

Strengthening House AND Heart

Mollie Jordan's life was a tapestry woven with abuse, neglect and heartache, yet the one thing she ever truly craved was love. She was born into chaos; never knowing her birth mother, and always suspecting her adoptive father was, in reality, her biological dad.

She craved the attention and love that a father should shower on his precious little girl, but instead was neglected and abused; circumstances that led to a life of drugs and alcohol. These were the things that were always there for her, and provided her with the comfort for which she yearned. To escape her past she married early, and by 19 had two children. Even with her boys, the substance abuse never went away, and all the love she had to give was smothered under the effects of drugs and alcohol, until finally one day, she left.

She lived an existence plagued with one abusive relationship after another, a transient life of low paying jobs and problems that continued to whisper in her ear, making it difficult to remain sober for even a brief time.

At 49, she was diagnosed with a terminal illness, sought treatment and began to believe that the only control she had left in her life was her ability to take it. Mollie

FOR ONE PATIENT, THE **HOSPICE OF GREEN COUNTRY** TEAM NOT ONLY HELPED REBUILD RELATIONSHIPS, BUT ALSO A HOME

took an overdose of pills to end the suffering that had tormented her for so long. Her attempt was unsuccessful and afterward, for once, things began to look up.

At last, Mollie found the unconditional love she had been searching for her entire life. She met John, a man who would become both her companion and soul mate. He provided her with the care she needed due to her deteriorating condition, and stood by her when she needed it most. She soon moved into his tiny travel trailer and began the emotional healing process.

A short five months after her attempted suicide, Mollie was referred to Hospice of Green Country so that her final months could be lived comfortably. "I feel as if I have already died," Mollie told her Hospice of Green Country social worker Linn Kuhnel.

"When we admitted her, Mollie cried through most of it, not wanting to accept that this was the end," said Linn, "She felt she had so much to finish in her life."

Linn immediately began to provide counseling to Mollie so she could have closure on matters in her life, especially the damaged relationship with her children.

"We began talking about them immediately," remembers Linn, "Although she had lived for years with the knowledge she had abandoned them, she had a difficult time admitting blame. She was so ashamed."

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Helping Others Help Themselves

ONE HOSPICE OF GREEN COUNTRY VOLUNTEER EXPLAINS HOW SERVING THOSE IN NEED HAS TOUCHED HER HEART AND THE HEART OF THOSE SHE SERVES.

Volunteering for an organization

you believe in can be one of the most gratifying and rewarding experiences of your life, and no one knows this better than Terri Wantiez, 2007 Oklahoma Hospice and Palliative Care Association Volunteer of the Year.

"My uncle received hospice care," she explained, "and my family was pleased he was able to remain so dignified. It wasn't until later that I saw an ad in the newspaper about volunteering for Hospice of Green Country, and I thought 'I can do that.'"

And she did. Terri enrolled in the training course, and was soon on her way to helping those who are nearing the end of their life. "The entire time I've volunteered, there was one man who touched me the most."

"This particular man had a military background, so he was very orderly. I remember he would give me a list of things to do, and map it out so I wouldn't have to drive out of the way. He was so sweet.

"I don't know what it was, maybe it was because I was a neutral party, and not involved with the family in any way, but he just opened up to me. We would talk for hours.

"One day out of the blue as I was leaving, he looked at me and said, 'I feel like I need to hug you,' I just looked him in the eye and said, 'We can't hug, I didn't bring a box of Kleenex,' and we laughed so hard; and of course I hugged him." she remembered. However it wasn't long

afterward, just before her next visit, when his condition became noticeably worse, and he passed away peacefully.

"He was just an amazing person," Terri remembers, "I think he knew he was near the end. I'll never forget him."

Not all assignments offered by Hospice of Green Country require the volunteer to interact with patients. "It really just depends on what you want to do. If you don't think you can handle being with patients, you can always come into the office and help out; and you can run errands for patients, or even just sit with them to talk. Sometimes that's all they want."

Terri believes that looking past the illness and identifying with the patient as a person is a hospice volunteer's key to success. "I think sometimes people forget that they've not always been like this. They're still people, just at a different stage of life than we are. They once had jobs, families and responsibilities. I have a great respect for those we serve. It takes a lot of courage to let a complete stranger come in and see them in the state they're in."

Out of the multitude of choices volunteers have the opportunity to choose from, one of the most endearing, according to Terri, is to simply sit and talk to a patient.

"I can remember one patient I was assigned to. When you walked into the room, you could tell she was a real lady. Very sophisticated. She was on



oxygen, and couldn't speak well, but one day she motioned to her lips. I handed her a pen and paper, and she wrote down 'A lady doesn't go without lipstick.' After that, I asked her nurse if she thought it would be alright to give her a perm. After she told us what we could do, my friend, a hairstylist, came over and we styled her hair, and got her all fixed up. She was so happy."

Volunteering for an organization like Hospice of Green Country can not only be rewarding, but also educational, says Terri.

"I've learned a lot since I started volunteering," she says, "I've learned about family, people as a whole and also about death. I hope that my experiences will allow me to effectively deal with grief if, and when, something happens to someone in my family. I've gone through training at several other organizations in town, but they just never seemed to fit." she said, "I wouldn't trade my time here for anything."

For information about becoming a Hospice of Green Country volunteer, please call 918-747-2273 or visit www.hospiceofgreencountry.org.

IN IT FOR THE LONG HAUL

THE ROAD TO HOSPICE CARE WAS LONG AND FULL OF DETOURS FOR ONE HOSPICE OF GREEN COUNTRY NURSE, BUT SHE WOULDN'T HAVE IT ANY OTHER WAY.



Faye Mannie, RN, BSN, CHPN, serves Hospice of Green Country as a certified hospice and palliative care nurse.

Faye Mannie's road to hospice nursing didn't begin like so many others. There was no family member who required hospice care, and it wasn't even a thought as she studied nursing. No, it was at the pleadings of a good friend and fellow nurse that eventually led her to Hospice of Green Country.

"I was doing home health care, and my girlfriend happened to be working at a hospice in town. She told me they were in

desperate need of a nurse where she worked. When she said hospice, I thought 'I don't think so' but she begged me to come, so I did."

"I love being a hospice nurse, and I don't want to do anything else," says Faye, "I find it to be such an honor to help these people live out the remainder of their life with such dignity."

Before becoming a nurse, Faye spent 20 years in the US Army, but as her discharge date loomed, she decided she

needed a change of scenery.

"I wanted to switch units, so I traveled to several in the Tulsa area. When I got to a medical unit in Broken Arrow, I knew that's where I should be, and they paid for LPN school."

Because Faye had only six months left on her term of service, she signed on for another term.

"I was in the reserves, worked at St. Francis and was planning to get my RN when I was deployed to Desert Storm in 1990. I spent six months there, which delayed going to school.

"I was able to go back to school when I came back; I finally got my RN. There were times I didn't think I was ever going to finish."

Since her beginnings in hospice, Faye has only grown to love the profession and the people she cares for.

"I've found that terminally ill patients thrive in their own homes. No one wants to be taken to a nursing home or hospital to die. They would rather spend the last moments of life in a place they've spent the last forty or fifty years.

"I believe hospice nursing is a calling," she continues, "But you have to remember to laugh everyday."

Wise words from a very talented nurse.

"I eat, breathe and sleep nursing," says Faye, "it's what I do."

Mollie continued from page 1

Mollie had attempted to reconnect with her children through the years, but received no response. After several sessions with Linn, Mollie asked her to make the initial contact with her two sons.

"I called the older of the two sons, and surprisingly, he called me back," said Linn. After several phone calls to help resolve some painful issues, a reunion seemed to be in the works.

The thought of a reunion thrilled Mollie. However, the travel trailer in which she and John lived was unbearably small; there was only enough room in the living room for a single chair, and Mollie seemed to be suffocating in the claustrophobic space. John knew a new trailer was out of the question. That's when the Hospice of Green Country team went into action.

"We received a grant from The Dream Foundation to enlarge the trailer, and several other agencies pitched in," says Linn. What was a travel trailer outfitted with a living room, an uncomfortably small bedroom and a bathroom so tiny John could barely stand, was transformed into a space featuring a larger living area and bedroom complete with a full bathroom; a home where Mollie could live comfortably and receive quality care from the Hospice of Green Country team.

On Christmas Eve 2007, Mollie welcomed home her two sons and their families. It was the first time Mollie had met her only grandson, an energetic four year old, and she couldn't have been more proud. The homecoming allowed the family to continue on the path of reconciliation. One son kept in touch daily and urged his mother to move in with him, but her condition had continued to grow worse. She had dropped to a mere eighty-six pounds and grew weaker each day.

Her final days were made bearable by the devoted staff of Hospice of Green Country. Her home was now large enough to accommodate a hospital bed her nurse Faye Mannie so desperately wanted for her, eliminating her risk of falling while asleep. She died in early February 2008; just before spring, a season she loved so much.

Before her death, Mollie felt she had taken care of the issues she felt needed to be resolved, yet one task still haunted her. Although Mollie knew her life was coming to an end, she refused to make funeral arrangements. After her death, John and her two sons came together and provided her with a funeral fit for a princess. "That's what she was," remarked Linn, "a princess."

Helping Others in Their Grief

WHEN OUR LOVED ONES ARE GRIEVING, WE OFTEN FIND OURSELVES LOST AT WHAT TO DO OR SAY.

At times of loss we sometimes feel inadequate at offering the support we want so desperately to give. In our search for the ‘right thing’ to do or say, we often stumble over our own words of encouragement. Simply communicating that we care and showing a willingness to listen, rather than speak, will prove to be more useful to our grieving friends.

Following are some helpful guidelines to express our care and support:

Remember, there is nothing to fix. Grief is the normal, natural reaction to the loss of someone or something cherished. By allowing our loved ones their unique expressions of grief, we provide a direct path to the healing process.

Let it be emotional. Anger, sadness, guilt, fear, depression—these are all normal feelings that a griever may experience. Expressing these emotions is not a sign of not coping. These are normal feelings and emotions that are a part of the grief process.

Talk about the person who died. Their name hasn’t changed to ‘him’ or ‘her’—use the name of the deceased. In sharing memories of the deceased, saying their name offers an easier way of comforting.

Be an active listener. Listening is harder than you may think. Remember, there is no need to ‘fix it’—and you don’t need to have answers. Actively engage by maintaining eye contact, be aware of your body language, and sincerely accept the emotions the griever is expressing. Don’t change the subject or make it about you—let your friend tell their story—as many times as they need to.

Avoid clichés. Clichés and platitudes are easy answers, but they trivialize the pain the griever is feeling. Rather than saying things like, “She’s no longer suffering,” or “It was his time,” a simple “I’m sorry... this must be so difficult,” is more comforting.

Show up, and be quiet. When in doubt as to what to say or the impact your words may have, remember that silence is golden. It isn’t necessary to give advice or try to resolve problems. Simply holding a hand, sharing a hug, or crying with the bereaved speaks

volumes – all without a word being uttered.

Keep in touch and remember special days. Grief is a long journey. It does not end when someone goes back to work or after a couple of months have passed. Stay in touch with your loved one, don’t be afraid of mentioning their loss, and make a point to offer extra support at times of birthdays, anniversaries and holidays.

Rev. Chaz Gaut serves Hospice of Green Country as community relations representative, on-call chaplain and grief and bereavement lecturer.



Self-Care for the Caring



The staff at Hospice of Green Country will tell you that I am a big proponent of “self-care.” I talk to them often about the importance of self-care because of the spiritual and emotional impact of hospice work on those who give of themselves to patients and families every day. But self-care isn’t just limited to those in hospice professions, it applies to everyone. What exactly is self-care? The obvious answer is, caring for the self, or taking time to make sure your needs are taken care of as you live. The best illustration I have heard comes from the experience of sitting through the safety instructions on a passenger plane. Remember the part about what happens if the cabin loses pressure? The flight attendant imitates the oxygen masks dropping down from the ceiling and you are instructed to place it over your nose and mouth in an emergency. But the most important part comes next: “If you have small children with you, put the oxygen mask on yourself first and then place one on your child.” When I was a child, I remember wondering to myself why? The reason is obvious to me now. A mother could not care for a child if she loses consciousness from lack of oxygen. In other words, the “caregiver” must be able to function appropriately in order to give good care to another.

So many of us stay busy and overextend ourselves

without getting enough sleep, eating right, exercising or just taking the time to relax. Between work, family, church, friends and community service, many of us are overcommitted and expend our energy taking care of everyone else but ourselves. If we stay on that path, it isn’t long before we find ourselves resentful and irritable when someone asks for part of our time or energy. When those warning signs begin to surface, it means our lives are out

Self-care is a way to address the imbalance and restore our depleted spirits.

of balance. Typically, that means we are giving more than we have available in our emotional and spiritual reserves. Self-care is a way to address the imbalance and restore our depleted spirits. I have a friend who says that self care should be scheduled into our lives just like brushing our teeth, at least on a daily basis. We can build self-care into our lives just by taking a few minutes to do something we enjoy, to look around

us at the beauty in the world or to reflect on a wise saying for a few moments. Bringing ourselves and our attention back to the present helps us release anxiety. Prayer can also help us place those stressful situations that are out of our control into the hands of God or a Higher Power. Whatever you choose to do, find something you can do every day that brings you comfort, peace and joy. Breathe deeply and be grateful for all you have been given. Life is now! Make sure you don’t forget to live it!

Rev. Delana Taylor-McNac serves Hospice of Green Country as the director of spiritual care and coordinator of the Pet Peace of Mind program.

Remembering *His 'English Lady'*

ALZHEIMER'S STOLE NADINE TURNERS MEMORY, BUT HER FAMILY WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER HER GENTLE SPIRIT AND UNENDING GRACE.



Nadine was a sweet girl," remembers a nearly 90 year old Pat Turner as he sat surrounded by his two daughters. "I called her my English Lady. She loved her girls, always playing with them, and making them dresses. She was a wonderful mother."

Burdened with a disease that captures the mind and holds it prisoner long before the body is ready, Nadine Turner slowly slipped from her family. However a year after her death, her spirit shines in the eyes of her husband and two beloved daughters.

"Dad had taken care of mom for about seven years, and it just became more and more difficult," says daughter Ellen Boothe, "Then dad had a mini stroke and had to stay overnight in the hospital, so my sister Nancy and I stayed with mom. We honestly didn't know how dad had done it for so long."

The family made the decision to move Nadine to a group home, and as part of the admissions process, she was given a routine check-up.

"The doctor came to us and said mom qualified for hospice care, and we were shocked," said Ellen, "We just knew that hospice care meant that you had six months or less to live. He recommended Hospice of Green Country, and then all of these wonderful things began to happen."

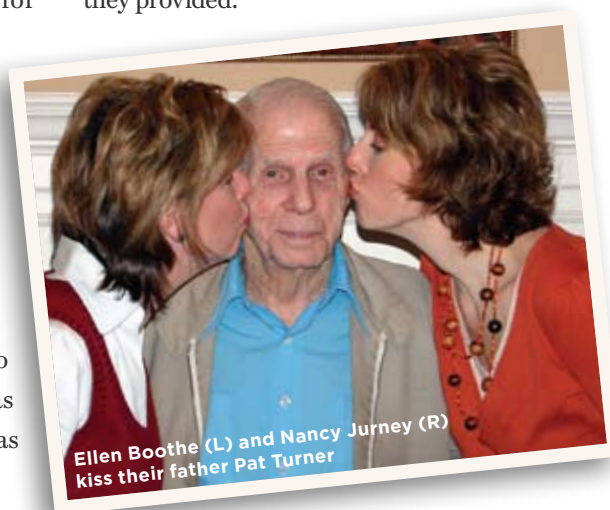
"Right off the bat they impressed me," said Turner, "The nurse would come in, check on mom, go somewhere else, and then she always came back. She even caught the bed sores that were develop-

ing and she got those taken care of."

Hospice of Green Country volunteers played a key role in assisting the family with the many responsibilities they were juggling.

"Bandy drove me to see Nadine sometimes three days a week," explained Pat, "We became good friends. We're both war veterans, so we would sit around and talk, just to see who set off the biggest bombs," he laughed, "He still calls sometimes."

"Everyone was so great," continued Ellen, "all the nurses, Pete, her home health aide; I'm still amazed at the care they provided."



Ellen Boothe (L) and Nancy Jurney (R) kiss their father Pat Turner

Nadine began a steady decline, and died one chilly November morning, surrounded by her family as snow gently fell from the sky.

"We knew it was coming," said Ellen, "I'm just glad it was peaceful. She had got up that morning, ate breakfast, and went back to sleep. She was smiling and her bright blue eyes were sparkling. It was difficult, but she hadn't been mom in a long time."

Because of the snow, many staff members weren't able to leave their homes, so Executive Director Tamra Moore paid a visit that morning when she heard the news.

"Tamra had the perfect demeanor," said daughter Nancy Jurney, "she was just so helpful."

"I'm just amazed at what was provided by your team," said Ellen, "I think there's a misconception that hospice care means a patient has less than six months to live, and it's a short term association. But people are missing the bigger picture. There are so many programs that our family didn't take advantage of like the Live Alone program and grief counseling, but its reassuring to know it was there if we needed it."

"Hospice of Green Country fits the bill in my book," continued Pat, "Everyone knows what they're doing. They have so much expertise. That's hospice to me. It's not a matter of books and education. Your team deals from the heart."

"I have so much I would like to say to all the people who helped care for mom," concluded Nancy, "but sometimes words seem so shallow. Of course thank you comes to mind, but the dignity shown to mom during this time was incredible."

"That's just it," continued Ellen, "Hospice care is about dignity. Dad, as well as the rest of us, entrusted the care of someone we loved with all our heart to a group of people we didn't know, and we were so happy with the respect you showed mom. Thank you."



Tamra Moore, RN

Springtime brings feelings of new beginnings as we see the first leaves of the daffodils and irises. As gardeners begin nurturing these tender plants, many will flourish and be full and beautiful by summer. Hospice of Green Country staff and vol-

unteers can be likened to gardeners. They bring new life to the patients and families that come to us by providing physical, emotional and spiritual care, at the level of need, regardless of financial resources.

Over twenty years ago, our founders and donors established our mission of providing compassionate

quality end-of-life care regardless of ability to pay and Hospice of Green Country remains true to this statement today. In 2007, we saw a 51% increase in the number of patients we serve who lack the ability to pay for hospice care. We are proud that we turned no one away and our goal is to continue this practice during the coming years.

Thank You to the generous supporters who have allowed Hospice of Green Country to live its mission. We need your ongoing support to provide this increasing demand of hospice care to those who lack the ability to pay. It is only through the support of volunteers, staff, donors and the community that we are able to bring a new beginning to patients and their families at a time they need it most.

from the board



Jane Mudgett

We've embarked on our 21st year as proud providers of hospice care in our community. Yet as we reflect on last years 20th anniversary, we are greeted with positive memories, challenging competition and rewarding new services that swirl in my head as I

recall this past year.

Elisabeth Kubler-Ross, author of *On Death and Dying* said, "Throughout life, we get clues that remind us of the direction we are supposed to be headed ... if you stay focused, then you learn your lessons." At Hospice of Green Country, we are proud that we continue to live by our focused mission...dedicated to providing compassionate, quality, end-of-life care to patients and their families- regardless of ability to pay. Our patients, family, friends and caregivers provide ongoing appreciation, suggestions and gratification that are the clues that lead to our continued success. Whether a patient is surrounded by caregivers, or is served via our Live Alone program, we are rewarded each and every day by their lessons of grace and courage during emotional and stressful times. Whether fees are waived through our Courtesy Care program or an insurance company is reimbursing us, we are touched by the stories, mementos and experiences we share at the end of ones days; they change our lives and add to our personal collection of positive memories.

In 2007, our services also expanded to the Hispanic

community through our many outreach efforts. Trust and confidence continues to flourish as bilingual materials, translation services and visibility becomes more commonplace. We are proud of this partnership and look forward to continued positive results with a facet of the community that is overlooked by the plethora of Tulsa hospice organizations.

It is important to note in 2007, our Courtesy Care program grew by 51%, our Live Alone program by 26% and our Hispanic Outreach and Care program by 600%. This need challenged us financially yet we are proud that no patient was turned away due to a lack of financial resources.

An exclusive new program was introduced with a fan fare of press - Pet Peace of Mind. The clues to take this direction were, well, with us at every visit - barking at us with a welcome or curling up on our lap during a home appointment. It's so comforting to know that when we can't care for ourselves, that someone will care for us AND our pets. The introduction and immediate success of the program, confirmed our judgment to kick off the program in earnest and the woofs, meows, and accolades continue into 2008.

So, by listening to the many clues posed by our physician partners, patients, staff caregivers and our community, we continue on a positive, yet challenging direction of success. We are comforted by our lessons of the past 20 years and eager about the many new lessons we will learn in our future.

Jane Mudgett serves on Hospice of Green Country's board of directors as treasurer and is a past board president.

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OUR MISSION

Hospice of Green Country is a nonprofit, community-based, multi-faith and multi-cultural United Way agency dedicated to providing compassionate and quality end-of-life care to patients and families — regardless of ability to pay.

www.hospiceofgreencountry.org



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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16

National Bereavement Teleconference

St. John's Health Plaza, 19th & Wheeling
12:30 PM – 3:00 PM

FRIDAY, MAY 9

Annual Volunteer Appreciation Banquet

All Souls Unitarian Church, 2952 S. Peoria
Please RSVP by May 5, to 388-1325

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12

Tulsa Area United Way Day of Caring

THURSDAY & FRIDAY, OCTOBER 1-2

The State Hospice and Palliative Care Association Annual Conference

Tulsa Marriott Hotel, 71st & Lewis

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