

## Mission House offers families time together when it matters most



*Mission House has peaceful, comfortable places for families to gather, knowing that their loved ones are receiving the best care possible.*

One of the many meaningful things about hospice care is that it is typically provided in the home, where people can live out their lives in a comfortable, familiar setting, surrounded by loved ones. But for some patients, staying at home is simply not an option.

When we opened our new hospice house in October 2015, our goal was to expand end-of-life options in the San Mateo County area. Mission House is a place for people in the last weeks of life

who need intensive, round-the-clock care that cannot be provided at home. With just 10 bedrooms, Mission House offers a peaceful, homelike environment for people who might otherwise be in the hospital. Our focus at Mission House is on the whole family.

In the past year, our hospice house has become an integral part of the services offered by Mission Hospice & Home Care. We are honored to have already cared for more than 100 people – and their families.

Here are a few of their stories.

**At 95, Eddie was suffering from end-stage cancer and bouts of delirium.** After his final hospitalization, it became too difficult for his wife Jean to care for him at home, and they could not afford round-the-clock caregivers.

Once Eddie was at Mission House, our professional staff monitored his medications carefully to be sure that he was safe, comfortable, and present for his wife and family. They visited frequently; Jean often slept in a rollaway bed beside him.

After a volunteer hairdresser gave him a haircut, Eddie pronounced himself so handsome that his wife would have to worry that he'd be attractive to other women. On the couple's 49th wedding anniversary, the Mission House team gathered with cake and cider. Eddie sang love songs to his wife, and the staff created a photograph album for Jean to keep. Weeks after his admission to Mission House, Eddie passed away, peacefully, his wife at his side.

*...continued on page 3*



## Hospice House Campaign Seeking public support

Last fall, we took a leap of faith and purchased a property on San Mateo's 16th Avenue. Thanks to extraordinary support from the community, we can now care for people and their families in **Mission House**, San Mateo County's only hospice house.

Adding Mission House to our continuum of care ensures that we can offer compassionate end-of-life support for patients at any stage of a life-limiting illness.

To fund the opening of the house, Mission Hospice launched an ambitious \$6 million fundraising campaign. We're thrilled to announce that local leaders and our community partners have already invested more than \$4.3 million.

**We are now asking everyone in the community to join us in supporting our Hospice House Campaign.** Together, we can



raise the remaining \$1.7 million necessary to give patients the gift of compassionate end-of-life care at Mission House – and support for the entire family.

**To find out more about our hospice house campaign, contact Marsha at 650.532.2550 or [MEddleman@MissionHospice.org](mailto:MEddleman@MissionHospice.org).**



## Caring for the caregiver

Dwight Wilson, CEO



The opportunities we have to care for one another – at any stage of life – can be the most rewarding things we do. Taking care of others can also be exhausting, frustrating, and stressful.

Our Mission Hospice teams know that care for the family caregiver is just as important as the care we provide for our patients. Often, family members suffer emotionally, spiritually, and even physically as they watch their loved one progress through the final year of life. Our continuum of care includes wraparound support for these family members throughout the illness and after death.

This support allows the family to be more fully present for their loved one – something that benefits the entire family. Family members often let us know that we make it possible for them to make the most of their time together, and we are honored to do this.

Families are the center of our work at our hospice house, where we see every day the value of this comprehensive support network. While our compassionate staff and volunteers provide round-the-clock symptom management, families can focus on what matters – and our team can provide emotional and spiritual support for all of them.

Thanks to the enormous generosity of our community, we opened Mission House in October 2015, and in the past year, we have cared for more than 100 people who cannot receive hospice services at home.

We are now officially launching the public phase of our fundraising campaign, seeking to raise the final \$1.7 million to support the hospice house. I hope you will consider donating to the campaign, knowing that your gift will help provide a peaceful, homelike setting, where people can spend their final days surrounded by family. – DW



Through the **We Honor Veterans** program, Mission Hospice is committed to respectful and compassionate care for our veterans, recognizing their unique needs at life's end.

## Upcoming events

### Movie night: Honor Flight

Thursday, November 10, 2016 • 6:30pm

Mission Hospice & Home Care, 1670 South Amphlett Blvd., Suite 300, San Mateo  
In honor of Veterans Day, we close our film series with this heartwarming film chronicling the journeys of thousands of WWII veterans on their final mission to visit Washington DC. Free tickets at [MissionHospice.eventbrite.com](http://MissionHospice.eventbrite.com).

### The Art of Saying Goodbye

Saturday, November 12, 2016 • 9:30am - 5pm

Peninsula Jewish Community Center, 800 Foster City Blvd., Foster City

A hands-on workshop about using the creative arts to express grief. Registration is \$80 (sliding scale) including all art materials and lunch. Call Susan at 650.532.2396 or register at [MissionHospice.eventbrite.com](http://MissionHospice.eventbrite.com).

### Light Up A Life Remembrance Ceremony

Sunday, November 13, 2016 • 2 - 4pm

San Mateo Senior Center, 2645 Alameda de las Pulgas, San Mateo

Our annual interfaith ceremony celebrates the lives of those who have died, and offers comfort to those who remember them. RSVP to 650.554.1000.

### Grief and the Holidays Support Group

Monday nights, November 14, 2016 – January 9, 2017

Mission Hospice & Home Care, 1670 South Amphlett Blvd., Suite 300, San Mateo

This semi-structured nine-week group will help grieving people manage the holiday season. Facilitated by Isabel Stenzel, LCSW. Free, but registration is required. To sign up, contact Roby Newman at 650.931.8236 or [RNewman@MissionHospice.org](mailto:RNewman@MissionHospice.org).

### • 38th Anniversary Celebration •

Sunday, January 29, 2017, 4 - 7pm

Sharon Heights Golf & Country Club, Menlo Park

Celebrate 38 years of service to the local community. Tickets go on sale in December. For more information, call 650.554.1000.

### Drop-in Grief Support Groups

Tuesday evenings from 6 - 7:30pm, led by Roby Newman, LCSW

Mission Hospice & Home Care, 1670 South Amphlett, Suite 300, San Mateo

1st and 3rd Saturdays, 10 - 11:30am, led by Tracie Pyers, MSW

Mission Hospice & Home Care, 1670 South Amphlett, Suite 300, San Mateo

2nd and 4th Saturdays, 10 - 11:30am, **Group for Young Widows and Widowers**, led by Tracie Pyers, MSW and Meechal Hall, LCSW

Mission Hospice & Home Care, 1670 South Amphlett, Suite 300, San Mateo

2nd and 4th Thursdays, 4 - 5:30pm, led by Bethany Berkowitz, RN, BSN and Dawn Fitzpatrick, LCSW (from Coastside Adult Day Health)

Coastside Adult Day Health Center, 925 Main Street, Half Moon Bay

**En Español: Miércoles en la noche**, 6 - 7:30pm, Dirigido por la Maestra en Trabajo Social Sara Martinez

Redwood City Fair Oaks Community Center, 2600 Middlefield Road, Redwood City

Our free drop-in bereavement support groups are open to the community. The schedule may change around the holidays; for details and to confirm the schedule, visit [MissionHospice.org](http://MissionHospice.org) or call 650.554.1000.

For details on all our events, visit [www.MissionHospice.org](http://www.MissionHospice.org).



# Diamonds in denim

Many thanks to event co-chairs Martha Melton and Yoli Crosby and their committee for hosting the Mission Hospice Auxiliary's 2016 Fall Gala. The festive evening – with a rocking band and a delicious dinner – raised a record \$174,000+ to support our Hospice House Campaign!



**Special thanks to our major sponsors:**

**Mills-Peninsula Health Services**

**Marilyn Porto, Realtor • BC Networks**

**Glenda Carney • Dr. Stephen & Nancy Weller  
CHME, Inc. • Crosby N-Gray & Co.**

Photos © 2016 Carl Ward Photography. More at [www.MissionHospice.org/photo-gallery](http://www.MissionHospice.org/photo-gallery) and on our Facebook page.

## Stories from Mission House

...continued from front

**Robin was a well-educated 51-year old woman with kidney failure.** After eight years of self-dialysis, the treatment became less effective, and Robin felt she had no quality of life. She made the decision to discontinue dialysis, and was admitted to Mission House.

Recognizing Robin's emotional anguish, the Mission House staff and volunteers spent hours listening to her stories, offering companionship and affection.

Our caregivers prepared her favorite meals (her first request: pepperoni pizza). A nurse arranged a Valentine's Day dinner for Robin, and coaxed her into dancing – something she had not done for years.



As her organs inevitably failed, she needed more pain medication, and became less responsive. Having helped ease her physical and emotional pain, the staff and volunteers at Mission House accompanied Robin until her last breath.

**A lifelong bachelor, Barry, 60, lived alone in Belmont.** His older siblings cared for him until the symptoms of his end-stage cancer became too much for them to manage.

Once he was admitted to Mission House, his family gathered at the house every day to be with their baby brother. On St. Patrick's Day,

the family brought in corned beef and all the trimmings; the Mission House cook prepared the meal, which Barry and his family shared with staff and volunteers.

When Barry needed rest, he would send his family out of his room so he could sleep. They spent time together as a family in the living room, dining room, and garden of the house, knowing that Barry was in good hands.

After Barry's death, his family expressed their enormous gratitude – not only for the compassion and care Barry received, but also for the welcoming, warm environment of the house, which allowed them to retain their sense of family. 🍷

## Meet Tracie Pyers, Medical Social Worker



**Born:** Cleveland, Ohio

**With Mission Hospice:** 1999-2004; returned in 2011

**How I came to hospice work:** It was a good job for a young mother

**Mission Hospice in three words:**

Caring – Amazing – Compassionate

**Passions:** Hiking and taking photos

**Little known fact:** I love to cook

**Reading:** *Fire Shut Up in My Bones*, by Charles Blow

**Desert island album:** Anything by Prince

**Favorite food:** Chile relleno – made by my husband

# MISSION HOSPICE & HOME CARE

1670 South Amphlett Boulevard, Suite 300, San Mateo, CA 94402

Save the date!  
*38th Anniversary  
Celebration*  
**Sunday, January 29**

Nonprofit  
Organization  
US Postage  
**PAID**  
Permit No. 63  
Burlingame, CA

**Mission Hospice & Home Care** serves patients and families in the San Mateo County area with quality care and compassionate end-of-life support. Founded in 1979, we are a local, independent nonprofit that has provided more than ten thousand patients and their families with physical, emotional, and spiritual support throughout the journey from a life-threatening diagnosis through death and the process of bereavement. [www.MissionHospice.org](http://www.MissionHospice.org) • 650.554.1000

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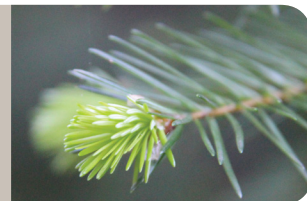
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To add or remove your name from our mailing list, please call 650.554.1000.

**INSIDE: Mission House offers families time together**  
**From the CEO: Caring for the caregiver**  
**Photos from our Fall Gala**



## Comprehensive support available for those who are grieving

At Mission Hospice, our compassionate care extends to the whole family – before, during, and after a death. We also offer grief support for the entire community: our free drop-in bereavement groups are open to anyone who is grieving.



Our expanded bereavement programs now include groups for Spanish speakers, young widows and widowers, those who are grieving the loss of a parent, and a twice yearly “writing through loss” workshop. One of our writing workshop members shares her experience in this honest poem.

You can find information about our grief support inside, online at **MissionHospice.org**, or by calling us at **650.554.1000**.

### *In Between*

— Sandi Kahn

*Brain Fog has set in,  
while staring at a blank page,  
teasing me to fill up its  
emptiness*

*with this week's prompts*

*There's been a surprising  
interior seismic shift,*

*where my vocabulary of grief  
and loss evade me*

*New words for acceptance,  
journey, serenity have snuck in  
as an unfamiliar, embryonic  
language*

*Now what am I supposed to  
do?*

*Making changes is a slow,  
lifelong character flaw of mine*

*Motivation sits by the roadside  
hoping to hitch a ride on a solo  
pilgrimage of reinvention*

*Instead, it becomes stuck in its  
safe, and familiar home  
where sometimes  
dishes get washed  
clothes get put away  
phone calls get returned,  
condolence cards get written*

*This is not to say  
that I haven't done my share of  
traveling to foreign lands,  
been surrounded by the Best  
Family and Friends,  
Yet this living on my own is just  
plain strange....*

*For now Motivation to change  
has gone AWOL,  
waiting for me to jump start  
my stalled engine  
waiting for me to make friends  
with Living, rather than Loss*