

Passages

A Publication of Hospice of Green Country, Inc.



SUMMER 2013

SETTING THE STANDARD FOR SKILLED, COMPASSIONATE CARE SINCE 1987

THE UNION IS IN HER BLOOD

Barbara Cale's first job was in a sweatshop – a mailhouse where rows and rows of workers sat, stuffing and sealing envelopes and mailers. They all worked on a quota system that punished you if you were under quota and punished you, as well, if you exceeded your quota, by raising it the next day. You learned to pace yourself but it was always stressful. At the time Barbara had a sick husband and two children. There was minimum sick leave and no family leave, so if Barbara had to miss work for her family, there was no paycheck.

She went looking for another job, and in 1967 Barbara went to work for the Transport Workers Union (TWU) as an administrative assistant and she's been a union woman ever since. In fact, she's been unionized twice: she worked for the TWU Local #514 and she was a member and officer of the local Office and Professional Employee International Union (OPEIU). After forty plus years, the union is in her blood.

"The union is an advocate for the workers," Barbara states and goes on to talk about how workers can be at the mercy of erratic bosses. "They can be mistreated, even be unsafe, and the only solution for the worker is to either put up or quit." She says the union steps in to serve as an intermediary, putting the boss on notice and sometimes putting the worker on notice. Unions don't win all the time, but they do provide a rational system for getting rid of either bad workers or bad bosses. "If I owned a company or were the CEO, I would want a union," Barbara states emphatically. "It organizes everything. Workers feel safe. The bosses can relax."

Barbara's dad was a member of the painter's union, but she was a typical youngster, oblivious to what her dad did. She went to Will Rogers High School and Tulsa Junior College, having grown up in a five room home with eight siblings, two brothers and one sister and four step-brothers and step-sisters. "We were probably poor, but we didn't know it."

Barbara says she was just a girl herself when she started having her two children, Ricky and Laurie. Their father was a union man as is Barbara's present husband, Keith. Ricky is a member of the Transport Workers Union and Laurie is a plaintiff's attorney, usually on the side of the worker or wronged party. Laurie's daughter, Tiffany, works for the Labor Counsel. It's truly the family business!



*"I'm proud to be a union man
I make those meetings when I can, yeah
I pay my dues ahead of time
When the benefits come
I'm last in line, yeah."*

— NEIL YOUNG

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THE UNION IS IN HER BLOOD



Barbara & her children

Barbara's union life is slowing down, but she still longs for the company of her colleagues and their passion for the cause. Even though she's on hospice for end-stage cancer, she's pretty spry, participating in occasional activities and walking in the garden. Her hospice team makes sure she's comfortable, a HGC volunteer comes regularly to give her a massage which helps her relax, and she is surrounded by her family. It couldn't get any better for her, unless, of course, a union had organized it.



GOODBYE TO AMY

Amy Pulliam's Home-going

It was kind of a home-going for Amy who began work July 8th as a Communications Consultant at BlueCross BlueShield of Oklahoma (BCBSOK). It was a home-going in the sense that Amy started her career fresh out of college in the insurance business, as a service representative for group benefits to El Paso businesses. At BCBSOK Amy will be part of the team that works on external and internal communications, newsletters, social media, et al.



As a kid, Amy had a lot of hometowns. She was born in Syracuse, NY, but spent her early years in Wallingford, Connecticut. Then, her family moved to El Paso, Texas, where she attended the 4th and 5th grades. When she was in the 6th grade, they settled in Buda, Texas, essentially a suburb of Austin, so that when asked, Amy says she's from Buda, pronounced "Bee-oo'-dah." She was on her high school debate team, attended Texas A&M, majored in communications with an emphasis on speech and presentations, and wanted to make a difference in the world.

And, what a difference Amy made at Hospice of Green Country! She organized the volunteer office, re-connected and empowered the volunteers, recruited and trained new volunteers, reorganized the Volunteer Banquet so that it became HGC's "happening" event, lent her great marketing and communication skills to the HGC mission, brought the eyes and ears and concerns of the volunteers to the clinical meetings, and always energized the staff.

As a result of that difference, it's been tough for the Hospice of Green Country staff, volunteers and patients to say good-bye. Three and one-third years, Amy's tenure at HGC, is long enough to get really attached and used to a certain level of magical spirit. However, unlike the irretrievable, serious home-goings our patients and families experience, we know we'll see Amy about town, over lunch, or at the 2014 Oysters & Ale. Amy will always have a home at HGC!

PRATIP BANDYOPADHYAY

Meet Bandy the volunteer

His full name is Pratip Bandyopadhyay (or as Google says, Pră-teep Bahn-th_oh'-pad-yai), but he goes by "Bandy." He's been a Hospice of Green Country volunteer since 1999, yet he grew up on the other side of the world in the small community of Krishnagar, 75 miles north of Kolkata, in the east Indian state of West Bengal, in a large successful Indian family. Bandy, four brothers, and his four sisters all lived together with his father's family (his grandmother and two uncles) in a large house.

The communities of Krishnagar and neighboring Nabadwip comprise an area of India that's considered a cultural, literary and religious center. Bandy's education through high school was in English in missionary schools. He attended college in Kolkata through the Ramakrishna Mission, a branch of Hinduism that seeks harmony between all religious traditions and cultural backgrounds.

Bandy came to the United States in 1959 to earn his doctorate in Chemical Engineering at the University of Michigan. He stayed to work for DuPont and then migrated to Cities Service which brought him to Tulsa in 1967. Bandy's wife, Jayanti, is also from West Bengal – theirs is an old-fashioned, arranged Indian marriage. Bandy and "Jay" have three children, all stories in their own right. The oldest daughter, Nisha, missed being a casualty to 9/11 because she was 10 minutes late to work that morning. His son, Neil, also a New Yorker, saw the first airplane strike the North Tower. Ronja, his youngest daughter, a graduate of Columbia University and Harvard Law School, is an attorney with the United Nations with the personal mission of protecting human rights in third world countries – Bangladesh and East Timor.

Bandy's Hindu religious tradition values volunteer work, the giving of one's self to others, the honoring of God in the other human being. He became an HGC volunteer



when several deaths in his family brought death and dying before him in a new way. Patient companionship is his strength – for years he went once a week to be with Mrs. Fisher and feed her lunch. More recently, he was a weekly companion to Mr. Hower, allowing his daughter to have a break. Bandy is also an 11th Hour volunteer

for HGC and has been called to provide comfort and a quiet presence to patients who are actively dying. And, on a less intense level, he has delivered medications and worked on the many mailing crews who help stuff, seal and stamp the quarterly mailings.

Oklahomans love to hug; West Bengali Indians not so much. Amy, our

volunteer coordinator, tells the story of meeting Bandy for the first time and embracing him enthusiastically as he stood wondering who this woman was. Now, Bandy will not let Amy be without his initiating an enthusiastic hug. You might say it's also part of his religious tradition - the harmony of the East and the West, seeking social equality and peace without any distinctions, realizing God within and serving God in others.



PET PEACE OF MIND – ROXY, THE BILINGUAL DOG

Spanish is her second language



Samuel Sanchez didn't want a dog. He was a sick man, on hospice for end-stage colon cancer which had spread.

He could not be bothered, but this two year old, partially blind Boston terrier mix was hard to resist. Roxy wormed her way under his blankets and into his heart. Sam gives everyone he likes a Spanish nickname – Roxy became Chula. It was her beginning as a bilingual dog.

Sam met his wife, Elizabeth, in California. She was only 21 years old and shopping in a North Hollywood furniture store for her first apartment when she rounded a set of bookcases and there he was. It was love at first sight. Her friend kept nudging her, saying that there was this handsome store guy who was following them around. Sam made sure the store clerk at the check-out counter got her telephone number. Just days later, he picked her up in his '63 Chevy pickup for their first date and two weeks later they married.



Sam came to the U.S. from Zacatecas, Mexico when he was 21. He learned English by watching TV and made his living as a mover, working 15 hour days, seven days a week. He was known for his work ethic, putting in whatever it took to get the job done right, and for his strength. He could lift a refrigerator by himself.

It was hard being sick. Chula eased that frustration by giving Sam a new focus – teaching her Spanish. He taught her “Venga acá,” or “Come here.” Also, “Vamos afuera,” which sends Roxy dashing to the front door, her tail wagging her back end. And there's her second favorite phrase, “Quieres comida?” because she's always hungry. Elizabeth taught her to dance – twirling her on her back legs like a ballerina in anticipation of a treat.

Chula is enrolled in our Pet Peace of Mind program that supplies her dog food and flea protection. Recently PPOM stepped in and updated her vaccinations. She also received a pedicure so she wouldn't hurt Sam in her enthusiasm for his attention.

Lately, it's been hard. Sam is getting worse and Chula always knows when he's having a bad day. She'll carefully hop up onto the bed and quietly lie next to him. Sometimes she'll go the entire day, forgetting to eat or drink, in her concern. She'll wait for his words, “Debajo de las cobijas,” before snuggling under the blankets. This little bilingual dog may only see in shadows but she's got a 20/20 heart.

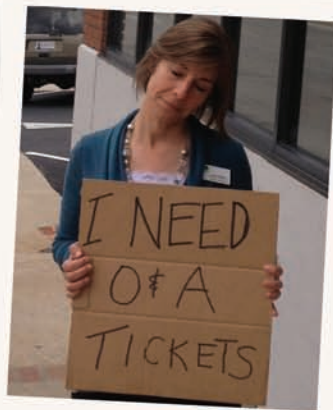


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Inside or outside . . . it was
 a perfect night for a party.



Filling the beer flights



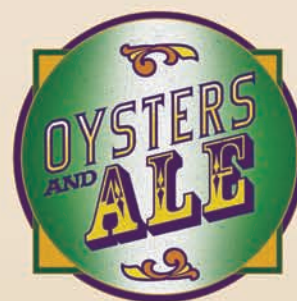
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See You Next Year !!

88 THINGS THAT MUST BE DONE BY THE SURVIVOR

A) Secure Vital Statistics (Required for burial permit)

- * 1. Name, home address and telephone no.
- * 2. How long in state
- * 3. Name of business, address and telephone no.
- * 4. Occupation and title
- * 5. Social Security No.
- * 6. War veterans serial no.
- * 7. Date of birth
- * 8. Place of birth
- * 9. U.S. citizen
- * 10. Father's name
- * 11. Father's birthplace
- * 12. Mother's maiden name
- * 13. Mother's birthplace
- * 14. Religious name (if any)

B) Pay some or all of the following

- * 15. Family burial estate
- * 16. Memorials
- * 17. Funeral director
- * 18. Interment service or cremation fee
- 19. Clergy
- 20. Florist
- 21. Clothing
- 22. Transportation
- 23. Telephone
- 24. Food
- 25. Doctors
- 26. Nurses
- 27. Hospitals and ambulance
- 28. Medicine and drugs
- 29. Other current & urgent bills (mortgage or rent, taxes, installment payments)

C) Collect Documents (required to establish rights for insurance, pensions, Social Security, ownership, relationship, etc.)

- * 30. Will
- * 31. Legal proof of age or birth certificate
- * 32. Social Security card or number
- * 33. Marriage license

- * 34. Citizenship papers
- * 35. Insurance policies (life, health & accident, property)
- * 36. Bank books
- * 37. Deeds to property
- * 38. Bill of Sale of car
- * 39. Income tax returns, receipts or cancelled checks
- * 40. Veterans discharge certificate
- * 41. Disability claims
- * 42. Memorial Park Certificate of Ownership

D) Decide and Arrange within a Few Hours

- * 43. Burial or cremation
- * 44. Burial estate location and which space to open
- * 45. Memorial type and inscription
- * 46. Casket type (if any)
- 47. Clothing for deceased
- * 48. Vault or sectional crypt
- * 49. Type of service (religious, military, fraternal)
- 50. Special selection from scriptures
- 51. Clergy to officiate
- 52. Which funeral director
- * 53. Place where service is to be held
- 54. Time for funeral service
- 55. Decide name of charitable organization to which donations are suggested in memory of the deceased
- 56. Providing information for eulogy
- 57. Select names for pall-bearers
- 58. Flowers
- 59. Music
- 60. Clothing for you and children
- 61. Preparation at home, including food for family and guests
- 62. Extra chairs
- 63. Transportation for family and guests, including planning funeral car list
- 64. Checking and signing necessary papers for burial permit
- * 65. Providing vital statistics about deceased to newspapers

- * 66. Providing addresses and telephone nos. for all interested people
- 67. Answering innumerable sympathetic phone calls, messages, emails and letters
- 68. Meeting and talking with funeral director, cemetery representative, clergy about all details
- 69. Greeting all friends and relatives who call
- 70. Arranging for meeting relatives who arrive from out of state at airport
- 71. Providing lodging for out-of-town relatives
- 72. Make list of callers and floral tributes sent for mailing card of thanks
- * 73. Arranging for special religious services
- * 74. Check the Will regarding special wishes
- 75. Order death certificate
- 76. Look after minor children

E) Notify as soon as possible

- 77. The doctor or doctors
- 78. The funeral director
- 79. The memorial park
- 80. All relatives
- 81. All friends
- 82. Employer of deceased
- 83. Employers of relatives not going to work
- 84. Casket-bearers
- 85. Insurance agents (Life, Health, & Accident)
- 86. Religious, fraternal, civic, veterans organizations, unions
- 87. Newspapers regarding notices
- 88. Attorney, accountant or executor of estate

* Indicates details that can be planned for or pre-paid ahead of time.

WELCOME PATTY KARAHALIOS WILSON!

Hospice of Green Country's new Executive Director

She's a Chicago girl, born and raised, the daughter of Greek immigrants, who answers the question, "Were you a good girl?" with "I would describe myself as outwardly good, but inwardly plotting." Both her mom and dad worked, so Patty and her older brother were raised by her grandmother who spoke only Greek.



The inwardly plotting was Patty's way of gaining a measure of independence from the strict confines and high expectations of her parents and Chicago's Greek culture. "I was a challenging adolescent," Patty admits, but she goes on to say that those challenges left her with a deep feeling that she needed to give back as payment for having survived her teen years. The Greeks call it "philotimo," and it's not easily translated beyond it's the feeling of the absolute responsibility to give back. Philotimo frames Patty's career and life.

After graduating from Loyola University with a degree in psychology, Patty went to work for the Hellenic Foundation which has a full array of social services for individuals in the Chicago area, including case management and home health care. Being one of the few fluent in Greek, Patty was given a full caseload of Greek families needing help. She calls the experience "foxhole learning," and it cemented her love of social work. After stints working in Chicago's domestic violence services and getting her Master's of Psychology from Roosevelt University, Patty eventually returned to the Hellenic Foundation as its executive director.

It was a lifestyle change that brought Patty and her family to Oklahoma. Both she and her husband, Larry, questioned the three-hour commute they both had. Larry was raised in Moore, OK and blown to Chicago as a young architect, so he knew the market for his career and the family-friendly pace of Oklahoma and Tulsa.

Patty's immediate and long-term goals for Hospice of Green Country are to strengthen the financial support for Courtesy Care and to be the professional advocate in the field of quality end-of-life care for those patients and families who do not have adequate financial resources. "Courtesy Care IS what separates us from all the other hospices; it is our reason for being, our mission; it is HGC's philotimo!"

2012 was a great year!! See for yourself.

The 2012 Annual Report of Hospice of Green Country
is now available for your reading pleasure at

http://www.hospiceofgreencountry.org/images/hospice/2012_Final_Annual_Report.pdf

The Addendum, which lists those who supported our work and mission
through a financial or in-kind gift, is also listed.

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Hospice of Green Country is the area's only United Way supported hospice. It is a multi-cultural, multi-faith agency whose mission, since 1987, is to provide compassionate and quality end-of-life care to patients and families – regardless of ability to pay.

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