

Pillar *for* Hospice

News from Spartanburg Regional Hospice

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Veteran Volunteers Share a Special Bond with Fellow Veterans in Hospice Care



Serving patients and families from all walks of life at the end of life is a distinct privilege shared among the Spartanburg Regional Hospice team. Every patient has a story and has made an individual mark in this world. Getting to know these patients and their families, being welcomed into this fragile time, and having the opportunity to hear their own special stories, is a rewarding part of our work. Still, when a veteran comes into our care, it is a particular honor to provide support for these men and women who have given so much to our community and nation.

The Department of Veterans Affairs estimates that 372 World War II veterans are dying each day. Korean War and Vietnam veterans are also aging. We are truly grateful for the service of all veterans to our country, and we do our very best to treat them with the dignity, compassion and expertise they have earned.

In this issue of *Pillar*, we present examples of the many ways Spartanburg Regional Hospice honors and serves veterans – from special events and recognition to connecting them with volunteers who have military experience. I hope you will enjoy these and other stories about our hospice program.

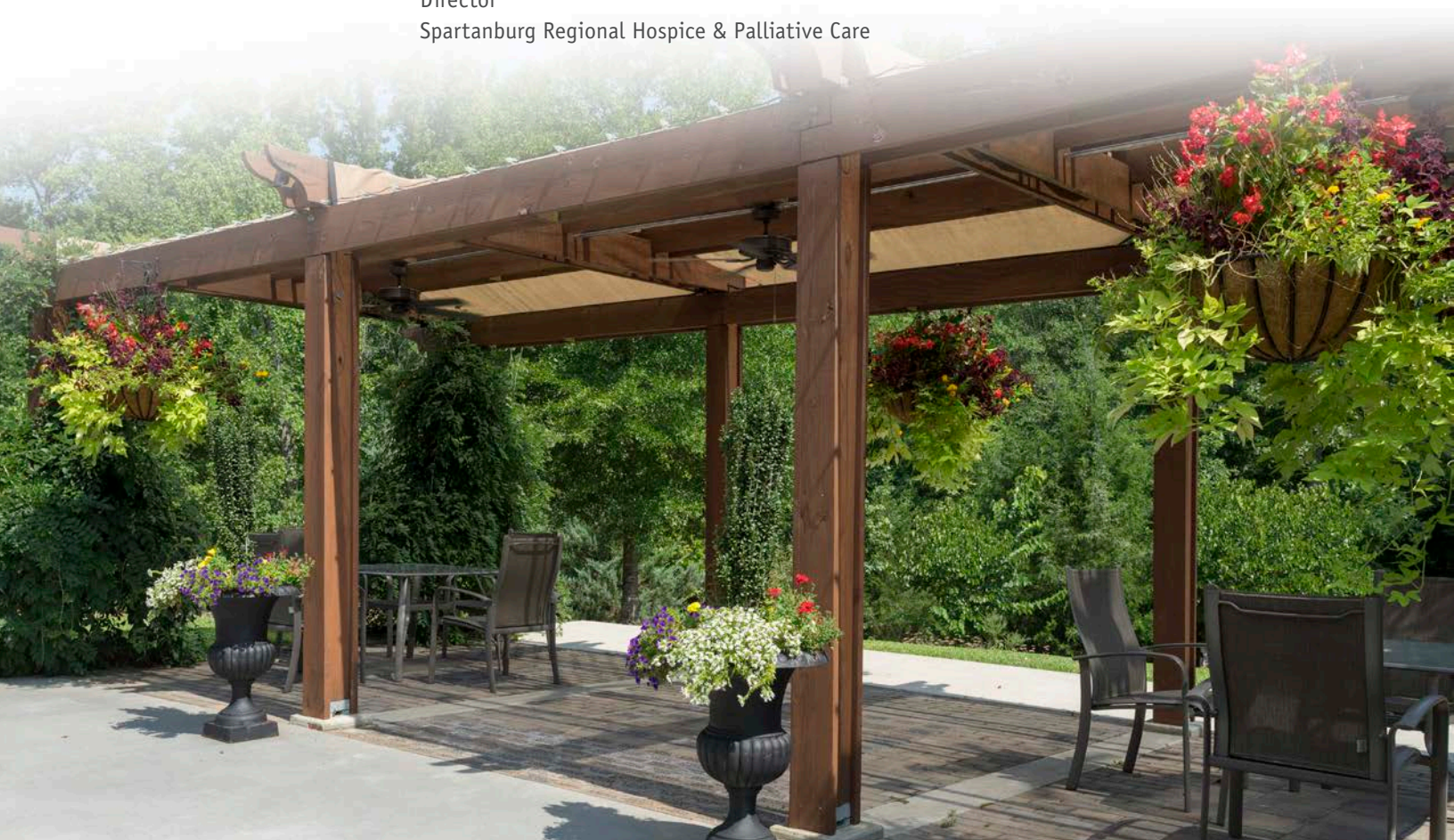
As always, we are grateful for your feedback and support.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kim Ross".

Kim Ross

Director

Spartanburg Regional Hospice & Palliative Care





Why Have A HOSPICE TEAM?

By Garrett Snipes, MD

Hospice and palliative care, in general, are a team effort – always has been, and I suspect always will be. The simple truth

is that no one type of medical practitioner can meet the needs of patients with serious or advanced illness, or people approaching end of life.



Garrett Snipes, MD

Mary is an 82-year-old with advanced pancreatic cancer, who has gone from being healthy and functional to weak and confined to bed in the span of four weeks. She is the beloved matriarch of a large family, many of whom are sad and even angry that this has happened. Mary herself mainly wants to have some relief from constant debilitating abdominal pain and nausea. After significant weight loss, she is so weak that she can't get out of bed by herself. Though deeply religious, she said she is angry at God for letting her down and, seemingly, allowing her to suffer.

Who can help Mary and her family? She needs a doctor to treat and alleviate the severe symptoms and suffering she is experiencing. Successfully treating complex symptoms such as these represent key challenges and the greatest source of achievement to a hospice physician.

But will that be enough to place her on a peaceful path? Wouldn't it be great to have a social worker with pre-bereavement skills to provide supportive counseling to her family and Mary herself? Spiritual support is essential too, for the "why" questions. Such support is routinely

provided by hospice chaplains.

The hospice nurse will coordinate all the team members involved and will carefully assess Mary's symptoms to make sure that her suffering is being relieved. The nurse techs will provide basic care, and volunteers will be a regular source of companionship.

Effective team communication, both in formal team meetings and informal discussions, ties the work of the team together.

When it comes to taking care of hospice patients, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. It truly does "take a village" for people approaching end of life to have the best quality of life possible. The hospice team approach is essential and provides that structure.

For more information about hospice care, please visit SpartanburgRegional.com/Hospice.

WE HONOR VETERANS

Spartanburg Regional Hospice Volunteers and Staff
Provide End-of-Life Care for our Military Heroes

When Jim Williamson volunteers with veterans under the care of Spartanburg Regional Hospice, he knows he's doing something that matters.

It's not just that these patients deserve to be honored for their service and their sacrifices, it is important they have someone there who understands what they've been through.

Williamson brings a deep level of compassion and understanding that many can't. He's a veteran, too; he served in Vietnam as a first lieutenant and was awarded three Purple Hearts.

Now, he is a volunteer with Spartanburg Regional Hospice in the "We Honor Veterans" (WHV) program. WHV is a collaborative effort of the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization and the Department of Veterans Affairs. A cornerstone of the program is the recruitment of veteran volunteers to visit with veteran patients.



WE HONOR VETERANS



Veterans in hospice feel they can open up to volunteers like Williamson, and this is important. Experts on veterans issues explain that, as they near the end of life, many who took part in combat suffer from anxiety. They may have bad dreams and painful or frightening memories. Some are dealing with

feelings of guilt or anger. Others may have been suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) for decades.

It is common for veterans approaching the end of their lives to want to talk about their military experiences with Williamson. They feel a bond, and, in turn, Williamson is a good listener.

"I had the wife of one patient tell me, 'I'd never heard him talk about that.' Sometimes there's something they wouldn't tell a family member, but they would tell me," he said.

If you are a veteran and would like to volunteer with Spartanburg Regional



An Important Connection

"Veterans really enjoy sharing stories with someone who has been through similar things," said Lynn O'Dell, director of the Spartanburg County Veterans Affairs Office. "They've been through so much and need to be listened to – most of the time, that's what they really want."

Veterans' advocates and caregivers are putting more focus on end-of-life issue for veterans. World War II veterans and many Korean War veterans are now elderly and are dying in large numbers. Many Vietnam veterans are in their late 60s and 70s.

WHV was launched in 2010 to address the growing need for veteran-centered care. It fosters respectful inquiry, compassionate listening and grateful acknowledgment. More than 4,200 hospice and community-based healthcare organizations across the nation are partners. In 2012, Spartanburg Regional Hospice joined the initiative.

Getting to Know our Veterans

"We do a lot of listening," said Volunteer Coordinator Kelly Hall. "And we have heard amazing stories – stories of hope and courage and, in some cases, reconciliation. This effort is so rewarding."

Hall and other Spartanburg Regional Hospice associates support additional efforts to help veterans and their families know they are appreciated.

Veterans under the care of Spartanburg Regional Hospice are presented a WHV certificate and special lapel pin acknowledging their service. Ceremonies celebrating Veterans Day and Memorial Day are hosted at Spartanburg Regional Hospice Home to honor patients and to remember those service men and women who have passed. Patients, family members and friends are invited. They share stories, and some bring old photographs and medals earned during wartime.

"It is our duty and honor to serve those who have served us so heroically. It is a true privilege to be with these patients and families at their most vulnerable time," Hall said.

Williamson, who has volunteered with Spartanburg Regional Hospice for more than two years, acknowledges that spending time with those nearing the end of life takes a certain mental and emotional toughness. He feels a close bond with other veterans and, in particular, considers his fellow Vietnam Veterans "brothers in arms."

"Death is inevitable, and if I can ease it for one patient and provide comfort for one family, then I'm willing to do it," he said.



Hospice, please contact Kelly Hall at khall2@srhs.com or 864-560-5636.



The Spartanburg Regional Hospice Home was conceived as a peaceful place, surrounded by the beauty and serenity of nature. Patient suites have French doors that open to private patios facing the lawn and garden area behind the home. Patients and families can often be found getting fresh air, taking a break or relaxing under the arbor.

The Spartanburg Regional Foundation is leading efforts to enhance the landscaping behind the hospice home. Grass will be planted, and there will be additional native flowers and shrubbery. Plans also call for upgrading existing structures and creating new tranquil areas for reflection.

“We believe this project is going to make our Hospice Home even more special and that families will really appreciate the added beauty of its surroundings,” said Shelly Sinclair, director of philanthropy and hospice liaison for Spartanburg Regional Foundation.

David Church, vice president of oncology and support services at Spartanburg Regional Healthcare System, said that these improvements will help fulfill the original vision planners had in mind for the Hospice Home more than 10 years ago.





"We didn't want it to look institutional. We wanted a setting where there were birds and trees and flowers," said Church, who played a central role in the development of the Hospice Home.

Another key figure at that time was Spartanburg attorney Jim Thompson, who served alongside Marsha Gibbs and the late Katie Hodge as a tri-chair of the capital campaign to raise money for the project.

According to Thompson and Church, numerous sites around the county were considered for the facility.

"It was a requirement that we would have a connection to nature," Thompson said.

Leaders settled on a piece of property near Asheville Highway, a few miles north of Spartanburg Medical Center. It was heavily wooded and came with an added bonus: The property is adjacent to the Upper Chinquapin Greenway, owned and maintained by the Spartanburg Area Conservancy (SPACE).

The location of the greenway means that the Spartanburg Regional Hospice Home will have a permanent buffer from I-585 and potential development. It also connects with a walking path on the Hospice Home property, giving families and other visitors access to an additional 1.6 mile walking trail.

SPACE executive director Andrew Waters said the adjoining properties make for a good partnership. He added, "Having had someone in my family in hospice, it's meaningful to me to be able to provide a place where family members can go to connect with nature."

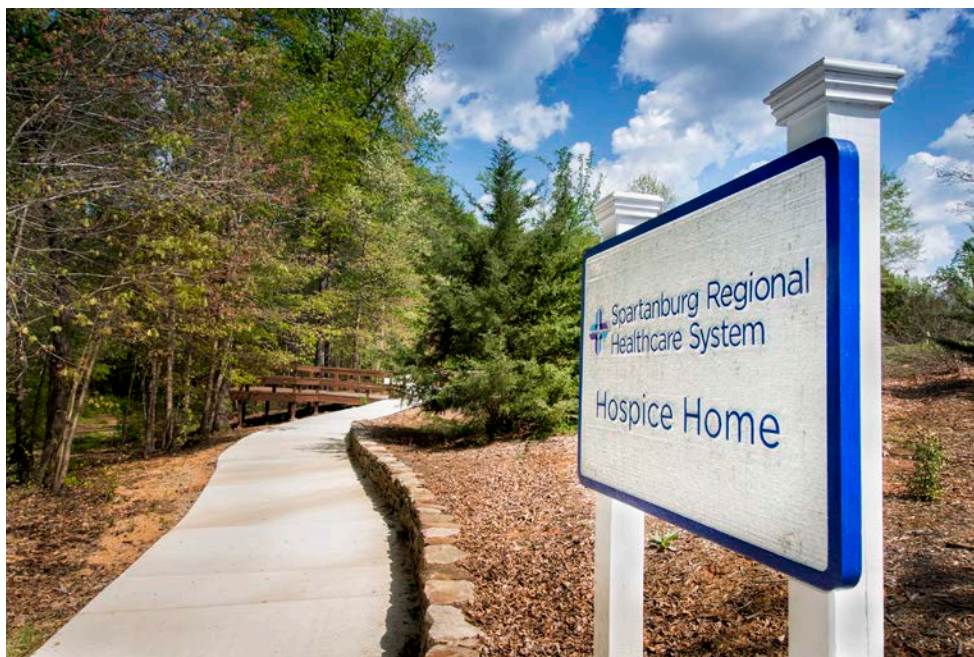
While the Hospice Home site turned out to be nearly ideal, it did require significant grading and a number of trees were cleared. The area was landscaped and, as Church said, "we rebuilt the forest" with newly planted trees and other plants.

Still, even though the capital campaign exceeded its fundraising goal of \$5.3 million, to keep costs under control, "we built [a setting] we could afford," Church said. "We put the bones of it in place with the idea that it could grow."

"Now is the time," said Kim Ross, director of Spartanburg Regional Hospice and Palliative Care. "The garden project will further enrich the exterior space surrounding our Hospice Home. The original design was thoughtfully planned to allow for enhancement and expansion."

Horticulturalist Stewart Winslow, who serves on the Spartanburg Regional Foundation's Hospice Division, is consulting on the project. He is working with planners to select plants and a landscape design that will be both attractive and sustainable.

Ross said she is grateful to those who contribute time, talent and funding. "We are thrilled to have the opportunity to make the space even better for our patients, families and associates."





hope blooms

for HOSPICE

Luncheon Supports Hospice
Patients and Families



The 2017 Hope Blooms for Hospice luncheon was May 18 at the Spartanburg Marriott and netted more than \$82,000 for Spartanburg Regional Foundation's Hospice Special Needs Fund. This fund covers a wide variety of expenses for patients in need – from power bills to grocery cards to special family experiences. The fund also supports Spartanburg Regional Hospice bereavement services.

Attendees at this year's event heard from Spartanburg Regional Hospice clinical staff about their passion for the work of providing end-of-life care.

"We believe that this year's Hope Blooms participants came away with a greater understanding of the work of the special people who provide care to those in Spartanburg Regional Hospice," said Shelly Sinclair, director of philanthropy for the Spartanburg Regional Foundation Hospice Division. "We are very grateful to those who sponsor and purchase tickets for Hope Blooms. These funds make a difference for hospice patients and their families."

Because of your support, the Hope Blooms luncheon netted more than \$82,000 that will support our hospice patients and their families.



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- Spartanburg Regional Senior Health Physicians
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To learn more about becoming a Hope Blooms sponsor, please contact Shelly Sinclair at ssinclair@srhs.com or 864-560-6467.

Lifelong Friends

Family Member Develops Bond with Hospice Caregiver

Janet Sulek becomes emotional when talking about the relationship she forged with Dana Heatherly, her mother's Spartanburg Regional Hospice nurse.

"Dana is unbelievable," Sulek said. "She was my support system; she'll be a lifelong friend."

When Sulek's mother, Etta Mae Shanks, was diagnosed with lung cancer, she moved from her Tennessee home to live with Janet and her husband, Gene, in Moore, SC.

"It was a huge life change," said Sulek, who is an only child. "But your parents took care of you when you were a child, so it's your responsibility."

When her mother was first diagnosed, Sulek was working full-time. Caring for her mother, along with her aging and hearing-impaired father, took a toll.

Heatherly was part of a team of Spartanburg Regional Hospice associates who provided timely and compassionate care. This brought a sense of comfort and calm for the Suleks.

"The amount of support they provided – not just for my mother's physical condition, but also for me and Gene – it was just remarkable," Sulek said.

From nurses to social workers to hospice chaplains, Spartanburg Regional Hospice was with the family throughout the journey, responding to Shanks' ups and downs, and keeping the Suleks informed and prepared.

"Hospice helped us through the process and to understand what to expect," Sulek said.

According to Sulek, her mother, a retired schoolteacher, was not always the easiest patient – not thrilled about being on a regimen of medications or being bothered by nurses. But, Sulek said, Heatherly's temperament and sense of humor won her over. Heatherly and Shanks became close.

"At one point, she gave Dana a big hug and told her that she loved her," Sulek said.

Shanks received care from Heatherly at home.

"Having the opportunity to go into the home of the patient or patient's loved one to provide care is really special," Heatherly said. "It helps to provide comfort for patients and family



members. And, as a caregiver, it enables me to form a stronger connection with the patients I serve. That is very meaningful to me."

But as Shanks' condition worsened, she was moved to Spartanburg Regional Hospice Home. She spent the final days of her life there.

Again, Sulek says her mother encountered caring and professional staff. She was impressed with the way that Garrett Snipes, MD, talked to her mother and treated her with respect.

She said nurses and other staff members were careful to give Sulek and her family privacy, while always remaining close by and available.

"They asked if you needed anything or if they could get anything for you. It didn't matter what it was – they were always willing to help," Sulek said. "Those people, they are truly angels."

To learn more about Spartanburg Regional Hospice, visit SpartanburgRegional.com/Hospice.

Loyalty Runs Deep

Volunteer Values Connection with Veterans and Other Patients

The 34 years Ray Dowis spent in the Army National Guard gave him a meaningful connection to others who served in the military, whether in combat or peacetime roles.

Now, he's staying connected with veterans as a volunteer for Spartanburg Regional Hospice. Dowis visits with veterans who are hospice patients – keeping them company and making it possible for a family member to take some time to run errands or relax.

"We just talk about experiences they had and experiences I had [in the military]," Dowis said.

Veterans aren't the only patients Dowis visits. Kelly Hall, volunteer coordinator with Spartanburg Regional Hospice, describes him as a loyal volunteer who's willing to support any patient he's asked to spend time with, clearly appreciating the opportunity to serve veterans.



With 34 years in the military, Ray Dowis stays connected to his fellow veterans by volunteering to provide companionship to veterans who are patients at Spartanburg Regional Hospice.

It's also a way for Dowis to show his gratitude for the hospice staff and caregivers. His wife, Thelma, died in 2005 in the care of Spartanburg Regional Hospice.

"They did a great job with her," Dowis said. "I thought this was a way I could give back."

Visit SpartanburgRegional.com/Hospice to learn how you can become a hospice volunteer.

We Care

"For a lot of these veterans – especially coming home from Vietnam – nobody cared," he said. "I want to let them know we care for them and want them to have the best quality of life possible."

Families to Create Memory Bears

The plaid flannel shirt that your dad always wore, the soft blanket that draped your grandmother's sofa for all those years, your sister's favorite Clemson t-shirt – touching and seeing those fabrics and designs often bring back sweet memories.

Spartanburg Regional Hospice wants to help turn those materials and articles of clothing into lasting keepsakes. We are excited to host a Make-a-Memory Bear Workshop in November and are

looking for volunteers to help make this community event possible. Spartanburg Regional Hospice is looking for talented volunteers with the gift of sewing to help us create this lasting memory. We also are in need of donated notions such as buttons and ribbon. If you or someone you know is interested in helping with this special event, please contact Kelly Hall at khall2@srhs.com or 864-560-5636.



Acclaimed Horticulturalist Lends Talent and Time to Hospice

Stewart Winslow was struck by the level of attention and compassion of the hospice staff when the father of a close friend became a patient at Spartanburg Regional Hospice Home. He was also impressed by the “peaceful and graceful setting.”

Space surrounding the Spartanburg Regional Hospice Home is beautiful and comforting, thanks in large part to Winslow’s expertise. He has volunteered as a consultant on the development of the property – helping to select species of flowers, shrubs, and trees – since planning began more than 10 years ago.

Milliken & Company

Winslow is a renowned horticulturalist. He got his start locally working for Milliken & Company. At Milliken he played a key role in the development of the nationally recognized Milliken Arboretum. Roger Milliken also supported numerous landscaping and tree-planting projects at Wofford College, and Winslow worked on many of these efforts. He is now employed by the college as director of horticulture and landscape design.

As a youngster growing up in Greensboro, NC, Winslow enjoyed experimenting with various plant seeds he bought out of *Boys’ Life* magazine. He later worked for several summers as a teenager on a strawberry farm before attending Clemson University and majoring in horticulture.

Winslow’s work can be seen all around the Upstate, from the entrance to Greenville-Spartanburg International Airport to Hatcher Garden and Woodland Reserve to Barnet Park and more.

“He’s just fabulous – you can’t beat Stewart,” said Kerin Hannah, who encouraged Winslow to get involved with Spartanburg Regional Hospice. “He’s very knowledgeable and has a great wit about him. He’s patient and very good to work with.”

Experience Galore

Milliken famously loved trees and the environment. The Milliken Arboretum features some 500 varieties of trees and shrubs. Many of these are rare to the Southeast. Projects with Milliken gave Winslow the opportunity to expand his knowledge, to take on exciting experiments, and to work with other experts – notably University of Georgia horticulturalist Michael Dirr and landscape architect Rick Webel.

“I’ve been fortunate,” said Winslow, who has been a member of the Spartanburg Regional Foundation Hospice Division board since 2014. “Mr. Milliken really pushed us, and I have had the chance to work on so many different kinds of projects.”

He’s pleased that his work has contributed to beauty and tranquility of Spartanburg Regional Hospice Home.

“People love to see the beauty of nature and have a harmony with nature,” he said.



Easter Meals

Foundation Provides Holiday Meals

Volunteers delivered more than 120 Easter meals in April to Spartanburg Regional Hospice patients and their families. The meals, prepared by Wade’s Restaurant, are funded by the Spartanburg Regional Foundation Hospice Special Needs Fund. Each family meal feeds up to 12 people.

The meals provide families with a loved one under hospice care the opportunity to come together during a special time of year without the stress of having to prepare a large meal. Meals are delivered to families at Thanksgiving as well.

A meal was also prepared and served at the Spartanburg Regional Hospice Home so that patients and families there could celebrate the Easter holiday together.

For more information on donating or delivering a meal, please call Kelly Hall at **864-560-5636**.





Healing at Hatcher

Spartanburg Regional Foundation is proud to support Healing at Hatcher, a community event for families to celebrate the lives of loved ones who have passed away. Each spring at beautiful Hatcher Garden, the gathering is hosted by Spartanburg Regional Hospice's bereavement program.

"Healing at Hatcher is a special way of

connecting with loved ones in the spring – a time of new beginnings," said Christi Foster, director of quality and support services.

Attendees at this year's event took part in art and nature activities, enjoyed music and refreshments, and participated in a healing water ceremony.

To learn more about Spartanburg Regional Hospice Bereavement Services, contact Christi Foster at **864-560-3856** or **cfoster2@srhs.com**.

Always Remember

Hospice Honors Veterans With Ceremony, Stories and Photos

Each year around Memorial Day and again at Veterans Day, Spartanburg Regional Hospice hosts a ceremony to honor veterans. On May 21, patients, families, associates and community members gathered at Spartanburg Regional Hospice Home to remember and celebrate those who gave so much to secure our freedom.

The event included the presentation of colors by the Dorman High School JROTC. Patriotic music was performed by Jed Dearybury on piano and trumpet. Community members and families of hospice patients shared photographs and stories about their loved ones and their service to our country.

"Dedicating time to purposely consider the contributions and sacrifices of the men and women who have served in our military is important," said Spartanburg Regional Hospice Director Kim Ross. "To see the families of veterans come together and share their stories and recognize one another was really special. It made me even more grateful for the service their loved ones gave to our nation."

The event concluded with a barbecue lunch and time for guests to enjoy conversation.



Dates to Remember - 2017

Service of Remembrance

A time to remember our loved ones.

July 25 – 6 p.m.

Sept. 26 – 6 p.m.

Service of Remembrance is hosted at the Outpatient Hospice Office, 1530 Drayton Rd, Spartanburg, SC.

Grief Support

Four-week group session beginning:

July 6 – 6 -7:30 p.m. – Thursdays

Sept. 6 – 10 a.m. – 11:30 p.m. – Wednesdays

Registration required 864-560-3856

Monthly group support:

July 20 – 10 -11:30 a.m.

Aug. 17 – 6 -7:30 p.m.

Sept. 21 – 6 -7:30 p.m.

Grief support sessions are hosted at the Spartanburg Regional Hospice Home, 686 Jeff Davis Drive, Spartanburg, SC.

Southern Legends Motorcycle Ride to Benefit Spartanburg Regional Hospice

Aug. 26 (Rain Date – Sept. 2)

The ride will start at the Spartanburg Shrine Club, 1450 Fernwood Glendale Road, Spartanburg, SC. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m., the ride will depart at 10 a.m.

Veteran's Day Ceremony

Nov. 5 – 2 p.m.

Hosted at Spartanburg Regional Hospice Home, 686 Jeff Davis Drive, Spartanburg, SC.

Thanksgiving Meal Delivery

Nov. 18 – 10 a.m.

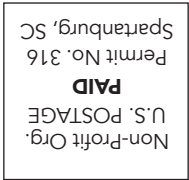
Light Up a Life

Dec. 7 – 3 & 7 p.m.

Hosted at the Spartanburg Regional Healthcare System Administrative Services Building, Beaumont Mill, 700 North Pine Street, Spartanburg, SC.



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For hospice referral information, please call 864-560-CARE

Contact info for Foundation:

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