



# HORIZONS

Community Newsletter

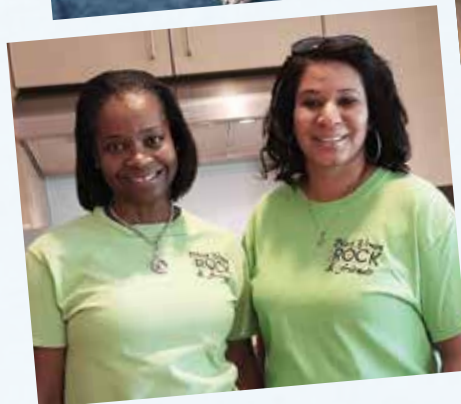
Comfort and dignity as life nears its end

SUMMER 2017

## GRASSROOTS EVENTS BENEFIT HOSPICE OF THE VALLEY

Forty years ago, Hospice of the Valley was formed by community volunteers who gave their time and money to support a much-needed service. Today, the community continues to sustain our not-for-profit agency through grassroots events held Valleywide. Ranging from fishing tournaments to ladies' teas, the gatherings are motivated by caring concern for others and a desire to give back. Here are a few that took place over the past year.

**Thanks to all!**



*Clockwise from left:  
The Heiland Ladies' 25th Annual Tea Party; Cards and cookies, American Express; Heart pillows, Church on the Green, Sun City West; Alpha Kappa Psi Helping Hand Walk/Run; Jesse and Joey White, Braden White, Valle Luna Restaurant and Q Bar and Grill, Lake Pleasant Fishing Tournament; Black Women that Rock.*







### **Making a difference— from the grassroots up**

Community spirit drove the creation of Hospice of the Valley 40 years ago, when a small group of volunteers established one of the nation's first not-for-profit hospices.

The same spirit sustains our agency today, as evidenced by inspiring stories of great people motivated by their desire to give back.

Over the last year we had the privilege to care for more than 18,000 patients and their families. We are inspired each day by their stories and honored to be a part of their journey. As we have grown over the years we have continued to attract dedicated and knowledgeable employees and have grown our volunteer corps to more than 2,000. We have more staff certified in hospice and palliative care than any other hospice in Arizona.

In this issue of *Horizons* you'll read about community fundraisers held by people of all ages. You'll also read about individual supporters who have been personally touched by HOV's care and want to ensure that others will have the same enriching experience.

Their commitment to our mission enables us to care for people who don't have insurance or financial means, as well as offering services not covered by insurance, such as palliative care for children, pet and music therapy.

We are thankful to the community for supporting our mission over four decades. We look forward to continuing to serve the patients and families who come to us for tender care and support.

With gratitude,

**Debbie Shumway**  
Executive Director



### **Hospice of the Valley's mission often inspires long-term commitments**

My association with Hospice of the Valley is one of longevity, like the organization itself. I first joined the board of directors in 1989 after my father passed. When he was diagnosed with terminal

cancer, he told my mom and me that he wanted to die at home, not in a hospital. He said hospitals weren't good places for sick people. We did not know how to make his wish happen, but we were determined to try.

We found HOV and the people were amazing in every way. We still remember the names of the nurses and volunteers some 28 years later. Why? Because they made a difference in our lives when we needed it most. After that experience, I joined the board and was fortunate enough to be board president in the mid-1990s. I took a 17-year hiatus to raise a family and start a business, and now I'm pleased to be back.

In the year HOV is celebrating our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, I have the honor of serving as board chairman again. I'm surrounded by familiar faces. Truth is many people in the organization have been here much longer than I. Why do people retain their commitment to Hospice of the Valley? Because no matter how much the agency grows, the mission stays the same, and the impact HOV has on patients and families remains the same. Patients and families will always have a need for comfort and dignity as life nears its end. And mission-driven employees and volunteers at HOV will always be here to answer the call.

The privilege is ours, now and going forward.

**Michael Withey**  
Board President



## Special *Events*

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### **AAHA! nets record donations for Hospice of the Valley**

AAHA! An Auction of Heirlooms and Art netted \$320,000 for Hospice of the Valley, with proceeds benefitting patients and families. It was a record-breaking amount raised in celebration of our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, up from \$300,000 last year.

The signature fundraising event, held February 25 at the Arizona Biltmore, drew 440 people who bid on art, collectible pieces and one-of-a-kind experiences at silent and live auctions. Guests strolled the red carpet as dynamic string quartet, Urban Electra, set the mood for a night of “fund-raising,” dining and dancing. Bobby D with Call to Auction stirred up excitement for our dazzling raffle prize—a diamond tennis bracelet.

Susan and Bill Levine were the honorary chairs; Susan served 23 years as executive director until her retirement last year. The major sponsor was Valley Toyota Dealers, along with a number of longtime and new sponsors.

The evening’s “Fund-A-Need” was the Susan Levine Legacy Fund for Charity Care, which drew \$111,000 in donations. The fund pays for basic patient care for those without Medicare or insurance and for the extras that bring added comfort to all patients. Last year the agency served 18,125 families in central Arizona.



### **Pro Am Golf Tournament presented by Cigna Healthcare of Arizona raises \$32,800**

Hospice of the Valley’s 19<sup>th</sup> annual Pro Am Golf Tournament presented by Cigna Healthcare of Arizona was held April 13 at Grayhawk’s Raptor Course. The tournament began with a shotgun start and ended with an exciting pro playoff, awards ceremony and reception. The tournament boasted a \$10,000 professional purse and this year, showcased 21 pros from the Southwest Section of the PGA, along with 84 amateur golfers.

This was the 19<sup>th</sup> year that Jay Hoselton has organized the tournament, raising \$32,800 this year, bringing the grand total to \$781,000 for Hospice of the Valley’s patients and families. The first-place amateur foursome was Risas Dental & Braces. The first-place pro was Marty Jertson.







*Sandi and Douglas Flowers*

### From darkness to light

Douglas Flowers walked the path with his wife Sandi following her 2015 leukemia diagnosis. They were in and out of hospitals, emergency rooms and intensive care units, where she died in early 2016. Then the flurry of activity that had consumed their lives abruptly stopped. Douglas, 69, was alone with his heartache and grief.

“A friend gave me Hospice of the Valley’s newsletter with a list of grief support groups,” he said. He went to several of the support groups offered at no cost at locations Valleywide. He found they offered a safe place to talk and to listen to people with like experiences. He was comforted by the hospice bereavement counselors who facilitated the groups, and participated in a few one-on-one counseling sessions.

More than a year after his wife’s death, Douglas feels strength in recovery. In gratitude, he made a gift to Hospice of the Valley’s bereavement program. “It’s invaluable,” he said.



*John Hardison (center) with his hospice team.*

### “It’s like you’re a king.”

John Charles Hardison is a self-made man, born to a poor family in Buckeye, struggling in school, getting by with hardscrabble jobs until he found the calling that would make him a success in business: the water and wastewater treatment industry.

Lots of hard work, perseverance and some luck propelled John to the top, running companies and creating patented products. Life was good until he hit age 49, when he was diagnosed with prostate cancer. He treated the disease and continued working 15 years until the cancer returned. This year John came to Hospice of the Valley’s Dobson Home in Chandler.

“I felt cared for the moment I came in the door,” said John, 66. “This is a magical, absolutely magical place. It’s almost like you’re a king. Whatever you need, it’s there. Every single person comes to you with an armful of caring and concern and love.”

During John’s two-week stay, he noticed that the 6,000-square-foot home, built in 1931, was in need of renovation since it opened as a palliative care unit 13 years ago. With his contributions, Dobson Home got new flooring, a monument roadside sign, more parking, new paint inside and out, shade structures and kitchen and bathroom renovation. “This reflects my commitment to this organization and the people who work here,” he said.

**The “extras” that make up extraordinary care:** Donated dollars enable Hospice of the Valley to offer services and care that go beyond what is covered by Medicare and insurance companies. Here’s a look at three Hospice of the Valley programs supported entirely by donations that have made a difference in the lives of our patients and families.

### Meet the menagerie

Monte Core, part Irish Wolfhound, part Terrier, is so smart she responds to 38 commands—entertaining patients and families with almost human-like interactions.

Lilly’s favorite color is pink. The miniature horse wears pink ribbons in her mane, a pink bridle, and loves for her white mane to be brushed.

Some 120 Pet Connections teams visit patients in skilled nursing and assisted living facilities, group homes, patients’ private homes, and inpatient hospice homes. It’s hard to say who gets the most out of it—the patients, the pets or the pets’ human partners who give their time to the donor-supported program.



*Pet Connections*

“We love it,” said Nancy Smith. “It brightens my day, it makes me feel so good that I can give to someone who is not feeling well.”

### Pediatric palliative care supports the whole family

Casey Algaylani was born with spinal muscular atrophy (SMA), a genetic disease that affects the part of the brain that controls voluntary muscle movement. She was hospitalized for three months, underwent heart surgery and a tracheotomy, and is dependent on a respirator to breathe. She requires round-the-clock care at home.



*The Algaylani family*

Months after Casey’s birth, her father Ram Algaylani suffered cardiac arrest stemming from a congenital heart defect. Only 30 years old, Ram was transported to Mayo Clinic Hospital, where he was nonresponsive and not expected to survive.

Rawaa, 26-year-old wife and mother, faced the dilemma of needing to be two places at once—with her husband and her daughter.

Without family nearby, Rawaa turned to Pam Ruzi, pediatric social worker for Arizona Palliative Home Care. Pam made arrangements for Casey’s care at home so Rawaa could stay with Ram at the hospital.

As Ram’s stay extended into weeks, Pam oversaw and coordinated Casey’s care with multiple providers—including Ryan House; a medical foster care family; and home care agency nurses.

Ram was discharged. He had to stop working and is awaiting next steps—possibly a heart transplant. At the holidays, Pam enrolled the family in Hospice of the Valley’s “Adopt a Family” program, also supported by donations.

Casey turned 2 in May. Rawaa takes care of her family at home, with help from friends, Arizona Palliative Home Care, Phoenix Children’s Hospital and a home agency nursing service. “It’s beyond amazing to see the support that’s there,” Ram said.



**Going above and beyond:** Employees and volunteers at Hospice of the Valley look for ways to enhance patients' and families' lives through personal touches that advance the agency's mission.

### Mary Donovan volunteers in many ways



Seventeen years ago, Mary Donovan's father was in a Hospice of the Valley inpatient unit for several weeks, getting pain relief and other forms of support that were a blessing to him and his family of seven.

When Mary retired from her food service career in 2012, she signed up as a Hospice of the Valley volunteer. "It was a way to pay back, but also I believe in this process. I believe in what we do in this organization," she said.

Mary's volunteer service has included patient home visits, spiritual care for dementia patients and Speaker's Bureau talks to groups including government social workers, retired federal employees, Alzheimer's family caregivers and the Lion's Club. "I love spreading the word to help people get on hospice sooner rather than later," she said.

### Bride's father lives one more day for daughter's wedding

Hospice of the Valley was called to admit a hospital patient with cancer who wanted to go home to die. The man and his family knew death was imminent and he was unlikely to live long enough to be able to walk his daughter down the aisle at her wedding that was only a few weeks away.

Enter Shirley Engel, HOV admissions coordinator turned wedding planner. Within hours, arrangements were made for a hospital wedding, complete with chaplain, cake, wedding dress and marriage license! The bride's sister from Colorado rushed from the airport to the hospital. The bride and groom recited their vows in the patient's ICU room, with the crowd spilling into the hallway. Soon after the patient went home, where he died peacefully the next day, surrounded by family.

### Caring for the whole family

Sometimes it's the family caregiver who becomes a hospice patient before the spouse who has dementia. When that happens, Hospice of the Valley goes the extra mile to care for both of them.

Frank and Josie Santilli have been married 63 years. Originally from New York, where their daughter Gayle still lives, they moved to Phoenix. Josie was diagnosed with dementia, and Frank took care of her, despite his own health issues.



*Gayle, Josie and Frank Santilli*

After Frank was admitted to HOV, the care team worked to keep Frank and Josie together. When he was at Second Floor Ryan House, the team created space for Josie so she could be with him.

Earlier this year Frank and Josie decided to move home to New York to live with Gayle. Social worker Rhonda Chorley helped coordinate a Wrap Pack visit of volunteers to their home. The White Dove Thrift Shoppe truck followed to pick up the boxes and furniture. The couple's donation will yield sale proceeds at the Dove to support other patients and families.

"I can never say thank you enough to everyone at Hospice of the Valley," Frank said. Added Gayle: "What an amazing organization full of amazing individuals. Thank you for taking such good care of my folks!"



### **Volunteer training sessions offered**



*Pet Connections team Nancy Smith and Monte Core visit with patient Alissa Aguero at Ryan House.*

Looking for a way to support your community? Hospice of the Valley needs volunteers to assist with patient care and to provide other services that don't involve patient interaction. Orientation sessions will be held in Central Phoenix in July and the West Valley in August. Apply online at [hov.org](http://hov.org) or call (602) 636-6336.

### **Grants support dementia and pediatric care**

Hospice of the Valley is thankful to Season for Sharing and Arizona Diamondbacks Foundation for their generous grants this year.

Season for Sharing, the annual campaign of The Arizona Republic and [azcentral.com](http://azcentral.com), in partnership with the Gannett Foundation, gave \$25,000 to support caregiver respite and education at Gardiner Home. Low-income patients and families will be supported through caregiver education, palliative and respite care.

Arizona Diamondbacks Foundation contributed \$5,000 to the Pediatric Helping Hand Fund, which helps families with unmet basic daily living needs such as groceries, transportation and utilities. The fund also is used to treat families to an occasional night out of dining and entertainment to bring enjoyment to their lives.

### **Grief support groups meet Valleywide**

Are you or someone you know in need of grief support? Hospice of the Valley offers support groups Valleywide that are open to anyone in the community, regardless of whether the loved one who died was a patient of the agency. New Song Center for Grieving Children is open to children, teens, young adults and their parents or guardians. For meeting dates, times and places, view [hov.org](http://hov.org) or call (602) 530-6970.

Individual grief counseling is available to people whose loved one was on Hospice of the Valley's service.

### **Speakers Bureau addresses community**

Hospice of the Valley's Speakers Bureau gives educational presentations to community organizations, service clubs, civic and faith groups, businesses, schools, senior centers, retirement communities and homeowners associations. There is no charge for the talks. For information or to schedule a talk, call (602) 287-7008 or email [speakersbureau@hov.org](mailto:speakersbureau@hov.org).

### **Mindfulness training open to all**

Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) training has been studied scientifically and found to improve physical symptoms and to decrease emotional and psychological distress. Hospice of the Valley offers mindfulness sessions at no cost weekly at noon Thursdays at the Phoenix Art Museum downtown and at noon Tuesdays at the agency's administrative office, 1510 E. Flower St. For more information, view [hov.org](http://hov.org).

### **Newly designed website goes live**

Hospice of the Valley's new website is live! Check out [hov.org](http://hov.org) for an updated, contemporary look with warm photos. The community is invited to contribute thoughts and memories of their experiences with Hospice of the Valley in honor of the agency's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. View the page: [hov.org/40-years](http://hov.org/40-years). Also, please "like" us on HOV's Facebook page!



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## SHOP. DONATE. VOLUNTEER.

The White Dove Thrift Shoppe offers three ways for the community to support Hospice of the Valley's patients and families.

**Shop.** Sale proceeds go directly to charity care and to support services not covered by Medicare and insurance. Bargains await on clothing, furniture, collectibles, art, jewelry, kitchenware and more. Come visit! Our four store locations are:

**17045 N. 59th Ave.  
Glendale 85308**

**5035 N. 7th Ave.  
Phoenix 85013**

**8461 E. McDonald Dr.  
Scottsdale 85250**

**1255 W. Guadalupe Rd.  
Mesa 85202**

**Donate.** Drop off unwanted items at any store location. For large item pick-up Valleywide, call (602) 274-DOVE (3683).

**Volunteer.** Volunteers ring up sales, sort merchandise and create store displays. We couldn't do it without them! To volunteer, call (602) 636-6336.

**[whitedovethrift.org](http://whitedovethrift.org)**

