

## Help for Nursing Home, Assisted Living Residents

A new way that Montgomery Hospice cares for patients in extended care facilities improves comfort for people who reside in those institutions.

Since 1981, Montgomery Hospice's core Hospice at Home service has comforted patients living in extended care facilities (ECFs). Commonly called nursing homes, ECFs include skilled nursing facilities, continuing care retirement communities, assisted living facilities and group homes.

Montgomery Hospice's recent innovation is to organize Hospice at Home caregivers with experience working in facilities into a specialized Facilities Team. Nurses, nursing aides, social workers, volunteers, grief counselors, a chaplain and a doctor comprise the team.

The Facilities Team works hand-in-hand with employees of nursing homes, resulting in valuable support for terminally ill residents, their families and even nursing home staff.

### COMBINED CARE

Montgomery County is home to excellent nursing homes whose employees do a good job caring for residents.

Terminally ill people living in facilities tend to have multiple health problems that require extra time and attention. The Montgomery Hospice Facilities Team brings extra "hands and eyes" to those patients, improving their quality of life.

The Facilities Team enhances, but can never replace, the vital care that our nursing home partners provide. Cooperation is key, and working together yields the best combinations of care.

### VOLUNTEER & BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT

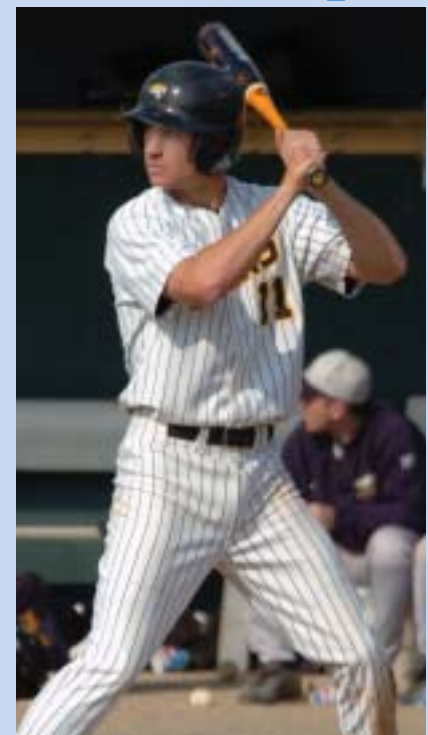
The volunteers and bereavement counselors on the Facilities Team have no counterparts at facilities. That means the Montgomery Hospice volunteers and grief counselors provide services nursing homes typically don't.

For example, Montgomery Hospice volunteers are trained as companions and caregivers for terminally ill patients. Some volunteers give soothing hand massages to nursing home residents. Others, called 11th Hour Volunteers, are trained to be with patients nearing death. They help ensure that patients don't die alone.

Helping family members cope with grief is typically not part of a nursing home's service, but it is part of Montgomery Hospice's mission. Montgomery Hospice provides free counseling to families of hospice patients for more than a year after a



## Hits for Hospice



A father and son's bond through baseball inspired a new way to support local hospice care. See Page 3.

patient's death. This care helps loved ones members adjust to loss.

### ACCESS & COMMUNICATION

Hospice care is a right, that people are entitled to, usually through Medicare, Medicaid and private insurance.

The availability of the Montgomery Hospice Facilities Team ensures that residents of extended care facilities can

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The Facilities Team: (First row left to right) Volunteer Coordinator Rachel Altemus, Dr. Cindy Williams, Team Manager Blanche Ventura, Nurse Deena Rumford, Bereavement Care Director Elaine Tiller. Second row: Social worker Adell Blankenbaker, Nurse Anne Street, Social Worker Tina Adler, Chaplain Gary Fink, Nurse Nancy Krause, Professional Liaison Kathy Menold.



## From Ann's Office *A Double Dose of Good News*

Two recent developments show these are exciting, encouraging times for people in Montgomery County who care about quality of life through all stages of living.

### **FACILITIES TEAM CREATED**

Few advances in local end-of-life care have the potential to help as many people as Montgomery Hospice's new Facilities Team. (See *Help for Nursing Home, Assisted Living Residents*, Page 1.)

Up to 5,000 county residents live in nursing homes and assisted living facilities, and more facilities are under construction.

The warm reception the Facilities Team has received from our partners at extended care facilities and from the public shows that the Facilities Team is an idea whose time has come.

When she authorized her staff to partner with our Facilities Team, the administrator of a nursing home in Rockville said, "I commend you for devoting a team to facilities. Finally, somebody realizes that care in facilities is different than care in private homes."

At an assisted living center where Montgomery Hospice cares for all the patients on a floor, the wife of a hospice

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access hospice in ways that fit how and where they live.

Members of the Facilities Team know insurance regulations and other rules governing care inside facilities. That makes them effective partners for nursing home employees.

The Facilities Team's consistent presence in nursing homes builds cohesion and communication, further improving patient care.

### **HELP FOR CAREGIVERS**

The Facilities Team does more than partner

patient praised the Facilities Team when she told another resident's wife, "Your husband needs to be in hospice, too."

The Facilities team is hospice at its best: versatile, collaborative and meeting patients where they are. These traits will serve the community well in the future.

### **DOCTORS CERTIFIED**

In February, the doctors who oversee the care of Montgomery Hospice patients earned the highest distinction available in the hospice field, certification by the American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine (AAHPM).

Certification is a sign that Dr. Cindy Williams and Dr. Genevieve Wroblewski are trained to the highest, latest standards in comfort care.

Both doctors were distinct even before they became certified because they work as full-time hospice specialists. (Most hospices use part-time, contract doctors.)

Certification raises Dr. Williams and Dr. Wroblewski to an elite, pioneering level. Of the roughly 18,000 doctors in

with nursing home staff as colleagues in caring. The team also supports nursing home staff as recipients of hospice comfort.

Specifically, Montgomery Hospice grief counselors help staff at extended care facilities cope with the cumulative losses they experience.

Nursing home employees are with patients in their most intimate moments and grow close to residents. When residents die, the employees grieve, even as they must continue caring for others.

"We support our colleagues' emotional



*Double Distinction: Dr. Genevieve Wroblewski and Dr. Cindy Williams are full-time hospice specialists and hold their field's highest credential.*

Maryland, fewer than 50 were certified in palliative care when Drs. Wroblewski and Williams took their exams in December.

Montgomery Hospice is a reflection of the community we serve. Everyone who cares about local end-of-life care can take pride that a Facilities Team and two certified physicians are working every day to give dying patients and families the best possible quality of life.

Ann Mitchell, MPH  
President & CEO

needs the same way we do with families," says Facilities Team manager Blanche Ventura. "Hospice cares for the patient and family as a unit. Caregivers at facilities are the extended family, the next layer of loved ones."

Montgomery Hospice is here to ease the burdens of grief for anyone in Montgomery County, so comforting our nursing home colleagues is a natural fit.

Counseling nursing home staff ultimately serves patients, too: By helping staff at facilities cope with grief, we help them be resilient and engaged caregivers.

# Hits For Hospice

A FUNDRAISER BY HANS FALKENHAN AND THE TOWSON UNIVERSITY BASEBALL TEAM



Hans Falkenhan is a senior on the Towson University baseball team. He was 15 when he lost his father, Frank Falkenhan III, to cancer. Montgomery Hospice supported Hans and his family through the final phase of his dad's life. Frank died at Casey House.

*Frank Falkenhan III, 1947-2000* Hans and Frank had a strong connection through baseball. Hans says that for the past six years, he has persevered with his loss, but has struggled to do something positive with his grief and show his appreciation to Montgomery Hospice.

For his final season at Towson, Hans has developed *Hits for Hospice* as a way to raise money for the hospice. The team has rallied behind Hans' cause. The team is asking family, friends and fans to make a financial pledge to Montgomery Hospice for each hit the team records this season. (In 2006, the Towson Tigers had 557 hits.)

In anticipation of your pledge, the Tiger baseball team thanks you for your support of *Hits for Hospice!*



Hans Falkenhan



## HITS FOR HOSPICE PLEDGE FORM



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Return completed pledge form to:  
Montgomery Hospice Foundation  
1355 Piccard Drive, Suite 100  
Rockville, MD 20850

Or pledge online: [www.montgomeryhospice.org/baseball](http://www.montgomeryhospice.org/baseball)

I Pledge  
5¢ 10¢ 25¢ 50¢ \$1 per hit  
not to exceed \$ \_\_\_\_\_ total for the season.  
Pledges are tax-deductible and accepted until May 17, 2007.

# Wills and Goodwill

*Montgomery Hospice receives little public funding, but its partnership with dedicated state employees helps grieving people in ways money can't buy.*

The Register of Wills (ROW) is the state agency that makes sure property passes to heirs legally and as deceased people intended.

Soon after Joe Griffin was elected Register of Wills in 1998, he began teaching his staff that serving grieving people who come to the Montgomery County courthouse to process wills and estates could be more than just a job.

Griffin noticed that hospice workers “seem to enjoy what they do. Even though it’s difficult work, it’s fulfilling. That’s what I wanted Register of Wills staff to feel,” he says.

## UNDERSTANDING GRIEF

In 2001, at Griffin’s invitation, Montgomery Hospice bereavement counselors spent a day training the Register of Wills’ 37 employees how to understand and interact with the thousands of people who come to the ROW office each year to process estates.

The training alerted ROW managers that some employees have experienced losses that make it hard for them to work on certain cases. Knowing who is unsuited to handle estates involving the death of a child, for example, helps managers keep the office running smoothly.

A key lesson for staff from the initial training and several refresher courses: Grieving people are often angry, but they’re angry over their loss. Knowing that visitors’ ire isn’t really about the Register of Wills helps staff deflect and defuse tense situations.

## MONTHLY VOLUNTEER VISITS

After the initial training, ROW employees said they’d help Montgomery Hospice however they could, “especially since hospice trained the staff for free,” recalls Griffin.

Once a month for the past five years, a vanload of Register of Wills employees has come to Montgomery Hospice’s Rockville offices to prepare mailings that hospice bereavement counselors send grieving people throughout the community. Different ROW employees come each month, and almost 100% volunteer at some point each year.

The volunteers stuff thousands of envelopes with helpful articles about grief. They also mail flyers alerting bereaved people about the free grief counseling Montgomery Hospice offers. In addition, ROW staff display and distribute the flyers at the Rockville courthouse.

Last year, Montgomery Hospice counseled more than 4,800 grieving people. That number would have been far lower if the Register of Wills staff had not helped spread the word that counseling is here for any local resident.

## COMPASSION, NOT PAPER

Ultimately, the monthly visits to Montgomery Hospice remind ROW staff that compassion, not paperwork, is the heart of their service.

For a staff that processes hundreds of thousands of documents each year, it’s tempting to see each death as another pile of forms.

Hearing stories from hospice counselors about love and loss reminds ROW employees that there’s a story behind each estate.

ROW staff know from their hospice training that people grieve at their own pace. That means some visitors will not be ready to complete all the needed paperwork on a particular visit. When that happens, ROW staff set aside the documents and listen sympathetically as visitors describe what their loved ones meant to them.



Once a month for five years, volunteers from the Register of Wills have helped Montgomery Hospice mail thousands of notices about grief and grief counseling to bereaved people. The volunteers’ work helps reduce suffering in the community.

“I can’t imagine the Register of Wills not interacting with hospice,” says Dylan Rawls, public information officer at ROW. “It’s essential to what we do. We can direct people to hospice grief counseling, and hospice teaches us to be compassionate.”

Griffin views his office’s relationship with Montgomery Hospice as a model of what government and nonprofit groups can accomplish together. “It’s a wonderful partnership that saves the state money because I don’t have to pay people to train the staff about grief. The office runs better and the service to the public is better because staff have this understanding of what people are going through,” says Griffin.

# Thank you, Gala Sponsors!

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# A Gala Night for Charity Care

On March 9, almost 200 hospice friends dined and danced the night away at Montgomery Hospice's 19th *Celebration of Life!* Gala. Proceeds from the event will help Montgomery Hospice continue caring for all county residents regardless of their ability to pay.

A highlight of the evening was the announcement that guests Mr. and Mrs. Sami Totah have donated 2.3 acres of land beside Casey House. The Totahs' kind donation gives Montgomery Hospice important flexibility in planning future services.

Montgomery Hospice Board Secretary Stephen Joseph and his wife, Dr. Colleen Joseph, co-chaired the Gala, which was held at the Bethesda North Marriott Hotel & Conference Center.



Special guests Annie Totah (L) and Sami Totah (seated), joined by Montgomery Hospice Foundation Vice President Maureen Dimont, Gala co-chairs Stephen and Dr. Colleen Joseph and Montgomery Hospice CEO Ann Mitchell. The Totahs generously donated land beside Casey House



Mark Shriver (L), Special Assistant to the County Executive Chuck Short and former Montgomery Hospice board member Catherine Leggett share a laugh.



# Julian Weinfeld Memorial Golf Tournament

*May 18, 2007*

**12:00 – 6:00 PM**

**UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND GOLF COURSE  
COLLEGE PARK, MD**

We are honored that the family of former patient Julian Weinfeld is organizing a golf tournament for the third year in a row to help Montgomery Hospice.

Proceeds benefit Montgomery Hospice.

For information, contact Gary Weinfeld at 410 897 0167.

# tree of lights 2006

Joan Adamowicz	John H. Brunk	Donald L. Daughters	Consuelo Garcia	Helen Hudson	Jennie Leibman
Dora Allen	Ash Bullard	Esther Betty Davis	Delia V. Garcia	Welbie S. Hudson	Francis T. Lenahan
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James K. Bruce					W. Robert Moccia

Over 300 area residents attended the annual Tree of Lights ceremony and reception at Brookside Gardens in Wheaton on December 5. Local families memorialized loved ones by buying lights on the tree.



Earlybirds get prime seats.

Music adds to the festivities.

Hospice staff greet families.

Kyle, Josie and Kari Rudgers light the tree.

The tree, as seen from afar.

- |                             |                                |                               |                             |                            |                           |
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- |                                 |                      |                       |                             |                        |                                  |
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*Between October 1 and December 31, 2006, Montgomery Hospice received contributions in memory or in honor of the following individuals. We are grateful for these gifts. They help fill the financial void between healthcare costs and insurance coverage.*

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"In Honor Of" and "In Memory Of" gifts may recognize any person, including a Montgomery Hospice patient. Gifts from individual donors and gifts in kind will be acknowledged in Montgomery Hospice's annual report. Please accept our apologies if we have omitted any names from these lists.

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## Sponsor Spotlight

### Businesses helping hospice

DaimlerChrysler is not just a leading manufacturer of cars and trucks. In Montgomery County, the automaker is also a major supporter of hospice care.

Every year since 2001, DaimlerChrysler has hosted a table and donated auction items for Montgomery Hospice's main fundraising event, the Hospice Gala. Proceeds from the auction help Montgomery Hospice care for local residents regardless of their ability to pay.

This year, DaimlerChrysler is setting a new standard in corporate support. As the hospice's first Gold Partner, DaimlerChrysler sponsored the Gala in March and will sponsor the Hospice Cup and the Montgomery Hospice Derby Duck Festival later this year.

The person behind DaimlerChrysler's hospice philanthropy is Cindy Albert, who works in the carmaker's Washington lobbying office. The Germantown resident has been a passionate hospice supporter since her father-in-law died in hospice care 15 years ago.

"I think hospice is invaluable," says Cindy. "It's a wonderful service for the community."

We are grateful to Cindy and to DaimlerChrysler for helping make hospice possible.

DAIMLERCHRYSLER

# Handmade Comfort

Knitting enthusiasts throughout Montgomery County comforted Montgomery Hospice patients this winter by making them warm shawls and scarves.

Volunteers crafted dozens of fleece and wool garments for terminally ill patients as part of Montgomery Hospice's new Comfort Shawl & Scarf Project.

Donations of yarn and other supplies are vital to continuing the Comfort Shawl & Scarf Project year-round. To become a knitting volunteer or to donate supplies, contact the Volunteer Services Office at 301 921 4400.



## Caring for Loved Ones With Memory Loss

*April 28, 2007*

**9:00 AM - 2:00 PM**

**MONTGOMERY COLLEGE  
7977 GEORGIA AVENUE,  
SILVER SPRING, MD**

A FREE conference for the multicultural community about how to overcome language and cultural barriers to get Alzheimer's care.

Lunch will be provided.

Organized by the Montgomery Hospice Office of Diversity & Multicultural Outreach with funding from the Montgomery County Council.

To register, contact the Office of Diversity and Multicultural Outreach at (301) 921-4401, Ext. 171. Or, register online at [www.montgomeryhospice.org/alzheimers](http://www.montgomeryhospice.org/alzheimers).

Conference Partners: Adventist Healthcare Health Ministry, African Women's Cancer Awareness Association, Alzheimer's Association, Black Ministers Conference of Montgomery County, Camino de Via - Hispanic Latino Ministries, CRCMC, DHHS, Holy Cross Hospital CRC, Holy Cross Hospital Faith Community Nurse Program, Indian American Leadership Council, IONA Senior Services, Islamic Society of the Washington Area, Montgomery College, Sandy Spring Bank, Shady Grove Adventist Hospital, The Ewe Church of America, USU Center for Health Disparities Research and Education, Voice of America.



Teen volunteers Cathy Kuangu, May Tangtrongwanit and Christina Somerville spent the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday helping fellow students make scarves.



Riderwood Village resident Martha Vayhinger models a scarf she made for hospice patients. Volunteers at Riderwood have enthusiastically embraced the Comfort Shawl & Scarf Project.



Volunteer Sharon Gervasoni helped organize the Comfort Shawl & Scarf Project.

# Calendar of Events

## Bereavement Care

- May 8 **Afternoon & Evening Grief Support Groups.** For any adult grieving the loss of a loved one. Meet for 90 minutes on Tuesdays or Wednesdays for six weeks. Call 301 921 4400 for times and locations.
- May 9 **Remembering Mom and Dad.** For any adult grieving the loss of one or both parents. Montgomery Hospice, Rockville. 7:00 – 8:30 PM.
- May 15 **Parent Loss Support Group.** For any adult grieving the loss of one or both parents. Meets Tuesdays 6:30 – 8:00 PM at North Bethesda United Methodist Church, 10100 Old Georgetown Road, Bethesda for six weeks.
- June 4 and June 11 **Peer to Peer.** A two-part grief support workshop for people age 17-28. Montgomery Hospice, Rockville. 7:00 – 9:00 PM both nights.
- June 27, July 25 **Afternoon Drop-In Discussions About Grief & Healing.** Montgomery Hills Baptist Church, 9727 Georgia Ave., Silver Spring. 1:00 – 2:30 PM.
- July 10, August 7 **Evening Drop-In Discussions About Grief & Healing.** Montgomery Hospice, Rockville. 6:30 – 8:00 PM.
- July 18 **Forgiveness and Grief.** A workshop about needing and finding forgiveness while grieving. Montgomery Hospice, Rockville. 1:00 – 2:30 PM and repeated 7:00 – 8:30 PM.

## Volunteer Training

- May 4, 11, 18  
October 5, 12, 19 **Orientation to the hospice philosophy and core caregiving skills.** Montgomery Hospice, Rockville. 8:30 AM – 5:30 PM.

## Fundraising Events

- May 18 **Julian Weinfeld Memorial Golf Tournament.** University of Maryland Golf Course, College Park. 12:00 PM – 6:00 PM.
- September 8 **Hospice Cup XXVI.** Annapolis. 10:00 AM – 8:00 PM.
- September 30 **Derby Duck Festival.** Seneca Creek State Park, Gaithersburg. 12:00 – 3:00 PM.
- November 16 **Montgomery Hospice Night at Olney Theatre.** See a production of Fiddler on the Roof, attend a reception for hospice friends before the performance. Olney Theatre, 2001 Olney-Sandy Spring Road, Olney. 6:30 – 11:00 PM.

## Community Education

- April 19 **Advance Directives Day.** Free information about legal documents that ensure healthcare wishes are honored. Call 240-777-3000 or visit [www.mccelc.org](http://www.mccelc.org) for times and locations around Montgomery County.
- April 28 **Caring for Loved Ones with Memory Loss.** A free conference for the multicultural community about Alzheimer's disease. Montgomery College (Takoma Park/Silver Spring Campus), 7977 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring. 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM.

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Hospice Matters is a newsletter for family and friends of Montgomery Hospice, a nonprofit organization serving residents of Montgomery County, Maryland who are bereaved or terminally ill.

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