



# HOSPICE *Happenings*

Providing physical, emotional, and spiritual support to terminally ill patients and their families with free, around-the-clock registered nursing availability and trained volunteers.

## Caregiving: Beyond the Catchy Phrases

*by Astrid Raffinpeyloz with input from caregivers*

'Silver Tsunami.' 'Sandwich Generation.' These buzzwords capture the scope of our caregiving crisis — but catchy labels will not solve it. In Clallam County and across the country, people are living longer, and many are juggling elder care alongside raising children and maintaining full-time jobs. The realities are complex, and the solutions must be concrete.

Planning ahead is an act of love. The older generation owes it to their children, grandchildren, friends, and neighbors to prepare for the inevitable caregiving years. It starts with smart, thoughtful changes: moving into homes with no-step entries, first-floor bedrooms and bathrooms; installing accessible features like ramped entrances and lever-style doorknobs; naming a trusted Health Care Durable Power of Attorney before decision-making capacity declines.

Families must anticipate various scenarios. Will an adult child become the primary caregiver? What support is available from agencies? Are there financial means for private caregiving or assisted living? These questions, though difficult, can ease future burdens if addressed early.

For those stepping into the role of caregiver — especially family members — information is power. Support groups exist. At VHOCC, the Sequim Bay Yacht Club Respite Care Fund can offer relief (see the Director's Note). Building a reliable support system can bring crucial breathing room. Help may come in small ways: a neighbor running errands; a friend listening without judgment, even at midnight; someone organizing a meal train or keeping others informed through group texts.

But even the best advice can feel out of reach. Sleep well. Exercise. Take care of yourself. These self-care ideals often clash with the relentless nature of caregiving. Jo Ann Fjellman, who has cared for her husband for two decades, likened it to training to run for 50 miles — only to find 100 more ahead, and then another 100 still. Long-term caregiving, especially in cases of dementia, brings an incremental grief that can be invisible to others. Sometimes, it takes an outsider to help a caregiver truly see the emotional toll.

Nurturing existing relationships — and building new ones, if possible — with others who understand becomes essential.

*Continued inside >*



## Join the Annual Reach & Row Fundraiser!

The Sequim Bay Yacht Club has raised money for our Respite Fund since 1991, allowing patients and their families access to capable caregivers at times of need.

**The rowing/paddling event is Saturday, Sept. 13, starting at 9 a.m.** This 5K course on Sequim Bay is open to any human-powered watercraft including kayaks, canoes, inflatables, paddleboards, rowboats, and rowing shells. Entry fee is \$30 per person for pre-registration ([webscorer.com/sbyc](http://webscorer.com/sbyc)) or \$60 on race day. All entry fees benefit Volunteer Hospice. Then enjoy a chili feed after the race!

**The sailing regatta is Saturday, Sept. 20.** For info, visit [sequimbayyacht.club/hospice-sailing](http://sequimbayyacht.club/hospice-sailing).

## Notes to VHOCC from Grateful Families

"We are so thankful for all of you. Your efforts, knowledge, and love made the experience much easier for all of us."

"I would not have been able to care for my mother in her last months without your help. The entire staff that I had the pleasure of meeting were wonderful."

"You are surely earning your angel wings here on earth. The love and support that we got from you was above and beyond. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts."



## VHOCC Resources & Program Calendar

All programs are free of charge. Registration is required for all except Follow-Up Grief Support Groups and Death Cafés. All programs are subject to cancellation. Call 360-452-1511 or email [reception@vhocc.org](mailto:reception@vhocc.org).

### COMMUNITY ORIENTATIONS

#### In-Person: Port Angeles

First Wednesday of each month, 11 a.m.–noon.  
VHOCC office, 829 E. 8th Street, Port Angeles.

#### In-Person: Sequim

First Tuesday of each month, 11 a.m.–noon.  
Location given at time of registration.

### GRIEF SUPPORT GROUPS

#### In-Person Group: Port Angeles

None until 2026.

#### In-Person Group: Sequim

Mondays, Oct. 27–Nov. 24, 1–3 p.m.

### FOLLOW-UP GRIEF SUPPORT GROUPS

Drop-in groups open to those who have attended a VHOCC grief support group.

#### In-Person Group: Port Angeles

First Thursday of each month, 4:15–5:15 p.m.

#### In-Person Group: Sequim

Fourth Monday of each month, 1–2 p.m.

### EMPOWER YOURSELF: ADVICE FOR LIVING ALONE

A practical, 4-week series on Home Maintenance, Cooking for One, Household Finances, and Self-Care. Mondays, Sept. 8–29, 1–3 p.m. Come to one or all!

### ONE-ON-ONE GRIEF SUPPORT

For anyone in the community grieving a loss. Call 360-406-4439 and ask for bereavement support.

### SOUL CARE

#### SPEAKER SERIES

Offered every other month on the second Wednesday.

#### Wednesday, Sept. 10, noon–1:30 p.m. via Zoom

'Making Space for You in the Midst of Caregiving' with Elizabeth Miller

#### Wednesday, Nov. 12, noon–1:30 p.m. via Zoom

'Wise Caregiving' with Jonathan Prescott.

#### DEATH CAFÉ 'TEA TO DIE FOR'

Open, casual, freeform discussions relating to end of life, death, and dying.

**Port Angeles:** Fourth Wednesday of each month, 4–5:30 p.m., VHOCC Conference Room, 829 E. 8th Street  
Fourth Thursday of each month, 5:30–7 p.m. at Studio Bob, 118½ E. Front Street.

**Sequim:** Second Monday of each month at KSQM-FM, 609 Washington Street, #17.

## Ongoing Generosity Supports Respite Care

Since 1991, Sequim Bay Yacht Club has raised funds every fall to support VHOCC's Respite Care program. Over the years, SBYC has raised more than half-a-million dollars.



These funds allow informal caregivers — the spouses, children, siblings, and friends who care for our patients around the clock — to take a much-needed break of up to 72 hours. This break can mean the difference between exhaustion and renewal.

Why is respite care so vital for family caregivers?

It protects their health. Caring for someone with a life-limiting illness is physically and emotionally demanding. Without rest, caregivers experience fatigue, anxiety, depression, and even deterioration of their own health.

It helps them remain a caregiver. Stepping away, even briefly, allows caregivers to come back with renewed patience, attentiveness, and compassion.

It reminds them that they matter, too. Respite gives caregivers permission to care for themselves — to rest, run errands, and tend to their own needs — without guilt.

All VHOCC patients are supported by someone who loves them. We know that caring for the caregiver is just as essential as caring for the patient. Thanks to the foresight and continued generosity of SBYC, we can support both. Thank you SBYC, for expanding what is possible for those in our care!

*Priya Jayadev, Executive Director*

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### Caregiving: Beyond the Catchy Phrases

Friends who adapt to changing circumstances make life richer for both patient and caregiver. Jo Ann shared how her friends jump into a 'doing mode,' cooking, cleaning, and showing up with purpose. It is far more meaningful than the vague and overwhelming "Let me know how I can help."

Caregiving is also an act of release. As the patient's condition evolves, caregivers must practice letting go. "Holding the expectation of death is exhausting," says Jo Ann. Shifting from problem-solving to acceptance transformed her experience. Her daily gratitude practice — though it took time to resonate — now brings calm and clarity in the face of uncertainty. Jo Ann concludes: "It's about finding joy and delight because they are the foundations of the future I want to build."

At VHOCC, our nursing staff and volunteers care deeply about patients and their loved ones. These frontline heroes often pick up on the unspoken emotions in a room. One CNA described the moment a family member's face softens with relief when reassured: "You're caring for your loved one beautifully." As CNA Becca B. explains, "It is a gift to support our families — to step into the hard moments and restore a person's comfort. It is also a gift to teach frantic caregivers the skills they never thought they would need but now hunger to learn."

## Volunteers of the Month



**JULY:** Bob and Linda Warder are a dynamic duo! Bob has a regular shift in our Lending Closet, while Linda helps on the Donations Team and in the Lending Closet. They also take on other projects with joy and gusto.

Linda says, "I just love it here, the mission and the people. This is a spectacular organization!" Bob appreciates how VHOCC took care of Linda's mother and wants to pay it forward. He loves meeting other volunteers and people who benefit from the Lending Closet. We are grateful to Swain's and Oak Table Café, who donated gift certificates to honor Bob and Linda.

**AUGUST:** Steady, agreeable, and willing: **Leslie Campbell** is all these things and more. She handles the Lending Closet with grace, patience, and determination. She readily cleans returned equipment, reorganizes shelves, and distributes flyers around town. Besides that, she is not afraid



to trudge in the snow to put up our 'Closed Due to Inclement Weather' notice on winter days. We are pleased to present Leslie with a gift certificate donated by Mad Maggi Boutique.



**SEPTEMBER:** Since 2019, **Donna Geer** has facilitated grief support groups in Port Angeles. After moving to Port Ludlow, she continued volunteering and now travels several times a year to P.A. to lead a group. That's how much she cares for Volunteer Hospice! In her role as facilitator, she says she is humbled by the participants' courage, witnessing their vulnerability and openness to share their stories and support one another. VHOCC is honored to have her among the volunteers, and we appreciate Mad Maggi Boutique's donation of a gift certificate for Donna.

## Making the Most of Your Giving

Volunteer Hospice of Clallam County does not bill anyone. We rely on the generosity of individuals like you. Because your support makes our work possible, we want to share some ways you can give and potentially save on taxes at the same time.



The most familiar option is giving with cash, check, or credit card. If you itemize your deductions, you can typically write off up to 60% of your adjusted gross income (AGI) for donations to qualified nonprofits like VHOCC. With recently passed legislation, the 'universal charitable deduction' will be available even if you don't itemize. Beginning in 2026, taxpayers who take the standard deduction will be able to deduct cash donations up to \$1,000 (individual) or \$2,000 (married couples).

While cash giving is straightforward, there are other options that may offer greater tax advantages.

If you own investments (stocks, mutual funds) that have gone up in value, donating them directly to VHOCC lets you avoid capital gains tax and still deduct the full market value. This may require a bit more coordination, but it can significantly increase your tax savings.

If you're 70½ or older, you can donate up to \$108,000 per year directly from your IRA to VHOCC through Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs). This donation counts toward your required minimum distribution (RMD) and doesn't increase your taxable income — even if you don't itemize.

With a Donor-Advised Fund (DAF), you can make a charitable contribution now, receive an immediate tax deduction, and recommend grants to VHOCC over time. Your gift can grow tax-free in the fund, and the process can streamline your giving and recordkeeping.

If you would like more information about tax-advantaged giving to Volunteer Hospice of Clallam County, please contact Priya at 360.797.8974 or [priya.j@vhocc.org](mailto:priya.j@vhocc.org).

## HOSPICE HUGS: Thank You to These Generous VHOCC Supporters!

### General Fund

Ann Allen  
Anonymous (4)  
Max Blair  
Sara Blake  
Linda Cameron  
Ross Canning  
Susan Cannon  
Carlos Cordero  
Janet Culver  
Thomas Deeney  
Jeanne Edwards  
Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund  
Janet Flatley  
Stanley J. Forsell  
Fraternal Order of Eagles Ladies' Aux. 483  
Nancy Goldstien  
Etta Grall  
Nancy F. Guinn  
Thomas Hamman  
Dr. Ed Hopfner  
Mark A. Johnson

Juan de Fuca Foundation for the Arts  
Carrie Kalina  
Marc Kalla  
Margie Kedish  
Kretschmer Private Foundation  
Dow & Marlene Lambert  
Suzanne Lockwood  
Rena Loving  
Bruce Manaka  
Robert M. McMillen  
Andrew J. Meyers Estate  
Sally L. Moore  
Carmen Moseley  
Terry Ann Norberg  
Barbara Orr Estate  
Adeline Ostrowski  
Port Angeles Marathon Association  
Cari Rene  
Betsy Robins  
Robert Schaller  
Suzanne M. Schneider  
Marion Shaw

Stephanie Sherman  
Soroptimist International of Port Angeles  
Vanguard Charitable  
Women of St. Joseph  
John Zey

### Community-Sponsored Fundraisers

Esprit Gala & Conference  
Louella Gebhardt Memorial Golf Classic  
Peninsula Dream Machines Car Club  
Peninsula Men's Gospel Singers

### Grants

Clallam County Physicians  
Community Benefit Fund  
Maybelle Clark Macdonald Fund  
Olympic View Community Foundation

### Volunteer of the Month Program

Mad Maggi Boutique  
Oak Table Café  
Swain's General Store



# Volunteer Hospice OF CLALLAM COUNTY

829 E. 8th Street, Port Angeles, WA 98362

Nonprofit Org  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Olympic Mailing  
& Printing Services

## Clinical Staff

Haley, RN, BSN, Clinical Team Manager  
Mary, DNP, FNP-C, Medical Director  
Lynn, RN, BSN, MS, Lead Nurse  
Shelby, Patient Navigator  
Ashley, CNA  
Becca B, CNA  
Becca W, RN, BSN  
Brittany, RN  
Deanna, RN  
Deb, RN  
Ellen, RN  
Jannae, RN, BSN  
Jeanette, CNA  
Kim, RN  
Molly, RN, BSN  
Nicole, RN  
Stephanie, RN

## Mission Support Staff

Priya Jayadev, Executive Director  
Astrid Raffinpeyloz, Volunteer Services Manager  
Heather Loyd, Administrative Services Manager  
Myrna Schaaf, Administrative Assistant

## Board of Directors

Roger Oakes, President  
Loriann Hamilton Ridgeway, Vice President  
Karen McCormick, Secretary  
Stuart Koop, Treasurer  
Wendy Brown  
Marca Davies  
Thom Hightower  
Suzanne Lockwood  
Tyrrell Prosser  
Peter Raiswell  
Ted Ripley  
Sandra Tatro

## Amazon Wish List Success

Thanks to all who've purchased items from VHOCC's Amazon Wish Lists. You saved us more than \$1,000 with the purchase of nursing supplies such as Calmoseptine, Dentips, medical gloves, no-rinse shampoo caps, baby wipes, and bath wipes — plus office supplies like packing tape, AA and AAA batteries, and #10 envelopes.

Would you prefer to receive this newsletter via email?  
Contact us at [office@vhocc.org](mailto:office@vhocc.org). Thank you!

## Farewell and Many Thanks to Betty Conger!



There's a season for everything — and now, it's time to bid a fond farewell to one of our longtime volunteers: Betty Conger. When Betty arrived in Sequim in 2006, she brought with her a decade of hospice volunteer experience from Pennsylvania. Under the mentorship of Rose Crumb, Betty served as a respite volunteer, offering comfort and support to those in need. About 15 years later, she gracefully transitioned into making bereavement phone calls — an important role she embraced wholeheartedly. Betty was known for her meticulous documenting of each conversation, and she often nurtured connections with her callers for more than a year. As Betty begins a new chapter at age 93, relocating to be nearer her loved ones, we celebrate her extraordinary legacy of care. She will be deeply missed!

## Thank You, Peninsula Dream Machines!

This amazing car club recently presented VHOCC with a check for \$2,119.43, funds raised during the club's Hot Rods & Hot Dogs show on June 15.

