



care matters

530.272.5739

www.hofo.org

11270 Rough & Ready Highway
Grass Valley, CA 95945

Hospice of the Foothills affirms life & promotes dignity at the end-of-life by providing professional, comprehensive, and compassionate care to our patients, their loved ones, and our community.





Hello Friends,

I'm excited to introduce myself to those of you I haven't had the pleasure of meeting yet. I joined Hospice of the Foothills, as the executive director, in mid-January of this year.

As I reflect on the journey that led me to Hospice of the Foothills (HOF), I realize it began when I was a young girl. We had a family friend who was a hospice nurse, and I was fascinated and pleased that someone was helping families at such a challenging time. I knew one day, one way or another, I wanted to make end-of-life care my calling, too. I took my first step in that direction by securing a position in the dietary department at SNMH. In what would become a 27-year career, my role evolved as I moved into billing, organizational leadership, process improvement, and finally, mission integration. I love my family at SNMH, but we all knew my heart belonged to hospice. When the opportunity arose to work with this organization, I jumped at the chance! I know I'm one of a lucky few who attain their dream job.

From my first moments at HOF, I was warmly welcomed into my new work family as I began 'taking the reins' from Carolynn Peterson. I have found this agency to have a collaborative and engaged board, a strong leadership team and an unbelievably mission-focused staff. Thanks to Carolynn's leadership, my work with HOF begins on stable financial footing with strong policies and procedures that allow our staff to meet and exceed the expectations of our patients and families facing end-of-life

challenges.

When I signed my contract with HOF in early December, I knew I was assuming a significant role, one for which I had great passion. What I didn't know was that my father, one of my best friends, would become part of my orientation. Just days after accepting the executive director position, my dad, Bill Stapp, was diagnosed with a terminal illness. He chose Hospice of the Foothills to assist through this difficult journey. My first few weeks of employment were spent learning the administrative functions, then rushing home after work to be with dad during his hospice visits where I received the most intensive 'hands on training' imaginable. I was blessed to experience firsthand what this organization provides to families and was able to reap the benefits of seeing my father's wishes honored as he faced his final weeks. Dad passed away on February 28th, with our family and hospice nurse by his side. I miss him terribly, but because of HOF, we were well prepared and supported throughout his journey, especially during his final days.

I am honored and excited to be a part of this amazing Hospice of the Foothills family and I look forward to connecting with you as my journey continues.

Take good care,

Viv



Viv Tipton
Executive Director

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The Day Their World Changed



In April of 2017, William ‘Bill’ Bierwirth was getting ready to retire after a long career in law enforcement, most recently as a Sergeant at the Wayne Brown Correctional Facility. As an avid outdoorsman, retirement held promises of hikes, lakeside camping, bonfires and family fun. Life was good for Bill and his beautiful bride of 8 years, Rocio. Then one Thursday, everything changed.

At Rocio’s urging, Bill made an appointment to see his doctor. She had noticed a bewildered look on his face a couple of times and thought it could be an ‘absence seizure’. During his appointment, Bill’s doctor said “Humor me with this and stop by the emergency room on your way home,” he encouraged. It had been a long, hot day and Bill didn’t want to go, but Rocio persuaded him to get it out of the way. What the ER doctors found was cause for concern. By Sunday morning, Bill was in surgery. By Sunday noon, they had a diagnosis of stage 4 glioblastoma.

The relative newlyweds were told if they had any big dreams or family events to plan, they should do it soon.

While the doctors conferred with the couple to determine the first round of treatment, Bill struggled to accept the reality of his condition. But Rocio understood the gravity of the situation and realized she was in way over her head. She didn’t know what to do or expect as Bill received radiation and chemotherapy. When a nurse recommended the Foothills Palliative Care program, Rocio gratefully reached out for help.

The Foothills Palliative Care program was a godsend to Rocio and provided the support and guidance she desperately needed. The nurse and social worker were always available to help, whether it was interpreting test results, making recommendations for medications to keep on hand, connecting Rocio to resources and information, or just to commiserate. They were also able to coach her on what she needed to communicate to Bill’s oncology team and how she needed them to communicate with her.

Throughout the next several months, Bill continued treatment. Nevertheless, Rocio could clearly see his slow decline. He was losing cognitive function and experiencing personality changes, headaches and increased weakness. In January of 2018, Bill was admitted to Hospice of the Foothills.

Over the next several weeks, Bill and Rocio received the warm embrace of care given by true hospice professionals. The team was available night and day to help with any problems or issues as they arose. In addition to Bill’s exceptional medical care, Rocio received equal support and attention. When Bill was no longer able to communicate, the team helped her anticipate what was ahead. On January 24, 2018, just nine months following his diagnosis, William Bierwirth died.

“I am thankful for everything we received in terms of help and encouragement,” said Rocio. “I so appreciate the HOF team being so careful and gentle with him. I had everything I could possibly ask for, short of the cancer going away,” she concluded.

Rocio continues to receive love and support from Hospice of the Foothills. As she navigates the new road ahead, she’s benefiting from the help provided by HOF’s bereavement counseling and support groups. The same strength and courage that carried her through Bill’s illness, will carry her forward in life.

A YEAR IN PICTURES



Betsy Perez, Raley's Store Team Leader presents Kristin Donahue, Fund Development & Marketing Director for Hospice of the Foothills with a donation. Pictured left to right: Briana Lavagnino, Betsy Perez, Kristin Donahue, and Bridget Wamat.



Volunteers Rebecca and Robert Goehl stand 'at the ready' to serve our guests at Breakfast in the Park, 2017.



HOF employees Laura Ptucha-Skoog and Dawn Tassone enjoy the HOF BBQ with their family.



Debe Wilson displays one of many handmade quilts she sells to benefit Hospice of the Foothills



Friends of Hospice members brave the rain to set up the Butterfly Garden of Remembrance.



Volunteer Bob Johnson helps spread the HOF message.



Hospice of the Foothills staff and facility received a blessing from the traveling Buddhist Monks.

Lazy Dog Chocolateria helped HOF staff give Carolynn Peterson a tasty sendoff with delicious ice cream treats.



Dick DeLisser and his service dog, Maggie, accept CHAPCA's Volunteer of the Year award from President, Susan Negreen.



So Many Choices!

The end of life has always been about choices, but never have the choices been so numerous, and therefore, difficult to make.

Over the years our medical care has become extremely complicated with more therapies available than ever before. There are now life-sustaining technologies for every type of organ failure except the brain. We can have our lives preserved, even with conditions that create great misery and pain, both physical and psychological.

People dealing with chronic diseases and life-limiting illness are often faced with significant challenges resulting from their treatment choices. Our Foothills Palliative Care (FPC) program is designed to help with these challenges. We assist physicians in managing difficult symptoms a person may be experiencing from their disease and/or treatment. About 73% of people utilizing the FPC program transfer to hospice care when they no longer wish to continue aggressive therapies, opting to focus instead on comfort and a better quality of life.

When to make the transition to hospice care is never an easy decision. Our care teams, consisting of a physician, nurse

and social worker, help guide patients and families through the journey. It can be difficult to know when “living” is ending and the process of “dying” has begun. It’s a well-known fact that most people enter hospice care very late in their trajectory, wishing they had chosen hospice much sooner.

In June 2016, California citizens were given an additional choice. The End of Life Option Act went into effect and patients were able to obtain medications that would intentionally end their life at a predetermined time and in a more controlled manner. Hospice of the Foothills supports a patient’s right to exercise this option, and our team continues to serve patients and families who make this deeply personal choice. We do not prescribe the medications but will continue to provide emotional and physical symptom support as patients go through the process of obtaining aid-in-dying prescriptions, and finally, death itself. Many people who obtain the medications ultimately choose not to take them, finding comfort in knowing they’re available.

Several other decisions challenge patients and families as they navigate the end-of-life. Deciding on caregiver options, the possible need for skilled nursing facility placement, medications and the side effects they may produce, healthcare directives, financial concerns, and post-death arrangements are just some of the many details that may need resolution. HOF’s clinical team recognizes the magnitude of these choices and strives to provide the compassionate guidance and knowledge to help make decisions as stress free as possible.

Dr. Rene’ Kronland
Medical Director
Hospice of the Foothills



“We could have never done this without your support and help. You made the roughest time of our lives bearable and rewarding.”

“You are responsible for making Dad’s transition into the next life a beautiful experience for our whole family.”

“You are an invaluable asset to our community. I can never repay you for the gift that you have given us. What you provide is beyond a blessing.”

“In his final hours, my stepfather knew he was surrounded by earthly angels—HOF nurses and volunteers. Because of them he was able to let go of his fear and pass peacefully and unafraid.”

“It’s never easy watching as your loved one slips away, but you made the journey much more bearable.”

What people are saying about Hospice of the Foothills!

“Hospice staff brought the calm to follow the storm that cancer causes in its final stages.”

“You were a life-giving service of aid, fellowship and concern that will always be remembered with tremendous fondness and gratitude. Your work and organization are a God-send to many!”

“All your help made my husband more comfortable during his final days. For that I am very, very grateful.”

“Every time I had a question I always got good advice delivered very cheerfully and in a way I could understand. Thanks to each of you for making a very difficult time easier to bear.”

“Just knowing I could pick up the phone at any time or that I would see your friendly and supportive faces was balm to my pain.”

A Muppet Launch?

One of the thrilling parts of working at Hospice of the Foothills is seeing the various creative and fun ways Nevada County residents of all ages find to support our patients and families. One of our favorites is the little town of Washington's annual Muppet Launch. Yes...you read that correctly. A Muppet is launched into 'space'!

It all started in 2006 when Kermit the Frog rolled into town with a bunch of his showbiz buddies to film a Super Bowl commercial for Ford. While filming only lasted a few days, the experience left its mark. The little town of Washington had a new-found love for Muppets and the commercial's Visual Effects Executive Producer, Todd Davidovich, left with a love for the town and its residents. And for one long-time resident, Poison Bob, the experience left the spark of an idea that sat and percolated for a few years. A fun, quirky idea that would bring together townsfolk, neighbors, visitors, and new friends, like Todd, to share lots of smiles and the love of a close community.

Poison Bob's idea came to life the day after Thanksgiving of 2011 with the inaugural Muppet Launch. The idea was to launch Kermit in a 'capsule' fashioned from an old

plastic cookie jar attached to a military-grade weather balloon. The capsule also contained hand written notes and memorabilia from residents. The Washington Hotel, then owned by Henry DeCorte, was already the town hub. It was only natural that the hotel would serve as Mission Control for the launch. With a giant chalk drawing in the road just outside of town to act as a launch pad, Kermit was ready for a new mountain adventure. Kermit was launched toward the heavens with the "Rainbow Connection" song playing in the background.



Poison Bob, the Muppet version, celebrates the launch.

The only expectation, aside from the fun and fellowship, was that the capsule would be found somewhere in the world and get returned to the little town of Washington with its own tales to be shared.

The event was a hit! So much so that it has been repeated every year since. Todd visits his adopted community every year to share in the traditional potluck Thanksgiving dinner on Thursday and the Muppet Launch on Friday. Henry has since retired, but the Washington Hotel's new owners, Cameron and Charity Jackson Collins, haven't missed a beat. Each year a different Muppet astronaut is chosen. Sadly, Poison Bob died in September of 2014. As a beloved member of the community, the town went the extra mile to honor him. Not only did the 2014 Muppet Launch serve as a memorial event for Poison Bob, it also began morphing into a charity event. Fundraising efforts were incorporated into the annual project with Hospice of the Foothills chosen as the beneficiary.

None of the seven Muppet adventurers have been found or returned, thus far. But the little town of Washington is ready and waiting, with arms wide open, for the return of their beloved terry cloth astronauts.

Keep your eyes peeled as you hike, paddle and bike this mountain wonderland of ours. You just might find a Muppet, a story, and a whole community of loyal friends.



Hank DeCorte helps ready his Muppet doppelganger, Dr. Bunsen Honeydew, for launch.

Circle of Care

Donors Dedicated to
Compassionate Care



Hospice of the Foothills is pleased to recognize our 2017 donors to **Circle of Care**, our premier stewardship & donor recognition program.

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Robert York & Deborah Jude-York
Gary Zanardi

VOLUNTEERING

The Heart & Soul of Hospice

April is always a special month at Hospice of the Foothills because it's National Volunteer Month, and volunteers are the heart of our organization.

2018 brought the 4th annual Volunteer Appreciation event which included the Marianne Murphy Volunteer of the Year Awards. Marianne Murphy was one of the volunteers responsible for founding Hospice of the Foothills 39 years ago. Marianne's primary role was that of Volunteer Coordinator, so it's fitting that the volunteer awards should bear her name.

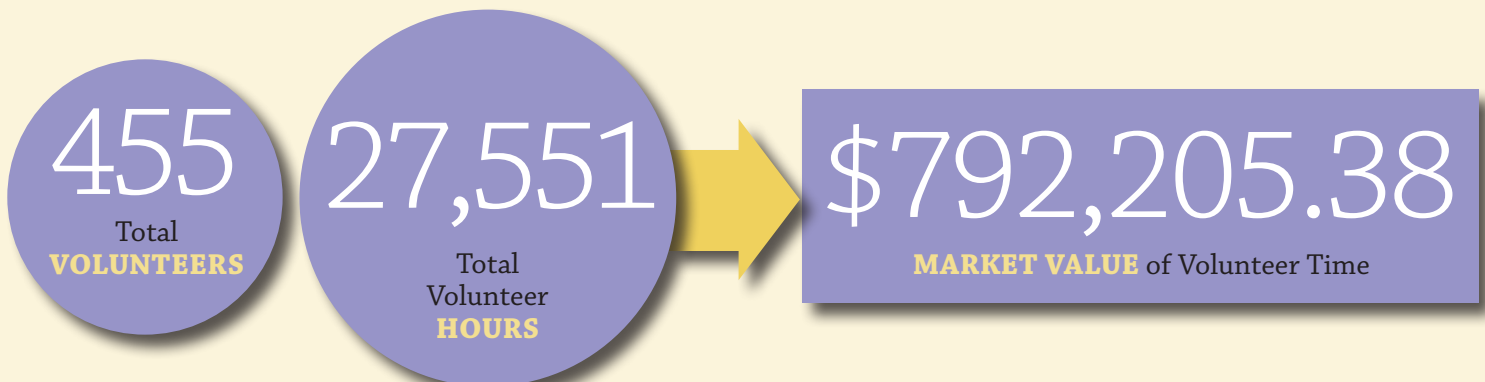
The 2017 award winners were Linda More for Patient Support, Barbara Cisar for Friends of Hospice, Nancy Henson for Professional Services, Catalina Davis for Complementary Services, and Leslie Landi for Gift & Thrift. The annual Volunteer of the Year award was presented to Cydne Grimsby for supporting Hospice of the Foothills in a multitude of ways over many years. In fact, if you visit our campus, there's a good chance you'll find Cydne lovingly tending to the roses and gardens.

Hospice of the Foothills extends a big, warm 'thank you' to all the volunteers who selflessly contribute their time on behalf of our patients and their families.

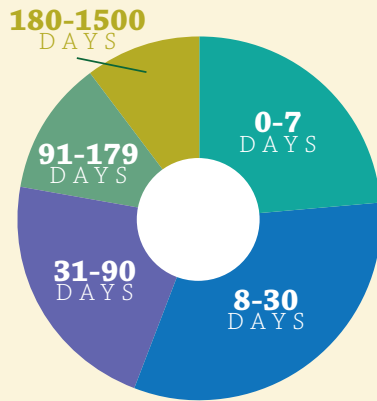


Award winners from left: Cydne Grimsby, Linda More, Nancy Henson, Catalina Davis, and Barbara Cisar.

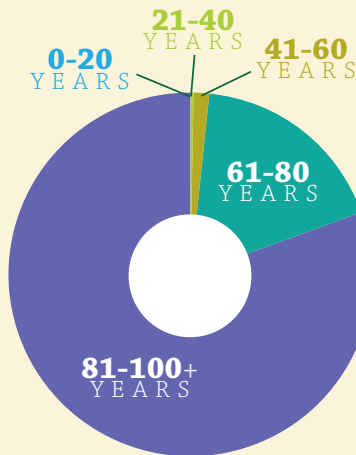
Our Volunteers are
MAKING A DIFFERENCE!



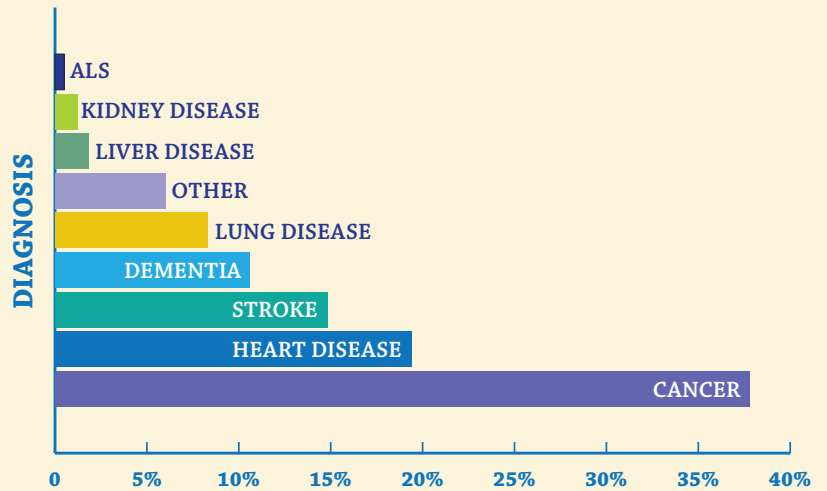
Patient LENGTH of Stay



Patient AGE Range



Patient Admission by DIAGNOSIS



Total Patients Served:	522
Total Patients Admitted:	434

Total Number of Patient Days:	26,589
Average Number of Patient Days:	63.76
Median Number of Patient Days:	23

The Board and staff of HOF are extremely grateful to have the support of this community which allows us to provide compassionate, comprehensive end-of-life care to our patients and supportive services to their families.

Total Operating Expenses:

Total Operating Expenses:	\$ 7,651,821
Total Income (includes fundraising, investments, insurance reimbursements & bequests)	\$ 8,569,059
Surplus/Cash Reserves*	\$ 917,238

Net Fundraising Income:

Community/Event Donations:	\$ 741,509
Gift & Thrift:	\$ 338,588
Other	\$ 159,509
Total Net Fundraising	\$ 1,239,606

*Fiscal year 2017-2018 resulted in a financial surplus due to several large bequests from community members. These generous bequests have permitted the planning and/or execution of the following deferred capital improvements/repairs:

- Upgraded to 'real-time' patient records system
- Installed pergola over the Gordon Patio
- Roof and AC repairs
- Installed interior/exterior LED lighting
- Replace weather damaged siding
- Install Eugene & Nina Zepp memorial flag pole & tribute

2018 Dame Cicely Saunders Awards



Pictured from left: Dennis Fournier, Janet Sisson and Mark Johnson.

Congratulation to the 2018 recipients of the Dame Cicely Saunders Awards. These awards invoke the name of the founder of the modern hospice movement. They honor the legacy of Dame Cicely Saunders and recognize the extraordinary contributions of those who share her vision and make possible Hospice of the Foothills' mission to provide compassionate end-of-life care. Awards were presented to Dennis Fournier (*Individual Award*), Janet Sisson (*Care Provider Award*) and Foothill Flowers, Marie Johnson and the Johnson Family (*Business Award*).



Dame Cicely Saunders

HOW CAN I HELP Hospice of the Foothills?

We are so pleased to share the achievements of HOF in the 2017/18 fiscal year. These achievements are made possible because of the role each of you play in supporting our mission, our patients, and our programs with your gifts of time and treasure.

This past fiscal year, these gifts allowed us to serve more than 500 hospice patients and their families. In addition, close to 300 community members participated in our grief support programs even though hospice was not utilized for their family member.

You may not be aware that HOF never charges our patients for the care provided. While approximately 70% of patient expenses are paid by MediCare and private insurance, the remaining 30% is funded through contributions. This often creates a financial challenge for us.

Our Circle of Care gives you the opportunity to help us meet this challenge. We hope you will consider one of the opportunities described in the enclosed Circle of Care appeal envelope. Each donation enables us to continue providing high-quality, compassionate care to our patients and their families during their difficult journey.

On behalf of our staff, board of directors, patients and families, thank you for your ongoing generosity and support.



Sally Gallagher
President
Board of Directors

HOSPICE OF THE FOOTHILLS TURNS 40 IN 2019!

Watch for special celebratory events next year.



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GUEST ARTIST | MIXED MEDIA PAINTINGS

LeeAnn Brook



Many thanks to LeeAnn Brook for allowing Hospice of the Foothills to use her stunning artwork. LeeAnn is a Nevada City-based artist whose works explore the landscape through color and movement. She is a five-time award winner in the California State Fair and a four-time winner in the nationally recognized Wild & Scenic Film Festival's juried art competition. LeeAnn has been painting professionally for over 40 years.



Awakening



Flow of Light

www.leeannbrookfineart.com