



HORIZONS

Community Newsletter

Comfort, dignity and compassionate care

WINTER 2026

SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITY TOGETHER

When people turn to us in times of need, Hospice of the Valley is humbled to serve with compassion and clinical expertise. For nearly five decades, we have supported families during life's most vulnerable moments. Thanks to your generosity, we have expanded our programs, turning no one away due to financial hardship. This past year, we cared for more than 28,000 patients and their families. At the heart of this exceptional care are 1,900 employees and 1,850 volunteers who carry out our nonprofit mission with dedication and purpose. We're honored that 99% of families say they would recommend our care — a reflection of the trust you place in us and our commitment to excellence. Your support makes all of this possible. We are truly grateful for you.



James looks forward to nurse Jorge Caldwell's visits.



Guadalupe is grateful for her nursing aide, Sandra Cianfarano.



EMPOWERING FAMILIES EVERY STEP OF THE WAY

As we begin our 49th year of service, I'm reminded of the profound impact your generosity has on the lives of those we care for. At Hospice of the Valley, our mission has always been rooted in compassion — and thanks to you, it continues to grow in meaningful and exciting ways.



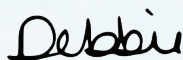
Debbie Shumway

Today, our care extends far beyond hospice. We've developed innovative programs that support people earlier in their healthcare journey — helping patients and families manage serious illness by providing clinical and emotional support.

As a not-for-profit agency, we are able to reinvest in vital services like our New Song Center for Grieving Children, a bereavement program offered at no charge. This past year, Hospice of the Valley provided nearly \$19 million in unreimbursed care and community programs.

We are proud to have the highest number of employees certified in hospice and palliative care in Arizona, bringing this specialized care to families in Maricopa County, northern Pinal County and the Tucson area.

As we begin a new year, we remain committed to serving our community — innovating, caring and walking alongside all who need us.



Debbie Shumway
Chief Executive Officer

Dementia training earns high marks

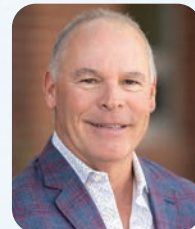
Arizona now requires all memory care staff to receive specialized dementia education. Hospice of the Valley is honored to be among the agencies approved to provide this comprehensive training — and is the only one offering it at no charge. We've already trained over 4,000 professional caregivers.

"Community caregivers gain practical skills they can apply immediately and feel better equipped to provide the best possible care," said Dementia Program Director Maribeth Gallagher.

Dementia team members congratulate a memory care worker on completing training.

SERVING WITH HUMILITY, PURPOSE AND GRATITUDE

It is an honor to step into the role of president of the board for Hospice of the Valley — once again. When I first joined this board more than 30 years ago, I could never have imagined how deeply this mission would come to shape my life. Serving for a second time as president is both a privilege and a responsibility I hold with great respect.



Dan Santy

My board service has always been a cherished gift. Not only because of the extraordinary compassion, dignity and expertise that define Hospice of the Valley, but because this agency has cared for my own family four times. Both my parents, my brother-in-law and my mother-in-law received comfort, grace and kindness from care teams during the moments when it mattered most. My gratitude is personal.

I will continue to champion and guide the mission that has touched countless families across our community — including my own — since 1977. Hospice of the Valley remains one of the most trusted and compassionate organizations in Arizona, and I am humbled to serve alongside the dedicated teams who do this important work every day.

I am committed to ensuring we carry that legacy forward with strength, clarity and purpose.



Daniel Santy
Board President



THE FUTURE OF HOSPICE: PROTECTING A SACRED BENEFIT

Choosing hospice care often comes at a stressful time for families. We frequently hear patients and families share, “We wish we would have called hospice sooner.” This holistic care focuses on quality of life and embraces dignity, comfort and compassion, supporting the patient and their loved ones during an emotional and vulnerable time — a sacred time.

When Medicare created the hospice benefit in the early 1980s, the care was provided by nonprofits — supporting all in need. Over the last few years, the landscape of hospice care has shifted in concerning ways. The number of not-for-profit hospices is dwindling nationwide. Today, just 25% of all hospices in the U.S. are nonprofit.

Locally, we are the only nonprofit hospice in Maricopa County and one of just a few in Arizona, a state now home to over 400 for-profit hospices. The concern is that a number of these hospices are focused on growing their programs in order to sell quickly, hoping for a large profit and often leaving patients without the care they need.

Medicare and state leaders are sounding the alarm

over the practices of these “bad actors.” That is why Hospice of the Valley is working closely with legislators, healthcare partners and Medicare to bring these care issues to light and advocate for reform. We are grateful that the federal government recently announced a new initiative to curb the activities of these problematic hospice operators.

This effort will take time and we want to ensure you, as ambassadors of Hospice of the Valley, are aware of what is happening in our industry.

Like Hospice of the Valley, nonprofit hospices are known for reinvesting in programs that expand access to care and services — and that will continue to be our focus. We are a safety net for those with nowhere else to turn, providing \$19 million in unreimbursed care and services last year. We want to ensure that all patients receive the care they need and deserve, preserving this benefit for generations to come.

Your feedback is welcome as we work to safeguard the future of hospice care in Arizona and our country. The great news is that Hospice of the Valley is strong and remains passionate and committed to our mission.

COMPASSIONATE CARE AT EVERY STAGE

We have been committed to developing innovative programs to support patients earlier in their healthcare journey.

Geriatric Solutions brings home-based primary care to frail and high-risk patients who find it difficult to get to the doctor due to advanced illness.

Arizona Supportive Care provides comprehensive in-home support for those facing advanced illness, with specialized expertise in cancer, respiratory conditions and neurodegenerative diseases like Parkinson’s and ALS.

Supportive Care for Dementia offers in-home education and clinical support for families caring for individuals living with any stage of dementia.

An extension of our Dementia Program, the **Dementia Care and Education Campus** is a dynamic campus where we share resources with families, professional caregivers and community members.

Hospice Care brings compassion and comfort to patients’ homes with skilled teams of doctors, nurses, aides, social workers and chaplains. Our nine inpatient care homes offer short-term stays when patients need symptom management and 24-hour care. Our teams are available at any time, day or night.



Dementia educator Thelma Harrison and her patient, Patricia.

Learn more: (602) 530-6900 or hov.org

GUIDE PROGRAM ELEVATES DEMENTIA CARE & SUPPORT

Hospice of the Valley is participating in a new Medicare model of care designed to better support people living with dementia and ease the strain on family caregivers. The innovative program, called GUIDE — Guiding an Improved Dementia Experience — is already making a remarkable difference for individuals who are not receiving hospice services.

Through our Supportive Care for Dementia program, GUIDE has served 460 patients and provided over 4,800 hours of respite care. This program combines expert knowledge with compassionate care.



Elisha offers companionship to James, who is living with dementia.



Dementia educator Amy Chengalaram visits her patient, Pura.

“The benefits are significant for these families,” says Kristen Pierson, program director.

Our dementia educators help families like Reesa and her husband, James, navigate each stage of the disease, while professional caregivers give loved ones some relief from the demands of caregiving.

“We feel blessed to have found this resource. It’s been a gift,” Reesa shares.

Learn more:

(602) 636-6363 or dementiacampus.org

REAL-TIME EDUCATION AND SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES

Hospice of the Valley’s online **Education Resource Library** places knowledge at the fingertips of patients, families and caregivers. “Our goal is to enhance the hands-on training provided by our clinical teams,” Education Director Kathy Roat explains.

We developed a personalized Symptom Management Guide and eight educational videos to help families understand and address commonly experienced symptoms, from pain and nausea to anxiety and trouble breathing.

Accessible anytime, the resource guides and videos are available at hov.org/education-resource-library in English and Spanish.

Special thanks to our nurses, chaplains and bereavement counselors for bringing this essential resource into patients’ homes when it’s most needed.



Nurse Bonnie Lazzeri (left) and social worker Alanna Ambos focus on the well-being of their patient, Evar.

FINDING STRENGTH TOGETHER

Hospice of the Valley's **Bereavement Department** and **New Song Center for Grieving Children** program offer a lifeline of compassion that helps people navigate loss and move forward with hope.



Hospice of the Valley's Bereavement Team.

Healing from loss

The impact of our amazing counselors was clearly felt at our second annual Bereavement Retreat, where participants gathered to reflect, connect and process their grief together. The retreat created a safe space for sharing stories, learning coping strategies and finding comfort in community. Participants described it as “a judgment-free, empathetic place.” They felt “blessed, renewed, encouraged and at peace.”

By the Numbers

This past year, the Bereavement Department:

- Held **462** virtual and in-person grief support groups, serving more than **4,300** participants.
- Provided nearly **20,000** individual counseling sessions and mailed more than **100,000** copies of our Bereavement Newsletter.
- Developed **12** new bereavement videos (six in Spanish), covering topics such as adult child loss, sudden and unexpected loss, multiple losses, dementia loss, partner loss and anticipatory grief.
- Launched Tucson's in-person grief support group, facilitated by our chaplain and bereavement counselor.

Learn more: newsongcenter.org or (480) 951-8985
For support in Spanish: (602) 776-6789

Passing down traditions

Día de los Muertos is a meaningful holiday that honors loved ones through vibrant altars (ofrendas) adorned with photos, favorite foods and bright marigolds.

Our New Song Center for Grieving Children holds a Day of the Dead celebration that grows more popular each year. More than 300 attendees joined us for our third annual event, featuring live mariachi music, traditional Mexican folk dancing and much more.



“It’s a special day to remember my brother,” Martin Quiroz said. “He would be happy to see us together.”

Elvia Ramirez was there in memory of her husband. “New Song support groups have helped a lot because I know I’m not alone. I see other people going through the same journey and it helps me cope with my pain.”

This unique program is offered at no charge and serves more than 1,000 participants, including nearly 600 families in support groups.

SPREADING JOY DURING THE HOLIDAYS

Thanks to the support of our compassionate community and employees, we are able to help a growing number of families every holiday season.

Thanksgiving

More than 750 patients and family members enjoyed Whole Foods meals through Shannon's Giving, the charity founded by Amber Kovarik eight years ago in memory of her sister, who received care at our Dobson Home. "Every year, I'm so incredibly grateful for my partnership with Hospice of the Valley," Amber said. "We try to ease the burden of holiday stress and remind these families that they're not alone."

In addition, our social workers delivered 140 turkey dinners donated by Bashas' to patients who are housebound or alone, plus 235 Fry's gift cards to help families facing hardship with holiday groceries.

Food and toy drives

Our generous employees collected dozens of boxes of nonperishables; the Sandpiper donated three large moving boxes of food for families in need; and Costco and Service 1st Co. donated hundreds of dollars in grocery gift cards. The Stonegate community, the Ahwatukee Chamber of Commerce and our Dementia Care and Education Campus held toy drives for grieving children in our New Song program. We are grateful to them and many others who help brighten the holidays for our patients and families.

Adopt-a-Family

With Hospice of the Valley's support, teams and departments across our agency adopted families in need, fulfilling the children's wish lists and surrounding them with the warmth of the season.



Amber and her family.



Symphony musicians wowed Anthony with Star Wars.

Galactic symphony

Hospice of the Valley enjoys a wonderful partnership with Phoenix Symphony, whose talented musicians bring mini concerts to patients longing for live classical performances. Social worker Lisa Maddock had a special request for Anthony, a Star Wars superfan.

The 26-year-old was blown away when six musicians performed a Star Wars medley in his own backyard. One violinist even dressed as Princess Leia and another as Luke Skywalker!

Treasures in every chapter

Our four White Dove Thrift Shoppes are an invaluable resource providing clothes, household items and other essentials to patients and families in need — truly brightening their days.

After social worker Jessica Miley-Luevano discovered that 100-year-old Barbara is an avid reader of mystery

novels, she started bringing five to 10 books to each visit. "The White Dove makes it possible for me to enrich Barbara's days with stories she loves. It's my way of showing her how much I adore her!"

All this magic happens thanks to generous store donations, the tireless energy of 400-plus volunteers and the dedication of the White Dove team.



Every book is a gift to Barbara.

Horizons Editor

Debora Britz, communications specialist
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Visit whitedovethrift.org for store locations

GRATEFUL FOR YOUR GIFTS OF TIME AND COMPASSION

Our extraordinary volunteers gifted our agency with nearly 200,000 hours of volunteer services this past year, a value of \$6.5 million. Here are just some of our many volunteer opportunities.

Inspiring a new generation of volunteers



Our newest Teen Volunteer and Teens in Nursing class.

About 70 teens volunteer in our inpatient units, offering support to both patients and care teams. Many also contribute in creative ways, such as baking or crafting items for our patients.

Through our Teens in Nursing program, volunteers work side by side with our nursing aides in the units and gain real-world experience while serving others. “This opportunity solidified my decision to be a nurse,” said Karin Myers, now a freshman in ASU’s nursing program. “I have learned many valuable skills and cannot thank Hospice of the Valley enough for helping me find my purpose.”

We also have created volunteer programs that inspire college students to explore careers in hospice and dementia care, as well as grief support.

Learn more: (602) 636-6336 or hov.org/volunteer

Honoring patients for their service

Our military veteran volunteers provided 326 Salutes visits this past year. In addition to honoring veteran patients, they help represent our agency at community veteran events, paying tribute and sharing helpful resources.

Sam, a 92-year-old patient and Korean War veteran, immediately bonded with volunteer Denton Simmons, a fellow Marine. “They had lovely conversations and it was truly delightful to watch them together,” said Sam’s daughter, Lorrie. “There could not have been a better person to visit with my dad!”

Similar to the Saluting Our Veterans program, Honoring First Responders recognizes the brave and selfless service of emergency, medical and law enforcement officers. Visits are a meaningful time for sharing memories and feeling appreciated for a career protecting others.



Denton and Sam hit it off!



Expanding pet therapy into Tucson

As our Tucson programs grow, so does our volunteer team. Allison Titcomb, a proud fifth-generation Arizonan, and her mixed-breed pup, Xochi, are excited to be our first pet therapy team in Tucson! Within Hospice of the Valley, we have 54 pet therapy teams bringing comfort and cuddles wherever they visit patients, like the sweet team pictured here. Many are especially trained to visit those living with dementia.

Kerry Postillion and her therapy dog, Pearl, star in our 2026 Pet Calendar, available at White Dove Thrift Shoppes.



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Special *Events*

Hospice of the Valley Pro-Am Golf Tournament

Golfers, get ready to tee it up at Grayhawk Golf Club on **April 2** for our 28th annual tournament, presented by Cigna Healthcare. Since 1998, generous sponsors and players have raised more than \$1 million to support Hospice of the Valley patients and families in need.



Our signature fundraiser is set for **April 25** at the JW Marriott Scottsdale Camelback Inn.

Highlights include silent and live auctions featuring collectible art, jewelry, trips and adventures, wines, and much more! Guests will enjoy fine dining and dancing to Nate Nathan & the MacDaddy-Os, one of the Valley's most popular bands. Proceeds support our charity care programs. Reservations: **hov.org/aaha**



Light Up a Life



Our 2025 Community Remembrance program aired on Nov. 23 on CW7 Arizona. We invite you to visit **cw7az.com/LightUpaLife** to watch and share the special tribute, featuring nearly 1,000 photos of loved ones set to beautiful music. Special thanks to the talented Valley Youth Theatre performers (pictured) and the Madison Center for the Arts, where they recorded our opening and closing songs.

More info: **hov.org/events**