



Creating Meaningful Moments in The Final Months of "The Dash"

In 1996, Linda Ellis penned a thought-provoking poem she titled "The Dash." The "dash," as she writes, represents the line between the year of birth and the year that marks our death. The poem encourages the reader to look long and hard at how they are spending their dash, "For you never know how much time is left that can still be rearranged."

At Hospice of the Piedmont, we have the privilege of caring for people who know how time-limited their own dash might be. At those bedsides, we hear stories from our patients about faithful service to their country, high school loves they have had "their whole life," cherished family, and faithful friends. It is in those stories that we learn what is most important to the patient and their loved ones. Our care team's focus is to honor this time and to make sure what is most important remains a priority during the final months of their dash.

For our patients whose dash has included time serving our country, we honor our veterans with gratitude for their service through a "pinning" ceremony. During this time, we hear stories of service, courage, and loved ones who have supported them in their work.

For those who have loved music their whole life, we work to ensure that music can be a part of the end of their dash as well. Through our supportive music programming, we are able to bring that love of music to the bedside, and oftentimes rekindle memories of earlier times of their dash.

We also realize there are some patients whose dash includes what others would describe as a life that has been hard. Our care teams, no matter what backgrounds patients might bring, are there to help and support. Our spiritual

counselors and social workers alleviate burdens and help to bring peace. Our physicians and nurses work with symptoms of disease to bring comfort. And if needs arise during the late hours, our overnight team is there to respond.

It is through our clinical teams and our generous donors that we can go far and beyond to honor the lives of those we support and care for. "If we treat each other with respect, and more often wear a smile, remembering this special dash might only last a little while."

Your peace is our purpose – honoring the remarkable dash of those we serve.

Nancy W. Littlefield

Nancy Littlefield





Celebrating Our Hospice House

A "Community Gem"

Recently, our Newton & Wilma Thomas Hospice House underwent a refresh and renovation to better meet the needs of our patients and families and improve their comfort and safety. To celebrate this "Community Gem," Hospice of the Piedmont was pleased to be able to host several events prior to the reopening.

A donor tea provided an opportunity for our leadership donors, long-time Hospice House supporters, and Legacy Society members to have an intimate tour of the house and hear from Nancy Littlefield, president and CEO, about her vision for the House.

Additionally, a community-wide open house, with more than 100 people in attendance, provided an opportunity for anyone interested to learn more about Hospice House, and the service it allows us to provide to our community as a nonprofit hospice.

The 1904 Victorian home was purchased by the Hospice of the Piedmont Board of Directors in 2002. After a capital campaign and extensive restoration, Hospice House opened its doors to patients in November 2004 – making 2024 its 20th Anniversary. It has eight private rooms, and is only one of three, licensed hospice houses in Virginia.

"Hospice House truly is a gem," said Littlefield. "Providing healthcare the way it should be to everyone in our community, no matter where they call home, is the heart of our hospice mission."

Beautiful furnishings, historical art, and lush gardens have helped make this house a home for over 1,500 patients and their families since its opening. Inside, the warm and peaceful setting is where Hospice of the Piedmont has the privilege of providing 24/7 expert and compassionate care to each resident.

Any Hospice of the Piedmont patient whose needs are too great to be met at home or who no longer has caregivers are welcome to stay at Hospice House, depending on room availability.

A financial screening is required but no one will ever be turned away due to finances.

Gifts to Hospice House allow us to employ skilled, compassionate staff who provide around-the-clock care to patients and support to their families during the most vulnerable time in their lives.

"Generous community philanthropy helps ensure that when our community members' needs are too great to be met in their own homes, our doors are always open," said Jenn Downs, Chief Development and Marketing Officer.

If you'd like to help ensure our patients always have a place to call home during their final chapter, please consider making a gift today. You may also contact a member of our Development Team at gift@hopva.org or (434) 972-3568 to find out more about the Hospice House Endowment Fund.





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Scenes from our Hospice House tea and open house

Engaging in the Uncommon

Community Education and Outreach

Who wants to talk about death? At Hospice of the Piedmont, we do. While it can be uncomfortable to ask questions like, “How prepared is your family for your death?” or “How prepared are you?” It’s crucial that these complex and emotional topics aren’t swept aside. Instead, at Hospice of the Piedmont, we want to empower everyone in our community to have open and honest conversations about end-of-life issues.

The decision to enter hospice care can be a difficult one. However, the more educated one is with information about the support hospice can provide, typically, the easier the decision becomes. Our Community Education and Outreach program is dedicated to increasing awareness about what hospice services can offer families and patients at the end-of-life. In Virginia, a recent study reported that only 50% of those who are eligible for hospice care actually access the service.

At Hospice of the Piedmont, we believe the key to helping more people access care is overcoming the stigma that hospice means “giving up.” Families and patients often report wishing they had started hospice services sooner, and patients who use hospice care tend to live longer than those who do not. Hospice care can be a gift to the patient and their family, providing an added level of support and allowing them to focus on what matters most – time together during the final chapter.

Our Community Navigator, Hannah Barton, hosts educational events about end-of-life issues. These events range from film screenings at local libraries to



Death Over Drafts at Kardinal Hall

attending local health fairs to advance care planning sessions at senior centers.

“Having meaningful conversations with family and friends and documenting your wishes is important,” explains Barton. “Planning can be a gift to those you care about. It reduces decisional burden and has been shown to improve bereavement experiences by lowering anxiety and depression after a loved one’s death.”

In the past year, Hospice of the Piedmont had over 1,500 attendees at 48 events in our service area. Our Death Over Drafts events at local breweries help begin important conversations in the broader community. Our pioneering team of trained Death Doulos help facilitate these discussions with questions like, “What music do you

want to be listening to on your last day alive?” Engaging attendees in a light-hearted yet thought-provoking manner, Hospice of the Piedmont is helping prepare our community for challenging conversations with their loved ones about end-of-life fears, concerns, and questions.

One conversation at a time, Hospice of the Piedmont is dispelling the myth that hospice is just for those who are actively dying. Philanthropic support allows Hospice of the Piedmont to continue providing meaningful community engagement to increase awareness of services that patients are eligible for and enhance care for both patients and their caregivers alike.



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Top left: Hannah Barton at Death Over Drafts

Top right: Community event at Westminster Canterbury retirement community

Bottom: Community talk at Unity Church

WE'D LOVE TO CONNECT!

To request a speaker or partner with us on an outreach event, please email navigator@hopva.org.
We look forward to hearing from you.

Giving Back, Grateful for the Care

The experience a family has during the final months, weeks or days spent with a loved one — and the grief that follows — can be overwhelming. Specifically, for individuals on hospice care, close relationships and appreciation often develop between the care team, patient, and the patient's family.

Such was the case recently for a woman and her two daughters as they navigated the end-of-life journey with their loved one. The family has graciously shared their experience in hopes that it will bring comfort and offer a path for others on a similar journey. The following is an excerpt from the letter the family sent to Hospice of the Piedmont shortly after their loved one passed away.

"The nurses at Hospice of the Piedmont are truly extraordinary. They are skilled in administering care for comfort and peace, not seeking a cure. They communicated to our loved one and to us in a way that was straightforward and gentle, while at the same time, open and frank about his situation. They did not sugar coat; they gave us sound guidance. They supported us as we began to enter this period of grief and mourning, this period of saying goodbye."

In gratitude for the care their loved one received, the family chose to express their appreciation through a philanthropic gift to Hospice of the Piedmont to be used to support nurses in delivering care.

"Gifts from the heart, such as this one, are truly an affirmation of the high-quality compassionate care we strive to deliver to each and every patient we serve," shares Alina Fomovska, MD, Chief Medical Officer of Hospice of the Piedmont. "Words of gratitude from our patients' families mean the world to our caring team of nurses, physicians, chaplains, social workers, and volunteers. A gift that helps enhance our team's delivery of care is a gift to everyone in the communities we serve."

Gifts in honor of a caregiver or care team may be made at hopva.org/give. If you'd like to discuss a gift, please contact the Development Office at 434-972-3568.

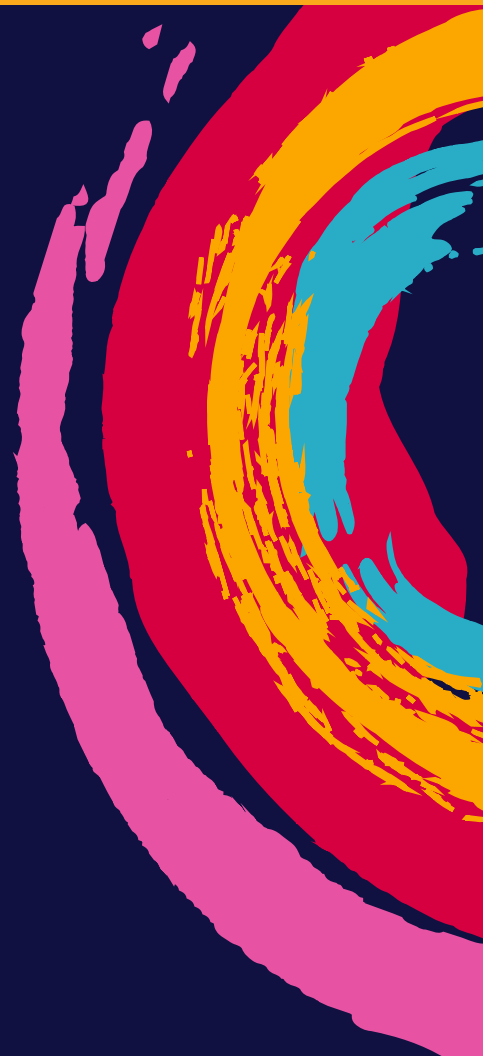
Leave a Lasting Legacy

Hospice of the Piedmont has been serving central Virginia for nearly 44 years. Our hospice care focuses on comfort so that the final chapter of life can be spent on what matters most. Philanthropic support allows Hospice of the Piedmont to continue providing meaningful programs that enhance care for patients, and their caregivers alike.

The Legacy Society recognizes friends and benefactors who have made plans to support Hospice of the Piedmont through a planned gift. A planned gift enables you to document a benefit to our organization that will come in the future, while meeting your current financial, personal, and philanthropy goals.

By including Hospice of the Piedmont in your estate plans, and notifying us, your name will be included in all acknowledgments of The Legacy Society, unless you prefer for your gift to remain anonymous.

For more information, or to make a planned gift, please contact Lauri Wilson, Director of Major Gifts at (434) 972-3538 or lauri.wilson@hopva.org.



SAVE THE DATE



JOIN US

DATE **Saturday, May 11**

TIME **8am**

LOCATION **Keswick Estate**

HOSPICE OF THE *Piedmont* 5k

JOIN US FOR THE HOP 5K

We hope you will join us for Hospice of the Piedmont's 23rd annual 5K Run/Walk, presented by Virginia National Bank, on May 11. Whether you're an experienced runner/walker or just starting out, this is the perfect opportunity to challenge yourself, meet new people, and have fun. Register TODAY for early bird pricing!

We invite you to 'Remember a Loved One' by purchasing a sign for the HOP 5K Run/Walk Memorial Mile. Team and individual fundraising, as well as partnership opportunities, are also available.

We can't wait to see you at the starting line! Register TODAY!



Scan the QR code, visit us at hopva.org/5k, or contact our Development Officer/Race Director at Ophelia.Lenz@hopva.org



JOIN US

DATE **Friday, May 24**

LOCATION **Fauquier Springs Country Club**

SEE YOU ON THE LINKS

We're excited to announce this year's Piedmont Golf Classic is presented by Virginia National Bank and will be held on Friday, May 24 at Fauquier Springs Country Club. We have many opportunities to participate and support the event. Don't forget to get your 50/50 ticket – they sell out fast!

Event Highlights

- **50/50 \$30,000 Drawing:** Tickets are \$100 each and only 300 will be sold!
- **Tee Sponsorship:** A sign with your sponsorship name will be placed among the 18 tees at the event and your name will be included in the tournament program book.
- **Sponsorship Opportunities:** The event sells out quickly. Kindly contact our Development Officer/Tournament Director for more information at Shannon.Gearing@hopva.org



Scan the QR code or visit us at hopva.org/golf for more information