



A Lifetime Pursuit of Excellence

Millie embodies the “can-do” spirit that she so admires in the lives of her favorite historical characters

OUR MISSION

Hospice of Green Country, a non-profit, community-based, multi-cultural, multi-faith, United Way agency, has been dedicated to providing compassionate and quality end-of-life care to patients and families — regardless of ability to pay - since 1987.

www.hospiceofgreencountry.org



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Hospice of Green Country - The Pet Friendly Hospice

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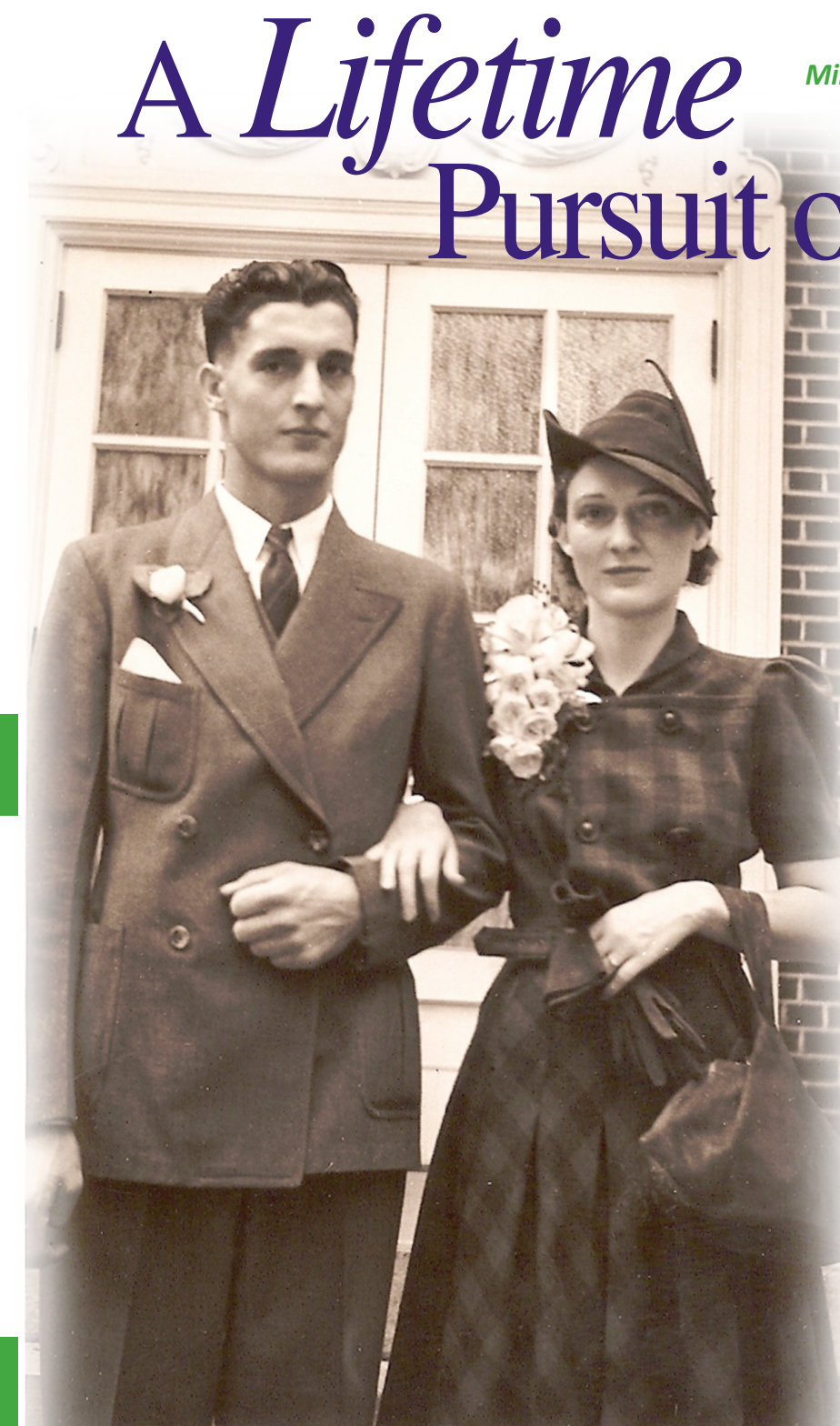
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Millie Arthrell has always been inspired by historical figures with the can-do spirit and she can recite their quotes and relate passages from their lives. You might say their words not only provide inspiration but they also validate her own life which began in poverty and is winding down 96 years later with most of her dreams fulfilled.

Millie's parents were poor. It was the time of the Great Depression and her father could not find a job that paid enough to support the family. Finally landing a job as a farmhand, he moved his family into the country outside Oberlin, Ohio. "I'm sure the move was hard on my parents, but it's wonderful to be a child growing up on a farm – learning about all the animals, running barefoot through the grass, catching fireflies at night." Millie says it was particularly hard on her mother who was ambitious and who had an indomitable spirit. "I'm sure she had high hopes when she married my father, but her dreams never amounted to much and, after she had my two sisters and brother, she remained ill-tempered and angry much of the time."

Millie remembers always having a job and earning a bit of money for the family. When she was in high school, she worked from 8 am to 10 pm at the A&P grocery store on Saturdays for \$2.00 a day. Farmers often came to town late, so the store stayed open. Any groceries her family needed were deducted from her \$2.00. One time Millie's mother needed a bar of soap so she could wash the clothes and she

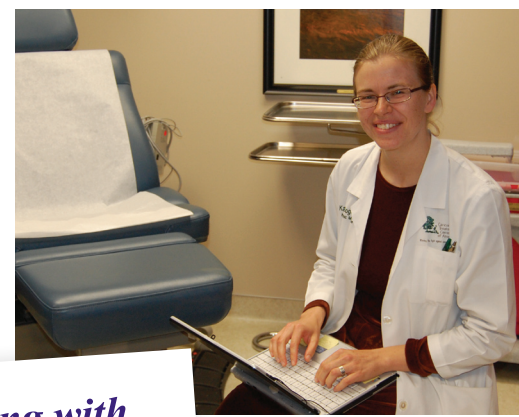
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Serving as a *Midwife* for Life's Final Adventure

Hospice's Life History program reinforces Katrina Bogdon's clinical skill of listening

Katrina Bogdon, N.D. is in her final year of residency in naturopathic medicine at the Cancer Treatment Centers of America (CTCA) and she is a volunteer for Hospice of Green Country (HGC). Katrina is HGC's only volunteer in the Life Histories program. She video-tapes one-hour life stories from patients who have requested this service. The tape is then edited with photos added, burned to a DVD which is given to the patient and family. "It's a powerful tool to bring meaning and closure to one's life," says Katrina. "I had one patient who started our session with a dismissive 'I don't know what to talk about. I haven't had a very exciting life,' and one hour later she was in awe of her own life experiences and the value of her being." By replaying the DVD and hearing the stories anew, the family is able to celebrate their loved one's life after they're gone.

Growing up in Arkansas Katrina wanted to be an astronaut and worked diligently toward that goal from the fourth grade until, as a teenager, she began to share her mother's passion for naturopathic medicine. Her mother insisted she go to a medical school in the field, so after Katrina graduated from the University of Arkansas summa cum laude in physics, she went on to graduate from the National College of Natural Medicine in Portland, Oregon. Naturopathic medicine combines the wisdom of nature with the rigors of modern science by recommending treatment plans that blend the best of modern medical science and traditional natural medical approaches to treat the disease and restore health. "To heal means to become whole once again; and this is



"Working with Life Histories, I've come to appreciate the Native American wisdom that the stories themselves are healing medicine."

"Listening is a powerful tool for us. We tend to have longer sessions with our patients," according to Katrina who went on to say that in naturopathic medicine the health of the individual goes beyond the purely medical histories. "So, I listen for those stories that will inform me of the whole person that I'm serving. And in that process I've found the act of telling the story aids in the health of my patients."

Katrina says she's learned so much about the process of dying, of grief, and of the different ways people find closure and resolution in their lives from talking and listening to HGC patients. "I've also learned about the Oklahoma Land Rush and what life was like on the prairie, and I've heard about true love and lasting friendships as well as listened to the painful stories of abuse, heartache and lost opportunities."

Almost the first thing Katrina did when she moved to Tulsa was look for a place to volunteer. That value of giving back to the community was instilled when she was a Girl Scout where she went through the entire program from Brownies to earning her Gold Award as a Senior Girl Scout. After settling in at CTCA, she sought out Hospice of Green Country. In addition to her deep desire to help people restore health and survive cancer, Katrina

exactly what naturopathic medicine teaches. I am here to respectfully and compassionately help people find wholeness again in their lives," says Bogdon in her CTCA online bio.

To date, Katrina has conducted eight Life Histories for Hospice of Green Country and finds the process helps her as a naturopathic provider.

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also needed some dried beans. The amount came to 14 cents more than the \$2.00. "I dreaded asking the owner if he would carry over the 14 cents to next week, but we needed to eat," Millie recalls. "I remember him gruffly saying to take the beans and not worry about the cents." Millie says the incident taught her that people have good hearts and will give in their own manner, sometimes to hide the goodness.

Books provided an escape. She loved to read and, as a little girl, could be found down in the schoolhouse, practicing with the books. The town librarian took a particular interest and supplied her with the classics, "Robinson Crusoe," Grimm's fairy tales, and the stories of King Arthur. She loved school and did well, particularly in English Literature and Latin. "I graduated third from the top of my high school class. If I had known there was an honor called a Valedictorian, I would have worked for it."

Oberlin College, nationally known for its academic and arts studies, offered her a full scholarship, but her mother said no, citing her lack of clothes and the family's need for an immediate wage-earner. So, Millie went to business college and claims it was the best thing to happen. "They gave me a job immediately and for the next three years, I taught typing, shorthand and filing. Then, I was hired as a secretary for a local golf ball factory and that's where I met George Arthrell. I was 26."

The girls in her office were all talking about this handsome man in shipping, according to Millie, but she ignored them. "I didn't think he would have any interest in me." Millie says George sought her out to see if she would help him with his typing. The rest is history, almost 65 years and two beautiful sons worth of history.

"I graduated third in my class.

If I had known there was a valedictorian,

I would have worked for it."



In 1954 when there was a tremendous shortage of teachers, Kent State University came to Elyria, Ohio to offer free two-year education courses that included a teaching practicum. Millie at age 41 signed up. She had always wanted to go to college to become a teacher. It was a

dream come true and, after those two years of study, she taught in the elementary schools of the Oberlin-Wellington-LaGrange area until she retired. In the meantime, Millie continued with her education, earning her Bachelor's Degree and going on to receive her Masters Degree in education. She graduated with honors from Kent State in 1978 at the age of 65. She would have gone for her PhD, but the Vietnam War protests intervened.

When Millie moved to Tulsa to live with her son and his family two years ago, she was told that she could only bring books for four bookcases. By the age of 94, any person might have collected a large quantity of books, but Millie was and still is an avid reader and a serious history buff and so, cutting back to four bookcases was going to be hard. Somehow she managed and she is now surrounded by towering bookshelves filled with her favorites, many of them history books on the Civil War, its battles and its cast of characters. She also loves Teddy and Franklin Roosevelt, Laura Ingalls Wilder, Lewis & Clark – history that demonstrates the will to succeed with honor and courage.

As an avid Civil War buff, Millie and her husband, George, would plan family vacations that included her sons and their families, and the three generations would visit the various battlefields and memorials. Her favorite was the reenactment of the Battle of Gettysburg.

Millie became a patient of Hospice of Green Country this June after suffering a series of small heart attacks, although at 96 years, no heart attack is small. She had not told her family about the first attack – they were all on vacation in Washington State for her grandson's graduation and she didn't want to spoil

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Symbolic acts that help you let go

Coping with Grief

When we counsel families about the dynamics of grief, we try to help them understand that the grieving process is a personal journey. As a culture, we tend to use funerals and memorial services to engage our grief in community. While this may be helpful in the days immediately following the loss of a loved one, it can leave us longing for something more personal weeks or months down the road. There is no right or wrong way to grieve a loss, but it is important that we engage our grief, rather than consciously avoid it. At the same time, it is normal to fear being incapacitated by our emotions at inappropriate times or in awkward places. As you negotiate your way through the grieving process, you may find these suggestions helpful.

One way that we can engage our personal grief is through the use of symbolism. For some people, participating in a meaningful ceremony or ritual adds something tangible to the whirlwind of emotions that often accompany grief. In our memorial services, for example, we offer attendees the opportunity to participate in a balloon release. A single helium balloon is given to each family. They, in turn, write individual messages to their loved one on the surface. As the balloon is released, family members watch it slowly disappear into the sky. Most people tell us this is a powerful way of connecting with their loved one. This same ceremony can be done individually, in a special place or on a special day, like a birthday or anniversary. Choose a balloon color easily visualized against the

sky and an open place away from trees or power lines. Use a soft tipped pen for your message.

Sometimes our grief journey involves coming to terms with unresolved feelings. Using symbolism to engage these feelings may be helpful. A woman was struggling with conflicted feelings of hurt and anger toward a parent who had passed away. Those feelings were keeping her from moving forward in her own life. She wrote a short note to her father, tied it around a stone and threw it into a large lake, symbolically releasing those feelings at the same time. The act of “casting off” her feelings and replacing them with forgiveness freed her from the bitterness that was holding her hostage. While this didn’t change what he had done or invalidate how she felt, she was now able to begin the healing process.

Other ways of engaging grief through symbolism include walking a labyrinth, lighting a memorial candle or making something meaningful from an article of clothing belonging to your loved one. Some people use art as a way of expressing their feelings or memorializing someone. Others find writing helpful, whether recounting favorite memories, writing poetry or journaling through their grief. Whatever you choose, make it meaningful for you, silencing any “inner critics” that might arise. This is your journey. By being proactive in engaging your grief, you may find ways to bring peace and comfort to your soul along the way.



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

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the celebration. Weak, out of energy, and steadily declining after they got back, Dan took her to the emergency room. It was there that Dan found out about the first attack. He asked the doctor about hospice. Millie liked the hospice her husband had in Ohio and wanted one for herself. Since the doctor thought that Millie would qualify, the family called Hospice of Green Country. Millie has become friends with her HGC care team who visit her at least three times a week to help her with the tasks of living.

“I didn’t really know my mother until she came to live with me. It’s been wonderful.” – Dan Arthrell

And, living is what Millie is all about. She is currently working on a presentation of Harriet Tubman for her church in October. She smiles as she recites the prayer attributed to this American Moses, “I’m goin’ to hold stiddy on to you, an’ I know you’ll see me through.” It’s also a prayer for Millie’s life.

www.hospiceofgreencountry.org

Viewing the Shadow of Life

A father took his young daughter to a nearby old growth forest. He hoped her enjoyment of the stillness and beauty of the massive trees would work their enchantment on her, as it had always worked on him to bring peace and contentment to sooth a troubled soul. Her little heart was at home in the quiet depths of these ancient trees. All was well for the first several moments, but something broke into the peace of the place.

As they walked farther into the forest he could see his daughter becoming troubled. She would be looking at a particular tree when the sun would pass behind a cloud creating a massive shadow that would move through the woods. The dark shadowy shapes would stretch out as if to touch her, and then the light would shift creating motion somewhere else. On and off went this shadow show, so that one minute she would be absolutely captured by the beauty of the light, the next minute she would be scared by the encroaching shadows.

As her emotional state escalated, her father realized that her limited understanding of the shadows was making it impossible for his daughter to appreciate the beauty of the forest he had always found so tranquil. And so, taking action before she became more frightened, he took his little girl by the hand. “Come on sweetheart,” he said, as they walked out of the forest and headed for a place where he knew she could gain a better understanding of what she was witnessing.

They walked hand in hand, silently, out of the trees, and climbed a gentle hill to its crest where they could get a panoramic view of the forest. They sat down on the edge of a little bluff together and quietly looked down on the woods spread beneath them. What a magical sight!

The little girl saw dozens of shadows caused by the clouds passing beneath the sun. She saw the whole of the forest and its invisible relationship with the world around it. From her new vantage point, none of the things that troubled her within the forest troubled her now. Peace returned to her. From that day on, whenever they went to the woods, she was no longer afraid!

Excerpted from *Let Go and Live in the Now* By **Guy Finley**



Volunteer Spotlight *continued from page 2*

Serving as a Midwife for Life’s Final Adventure

says she’s also been drawn to healing at the end of life. “Some doctors want to be a midwife at birth. I’ve wanted to be a midwife to life’s final adventure, death.”

Katrina says she’s learned so much from Hospice of Green Country’s patients and their families. “They give me hope that we can all live complete lives

and leave this world with great love and dignity. Every time I video-tape, I’m reminded how important it is to sit with a person, listen to their stories, and how healing that process is – the listening and the telling. It’s made me appreciate the Native American Wisdom that the stories themselves are healing medicine.”

Hospice of Green Country needs more volunteers in its Life Histories Program as well as video cameras. If you would like to volunteer and are unfamiliar with a video camera or how to video tape an interview, HGC will train you. If interested, call Donna Stidham at 918-747-2273.

www.hospiceofgreencountry.org

Introducing Rusty, a loving diversion

Pet Peace of Mind program allows pets to bring solace in the midst of pain and grief



“Rusty” was about 9 months old when his owner became our patient.

Mrs. Goldman had terminal cancer and her husband had brought her a puppy to cheer her up while she was undergoing a final and difficult round of chemotherapy. She loved the little dog,

but it was Mr. Goldman who clung to Rusty through the grief of watching his wife of 52 years decline, despite the attempts to manage her symptoms.

Rusty provided comic relief from the sadness and pain they both felt and he slept beside Mr. Goldman as he watched over his wife at night. When hospice took over her care, we provided support for her, for him and the Pet Peace of Mind program provided for Rusty, too. We provided his food as well as transportation to the vet and funding for his second and third set of vaccinations and neutering. We also provided flea and tick and heartworm preventions for Rusty, so taking care of him during this time would be easier for Mr. Goldman.

The family photos taken toward the end of Mrs. Goldman’s life show Rusty in Mr. Goldman’s arms. His place in the family was secure. Mr. Goldman was delighted when we took a picture of Rusty and presented it to him in a pet-themed frame. He displayed it at his wife’s funeral two weeks later.



From the Pet Peace of Mind blog of Rev. Delana Taylor McNac, Director of Spiritual Care and coordinator of the Pet Peace of Mind program. The blog address is <http://petpeace.blogspot.com>

Hospice of Green Country

Cordially invites you, your family & friends to attend the Tulsa Area Annual Memorial Service

Sunday, October 11, 2009
2:00 – 3:00 pm

St. James United Methodist Church
5050 E 111th St (Yale & 111th)
Tulsa, OK

This service is intended to honor the memory of our patients and celebrate their families and friends.
Refreshments will be served immediately following the memorial.

Please RSVP by October 5th
747-2273
Or email: dtaylor@hospiceofgreencountry.org

www.hospiceofgreencountry.org

From the Board President



By any measure, the last six months have been an extraordinary time. Difficult economic conditions, not just in our neighborhoods, but around the world, have given rise to challenges for all non-profits, including Hospice of Green Country.

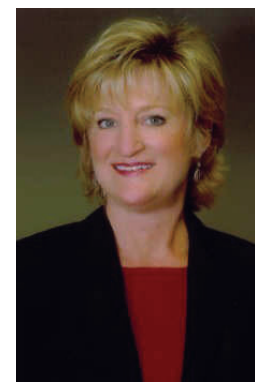
Extraordinary times call for extraordinary measures. In these extraordinary times, I am seeing the leadership and staff at Hospice of Green Country take extraordinary measures every day to continue to serve the increasing need for our services to our patients, their families, and the community. The increase in demand for services is not small. At the end of July, Courtesy Care days exceeded the same period in 2008 by 20%. The dedication to the mission of Hospice of Green Country among everyone here is truly

impressive, and will not waiver. We are all working tirelessly to ensure that every patient who is in need of high quality, compassionate, end-of-life care receives it – regardless of ability to pay. I am proud to say that we have continued to fulfill that mission despite all of the challenges and hardships.

I continue to be astounded by the devotion to the mission, the patients, the families, and the community demonstrated by the leadership and staff of this wonderful organization. We can all be extremely proud to be a part of this team. I want to thank each and every one of you not only for what you have done for Hospice of Green Country but also for your continued support, which is more essential than ever before, as we persevere through these extraordinary times.

Nelly Vanzetti, PhD, 2009 Board President

From the Executive Director



“You went above and beyond to help get some things done that were not completed before my Dad was sick.”

“Mother loved all the people who came to see her and help us. You each made a big difference in our lives.”

“Each of you touched his life more than you may know.”

“You made us feel at ease – you all are so caring.”

You do not have to look far, as these comments show, to realize the impact Hospice of Green Country’s (HGC) staff and volunteers have on our community. Giving that extra is common place among this team. No

one boasts about the selfless acts that seem to pour forth so freely and if the patients and families didn’t mention them, most would go unnoticed.

A recent card thanked the social worker and nurse case manager for the roses they delivered for a 60th wedding anniversary. A family made comment to the hospice aide of how the volunteer asked if there was anything else that would bring comfort before they finished the shift; they gladly did that one last “extra” that made the

patient feel so special. Tears moisten the eyes of the hospice team when notified of a patient’s death. All of this speaks to the hearts of the staff and volunteers; hearts filled with compassion and respect for others.

The HGC team considers it an honor to provide care to patients and families during the last phase of life. I am humbled to be a part of this important work and to be a part of the extensive history of an organization with a reputation for quality care.

Thank you to the generous supporters and donors who make it possible for us to continue to live our mission of providing compassionate, quality end-of-life care ~ regardless of ability to pay. You help make a difference in the lives of many.

Tamra Moore, RN, Executive Director

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