

## HAPPY VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION WEEK

thank you for making  
a difference in  
our patient's lives



## Get to Know Us: Hospice Volunteer

Josie Reed, Volunteer since April 2021

Volunteering for Silverado has been such an amazing experience. I began the volunteer process during the pandemic to try to be a help during such a hopeless time, but also for myself to gain new perspective on life from others. The process was easy, with the Volunteer Manager, Valerie, helping to educate me along the way.

When I was given the information of my first hospice patient I'd be visiting, I was very nervous. I wanted to be a volunteer that this person would find value in spending time with. I definitely should not have been so concerned because this was a perfect pairing! The person I was matched with has let me into her past and all of her wonderful memories. She has lived such an incredible life and given me so much insight to the life of someone who grew up in a different country and a different time. I've held her hand while having emotional conversations about her feelings the disease process. But I've also held her hand, while painting her nails and laughing with her about her favorite funny memories and embarrassing moments.

Silverado joined me to celebrate her 99th birthday - she was over the moon that day and it's a day she will never forget. Since I started visiting her, one year ago, I have noticed she

has become more positive about the life she is still living. Of course she still has days where she feels down, but she also has a rejuvenation in being involved in the world again. Silverado's volunteer program has allowed me and others to make sure she knows that she is cared for and loved.

Our time together has not just helped her, but has helped me immensely as well. When volunteering for hospice, I already knew that the time I would spend with someone would come to an end, my hope is to help their last days be full of love and comfort. During this experience volunteering I didn't realize how much love and comfort I would also receive and how that will carry into my life and relationships with others.

Those of us who live our lives without the perspective of those who have been told to expect death, can learn so much. For the patients who can't communicate as well, we should understand that any comfort and love given through any simple communication, such as just being present, and holding a hand is significant.

I am so happy to be a part of the Silverado hospice volunteer group and hope that more people see the value in the program, it really is life changing for the patients and the volunteers.



# NEWSLETTER

## Self-Care for the Caregiver: Bringing Your Best Self to Your Loved Ones

by Liz Bahrenburg, MSW Candidate

When we fly on airplanes, the flight attendant instructs us to put our own oxygen mask on first before assisting others. Yet this concept is difficult to grasp when caring for a loved one. In my personal experience, I believed that the amount of time I spent taking care of my loved one demonstrated how much I loved them. In other words, if I was not helping 24/7, I feared that somehow I didn't love them enough. However, I asked myself, if I am always cranky, melancholy, and impatient when I am around my loved one, how is this expressing love? Caregiving is one of the most rewarding yet challenging roles. While it is rewarding to be there for your loved one during their time of need, it can be physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually draining, particularly if they face a terminal illness. Hospice's philosophy is to promote quality of life by providing comfort, support, and dignity for patients and their family members as they journey toward the end of life. Self-care for the caregiver is critical for ensuring a patient's quality of life.

Caregiving comes with many risk factors that lead to caregiver stress and subsequent health issues. Do you feel overwhelmed and worried? Tired all the time? Are you gaining or losing weight? Have you lost interest in the activities that you usually enjoy? Are you experiencing physical ailments

such as headaches, body pain, and insomnia? Are you impatient, irritable, and sad? These are all common signs of caregiver stress brought on by the release of hormones in the body. The good news is that strategies exist to combat these symptoms. The first strategy and probably one of the most challenging for full-time caregivers is accepting help. Many caregivers do not want to burden others, so they do not seek help or decline it from friends, family members, and other sources. It's helpful for a caregiver to remind themselves, if someone offers support, they offer because they want to. It's important for caregivers to allow themselves support and not feel guilty about time away from their loved ones so they may be able to recharge their batteries.

Caregivers, by nature, are compassionate individuals. It's essential that they offer themselves that same kindness and compassion. Self-care does not have to be a significant time commitment. It involves being mindful of the small actions one can take each day to lower their stress level.

There is no wrong way to engage in self-care. Self-care can be any activity that makes one feel happy, worthy, and relaxed to recharge our battery. Spending time with loved ones is about the quality, not the quantity, so make your moments with your loved ones count by bringing your best self to the relationship.

**Self-care suggestions →**

## 10 suggestive ideas for self-care:

1. Eat a well-balanced diet and drink plenty of water throughout the day.
2. Prioritize sleep and develop a routine that helps you wind down for the night (i.e., a warm bath, soothing music, essential oils, reading a book).
3. Listen to a guided meditation or your favorite music for ten minutes.
4. Go outside (or sit in front of an open window), close your eyes, breathe deeply, and simply open your senses to the sounds and smells of nature.
5. At least three days per week, get some exercise. Even a short walk around the block can make a significant difference.
6. Be realistic about goals and projects you want to accomplish.
7. Each week, schedule time for an enjoyable activity (i.e., reading a book, gardening, hobbies, shopping, coffee or a meal with a friend).
8. Join an in-person or online support group so that you can share your challenges fears, frustrations, and triumphs with individuals who can identify with your circumstances.
9. Ask your social worker about resources such as meal delivery, part-time in-home care, and respite services/grants.
10. Be kind to yourself.

## National Walking Day | April 6

by Kristina Nguyen RN, BSN, CHPN | Director of Patient Care Services

Walking is an underutilized method of exercise that can benefit anyone putting forth the effort of trying to walk 30 minutes a day. 30 minutes a day can not only assist in losing weight but lower blood pressure, help regulate diabetes, and maintain bone strength. Other benefits include reducing stress as well as improving your sleep. Small tips in adding additional walking in your day is taking the time to park further away from your desired destination to increase your steps, decide to take the stairs instead of elevator, and encourage your friends or family to take walks with you as alternatives to socializing and making the most of your lunch break (National Walking Day, 2020).

Decreased time spent walking can have a quick and negative effect on health that we see in patients leading up to a possible admission into hospice. When you are able to walk and do less, this can affect your bone density, back pain and muscle loss, increase the inability to handle activity over a period of time, and make it difficult to go to the restroom which can then lead to incontinence. Possible reasons someone may have an increase difficulty of walking can be arthritis or worsening conditions of dementia, Parkinson's disease, or lasting effects of a stroke (Difficulty Walking, 2021).

Resources: National Walking Day: <https://bit.ly/3qCByla> | Difficulty Walking: <https://bit.ly/383YzNR>

## Celerbation of Life

A virtual event in memory of loved ones

Tuesday, April 19, 2022 | 4:00pm

Join us for our virtual Celebration of Life ceremony to share memories and honor loved ones who now live on in our hearts.

This event will be held virtually via Zoom.

RSVP by Friday, April 8, 2022 to  
Seema Cisneros, Bereavement Counselor  
Call (888) 328-5660 or  
email [seema.cisneros@silverado.com](mailto:seema.cisneros@silverado.com)

## Awareness Dates to Remember

National Volunteer Month

Alcohol Awareness Month

Irritable Bowel Syndrome Awareness

National Cancer Control Month

National Autism Awareness Month

National Interprofessional Healthcare Month

National Minority Health Month

Occupational Therapy Month

Parkinson's Awareness Month

Oral Cancer Awareness Month

Stress Awareness Month

Testicular Cancer Awareness Month

National Public Health Week | April 1-7

Oral, Head & Neck Cancer Awareness Week | April 11-16

World Immunization Week | April 22-28

Patient Experience Week | April 25-29

Annual National Health Care Decision Day | April 16

World Meningitis Day | April 24

## CONTACT US

24-hour line: (888) 328-5660

Fax: (949) 653-0452

Referral line: (800) 507-9726

Volunteer inquiries: (888) 328-5660

Visit us online with our 24/7 Live Chat Line: [silveradohospice.com](http://silveradohospice.com)



If you would like to leave one of your favorite team members a praise, you may do so on our Yelp page. Search **Silverado Hospice Orange County**