

# Passages

A Publication of Hospice of Green Country, Inc.

SUMMER 2014

SETTING THE STANDARD FOR SKILLED, COMPASSIONATE CARE SINCE 1987

## CHOOSING YOUR FAMILY: MARY HADLEY

*Blood is not thicker than love and concern ...*

**B**lood is not always thicker than water, according to Mary, a 79-year-old living with terminal cancer. The first time she really understood that about family being more than blood was when she was a teenager and crowned the Pryor High School Band Queen. Then, two weeks later she was crowned again as Homecoming Queen. For the first crowning she and her mom went to Tulsa to find a beautiful long dress. When the second crowning occurred, Mary insisted that she could re-wear the Band Queen dress for Homecoming. Her step-dad was adamant that she would have a new dress, so she and her mom were off again to Tulsa. "That's when I knew that Daddy Ray was my true daddy," Mary tears up as she remembers. "I knew he was wearing cardboard in his shoes – you could see it through the holes in the bottoms. He was willing to forego getting himself some new shoes in order to get me a new Homecoming dress."

Mary's birth father deserted the family when she was two months old. Her mother, Jane, was only 19 years old. Urged to get out instead of staying home and playing with the baby (or playing dolls, as a neighbor called it), her mother went to a local dance. There, she met Ray Poplin, 36 years old and never been married. He asked her to dance; Jane turned him down, but he was smitten. Years later, Ray's mother told the family that Ray had come home and announced that he had met the woman he was going to marry – he didn't know her name, but he was going to marry her. That's how Daddy Ray came into Mary's life.

She considered him so much her daddy that she hauled off and "clobbered" her real dad, her birth father, when he showed up unannounced when Mary was 42 years. "He wasn't my daddy," Mary asserts. "I did not know that man and I told him so."

When Mary was in 9th grade, her family moved back to Pryor to take care of her Grandmother, Muddy, after Grandfather died. On her first day of school some cheeky boy, "trying to make points with the new girl," pulled on the back of her sweater and broke the string of pearls Grandmother Muddy had given her. As they bounced all over the floor, she and the boy scrambled to retrieve them, and that's how Mary met the love of her life, James Hadley.

Jim and Mary eloped to Arkansas on November 15, 1949, while claiming to be going to the OU/Nebraska game in Norman. "We knew we'd be 40, if we waited for permission," Mary says with a chuckle. "I was just



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# CHOOSING YOUR FAMILY: MARY HADLEY

three days shy of my 18th birthday.” Mary goes on to say that when they told her parents, her mother calmly announced that she was going to have Jim arrested and the marriage annulled. Jim stood up slowly from his chair and told his mother-in-law that she could go ahead and do that, but on Wednesday, he and Mary would just go back to Arkansas and re-marry. They would be legal then.

“Back then, when a couple ran off to get married, most people thought the girl must be pregnant,” Mary says with a grin. “There was a woman in Pryor who kept a calendar and marked when a couple got married, but we showed her. I didn’t have a baby until six years later.” Mary attributes life and responsibilities as getting in the way of starting a family – getting drafted for the Korean Conflict, finishing college at Northeastern State in Tahlequah, going to work for the Texas Company (Texaco).

“I got my degree too,” Mary asserts. When they called Jim’s name at graduation, Mary says that they also called hers and the president presented her with a PhT – “Putting Husband Through.”

Several years later ... after stints in Fairfax, OK and Wichita, KS, Jim’s father asked him to come back to Pryor to help with the family business, the Hadley Laundry. They were ready. By that time, little Jimmy had been born. In addition to helping in the laundry, Mary ran a successful antique business on the side, going to flea markets and selling on eBay. “Jim discovered I was worth more than ironing shirts and britches,” Mary says with a laugh.

Life’s been hard these last twelve years. Jim died in 2002, just shy of their 50th wedding anniversary and is resting with his parents in Pryor. Their son, Jimmy, married the wrong woman, according to Mary, and she turned him against his family. Both Jimmy and his wife died early and, their two boys, Mary’s grandsons, don’t come around much so Mary isn’t close to them. Mary is in her final fight with cancer, but she doesn’t let it get her down – she has her memories and stories, her pots of blooming flowers and a few tomato plants that Deb, the HGC social worker, planted for her, and visits from her best friend, Pat, who is her family now.

Mary is waiting for the day when she will join Jim and his parents in Pryor. Back in 2002, Jim agreed to cremation and his ashes spread over his parents’ graves, only if she promised to also be cremated and join him, with her ashes spread with his when her time came. She made that promise.



*Above: Spring Garden, compliments of Deb, the HGC social worker. At left: Mary’s husband as a little boy with his parents at the family business.*

# COMPLICATED GRIEF

By Ruth Richards, Editor, Passages



After a loss of a loved one, there is a period of deep sorrow, numbness, and even guilt and anger. Feelings are intense at the beginning, almost unbearable, but that intensity begins to dissipate over time. There will be moments, even days, of extreme grief, but they will become fewer and farther apart. With the help of family and friends the grieving individual begins to move forward, gradually returning to the life so sadly interrupted.

Sometimes, however, individuals can become mired in bereavement. Even though the death was months past, they continue to grieve as if it were yesterday, with symptoms sometimes even worsening over time. These symptoms can include an extreme focus on the loss and reminders of the loved one, inability to carry out normal routines, a withdrawal from all social activities, intense longing, and severe depression. They know their loved one is gone, but they still can't believe it. They talk about strong feelings of yearning for the person who died, feelings that don't seem to lessen as time goes on. At times, people with complicated grief may even consider suicide.

Lady Mary of Downton Abbey, the British TV show, showed classic symptoms of complicated grief after her husband was killed unexpectedly in an automobile accident. The new season begins six months after his tragic accident and we see a wan, somnolent Mary. She barely tolerates her family, including her six month old son, George, and either lashes out or withdraws when approached. Her brother-in-law, Tom, is concerned and describes her as "being no better than she was right after the funeral."

Her father wants to protect her by not making any demands and "enfolding her in our love and care," but the grandmother insists he is wrong, that their job is to "bring her back." The grandmother and the butler Carson confront Lady Mary, starting first with declarations of their love for her, but moving into a firm call that for the sake of herself and her son, she must set aside her grief, she must begin to care for the future. "You have a clear choice in front of you, my dear," the grandmother states. "You must either choose death or you must choose life."

Their loving efforts work. You don't really see the process of change, only that the next time Mary walks into the room, she is wearing purple (a favorite Downton color) and not black. The show does imply that the tough love of Carson and her grandmother, the call to Mary to care for something outside herself

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## *What not to say to a grieving friend*

### **THE BEST THINGS TO SAY ....**

1. *I'm so sorry for your loss.*
2. *I wish I had the right words; just know I care.*
3. *I don't know how you feel, but I'm here to help in any way I can.*
4. *You are in my thoughts and prayers.*
5. *My favorite memory of \_\_\_\_\_ is ...*
6. *I am always just a phone call away.*
7. *Give a hug instead of saying anything.*
8. *Let me help ... (don't ask them what ... pick something)*
9. *Do not say anything; just be with the person.*

### **THE WORST THINGS TO SAY ....**

1. *At least she lived a long life; many people die young.*
2. *He is in a better place.*
3. *She did what she was on earth to do and it was her time to go.*
4. *There is a reason for everything.*
5. *Aren't you over him yet; he's been dead for a while now.*
6. *You're still young. You can have another child.*
7. *She was such a good person; God wanted her to be with him.*
8. *I know how you feel.*
9. *Be strong.*

# VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT – TERRI WANTIEZ

*“It’s important not to judge ...”*

Terri Wantiez is one of those Hospice of Green Country (HGC) volunteers you can send anywhere to do any kind of job. And, she has done it all – cleaned cockroach-infested kitchens, washing the floor on her hands and knees, washed bed sheets soiled with blood and urine, held the hands of actively dying patients, and stepped in to give an exhausted caregiver a break to go shopping or get some sleep. On her very first patient assignment, the patient died unexpectedly.

Terri thinks he waited until his wife was out of the house. Terri’s husband, Oscar, was with her and he helped the HGC nurse clean the patient and close his eyes before the wife returned.



“They’re sick ... they’re dying. It’s so very personal. It’s important not to judge their current situation or the lifestyle that brought them to their unkept homes and sometimes early deaths. I think what if it were my brother in this situation? What if it were me? I wouldn’t want anyone to judge me when I’m at the end.”

Terri says the first job of the hospice volunteer is to gain the patient’s trust and in some cases it’s really hard work. “You want to recoil.” Instead she brings root beer to freeze in their ice trays, a refreshing cool snack. And, she has a cleaning kit with rubber and vinyl gloves, sponges & sprays, and a scented candle which she often leaves behind.

*“Once, there’s trust, patients will often share feelings and memories with me they won’t share with their caregivers. That sharing gives them such release.”*

Or, she’s there to listen. “Once, there’s trust, patients will often share feelings and memories with me they won’t share with their caregivers. That sharing gives them such release.” Terri says she knows everything about Ms. Ruth, a patient several years back. “She was poor, old, and dying from a liver brought down by drugs and drink. I visited her every week, helped with her dishes and housework. We became very close.” Terri goes on to say that Ms. Ruth was estranged from her son who was in an Oklahoma prison and with whom she hadn’t communicated in years. HGC made it possible for Ms. Ruth to talk to her son in prison before she died - HGC social workers set up the phone call through the prison warden.

“That kind of extra effort is why I keep coming back to Hospice of Green Country,” Terri says, going on to confess she’s been a volunteer for another hospice, a for-profit hospice. “There is simply NO comparison between HGC and the other hospices.”

Terri says people ask her how she can stand to be around death and dying and she has a hard time convincing them that she finds the work uplifting. “Oh, I have days when I feel burned out,” Terri goes on to say. “I tell HGC no on those days. Sometimes I have to take a month off. You have to have your A-game when you walk into a patient’s home.” She admits she’s always eager to return to the work. She says HGC hospice work fills her spirit.

Hospice of Green Country would like to clone Terri Wantiez.

*Hospice of Green Country*  
**2013 Annual Report**



## Everyone...

Since 1987, Hospice of Green Country's (HGC) vision has been to be the pacesetter for compassionate end-of-life care that serves the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of the patient as well as the patient's family. HGC's mission - to provide compassionate and quality end-of-life care to patients and families, regardless of their ability to pay - is grounded in one core belief: everyone deserves to die with dignity, in comfort and peace.



**Regardless of ability to pay ...** accepting patients who do not have the ability to pay for end-of-life care makes HGC the leading provider of high quality hospice care for those without resources. Decisions regarding care are based on patients' individual needs, not their pay source.

**Quick Fact:** HGC offers translation services and culturally sensitive hospice care to area Hispanic and Latino communities.

## Core Values...

### Hospice of Green Country...

- ...Affirms life.
- ...Believes dying is a natural process and a profoundly personal experience.
- ...Believes suffering can be relieved.
- ...Believes compassionate end-of-life care should be available to all.
- ...Supports the whole person.
- ...Respects and supports the personal, cultural and religious values, beliefs and practices of all.
- ...Practices responsible stewardship of the resources entrusted to us.
- ...Sets the standard for skilled, compassionate care.

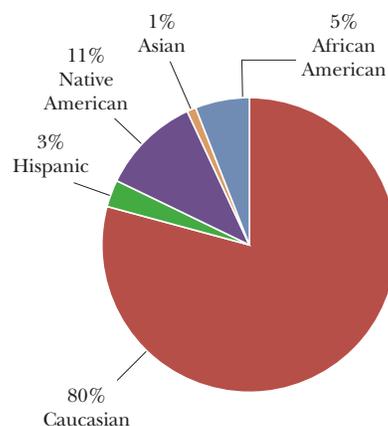


### 2013 Patient Information

Gender  
Female: 116  
Male: 93

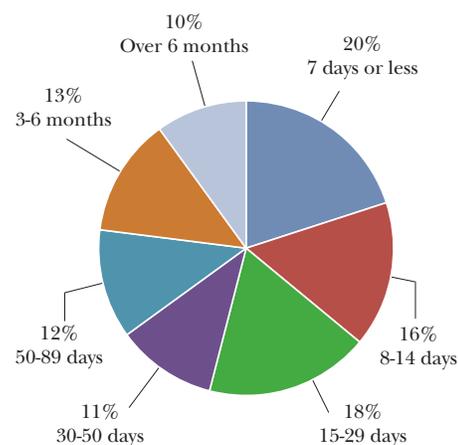
Age  
30-64 years: 47  
65 plus years: 162

### 2013 Patients



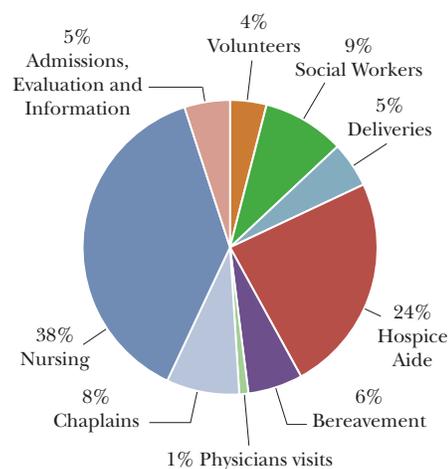
**Quick Fact:** Average length of stay in 2013 was 58.83 days.

### 2013 Days of Service



**Quick Fact:** In 2013, HGC provided comfort and dignity to 209 patients for a total of 12,296 days of hospice care.

### 2013 Direct Care Visits and Phone Calls



## Special Programs . . .

The **Pet Peace of Mind** program allows a cherished pet companion to stay in the home when the patient can no longer feed or care for it due to their own health care needs. PPOM also provides reassurance that this beloved family member will be taken care of after they are gone. PPOM helped fourteen patients provide basic care – food, litter, walks, grooming, vet visits – for **23 pets**, averaging **\$64 per pet**, in 2013.



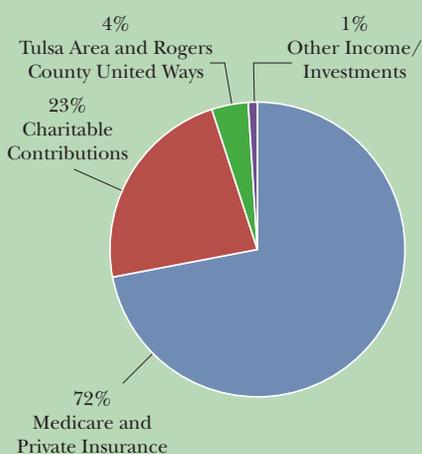
The **Live Alone** program allows patients with limited means, who live alone or who have limited access to a caregiver, the opportunity to stay in their homes in familiar surroundings through special supportive services that maintain their safety and quality of life. Live Alone allowed **twenty-four patients** to stay in their homes surrounded by their cherished belongings by using special services, such as paid caregivers, volunteer home and yard maintenance, etc.

Through **Courtesy Care**, Hospice of Green Country provided a total of **893 days of care** to **33 patients** who would not otherwise afford hospice services. The average age of our Courtesy patients was **57 years**. According to the National Hospice & Palliative Care Organization, the typical for-profit hospice rate in serving low income individuals is 1.5% of patient census. HGC's rate in serving those without resources was **16%** of our patient census in 2013.

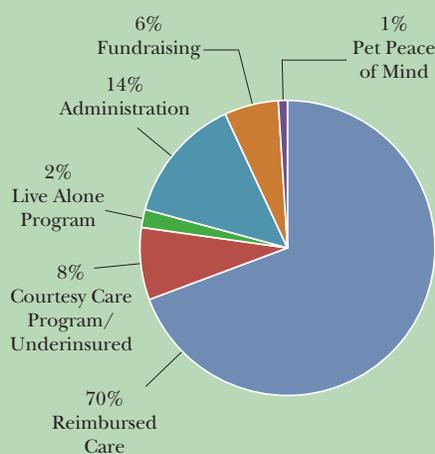
**Grief and Bereavement Services** are offered to each patient's family and friends for at least 13 months following the death of their loved one. In 2013, the Bereavement program followed the families and friends of **191 patients**, spending a total of **730 hours**, helping them work through their loss. A special program "Bear Hugs" is designed for the surviving children and grandchildren of our patients.

**Our Volunteers** are critical to the work of Hospice of Green Country. They bring comfort, dignity, and friendship to terminally ill patients and their families in northeastern Oklahoma. Whether walking a dog, delivering medications, driving a patient to the doctor, or simply being a companion, hospice volunteers bring comfort, care and dignity to patients and their families. **Eighty-five** dedicated volunteers gave **2,472 hours** of service and drove **19,201 miles**, saving the agency **\$63,041**. Medicare requires that 5% of a hospice's direct clinical services be matched by volunteer hours. HGC's matching percentage in 2013 was **21%**.

### 2013 Income: \$2,148 (in thousands)



### 2013 Expenses: \$1,952 (in thousands)



### 2013 Donations by the Numbers

621 gifts received  
 447 donors  
 213 donors who gave memorials for their friends or family  
 9 donors who honored friends and colleagues with a gift  
 53 in-kind gifts received

Please visit our webpage to view the individuals, businesses, and foundations who generously supported our mission and work, as well as those who gave memorials for their friends and family.



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northeastern Oklahoma:

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Tulsa, OK 74119  
918-747-2273

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Claremore, OK 74017  
918-342-1222

**Southwest Office**

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918-224-7403

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

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Hospice of Green Country is licensed by the State of Oklahoma and is Medicare certified.  
It is a member of the Oklahoma Hospice and Palliative Care Association as well as the National  
Hospice and Palliative Care Organization.



Hospice of Green Country, Inc. is northeastern Oklahoma's only United Way supported hospice.  
It receives funding from both the Tulsa Area United Way and the Rogers County United Way.

# WALKING SPARKY – *The Pet Peace of Mind program at work*

Maggie was an 82-year-old patient with a bad heart and macular degeneration that had left her legally blind. She was weak and not doing well when her physician put her on hospice. Maggie lived alone with her dog Sparky, a 15-year-old dachshund and miniature pincher mix.

A week after admission, Terri Wantiez, volunteer extraordinaire, showed up to be Maggie's and Sparky's volunteer. Maggie had been falling so she and Sparky were housebound and Terri was sent to be company to Maggie and to walk the dog as part of the Pet Peace of Mind program. All she had to do was jangle the leash and Sparky was alive, prancing and dancing to go outside.

One day as she was out walking Sparky, Terri wondered if Maggie knew her husband, Oscar, who had grown up in Okmulgee, Maggie's hometown. It seemed to Terri that over the years she had heard Oscar's mother talk about her best friend Maggie who no longer lived in town. When she returned from Sparky's walk, she asked Maggie if she knew an Oscar Wantiez from Okmulgee.

"Oh my, yes!" exclaimed Maggie. "He's my best friend's son." Terri proceeded to introduce herself to Maggie and when she left that day, Maggie told her to give "Oscar Dale" a hug. It is such a small, small world!

Maggie and Sparky are no longer on HGC service. They have "graduated," meaning that Maggie's health improved so much under the watchful care of the HGC care team that she no longer met the criteria for hospice service. HGC has had several patients graduate, including a 100-year-old woman who is still going strong – we keep in touch. It is why we hope patients come to us sooner, rather than later.

As for Maggie? She continues to do well and Terri still goes to visit and to walk Sparky.



## HOW PET PEACE OF MIND GOT STARTED

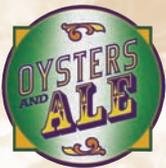
*By Delana Taylor McNac, DVM*

I've worked as both a veterinarian and as a chaplain for Hospice of Green Country. I never thought to connect the two until one day I found a hospice patient talking to and petting an invisible dog. He wasn't suffering from dementia. He was simply missing his dog which he had to give to relatives when he moved into the nursing home. It didn't seem right for him to lose the comfort and companionship of his beloved pet at the end of his life.

There are other issues as well with hospice patients and their pets. Many cannot physically take care of their animals or cannot afford the pet food and vet visits the pet needs. Often, family members step in and the solutions hurt both the patients and their beloved animals.

I became determined to figure out a way to keep hospice patients and their pets together. Hospice of Green Country agreed. Pet Peace of Mind (PPOM) was soon born; it was the summer of 2007.

*continued on page 7*



# 2014 OYSTERS & ALE BY THE NUMBERS ...

*And, we aren't just shucking around!*



<b>2,800</b>	Oysters consumed.
<b>5</b>	Oyster beds constantly replenished with ice & oysters.
<b>257</b>	People in attendance.
<b>5</b>	Craft beer breweries.
<b>5</b>	Gallons each of cocktail sauce & horseradish consumed.
<b>25</b>	Bags of oyster shells recycled to reinforce a driveway.
<b>\$51,174</b>	Raised to support the HGC mission and work.

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# CONSIDER A SIMPLE BEQUEST

Naming Hospice of Green Country (HGC) or your favorite charity as a beneficiary in your will or trust can be an effective way to make a lasting gift. Many people would like to do more for their charity, but have other responsibilities to consider. A gift in your will or trust allows you to give when you no longer need the funds and it also lowers your estate taxes.

You can save even more in taxes by giving from your retirement plan or IRA. You simply name Hospice of Green Country as one of the beneficiaries of your IRA upon your death. It's an excellent way for you to have a lasting impact on the work and mission that you love so dearly.

At death, IRAs and retirement plans are exposed to not only estate tax, but also income tax, unless given to a charity. If you plan on making a charitable gift as a legacy to your life or to the life of a loved one, consider making it from your retirement plan or IRA or as a simple bequest in your will.

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## COMPLICATED GRIEF *continued from page 3*

– her love as a new mother and the duties of managing the estate – caused her to turn aside from her intense sorrow.

It's important for family and friends to carefully step in and get help for someone who seems stuck in their intense grief. There is help. Talk to your hospice chaplain or the pastoral counselor from your religious community. In Tulsa, there's the additional resource of the Tristesse Grief Center – a fellow Tulsa Area United Way agency that provides counseling and education services for individuals and their families who are struggling with tragedy.

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## HOW PET PEACE OF MIND GOT STARTED *continued from page 5*

The program pays for pet food, kitty litter, routine vet visits, and the yearly shots, but the day-to-day operations depend on the generosity of time given by the HGC volunteers. They walk the dogs, take pets to veterinarian and grooming appointments and bring them to visit if their owners are in nursing homes. Most importantly, PPOM helps patients make arrangements for where pets will go after they die so they don't have to worry. The program has found new homes for dogs, cats, birds, even an iguana, and has had patients linger on until they knew their beloved animal friend had a forever home. Since its beginning, the PPOM program at HGC has cared for 292 pets.

In 2009 HGC gave the Banfield Charitable Trust permission to take Pet Peace of Mind national. Banfield offers start-up grants of \$5,000 to non-profit hospices to begin their own PPOM program. Currently there are 76 PPOM programs in 33 states across the country.



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918-747-CARE (2273)  
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