Caring for the Caregiver

Mary K. Spengler, MS, Chief Executive Officer, Hospice of Westchester

Caring for a loved one, whether a family member, friend or neighbor, is becoming increasingly common as the Baby Boomer generation continues to age. According to AARP and the National Alliance for Caregiving, 40 million Americans provide care for an adult friend or family member who is ill. While the typical family caregiver is a 49-year old woman, there are an increasing number of men serving in this role. In addition, about one-quarter of all caregivers are now between the ages of 18 and 34.

The responsibilities of family members or friends that find themselves in this situation do not end with caregiving; many also hold full-time jobs. Caregiver obligations can place demands on their schedule and emotions, causing significant stress both in and outside of the workplace. For this reason, those in this position must be sure to take care of themselves in order to protect their own health and well-being in all aspects of their life.

It is imperative that caregivers understand that taking care of themselves is just as important as caring for a loved one. While there are myriad of rewards for providing care for another person, there are also potential risks to the caregiver’s health.

Signs of caregiver stress may build up slowly and might not be immediately noticeable. Coworkers, friends or loved ones may detect mood changes, impatience with colleagues and clients, and a lack of joy in workplace and social activities. Anxiety, irritability and exhaustion also are common signs.

Stress can contribute to lost wages and ill health effects on the caregiver without the proper tools and exercises. Some simple steps can be taken to prevent or minimize the effects of stress. Seeking help is paramount. continued on page 3

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**Butterfly Release**

Hundreds of family, friends, and community members gathered for two remembrance ceremonies at HOW’s sixth-annual Memorial Butterfly Release on May 15 at the Wainwright House in Rye, NY.

*Children pose with Monarch butterflies during HOW’s Memorial Butterfly Release on May 15 in Rye.*

**Spring Soirée**

On April 20, HOW once again partnered with everyone’s favorite local restaurant, Sam’s of Gedney Way in White Plains, for our second annual Spring Soirée. Ten percent of the revenue generated throughout the evening was donated to HOW and earmarked to support our vital programs and compassionate services.

*L-R: Susan Yubas, Chair, HOW; William F. Flooks, Jr., Board Member, HOW; Mary K. Spengler, MS, Chief Executive Officer, HOW; Karen Herrero, Owner, Sam’s of Gedney Way; Holly K. Benedict, Director of Public Affairs and Development, HOW*

**HAPPENINGS & GATHERINGS**

**GOLF INVITATIONAL**

HOW HOSTED ITS 14TH-ANNUAL GOLF INVITATIONAL ON JUNE 21 AT WESTCHESTER HILLS GOLF CLUB IN WHITE PLAINS, where dozens of local business leaders and members of the community played the links to support HOW. Brian Crowell, PGA head golf professional, golf instruction book author and TV/radio host was on hand to help participants with their swing and played a hole with each foursome. A special thanks to our sponsors, which include Hildegarde D. Becher Foundation, Inc., Atlantic Tomorrow’s Office, Beecher Flooks Funeral Home, Inc., Entergy, Zanzarella Marketing, and Arroway Chevrolet-Cadillac of Mount Kisco.

*A foursome representing Atlantic, Tomorrow’s Office, a sponsor of HOW’s 14th Annual Golf Invitational, with PGA pro Brian Crowell. L-R: Anthony Dugay, Stephen Gallo, Christa Puccio, Carolyn DeSpirito, Brian Crowell*

*L-R: William F. Flooks, Jr., Golf Invitational Co-Chair and Sponsor, Beecher Flooks Funeral Home; John Zanzarella, Golf Invitational Co-Chair and Sponsor, Zanzarella Marketing; Susan Yubas, Chair, HOW; Mary K. Spengler, MS, Chief Executive Officer, HOW; James P. O’Toole, Golf Invitational Co-Chair, James P. O’Toole Consulting; Jack Geoghegan, Golf Invitational Co-Chair and Grand Sponsor, Hildegarde D. Becher Foundation, Inc.*
In September, HOW was named Outstanding Nonprofit by 914INC. magazine at the 4th Annual Small Business Awards. It was a wonderful evening celebrating small businesses throughout Westchester County, and we were truly honored by this recognition.

Our New Name

In April, we announced a rebrand which included a refreshed name and new tagline: Hospice of Westchester – Making the Most of Each Day.

“This is a very exciting time for our organization, and a strategic step to help us stay relevant in the marketplace as we begin preparations for our 25th anniversary next year,” said Mary K. Spengler, MS, chief executive officer of Hospice of Westchester. “Our name now reinforces what we provide, quality hospice care, and who we loyally serve, patients and families in Westchester County.”

914INC. Small Business Award Winners

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Fall/Winter Bereavement Support Groups

- Daytime Spouse/Partner Loss
- Evening Parent/Sibling Loss
- "Flying Solo" spousal loss after a year (for women)
- Comfort Crew Child/Family Bereavement Program
- Coping With The Holidays workshop

Please contact our bereavement department for further information regarding dates, times and registration.

Karen Dreher, LCSW-R
Bereavement Coordinator
914-682-1484 ext. 130

Kim Gordon, MHC-LP, CT
Bereavement Coordinator
914-682-1484 ext. 163

Bruce Page, MAT, MDiv
Director of Volunteer Services
Bereavement Coordinator
914-682-1484, ext. 118

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A version of this article was published in the Oct. 10 edition of the Westchester County Business Journal.
Letter from The Chief Executive Officer

THIS YEAR, WE CELEBRATED OUR 24TH ANNIVERSARY OF PROVIDING EXCEPTIONAL HOSPICE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TO RESIDENTS OF WESTCHESTER COUNTY.

2016 was filled with exciting developments that have afforded us the opportunity to expand and enhance our offerings. We began the year in our new headquarters, and launched a refreshed name and new tagline: Hospice of Westchester – Making the Most of Each Day. Our name now reinforces what we provide, quality hospice care, and our goal of enabling patients and their families to enjoy each day in a comfortable and dignified manner.

This has been an extraordinary year for the organization, and we want to share with you the remarkable growth and accomplishments we have achieved thanks to the dedication and leadership of our tireless staff, volunteers, board of directors, supporters and friends. We are proud to say that we have once again met all 20 standards of charitable accountability established by the Better Business Bureau and received designation as an accredited nonprofit. In addition, we were also named Outstanding Nonprofit by 914INC. at the 4th Annual Small Business Awards. We are extremely proud of both of these accomplishments.

While it has been an exceptional year in many respects, government cuts and regulatory changes made to Medicare have continued to broaden our responsibility in covering additional costs (such as medications) for our patients. In addition, the mandatory cuts to federal agencies that went into effect three years ago continue to impact our bottom line. However, it is important to note that HOW has continued to maintain and offer its exceptional clinical expertise to our patients and their families. We are proud to say the financial cuts have had no impact on the compassionate care we offer to our patients. The losses, however, have required us to be even more dependent on the generosity of our donors and supporters.

Each day, HOW continues to make great strides and carry out its mission to provide extraordinary and dignified comfort, care, and compassion to individuals and families facing a serious or life-limiting illness. We would not be able to deliver such high-level care without the continued support of individuals, corporate neighbors, and the Westchester community. We are eternally grateful to you—our donors—without whom we would not be able to enrich and expand our services year after year and continue to be recognized as the “Hospice of Choice” in Westchester County.

Thank you for your continued support and generosity. Our best wishes to you and your family for a peaceful and healthy holiday season!

Mary K. Spengler, MS

For 24 years HOW has served as an integral and solid member of the Westchester County community by providing quality end-of-life care that emphasizes compassion, dignity and respect.

We continue to rely on the dedication of you and other community members who have supported us throughout our history. Please continue this tradition by making a year-end, tax-deductible gift to HOW using the enclosed envelope. For further information, please contact Holly K. Benedict, Director of Development and Public Affairs, at 914-682-1484 ext. 122. Thank you again to you – our supporters – who have helped HOW stay true to our mission and making us the “Hospice of Choice” in Westchester.

HOSPICE SERVICES ARE COVERED BY MEDICARE, MEDICAID AND MOST PRIVATE INSURANCE.

Hospice of Westchester is a private not-for-profit, tax exempt agency that is certified by the federal government, licensed by the New York State Department of Health, as well as accredited by the Community Health Accreditation Program (CHAP).
Educational Series

In an effort to continue to offer the highest quality of care to our patients and their families, Hospice of Westchester (HOW) is committed to providing ongoing educational opportunities to its staff throughout the year. We are grateful for the support of the Edward M. Simas Educational Fund and United Way of Westchester, who have helped fund our educational series.

Our staff took part in two presentations in 2016. Our first presenter was Kenneth J. Doka, Ph.D, a professor of gerontology at The College of New Rochelle and senior consultant to The Hospice Foundation of America. He spoke to the team about the importance of “Care for Caregivers.”

The second presentation was given by David A. Chmielewski, MD, a specialist in hospice and palliative medicine practicing in New City. He presented at the Hospice and Palliative Care Association of New York State (HPCA-NYS) Conference and gave the same provocative presentation to HOW staff members on “Protecting Our Patients from Polypharmacy.”

HOW also hosted a Nursing Home Advisory Meeting this year. At this presentation, HOW staff discussed best practices in coordinating hospice care with our partners in Skilled Nursing Facilities.

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Our Volunteer Department is always seeking warm and compassionate individuals, including active clinical professionals (nurses, social workers, MD’s), to volunteer with our patients and help in the office. We will be offering an accelerated training opportunity for our Comfort Crew children’s bereavement support program (meets every other Wednesday evening). Two 5-hour Saturday sessions in December will be available to those interested, along with observation of our already active volunteer facilitators.

In the New Year, we will be offering training in vigil work (longer volunteer support in the last days/hours of a patient’s life). Our department is also currently working with HOW’s Bereavement Department and Spiritual Care Department about skill enhancement opportunities in these areas for existing volunteers.

For further information, please call Bruce Page, MAT, MDiv., Director of Volunteers, at 914-682-1484 ext. 118.

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NY State Tribute Foundation Donation

Earlier this year, HOW was honored to receive a $3,500 donation from the New York State Tribute Foundation, which was earmarked for our Bereavement Program. The NYS Tribute Foundation, which unites funeral service professionals throughout New York State, is dedicated to supporting education, outreach and research programs that advance the public’s understanding of end-of-life issues.
NATIONAL HOSPICE & PALLIATIVE CARE MONTH

In 1992, the month of November was designated as National Hospice & Palliative Care Month, designed to raise awareness of hospice and palliative care within the community. The message shared throughout the month is that hospice care help patients and families focus on living. We are proud to have offered exceptional hospice programs and services to the Westchester County community for 24 years thanks to the generosity and support of our exceptional staff, volunteers, board of directors, supporters and friends.

SAVE THE DATE

December 7, 2016
TREE OF LIFE

Friends, families and community members are invited to remember a loved one by purchasing a gold star in their memory. The evening also includes a reception with entertainment.

Hilton Westchester
5:30-7:00pm
For further information about the event or to make reservations, please call Holly K. Benedict at 914-682-1484 ext. 122.