

Hospice Matters

A Newsletter for Family and Friends of Hospice

The Book of Love

A husband's insights into caregiving

Marie Was Mine is Rocco Porreco's memoir of caring for his wife, Marie, the two years before her death from cancer and Alzheimer's disease.

Mainly a diary, the book contains intimacies and details of Marie's particular illnesses. Yet, others caregivers may identify with the surprises and predicaments Rocco discovered.

As Rocco wrote six years into Marie's decline and three months before she died, "I feel sorry for myself thinking that my situation as a caregiver is uniquely difficult. The more rational side of me, however, knows that it is not."

NEW AND OLD IDENTITIES

Alzheimer's changed Marie's personality in several ways, a process that began about four years before Rocco started keeping his journal.

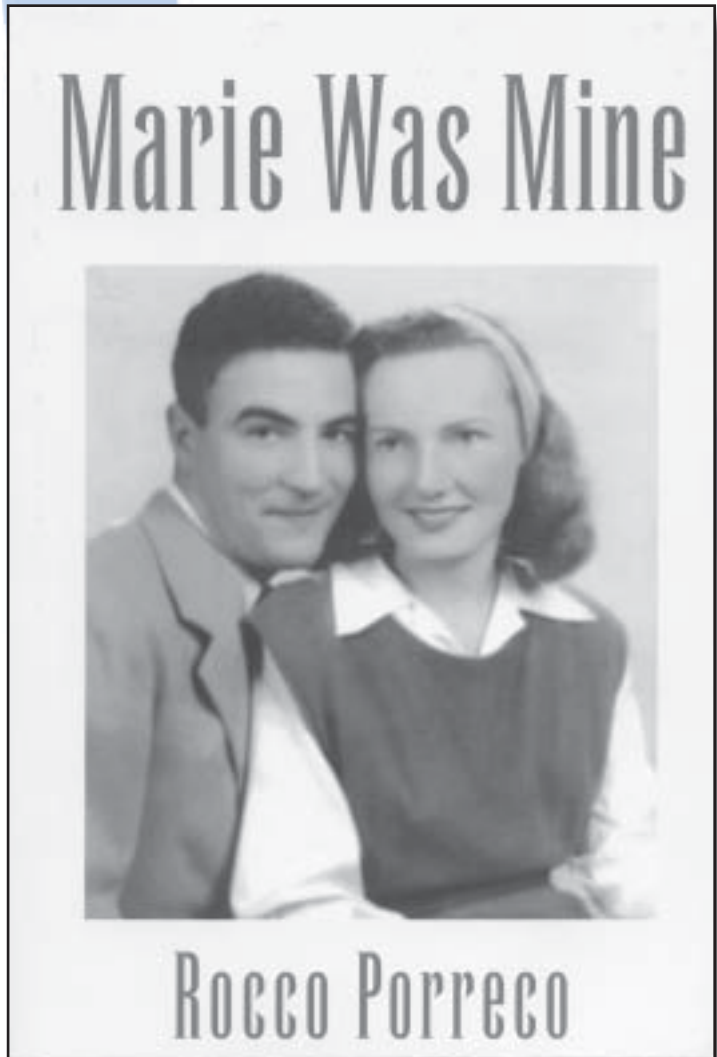
As Marie's illness progressed, Rocco lost the supportive wife he had for the first 50 years of their marriage. But his love for Marie took new form and deepened:

In some ways I'm closer to Marie than I was a few years ago. I guess having someone dependent on you brings you closer.
– March 17, 2004

I feel the sadness of no longer having her as my wife and friend. Yet in many ways she compensates by being a charming child. – October 17, 2004

I suppose that I really want to forget the last seven years of our marriage and remember only the first 50. [Yet] as I look back on the last two years, I realize I got closer to her than I had ever been. I guess because she needed me and became my new child. – July 23, 2005

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Kids' Hospice Hearts



The hospice "tattoo" was a hot fashion item for kids at local fairs and festivals this summer. See Page 10.

Rushmo Wins Again!



Casey House's unofficial racehorse helped Montgomery Hospice by winning his second career victory in July. See Page 7.



Many Peoples, One Place

Census trends that shape hospice

The lead story in *The Washington Post* on August 15 reported demographic facts that distinguish Montgomery County and define everything Montgomery Hospice does.

The *Post* revealed that Montgomery County is *the place* with the highest percentage of foreign-born residents, not just in the DC area but in all of Maryland.

Montgomery Hospice's ability to serve the 268,000 county residents originally from other societies requires that our caregivers adapt to how those cultures approach illness and grief. Our community's diversity makes cultural understanding an important caregiving skill. Hospice is a reflection of the community it serves, and foreign-

born residents add new richness to Montgomery Hospice's continuous improvement.

Workforce demographics explain why even county residents who are neither minorities nor foreign-born have a stake in Montgomery Hospice's ability to welcome people of any background. Montgomery County public schools have been majority Hispanic, Asian and African-American for several years. The workforce will have similar makeup before long. Having enough staff to meet our mission requires that Montgomery Hospice be known as *the place* where workers of any background can develop fulfilling careers.

Montgomery Hospice's vision is to be *the place* the county turns to for help

in coping with serious illness and loss. More and more, being the place means integrating and reflecting the customs of many places and peoples.

Montgomery Hospice's Office of Diversity and Multicultural Outreach is at the forefront of meeting this stimulating challenge. It is rewarding work that all of us are privileged to share.

Ann Mitchell

Ann Mitchell, MPH
President & CEO



We're Number One: Diversity has important implications for end-of-life care in our community.

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Even as Marie became Rocco's child, she never stopped being a mother to their five children. Family members marveled at how engaged and alert she became around her kids. Being an attentive and sensitive parent was so ingrained as to escape dementia's effects.

A confounding trait of Alzheimer's is that some memories and personality traits are lost while others remain intact. For Marie, the maternal was eternal.

MEMORY & HUMOR

"It is fortunate that during our married life she shared her childhood and adult experiences with me. Since her short-term memory is failing, that is often the best way to get in touch with her."

— March 17, 2004

"In the illness, she lost her inhibitions. She was more fun to be with, strange to say."

— Interview about the book, September 2006

Rocco says *Marie Was Mine* is mainly a love story, but also a comedy. He stimulated Marie's fading mind by bringing up old jokes and catch phrases.

"Do you find me attractive?" was a reliable favorite. Twenty-five years earlier, a colleague of Rocco's asked that of Marie after showing up drunk during dinner and passing out face-first into a bowl of spaghetti. Mentioning that buffoonish advance made Marie smile, even as dementia disconnected her from immediate and recent events.

Marie's illness also changed what she found funny. Polite and reserved most of her life, she developed a taste for bawdy humor. She absentmindedly rearranged household items, at one point mixing piles of dirty and clean laundry. When Rocco complained that he couldn't tell which was which, Marie stunned him by saying, "Smell them!" Rocco marvels, "She would never have done that before."

BALANCING ACT

In many ways, caregiving is a series of trade-offs. Medicines that keep a patient comfortable may have troubling side-effects. Family members may want to do everything for a patient, but become so exhausted that they endanger themselves and the patient.



Marie and Rocco Porreco, Mothers Day 2003

A drug that controlled Marie's liver cancer also caused heavy nosebleeds that took hours to stop. Preventing, monitoring and treating nosebleeds consumed much of each day.

Our Rabbi's Role

In a newspaper story about his becoming a Montgomery Hospice chaplain, Rabbi Gary Fink explained why spiritual support is an important part of hospice care.



"When someone is diagnosed with a life-limiting illness, their world turns upside down. A steady, supportive presence can be immensely helpful."

"My work with hospice involves physical and spiritual dimensions – a birthing in reverse – to help someone leave this world with grace, reconciliation, hope or peace."

"Helping people find purpose and meaning and affirmation at the very worst times is a very rewarding experience."

Eventually, the downside of using the cancer drug outweighed the good it was doing, and the treatment was stopped.

Balancing benefits and burdens was the key to Rocco's dilemma over how much to let others do for Marie. On one hand, routine and predictability comforted Marie. She was private and wanted only Rocco to do things like bathe her.

Rocco, a decorated World War II medic, found 24-hour caregiving more grueling than war. He worried he would collapse in the middle of the night and that Marie would find him and become distraught, unsure what to do.

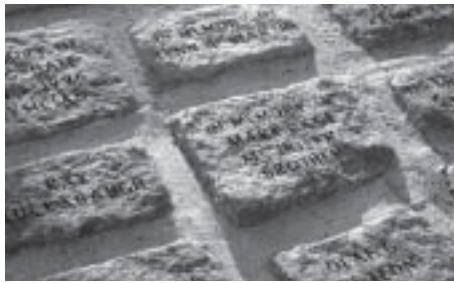
Marie went to Montgomery Hospice's inpatient facility, Casey House, for four days of respite care. That service allows Hospice at Home patients to live at Casey House for up to five days while family caregivers catch up on their rest.

Continued on Page 7

You Make Hospice Possible

Generous community support enables Montgomery Hospice to care for patients regardless of their ability to pay. Here are ways you can aid in the care of dying and bereaved people.

Memorial Gifts



Casey House cobblestones

Cobblestones that line the walkways at Casey House are handsome examples of memorial gifts.

Memorial gifts are thoughtful ways to honor someone who has touched your life.

Many families request that friends give memorial donations in lieu of flowers.

Workplace Giving



Designate CFC/United Way Charity #8277.

The Combined Federal Campaign and United Way payroll deduction programs are easy, automatic ways to put your charity dollars to work.

IRA Charitable Rollovers

A new law allows tax-free charitable donations of up to \$100,000 from individual retirement accounts (IRAs).



The IRA charitable rollovers must occur in 2006 or 2007 to qualify for this tax break.

Online Donations

If you prefer to charge charitable gifts on credit or debit card, why not click on our Web site to make a donation?



Online gifts at montgomeryhospice.org are secure, and you can make them anytime.

Planned Giving

Planned giving, such as naming Montgomery Hospice in your will, can create a lasting legacy and reduce your heirs' tax burden.



To make gifts of stock, life insurance or charitable annuities, call the Montgomery Hospice Foundation at (301) 921-4400.

Thank You, Golfers!

Two groups recently helped dying and bereaved people in Montgomery County by organizing golf tournaments to support Montgomery Hospice.

In May, the family of former Montgomery Hospice patient Julian Weinfeld held a tournament in his memory. The tournament raised \$4,500 for all Montgomery Hospice services.

At the Ryan Homes tournament in September, hospice friends raised over \$7,000 for Casey House.

We are grateful to the Weinfeld family and to Ryan Homes for their kind support of people coping with illness and loss in our community.



Check presentation, Julian Weinfeld Memorial Golf Tournament: Ann Mitchell, Montgomery Hospice CEO; Gary Weinfeld, son; Diane Weinfeld, wife; Dr. Jeff Weinfeld, son. The May tournament at the University of Maryland, College Park raised funds for all Montgomery Hospice services.



In September, the Ryan Homes Golf Tournament at Hampshire Greens in Silver Spring raised over \$7,000.

Ryan Homes

It's Raining Ducks!

Almost 200 hospice friends attended the third annual Montgomery Hospice Derby Duck Race on Sunday, October 8. The race of 10,000 rubber ducks on Clopper Lake in Gaithersburg raised \$50,000 for local hospice care.



Quacky, the Derby Duck mascot, greets young fans.



A helicopter launches ducks into the lake...the race is on!



Teen volunteers with balloons welcome families.



Chaplain Phil Rider and volunteer Keith Midberry pull the winning ducks from the finish chute. Claudia Ritchey of Frederick adopted the first-place duck and won a 32-inch HDTV set. The second-place duck belonged to Chevy Chase's Geraldine Pilzer, who won \$1,000 cash.

Our Doctor for Life



The doctor who did as much as anyone else to build hospice care in our community has retired. Dr. Eugene Libre was an oncologist in Kensington for 40 years and worked for Montgomery Hospice for 18 years.

Dr. Eugene Libre

Dr Libre held every job a Montgomery Hospice doctor can have: Hospice at Home team physician, Casey House physician, Medical Director and Director of Medical Education. His kindness and skill are big reasons why Montgomery Hospice's service has grown 700% since he started caring for hospice patients in 1987.

Dr. Libre retired in 2005 to Lake Placid, New York. In July 2006, the Montgomery Hospice Board of Directors appointed him Director Emeritus of Medical Education, an honorary post.

It is said that hospice "adds life to days," even when days cannot be added to life. In Montgomery County, no one added life to days as gently or as loyally as Dr. Libre.

Fittingly, his Emeritus appointment is for life.



Dr. Eugene Libre has retired to Lake Placid after 18 years of service at Montgomery Hospice. A doctor for the 1980 U.S. Olympic Team in Lake Placid, Dr. Libre was at the storied USA-USSR hockey game with his sons. His sons are waving the American flag in this famous photo.

Montgomery
25 **HOSPICE**
YEARS of SERVICE
1981-2006

A Grandson's Thanks



Dr. Geoffrey Wilson (center) wrote to Montgomery Hospice after the death of his grandmother, Sophia Wilson (second from left). Dr. Wilson's note is reprinted with his permission.

As a physician at a local hospital, I assisted with sending patients and guiding families to Casey House. I didn't have personal experience with Casey House until my grandmother was diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer. When my grandmother was accepted and transferred to hospice care, I was humbled and impressed with the care and compassion that she received. Thank you for all that you did for my grandmother, for what you have done for my patients and their families, and for all that those at Casey House continue to do on a daily basis. Dying with dignity is the only way to go.

—Geoffrey Wilson, MD

22%

Research from the Maryland Vital Statistics Administration (VSA) shows that Montgomery Hospice cared for 22% of Montgomery County residents who died locally in 2005, including half of all cancer deaths.

Twenty-two percent marks record high use for any hospice service in our area. It is also double the percentage of dying people who received comfort care from Montgomery Hospice in 1999. Compared to national norms, serving almost one in four dying people in a suburban area like Montgomery County is a sign of advanced, community-based care.

There is another important measure of hospice service that the VSA did not report: In 2005, professional grief counselors from Montgomery Hospice helped 2,606 relatives of hospice patients and 1,780 other grieving people cope with the loss of a loved one.

Another Win for Casey House!



Rushmo (far right), the thoroughbred that informally represents Casey House, won his second career victory in July. Rushmo's trainer, Bev Heckrotte,

continued the tradition she started in 2005 of donating part of Rushmo's winnings to Casey House. Thank you, Bev, and thank you, Rushmo!

Vocation Vacations

Two Montgomery Hospice staff members recently spent their vacations and their own money in other countries teaching and learning about end-of-life care.

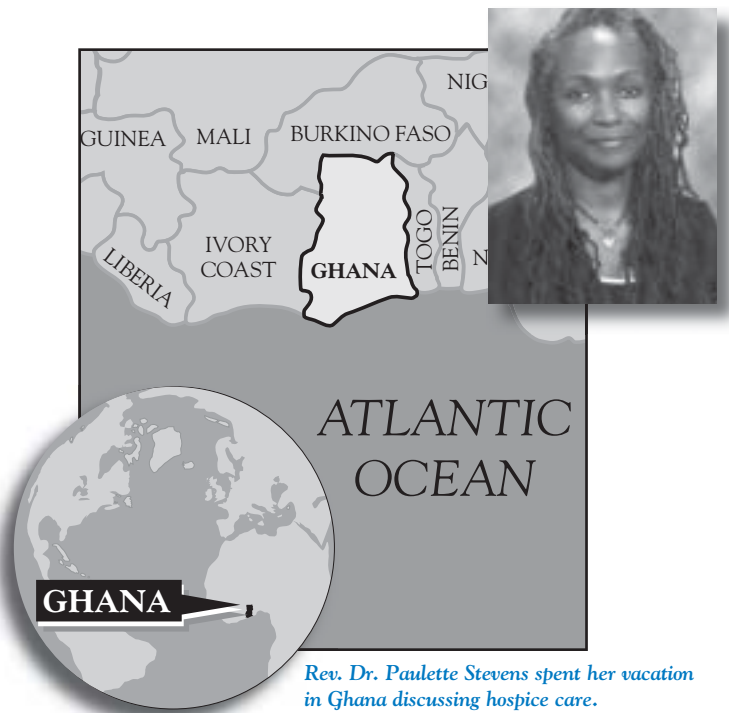
Rev. Dr. Paulette Stevens, Director of the Office of Diversity and Multicultural Outreach, spent most of August in Ghana. She led seminars for clergy and nursing students about end-of-life care. She also met with the Ghanaian Minister of Health about that country's care for its large AIDS population.

Paulette's trip was part of a non-financial partnership Montgomery Hospice has with a nursing college and an AIDS ministry in Ghana. That partnership, arranged by the Foundation for Hospices in Sub-Saharan Africa, matches hospices in developed countries with caregivers in Africa to collaborate on global health problems.

In August, Director of Volunteer Services Monica Escalante gave presentations to over 100 healthcare volunteers and government health officials in Chile about hospice care and the work of hospice volunteers in Montgomery County.

Fundacion Nuestros Hijos (Our Children Foundation), which is trying to establish pediatric hospice care in Chile, hosted Monica and paid some costs of her trip. Two Nuestros Hijos representatives also attended Montgomery Hospice's volunteer orientation in May.

Hospice professionals return from "vocation vacations" with a better understanding of other cultures and societies. That knowledge can improve the care Montgomery Hospice provides people who move here from overseas.



Rev. Dr. Paulette Stevens spent her vacation in Ghana discussing hospice care.



Monica Escalante was a guest teacher in Chile about hospice care.

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Recognizing that routine had changed from being a benefit to being a burden was hard. Fortunately, the respite stay had its desired effect. Rocco regained some strength and was able to care for Marie her final two weeks.

She died peacefully at home on May 3, 2005.

Rocco on Hospice

Rocco dedicates *Marie Was Mine* to Marie's Montgomery Hospice caregivers. "I was really impressed by the hospice people. They were really good," he says.

Chaplain Susan Mitchell was especially helpful. Marie loved it when Susan would sing to her, and the family appreciated how Susan helped them understand and anticipate changes in Marie's condition.

Rocco is grateful to Marie's physician, Dr. Leon Hwang, for referring Marie to hospice. "I've known some people who didn't get hospice until later," Rocco says.

Indeed, many patients are referred weeks or months after hospice could have started improving their quality of life. Books like *Marie Was Mine* may help people get care sooner.

Memorial and Honorary Gifts

IN MEMORY OF...

Calema Abdow	Anna H. Cook	Rose Greenbaum	Rose C. Kramer	Theresa Ball Olson
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Ruth Asselin	Alicia Cormack	Robert J. 'Chip' Gregory	Barbara Susan Kreisberg	Grace O'Reilly
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Warren H. 'Don' Clark	Harry Lewis Goodwin	Selma Klineberg	Mary E. 'Betty' Nearing	Chester Slama
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June Conte	Joseph S. Greco	Ellen P. Kraemer	Teresa Olson	Patricia A. 'Patti' Smith

Between June 1 and September 30 2006, Montgomery Hospice received contributions in memory or in honor of the following individuals. We are grateful for these gifts. They help fill the financial void between healthcare costs and insurance coverage.

Muriel Solomon
John R. Sorrells
Manote Sounrut
Dr. Charles Spratt
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Haley Steiner
Herman Sturza
Mary Katherine Styer
Mary Sudano
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Marjorie Whitten
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David H. Wyatt

Donald M. Wynne Sr.
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Evelyn Yinger
Matthew C. Zehner
Helen Zimmerman
Lillian Zinser
Bobbie Zwilsky

IN HONOR OF...

Helen Bedzyk
Mary Ellen Bittner
Dorothy Boykin
James Robert Brown
The 50th Wedding Anniversary of
Norma and Harry Brucker
Hilda F. Copenhaver and Her Son
William F. Copenhaver

Marie D'Agostino
Andrea Dembnicki
Fred Feldman
Dennis Gaynor
Charles Gendron
Viola Goudy
10 Healthy Grandchildren
Merion Green

The Gregorio Family and Their
Efforts on the Golf Tournament
Charles Hailey
Dr. Stephen J. Hoye
The Marriage of Kathleen Duggan
and Justin Jacobs
Betty Jane Knight
Robert Larash

Alice K. Lee
Sylvia Levin
Mary Frances 'Miki' Loughlin
Richard & Evelyn Lutz
Joseph McGary
Joeann B. Meyer
The Original 13
Renee Rosenberg

Stella's 90th Birthday
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Myrna Wilensky
Susan Wilensky
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Potomac United Methodist Women
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Women of All Saints

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Woman's Club of Potomac, Inc.

"In Honor Of" and "In Memory Of" gifts may recognize any person, including a Montgomery Hospice patient. Gifts from individual donors and gifts in kind will be acknowledged in Montgomery Hospice's annual report. If we have omitted names, please accept our apologies and notify us of the error.

New from NIH

Four Montgomery Hospice employees, including a doctor and the director of Casey House, recently joined our staff from the National Institutes of Health.

As the Federal government's main medical research agency, NIH trains caregivers in the best and latest techniques. We are proud that these professionals have joined Montgomery Hospice and are sharing their expertise with the rest of our care teams.



*Donna Pereira, RN, MA, PC-APRN
Director, Casey House*



*Cynthia Williams, DO
Team Doctor, Casey House
and Hospice at Home*



*Linda Hodson, M.Div.
Chaplain, Hospice at Home*



*Blythe Edwards, MS
Grief Counselor*

Fair Fashions

Balloons and press-on "tattoos" were the trendy attractions that drew countless kids to the Montgomery Hospice tent at community fairs this summer.

The chance to meet Quacky, the Derby Duck Race mascot, was also irresistible for young visitors.

On five out of seven weekends in August and September, volunteers greeted thousands of visitors at events like the Montgomery County Fair and the Takoma Park Folk Festival.



Volunteer News

Welcome!



Twenty-one volunteers completed training in September to join our care teams. Kneeling: Christina Somerville, Ryann Morris. First row: Larisa Shirtberg, Linda Leach, Kirsten Riesbeck, Marcia Joiner, Adrienne Allison, Sue Rogus, Elsie Clark, Francyne Feinberg, Ify Anne Nwabuwu. Second row: Stacey Katz, Aileen Solomon, Dottie McDermott, Matthew Quimm, Neil Hadley, Jason Gedeik, Cheryl Guidry-Tyiska, Vera Oye Yaa Anna, David Hughes, Geoff O'Neil.

Special Events Spotlight

Special Events Volunteers are behind-the-scenes party people who help organize fundraising events. Their work helps keep hospice care available for all county residents.

Special Events are a great fit for workplace pals and other groups looking to volunteer together on brief projects. To learn more, call the Volunteer Services Offices at (301) 921-4400.



Special Events Volunteers from Choice Hotels prepare ducks for the Derby Duck Race in October. Helping with fundraising events is a fun way for coworkers to do something together for a good cause.

Don in Denver

Volunteer Don Duggan was a featured presenter at the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization conference in Denver in July. He discussed how Montgomery Hospice uses veteran volunteers to train new volunteers.

Don knows that learning from other volunteers bolsters trainees' confidence that they can be effective caregivers. A retired personnel trainer with the Federal government, Don says that peer-to-peer instruction also



Don Duggan, shown discussing hospice on Montgomery Community Television in July, was a speaker at a Denver conference on hospice volunteering.

builds "ownership, loyalty and commitment. You think about what you can do to make the program better."

Don's trip confirmed that Montgomery Hospice volunteers have unusually significant roles. The conference was titled Volunteerism and Family Caregiving, but he was apparently the only presenter who was a volunteer.

✂ REMOVE HERE

TELL ME MORE

I am _____
(Name)

I would like information about volunteering in:

- ___ **Patient Care** (Being a companion to Hospice at Home or Casey House patients)
- ___ **Fundraising & Special Events** (Organizing money-making activities to support charity care)
- ___ **Bereavement Care** (Being a listener and source of support for people who are grieving)
- ___ **Office Support** (Providing administrative help at Casey House or offices of Hospice at Home)

I prefer to be contacted:

- ___ By Phone _____
- ___ By Email _____
- ___ By U.S. Mail _____

Cut along dotted line and return to:
Montgomery Hospice
1355 Piccard Drive, Suite 100
Rockville, MD 20850

Calendar of Events

Fundraising Events

- November 10** **Basket Bingo.** Play to win Longaberger gift baskets. Rockville Elks Lodge, 5 Taft Court, Rockville. 6:00pm – 9:00 PM.
- December 5** **Tree of Lights.** Brookside Gardens, Wheaton. 7:00 – 8:30 PM.
- March 9** **Montgomery Hospice Gala: A Celebration of Life!** Bethesda North Marriott Hotel and Conference Center, 5701 Marinelli Road, North Bethesda. 6:30 – 11:00 PM.

Volunteer Training

- February 5 – 9** **Orientation to the hospice philosophy and core caregiving skills.** Leisure World Inter-Faith Chapel, 3680 S. Leisure World Boulevard, Silver Spring. 9:00 AM – Noon each day.

Grief Care

- November 20** **Evening Drop-In Discussions About Grief & Healing.**
January 4 Montgomery Hospice, Rockville. 6:30 – 8:00 PM.
- November 28** **Afternoon Drop-In Discussions About Grief & Healing.**
December 19 Montgomery Hospice, Rockville. 1:00 – 2:30 PM.
- December 12** **Winter Blues: Balancing Sorrow and Celebration While Grieving.**
 Montgomery Hospice, Rockville. 6:30 – 8:00 PM.
- January 9** **Afternoon Grief Support Group.** Meets 1:00 – 2:30 PM at St. Elizabeth Catholic Church, 917 Montrose Road, Rockville on Tuesday afternoons for six weeks.
- January 10** **Evening Grief Support Group.** Meets 6:30 – 8:00 PM at Montgomery Hills Baptist Church, 9727 Georgia Avenue, Wheaton on Wednesday afternoons for six weeks.
- January 16** **Parent Loss Support Group.** For adults grieving the loss of one or both parents. Meets 6:30 – 8:00 PM at North Bethesda United Methodist Church, 10100 Old Georgetown Road, Bethesda on Tuesday afternoons for six weeks.
- February 7** **Child, Adolescent & Teenager Support Group.** For children ages 4-17 who have lost a parent or sibling. Meets 6:00 – 7:30 PM at Montgomery Hospice, Rockville on Wednesday evenings for six weeks.

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For information about any Montgomery Hospice event or activity, contact us at (301) 921-4400 or visit www.montgomeryhospice.org. Grief support groups fill quickly, so please register early.

Hospice Matters is a newsletter for family and friends of Montgomery Hospice, a nonprofit organization serving residents of Montgomery County, Maryland who are bereaved or terminally ill.

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

1355 Piccard Drive, Suite 100
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 (301) 921-4400
www.montgomeryhospice.org

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