



Hospice & Palliative Care of Westchester

TODAY

WINTER 2009

Happenings & Gatherings



Pictured left to right: James P. and Sandy O'Toole, of Darien, Connecticut, Kate Colburn and GERALYN Bermudez both of White Plains

PEARLS FOR A CAUSE

Geralyn Bermudez, director of the Tiffany & Co. store at The Westchester in White Plains, hosted a successful "Pearls for a Cause" event to benefit Hospice & Palliative Care of Westchester. "We are so grateful to Ms. Bermudez and Tiffany & Co. for their partnership with us and their continued generosity," said Holly Benedict, director of development. "Our guests enjoyed a lovely, elegant evening while supporting Hospice & Palliative Care of Westchester."



Pictured left to right: Jennifer Watts of White Plains, Rita Morgan of Stony Point, Mary Spengler of White Plains, Jaquelyn Pirri of White Plains, and Kathleen McArdle of Rye

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A SPECIAL JOURNEY

The following is an excerpt of an article that was written by Brenna Sheenan Mayer, along with the Bernard Sheenan Family.

Last summer my father's energy simply left him. He was tired and would no longer be cajoled into doing anything. He said he was ready "should God call him" and began to prepare us for his death. Dad wanted us to know and understand that dying was part of life. He was clear that he wanted no extraordinary measures nor did he ever want to go back to the hospital. So Marion (my father's second wife), my sisters and I learned how to deal with my father's congestive heart failure.

We knew Dad was near the end of his life but in our confusion, we persisted in trying to make him better. I wanted one more intervention, and it was not hard to think that way. The medical community most certainly encouraged us to think in those terms. They paint the most positive picture rather than the most realistic one. Our acceptance of Dad's impending death seemed to change from day to day.

In our search for guidance we found Hospice & Palliative Care of Westchester. One phone call obtained the assistance we so desperately needed. They welcomed us into the program and immediately we experienced their support.

No one wants to speak about death and dying so there is little understanding of the process or how to behave. People need to be educated to know when it is time to stop interfering. When you call a hospice it is not about giving up hope; rather it is about acceptance. Hospice helps you come to terms with this most important moment of life. They give physical, medical, emotional and spiritual guidance to this stage of life with great kindness, and they bring dignity to dying. With their round-the-clock support, Hospice enabled our family to care for Dad at home.

Hospice was so very present to all of us. Dad's nurse became a wise and trusted friend. Our social worker gave us great practical advice. Dad was treated by a reflexologist for an hour each week. Our spiritual care coordinator gave all of us incredible emotional and spiritual support,

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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.

Executive Director's Corner



I am proud to announce that Hospice & Palliative Care of Westchester (HPCW) is celebrating its seventeenth

anniversary. Since our inception, we have taken care of 6,150 Westchester residents and our daily census has increased 27% over the last two years. Currently, our staff is providing programs and services to over one hundred patients daily and offering help to their families. In our effort to provide the best possible hospice services to our community, we continue to upgrade our facility and capabilities to keep pace with advancing technology. HPCW searched for a new building which would accommodate staff and patient needs.

In December 2008 we moved our headquarters into the Westchester Medical Pavilion, on 311 North Street. It is a new state-of-the-art medical office complex located on the campus of the former St. Agnes Hospital. The building is designed to accommodate physician offices, an adult day care center and other health related providers. The Board of Directors approved our taking a lease at the Westchester Medical Pavilion in the belief that occupancy in a medical office building would help position us to be more visible in the medical community. Additionally, the building is much more accessible to staff, volunteers, board members, clients and the general public.

Our facility was designed

specifically for our needs. We installed new telephone and data equipment to provide us with a state-of-the-art communication/information infrastructure. This was critical for us in order to meet the new requirements of our hospice regulations and to increase our response time to patient needs.

Our new headquarters include a new board room that is large enough to accommodate the entire staff and host meetings with other community groups. We have a vast library and act as a resource for the community, and we have space to provide hospice family and community bereavement counseling and workshops.

Our move was the result of the Board's strategic plan to ensure the future viability of the organization, to position the agency with optimum visibility in the community, to be accessible to the general public, and to provide an environment that is supportive to our employees and our patients. We are extremely excited to be here and I invite you to call for a personal tour of our new facility.

Our outstanding achievements are the results of excellent staff and volunteer work, commitment to patient care and dedicated support by our Board of Directors, committee members, the community, referral sources and donors. I extend my most sincere gratitude, and with your continued help we can meet the challenges of the future.

Kate Colburn, M.A.
Executive Director

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TREE OF LIFE



Pictured left to right: James P. O'Toole and Rita Kokkoris

Hospice & Palliative Care of Westchester's 8th Annual Tree of Life was a wonderful success. Stars that honored loved ones were placed on the Hospice & Palliative Care of Westchester Tree of Life at the Hilton Rye Town. All donors to the Tree of Life were invited to participate in the Tree Lighting Reception that was held at the Hilton Rye Town. Holiday entertainment was 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, Landauer Metropolitan and Ross Mailing Service, Inc.**

WELCOME NEW STAFF MEMBERS

We welcome the following new staff members, **Andrea Durkin**, director of clinical services and **Jesse Caudill**, spiritual care coordinator. Ms. Durkin received her nursing degree from Dorothea Hopfer School of Nursing at Mt. Vernon Hospital and is currently enrolled in the BSN/MSN program at Mercy College. Along with her hospice experience, Andrea holds certification in HIV/AIDS nursing. Mr. Caudill received his BS in Sociology from the University of Cincinnati and an MLS from Indiana University. He was ordained as an interfaith minister and also received ordination in Buddhist Ministry.

NEWS FROM THE NURSING DEPARTMENT

Caring For Cardiac Patients

According to the American Heart Association approximately 700,000 Americans suffer from a heart attack each year, and cardiac disease is the leading cause of death for both men and women in our country. At Hospice & Palliative Care of Westchester (HPCW), approximately 17% of our patients have a diagnosis of cardiac disease.

The following are risk factors for heart disease: hypertension, diabetes, obesity, decreased physical activity, high cholesterol, smoking, stress, excessive alcohol use and illegal drug use. There are risk factors that cannot be changed that also increase the risk for heart disease. They include increased age, heredity, race and

history of stroke.

Medication and comfort measures are used in caring for our cardiac patients to help improve their quality of life. Medication can help decrease lower extremity swelling and weight gain. We also recommend decreasing the use of salt in their diet and elevating the patients' legs. To help bring blood pressure under control, we help them maintain a healthy weight and include fresh fruits, vegetables and whole grains in their daily meals; exercise daily; and stop the use of tobacco products. Exercise is important for cardiac patients, but be sure to check with a health care professional for direction. It is recommended to include rest periods to reduce fatigue.

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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 2009

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 8 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

Visit our website: www.hospiceofwestchester.com

NEWS FROM THE VOLUNTEER DEPARTMENT

Pet Therapy Program

We welcome volunteer Dot Berman and Jackson, her certified pet therapy dog, to our Pet Therapy Program. They reside in Hartsdale and make visits throughout Westchester County to the delight of our patients. They joined our Volunteer Department this past December. It is important to note that only dogs which are certified to be medically fit and are trained and certified by an appropriate accrediting agency are allowed to be a part of this program.

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:

- Nursing Home Visitor – White Plains, Valhalla & Cortlandt**
- Hospital Visitor – Yonkers**
- Private Residence Visitor**
- Office/Clerical Support**

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.

NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK April 19-25

We plan to recognize and celebrate our Volunteer Team at a reception. Become a volunteer and join in the celebration.

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helping us to deal with our anger, frustration and despair. The gentle woman was with us at the very end and enabled us to stay the course.

When my father died, we were as ready as we could be. Hospice guided us through the final critical issues, so we were able to be at peace as the end drew near. We

are so very blessed to have had the support of this wonderful organization. Hospice & Palliative Care of Westchester allowed us to communicate our feelings honestly, so we could each make the most of the final days and hours. It was a very special journey and one for which I am truly grateful.

CARING FOR CARDIAC PATIENTS
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At HPCW, we bring oxygen into the home to promote patient comfort when appropriate. If our patient does not require oxygen, we recommend the use of a small fan with a gentle breeze pointed in the direction of the patient's face. This can help relieve the feeling of breathlessness and promote relaxation.

"Education and communication are crucial in the care of our patients. We strive to discuss disease outcomes with our patients and their families," stated Nancy Mangels, RN, BSN, a Patient Care Coordinator with HPCW. "Our care is centered on the patient as well as the family with the major emphasis on symptom control. It is important to maintain respect for the patient's autonomy as well as keeping communication with the patient and family open and sensitive."

SAVE THE DATE

May 6, 2009

An Educational Seminar for Caregivers and Professionals *Dementia: What Every Caregiver Should Know*

Burke Rehabilitation Hospital – White Plains, NY

To register: contact Arlene Rosen, R.N., Ed.D 914-368-5508

or arosen@hebrewhome.org

June 23, 2009

7th Annual Golf Invitational

Westchester Hills Golf Club – White Plains, NY

September 24, 2009

8th Annual "IN CELEBRATION" Gala Cocktail Reception

Westchester Country Club – Rye, NY

For further information about our upcoming events, to make reservations or to become a sponsor, please contact Holly K. Benedict at 914-682-1484 ext. 122.

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

YOUR LIFE, YOUR DECISION, OUR HELP.



Hospice & Palliative Care of Westchester

311 North Street, Suite 204
White Plains, NY 10605-2232

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