



Hospice & Palliative Care of Westchester

TODAY

FALL 2009

Happenings & Gatherings

TREE OF LIFE 2009

Plans are well underway for the Hospice & Palliative Care of Westchester (HPCW) 9th Annual *Tree of Life*. This is a special way to honor your loved ones while supporting HPCW. *Tree of Life* is an annual event that is held during the months of November and December and that provides an opportunity for the community, individuals and families to purchase a star or stars in honor or memory of their loved ones. The personalized stars will be placed on the HPCW tree at the Hilton Rye Town. All donors to the *Tree of Life* are invited to participate in a Tree Lighting Reception to be held at the Hilton Rye Town on Wednesday, December 2, 2009 from 5:30 to 7:00pm. Holiday entertainment will be provided by The Quintessentials – the Elite Pop Vocal Group from Manhattanville College. We are grateful to our event **Grand Sponsor Provident Bank** and to **Sponsors Beecher Funeral Home, Efficiency Printing, Hilton Rye Town, and Ross Mailing Service, Inc.** For further information, or to make a reservation, please call Holly K. Benedict at 914-682-1484 ext. 122.

IN CELEBRATION

Our 17th Anniversary and 8th Annual "In Celebration" was attended by 165 guests who enjoyed the elegance of

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Hospice & Palliative Care of Westchester Wins Honorable Mention from National Organization for Volunteer Film



Mary Jane Schaumann, Hospice & Palliative Care of Westchester's Director of Volunteer Services, and Tom Warren, HPCW volunteer and winner of the NHPCO film award

We are proud to announce that we were awarded 2009 Honorable Mention by the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO) for its Photography, Writing, Film Contest. Our own volunteer, Tom Warren, created and produced the film, "Hospice Volunteers – In Their Own Words,"

which was one of more than 300 contest entries.

According to the NHPCO, the contest focused on films that serve to educate hospice and palliative care professionals, volunteers and other professionals who provide end-of-life care for patients and families. "The judges were impressed by the number of excellent films using staff, patients and families to share important lessons about quality of end of life care," said J. Donald Schumacher, President/CEO of NHPCO.

Previously a photojournalist, Warren is fulfilled by his volunteer efforts. "Now I understand why people volunteer. It is absolutely liberating – to give without expecting anything in return. I get back more than I give and am surprised every time," he said.

"Our entry is special because it was developed by one of our dedicated

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Executive Director's Corner



It has been a very exciting six months here at Hospice & Palliative Care of Westchester. We have had

record number of patients referred to us and are now caring for 120 to 130 patients each day. We continue to hire new staff to keep up with our growth and are very pleased with the positive feedback we receive from families, physicians and referrers about the quality of our care.

In 2006, the Board of Directors decided that one of their goals for us was that Hospice & Palliative Care of Westchester would become the "Hospice of Choice" in Westchester County. From the rate of growth in the past two years, which is unprecedented in the history of the agency, the board now believes that we have reached that goal and has set some new goals.

The Strategic Planning Committee and the Board have been working diligently on a new three-year strategic plan for our organization. One of those goals is for Hospice & Palliative Care to become a "Center of Excellence" and serve as a model for the provision of hospice and palliative care. Becoming a "Center of Excellence" is an involved process. It ranges from community

outreach to establishing research partnerships to ensuring that each staff member becomes credentialed in their professional fields. This is a wonderful and bold vision for the agency, and the management team is looking forward to undertaking this process. We are grateful to the Board of Directors for its confidence in our agency and recognizing our ability to continue to evolve and expand.

As we plan for our future and thoughtfully position our agency within the health care community in Westchester, we are also very aware that this is an extremely uncertain time. Health care reform will more than likely pass in Congress this year, and even though there are indications of what the insurance coverage model might be, the process is far from over.

One thing of which we are certain is that we will be subject to cuts over the next ten years. Our current estimates indicate that we will see a 14% reduction in our rate of reimbursement. This is because hospice is facing two potential concurrent reductions: one in the health care reform bill and one which was initiated by regulation at the end of the Bush administration. While our peers in the hospice industry agree that we cannot be exempt from the cuts being imposed on all other providers through health care reform, we feel that "two cuts are too many."

I, along with many of my colleagues from around the state and country, am working with our national organization to eliminate one of the cuts. Otherwise, our agency will have to face some hard decisions about whether we can continue to offer the many unreimbursed services we provide – services that I believe have made us the premiere hospice in Westchester. It will be an interesting next six months as the political scene becomes clearer and our future unfolds.

In the meantime, as always, we will continue to keep our focus on our patients and families while keeping informed of how and when we might need to change our strategic plan. More than ever, flexibility is the main characteristic our agency and our Board of Directors will need to possess. I am confident that our challenges can be met with the outstanding leadership of our Board of Directors, our strong, professional hospice staff, our dedicated volunteers and our generous donors and supporters.

On behalf of Hospice & Palliative Care of Westchester, I extend our most sincere gratitude for your steadfast support and wish you a healthy, happy and peaceful Holiday Season.

Kate Colburn, MA
Executive Director

Happenings & Gatherings

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Westchester Country Club. It was a lovely evening that raised over \$66,000 that is earmarked for the Anna and Louis H. Shereff Caregiver Program, which was established 14 years ago by Mrs. Anna L. Shereff. We are most grateful to Mrs. Shereff, who will match all the funds raised at the event.

Grand Sponsor of the event was **Anna L. Shereff**, and sponsors included **Hon. John M Voetsch, Esq.** and **Corner Ridge Real Estate**, **Michele and Terry Geller**, **John D'Agostino** and **Key Bank**, **Robert Varbara** and **Sound Shore Liquor Pantry** and **Visiting Nurse Services in Westchester**. HPCW Development Committee co-chairs **William F. Flooks, Jr.** owner, Beecher Funeral Home in Pleasantville, and HPCW Board member **Michele Geller** served as event co-chairmen. **James P. O'Toole**, HPCW Board Chair, served as Master of Ceremonies.

"We were thrilled to honor four dedicated individuals for their steadfast commitment to Hospice & Palliative Care of Westchester," said Kate Colburn, MA, executive director, HPCW. The 2009 honorees included **Michael J. Amoruso, Esq.**, **Managing Partner of Amoruso & Amoruso, LLP**; the **Hildegard D.**

Becher Foundation, Inc.; **Barbara Jakubowski Costello**, former Board Chair of HPCW; and **Carol L. Weber, RN, MS., President/CEO of Visiting Nurse Services in Westchester.**

Special recognition was given to Anna L. Shereff for her outstanding vision, generosity and commitment to the Anna and Louis H. Shereff Caregiver Program.

Dining for Hospice & Palliative Care of Westchester at the Brazen Fox

Enjoy an evening out! Head over to **Brazen Fox Restaurant & Bar** on

Mamaroneck Ave. in White Plains on **Wednesday, November 11, 2009** for a special dinner to benefit Hospice & Palliative Care of Westchester (HPCW). No program, no speeches, no strings attached.

A specially-designed, three-course meal, along with a complimentary glass of wine or beer, is being offered for \$30 per person, a portion of which will benefit HPCW.

Please make your reservations **(914-358-5911)** for anytime between **4:00 pm** and **10:00 pm** and mention the HPCW dinner.

For additional information, call **Holly K. Benedict** at HPCW **914-682-1484 ext. 122.**



Above left to right: 2009 Honorees, **Michael J. Amoruso, Esq.**; **Barbara Jakubowski Costello**; **Carol L. Weber, RN, MS**; **Jack Geoghegan**; and **Larry Dix**



Above left to right: Committee Co-Chairman, **William F. Flooks Jr.**, accompanying Grand Sponsor **Anna L. Shereff**



Above left to right: **James P. O'Toole**, Board Chairman; **Kate Colburn, MA**, Executive Director; and **Michele Geller**, Event Sponsor and Co-Chairman

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volunteers,” said Kate Colburn, M.A., HPCW Executive Director. “Tom’s film is especially effective in recruiting and educating volunteers, because it so effectively describes the hospice experience in the words of volunteers themselves.” The film featured HPCW volunteers who talked about experiences with hospice patients.

GRIEF AND THE HOLIDAYS

The following is advice from the Hospice Foundation of America.

A question asked by bereaved people at this time of year is, “How can I get through the holidays?” There is no single answer. One important guiding principle is: do what is comfortable for you. Here are some suggestions that may help you through the holidays.

Plan for the approaching holidays. Be aware that this might be a difficult time for you. It’s not uncommon to feel out of sorts with the celebratory tone of the season. This is a normal reaction.

Recognize that holidays won’t be the same. If you try to keep everything as it was, you may be disappointed. Doing things a bit differently can acknowledge the change while preserving continuity with the past. Be careful not to isolate yourself.

The holidays may affect other family members. Talk over your plans. Respect their choices and compromise if necessary. Everyone should participate in ways that are comfortable for them.

Avoid additional stress. Decide what you really want to do, and what can be avoided.

Do the right thing: not what others think is right, but what you need and want to do.

Kate Colburn Invites Clergy to Work Together in the Continuum of Care

Westchester County’s Livable Communities initiative was created to improve the quality of life for people of all ages and enable seniors to remain in their homes as they age with dignity, independence and civic involvement.

As a Livable Communities collaborator, Kate Colburn, M.A., Executive Director of Hospice & Palliative Care of Westchester (HPCW), spoke at a luncheon for clergy members about the place for hospice in livable communities. She also discussed the role of clergy in ensuring quality of life during end-of-life care. The luncheon was part of the county’s first regional livable communities conference, *Livable Communities: A Vision for All Ages*.

Colburn addressed the importance of providing support to community members in their end of life decisions. “Dying at home, in the place dearest to most people’s hearts, is one of the most common preferences voiced by Americans when asked about death and dying,” said Colburn. “But this final request often goes unfulfilled.”

“People who face life-threatening illnesses not only desire to be free from physical pain, but they also need to have their spiritual distress recognized and addressed by members of the clergy,” Colburn added. “Hospice provides you with a built-in team that supports your work so that you, as a member of the clergy, are not alone if trying to bring comfort to a patient and a distraught family.”



Above left to right: **Andrew J. Spano**, Westchester County Executive; **Kate Colburn, M.A.**, Executive Director of Hospice and Palliative Care of Westchester; **Rabbi Jay Miller**, Executive Director of Peninsula Clergy Network in San Mateo, California; and **Mae Carpenter**, Commissioner of the Westchester County Department of Senior Programs & Services, at Westchester County’s first regional livable communities conference, *Livable Communities: A Vision for All Ages*

NEWS FROM THE BEREAVEMENT DEPARTMENT Bereavement Support Groups

Participation in a support group has been shown to be one of the best ways to help those who are grieving the death of a loved one. People who have experienced similar situations are brought together in an environment of safety, care, and compassion. Mutual learning can take place regarding how to manage the grief process in a healthy way.

Bereavement Support Groups 2010

Evening Adult Loss of Parent:	Mondays 6-7:30pm
Evening Loss of Spouse:	Mondays 6-7:30pm
Evening General Bereavement:	Mondays 6-7:30pm
Daytime Senior Loss of Spouse:	Wednesdays 10:30-noon

Our group sessions run for nine weeks. All of our support groups are facilitated by Clinical Social Workers with expertise in grief counseling. Please contact one of our bereavement coordinators for further information regarding start dates and registration.

Janice Sauer, LCSW, CT 682-1484 ext. 130
Linda Plastrik, LCSW 682-1484 ext. 118

NEWS FROM THE VOLUNTEER DEPARTMENT

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Our volunteers are very special people. They make a positive difference in our patients' lives and help support their families and caregivers. At this time our volunteer opportunities include:

- **"Flowers For Life Program"**

In conjunction with another volunteer, pick up flower donations on Monday mornings from participating establishments, bring the flowers back to the hospice office and arrange them in vases. These arrangements are then taken to our patients during the week by a member of the team.

- **Nursing Home Visitor in Port Chester and New Rochelle**
- **Hospital Visitor – Yonkers**
- **Private Residence Visitors**
- **Pet Therapy Volunteers – Northern Westchester**

If you are interested in volunteering for any of the above opportunities or would like further information, please contact Mary Jane Schaumann, Volunteer Coordinator, at 914-682-1484 ext. 116 or e-mail mjschaumann@hospiceofwestchester.com.

HPCW VOLUNTEER LENA SJUNNEMARK CHOSEN FOR WESTCHESTER COUNTY SENIOR HALL OF FAME



Lena Sjunnemark

We are very pleased to announce that long-time HPCW volunteer Lena Sjunnemark has been chosen as a 2009 Westchester County Senior Citizens Hall of Fame. Lena is a wonderful, caring person who visits with residents and patients at The Osborne Nursing Home and its private residence and also serves as a mentor to new volunteers.

Lena gets more out of her efforts than she ever thought she would. "I just get SO much back from the work that I do. I spend time with all kinds of patients and just adore them. Friends ask me if I ever get depressed, and I say 'no'

because I am always so happy to be there and share this journey with them. It's really the most wonderful thing I could ever have done. My patients are unbelievable and always so happy to see me," she said.

"Throughout the course of her volunteer efforts at HPCW, Lena has made a difference in the lives of more than 70 patients and their family members. We couldn't be luckier to have her on our volunteer staff," said Mary Jane Schaumann, Director of Volunteer Services for HPCW.

NOVEMBER IS NATIONAL HOSPICE MONTH

November is National Hospice Month, and hospices across the country and in Westchester County are reaching out to raise awareness about important care issues for people coping with a life-limiting illness. The designation of National Hospice Month also serves as an annual reminder to engage important discussions with loved ones about end-of-life wishes. Begin the conversation. Making your wishes known and properly documented will help to ensure that your plan for how you want to live your life will be respected and honored.

Kate Colburn, MA Elected to HPCANYS Board of Trustees

We are proud to announce that HPCW executive director Kate Colburn has been elected to three-year term on the Board of Trustees for the Hospice and Palliative Care Association of New York State (HPCANYS), a not-for-profit organization representing hospice and palliative care programs, allied organizations and individuals. As a board member, Colburn is being recognized as a leader within the hospice and palliative care community who demonstrates knowledge of and commitment to hospice care.

NEW STAFF MEMBERS AND APPOINTMENTS

We are thrilled to welcome the following new staff members to our agency: Monica Sabia, RN; Marilyn Tillim, RN; Nancy Caputi, RN; Dale Salvia, RN, Patient Care Coordinator; Erin Orjuela, LCSW; Sophia Allen Dennis, Home Health Aide; Marcelles Jaeger, Administrative Assistant; Kenia Suarez, Clinical Team Secretary; Monica DeFeo, Dietitian; and Mimma Mosca to our Finance Department. WELCOME! Congratulations are extended to Julia Lake, who was promoted to the position of HPCW Office Manager!

OUR MISSION

Hospice & Palliative Care of Westchester provides extraordinary and dignified comfort, care and compassion to every individual and family facing a serious or life-threatening illness.

Appreciation to Friends and Supporters of Hospice & Palliative Care of Westchester

This year marks the 17th anniversary of Hospice & Palliative Care of Westchester (HPCW). We continue to be an integral and solid member of the Westchester community by providing our quality, end-of-life care that emphasizes compassion, dignity and respect. This success reflects the loyal support of you and area residents who have supported us through our history. Please continue this tradition by making a year-end, tax-deductible gift to HPCW. For further information, please contact Holly K. Benedict, Director of Development, at 914-682-1484 ext. 122. Thank you again to you our supporters who have helped HPCW stay true to our mission and making us the "Hospice of Choice" in Westchester.

SAVE THE DATE

November 9, 2009 Annual Candlelight Remembrance

Ethical Cultural Society White Plains 6:00-8:00 pm
RSVP Mary Jane Schaumann – 914-682-1484

November 11, 2009 Dinner at the Brazen Fox Restaurant in White Plains

To benefit Hospice & Palliative Care of Westchester
To make a reservation call Holly K. Benedict, 914-682-1484 ext. 122

November 13, 2009 Collaborative for End of Life Care Conference

Westchester County Center 8:00am-4:00pm To register call William Dawe, 914-682-1484 ext. 149

November 18, 2009 Bereavement Educational Workshop "Coping With The Holidays"

A video presentation and discussion to follow 6:00-7:30 pm. at Hospice & Palliative Care of Westchester.
Pre-register by calling 914-682-1484 and speak to Janice Sauer at ext. 130 or Linda Plastrik at ext. 118.

December 2, 2009 Annual Tree of Life Reception

Hilton Rye Town 5:30 – 7:00pm
Please call Holly K. Benedict at 914-682-1484 ext. 122 for further information or to make reservation.

If this was received in error please call 914-682-1484 ext. 122.

YOUR LIFE, YOUR DECISION, OUR HELP.

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Hospice & Palliative Care of Westchester

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