

# HOSPICE HAPPENINGS

Compassionate care for the terminally ill, their caregivers and their families

Serving our community since 1978



## VHOCC CELEBRATES 40 YEARS OF MEETING PEOPLE WHERE THEY ARE: MUSIC FOR THE AGES

The music has been chosen, not only because it sprung from the age when science indicates Wanda developed her music preference, but also for its healing powers. As Katie unpacks her guitar, ukulele and ocean drum, a comfortable conversation takes place between music therapist intern and patient, about the week just past and about life in general.

The melody of “Hey Good Looking” fills the homey room at St. Andrew’s Place as Wanda, hands folded in lap, and foot flexing to the beat, escapes the moment and finds her way to crystal clear memories of the past.

A series of serendipitous occurrences brought these two together on Friday afternoons in Port Angeles. Katie, a graduate of Illinois State University, found her life’s calling at the bedside of her grandmother. The roommate assigned to the same nursing home also had a visitor—a woman who was the Director of Music Therapy program at Illinois State University. A passing conversation developed into a mentorship, a degree program, a plan for the future. Seeking out a 2018 internship, Katie found her way to Encore, the adult day care program in Port Angeles. And a contact with VHOCC provided a hospice therapy option unavailable 40 years ago when Rose Crumb founded the local volunteer hospice.

Wanda was born in Hamilton, Ohio, worked 20 years as an OR technician in Nashville and Memphis, and raised a house full of kids. With a son here, she made the move north a few years ago. She’s been a VHOCC client for an extended time and looks forward to the volunteer visits.

Katie hands Wanda the ocean drum, a percussion instrument that can produce sounds mimicking ocean waves, a flowing river, or a soothing gentle breeze weaving through trees. Wanda is intrigued, first appreciating the beauty of the instrument itself, then finding a rhythm in the movement of the metal beads. “Beautiful Dreamer” takes Wanda on a reminiscent journey of walking a Florida beach when a doctor had recommended “taking the cure” for her asthma.

Katie explains that there is a science behind what we accept intuitively . . . that music is therapy. Although music therapy for hospice patients is a **continued on page 2**

Volunteer Hospice of Clallam County is a 501(c)3 non-profit charitable organization, whose service area stretches from Diamond Point to Joyce.

The mission of Volunteer Hospice of Clallam County is to provide physical, emotional and spiritual support to terminally ill patients and their families with free around the clock registered nursing availability and trained volunteers.

This support enables patients to live out their final days as fully and comfortably as possible. Ongoing grief support services are also offered to the families and anyone in the community who has experienced the death of a loved one.

Since its inception in 1978, all services have been provided free of charge to patients and their families; VHOCC does not bill any government agency for its services.



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 Classic

Port Angeles Senior Center

Peninsula Men's Gospel Singers

Sequim Bay Yacht Club

Soroptimist International of Sequim

Westside Pizza

## Volunteer of the Month

April: Volunteers Appreciation  
 Luncheon

May: Margaret Preston

June: JoAnne Yerkes

**continued from page 1** relatively new field, there is documented clinical proof that preemies, war vets and PTSD sufferers benefit from the treatments. Music therapists are trained to ensure patients have a successful musical experience even if one has no musical background. And, following an assessment, and the establishment of goals and objectives, a determination is made as to how the therapy will be focused. One patient with chronic pain falls into a relaxing sleep during the sessions. Another has found the treatment cathartic, nostalgic and a peaceful life review opportunity. For Wanda the therapy sessions are mood enhancers, as witnessed by the smile that starts in her eyes, lifts her cheeks, widens on her lips, and sets her foot to flexing.

We admire the view of Ediz Hook from the living room window and compare notes on recent books read. Wanda's current read, "Breakfast at Sally's" by Richard LeMieux, is perched atop a stack including a couple by John Grisham. Her interests are apparently eclectic. And though she has an interest in music, in fact loves it, she was told at a young age that she couldn't carry a tune. So, try as she might, Katie can't pull a whisper of a note from Wanda's mouth. But, when Katie hands Wanda the ukulele, shows her how to strum it, and starts playing "Blue Suede Shoes," Wanda strums to the beat and a contagious giggle erupts from the voice that is hesitant to sing. "Do you like Elvis?" asks Wanda.

"Yes, . . . what's your favorite Elvis song?" responds Katie. "How Great Thou Art." And here's where Katie's years of training bear fruit. Though Katie has never played the song before, she finds a key, a chord, and the song flows forth.



As Katie sets the guitar aside, Wanda shares a long-held memory of being in the Christmas Cantata in 9th grade. It was the first time she wore long silk hose. Babe the cat has quit pacing and seems to also sense the air of peace, contentment, acceptance, communion.

The connection made between Katie and Wanda is an ideal representation of how VHOCC has expanded its services since its inception 40 years ago. VHOCC also refers its clients to the local chapter of the Threshold Choir. The acapella group offers "a calm and focused presence at the bedside, with gentle voices, simple songs, and sincere kindness, . . . soothing and reassuring to clients, family, and caregivers alike."

Whether the patients reside in a care facility or at home, VHOCC's nurses and volunteers provide a presence and specialized knowledge while attending to the immediate needs of the living. The goal: comfort, dignity, self-determination.

*Joanne Yerkes, VHOCC Volunteer*

## REACH AND ROW FOR HOSPICE

Sequim Bay Yacht Club (SBYC) is sponsoring the 26th annual "Reach and Row for Hospice" race on Sept 15, 2018. The event raises funds that are earmarked for respite care for family members of VHOCC patients.

The race last year raised \$27,764, bringing the total contribution amount to \$358,176.48 over the past 25 years.

The event is held on Sequim Bay so come out and watch the competition from the numerous vantage points at the John Wayne Marina. The races are scheduled to begin at 12 noon and will conclude around 4pm. If you cannot attend but would like to make a contribution to this respite care fund, send your tax-deductible donation to VHOCC, 504 E 8th St, Port Angeles WA 98362 with "Reach and Row for Hospice" in the subject line.

For any questions or more information about the event, contact Susan Sorensen, Chairperson of Reach and Row for Hospice 2018 at [starlady@olyopen.com](mailto:starlady@olyopen.com).

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## OPEN POSITIONS AT VHOCC

The number of people we serve follows the upward curve of the aging of the population nationwide: more hospital beds need to be delivered, more grieverers are attending our grief and bereavement programs. The following positions currently have volunteer openings:

- Equipment delivery & maintenance
- Equipment repair & cleaning
- Clerical office support
- One-on-one grief support

The rewards of volunteering are yours to cherish. Know that you will make a difference, no matter what.

For more information, contact the Volunteer Services Manager at [ysm@vhocc.org](mailto:ysm@vhocc.org) or 360-775-7806.

## ESPRIT CONFERENCE

When Esprit started its conference in May 1990 we discovered that the citizens of Port Angeles were welcoming, open minded and welcomed us to their community. Everyone at Esprit wanted to show a meaningful thank-you to Port Angeles so we had a meeting to determine what to do. It took us several years to finally decide to raise funds and support a charity within the community. Of course, then, it became an argument among us to support our individual favorite charities.

Then it hit us, someone on the committee had Hospice involved in their life at home, and someone else said they did too - and then more of the Esprit committee began to tell touching stories of Hospice in their lives. There it was, Hospice touches nearly everyone's life. We then contacted Rose for the first time and VHOCC became the charity of everyone's choice.

After that we began to build programs into Esprit, designing them to raise funds to donate to VHOCC. Notably, the Friday Night Talent Show at the Elks, with a hundred or more citizens of Port Angeles in our audience, has become the major fundraiser for VHOCC. We ask for a donation of \$5 to attend the Talent Show, of which 100% is donated toward Volunteer Hospice.

To date Esprit has collected a little over \$50,000 for this wonderful organization. Once the attendees discovered that all of the money raised goes to VHOCC we find that many often donate \$20. Now, there is a win-win situation.

*Suzanne Adams, Chair of Esprit*

## NEW BUILDING UPDATE

What does a volunteer organization do when their newly purchased building needs an internal remodel? It turns to its volunteers. Board member Michael Bucierka, a lifelong builder, and two other volunteers, Chas Bridge and Gary Poor, are tearing down walls and building a new footprint to accommodate the VHOCC administrative and nursing staff. In addition to the new footprint Michael is overseeing the remodeling of one restroom to be ADA compliant and redoing all the lighting to make for a more inviting and efficient workplace.

The new construction for equipment and supply storage is in the final construction drawings phase and we should break ground by August. As the new construction is completed and a new roof is placed on the existing structure the entire outside will be refreshed and repainted. In December the remaining tenant will be leaving, and that space will become the new home for group meetings and other volunteer services.



Volunteer Hospice of Clallam County  
540 E. 8th St.  
Port Angeles, WA 98362

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**1978-2018**

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**Volunteer Hospice of  
Clallam County**

**Events**

August 16-19 – Clallam County Fair – Come and visit us in the Merchants Building. You might win a prize!

August 25 – RC Club at Air Affaire in Sequim Airport

September 15 – “Reach and Row for Hospice” Race – Sequim Bay Yacht Club

**Community Orientation to Volunteer Hospice**

First Thursday every month, 11 am - noon, Sequim

First Friday every month, 10 am - 11 am, Port Angeles  
(call the Volunteer Services Manager 360-775-7806)

**Programs: information & register at 360-452-1511**

**Community Education & Volunteer Training Series**

Wednesdays, Sept. 19 - Oct. 24, 6 - 8 pm, Port Angeles

**Grief Support Groups**

Port Angeles: Tuesdays, Sept. 11 – Oct. 30, 2 - 3:30 pm

Sequim: Mondays, Oct. 22 – Nov. 19, 1 - 3 pm

**“Living Alone Now” Workshops: Practical Advice**

Wed. Sept. 12, 2 - 4 pm: Q&A with Mark Harvey from Senior Information & Assistance (Olympic Area Agency on Aging)

Late Fall: Self-Care with RN Debby Smith and Rev. Maggie Boume-Raiswell

**Check-In Support Groups** in Sequim and Port Angeles (after completion of one of our Grief Support Groups)

**One-on-One Grief Support** to anyone in the community