

Love Expressed in Many Forms - February 2021

While February is recognized as the month to honor love, Celia's House staff and stories easily show us the many forms that love can take.

Small Moments, Deep Meanings

By Cheryl French, Southern Oregon Friends of Hospice Volunteer



Although all residents at Celia's House are terminally ill, they arrive with different diagnoses and different states of physical and mental well-being. While we all harbor a deep need for connection, the dying person's normal avenues — conversation, activities, or shared memories — are closing down. Celia's House resident support volunteers and staff provide a unique and crucial

service during this time. They are trained companions who spend time with residents and their families, creating connections through seemingly small moments and different pathways.

"We can't pretend that residents aren't dying," says long-time support volunteer Su Rouzie. "It is a unique journey for each person; how to come to terms with it. We try to be with them through connection." Su explains that when two people enjoy something together it connects them by sharing the same real and present moment.

Sometimes seemingly small things create an opening. Volunteer Support Coordinator Sue Carroll shares a perfect example: spending time doing puzzles with a resident who at first did not want company. With that small companionship, he is now feeling quite at home.

John Forsyth, volunteer and retired physician, tries to find out what music a resident

likes, and then makes it available to enjoy together when he visits.

Celia's House chef Karen Amarotico discovered that one of the residents loved Bette Midler's song "The Rose". They would sing it together, and then it became their song.

Su Rouzie describes the contentment that she and a resident share watching birds at the feeders down in the garden. "Her memory is not great," Su explains, "but when we watch the birds together, she starts to smile, and I smile. We look at one another and share the moment. I find that seeing her smile is very fulfilling."

Celia's House support volunteers and our staff seek to share many moments with residents, no matter how small —whether watching birds, listening to music, or quietly sitting surrounded by the lovely grounds at Celia's House. Everything has potential to build connection, to create a loving moment, if we pause to recognize it.

A Recipe for Love

By Karen Amarotico, Celia's House Chef

Not long ago, I made an apple pie for a friend and her husband. Later that night she shared this message: "My husband asked what was in the pie - what spice or ingredient had made it taste so special and delicious? I could only say, I think it's Love you're tasting. Karen, maybe you also have some secret earthly ingredient, but to me the most important one you add is Love."

In a thank you note a family member wrote this to us "Eating food that is lovingly prepared nourishes the soul." We in the kitchen at Celia's House often hear comments about our food and what makes it taste so good. And really, there is no secret to it. I believe that the love and care we put into our meals is the defining factor... not the simple ingredients we use.

This month, instead of offering a recipe, I'd like to suggest that you prepare something for a loved one, even something as simple as a cup of coffee. As you do this, imagine the love you have for this person pouring out of your heart and into the dish or cup and take as much care as possible into making it. When you serve your creation, smile warmly knowing they will soon be tasting your love. I'd be surprised if they don't notice and wonder what's different. When they ask, please share our secret!



PS - Watch our next e-News announcing my next cooking class in April via ZOOM!

MANY HANDS - ONE MISSION

Many of us who work or volunteer for Southern Oregon Friends of Hospice, Celia's House, or Hospice Unique Boutique (The HUB), are drawn to support hospice work because of a personal experience with terminally ill loved ones or friends who were cared for by hospice workers. This ongoing newsletter section will introduce the remarkable front-line and behind-the-scenes people involved in the care of Celia's House residents.

Celia's House Introduces Rose Barnum, RN

By Cheryl French, Southern Oregon Friends of Hospice Volunteer



Rose Barnum, RN was the ninth of 10 children. “In our Portland neighborhood, there were lots of large families and we all grew up taking care of one another,” she said. “It was a natural transition to go into nursing.”

Rose spent most of her nursing career assisting long term-care patients and came to love the elderly population; especially helping those who were terminally ill. She says she feels grateful to be able to relieve families of the hard part of medical caregiving. “It is a huge job that goes on 24/7 and can be difficult for a family with a terminally ill loved one.”

While Rose learned to appreciate hospice care working in long-term care, more recently she came to appreciate the hospice mission more fully when hospice care became necessary for several of her own family members. “I just wish everyone knew that hospice care may be provided for up to six months.”

This special type of caregiving is exactly why Rose joined Celia's House. “It is an honor to work with the round-the-clock team of caregivers here, including CNAs, medication technicians, volunteers, kitchen staff, hospice nurses, and everyone who is trying to make the end of someone's life the best it can be.”

“Not everyone can do this job,” Rose adds, “but those of us who work in hospice are lucky. It is such a precious part of life. I am humbled to be present when someone takes their last breath.”

Working at Celia's House also allows Rose to do what she loves – to spend as much one-

on-one time as she is able at the bedside with each resident. “I think hospice is sometimes a scary word when someone is ill, but really it is a gift. We can help provide quality care and help families. I want to encourage individuals and families to seek care early when receiving an end-of-life diagnosis.”

The Power Behind Every Gift and Every Giver

By Julie Raefield, Development Director

When we give something, our gift represents a tangible expression of our values, our hopes, and our hearts. It represents a wish in action to raise someone else up in some way.

When we at Southern Oregon Friends of Hospice receive donations from you, we choose to be mindful of the entire meaning of those gifts. We work to pause and reflect on your intention when that special family keepsake is offered to The HUB or when that special financial gift is made each month or once a year. We think about the kindness that you exemplify, the willingness to share from your substance, the compassion that fills your heart as you think about our hospice residents. We stop and experience gratitude at how you share our mission to create a place where those at the end of life can focus on what matters most.



Thank you for the many ways in which your gifts raise up our residents, our families and our staff. With your help we can better provide a beautiful, peaceful home for our residents and families that is filled with loving, trained staff and volunteers who exemplify kindness, presence and gratitude in the comforting care they provide.

In keeping with this month's theme of loving connections, please consider a donation supporting the Acton E. Black, Jr. Family Food Program. The Black family started this fund to honor their father, allowing us to offer resident families free meals whenever they are visiting. Mailed donations are gratefully received at Southern Oregon Friends of Hospice at 217 S. Modoc Avenue, Medford, OR 97504. Online donations are accommodated via the website at: <http://bit.ly/SOFHdonations>

Furniture cluttering up your garage or back room? The HUB is seeking quality furniture donations - and we can arrange for free pick-ups! Please call 488-7805.



Non-Furniture Donations Also Gratefully Accepted! Drop by with your beloved no-longer-needed items 10:30-4:30 daily.

Visit us in person at 1618 Ashland Street, Ashland or **visit our eBay store to see some new treasures! Check them out here:** [Link to The HUB eBay store](#)

Need Help or Have Questions?

*Call Sarah Bieniek,
Administrative Assistant at:
541-500-8911*



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PS - Oliver sends his regards to all his friends from his beloved bird feeder viewing perch #2 at Celia's House.

