

# Hospice News



Carondelet Hospice & Palliative Care

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## Nancy Epperson is named Executive Director

We are pleased to announce the appointment of Nancy Epperson, RN BSN, as Executive Director of Carondelet Hospice and Palliative Care effective November 2013! Martha Gerganoff, COO/CNO, Carondelet St. Mary's Hospital, made the official announcement at the November All Staff meeting.

Nancy is no stranger to Carondelet Health Network and Carondelet Hospice. She has been with Carondelet for a total of 32 years, 23 years with Carondelet Hospice and 15 of those years in Carondelet Hospice leadership roles.

As a native Arizonan, Nancy is a graduate of the University of Arizona College of Nursing. She holds certification as a Hospice and Palliative Care Administrator (CHPCA)



through the Hospice and Palliative Care Nurses Organization. She has also served on the Board of the Arizona Hospice and Palliative Care Organization.

## The Ethic of Reciprocity

The Golden Rule or ethic of reciprocity is a maxim, ethical code or morality that essentially states either of the following:

-One should treat others as one would like others to treat oneself. (Positive form)

-One should not treat others in ways that one would not like to be treated (Negative form, also known as the Silver Rule).

As a concept, the Golden Rule has a history that long predates the term

"Golden Rule", or "Golden law", as it was called from the 1670s. As a concept of "the ethic of reciprocity," it has its roots in a wide range of world cultures, and is a standard way that different cultures use to resolve conflicts.

## Holiday Volunteer Activities

Tucson Electric Power employees and their families held a pot luck dinner at Carondelet's Holy Family Center the week before Christmas. Over 130 gifts were wrapped in preparation for delivery to hospice patients and their families. This is the 31st year that TEP has partnered with Carondelet Hospice and Palliative Care to share holiday joy in the communities of Pima and Santa Cruz counties.



## Santa Deliveries Spread Joy

On December 23, 2013, TEP employees (dressed as Santa and Mrs. Claus,) along with volunteers, delivered gifts and turkey dinners to hospice patients and their families that were identified by Carondelet interdisciplinary team members. Most of the gift requests were modest everyday items that the families simply had no resources to purchase. Families from Tucson to Nogales, who are in the

midst of one of life's most challenging chapters, were delighted to receive the presents, food, and a friendly visit from Santa and his helpers.

Roger Coonts, Carondelet Hospice Volunteer Coordinator reported that one gentleman requested a cowboy hat for his holiday gift. He was spending his remaining days in a skilled nursing facility. "The delight on his face when he received the hat was contagious.

His caregivers had never seen him so happy," reports Coonts.

Medicare mandates that every hospice provider maintain a volunteer staff sufficient to provide at least 5% of direct patient care and administrative services.

To request more information about becoming a Carondelet Hospice Volunteer, call 520-205-7567.



## The Myth of Getting Over It

Adapted from an article by Steven Kalas, columnist for the Las Vegas Review Journal. Reprinted with permission.

It's my attempt to answer grieving spouses, family members: When will I get over this? How do I get over this?

You don't get over it. Getting over it is an inappropriate goal. The loss changes you. It changes your existence. You are forever different.

You don't want to get over it. Don't act surprised. As awful a burden as grief is, you know intuitively that it matters, that it is profoundly important to be grieving. Your grief plays a crucial part in staying connected to the lost life. To give up your grief would mean losing them yet again. If I had the power to take your grief away, you'd fight me to keep it. Your grief is awful, but it is also holy. And somewhere inside, you know that.

The goal is not to get over it. The goal is to get on with it.

Profound grief is like being in a stage play wherein suddenly the stagehands push a grand piano into the middle of the set. The piano paralyzes the play. No matter where you move, it impedes your ability to interact with the other players. You keep banging into it, surprised each time that it's still there. It takes all your concentration to work around it, when you have little ability to concentrate on anything.

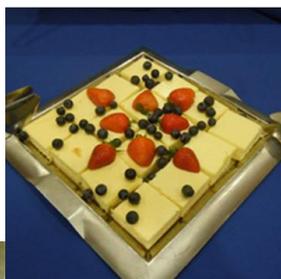
The piano changes everything. The entire play must be rewritten around it.

But over time the piano is pushed to stage left. You are the playwright, and slowly, surely, you begin to stop reacting to the intrusive piano. Instead, you engage it. You begin to write the piano into each scene, into the story of your life.

You learn to play that piano. You're surprised to find that you want to play, that it's meaningful, even peaceful to play it. At first your songs are filled with pain, bitterness, even despair. But later you find your songs contain beauty, peace, a greater capacity for love and compassion. You and grief — together — begin to compose hope. Who'da thought?

Your grief becomes an intimate treasure, though the spaces between the grief lengthen. You no longer need to play the piano every day, or even every month. But later, staring out your kitchen window on a random Tuesday morning, you welcome the sigh, the wistful pain that moves through your heart and reminds you that the lost life mattered.

You wipe the dust off the piano and sit down to play.



## Memorial Tree Lighting

It is our holiday tradition to invite the families we have served and members of the community to create a memorial star ornament and attend one of three tree lighting events:

- **Tucson**, where a harpist plays holiday tunes while guests enjoy desserts and warm beverages followed by a program filled with music and reflection.
- **Green Valley**, where we all enjoy a light lunch of tea sandwiches and the beautiful music of a harp. Afterward, there is a brief ceremony and community song.
- **Nogales**, where mariachis play traditional music and families gather in the chapel of Holy Cross Hospital to light candles in memory of their loved ones.