



## One Daughter's Journey

After a career working in the Civil Department of the Benton County Sheriff's office, Joyce Oliver looked forward to the next chapter of her life when she retired in 2008. She knew she wanted to make a difference in her community by volunteering but wasn't sure where, and she was hesitant, fearing she would over-commit and lose her newfound freedom from fulltime work. She took three years to explore and contemplate her next steps. Meanwhile she started working a couple days a week for SOMA Clinic for Natural Medicine. She had always been interested in our society's overall attitudes toward death and dying. Joyce became aware of hospice and saw it as a place to learn more, so in January of 2011 she enrolled in an eight-week Benton Hospice volunteer training.

After the third week of classes, Joyce was called away to go see her mother in Southern California. Her 95-year-old mom's health had taken a turn for the worse. Joyce arrived in North Hollywood to find her fiercely independent mother, Estelle, in need of round-the-clock care and hospice services. So Joyce stayed and cared for Estelle in her home. Thinking back on her interrupted hospice training Joyce said, "Those first three hospice volunteer classes made me so prepared to do everything for Mom."

Joyce was scheduled to return to Oregon on April 12, 2011 but did not want to leave her mom. She called the airline to try to reschedule her flight, and for reasons unknown,

the airline did not have Joyce's reservation. She saw this as a sign that she was in the right place as her mother's caregiver. Under Joyce's care, with the help of hospice in North Hollywood, Estelle got stronger. However, Joyce

knew that she needed to get home to Oregon... and take Estelle with her. It was hard for Joyce to tell Estelle that coming to Oregon was for the best. Estelle took it in stride saying, "Well, Corvallis is a river town, and has a college, like the town in Massachusetts that I grew up in." Estelle was about to take her first road trip!

Joyce's friend Pete flew down from Oregon. They rented a van and readied Estelle for the two-day trip to Corvallis. The hos-

pice in California worked with Benton Hospice Service to transfer Estelle's hospice care. Joyce called Benton Hospice to let them know when they would arrive. Along the way they picnicked, spent the night in Willows, California and listened to Estelle's life stories. Joyce reflected, "The older I've gotten, the smarter Mom got. We bonded in a way that can only happen when you get older and can accept the wisdom that your parent has."

When they arrived in Corvallis on June 11, everything was ready. Benton Hospice came earlier that morning to set up a room in Joyce's house with a hospital bed and all the necessary medical equipment and supplies. Joyce's friends had helped prepare the room. And to Joyce's surprise,

*Continued on page 7*



*Four generations of Olivers enjoy their time together. BACK: Joyce, with mom, Estelle, and daughters Dana and Jenny. FRONT: baby Will and Kate (Jenny's kids).*

# Transitions: Help for Those Not Ready for Hospice Care

Now in its second year, the Transitions program continues to offer support to those who are not yet eligible, or perhaps not yet ready, for hospice care and all at no cost to those who access it. To date Transitions has served over 75 clients and their families. Transition services have helped clients by providing information on and connections to local, regional and national resources. Referrals are made for resources such as caregiving agencies, adult foster homes, assisted living facilities, support groups, caregiver support resources, durable medical equipment, transportation, in-home care information, and volunteer help.

Transitions volunteers have provided almost 650 hours of support during the past year alone, providing everything from companionship and respite to transportation and emotional support. We are proud to be a hub of information and support to our community and would not be able to provide what we do without the support of our donors and volunteers.

## Volunteer Training Changes

Benton Hospice Service Volunteer Program has implemented a new two-day volunteer training. The goal is to offer the training more than once or twice a year to give interested volunteers more classes to choose from. Volunteer training is being held every other month in 2012 from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm each day. Administrative volunteer trainees need to attend only the morning of the first day of training which is dedicated to hospice orientation. All others attend the full two-day training.

Volunteers provide a much-needed break to caregivers, provide companionship, help with errands and household tasks, play music, read, bring therapy dogs for visits and so much more. Volunteers also help with administrative tasks in the office. Graduates of the last three classes numbered 38!

Volunteer Jeanne McLoughlin pointed out, "The training is a valuable resource, not only to comfort patients, but we also receive tools to help a friend or family member with difficulties they may be experiencing."

The next three volunteer training classes are scheduled for May 22 and 24, July 17 and 19, and September 18 and 20. Pre-registration is required. To learn more, contact Jamey Suderman, Volunteer Coordinator at 541-757-9616 or [jamey.suderman@bentonhospice.org](mailto:jamey.suderman@bentonhospice.org).

## Camp Compass, a Place for Families to Share and Learn About Grief

Grief rocks an entire family. While trying to cope with their own grief, parents struggle with how to raise grieving children. Two-thirds of parents find it hard to know what their child needs from them and say they don't understand what their children are going through. More than 70% identify that their friends and relatives are uncomfortable around them, don't know what to say, and do not talk with them about their grief or the person who died. 80% of parents and kids say that gaining support and understanding connections are the most valuable resource.



Camp Compass, offered by Benton Hospice Service, is a place for grieving families to share and learn about grief. The camp will be held on Saturday August 25, from 8:30 am - 5:00 pm in a peaceful, beautiful setting in the forest of Kings Valley. Camp Compass offers time in nature, art, rest, play, food, learning and healing. It has something for the whole family – adults, teens, and young children.

A team of Benton Hospice Service professional social workers and specially-trained volunteers will lead small groups through age-appropriate healing-focused activities, as well as traditional camp activities. Families with children ages 5 to 17 who are grieving a death of someone in the last two years are welcome to attend.

"Too often, society is shy about acknowledging grief and helping those struggling with loss – especially grieving children," says Bereavement Coordinator, Joelle Osterhaus, "so we are offering a time and space for parents, teens and young children to connect with each other, share their experience, and receive support from each other." Loss is a universal experience. The nearest programs for families in our area are in Salem or Eugene. "It is time our community had its own camp and we at Benton Hospice feel privileged to make it possible."

Families interested in participating should contact Joelle Osterhaus, Bereavement Coordinator, 541-757-9616 or emailing [joelle.osterhaus@bentonhospice.org](mailto:joelle.osterhaus@bentonhospice.org).

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To **Rhonda Seals and Kelly Campbell** for donating vases for flower arrangements that cheer people.

To **Hope and Joy Quilts** who continue to bring us the beautiful lap quilts that warm and brighten patients' days.

To the **Corvallis Market of Choice** for providing flowers that cheer patients and their families

To the **Lebanon Senior Center** for co-sponsoring and generously providing space for our February Powerful Tools for Caregivers series.

For the hand puppets made and donated by **Nan Tonkin** for the children's grief program.



Noah and Marley Evans model hand puppets made by Nan Tonkin and donated to the children's grief program.

## CALENDAR

### Adult Grief Education and Support Groups

Six-week sessions open to anyone who has experienced a loss. Preregistration is required. BHS meeting room.

Thurs. evenings 5:30 - 7 pm  
beginning July 12 and October 11 OR  
Fri. mornings 11 am - 1 pm  
beginning July 13 and October 12

### Community Grief Support

For anyone grieving a death of someone they care about. Drop-ins welcome.

*Corvallis:* second and fourth Fri., 3:30 - 5:00 pm;  
BHS meeting room

*Albany:* first Thurs., 10:00 - 11:30 am; Guadalupe House, 728 Elsworth Street, rear entrance

*Lebanon:* fourth Thurs., 2:00 - 3:30 pm;  
second and fourth Fri., 3:30 - 5:00 pm  
Lebanon Senior Center; 80 Tangent Street

### New Grief Support Groups for Young Adults

For anyone aged 19 to 35 grieving a death.  
second Tues.; noon - 1:00 pm;  
BHS meeting room

### Caregiver Support Groups

*Corvallis:* second and last Tues.,  
1:30 - 3:00 pm; BHS meeting room

*Albany:* third Thurs., 2:00 - 3:30 pm; Guadalupe House, 728 Elsworth Street, rear entrance

*Lebanon:* second Thurs., 10:00 - 11:30 am;  
Lebanon Senior Center; 80 Tangent Street

### Comfort Crafting Circle

Knit, crochet, or craft first and third Wed.  
1:00 - 2:00 pm; BHS meeting room.

### Volunteer Training

Two-day volunteer training, 8:30 am - 5:00 pm.  
Preregistration is required.  
Tues. and Thurs., May 22 & 24; July 17 & 19;  
September 18 & 20; November 6 & 8.

### Camp Compass

A one-day camp for grieving families that offers time in nature, art, rest, play, food, learning and healing. August 25, 8:30 am - 5:00 pm.  
Registration deadline is August 1.

**For info and registration, call 541-757-9616.**

## One Daughter's Journey (cont. from page 1)

while Estelle had fought having a hospital bed in California, she delighted in having adjustable controls in her bed in Corvallis. Joyce reminisced with a smile, "She always did like being in control."

With the help of the entire hospice team, as well as an outpouring of neighborliness from friends, Joyce reveled in caring 24/7 for Estelle. She found it fulfilling to spend time reading to her mom, listening to baseball on the radio, cooking for her and eating together. They fell into a pleasant routine. Joyce even learned to appreciate baseball which, as she said, "was something I never had before!"

The time was short-lived. At 4 o'clock on June 23rd, about two weeks after they arrived in Corvallis, Pete was staying with Estelle while Joyce was at her part-time job. Joyce got a call from Pete that something was wrong. Joyce immediately headed home, arriving just after her mother died sitting on the couch in the sunny living room waiting for the blueberry shake that Pete was preparing. Joyce wasn't prepared. Her mother's death had come so quickly.

What happened next was nothing short of amazing. Cadie, a Benton Hospice nurse, arrived soon after being notified of the death. Her calm, steady, competent manner put Joyce at ease; together they laid Estelle down on the couch and covered her. Cadie comforted Joyce explaining that she could take all of the time she needed with her mother. The funeral home could come whenever Joyce was ready. Joyce spent the evening sitting with her mother, talking and reading to her to help ease her passage from this life. The funeral home came the next morning.

Joyce had wanted to have more time together with her

mom in Corvallis but was content that Estelle had had such a peaceful death. The two and a half months she cared for her mother were, "truly a gift for me." Her one and only regret was that they didn't have Benton Hospice longer so they would have had more time to get to know and learn to work with the entire team.

After her mother's death, Joyce took some time for her own grieving and contemplation. As Joyce stated, "Death is so stunning. It sweeps everything out from under your feet."

She then went on to complete her volunteer training at Benton Hospice and in December of 2011 Joyce received her first assignment. She feels honored to be allowed to be present with her patient; just being there and being appreciated is the best part. She says, "I still haven't changed into a super caregiver. I'm still me." When she first considered volunteering she was fearful that Benton Hospice would want more than she had to give or would take more of her time than she had to offer. She has found just the opposite. "Everyone at Benton Hospice is so compassionate." She feels completely supported by the staff and all of the training materials, as well as feeling like an important part of a team caring for her patient. She is moving ahead at her own pace, and is becoming more capable and confident with each visit.

From a volunteer's perspective, Joyce wanted to point out that it helps to get the hospice team in sooner rather than later, so they have time to get to know the patient and family... to help the patient live life as fully as possible for as long as possible. With hospice, Joyce points out, "You don't have to suffer."

### *2012 officers and board members*

*Benton Hospice Service is governed by a board of directors comprised of devoted members from diverse backgrounds who volunteer their time to help guide the organization.*

*Sheila Goodwin, RN was elected to chair the Benton Hospice Service board of directors in 2012. Goodwin, retired RN and Eldercare Consultant, has been a member of the Benton Hospice board of directors since 2007. Other officers include Gary DeLander, PhD, RPh, vice-chair; Deb Rose, secretary; and Scott Meeker, CPA, treasurer.*

*Benton Hospice welcomed three new board members for 2012. They are Karen Kemper, JD, Jeanne Smith and Associates; John Mills, Business Planning Manager, Hewlett-Packard Company; and Steve Schauble, CFO, Oregon State University Foundation. They join continuing board members Courtney Campbell, PhD; Simon Justice; Dina Lindquist; Lia McCabe; John Mills; Jason Phillips, MD; Kay Schaffer, PhD; Christine Smith; Barbara Swain; Bruce Thomson, MD; and Tamina Toray, PhD.*



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have enough words  
to thank you. The  
personal contact and  
each caregiver &  
volunteer's caring  
compassion was  
invaluable for mom's  
well being during  
this time. Thank you  
so much!"*

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