

# Volunteer SCENE

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR HOSPICE OF HAVASU VOLUNTEERS

**JUNE/JULY 2008**

**Volunteer  
Continuing Education  
LAKE HAVASU CITY**  
Meetings are at 10 a.m. on Mondays

June 9

Lessons on Living Morrie Schwartz

June 16

Polidori Volunteers Breakfast Meeting  
8:30 - 10 .m.

June 23

No meeting

July 14

Let's Talk

July 28

Self-care Yoga - Dr. Pamela Meyers, PhD

**PARKER**

Meetings are on the 2nd and 4th  
Tuesdays at 11 a.m.

June 10

Things of the spirit: Understanding the  
spiritual needs of a hospice patient.

June 24

No meeting

July 8

A Time of Grief: Undertsning  
bereavement

July 22

Caring for You: Learning to give  
without hurting yourself

## It's great to be back!

By Janet Baier  
Manager of Volunteer Services

It's great to be back. I'm actually trying to catch up and many of you know how difficult that can be.

I want to thank you for the many cards, visits, flowers gifts and phone calls I received while in the hospital and recovering at home. While I was recuperating I even received some great food. Thank you to the volunteers keeping the office going. Also to the volunteer who came to my house twice daily to make sure my children (yes, dogs) had water and food, and taking them for a walk. Thank you for the volunteers picking up my mail and newspaper. You all are definitely part of my wonderful family.

I will be leaving June 19th for a vacation in Japan. When I return there will be many things to be accomplished. I look forward to many positive things happening in our department.

I have a favor to ask. Do you have a friend who might be interested in volunteering? Have you ever asked your friends if they would like to?

If so, please stop by for an application and give it to them or have them call me at the office.

They also can go on-line to [www.hospicehavasuu.org](http://www.hospicehavasuu.org) and download an application and send it in or bring it in. My next class will be an evening class.

We desperately need volunteers in Lake Havasu City for Patient Care, Yours, Mine and Ours, and the Polidori House.

## Personal thoughts: Companioning with the dying

By Charlotte Van Nierop  
Hospice of Havasu volunteer

We all have a story to tell, and this is mine. It is a story I wish I did not have to tell. I have dealt with death and dying as a nurse and in my own personal experience I have lost family members and dear friends. This loss, however, will be the hardest I have had to deal with.

I recently lost my ten month old grandson.

Jonathon was four months old when they found he had a rare type of brain cancer. He had surgery and then a bout

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Hospice of Havasu Volunteers were asked to write something about the meeting they attended at the Arizona Hospice Foundation Volunteer Conference, "Companioning the Dying" in April. Other writings continue on the next page.

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with chemotherapy. After the chemo the family was told nothing else could be done.

Jonathon was brought home and hospice was called in to help. This was their first experience with a baby dying of cancer.

I went down to help care for my grandson and to support my daughter and

son-in-law as they faced the loss of their first-born child.

In a way we knew what the final outcome would be but we didn't dwell on it.

We just took care of Jonathon.

We loved him and I loved reading to him.

We kept him in the living room so he could see everyone coming and going. One day while I was reading to him he put his little hand on my face and looking at me with his big brown eyes I felt he was telling me its OK grandma, I will be okay. We were blessed to have Jonathon with us for three weeks before God took him

home to be with Him.

I will never forget the feeling of those tiny fingers on my face.

I have a "blanket of mercy" that is soft and light blue and it has outlines of faith, family and little angel wings.

When I put it around me it reminds me of a very special gift we were blessed with for such a short time.

I felt Jonathon had a happy death as he passed away in his mother's arms with family members surrounding him saying the "Our Father".

I now have a very special guardian angel.

# Personal thoughts: Companionship with the dying

## Plan now for next year

By Dorothy Roberts  
Hospice of Havasu volunteer

On April 12th we went to Phoenix to the Conference on Companionship with the Dying by Greg Yoder.

He talked about the gift of sacred silence and about walking along side, not leading but being led; how to have more effective language and listening skills; ways to honor every moment with the dying; ways of letting the dying tell their story and us listening.

Greg was very interesting to listen to, especially when he was telling us about companionship some of his patients.

I really enjoyed the seminar and would go again. This is the second one I have attended and have learned so much.

I hope to see more of our volunteers in attendance next year.

## Keeping an open mind

By Jo Stephens  
Hospice of Havasu volunteer

As Guy Yoder (speaker) pointed out "we all have a story to tell" "A Human Life is a story told by God" Han Christian.

When companionship with the dying the concept of helping is redefined. One of the most important parts of helping is listening.

This was a good review on how to be an active listener. When companionship with a dying patient, complete attentiveness is essential.

Even when the conversation may make you uncomfortable, be open, don't back away, and Repeat what the person is saying. This can also help clarify what is being said, what they are feeling at this time. "Our challenge as a companion is to keep an open mind and heart"

## Training helpful here

By Kathy Meehan  
Hospice of Havasu volunteer

On April 12, 2008 at 3:45am we were on the road to Phoenix to attend "Companionship with the Dying": Practical and Philosophical Tenets for Hospice Volunteers, sponsored by Arizona Hospice Foundation with Greg Yoder, MC LPC CT.

Active listening was again stressed as a major focus for a Hospice Volunteer: attending (body language), paraphrasing, reflecting (feeling), clarifying (double checking) and summarizing.

He discussed the 8 Tenets of Companionship based on the Tenets of Alan Wolfelt Ph.D. These tenets are very enlightening for all Hospice volunteers but especially those who attended the recent "11th Hour" (The Gift of Presence) training.

I came away with a better understanding of a person "wanting" to die without all the medical life support, with family and friends around and preferable at "home". Hopefully I will be able to fulfill this for my loved ones.

## Learning from the dying

By Judy Scartozzi  
Hospice of Havasu volunteer

"Making peace with our limitations; that which we can do will always be enough" As a new volunteer, I'm entering territory unique in my life experiences.

The above quotation taken from the Volunteer conference related to me, that I go in with what I have, give what I can, and listen and learn from the dying.

## Conference worth effort

By Helen Dean  
Hospice of Havasu volunteer

April 12, 2008 was my first conference sponsored by the Arizona Hospice Foundation.

The speaker, Greg Yoder was excellent. His topic, Companionship with the Dying was appropriate for me personally because I am working at the Polidori House.

I recommend this conference and I hope to attend next year.

## Learning ... and fun

By Janice Will  
Hospice of Havasu volunteer

After I received a reminder that I needed to write my thoughts about the "Companionship with the Dying" conference I attended in April, I was puzzled by what I should say. After reminiscing briefly my fingers were flying. First and foremost, Greg Yoder is perhaps the most interesting and inspiring speaker I have ever had the pleasure of meeting. "Don't just do something ... Stand there!" will stick in my mind always. Often times I find myself being too quick to try and jump in and help, or trying to "fix things". I hadn't thought much about how my presence alone can play a significant part when companionship with the dying. This was the first conference that I have been able to attend. I highly recommend the experience to anyone having the chance to go in the future. The camaraderie with fellow volunteers was excellent and an experience in itself. I am thankful for being able to attend such a wonderful gathering of people from Hospices around Arizona.

P.S. The food was also wonderful!

## June & July Birthdays

Gloria Wright - June 06  
Rick Leach - June 08  
Pat Schlecht - June 12  
Rosalie Smith - June 23  
Bonnie Campbell - June 30

Dorothy Mulpelon - July 1  
Janice Will - July 1  
Mary Louise Western - July 2

Faye Story - July 3  
Charlotte VanNierop - July 10  
Barbara Schoof - July 12  
Dorothy M. Beckman - July 13  
Richard Salmon - July 15  
Dan Heinrich - July 17  
Fr. Peter V. Henry - July 21  
Jennifer W. Anderson - July 25  
Elaince Nicol - July 30

# Why become a volunteer, anyway?

By Jenny Anderson

*Hospice of Havasu volunteer*

Why should we encourage others to participate as Hospice of Havasu volunteers? Most of us who serve as volunteers can list a variety of things that we learned while participating in the training program. Most of all, I believe that we get a huge dose of self-awareness. Learning to understand what motivates us is critical in functioning as a good volunteer.

The title of the student manual, "My Gift: Myself", really is indicative of what

our experience in the course will be -- we learn about ourselves, which in turn makes us better caregivers and better volunteers.

One of the first activities that we complete is that of identifying our strengths: just what can we do? We start thinking about sharing individual talent, abilities and "gifts" with others.

The class sessions combine video, discussion of reading assignments, and sharing of personal stories. Although class sessions are lengthy, we enjoy the time together -- in fact, many volunteers find new friends

in their classmates. We find that we are part of a larger, compassionate community.

I think it's very important to learn about the grieving process and some caregiver techniques.

Almost everyone will face these things, as losses are part of our life experience. Learning listening skills, dealing with guilt, and understanding true spirituality are all critical issues in the course. We learn to deal with the whole person, not just the physical portion.

Even if you've previously taken hospice training, this "new and improved"

version is recommended ---I took my first hospice-training course in 1983, so I was certainly due for a refresher!

It's made me think about how I might deal with the loss of a close family member, as well as organizing for final arrangements -- including my own.

Sometimes we benefit by having someone lead us through the steps, and this hospice volunteer training course does just that. Please encourage others to join our ranks as volunteers for Hospice of Havasu!

# Learn how to be a better volunteer

By Bob Myers

*Hospice of Havasu volunteer*

In the professional working world continuing education has become an indispensable part of a person's professional growth in their chosen field of work. Whether it is medicine, social work, communication, education or any of a hundred other fields, in our fast-paced society continuing education has become a necessity. For us volunteers, frankly we are not talking about fast paced or technologically demanding work but continuing education still plays an important role.

In our thirty hours of hospice volunteer basic training we do just that—we cover the basics. There is still much more to learn and

experience. I have found that experience is our best teacher--that by actually doing the volunteer work we gain knowledge, skill and confidence. Continuing education fits right into that scenario, however, by providing additional information as we need it to become better hospice volunteers.

Some of the subjects covered in volunteer continuing education are required by Medicare. Some of these include safe driving, HIPAA, palliative care, safety and others.

Of course, in every hospice organization providing palliative care is what we do. That is, as volunteers, we assist our professional staff in this important function. This is a frequent topic and recently we heard

from Jackie Meyer about MRSA from Dr. Kazmi on Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia and from Connie Jackson who gave us a diabetes update. We recently completed five sessions on 1 1/2 hour training which is now being called "The Gift of Presence" and a session on communicating with compassion.

For me one of the major benefits of the continuing education sessions is the opportunity to meet with my fellow volunteers to renew acquaintances and meet new people. For those of you who just graduated from "basic training", getting together at continuing education sessions will be an excellent way to get acquainted with your fellow volunteers. Sometimes our volunteer experiences,

especially patient care work, is solitary work. We need to get together as often as possible just to say hello and share a cup of coffee before or after the session.

In Lake Havasu we meet on 2nd and 4th Mondays at 10:00 am although, due to holidays and other conflicts there was only one continuing education session scheduled for May and one in June. In Parker sessions are scheduled on 2nd and 4th Tuesdays at 11:00 am. Pick up a schedule at the office for details on upcoming meetings or call the office and they will mail a schedule out to you.

We hope you will continue to be a hospice volunteer for a long time and we hope you will continue your education too!

# Take It One Day at a Time

There are two days in every week about which we should never worry – two days which should be kept free from fear and apprehension.

One of these days is yesterday, with its mistakes and cares, its faults and blunders, and its aches and pains.

Yesterday has passed forever beyond our control. All the money in the world cannot bring back yesterday. We cannot undo a single act we performed. We cannot



erase a single word we said. Yesterday is gone.

The other day we should not worry about is tomorrow.

Tomorrow is beyond our

immediate control. Tomorrow's sun will rise, whether in splendor or behind a mask of clouds. But it will rise. Until it does, we have no stake in tomorrow.

That leaves only one day – today. Anyone can fight battles of just one day. It is when you and I add the burdens of those two awful entities – yesterday and tomorrow – that we break down.

Let us therefore live one day at a time.

-- Author unknown

## Don't be a perfectionist; just serve

By Janet Baier  
Manager, Volunteer Services

Has the thought of volunteering for a nonprofit crossed your mind, but you aren't sure if a volunteer position is right for you?

Sometimes we hold back from stepping up to the plate because we're afraid we can't do the best job possible. We think we don't have what it takes. That's wrong.

Don't try to figure out your talents before volunteering; just start serving. If it doesn't work out, just call it a learning experience, not a failure.

If we always waited for the perfect volunteer opportunity, we would probably never serve. Remember, it's better to do the right thing, even if we do it poorly, than to do nothing at all. Just jump in with both feet!

Do you have an extra few hours each week to help us at the Polidori House. We need Administrative Clerks to greet people and answer the phone. Hours are 10am to

noon; noon to 2pm and 2pm to 4pm. We need volunteers in the kitchen to prep and prepare breakfast, lunch and dinner. Hours for breakfast are 7:00am – 9:00am, lunch, 10:00am – 2:00pm and dinner, 4:00pm – 6:00pm. We need some one to dust, help with laundry and shop. We also need someone to help with activities.

At the present time we do have a kitchen leader and also activity leaders.

If you would like to get on a list to substitute when needed, please call volunteer services.

I recommend each person working at the Polidori House to get their food handlers card. Give us a call at the office and we can let you know the dates and times the Health Department offer them.

Yes, even I am going to get my food handlers card. It is only a 2-hour class and you will receive continuing education hours.

WE ARE NOT PUT ON THIS EARTH FOR  
OURSELVES, BUT ARE PLACED HERE FOR EACH  
OTHER. IF YOU ARE ALWAYS THERE FOR OTHERS,  
THEN IN TIME OF NEED,  
SOMEONE WILL BE THERE FOR YOU.

-- JEFF WARNER