



Spring 2010

A PUBLICATION OF HOSPICE OF GREEN COUNTRY, INC.

# A Dream Come True

*“... as they watched the sun set  
over the yachts and sailboats and the Gulf of Mexico”*

It was her final dream: to go to Florida and walk on the beach, feeling the sand under her feet and softly between her toes. Deanna Robinson had always been a traveling woman. She had visited the three corners of the country. And it's not that she hadn't ever seen an ocean before. Deanna had visited or lived in Washington, California, North Carolina, Louisiana, and Texas, all states with beaches. She just had never been to Florida, and it had been years since she had walked an ocean beach. How she longed for the beach! She missed the sounds and smells of sand and salt water.

Deanna has a form of cancer that can progress quickly in six months to a year. The pain and debilitation were taking their tolls on her body as well as her spirit. Since she hadn't worked in a while and she barely had enough to meet each month's expenses, Deanna knew she would never see a beach again. Her traveling days were over.

Then in walked Hospice of Green Country and Linn, the social worker on Deanna's hospice team. As soon as she heard about Deanna's dream, Linn went to work. She collaborated with the Dream Foundation, a California non-profit, and within a month Deanna and her mother, Jo, were nestled in their room at the Sanibel Harbor Resort and Spa on Florida's southwest Gulf Coast, near Fort Myers.

Neither woman had seen such luxury before! There were two queen beds, each with two huge pillows. Their balcony looked out



**Deanna** continued on page 3



# Joe Garrett Delivers

*You have not lived a perfect day,... unless you have done something for someone who will never be able to repay you. -- John Bunyan*

Since we've known Joe Garrett as a Hospice of Green Country (HGC) volunteer, he has had a lot of perfect days. As he delivers prescriptions and medications to our patients, navigating northeastern Oklahoma is just a variation of what Joe Garrett has done all his life – navigate and find people.

Prior to becoming HGC's everyday volunteer, Joe spent nearly 40 years as a navigator of large transport planes for the Air Force and then for a couple of charter companies, one of which was in Ardmore. The latter brought this Pennsylvania native to Oklahoma. Joe has flown troops and supplies, unfinished blue-jeans to U.S. finishing plants, and tourist groups to Europe. In those days a navigator was needed to cross the ocean where there are no landmarks to guide you. Joe navigated by calculating movement and acceleration – today they have computers. Joe says he's the airplane version of the buggy whip; he's been automated out of business.

When he retired from the navigation field and moved to Tulsa, he became a private investigator (PI) and discovered that finding people was much like finding places. Families or companies would hire Joe to find people – ex-husbands or ex-wives, embezzlers, lost or runaway children, employees or customers who had stolen, etc. Joe says he's done all the classic things that PIs do – waiting until the trash barrels are placed on the curb and then sorting through people's trash, hanging out in sleazy hotels looking for the target, tricking the desk clerk into revealing the target's room number so he can send that information back to the client. Joe is emphatic that he didn't have to talk to the targets, only find them and relay their locations back to his clients.

Joe found Hospice of Green Country through his wife, Sandi, who is also a HGC volunteer. He's been an active volunteer for eight years, delivering prescriptions to



pharmacies,  
doctors orders  
to physicians,  
and medications  
to patients  
almost every

day. He loves to drive around town and prides himself on his ability to find any Tulsa address. He's got it down to a system – organizing his stops along a practical direction so as to save time and gas. It's the navigator's way.

Joe likes helping people. There was the time in Claremore that he drove a patient to the doctor's office because her car had broken down. He also stepped in to help when a used car dealership sold her two lemons, one right after the other and kept her money. Joe went to the Oklahoma Used Car & Parts Commission which in turn forced the dealer to return the nearly \$2,000 of the woman's money.

Or, the time he delivered to a woman who had been bed-ridden for ten years with multiple sclerosis. He became her friend and would stay and talk. Or, he would come back with books and healing tapes. Joe firmly believes that prayer and faith provide answers, so he's often in conversation with God about how he should help.

Recently Joe hasn't been able to volunteer every day due to his health and also due an increase in Sandi's work. Joe helps her with deliveries. It's going to take five or more volunteers to do Joe's job – you know folks like that - irreplaceable! We might need a volunteer for each of the week days, particularly Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, and several substitutes as well. Interested? Call Amy Pulliam, Volunteer Coordinator, at 918-747-2273 or email: [apulliam@hospiceofgreencountry.org](mailto:apulliam@hospiceofgreencountry.org).

# A Dream Come True

Deanna continued from page 1

over the marina. They could see palm trees and the water. There were lotion, shampoo, and conditioner as well as the finely milled bars of soap in the bathroom, but best of all, hanging on the back of the bathroom door, were two thick terrycloth bathrobes for each of them. In all the motels Deanna had stayed in her life, she had never seen such things. That first

night, exhausted from the trip, they ordered room service and ate in the soft luxury of their bathrobes on the balcony as they watch the sun set over the yachts and sailboats and the Gulf of Mexico. It certainly felt like a dream.

The next day the joy was in the beach. They walked across the soft sand, picking up shells as they went and cooling their feet as the Gulf washed up on the shore. Shortly Deanna's strength gave out and they rested on the sand, the breeze from the Gulf cooling them as the sun and sand warmed them. They could have stayed there all afternoon letting the seagulls entertain them, but they needed to get back to their room and Deanna's medicine. Her cancer had her on a short leash to reality.

That night the Dream Foundation sent them to the Bubble Room, a famous restaurant on neighboring Captiva Island, known for its outrageous décor and wonderful desserts. Imagine Christmas, an antique shop, a toy store, and a flea market all rolled into one. The Bubble Room was filled with blinking lights, gnomes, knick-knacks, toys and trains, and assorted memorabilia from the 20's, 30's, and 40's.



All the servers, Bubble Scouts, were dressed in khakis with scouting sashes covered in badges and buttons.

Deanna and her mother, Jo, had never experienced such fun and great food. Life had not been easy for either of them. Jo had known

hunger as a child. Deanna had worked hard all her life to provide for her three children, now grown, her daughter with children of her own. Bad luck and misfortune seemed to be her lot. She

had come to Oklahoma in the early 80's to be near family. She worked in the Whirlpool plant when an accident and resulting medical issues left her without a job. Then, she barely escaped a fire that started in the apartment below hers and destroyed her possessions. Now, the cancer.

The Florida beach was the perfect respite for both mom and daughter. They visited a lighthouse, were able to see a dolphin break the water of the Gulf, visited with a cousin they hadn't seen in years who drove them around the area, and watched pelicans dive for fish in front of the setting sun. Deanna's favorite memory is the sunset of her second day, the colors of gold, rose and purple playing across the sky and the water. Deanna Robinson came home to the fight of her life and her Hospice care team was right there with her. They encouraged her when she got discouraged, comforted her when she was in pain, and made her smile with the memories and stories of her stay on Sanibel Island, its beaches and its sunsets.

**\*\*** Deanna Robinson died April 7th. All the HGC staff extend their deepest sympathy to her family and friends.

# Spiritual Care Happens Here

by John Vanaman

As I stepped off the elevator at Hillcrest hospital on the way to my first interview for chaplaincy school, a flyer in a display near the elevator caught my eye “Spiritual Care Happens Here” it boldly said. This will be a snap, I thought to myself, I have been a Christian a long time, had the privilege of being taught by some excellent Bible teachers, and have a good understanding of God’s word. Little did I realize that I didn’t know squat about “spiritual care”. Oh, I could talk Bible, church, or God to someone – but what if they did not want to talk Bible, church, or God – or if their belief was not in the God I know but a different belief altogether? Maybe their trust was in their own understanding and ability. Did I not have anything to talk to them about? Do they not have a spiritual part of them that needs care?

I have come to realize that every person has a spiritual part much like everyone has an autonomic nervous system – you know, the part that keeps our body functioning

without us having to think about it, liking breathing or heart beats - it just happens automatically. The spirituality part of us is there to protect and support us emotionally. It connects us to the wider world and all that surrounds us. So how do we care for that part of a person, or allow someone to provide care to that part of us?

We have to be willing to meet someone where they are! A fireman unwilling to enter a burning building does not

stand much of a chance of saving

someone in that building. Sometimes, the hard part is really finding where someone is spiritually or emotionally. We are programmed all of our life to hide and protect that most private of self. A trust must be established just as we must trust someone before we will be open enough to receive help for ourselves.

Then, we have to be willing to become involved. Without the risk of becoming hurt, wounded or even worse, the fireman cannot rescue anyone. We must be present with our patients to offer any spiritual care. We must have worked through our own “stuff” before we can allow anyone to down load any of their “stuff”. If we have not worked through our “stuff”, a patient might generate emotions in us that will blindside us and make us ineffective or even a detriment to their well being. Being present with someone allows a person to be comfortable enough with you to share those private things that make them uncomfortable.

People won’t remember what you say but will remember how they felt while you were with them. Sometimes all a person needs is a hand to hold and a heart to understand.

I have heard it said that a human life is like a garden. Everyone wants to be around and a part of someone’s life during the spring and summer time; it’s more difficult to be around during the fall and especially the winter time of a person’s life. Even though we see the weakened limbs,





# Grief

## *Uniquely Yours*

by Chaz Gaut



Grief is a universal process experienced on a highly individual basis. Your journey through grief is as unique as you are.

Many factors affect the grieving process, including:

- The nature of your relationship with the person who died
- The quality of the relationship
- The time you had to prepare for the loss
- Your own character and personality

Expressing emotions, such as crying, is an important part of the grieving process for many people, but a lack of tears doesn't necessarily indicate that the grieving process has stalled. If you're wondering why you aren't crying, don't worry. You may simply need some time and space to mourn your loved one's death in your own, unique way.

It is important, however, to make sure you're dealing with your feelings appropriately. If you find yourself *suppressing* your emotions, isolating yourself, having trouble completing your usual daily activities, or feel

like crying but can't, consider seeking the help of a grief counselor or other mental health provider. A counselor can often suggest various exercises or behavioral therapies to help you re-establish a sense of direction and control while putting your mind at ease.

Each distinctive trait in us influences the way we deal with grief. Though there is no right or wrong way of coping, it is essential to understand that a strong support system will assist with the impact of grief and facilitate healing. People often have an awareness of what they need to do to feel better, yet don't act on those inclinations due to feelings of inhibition, judgment, or loneliness.

Talking about what is happening, expressing your emotions, and being able to simply tell your story in a supportive and accepting environment can make all the difference in how you get through your journey of grief. Knowing that other people care and to a degree understand what you are going through can relieve the burden of 'holding it all together'.

The grieving process commands respect and requires time. However, unresolved grief can lead to depression and other mental health problems. If you're concerned about reaching a healthy resolution to your grief, recognize your need for assistance and seek the professional help you deserve.

*Rev. Chaz Gaut serves Hospice of Green Country as Community Relations Representative and Grief and Bereavement Speaker.*

## Spiritual Care

*Continued from page 4*

smell the bad smells, and endure the grumpy times, we get to see the real strength of a life, the endurance and stamina. We get a real good snapshot of the person, how they have lived their lives, a sense of what they value, and the lastingness of their love. It is very rewarding to sit with a husband at his dying wife's bedside and hear his story

of their life together, the vacations they took, the way they shared the good times as well as the times of heartbreak.

"Spiritual care happens here" when we know ourselves, are willing to meet people where they are, are willing to become involved, and can be present.

*John Vanaman serves as chaplain at Hospice of Green Country as well as associated chaplain at Hillcrest Medical Center.*

# Introducing Tuffy a reformed & happy dog

*He's a lover, not a biter!*

He was an ill-mannered, yappy little dog when the Hospice of Green Country care team first met Tuffy the Dachshund. He would get more agitated and growl the closer anyone got to his beloved owner, Frieda. Jumping on Frieda's bed, he could face "the enemy," barking and snapping. No one was going to touch his owner; he meant business and he drew blood several times to prove it.

Frieda was in end-stage renal failure due to cancer. The HGC care team went into action, moving gingerly around the small home, watching for Tuffy, but delivering their wonderful care and comfort. They enrolled Tuffy in the Pet Peace of Mind program, making sure he had his shots updated and bringing him treats from the PPOM food pantry.

Eventually Tuffy came to tolerate their presence in his home, but only barely. He would occasionally revert back to his guard dog personality and bite someone who was standing too close to Frieda. Such an incident would land Tuffy in the bathroom with the door closed as a doggy timeout. He would emerge chastened and subdued. Those antics would bring a smile to Frieda's worn and tired face. She loved that little ankle biter.

Frieda declined rapidly, just barely hanging in there until she knew that Tuffy was going to a kind and loving home. That was going to be tough. Who would want this aggressive little dog? Carol, the hospice aide, finally volunteered to take Tuffy



home to her family of dogs, Princess the Beagle and Sugar the Rat Terrier-Chihuahua mix. Sighing with relief, Frieda sank back into her pillow with a small smile on her face; she died the next morning.

Tuffy loves his new home. For the first time, he has other dogs to play with and keep him company. He still mourns Frieda and will go lie down with the bear that came from her house, looking up at Carol with very sad eyes. And, he occasionally forgets his place and will growl and snap at visitors to the house. Doggy time-out at Carol's is a muzzle which Tuffy hates, so the aggressive incidents have become fewer and fewer. Lately, he even welcomed Carol's brother to the home with wagging tail and friendly barks. Carol says he's a lover now, not a biter.

Recently Tuffy wrote Pet Peace of Mind a thank-you note for being so kind when he didn't deserve it, for finding him a loving home, and for helping him deal with his loss of Frieda.

*Pet Peace of Mind brings comfort to patients in knowing that their family pet, sometimes the only member of their family, can remain as a companion in their home and will be taken care of after they die. If you would be willing to foster a pet of a Hospice of Green Country patient, please call the office at 918-747-2273.*

I love it here and I'm OK for now, until I'm reunited with my loved one in Heaven. I give special Thanks to the "Pet Peace of Mind" LOVE You  
Tuffy Shuckakosee  
PS I'm a lover not a biter now

# From the Board President

Greetings and (belated) Happy New Year!

It is my delight to serve as the new Hospice of Green Country (HGC) Board President for 2010. I previously served an extended period on the HGC Board before taking a year off to focus on managing my business through the recession. Now that my business has stabilized, I am able to return to the board and serve as President.

Good riddance to 2009! It was a challenging year for everyone. I learned a lot about managing through tough economic times over the last 12 to 18 months at my own business. I'm eager to apply some of what I learned to HGC during my Presidency.

HGC did not escape the wrath of the recession, although I think we might have fared better than others in Tulsa's nonprofit community. We owe our gratitude to Walt and Peggy Helmerich who went to bat for us by making some critical phone calls that helped with our financial bottom line.

We have a new Board set for 2010, re-energized, and ready to go to work. It's a strong

Board that understands the mission and purpose of HGC as well as the value HGC brings to all of Green Country. It's a Board that understands the challenges HGC is facing as it comes out of 2009, yet the entire Board is committed to confronting and addressing those issues during 2010.

I have been away for about a year but I am still unbelievably impressed and humbled by the work done by HGC, its staff and volunteers. The staff and volunteers are true professionals who are passionate and committed to the individuals they serve on a daily basis. It is an honor to serve and assist such a great group of people.

I am enthusiastic about 2010 and look forward to serving as the Board President. If you need to contact me for any reason I can be contacted through Tamra Moore. I am looking forward to a great 2010.

**Hal Salisbury**  
President

## 2010 Board of Directors

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**Ron Peters**  
**Nelly Vanzetti, PhD**

**Executive Director**  
Tamra Moore, RN

# From the Executive Director

Martin Luther King Jr. spoke the words "The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy." The past several months did bring challenges to Hospice of Green Country (HGC) and we made changes, both in practices and attitudes to rise above them. The board, staff and volunteers worked tirelessly to make our organization stronger financially while at the same time remaining true to our mission.

The HGC volunteer department plays a significant role in our success in meeting the needs of patients and families. You have read about one of our dedicated volunteers, Joe Garrett. Approximately 75 other volunteers work

throughout the year, not only supporting those we provide care to; they also help decrease our administrative costs. In 2009, the time and talent donated by this dedicated group saved the organization more than \$115,000! On April 22<sup>nd</sup> we will honor them at the annual volunteer appreciation banquet. Our volunteers help us build a better community and are the heart of hospice.

Hospice of Green Country, with the support of our generous supporters and donors, remains committed to providing compassionate, quality end-of-life care. Thank you for allowing us to continue this important work.

**Tamra Moore, RN**  
Executive Director



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## 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](http://www.hospiceofgreencountry.org)



Hospice of Green Country gratefully acknowledges  
Bluestem Integrated, (a division of Oklahoma Offset)

# Hospice of Green Country - The Pet Friendly Hospice

## HOSPICE OF GREEN COUNTRY STAFF

Hospice of Green Country has three new staff people.

### Judi Smith – Director of Communications & Development

Calling Chicago her home town, Judi Smith is a seasoned fundraising professional with over 16 years of experience working in or with nonprofit organizations nationwide. Before joining Hospice of Green Country, Judi worked as a knowledge management consultant to non-profits assisting with database management, solicitation strategies, event management, board development and management, and inter-department communication. On the weekends, she likes to relax by riding her Harley through the hills of Green Country.

### Amy Pulliam – Volunteer Coordinator

Amy Pulliam was a part-time Speech and English teacher at Tulsa Community College and most recently, completed an internship with the Broken Arrow Public School district as an assistant to the Chief Communications Officer. She enjoys spending time with her family and friends, running on different Tulsa trails, cooking new recipes, and working outside on pretty days.

### Marca Davis – Community Relations

Marca Davis has worked in the healthcare industry for 20 years, starting first as a Certified Nursing Assistant. Marca loves working with people and is looking forward to speaking to groups and individuals about the mission and work of Hospice of Green Country.

Dala Jarolim, MD – Medical Director  
William Smith, MD – Medical Director

Lorena Arista  
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