

Foster City's Marvin Crockett: Finding comfort in cycling



Marvin Crockett and Mission Hospice volunteer Rick Barrelier ride together around Foster City about once a week.

If you're in Foster City, the odds are good that you'll see Marvin Crockett out riding his bike. A San Francisco native, Marvin used to ride up and down the hills of the city, so the flat roads of the Peninsula seem easy to him.

Marvin knows the streets of Foster City well. He and his wife Mary Ann were among the first residents to move to their neighborhood when it was a new development in 1964. They raised their four sons here, and were active in schools, sports, and city politics.

Now 77, Marvin is living with pancreatic cancer and early-stage Alzheimer's disease; he started hospice care in the spring. And he is still bicycling, riding as much as 15 miles almost every day.

"It's just a wonderful thing to be on the bike, going where I want to go," he says, proudly showing off his newest bike, a three-wheeled recumbent. "Cycling is a real comfort for me."

Marvin worked for 23 years at PG&E, but family was always first for him. When he was offered a promotion to a position that would have meant lots of travel, Marvin turned it down, because he didn't want to be away from home that much.

Now married almost 60 years, Marvin and Mary Ann love spending time with their sons and their families, including 10 grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Most of them gathered in August for a week at their family's favorite spot, along the shores of Lake Almanor, north of Chico.

Back home, Marvin treasures life's little pleasures even more: enjoying meals outside with his wife, playing with their terrier mix,

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Home health aides are a healing presence for patients and families

Our home health aides (HHAs) often spend more time in patients' homes than anyone else on the care team. Many times, they become trusted friends and confidants, developing close relationships with patients.

HHAs are caregivers, personal attendants, teachers, companions, and much more. They help patients get in and out of bed, bathe, and wash their hair – even if the patient is bed-bound. They change linens. They can offer light massage and apply lotion, which many people find soothing.

"Our HHAs teach families how to look after their loved ones – most

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Our home health aides are caregivers, personal attendants, teachers, companions – and often, trusted friends and confidants, supporting patients and families in so many ways.

Demonstrating excellence

Dwight Wilson, CEO



The medical community pays a lot of attention to the definition of excellence.

One definition has been created by The Joint Commission, an independent nonprofit founded in 1951 to improve health care by accrediting and certifying organizations that provide safe and effective care of the highest quality.

Earlier this year, we spent several days with Joint Commission teams. They examined our policies and documentation, and followed our clinical staff in the field, evaluating our care from admission all the way through bereavement. I'm pleased to announce that we earned a Gold Seal of Approval for Home Care Accreditation, as well as Certification in Community-Based Palliative Care.

As important as this is, we care even more about another kind of excellence. It's not something we can measure or certify – it's the difference we make every day in the lives of patients and families. To us, excellence means helping people make the most of the time they have.

For example, our cover story describes the tremendous compassion our HHAs show in their connections with patients. What the article doesn't describe is the behind-the-scenes work that makes this care possible – many hours in the car, driving between homes. It can mean thinking outside the box to meet a patient's needs. And it can mean late night calls with family members.

This kind of excellent care goes beyond what Medicare and other insurance will reimburse, and it would not be possible without the financial support of our community donors. I'd especially like to thank the Mission Hospice Auxiliary for hosting our 2017 Fall Gala. In addition to being a lively evening with lots of laughter, this year's event raised a remarkable \$270,000+ for our Hospice House Campaign.

I'd also like to thank devoted volunteer Patricia Matthews and the Columbus Day committee at the Peninsula Italian American Social Club for a memorable Genovese Night to benefit Mission Hospice. Thank you to all of our generous sponsors, donors, and attendees for making both events, and our care for patients and families, excellent. – DW



Hospice House Campaign Update

We're getting close to finishing our campaign to provide a place for patients and families in the last weeks of life! We've raised \$5.6 million – help us find the final \$400,000 by the end

of December. For information, contact Marsha Eddleman at 650.532.2550 or meddleman@MissionHospice.org.

Upcoming events

Movies@Mission Hospice

Thursday, November 9, 2017 • 6:30pm • **Death Makes Life Possible**

Mission Hospice & Home Care, 1670 South Amphlett, Suite 300, San Mateo
How might facing our mortality inspire us to live our lives more fully? This film explores how people across the world are learning to live well and die better. Free! Details and registration at MissionHospice.eventbrite.com.

Grief and the Holidays Support Group

Monday nights, November 15, 2017 – January 10, 2018

Mission Hospice & Home Care, 1670 South Amphlett, Suite 300, San Mateo
This free, semi-structured group will help grieving people manage the holiday season. Facilitated by Tess Rogers, MSW; Isabel Stenzel, LCSW; and Jan Prins, MFT trainee. Registration required: contact Roby at RNewman@MissionHospice.org or 650.931.8236.

Advance Care Planning Workshops

Wed., December 6, 2017 or Wed., January 10, 2018 • 1-3:30pm

Little House, 800 Middle Avenue, Menlo Park
*Bring a friend or family member and learn how taking charge of your future care can bring peace of mind – to you and your loved ones. Free; reserve your place with Little House at 650.272.5045 or msavage@penvol.org. **MissionHospice.org/TakeCharge**.*

• 39th Anniversary Celebration •

Sunday, January 28, 2018, 4 - 7pm

Sharon Heights Golf & Country Club, Menlo Park
Celebrate 39 years of service to the local community. Tickets go on sale in December. For more information, call 650.554.1000.

New Volunteer Informational Meetings

Tuesday, January 30, 2018 • noon-1pm or 5:30-6:30pm

Mission Hospice & Home Care, 1670 South Amphlett, Suite 300, San Mateo
Find out about volunteering with Mission Hospice. No RSVP needed. Questions? Contact Craig Schroeder at 650.532.2323 or cschroeder@MissionHospice.org.

New Volunteer Training Sessions

Saturdays (February 10, 17, and 24, and March 3) from 10am-3pm and

Thursdays (Feb. 22 and March 1) from 6-8pm

Mission Hospice & Home Care, 1670 South Amphlett, Suite 300, San Mateo
This training prepares Direct Care volunteers to care for our patients and families. To sign up, contact Craig Schroeder at 650.532.2323 or cschroeder@MissionHospice.org.

Drop-in Grief Support Groups

Our free drop-in bereavement support groups are open to the community. The schedule is subject to change - check MissionHospice.org or call 650.554.1000.

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

- **Tuesday evenings** 6-7:30pm, led by Roby Newman, LCSW
- **1st and 3rd Saturdays** 10-11:30am, led by Tracie Pyers, MSW
- **2nd and 4th Saturdays** 10-11:30am, *Group for Young Widows and Widowers*, led by Tracie Pyers, MSW

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

- **2nd and 4th Thursdays**, 4-5:30pm, led by Lynne Siracusa, LCSW (Coastside Adult Day Health Center)

For details on all of our events, visit www.MissionHospice.org.



THE MISSION HOSPICE AUXILIARY FALL GALA

Diamonds & Denim

Thanks to Auxiliary President Vibeke Gade, Event Co-Chairs Yolanda Crosby and Martha Melton, and the entire Mission Hospice Auxiliary for our biggest and best Fall Gala yet!

A record 330 people enjoyed dinner, dancing, and auctions – and raised more than \$270,000 to support our Hospice House Campaign.

You can find more photos from the event at www.MissionHospice.org/photo-gallery and on our Facebook page.



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Home health aides *...continued from front*

of them have never done this kind of care before," says Elle James, HHA Manager and Senior Nurse Educator.

"Most importantly, they help patients maintain their dignity and feel cared for."

Our agency currently has 25 home health aides, each with years of experience. To a person, they say that one of the things they love about working at Mission Hospice is that they are given the time they need to be fully present.

Ana Juarez says this means "we can give the patient our time and attention. We don't have to rush. And we are trusted to know what is best for the patient."

A visit from an HHA can be something to look forward to, especially for patients who are house-bound. As Tommy Joe says, "we can be the highlight of their day."

His colleague Mitch Park concurs. "I ask them to share their stories, and that's what they look forward to. They could do without the bath!"

Finding a connection with a patient is a good way to establish rapport and trust.

Tommy says that he is often able to connect through sports. "It gives us something to

"Our home health aides teach families how to look after their loved ones – most of them have never done this kind of care before."

talk about and share," he says.

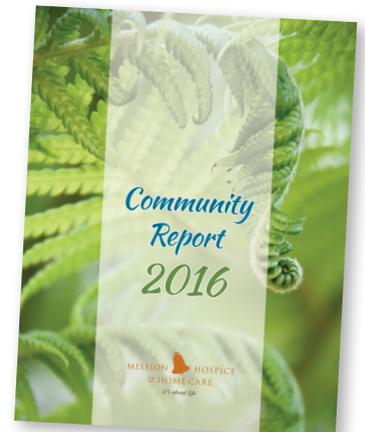
Mitch agrees. "Usually when someone has a terminal disease, people treat them differently," he says. "I walk in and I say, 'Did you see the game last night?' It's like a breath of fresh air for them."

JoGrace Kotico sometimes connects with people through music. She remembers a patient who had served in the Army, who really liked the national anthem. "He wanted me to sing that to him as I cared for him," she said, laughing about the difficulty of the tune. "I practiced in the car on the way to his house! And on the day he died, I was holding his hand and singing to him."

These kinds of connections are one reason Mission Hospice is committed to keeping the same care team around patients who

move between programs – say, from Advanced Care to Hospice. At a time when so much is changing in their lives, we can offer patients and families the comfort and stability of trusted relationships.

"We talk a lot about not just the physicality of the home health aide role, but the humanness of it," says Elle. "They do so much more than just provide care. Our HHAs are a healing presence." 🐾



Our Community Report highlights our accomplishments and donors for the year. You can find it at MissionHospice.org, or call us at 650.554.1000 and we'll send you a copy.

Mission Hospice & Home Care serves patients and families in the San Mateo County area with quality, compassionate end-of-life care and education. Founded in 1979, our local, independent nonprofit has provided more than 11,000 patients and their families with physical, emotional, and spiritual support throughout the journey from a life-threatening diagnosis through death and bereavement. www.MissionHospice.org • 650.554.1000

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**INSIDE: Patient Marvin Crockett: Finding comfort in cycling
Our home health aides are a healing presence
Photos from our Fall Gala!**



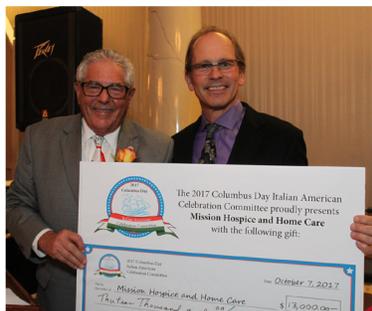
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Genovese Night honors Patricia Matthews and benefits Mission Hospice



On October 7, the Peninsula Italian American Social Club hosted their annual Genovese Night, benefitting Mission Hospice. The festive evening honored longtime Mission Hospice volunteer Patricia Matthews as Queen Isabella.

Photos by Albert Joseph



Finding comfort in cycling ... continued from front

Princess, and riding his bike. Marvin has gone on bike rides with his Mission Hospice physician, Dr. Gary Pasternak, as well as with his hospice volunteer, Rick Barrelier.

“Marvin is a family man whose gratitude for his wife and kids is exceptional,” says Rick. “He is one of the sweetest patients I have had the pleasure to be with and learn from.”

Mary Ann says that when Marvin’s primary care physician initially suggested hospice, she wasn’t sure it was a good idea. “I always had the impression that hospice meant you had a couple of weeks left,” she says. But over the past few months, the Mission Hospice team, which also includes nurse Naoko Ishikawa and social worker Darlene Chow, has helped control Marvin’s pain and regain his appetite.

The team also provides important support for Mary Ann, who knows she needs to take care of herself in order to care for Marvin. She swims every day, stays positive, and keeps an eye on Marvin’s pain medications.

The mood swings that come with his disease can be hard to deal with, and Mary Ann likes that she can call the Mission Hospice team when she is having a tough day, or needs help solving a problem.

“I’ve found out there’s more to hospice than most people think – it just makes it easier, for him and for me.” And she is grateful that he’s got his bicycles. “His riding makes a huge difference,” she says. “When he comes back from a ride, he feels really, really good.”