

HOSPICE

Gifts

HOSPICE OF THE PIEDMONT, SHARING THE JOURNEY

FALL 2008

A Match Made in Heaven

ANN AND JOE WERE, QUITE obviously, made for each other.

They met mid-way through life, both of them academics who were working and teaching at a small college in Florida. Ann was a single mother, raising a son and teaching economics. Joe, a former priest who had taken leave from the Catholic diocese because of political differences with the church, was working as the registrar.

Ann, who was certain she never wanted to marry again, accepted Joe's offer to escort her to a college function under the assumption he was a "safe date." One week after they met, Joe proposed marriage. Three months later that's just what they did, and thirty-five years later they wouldn't change a day of their life together.

It wasn't until their first December as newlyweds that Ann and Joe discovered a deeply shared passion for the Christmas holiday. That passion grew into an enormous collection they've



Ann and Joe in 1983

joyously displayed every year, opening their home to neighbors and friends. Ann likes to say that Joe collected nativities because of his love for religion; as an economist, her collection is all about Santa Claus.

They retired in 1992 to the hills of North Carolina. Ten years later Joe received a difficult diagnosis that would, slowly but eventually, take his life. With this knowledge in hand, they decided to move closer to their son, Fred, who lives in Washington, D.C. Fred recommended they look at Charlottesville; when they did, they knew this was where they could settle down for Joe's final years.

By 2007, Joe's doctor thought it was time to call hospice. Ann and Joe had

"Hospice helped us come to terms with our fear of the unknown, and they've done it in such a positive, caring way."

experienced hospice care with other family members in Florida and in Ohio, so they thought they knew what to expect. But "Hospice of the Piedmont has exceeded our expectations, 100 times over," Ann said. "We *expected* we would get regular nursing check-ups, compassion, and support for Joe's death. But the reality of the care and the real and deep nature of the relationships we've built with these angels—as Joe calls them—have been incredible."

Thinking Joe had only four months or so to live, they opened their home to regular visits from their hospice nurse, social worker, chaplain, and home health aide. "Our nurse, Beth Ripley, was always upbeat but very honest with Joe when he'd ask her what was going to happen to him," described Ann. "Lara Fisher, our social worker, anticipated our questions and was proactive in helping us. And we simply couldn't have survived without the incomparable Barbara Stotemyer, our aide."

Bravely facing his decline, Ann and Joe talked often about his illness

HOSPICE Gifts

The gifts of time, compassion and support are priceless in the true sense of the word. These gifts, given freely by our community to some of its most vulnerable citizens, are the currency and the heart and soul of Hospice of the Piedmont. Through this newsletter we hope to share the power of the gifts we give and receive.

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HOSPICE MYTHS

Hospice is a place.

IN FACT: Hospice of the Piedmont usually provides care in the comfort of the patient's home, but we can provide care wherever they call home, including nursing homes, hospitals, assisted living facilities, and residential care facilities.

Hospice means giving up.

IN FACT: Entering into Hospice of the Piedmont's program does not mean the patient is giving up hope or that death is imminent. The earlier an individual receives hospice care, the more opportunity there is to relieve their pain and suffering and address other needs. Some patients actually improve and may be discharged from hospice care.

Hospice is expensive.

IN FACT: Hospice care is a Medicare benefit. Most private insurers also cover hospice care as well. Hospice of the Piedmont is committed to caring for all patients, regardless of their ability to pay.

Patients can only receive hospice care for a limited amount of time.

IN FACT: The Medicare benefit, and most private insurance, pays for hospice care as long as the patient's condition is certified to be appropriate for hospice care by a physician. Patients may come on and off hospice care, and re-enroll in hospice care, as needed.

Hospice only cares for the patient.

IN FACT: Hospice of the Piedmont focuses on comfort, dignity, and emotional support for the patient and everyone they call family. The quality of life for the patient is improved when their family, friends, and caregivers all receive the support they need. 🌻

Q & A

How Does the Hospice Program Work?

When should I call Hospice of the Piedmont?

Consider calling us when you or someone you love receives a diagnosis of a serious, progressive illness. The sooner you contact us, the sooner you are able to take advantage of the full range of services we offer our patients and their families. Anyone can call for more information or to refer a patient to Hospice of the Piedmont. We are available to talk with you and help you understand the options available to you 24-hours a day, seven days a week. Please call (434) 817-6900 or (800) 975-5501.

How does Hospice of the Piedmont's team help patients and their families?

Members of the hospice team—nurse, social worker, home health aide, volunteer and chaplain—make regularly scheduled visits depending on the needs and wishes of patients and their loved ones. Hospice personnel are teachers as well as health care providers. They teach loved ones or caregivers how best to care for the patient. The caregivers become knowledgeable in dispensing medication and in providing daily care for the patient. This is effective since it helps the family members or caregivers feel they are doing everything possible to care for the patient. At the same time, they are receiving expert help and advice from the hospice team members who come to their home on a regular basis.

What if a patient has no insurance and doesn't qualify for Medicare?

Hospice of the Piedmont accepts all patients regardless of their ability to pay for services. No one is ever turned away because they do not have Medicare or private insurance coverage. The generous financial support of our community members, patients' families, and friends allows Hospice of the Piedmont to meet the needs of all members of the community who can benefit from hospice care, regardless of their financial situation. 🌻

*If you have other questions please call us at
(434) 817-6900 or visit our website: www.hopva.org.*



Shelter from the Storm

AS I WRITE, IT SEEMS THE WORLD HAS GONE mad. We have recently completed a contentious presidential election, Hurricane Ike hit the Gulf coast, Wall Street has imploded, and communications technology continues to be a substitute for human contact.

But the truth is, this sea of conflict is no different today than it was in the past. We just know about it sooner. It is reassuring to remember that there is one true thing: nothing lasts forever. Hard times and good times will pass.

So what does all this have to do with Hospice of the Piedmont? We all need shelter from life's many storms. Hospice care is a haven when serious illness occurs. The impact hospice has on each of us, our families, and the community is profound. Every person we serve in our hospice program has the same sense of a world out of control when hearing the diagnosis and prognosis of a serious illness. Families are profoundly affected. Everyone is scrambling to find answers and make sense out of the incomprehensible as they deal with the reality of such a catastrophic event.

Enter Hospice of the Piedmont. While hospice cannot change the reality of a shortened life expectancy, it can and does offer comfort, dignity, compassion, and support to the patient and the family in the privacy of their home through a variety of programs. A wonderful hospice organization like ours gives our community moral authority to care for our most vulnerable members in a compassionate way. The existence of Hospice of the Piedmont is directly attributed to the collective voices of our community, ensuring that there will always be a resource for those who choose this special kind of care.

Like everything in life, we learn lessons and recover from difficult experiences. Sometimes our most profound insights come from surviving the toughest times. You will read about the resilience that our patients and their families demonstrate each and every day of their lives in this edition of *Hospice Gifts*. The stories that they share are truly gifts to each of us and a strong message of hope in the face of the worst of times.

Thank you for making this possible through your continued support of Hospice of the Piedmont.



 Roberta White, CEO

Celebrating 20 Years of "Dining Around the Area" to Benefit Hospice of the Piedmont

Enjoy great savings at many of the area's best restaurants with our new Dining Card and Restaurant Directory. Your Dining Card provides you with one free entrée, or sizable entrée allowance, when you purchase an entrée of equal or greater value. An estimated value of more than \$700, it's yours for just \$45! Thanks to the generosity of the 44 participating restaurants, all proceeds from the sale of the Dining Around the Area Cards benefit Hospice of the Piedmont.

Visit our website at www.hopva.org to purchase your Dining Around the Area Card, or call (434) 817-6900 to buy one by phone with your Visa or Mastercard.



LOVED ONES SHARE THEIR THANKS

Friends and family members often share their sincere gratitude for the services we provide to their loved ones. These personal notes mean the world to everyone at Hospice of the Piedmont. We are honored to receive such kind words.

"Hospice of the Piedmont did what I and my family could not do, and they could not have done it better."

"The memorial service that you performed captured my husband's spirit more than I could have hoped. I will never forget your kindness."

"You were there when my beloved wife went to be with the angels; I cannot tell you how much your support has meant to me."

"Our love was spread between family and friends. It was truly a 'beautiful' time and it was all possible because of the wonderful people at Hospice of the Piedmont."

"Thank you all very much for supporting us and educating us during mom's illness. It allowed us to keep her at home with wonderful care."

We invite you to share your thoughts and feelings about a hospice experience you may have had.

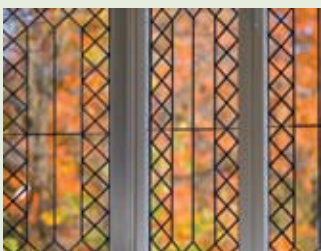
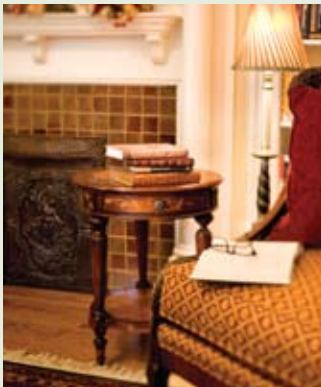
Email: newsletter@hopva.org or send a letter to Hospice of the Piedmont, P.O. Box 7926, Charlottesville, VA 22903-7926.



The Newton and Wilma Thomas Hospice House

MAKE A GIFT

To make a gift to the Hospice House Endowment, make your check payable to Hospice of the Piedmont, and in the memo line include: Hospice House Endowment. Pledges paid over a three-year period of time are also welcome, and opportunities to recognize or memorialize a loved one by naming a space in the House are available. 🍷



A Son's Tribute to His Mother Helps Create

An Endowment for Hospice House

“MOTHER WAS QUITE A character, and always lived her life independently.”

That’s how Ron Sykes, headmaster of the Covenant School, fondly describes Eleanor Sykes, a former patient at Hospice House who died in 2006 at age 90.

“It was discouraging for Mother to rely on my wife Jane and me for all her care—especially when her medical condition declined and she needed help of a very personal nature. I mean it when I say that the hospice staff members were our angels.”

Sykes credits the nurses and staff of Hospice of the Piedmont—particularly his mother’s home health aide, Rhonda—who helped them navigate the last year of her life. Both Ron and his wife Jane were worn out from the demands of his mother’s health needs, although they tried to keep her in their home as long as they could. “As she continued to decline we searched for other options but nothing was right, or it was all too expensive. Then someone said we should try Hospice House. I was sure we couldn’t afford it, especially after we made our first visit and saw what a luxurious setting they’ve created.”

A daily room and board rate is assessed for a patient’s stay at Hospice House. But thanks to a generous community and a financially responsible organization, the question of finances are secondary to the conversation when a family needs hospice support, and certainly not until the patient is comfortable.

That was true for the Sykes. Eleanor scrimped by on a very modest, monthly income from Social Security. “My parents lived a humble life, and as teachers our resources are limited,” Ron Sykes explains. “Jane and I were willing to take out a second mortgage to pay for the right location for Mother, but Hospice of the Piedmont encouraged me to focus on my



Jane and Ron Sykes celebrated Eleanor's 90th birthday in Hospice House

relationship with her, not the money. I paid what little I could.”

Hospice House is designed to provide safe, skilled, compassionate care in a warm, homelike setting for hospice patients who cannot remain at home during the final weeks of life. For these patients, Hospice House is a place of refuge and support where they are treated with dignity, kept comfortable, alert and pain free, and where they can say their final goodbyes, surrounded by their loved ones.

Hospice House opened in November of 2004, responding to a need identified in the Charlottesville community and the nine counties served by Hospice of the Piedmont. Since that time, more than 190 patients and their families have been served at the House by compassionate, experienced staff and caring volunteers.

Medicare, Medicaid, and private insurance cover only the basic daily rate for hospice care approved for patients living at home. That is to say, for patients at Hospice House, Hospice of the Piedmont is not reimbursed for the cost of providing

room, board, and round-the-clock staff, in addition to the other expenses related to operating the residence.

Still, the Board of Directors of Hospice of the Piedmont is determined to make Hospice House available to those who need it during the last weeks of life, without regard to their financial circumstances, and to keep any costs passed on to patient families as reasonable as possible.

Families with the means to do so are asked to compensate Hospice of the Piedmont for room, board, and staffing costs, on a sliding scale based on income. Patients who are uninsured or unable to share in the above costs are not denied access to Hospice House. Instead, funding for care of these individuals is sought from the general fundraising efforts of Hospice of the Piedmont, and now through a three million dollar endowment campaign.

Ron Sykes is so grateful for his mother's experience and for the support he and his family received that he has agreed to chair the campaign for a Hospice House Endowment, lending his name to an effort to ensure that Hospice House remains a resource to the community for generations to come.

"I think it surprises people when I say this, but I firmly believe that the last six months of Mother's life were the best of her life. She was loved, cared for, made new friends, said her goodbyes to her family—all in the nicest home she'd ever lived in."

For more information on making a gift of any size or type to Hospice of the Piedmont, contact:

Karen Ratzlaff

Director of Development

(434) 817-6910

E-mail: karen.ratzlaff@hopva.org

"Hospice of the Piedmont encouraged me to focus on my relationship with my mother..."



Eleanor (on right) and a friend at Hospice House

The demand for a bed in Hospice House has remained consistently high since it opened (there is always a waiting list for one of the eight beds). Meanwhile, the need for financial subsidies has grown dramatically. In fiscal year 2007, Hospice of the Piedmont subsidized more than \$62,000 in patient care. The following year, the need escalated to more than \$135,000.

A non-profit, charitable organization like Hospice of the Piedmont must plan carefully for the future. An endowment lives in perpetuity; the principle of an endowment is never spent while the income earned on that investment will provide a permanent, annual stream of income.

Ron and Jane want to do whatever they can to help ensure that other families know about Hospice of the Piedmont, and have access to the services hospice has to offer.

"We hope others will join us in this effort," Sykes explained. "We will never be able to fully repay the gift Hospice of the Piedmont gave my mother, but we want to try." 🙏

NAMING OPPORTUNITIES IN HOSPICE HOUSE

The Campaign for the Hospice House Endowment offers donors the opportunity to remember or honor a family member, friend, or loved one with a named space or fund in the Hospice House. The following opportunities are currently available—donors are encouraged to contact Karen Ratzlaff to obtain the latest version of this list or to discuss how to structure their gift.

Hospice House Endowment

\$1,000,000 to name a
\$3,000,000 endowment

Reception Foyer	\$500,000
Front Porch/ Main Entrance	\$250,000
Floor One	\$200,000
Floor Two	\$200,000
Floor Three	\$150,000
Meditation Space/ Chapel (third floor)	\$150,000
Staff/Family Suite (third floor)	\$150,000
Grand Staircase	\$100,000
Dining Room	\$100,000
Front Gardens	\$100,000
Staff and Family Lounge (third floor)	\$100,000
Hospice House Gardens Endowment	\$100,000
Kitchen	\$75,000
Patient Rooms (7)	\$50,000 ea.
Side Porch/Entrance	\$50,000
Side Garden	\$50,000
Rear Entrance	\$25,000
Visitor Station/ Memorial Alcove	\$25,000
Stained Glass Window	\$10,000
Fresh Flower Fund	\$10,000
Laundry Facility	\$10,000
Postbox (front porch)	\$5,000
Sitting Area Furnishings (3)	\$2,500 ea.
Maple Trees (2)	\$2,500 ea. (1 Reserved)
Engraved Bricks – front walkway	Amount per brick to be determined (planned for 2009) 🙏

“They met us where we were—they didn’t expect us to change or ask me to do anything I couldn’t handle.”

and death, but not everyone in their circle of friends and family could handle those conversations. “Beth, Lara, and Chaplain David Flack helped us come to terms with our fear of the unknown, and they’ve all done it in such a positive, caring way.”

Adding how non-judgmental she finds the hospice staff, Ann observes, “They met us where we were—they didn’t expect us to change or ask me to do anything I couldn’t handle.”

Eight months later it became clear Joe needed more constant care than the visiting hospice nurses could provide, and Ann couldn’t find private nursing care she could rely on. They utilized one of the little-known benefits of hospice under Medicare—respite care—which gave Ann, Joe’s constant caregiver, a much needed five day rest. Although the facility he visited for that week provided good care, Joe knew that wasn’t the kind of place where he wanted to be at the end. They began to talk more seriously about a move to Hospice House which is much more like a home in feeling, appearance, and operation.

Shortly after his 85th birthday and their celebration of the Easter holiday, the call came from hospice that a bed had opened. “The night before Joe left for Hospice House was the hardest night of our lives, but we made it through and we haven’t looked back since. Moving Joe to Hospice House was the right decision.”

Joe got superb care from all the staff at Hospice House, so good in fact that he gained back six of the twenty-



Joe Steckler at Hospice House

five pounds he’d lost. “The cook does a wonderful job, and tries to make what the patients enjoy.” Ann visited Joe every day for cocktail hour, and they talked and reminisced about their lives together. Together they quietly celebrated their 35th wedding anniversary at Hospice House—Ann took him balloons, champagne, and wedding photos to enjoy.

It’s quieter around their home, but Ann adopted a dog named Posy for company and to keep herself occupied. She admits the new pet has helped, and she often takes Posy to the Hospice House to visit Joe. “Everyone, even animals, loves Joe.”

As his disease progresses Joe is sleeping more and remembering less. But he tries to spend every day in his recliner and enjoys visits from numerous friends, neighbors, and hospice volunteers. He especially enjoys his time with hospice chaplain, David Flack. The former Catholic priest and the former Baptist minister have connected on a deep, spiritual level which brings Joe peace of mind and of soul.

Ann’s advice to anyone who is very ill, or to anyone who loves someone who is seriously ill, is to find out more about Hospice of the Piedmont.

“Once you face the reality that your loved one is dying, or even if you haven’t yet fully accepted the idea, make the call. Hospice will make the process more than bearable.” She admits that she and Joe have had the benefit of time to get to know the staff members who have become their partners in the journey. “I’m so glad we didn’t wait.”

 Karen Ratzlaff, July 2008

Joe Steckler quietly and peacefully passed away on September 27, 2008, surrounded by his loved ones and holding fast to the grace and faith that were his gifts in life. We are grateful that Joe and Ann allowed us to share their hospice story.

Upcoming and Ongoing Events

November, National Hospice Month

- 5** 6–8pm Beginning Your Grief Journey Workshop
- 8** 9:30am–2pm “Planning for the Final Phase of Life: Helping Loved Ones Prepare” panel discussion, Unitarian Church, call (434) 293-8179 to register.
- 18 and 25** 6–7:30pm Holiday Grief Support (Living with Grief workshop series)

December

- 3** 6–8pm Beginning Your Grief Journey Workshop
- 2 and 16** 6–7:30pm Holiday Grief Support (continued from November)
- 9** 6:30pm Hospice Tree Memorial Service, First Presbyterian Church

January

- 7** 6–8pm Beginning Your Grief Journey Workshop
- 12 to 3/2** Please Call Eight Week Support Group Begins

February

- 4** 6–8pm Beginning Your Grief Journey Workshop
- 10, 17 and 24** 6–7:30pm Living with Grief Workshop Series (Psychosocial/Emotional)

March

- 4** 6–8pm Beginning Your Grief Journey Workshop
- 2 to 4/20** Please Call Eight Week Support Group Begins

April

- 1** 6–8pm Beginning Your Grief Journey Workshop
- 17 to 19** (Fri–Sun) Teen Retreat (Please call for more information)
- 20 to 6/8** Please Call Eight Week Support Group Begins
- 29** 1 – 4pm HFA Teleconference on Diversity and End-of-Life Care

May

- 6** 6–8pm Beginning Your Grief Journey Workshop
- 19** 6:30pm Spring Memorial Gathering

Living with Grief Workshops

This series supports the bereaved and facilitates a deeper understanding of the grief journey.

Beginning Your Grief Journey Workshop

An evening of education and sharing for the newly bereaved:

Part 1, 6–7 pm Understanding Grief: Introduction to basic grief concepts

Part 2, 7–8 pm Sharing Your Story: Time to share the story of your loss in a group setting and discuss topics of grief

Bereavement Support Group

Learn about the grieving process and be with others who are grieving. This group is for adults who have experienced the death of a loved one, and three months have passed since the death.

Journeys Grief Groups

Children and teens receive grief support and education using art as a tool for creative self-expression.

School-aged Group: Tuesdays, 5–6:15 pm

Teen Group: Thursdays, 5–6:30 pm

Parent Groups: Occurs simultaneously on both evenings.

Call (434) 817-6900 or (800) 975-5501 for more information, including locations, directions and to reserve space in one of our groups. 📍



QUICK FACTS

Hospice of the Piedmont

Hospice of the Piedmont cared for a **total of 956 patients** over the last year. Our service area includes Charlottesville and the counties of Albemarle, Augusta, Buckingham, Fluvanna, Greene, Louisa, Madison, Nelson, and Orange. Our clinical staff drives more than **640,000 miles** each year.

Hospice of the Piedmont currently employs **143 full and part-time** nurses, physicians, chaplains, social workers, case managers, pharmacy staff, and administrative staff.

Currently, **135 trained volunteers** donate their time to Hospice of the Piedmont, providing 20% of all administrative and clinical services. Volunteers visit and spend time with patients, providing respite care for caregivers, running errands, doing light chores around the house, or helping at the administrative offices.

The following programs are offered free of charge to the community and are funded solely by donations and grants:

Transitions is a pre-hospice, case management program.

Bereavement and Grief

programs are available to any community member dealing with issues of loss due to death, whether or not they have an existing connection to Hospice.

Journeys programs offer support to children ages 4 to 17 in the community, whether or not they have an existing connection to Hospice.

Through our **Speakers Bureau**, experts are available to businesses, civic, community or faith groups, to make presentations, conduct workshops or lead discussions on a wide variety of issues related to end of life, grief and loss and pain management. 📍



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OUR MISSION

Our mission is to serve our community with hospice care and supportive services related to serious illness and loss with the highest level of skill, compassion and respect.

VISION

To be the provider and the employer of choice in our community for the delivery of hospice care and supportive services related to serious illness and loss.

VALUES

Hospice of the Piedmont espouses the following values:

Respect

We recognize and appreciate the diversity, worth, dignity and privacy of every patient, family member, co-worker, and volunteer.

Advocacy

We actively support the patient's choice for end-of-life care.

Integrity

We hold ourselves to the highest level of ethical conduct in every aspect of our organization.

Stewardship

We make effective and efficient use of the resources available to help us accomplish our mission.

Effectiveness

We work with individuals and organizations to ensure the most effective, compassionate, appropriate and highest quality care available. 🙏

How To:

Contact Hospice of the Piedmont

If you want to refer yourself or a loved one, or if you want more information, simply call us: (434) 817-6900 or (800) 975-5501. On-call staff is available 24-hours a day, 7-days a week. Visit our website: www.hopva.org. Send us an email: info@hopva.org. Visit or write to us: 2200 Old Ivy Road, Suite 2, Charlottesville, VA 22903.

Share your story

Personal stories are the best way to spread the word about Hospice of the Piedmont. If you would like to share your experience, please let us know. Help us make everyone who can benefit from hospice care aware of our services. Call (434) 817-6900 or (800) 975-5501 or email: newsletter@hopva.org.

Volunteer

Volunteers are the “heart of hospice.” Without our current team of dedicated volunteers Hospice of the Piedmont would not be able to provide the quality and quantity of services we make available to our community. If you are compassionate, caring, and sensitive and have time, patience and desire, your community needs you. Call one of our Volunteer Coordinators at (434) 817-6900 or (800) 975-5501 or email: tina.hughey-comers@hopva.org or kathy.doby@hopva.org.

Support Hospice of the Piedmont

We provide the “gold standard” of care for every patient and family we serve, regardless of their ability to pay. And we offer many valuable services that are not covered at all by revenue from Medicare, Medicaid, or private insurance—like grief support for adults and children, and pre-hospice support through Transitions. The scope of our services is enhanced immeasurably thanks to generous financial support from our community. To make a gift today, use the envelope included in this newsletter. To make a gift tomorrow, consider including Hospice of the Piedmont in your will or estate plan. Call Karen Ratzlaff, director of development, at (434) 817-6910 for more information, or email karen.ratzlaff@hopva.org.