

# Silverado Hospice Newsletter

## Silverado Hospice Los Angeles



## Cheers To Grandparents!

Grandparents play a pivotal role in our lives and families, often serving as the backbone of tradition and culture. While parents are typically at the forefront of children's development, the influence of grandparents is profound, passing down values that remain crucial today.

As we approach National Grandparents' Day on September 10, let's take a moment to acknowledge how awesome they are and make an effort to visit them when we can. Remember, you don't need a holiday to show appreciation for your loved ones!

At Silverado Hospice, we have had the honor of caring for many elderly patients, including those who are grandparents. To all the grandparents out there—thank you for everything you do!

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## Meet Our New Memory Catcher Volunteer, Judy Devore!

**Why hospice: I've always had an interest in the beginnings and ending of lives... always seeming of equal significance. After abandoning an early interest in serving as a birth "doula" (being a lawyer I was very concerned with significant liability issues) I turned my attention to end of life issues. "Hospice" (as a "place") was prominent at that time and it interested me. I therefore trained and volunteered as a "hospice worker". That was many years ago.**

**How did you end up at Silverado Hospice: I came across Silverado on a VolunteerMatch website.**

**What's your favorite thing to do outside of work/volunteering: Outside of volunteering I enjoy painting, reading, watching the birds on my tiny balcony and being with friends, family and three granddogs.**

## Memory Catcher Program

Memory Catchers is an innovative program designed to capture and preserve the life stories of hospice patients for their families and future generations. Through this program, a trained volunteer conducts interviews with the patient, recording their life history and memories either as audio or video. Once a Memory Catcher candidate is identified, a volunteer equipped with the necessary tools and the patient's or family's permission visits the patient's home to begin the recording process.

The volunteer uses guided questions to help the patient share their story. Each patient's journey is unique, so the number of sessions may vary, though most recordings can be completed in 1-2 sessions. Release forms are obtained from the responsible party before any recordings begin.

After the interview, the volunteer edits the recording to remove extraneous noises, pauses, and to streamline the content into an enjoyable video or audio format for the family. This program can also be invaluable for recording the stories of family members and loved ones, particularly in cases where the patient is unable to communicate due to conditions like dementia. For example, if a patient is in the late stages of dementia, family and friends can be recorded sharing special memories and stories about them.

Our goal with the Memory Catchers program is to provide our patients with an opportunity to leave behind a meaningful legacy—a story, a message, or any other sentiment they wish to share with their families, something to be treasured for years to come.



## Spoken Memories

Why I Want to Do This: As I've gotten older, I've noticed more and more of my friends have lost their parents, and we often find ourselves talking about them. What strikes me is that we all share the same sentiment: we never really knew our parents as actual people. We only knew them as the single-dimensional "Mom" or "Dad" we saw every day. We didn't realize that we were only seeing a small part of who they were—a persona adopted by people new to the job of parenting. But it didn't matter; we didn't know the difference.

Parenting is a job, and most parents bring their "work selves" to that job, saying and doing what the role requires with few deviations. This single dimension often persists even when we grow up and have kids of our own. We rarely think to ask our parents deeper questions until, that is, they're gone. When people are asked, "If you could have a long lunch with someone from the past, someone long gone," many might say Jesus or another central religious figure. But very often, in the first few years after losing a parent, people will say, "My mother" or "My father." They want to ask them questions—learn about their young lives, the challenges they faced, the heartaches they endured. They seek the truth, the reality—not the version edited for a child's limited understanding and tender feelings.

One friend discovered that her mother, a Holocaust survivor, had maintained an entire "other life" that she never knew about. After her mother passed away, she found all sorts of items related to a vibrant social life—entertaining at home, dressing up to go out—things that were completely shocking to her. Another friend found out that she might have had a sibling, a brother born between her and her other brother, whom she had never known about.

Now that I'm older, like most people, I want to ensure that my belongings are organized and passed on to my kids. My parents did that for me, leaving everything neat and organized. But what my aching sense of loss really needed was a way to know who my mother and father had been as people. I remember asking their friends, acquaintances, and family members for anything they knew, and the details I uncovered were fascinating, holding my attention like a great book.

During this time in my life, I've been working with seniors, volunteering as a "senior peer counselor." My role was basically to visit and talk with them. Inevitably, the conversation would turn to their kids and their relationships, and they often shared that those relationships were sometimes strained in the last challenging years. I'd ask if they thought their kids truly "knew" them, really understood who they were and what they had been about. Invariably, they would say, "Heavens no." When I asked if they had truly known their own parents, they would sadly say no, adding that they'd give anything for just an hour or two with their long-gone mother or father, to ask them questions and hear their voices one last time.

That's when I started asking if they wanted to give their kids a gift—a way to really know them, to hear them share their stories in their own voices. They loved the idea, and that's how "Spoken Memoirs" was born: audio recordings of older people sharing and revealing themselves to their children or other loved ones. I would give them a short list of things to think about in advance, and then we'd just talk. I'd ask questions designed to encourage heartfelt responses, and with their agreement, and my gentle encouragement, little, if anything, would be left out. The results were gifts of immeasurable value—more valuable than the houses or bank accounts they might be passing along. A small recorder, wrapped in a gift box, to be opened upon their passing.

Now that I'm putting things in order for my own children, I'm reminded of that feeling I had—the feeling all my friends have had—the pressing desire to know who the people we lived with all those years really were. "Spoken Memoirs" is my way of helping others fulfill that desire for their loved ones.

-Judy Devore



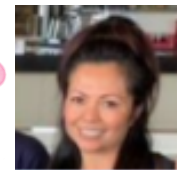
# Meet three of our wonderful employees who were recognized as employees of the month in May! Spotlight On!



**Meet Deby,  
RN Case Manager**

Deby was selected by her peers through voting. Her peers said things like. “She has a heart of gold and takes her time with all the patients and families. Her nurturing presence brings calmness and reassurance to those around her. She has been a blessing and great addition to our Calabasas team.”

Her peers said things like. “She is very kind, and gentle with her pts and families. She’s very knowledgeable with care and treats every family member like they were her own.”



**Meet Julie,  
RN Case Manager**

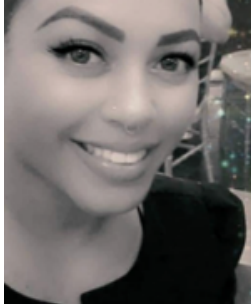
Dominique goes above and beyond and is very knowledgeable. So if you ever need help she’s always willing to help and if she doesn’t know how, she figures it out.



**Meet Dominique,  
Regional Business Manager**

**Meet one of our wonderful employees who was recognized as employee of the month in June!**

## **Spotlight On!**



**Meet Keisa,  
Patient Care Coordinator**

**She is always willing to help me if I have questions. She always helps me with my schedule, especially if i need changes at the last minute**

**Meet two of our wonderful employees who were recognized as employees of the month in July!**

## **Spotlight On!**



**Meet Jesus,  
Spiritual Counselor**

**Jesus, you are an amazing human being. You always bring that sense of calm and peace with your presence. Thank you for not only being there for support to our patients but also our staff, Thank you again, My friend.**



**Meet Shelley,  
CHHA**

**Shelley is such a great addition to our team. Few weeks after she was hired, I've received calls from families praising her and appreciating all the things that she does. She is truly a wonderful blessing.**