hassel
High Energy Metals Inc.
William Holt
Pam Hooper
Cheri Huber
Jo Anne Hughes
Intl. Brotherhood of Electrical Workers
Carole Kalahar
Mike Kalahar
Pat Little
M. Shonsey Family Charitable Fund
Karen McCormick
Yvonne B. McMillian
Patricia S. Metcalf

David H. Morris
James Mowry
Sherlee A. Polglase
Toni Randall
Ben Skerbeck
Ronald Stecker
Roberta Stoneman

Community-Sponsored Fundraisers

North Olympic Mustang Club
Sequim Bay Yacht Club

Grants

Albert Haller Foundation
Sequim-Dungeness Hospital Guild

Volunteer of the Month Program

Airport Garden Center
Traylor's Restaurant

Volunteer Hospice

OF CLALLAM COUNTY

829 E. 8th Street, Port Angeles, WA 98362

Nonprofit Org
U.S. Postage
PAID
Olympic Mailing
& Printing Services

Clinical Staff

Haley, RN, BSN, Clinical Team Manager
Mary, DNP, FNP-C, Medical Director
Lynn, RN, BSN, MS, Lead Nurse
Shelby, Patient Navigator
Ashley, CNA
Becca B, CNA
Becca W, RN, BSN
Brittany, RN
Deanna, RN
Deb, RN
Ellen, RN
Jeanette, CNA
Joe, RN
Molly, RN, BSN
Nicole, RN
Stephanie, RN

Mission Support Staff

Priya Jayadev, Executive Director
Astrid Raffinpeyloz, Volunteer Services Manager
Heather Loyd, Administrative Services Manager
Myrna Schaaf, Administrative Assistant

Board of Directors

Roger Oakes, President
Loriann Hamilton Ridgeway, Vice President
Karen McCormick, Secretary
Stuart Koop, Treasurer
Wendy Brown
Marca Davies
Thom Hightower
Suzanne Lockwood
Tyrrell Prosser
Peter Raiswell
Ted Ripley
Sandra Tatro



Don't Miss Our Quilt Raffle!

The Sunbonnet Sue Quilt Club has donated a stunning 62"x79" snowflake quilt. Tickets are \$5 each, or \$20 for 5. Buy tickets (and see the quilt!) in our Port Angeles office or at the Jan. 1 Polar Bear Dip fundraiser for VHOCC. (Proceeds will count toward the Polar Bear Dip's totals.) The winning ticket will be drawn on Jan. 2. Visit volunteerhospice.org for more details and photos.

Help us keep our printing and mailing costs low. Get this newsletter via email. Contact us at office@vhocc.org. Thank you!



Join Us for Our 8th Annual Remembrance Ceremony! This VHOCC Soul Care community-outreach program is an uplifting, spirit-filled celebration that's open to all.