

# Volunteers SCENE

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR HOSPICE OF HAVASU VOLUNTEERS



**MARCH  
2008**

**Volunteer  
Continuing  
Education**

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

**March 3**

The Gift of Presence, Part 3  
(Formerly known as the  
11th hour training)  
Carol Sheffield, RScF  
Chaplain

**March 10**

Let's Get a Diabetes Update  
Connie Jackson, BS, CDE, CHPN  
Clinical Services Manager

**March 17**

The Gift of Presence, Part 4

**March 24**

REQUIRED HIPAA Update  
Debbie Russell, BA  
HIPAA Privacy Officer

**PARKER**

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

**March 11**

Let's Get a Diabetes Update  
Connie Jackson, BS, CDE, CHPN  
Clinical Services Manager

**March 25**

REQUIRED HIPAA Update  
Debbie Russell, BA  
HIPAA Privacy Officer

**MEDITATION  
(Guided Imagery)**

9 a.m. Fridays, in the lobby.



**More Volunteers**

A large new class of volunteers has been hard at work and will graduate March 12. Janet Baier, Volunteer Services Manager, (standing) goes through lesson plans with the class. Classes are planned later this year in Lake Havasu City and Parker.

## Pets help kids past grief

By Jenny Anderson  
*Animal Assisted Activity*

Pet Partners of Havasu is a committee of volunteers under the umbrella of the Havasu Community Health Foundation. The foundation agrees that our Animal Assisted Activity is very therapeutic. One special type of teamwork involves work with Hospice of Havasu.

Several teams are involved with Animal Assisted Activity through Hospice. The teams must take an additional training course, but that class opens up a whole new world of understanding and empathy.

One special program that Hospice of Havasu offers is the program for children who have experienced a death in their family. This

course called "Adventures in the Land of Grief". Our Pet Partner teams have been invited to join the children in the session where they must face some of their worst fears. The children are matched-up with a dog and handler early in the class.

Our animal companions have impacted the children in this program. There was a young boy who was unable to talk about his father's death. A year had passed, and his mother was very concerned that he remained withdrawn -- unable to accept the loss, unable to grieve. This little boy teamed with Ollie, and that experience seemed to unlock his emotions. Perhaps it was the dog's warmth and acceptance, or perhaps it was the gentle kisses she gave

him, but when his mother picked him up that day, the change was remarkable.

She later shared that he was animated, talking freely for the first time, and even expressed interest in getting a dog.

He described the class session in detail and then said, "Mom, do you think we could get a dog? And I would like one just like Ollie!" Mom didn't even realize that he wanted a dog.

Of course, it was a few weeks later when we heard this story. Ollie has had no idea how much love she brings to others in our work together -- she just naturally shares her affection. To this day, this story warms our hearts and renews our commitment to continue with hospice.

# A Note from Janet . . .

On January 28th Dr. Kazmi gave a presentation on Alzheimer's for Continuing Education. It was very informative during the 1-1/2 hours. Each person attending received 1.5 hours credit for Palliative Care.

Today, I was reading my e-mail and came across the following. I am copying it because I feel it fits in with much of what Dr. Kazmi said.

**1. Brain health is another reason to get on your bicycle, to the swimming pool, or wherever else you like to exercise your body.** The reason: Exercise has positive benefits for the hippocampus, important for learning and memory. It can also help create new cells.

**2. Add blueberries to your regular diet.** The reason: Studies suggest that a diet rich in blueberries can improve short-term memory, balance and coordination.

**3. If you're right-handed, use your left hand for daily activities (or vice-versa).** Start with brushing your teeth, then builds up the more complex tasks, such as eating. The reason: Doing a familiar exercise in a new way will help millions of neurons learn new tricks.

**4. Find a solitary activity such as completing a crossword puzzle or knitting, and see if by concentrating you can succeed better or more quickly.** The reason: By making the activity more demanding, you'll re-engage the brain's learning machinery.

**5. Practice throwing and catching a ball up in the air.** If you're good at it, take up juggling. The reason: People who master sensory-guided movement activities can hone their brains' visual, tactile and hand-eye coordination responses.

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## 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

**6. Turn your TV volume down from where you normally have it set.** See if by concentrating, you can follow just as successfully as when the volume was higher. The reason: You'll fine-tune your listening skills, enabling you to catch every word when talking to others.

**7. Do a jigsaw puzzle that will be challenging for you – no fewer than 500 pieces.** The reason: Completing a jigsaw entails mentally "rotating" the pieces, manipulating them in your hands, and shifting your attention from the small piece to the "big picture."

**8. Learn to play a new instrument or take up an old one.** The reason: Playing an instrument helps you exercise many interrelated dimensions of brain function, including listening, control or refined movements, and translation of written notes to music.

**9. Sit on a park bench or in a café and stare straight ahead without moving your eyes.** Without moving, focus on everything you see, including your peripheral vision – and make a list. The reason: You'll reinvigorate neurotransmitters crucial to focus and memory.

**10. Choose a song with lyrics you enjoy, but don't have memorized.** Write down all the lyrics, and then learn to sing along. Once you've mastered one song, move on to another! The reason: Developing careful listening habits will sharpen your understanding, thinking and remembering.

**11. Go on a guided museum tour and pay close attention.** Later, reconstruct the tour by making an outline. The reason: Memory activities that engage all levels of brain operation – receiving, remembering and thinking – improve the brain's function and hinder decline.

**12 Eat a few squares of dark chocolate every day.** The reason: When you eat chocolate, you activate the systems in your brain that pump dopamine, an important brain chemical.

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## More parking room at office

The parking lot at the office is now larger. For driving safety, please use the NORTH side of the parking lot to exit and the SOUTH side to enter.

## March Birthdays

Sue Kohler - March 1	Tom Roger - March 15
Joan Louis - March 8	Pamela Meyers - March 18
Dwight Belknap - March 9	Barbara Foley - March 20
Gloria Askland - March 10	Ruth Spellman - March 26
Janice Fortney - March 12	Joyce Lundstrom - March 30
Kay Champaigne - March 13	

# VOLUNTEERS CAN NOW PROVE THEY ARE STARS!

Hospice of Havasu volunteers -- already certainly stars in our mind -- can now prove their "stardom" by chipping in to buy a star on the red carpet leading to this year's Hollywood-themed Hospice Happening!

People and firms throughout the community are purchasing the stars for \$200 and it would be great if the best volunteers in town joined the "star walk." All proceeds will be used for patients and programs, of

course.

Volunteers wanting to join in the effort are encouraged contribute -- whatever amount you want to donate -- toward purchasing the star. Bring your donations by the office before March 10.

## Watch carefully what your dog eats

If you have a dog... PLEASE read this and send it on. If you don't have a dog, please pass along to friends who do.

Written by:  
Laurinda Morris, DVM  
Danville Veterinary Clinic  
Danville, Ohio

This week I had the first case in history of raisin toxicity ever seen at MedVet. My patient was a 56-pound, 5 yr old male neutered lab mix that ate half a canister of raisins sometime between 7:30 AM and 4:30 PM on Tuesday. He started with vomiting, diarrhea and shaking about 1 AM on Wednesday but the owner didn't call my emergency service until 7 a.m.

I had heard somewhere about raisins AND grapes causing acute Renal failure but hadn't seen any formal paper on the subject. We had her bring the dog in immediately. In the meantime, I called the ER service at MedVet, and the doctor there was like me - had heard something about

it, but.... Anyway, we contacted the ASPCA National Animal Poison Control Center and they said to give IV fluids at 1 1/2 times maintenance and watch the kidney values for the next 48-72 hours.

The dog's BUN (blood urea nitrogen level) was already at 32 (normal less than 27) and creatinine. Over 5 ( 1.9 is the high end of normal). Both are monitors of kidney function in the bloodstream. We placed an IV catheter and started the fluids. Rechecked the renal values at 5 PM and the BUN was over 40 and creatinine over 7 with no urine production after a liter of fluids. At the point I felt the dog was in acute renal failure and sent him on to MedVet for a urinary catheter to monitor urine output overnight as well as overnight care.

He started vomiting again overnight at MedVet and his renal values have continued to increase daily. He produced urine when given lasix as a diuretic. He was on 3 different anti-vomiting medications and they still

couldn't control his vomiting. Today his urine output decreased again, his BUN was over 120, his creatinine was at 10, his phosphorus was very elevated and his blood pressure, which had been staying around 150, skyrocketed to 220. He continued to vomit and the owners elected to euthanize.

This is a very sad case - great dog, great owners who had no idea raisins could be a toxin. Please alert everyone you know who has a dog of this very serious risk. Poison control said as few as 7 raisins or grapes could be toxic. Many people I know give their dogs grapes or raisins as treats including our ex-handler's. Any exposure should give rise to immediate concern.

Onions, chocolate, cocoa and macadamia nuts can be fatal, too.

Even if you don't have a dog, you might have friends who do. This is worth passing on to them.

Confirmation from Snopes about the above...

<http://www.snopes.com/critters/crusader/raisins.asp>

## Sharpen listening skills to get the information you need

One of the most difficult things to do is really listen to people.

But it's also one of the most important.

Here's how to be sure you're getting all the information you need:

• **Listen actively and don't interrupt.** Resist the temptation to

prepare a reply while listening. If you're thinking of a reply, there's a good chance you'll miss something important that's being said.

• **Pause before replying.** You'll be less likely to accidentally interrupt, plus you'll show you're letting the message sink in. And guess what? The message really will sink in

better.

• **Clarify.** Ask open-ended questions, such as "What do you mean exactly?" to invite elaboration and more information.

• **Paraphrase.** Say, for example, "Let me see if I have this right."

# Just another fare, just another trip?

## Driver learns important lesson on memorable night

**T**wenty years ago, I drove a cab for a living. One night I took a fare at 2:30 am, when I arrived to collect, the building was dark except for a single light in a ground floor window. Under these circumstances, many drivers would just honk once.

But, I had seen too many impoverished people who depended on taxis as their only means of transportation. Unless a situation smelled of danger, I always went to the door. This passenger might be someone who needs my assistance, I reasoned to myself.

So I walked to the door and knocked. "Just a minute," answered a frail, elderly voice. I could hear something being dragged across the floor.

After a long pause, the door opened. A small woman in her 80's stood before me. She was wearing a print dress and a pillbox hat with a veil pinned on it, like somebody out of a 1940's movie.

By her side was a small nylon suitcase. The apartment looked as if no one had lived in it for years. All the furniture was covered with sheets.

"Would you carry my bag out to the car?" she said. I took the suitcase to the cab, then returned to assist the woman.

She took my arm and we walked slowly toward the curb.

She kept thanking me for my kindness. "It's nothing," I told her. "I just try to treat my passengers the way I would want my mother treated."

"Oh, you're such a good boy," she said. When we got in the cab, she gave me an address, and then asked, "Could you drive through downtown?"

"It's not the shortest way," I answered

quickly.

"Oh, I don't mind," she said "I'm in no hurry. I'm on my way to a hospice."

I looked in the rear-view mirror. Her eyes were glistening. "I don't have any family left," she continued. "The doctor says I don't have very long." I quietly reached over and shut off the meter.

"What route would you like me to take?" I asked.

For the next two hours, we drove through the city. She showed me the building where she had once worked as an elevator operator.

We drove through the neighborhood where she and her husband had lived when they were newlyweds. Sometimes she'd ask me to slow in front of a particular building or corner and would sit staring into the darkness, saying nothing.

As the first hint of sun was creasing the horizon, she suddenly said, "I'm tired. Let's go now."

We drove in silence to the address she had given me. It was a low building, like a small convalescent home, with a driveway that passed under a portico.

Two orderlies came out to the cab as soon as we pulled up. They were solicitous and intent, watching her every move. They must have been expecting her.

I opened the trunk and took the small suitcase to the door. The woman was already seated in a wheelchair.

"How much do I owe you?" she

asked, reaching into her purse.

"Nothing," I said

"You have to make a living," she answered. "There are other passengers," I responded. Almost without thinking, I bent and gave her a hug. She held onto me tightly.

"You gave an old woman a little moment of joy," she said. "Thank you."

I squeezed her hand, and then walked into the dim morning light. Behind me, a door shut. It was the sound of the closing of a life.

I didn't pick up any more passengers that shift. I drove aimlessly lost in thought.

For the rest of that day, I could hardly talk.

What if that woman had gotten an angry driver, or one who was impatient to end his shift?

What if I had refused to take the run, or had honked once, then driven away?

On a quick review, I don't think that I have done anything more important in my life.

We're conditioned to think that our lives revolve around great moments.

But great moments often catch us unaware-beautifully wrapped in what others may consider a small one.

The lesson from that night:

**People may not remember exactly what you did, or what you said, but they will always remember how you made them feel.**

