Summer 2009

A Newsletter for Friends and Supporters

Volume 3, Issue 2

A Humorist Illuminates the Blessings of Hospice

By Jane E. Brody, Published: January 23, Article adapted from- 2007 New York Times

As the self-described "man who would not die," the humor columnist Art Buchwald was a strange bedfellow with the hospice movement. But in the months between the end of his extended hospice stay and his death from kidney failure at age 81, Mr. Buchwald was a living testimonial to the benefits of hospice care. What he hoped to do, he wrote in his recently published book, "Too Soon to Say Goodbye" (Random House, 2006), was make "hospice" a household word. "Unless they've had some experience with it, the hospice is still a mystery to most people," he wrote. "Because hospice deals with death, people tend not to talk about it."

Early last year, Mr. Buchwald wrote, after his kidney's failed, after he lost half a leg and after doctors told him he would have to be on dialysis for the rest of his life, he decided "enough already." So he moved from a critical care bed to a comfortable room in a lovely hospice in Washington, D.C., to await his death, which his doctor expected would come in a few weeks.

But Mr. Buchwald managed to charm the Angel of Death. He did not die. Instead, his kidneys rebounded while he entertained a steady stream of visits from the rich and famous and ordinary in his hospice living room. And while his doctors said his kidneys would surely crash again soon, they did not. Finally, after five months of having "a swell time— the best time of my life, "Mr. Buchwald checked himself out of hospice to resume an ordinary life of a famous old funny man.

He continued to write his column and he worked on his book, in which he provided a first-hand account of the advantages of hospice.

"The hospice gives a person the opportunity to die with dignity," he wrote. "It provides care, help, and as much comfort as possible."

And not just for the person who is dying. As Mr. Buchwald described his experience, "When the patient enters the hospice, an entire team sets to work to meet the family's needs—a doctor, a team of nurses, a case manager, a social worker, a chaplain, a nursing assistant, a bereavement coordinator, and of course, the volunteers, "who give nurses more time to spend with patients by answering phones, screening calls and running errands. (continued page 3)

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Mark Your Calendars

- July 1, 2009– 10:30am– Senior Health & Welfare Forum. For more information, please call 205-7575.
- **July 21, 2009** 11:30am-1:00pm Life Care Planning/Five Wishes at Encore Senior Village. Please RSVP to 320-7505.
- September 11, 2009- 12:00pm Life Care Planning/Five Wishes for NARFE (National Active and Retired Federal Employees) Green Valley Chapter at Friends in Deed. Call 205-7575 for more information.

SAVE THE DATE: Palliative Care Teaching Day - October 7, 2009

Hospice Inquiries Admissions and Patient Support (520) 205-7700 Charitable Gifts
Carondelet Foundation
(520) 873-5000

Events (520) 205-7557

In-Patient Unit (520) 205-7600

~Letter From Our Director~

Summer greetings to all...

Isn't Tucson a lovely place to settle in the summer? Beautiful mornings and evenings, magical sunsets, powerful monsoons, less traffic, and everything just a little more laid back than usual. Yes, there are actually some of us that thrive in the heat!

But... even if you dread the heat there is still much to celebrate.

We just completed a successful Joint Commission survey and acknowledge our entire hospice team for this accomplishment. The unique contributions of each associate and volunteer ensured that we would do well.

We are also very proud of how families feel supported by our program. One-hundred percent of our hospice families surveyed stated that they would choose hospice again. This is due to the commitment of our associates and volunteers who provide service to patients and families in a way that expresses God's love.

Most of all, I celebrate the kindness and compassion of our hospice team. The concern they have for each other and those we serve is evident every single day...the hugs in the hallway, the flowers on the way to a patient's house, the weekend call to a wife for her dying husband, the prayers for those who have passed and those who remain. It is this, their spirit of goodness and generosity that brings light into every day.

Have a joyful, peaceful and spirit-filled summer.

.....

Bonnie Knobloch,

Executive Director

FAMILY CORNER

New Staff & Volunteers

Please extend a warm welcome to our newest volunteers!

Ivan Borbon Gabrielle Brown **Emily Cousens** Mosab Frefer Amanda Garlish Judy Gersmeyer Ashlee Hendersn Jose Grijalva Aaron Havas Jose Herrera Vanessa Jordan Annie Le Katie Miller Shannon Lim **Beatrice Muse** Alexia Schou **Andrew Wang** Michelle Yauger

Community Volunteers Needed

We are in need of volunteers who are able to sew ornaments for our upcoming Tree of Memories Event.

Please contact Tara Norris

© 520-205-7557. We will begin our project August 1, 2009.

Thank you for your generous support!

Recipe of the Month- Confetti Corn Quesadillas

Ingredients:

1 cup fresh corn kernels

1 cup grated zucchini, squeezed dry

1/4 cup chopped cilantro

1 jalapeno pepper, seeded, chopped

1 1/2 cups drained and rinsed canned black beans (15 oz. can)

1/2 teaspoon salt, 1/4 teaspoon pepper, 1 teaspoon chili powder

2 cups shredded Monterey Jack

8 large flour tortillas

2 tablespoons vegetable oil

In a large bowl, toss together corn, zucchini, cilantro, jalapeno, beans, salt, pepper, and chili powder. Stir in the cheese. Heat the oven to 200°. Set the tortillas on a work surface. Put about 1/3 cup of the filling on half of each tortilla, spreading it to the edge and then folding the other half over it. In a large, nonstick frying pan, heat 1/2 tablespoon of the oil to medium; add tortilla and cook for about 2 minutes. Transfer to a baking sheet and bake keep warm. Cut into wedges. Serves 4 to 6.

NEWS YOU CAN USE

(continued from Cover Story)

An Underused Service

Hospice services, in institutional settings or at home, benefit only about one person in three who dies in this country. "There are still over one million Americans who die each year without receiving hospice or hospice-type services that would have benefited them and their families," according to a report, "Access to Hospice Care," produced in 2003 by the Hastings Center.

And for most who do get hospice care, the benefit is short-lived, with the average patient receiving care for less than three weeks, I person in 3 for the last week of life, and I person in 10 for the last day of life.

With time in hospice so short, staff members often lack the opportunity to provide optimum care for a dying patient's physical and emotional needs. It can take days or weeks to determine the best way to control a patient's pain, to help a patient tie up life's loose ends and to fulfill a patient's spiritual and emotional needs.

The most common report from families after a loved one's death is regret that hospice had not been called in sooner. In a study of 275 patients, families that benefited from hospice thought three months would have been optimal and that less than three weeks was too short.

Understanding End-of-Life Care

The philosophy of hospice is neither to hasten nor postpone death. As Dr. Matt Kestenbaum, the medical director of Mr. Buchwald's hospice put it: "We're not here to pull the plug. We let nature take its course, and we give patients all the things they need to be comfortable."

Dying "naturally" in hospice does not preclude treatment for common complications like blood clots, urinary tract or respiratory infections or painful bone metastases from advanced cancer. Hospice expenses are automatically covered by Medicare. Most employer-based and private insurers provide hospice coverage as well.

Choosing hospice care does not mean patients lose the services of their personal doctors. Nor are the penalized if, like Mr. Buchwald, they leave hospice care because their condition improves or they want a therapy the hospice does not provide. They can return to regular insurance benefits, and should the need arise later, they can reinstate hospice benefits.

The goal should be to refocus hope on what might be realistically achieved in the time remaining. A patient who enters hospice sooner rather than later can have the opportunity to spend quality time with family and friends, settle unfinished business and find closure to strained relationships.

For those who wish to obtain hospice care at home, it is essential to have a caregiver who is willing and able to take primary responsibility for the patient, assisted by the hospice team. For patients who need nursing home care, there are many hospices that have contracts with nursing homes.

Ideally, patients or families should research hospice options well in advance of needing them. For further information on hospice, go to the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization web site, www.nhpco.org. The web site provides a list of questions to ask when seeking hospice services.

When to Consider Hospice Care

- The patient has sought treatment in an emergency room or been hospitalized for diseaserelated episode twice in the past year
- The physician is receiving an increased number of calls and requests from family caregivers
- Family members appear to be overburdened with or fatigued by caregiving
- After hospitalization, the patient cannot return home and is admitted to a nursing facility
- The patient has had a weight loss of 10% or more in the past six months
- The patient's appetite has been steadily declining, unrelated to any other medical condition

To initiate a hospice consultation or for more information about Carondelet Hospice & Palliative Care, please call 205-7700



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The Gift that "Gives Back"

Gifts are used to advance the mission of Carondelet Health Network, to help purchase equipment, enhance facilities, expand services, fund staff education and to reach out to meet the health care needs of our communities throughout

Southern Arizona.

You can also give by visiting the Carondelet Foundation Website at: www.carondelet.org/foundation

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