

## Shannon Paley's volunteer family spans three generations

It's common for Mission Hospice volunteers to love their work so much that they spread the word. Many of our volunteers became involved because of someone they knew. Direct Care Volunteer Shannon Paley may be the only one to recruit two generations of family members to our volunteer corps.

A Burlingame native, when Shannon took leave from her job in biotech to be home with her toddler, she was looking for something meaningful to do with her extra time. She was drawn to Mission Hospice because her family had seen the benefits of hospice first-hand when her paternal grandmother became ill with cancer.

Shannon started volunteer training when she was six months pregnant with her second



*Direct Care Volunteer Shannon Paley and baby Genevieve visit patients together. Viola, who is legally blind, loves holding (and hearing) the baby.*

child. "I thought I'd wait until the baby was born to start volunteering," she says, but Volunteer Services Director Craig Schroeder told her that having a pregnant woman visit would bring people joy and hope.

kind of work – she's very social, and loves visiting people."

Shannon also brings her three-year-old daughter Simone, who enjoys sharing

"He was exactly right," says Shannon. "The minute I walked in the door, patients smiled and wanted to talk about my baby. Our being there led them to open up and tell me about their experiences being pregnant and having children. I think it brought back fond memories."

And after Genevieve was born in January 2018, Shannon brought the baby with her on patient visits. "I didn't realize what an impact bringing an infant would have on the patients. Luckily, she's cut out for this

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## Woodside Hospice House opens, capital campaign in full swing



*Our care team recently welcomed the first patients and families to Mission House Woodside. We are now seeking additional gifts to complete our \$4 million capital campaign for the house.*

Earlier this fall, we received final licensing for our new hospice house in Redwood City – and our staff welcomed the first patients and families to this beautiful home. Like our first house in San Mateo, Mission House Woodside gives us a place to provide intensive, round-the-clock care for patients whose end-of-life needs cannot be managed at home.

Near Highway 280 and Woodside Road, the hospice house offers six rooms where we can provide interdisciplinary care and support for the whole family. It's convenient for patients, families, and physicians in southern San Mateo County and Santa Clara County.

"Mission House provides a peaceful place for families to gather during their loved one's final weeks or months, while our professional team focuses on the patient's comprehensive needs," says Gary Cripps, RN, Director of Operations, Mission Houses.

While hospice houses are common in other parts of the country, the Bay Area has only a handful, due to the high cost of land in our area. In fact, until we



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## Volunteers – our heart and soul

Dwight Wilson, CEO



As we approach our 40th anniversary year, I want to recognize the many volunteers who make our care for the community possible.

Mission Hospice was founded as an all-volunteer organization in 1979, and although we now have more than 200 staff members supporting some 1,500 patients annually, our volunteers remain the heart and soul of our care. In fact, in 2017, volunteers spent almost 17,000 hours helping patients and families, educating our community, serving on our board of directors, and raising funds for our nonprofit agency.

Volunteer fundraisers organized our very first gala back in 1982, and they'd be proud to see that last month's gala raised more than \$285,000 to support our Woodside Hospice House Campaign. This is thanks to the hard work and dedication of Gala Co-Chairs Yolanda Crosby and Vibeke Gade, along with the entire Auxiliary. This tireless group of volunteers created an amazing event that both filled our hearts and filled the dance floor – look for photos on our website and our Facebook page. To all who sponsored, attended, and bought auction items – thank you.

Thank you also to our Direct Care volunteers, like Shannon Paley and Dan Ochse (featured in this issue), who tell us that spending time with patients is one of the most rewarding experiences of their lives. Community Ambassadors help people learn about end-of-life issues long before hospice is needed, giving their time at educational events, presentations, and workshops for the public. In the office, volunteers provide important behind-the-scenes support, helping with note cards, phone calls, and filing. And of course, our board members continue to guide us at the highest level of governance.

We are grateful for the service of all of these teams, and always welcome new volunteers. If you'd like to find out how you can get involved, contact Volunteer Services Director Craig Schroeder at 650.554.1000 or CSchroeder@MissionHospice.org. – DW



Our 2017 Community Report is now available at [MissionHospice.org](http://MissionHospice.org).

## Upcoming events

### Drop-in Grief Support Groups

Every week in San Mateo and Half Moon Bay

Our drop-in bereavement support groups are **free** and open to all. For details, check [MissionHospice.org](http://MissionHospice.org) or call 650.554.1000.

### Stories That Heal: Weekend Writing Workshop

Saturday, November 3 + Sunday, November 4 • 9:30am-4:30pm

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

Learn how to tell your story of life and loss in this small-group writing workshop with author Ann Randolph. **Fee \$320**; register at [MissionHospice.Eventbrite.com](http://MissionHospice.Eventbrite.com)

### Movies@Mission Hospice: How to Die in Oregon

Thursday, November 8 • 6:30pm

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

The final film in our 2018 film series examines how physicians, patients, and families find their way through Oregon's "Death with Dignity Act," the first law in the US that allows physicians to prescribe lethal doses of drugs to terminally ill patients. Join us for popcorn and discussion. **Free**. Register at [MissionHospice.Eventbrite.com](http://MissionHospice.Eventbrite.com).

### Specialized Grief Support Groups

**Grief and the Holidays Support Group** • Wednesday evenings, Nov. 14 - Jan. 9

**Writing Through Loss** • Wednesday evenings, Jan. 23 - March 6, 2019

**Parent Loss Support Group** • Monday evenings, Jan 28 - March 25, 2019

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

Our semi-structured support groups meet weekly for about 8 weeks. **Free**; but registration is required. For details, call 650.554.1000 or visit [MissionHospice.org](http://MissionHospice.org).

### Take Charge! Advance Care Planning Workshop

Tuesday, January 22 + 29 • 1-3:30pm

Little House, 800 Middle Avenue, Menlo Park

Learn more about advance care planning and the steps you can take to help get the care you want, based on what matters most to you. This two-part workshop will help bring peace of mind to you and your loved ones. **Free**. Register at [MissionHospice.Eventbrite.com](http://MissionHospice.Eventbrite.com).

### 40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Sunday, January 27, 2019

Sharon Heights Golf & Country Club, Menlo Park

**Save the date** for a very special celebration of 40 years of caring for the community. Tickets go on sale in December. For more information, call 650.554.1000.



### New Volunteer Informational Meetings

Tuesday, January 29 • noon-1pm or 5:30-6:30pm

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

Find out all about volunteering with Mission Hospice. **No RSVP needed**. Questions? Contact Craig Schroeder at 650.532.2323 or CSchroeder@MissionHospice.org.

### Bridge Day and Luncheon

Friday, February 15, 2018 • 9:30 am – 2:30 pm

Peninsula Golf & Country Club, 701 Madera, San Mateo

**Save the date** for the Mission Hospice Auxiliary's annual event to benefit Mission Hospice. Participants can choose Tournament or party bridge.

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

## Three-generation family of volunteers

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nursery rhymes and songs with patients.

Their patients love having the young visitors. One patient held three-week-old Genevieve for hours. One of their patients calls the baby her “ninth grandchild.” And when the family visits their patient who lives in a nursing facility, they visit with all of the residents. “They greet us like celebrities – everyone comes out to say hello.”

“Volunteering gives me connections and interactions that I was missing while taking a break from work,” says Shannon. “One of the things that made this a great fit for me is that it’s a really flexible time commitment. And I get to help people at a critical time of their lives.”

When Shannon shared her volunteer experience with her family, it resonated with her dad, Dan Ochse. Semi-retired, he had also been looking for something to do with his extra time.

“When Shannon started volunteering, I admired her doing it – and I knew

immediately that this was something I could do,” says Dan. “I called Craig and enrolled in the very next training.”



“They teach us that we get more back than we give, and that’s been so true,” he says. Both Dan and Shannon say that sharing the volunteer experience has not only brought them even closer, but has benefited their family. “Doing this gives you a different perspective on life,” says Shannon. “We’re better equipped to deal with loss and grief.”

“Volunteering definitely prepares you to be more understanding of the process of death,” agrees Dan. “That can only be helpful to our family at some point.”

Shannon says, “I’m so grateful to Mission Hospice for the opportunity to do this – I’ve already gotten so much out of it.”

“It’s almost as if this was meant to happen,” says Dan. “It’s beautiful. I’m really proud to be a part of an organization like this.”

## Woodside Hospice House

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opened our first house in October 2015, the only options for patients in San Mateo County were a hospital, residential care facility, nursing home, or a board and care facility – none of which is specifically designed or staffed for intensive hospice care.

Gary explains, “It’s really a gift to the entire community to offer this setting for compassionate end-of-life care.”

This venture was supported from the beginning with generous lead gifts from the Sequoia Healthcare District and Stanford Health Care. We have since raised a total of \$2 million toward our \$4 million campaign goal.

We are now asking our community for the remaining \$2 million needed to fund the purchase of the home, start-up costs, and care for patients who are underinsured or cannot afford to pay for room and board – which is not covered by insurance.

To find out more about our **Woodside Hospice House Campaign** or to arrange a tour, contact Marsha at 650.532.2550 or [MEddleman@MissionHospice.org](mailto:MEddleman@MissionHospice.org).



THE MISSION HOSPICE AUXILIARY FALL GALA

## Diamonds & Denim



Our fall gala had everyone dancing to the lively music of Pride & Joy – and thanks to our sponsors and a lively auction, it raised a record \$285,000+ for our Woodside Hospice House Campaign.

The dinner-dance was hosted by the Mission Hospice Auxiliary, with leadership from Gala Co-Chairs Yolanda Crosby and Vibeke Gade.

More photos at [MissionHospice.org/photo-gallery](http://MissionHospice.org/photo-gallery) and on our Facebook page.



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**Mission Hospice & Home Care** serves patients and families in the San Mateo and Santa Clara County area with quality, compassionate end-of-life care and education. Founded in 1979, our local, independent nonprofit has provided thousands of 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](http://www.MissionHospice.org) • 650.554.1000

**Board of Directors**

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

**INSIDE:** Baby Genevieve and her family bring joy to patients  
Attendees at Fall Gala raise the roof!  
Woodside Hospice House open; campaign continues



**From the Bereavement Coordinator, Isabel Stenzel, LCSW, MPH**  
**Tips for coping with the holidays while grieving**



The holidays are upon us already, and the celebrations around this season can be particularly difficult for those who are grieving. If you've lost a loved one, you might feel their absence in more intense ways this time of year.

Taking care of yourself and your grief is very important to manage the stress around the holidays. The most important thing is to be kind to yourself. Eat well and get plenty of sleep.

Exercise and relaxation exercises can also help you relieve tension.

Other people may be eager to engage you in holiday activities. Remember to communicate your needs and choose what works for you. Acknowledging your sadness or loneliness can be a way to invite support. Balancing your grief emotions with some distraction can help manage those feelings.

The holidays can impose more tasks and demands for our time. Find balance between what needs to be done and what you are capable of. Don't judge yourself for saying "no" to something, and be sure to ask your family and friends when you need support.

The holidays are often a time of family gatherings, and the absence of loved ones means things have changed. This is a good time to let

go of your expectation of a "perfect" holiday. Be open to changing some traditions, and accept the unexpected.

New traditions can help you connect to your beloved departed. Rituals can help you recognize your loss, such as lighting a candle, planting a tree, or writing a letter to a loved one. Give yourself permission to look for joy in the present moment. 🐾

*Isabel leads a "Grief and the Holidays" support group. For information, contact Isabel at [IStenzel@MissionHospice.org](mailto:IStenzel@MissionHospice.org).*



*Grazie mille to the Peninsula Italian American Social Club, whose annual Genovese Night benefited Mission Hospice. Photo by Albert Joseph*