A woman stands at the bedside of a dying man. Her eyes fill with tears as he, her husband of 65 years, takes his last breath. She speaks softly to him, gently touching his hands; telling him how much she loves him. She is saying good-bye.

She feels deep sadness, but also a strong sense of satisfaction. Everything that could have been done for her husband’s comfort and for her support has been available. She knows this transition in her life could have been much harder without the loving support of her hospice team.

Without the presence of knowledgeable, skilled and dedicated end-of-life caregivers, she would have been alone in a frightening and unfamiliar landscape. Her support team — including her primary doctor, nurses, social workers, chaplains, home care aides, therapists and volunteers — were there to support and guide her through this profound loss.

**Creating comfort**

The focus of hospice care is on the patient — not the disease. Each family receives a customized plan of care. The goal of hospice is to relieve pain and the uncomfortable symptoms that are present as a result of a terminal illness — in the comfort of a person’s home, nursing home or assisted living facility.

Typically, a family member serves as the primary caregiver and, when appropriate, makes decisions for the terminally ill individual. Our hospice team members make regular visits to assess the patient and provide additional care or services. Families are never alone — our staff is on-call 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

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**Living with hospice, not dying on hospice**

Hospice is a philosophy that benefits people at the end of their lives by promoting and enhancing the quality of a patient’s remaining life.
FIVE STAR STORIES

How would you like to be part of a great story? One of the wonderful opportunities presented by our recent merger is the expansion of the Life Stories Program run by Camarillo Hospice. We would like to expand this program in Camarillo and be able to share it with Livingston patients throughout Ventura County. To do this we need more Life Story Program volunteers.

Everyone has an important story to tell, especially the elderly and those nearing the end-of-life. A person’s background and life experiences form a legacy of wisdom and love that has immeasurable value to family and friends. We need your help to capture and record those stories. We also need editorial help with the media production to create a living memorial.

If you are the interviewer, you will meet with the subject five or six times for about an hour each visit. You will talk about ideas for telling the patient’s story, organize a general outline with them, and then talk about the chapters of their life. The subjects may want to talk about growing up on a farm, life overseas, military service, children and family, faith, loves and losses. It’s their story and your job is to help facilitate its telling. During a recording session, you may ask questions to clarify something or to keep the story on track.

We also need volunteer editors who review the recordings to remove background noise, unrelated comments, and prepare a CD for the subject who can then make copies and distribute to family and friends. The editors are the people that create the magic behind the scenes.

Training is provided to volunteer interviewers and editors. If you’ve ever wanted to be an investigative reporter or behind the scenes director, this is your chance to step forward. Please call Sandi Biggs, Camarillo Hospice Volunteer Coordinator, (805)389-6870 x453 or sbiggs@lmvna.org.

Laura K. McAvoy, Board Chairman
Lanyard K. Dial, MD, President/CEO and Medical Director

Mission Statement
Livingston Memorial VNA Health Corporation, Livingston Memorial Visiting Nurse Association and Livingston CareGivers recognize the growing need to provide services in the home environment for the sick, handicapped, elderly, terminally ill, and homebound. As community-supported non-profit organizations, they strive to provide professional and supportive home health and hospice care services of the highest quality in the most cost-effective manner to the people of Ventura County to ensure a positive patient outcome. Livingston explores and develops health-related programs based upon community need and acceptance, economic viability and availability of resources to provide services. Livingston is sensitive to the financial circumstances of its patients and provides needed services, including those at reduced or no charge to indigent patients, based upon the available resources of the organization.

The Livingston Memorial VNA Health Corporation is the parent organization of Livingston Memorial Visiting Nurse Association and Livingston CareGivers. Livingston Memorial Visiting Nurse Association is licensed by the state of California, certified by Medicare and Medi-Cal, and is accredited by The Joint Commission. Joint Commission accreditation is regarded as the most comprehensive review of patient safety and quality efforts in the industry. Livingston CareGivers is a non-medical provider of in-home assistance and is CAHSAH certified and not associated with The Joint Commission.
You are invited to join us as we remember and honor loved ones and special friends.

**33RD ANNUAL**

**Light Up A Life Celebration**

**MEMORY TREE LIGHTING CEREMONIES**

**Camarillo Tree of Life**
Saturday, December 2, 2017 – 4:30pm
Constitution Park, Camarillo

**Ventura**
Thursday, December 7, 2017 – 6:30pm
Pacific View Mall, Ventura

**Ojai**
Thursday, December 14, 2017 – 5:30pm
Chaparral Auditorium, 414 E. Ojai Ave., Ojai

All events are free to attend.

The warmth and spirit of the holiday season is ushered in each year as we present our Light Up A Life memory trees. Now in its 33rd year, this annual free community event gives us the opportunity to remember, honor, and celebrate the special people who have touched our lives.

We hope you will join us for this cherished event by becoming an event sponsor or by purchasing a memorial star. You can purchase your sponsorship or star online at www.lmvna.org/lightupalife or by calling (805) 642-0239. For additional information about the events, please contact Maddy Hazard at (805) 642-0239 x775 or lightup@lmvna.org.

All funds raised through Light Up A Life help ensure comfort, enhance quality of life and preserve dignity for Livingston and Camarillo Hospice patients and their families.

**Thanks to our Sponsors**

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Updated as of 10/31/17
Livingston CareGivers has provided vital, non-medical, personal assistance in the home to residents of Ventura County for over 15 years. Our clients encompass not only the frail, disabled and elderly, but anyone and any age that needs personal help at home.

People can remain in their home, when daily needs are managed and addressed, which is often a preferred option to long term placement. Many studies show that home is where the elderly prefer to be and where they do best.

Livingston CareGivers provides numerous services, but the most important benefit we provide you with is the peace of mind in knowing that a trusted agency, part of the Livingston Family, is here for you and your loved ones.

(805) 642-9570
lmvna.org/caregivers

GRIEF AND THE HOLIDAYS

Lisa Ann Rood, LCSW, Bereavement Services offers ways to cope this holiday season.

When I was a little girl, my best friend's father died on Thanksgiving morning. My heart broke for what she and her family had to go through. I remember her dad with a twinkle in his eye and apple red cheeks. And as Thanksgiving approaches almost fifty years later, I enjoy remembering him on this day of celebration and family.

Each of us enter this holiday season with loved ones in our hearts — perhaps a treasured parent or beloved spouse, dear friend or precious child. For some, the loss is fresh. For others, it’s just beginning to fade.

Learning to Cope

Several years ago, I made the decision to go inward during the holiday season and make it one of quiet and reflection. I decided that my friends and family could live without the cards I spent hours addressing and sending. Instead, I thoughtfully considered who I might get together with and what I might brings as a small token of love.

I introduced this idea to a man I was working with who was grieving the loss of his only son. Facing the holidays brought up his pain all over again. The best plan he could manage to come up with for himself was to walk over to his neighbor’s house to sit with them over dessert. The neighbors were close family friends and would understand.

Another year I asked the teens I meet with in a Grief Group to write holiday cards to their loved ones — what they'd like to say if they could. I brought boxes of cards and watched as they sorted through and selected just the right card. The room grew quiet — words were being written on paper that was blank minutes ago.

One by one, the students looked up and put down their pens. Perhaps entering the holiday season without their loved ones present was made just a little easier by the act of opening their hearts.

I hope you, too, can find a way to release your sorrow and allow others the gift of offering you love and support as you remember your loved ones this holiday season.

To learn more about our free bereavement services and groups, contact Maddy Hazard at (805) 642-0239 ext. 775 or visit our website www.lmvna.org/bereavement.
For a current and complete listing of classes, visit the **CALENDAR** section at www.lmvna.org.

These **FREE** community classes are available to anyone learning to care for or cope with the loss of a loved one, managing their diabetes or living with new mobility after a hip or joint replacement.
Join a remarkable core of volunteers — community heroes that give special gifts of time and compassion to patients and their families. We will provide you with training that gives you the confidence to enter the homes and lives of others to support them as part of the Livingston and Camarillo Hospice volunteer team. What you receive back is as priceless as what you give.

Each session meets for eight consecutive weeks and volunteers serve throughout Ventura County. Please visit our website www.lmvna.org/volunteers for more information.

Winter Session: Ventura January 2018
Contact: Maddy Hazard (805) 642-0239 ext 775  email: mhazard@lmvna.org
Imagine sitting with a family and their dying loved one — wishing there was something more you could do, something more you could offer. Maybe they are holding your hand — desperate to connect. Maybe they are looking into your eyes — searching for something unnamed.

That is where an “end of life Doula” can be of service.

End of Life Doulas are also known as end of life coaches, soul midwives, transitions guides, death coaches, death doulas, doula to the dying, death midwives, thanadoula and end of life guides.

What is an End of Life Doula?

If you are familiar with doulas, it is most likely someone who companions women and their families around childbirth. There are also end-of-life doulas. They provide non-medical support to individuals who are facing end-of-life. They provide another kind of companionship — one that offers spiritual and emotional healing as well as practical but gentle guidance in dealing with the many challenges and decisions surrounding the end of life.

How fortunate we were when Cheserae Scala — known to us as “Ta” — reached out to Livingston. Ta participated in our hospice training class. Now she shares her expertise viewed as the Art of Dying — with current volunteer trainees.

Programs that work in partnership with Livingston Hospice

Ta and her partner Birgitta Kastenbaum, support families through Bridging Transitions™. Not only do Ta and Birgitta go into homes of individuals who are terminally ill, but they offer training on Sacred Tending™ to the community. Sacred Tending™ emphasis the sacredness, uniqueness and universality of the human experience of death.

The Livingston Hospice team is dedicated to providing the best quality of care to patients and their families. We embrace serving the physical, emotional and spiritual aspects of life. We welcome the opportunity to work with others, like Ta, to learn, share and ultimately enhance the Art of Dying.

To learn more about compassionate hospice services, contact Mandy Furlong at (805) 642-0239 ext. 755.
Celebrating a Mother’s Memory

Jonathan Sandoval tells of his unique way to honor the memory of his mother.

I had such a fantastic experience raising money for Livingston during my 2015 Los Angeles Marathon journey; I decided to try it again in 2017. Once again, I asked my friends and family to sponsor individual miles along my 26.2 mile adventure through the streets of LA. Once again, they exceeded my expectations — by far! Nearly 30 individual pledges were made in honor of my mother, Julie Sandoval.

One of the promises I made to myself when my mom passed away in 2013 was that I would never let her spirit or her memory fade away. Since that tough day in December I have made it my duty to keep her flame alive and well — and tell her story every chance I get.

Her story is the way she lived

And I really love to tell her story. Whether it is about her illness or simply her life in general, I often find myself telling people about her and how she influenced something currently taking place in my life. Some stories are about her love for sports, some are about her never ending zest for life. Some focus on how she dealt with her diagnosis and the latter years of life, and some reference the way she approached raising my sister and me. No matter what the subject of the story was there is always a sense of joy and excitement, which is exactly how she tried to live her life.

My mom really did live life to its fullest. She made sure to take advantage of every opportunity that came her way, and she made it a point to celebrate even the smallest victories. One of the most important things that I learned from her in our 31 years together was to live life happy. Sure, bad things will happen — it’s inevitable. But one thing you can always control is your reaction and your outlook on life each day.

These days, when I talk about my mom and tell her stories, it is not an unhappy memory associated with losing her — it is a chance to celebrate her and the things she did to shape my life. Her story will always be one that guides me and that reminds me to stay on track and to always flourish despite the challenges of life.

Mom’s Mile

My favorite part of every marathon I have run, 15 in total, is reaching “Moms Mile” or mile 25. I always dedicate the last 1.2 miles of my 26.2-mile journey to my mom and her memory. I consider this final stretch of my race to be my Victory Lap. It’s a chance to run with mom and reflect on all that she taught me. This is my chance to ignore the pain and suffering of the moment and replace it with pure joy and elation — and to reflect on the many positive memories of my beautiful mother.

My mom was lucky to receive care from Livingston Hospice during her final days in 2013. I know she would appreciate giving back to such a wonderful organization. This year I was able to donate $1,050 in her memory — the most I’ve ever raised with my Marathon Donation Project.

Jonathan raised over $1,600 through his races to support Livingston through his Marathon Donation Project. Many donors create fundraising opportunities around important life event — birthday, holiday or just because. It’s a great chance to tell your friends, family, colleagues, or partner that you’d rather have them give...
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Memorials & Tributes
AUGUST 2017 THROUGH OCTOBER 2017
At its heart, Livingston is about helping people. It is with deep gratitude that we recognize gifts made in tribute to friends and family members. These thoughtful gifts will truly help someone when they need it most.

Friends & Family Members. These thoughtful gifts will truly help someone when they need it most.

Livingston Memorial Visiting Nurse Association • lmva.org

9
Thank you for sharing your feelings.

Please tell me what you are feeling.

What is the hardest part for you?

I’m here and I want to listen.

Take all the time you need.

You must really feel angry.

I’ll call you tomorrow.

This must be hard for you.

You will feel worse before you feel better.

I’m sorry.

I’m sad for you.

You can always remarry.

Something good will come out of this.

At least you have another child.

He (She) led a full life.

Be strong!

What NOT to Say

I understand how you feel.

Death was a blessing.

You’re still young.

You have your whole life ahead of you.

You will feel worse before you feel better.

You can have other children.

You can always remarry.

Honoring and recognizing our donors is very important to us. We apologize for any omissions and/or errors. Please call Lynda Frank at (805) 642-0239 x641 to update us with any changes, corrections or preferences. Your support is greatly appreciated!

How to Express Sympathy:
What to Say and What Not to Say.

Although many people want to comfort and help the bereaved, the stress and anxiety of the encounter sometimes makes it difficult to know what is actually helpful. Often the phrase that is meant to help actually produces more pain and distress. What follows is a partial list of phrases that have been found to be helpful (and hurtful) in comforting the grieving person.

**What to Say**

I’m sorry.

I’m sad for you.

What can I do for you?

I’m here and I want to listen.

Please tell me what you are feeling.

This must be hard for you.

What is the hardest part for you?

I’ll call you tomorrow.

It isn’t fair, is it?

You must really feel angry.

Take all the time you need.

Thank you for sharing your feelings.

**What NOT to Say**

I understand how you feel.

Death was a blessing.

You’re still young.

You have your whole life ahead of you.

You will feel worse before you feel better.

You can have other children.

You can always remarry.

Something good will come out of this.

At least you have another child.

He (She) led a full life.

It’s time to put it behind you now.

Be strong!

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Used with permission and adapted from What to Do When Someone Dies by Buz and Joanie Overbeck, TLC Group, Dallas, TX 1995
Remembering a Devoted Volunteer

Over twenty years ago, Donna Miller was looking for a way to “give back” after her father died of cancer on our hospice care. Warm, sincere, compassionate and dynamic, Donna was everything one could hope for in a hospice volunteer.

Donna eventually became the co-chair of the Light Up a Life event. As Donna would say, “I am all about Light Up.” During her tenure as co-chair, the event grew each year and raised over $968,000 to support compassionate hospice care over 20 years.

“Donna provided volunteer help at our offices — editing the newsletter — and coordinating numerous fundraising events over the years. From Guerney Turney to Miniature Golf tournaments to the first Mother’s Day Luncheon, Donna definitely put the “fun” in fundraising. But she never lost site of the purpose,” recalls Volunteer Coordinator Maddy Hazard. “We were very fortunate to have her as a part of Team Livingston for such a long time. Her kind and caring presence brought peace to so many people in our community.”

Donna passed away on April 24, 2017, from Alzheimers, with her family by her side. This year, Donna’s family will light the Ventura Tree in her memory.

We are lucky to have had such a devoted volunteer. If you are interested in volunteering for Livingston or Camarillo Hospice, please contact Maddy Hazard at (805) 642-0239 x775 or mhazard@lmvna.org.