



## Living Every Moment with Care, Comfort and Hope



### From Country to AC/DC—Music Therapy Brings Hospice Patient Diane Huseman Joy

When most people think of music therapy, they don't necessarily think of humor, yet Diane Huseman's latest music therapy project makes her laugh.

Diane is a hospice patient at Spring Arbor Senior Living, who has been working with Hospice music therapist Melanie Jessop, LPMT, MT-BC since May. Melanie visits once per week for their music therapy sessions, where they do a lot of listening and singing, but most recently have been writing a song.

"I wanted to write something that sounded like Tim McGraw," Diane says. "Country music is always so sad."

They ended up with a spoof of a country ballad entitled "My Toilet Overflowed in West Virginia." It follows the lines of the country song stereotype where things go from bad to worse – with a good dose of humor thrown in.

Melanie strums the chords on her guitar – an appropriate instrument for the genre. She asks Diane if she's going too fast – if it needs to pick up more of the "sadness" – but Diane says it's just fine.

"My husband and I used to laugh about country music," says Diane, whose husband passed away four years ago. She is keeping his memory alive with the "corny" but enjoyable song, featuring a protagonist who loses his truck, his dog, and his wife, and ends up – where else? – at the local bar.

Diane is actually a serious appreciator of music, but her interests lie mainly in heavy metal and rock.

"I almost had to become involved in music because I have twin sons who have always been in bands," she says. "They were in bands as kids and they're still playing today – guitar, singing, and drums."

Some of her favorite artists today remain AC/DC, The Eagles, and Janis Joplin. Melanie talks about how Diane sang "Hotel California" at Spring Arbor's latest karaoke event.

During their music therapy sessions, with the help of the guitar, a Bluetooth speaker, and the tambourine, Melanie and Diane sing and tap through favorites such as AC/DC's "You Shook Me All Night Long,"

*continued on page 2*



#### STAY CONNECTED

Follow, Like and Share  
Frederick Health Hospice on Facebook



Music therapist Melanie with Diane.

**Carlos Graveran**  
Frederick Health Hospice  
Executive Director

#### Board of Directors

**John Verbus**  
Board President

**Arthur Anderson**  
Board Vice President

**Shane Weeks**  
Board Secretary

**Allison Zerr**  
Board Treasurer

**Alison Bomba, Psy.D.**  
**Douglas Brown, PA-C**  
**Laurel Cucchi**  
**Tejal Gandhi**  
**Bill Haugh**  
**Heather Kirby**  
**Thomas Kleinhanzl**  
**Patrick Mansky, MD**  
**Rev. Timothy May**  
**Charles J. Smith, III**  
**Steven Stoyke**  
**Dan Tipsord**

Janis Joplin's "Bobby McGee," and other '60s and '70s hits. Melanie, who has been a certified music therapist for 26 years, speaks on how these practices provide a variety of benefits, from calming stress and focusing the mind away from pain to emotional processing during end-of-life care.

"Gentle movement, humming, and singing can settle the patient," she says. "We have a practice called entrainment where we match a patient's energy with our music, and then gradually slow the pace and intensity to promote calm."

**Another important practice – which has definitely been part of her work with Diane – is what she calls "legacy work" and "life review." The songs patients write are something their families can cherish for a long time to come, and music provides an outlet to trigger memories and process experiences. It encourages expression.**

During "You Shook Me All Night Long," Diane briefly coughs and adjusts from some discomfort. Melanie pauses to check in, but as AC/DC keeps playing, Diane is eager to keep going. "I'm doing okay," she assures with a smile, and continues singing along.





## Director's Corner

Carlos Graveran, Executive Director

It seems like fall arrived just yesterday, but before we know it, we'll be heading into those colder months that cause us to reflect on the people and opportunities bringing warmth to our lives. Gathering with family and friends naturally causes us to express and experience a sense of gratitude, and there's no shortage of that to go around in the Frederick Health Hospice community. Every day, I try to be intentional in remembering how special it is to serve our unique patients, alongside our exceptional staff, supported and guided by both our donors and Board members.

Being in medicine and clinical care, we like to focus our attention on evidence-based practices, and it may surprise you to learn that there's a growing body of research behind gratitude for wellness. The Greater Good Science Center at the University of California Berkeley, in fact, goes so far as to say that gratitude is the "social glue" binding together relationships. Gratitude practices work by helping people to notice the good things they enjoy, and also to acknowledge that often those good things are a result of help from others. It reminds us of how social and communal we are, and that none of us can afford to operate alone.

Written gratitude practices have been proven in experiments to contribute to and boost even long-term mental health – up to six months after the gratitude writing practice has ended. Other studies have found that people with more naturally "grateful" tendencies tend to report less common health problems such as colds and body aches. Gratitude – an overall focus on the positive and encouraging rather than the negative – can increase the influence of the parasympathetic (calming) nervous system, reduce stress, and promote a restful state. It's no wonder that gratitude is correlated with lower blood pressure and better heart health.

I want to take this opportunity to thank you as a friend of Frederick Health Hospice and to let you know that we couldn't serve our community without you. Our patients receive the highest quality care because you care – and because you value their experiences at end-of-life. I wish you a happy holiday season, and I hope your lives are full of gratitude, as well.





## Hospice Patient Mary Keeps Volunteers Moving

In the Willows memory care unit at Homewood, one hospice patient brings volunteers lots of joy – and exercise.

“The first time I visited with Mary, I walked for an hour straight carrying my guitar. I was completely tired out,” jokes Todd Williams, a hospice music volunteer. Todd was assigned to Mary a few months ago for weekly music comfort visits, but the first time he arrived, it was clear she had other plans.

“Sometimes she’ll let me sit down and play for her, but a lot of times we just walk through the halls,” Todd says, adding that he’s never actually seen Mary settled in her room.

Both Todd and Madi Goodwin, another volunteer, attest to Mary’s cheerful disposition and willingness to chat, even as memory challenges prevent longer conversations. While they walk, they’ve discussed everything from the Olympics – Mary’s daughter Tina used to play sports – to places in Frederick, to Mary’s favorite singer, Elvis.

“One song she does enjoy,” says Todd, “is Hound Dog.”

Both Todd and Madi volunteer with Hospice because they saw how valuable it was to others in their lives. Todd says he saw the benefit of hospice as a friend’s mother was passing away, and Madi’s grandmother was placed with a hospice program before she died a couple years ago. “Volunteering in this setting can make some

people uncomfortable,” Todd says, “but I saw how it contributed something positive. It really felt like a fit.”

**Todd says that Homewood staff is “protective” of joyful Mary and acknowledges that in his three years of hospice volunteering, she definitely stands out. “She has a lot of vitality,” he says. Madi praises the “warm” feeling spending time with Mary gives her, “She always puts a smile on my face.”**



Hospice volunteers Madi Goodwin (left) and Todd Williams (right) have both experienced the joy that patient Mary brings to everyone she meets.



## HosPets Bring Comfort to Patients, Families, Staff and Campers Alike

HosPets are therapy animals trained to provide comfort and companionship to hospice patients, as well as kids and teens at Camp Jamie. These special visits help ease loneliness and stress, uplift spirits, encourage interaction, and bring a sense of peace. Handlers work closely with hospice teams to ensure each visit is safe and meaningful for patients and their families.

## In Memoriam

We are grateful to the individuals and families who designated contributions to Frederick Health Hospice in memory of their loved ones who are listed below:

Robert E. Bellison  
Estella E. Belt  
Donald K. Bonner  
Linda Lou Brandenburg  
Warren E. Brockett  
Roscoe H. Crone  
Roy K. Eaves  
James C. Fletcher  
Agnes M. Fogle  
Betty M. Fowler  
David P. Gray

Leon R. Gregg  
Eleanor M. Heck  
Anna R. Heyden  
Kathryn R. Himes  
Estelle Hines  
Richard S. Hummer  
Dennis C. Johnson  
Wade V. Johnson  
Janet E. Kaiser  
Mary E. Kearney  
Thomas A. Little Sr.

Thomas W. Mackintosh  
John L. Manley  
James A. Massey  
Nancy E. McCartney  
Roger L. McCoy  
Patricia T. O'Dell  
Elaine R. Parker  
Mary Lou Pepper  
Thomas N. Presgraves  
Dorothy E. Reed  
Peggy L. Rippeon

Betty J. Shaw  
Teresa V. Snook  
Carol S. Stockhausen  
Rosemary R. Tunkel  
Geraldine M. Warren  
Carol K. Watson  
Robert A. Windon  
Bonnie L. Winkler  
Linda G. Bentley Wyatt





## Volunteer Holly Shifrin Sews Memories with Patient Elizabeth



Holly Shifrin, a volunteer who's been serving with Hospice for six months, has known how to sew since she was a child. "My mother taught me," she recalls. She didn't imagine that it was a skill she would use in keeping a hospice patient company, but that's just what happened with 98-year-old Elizabeth.

"Volunteer coordinator Dianne asked if there was anyone who could help Elizabeth sew, and I was more than happy to do it," Holly says.

Now, Holly visits Elizabeth's home once a week, where she brings her sewing machine to create blankets out of patchwork squares that Elizabeth cuts. Each blanket is made of rows of three-inch squares, clipped from Elizabeth's vast fabric collection. The blankets go to her grandchildren – and sometimes smaller ones go to great-grandchildren's dolls.

**Elizabeth, Holly says, is very "focused" throughout their two-hour sessions. The work gives her something tactile to do. Her family, additionally, whom Elizabeth is close to, reports that the sewing projects have lightened her mood. "She has been more engaged and happy," Holly says.**

Holly also helps her make fabric Christmas ornaments as gifts. Elizabeth traces the ornament shapes – such as stockings and Christmas trees – on colorful fabric to be cut out, sewn together, and stuffed. Between the ornaments and the blankets, Elizabeth's family will have these handmade keepsakes as unique reminders of her. Some of the fabric, Holly says, is clipped from old clothing items that hold special memories.

Holly admires Elizabeth's involvement with her family, and has come to look forward to their time together. The opportunity to sew and serve has been good for both of them: "I really enjoy it," she says.

# Veteran Liaisons Help Navigate VA Benefits

Applying for veterans benefits can already be an overwhelming task for families, especially when their loved one is in hospice care. As Hospice Veteran Liaisons, Eric Jorgensen and Bob Lebron are dedicated to helping veterans and their families navigate the complexities of applying for various Veterans Affairs benefits, ensuring they receive the support they deserve at no cost.

"Nobody should be paying to file an initial claim with the VA," says Eric.

Across the country, veteran service organizations like the VFW, DAV, and American Legion are available to help submit benefit applications. For residents in Frederick and Montgomery counties, Jorgensen and Lebron extend their support to veterans and their families – regardless of whether they are patients at Frederick Health Hospice.

This assistance alleviates financial stress and provides vital support through programs including Survivor Pension, Veteran Pension, and Aid & Attendance. These benefits can be instrumental in covering home health care costs and other needs, with some payments being tax-free. For example, if a family needs in-home support, Jorgensen and Lebron can help veterans enroll in VA Healthcare, allowing up to 12 hours of home health aide support per week at no cost to the family.

The process begins by determining a veteran's eligibility based on their service history. Understanding the era during which they served is crucial because it influences the type of benefits they may qualify for.



**"I've found that many families had no idea they were eligible for anything," says Eric.**

Once their eligibility is confirmed, Jorgensen and Lebron assist families with an "Intent to File," ensuring that benefits are awarded from the date of the intent, even if the full application is completed later. This accounts for the time families may need to gather necessary documentation. Families are guided through the application forms and, if online submission is not possible, pre-addressed envelopes are provided. This hands-on approach helps minimize barriers and further streamline the benefits application process.



Veteran Liaisons Bob Lebron and Eric Jorgensen work to help veterans and their families with vital support and assistance for end-of-life issues.





Big Buddy Tom and Camper Matthew enjoy some creative time together.



## Camp Jamie Volunteers Wanted: Make a Difference with Support & Care

"Everyone experiences loss," says Camp Jamie volunteer, Elaheh Eghbal. She continues that Camp Jamie "gives kids the tools to cope." Elaheh, a Camp Jamie volunteer since 2021, says that Camp helps build a supportive community for volunteers and campers.

Camp Jamie is a grant-funded program for grieving children and teens in grades 1-12 that includes at least 4 events per year. It's the perfect volunteer opportunity for community members who want to help create a safe space for children and teens, who have lost someone special in their lives, to feel supported and to be themselves.

At Camp Jamie, volunteers can support campers through participating in some of the camp activities including arts/crafts, animal-assisted therapy, nature walks, outdoor games, and sharing circle. At overnight camp, volunteers can be assigned as a "Big Buddy" to a camper or as support staff for the grief counselors.

Beth Bittle has been volunteering 8 years and Tom Delaney has been volunteering for 18 years. Both of them describe their experience of supporting their "Little Buddies" as a surprise, and offers a fresh opportunity to engage with someone new.

"You never know who is going to walk through that door," Beth says. Both Beth and Tom speak to the uniqueness of each camper's experience and their need for different kinds of support. "Some kids want you to listen and talk to them, other times, they're very quiet and they just need you to be there," Beth says. "Some kids are very athletic," Tom says, "and the sports activities help."

One of Beth's favorite things about Camp Jamie is that camp activities have helped her feel "like a big

kid." She's joined campers in papier-maché, bracelet making, birdhouse painting, ziplining and giving piggy-back rides at camp reunions. She always has a blast! Tom echoes Beth's sentiment: "I volunteer at Camp Jamie because it helps kids talk about grief, but it's also a lot of fun."

**Hospice is looking for helpful, energetic, and flexible volunteers who have a passion for listening and supporting kids and teens.**

Volunteering at Camp Jamie is free—requirements are to be 18 or older, complete a background check, volunteer application, and volunteer training (for overnight camp). For further questions, call the Hospice Bereavement Team at 240-566-3030 or email [griefsupport@frederick.health](mailto:griefsupport@frederick.health).



(Left) Camper Aayla and Big Buddy Beth share a heartfelt moment. (Right) Camper Tanza brightens the day with a smile alongside her Big Buddy, Elaheh.





## Twisted Rodz of Maryland Shows Hot Rods for Hospice

When Katie Gray married her husband Robert 16 years ago, she also married one of his lifelong passions – hot rods. “We started dating when we were 15,” Katie says. “He told me even back then that if I wasn’t ok with his love for cars, it probably wasn’t going to work out.”

Fast forward to 2024, and the two of them are now serving as Co-Presidents of the car club they founded, Twisted Rodz of Maryland.

A few years ago, the Grays used to be part of a car club out of Bowie, but didn’t like the fact that it was so far away. Noting that there was a pretty large car scene in Mount Airy, they decided to start a community closer to home. The club exploded after COVID, Katie says, and now there are about 45 people in their core group.

A unique feature of Twisted Rodz is that it was set up to serve the community from the start. “I told Robert that if we were going to do this,” Katie says, “I wanted to create something that would give back.” The club is truly a passion project, Katie continues, where expenses for shows are



Katie and Robert Gray presented Hospice with an incredible donation of \$7,200 from their 2nd Annual Rally in the Back Alley Car and Truck Show held at the Frederick Health Village campus on September 21st.

crowd sourced and collected from members. There’s no membership fee, but everyone offers to chip in. This means that show registration fees and money collected from raffles goes straight to charities of the car club’s choice. One of Twisted Rodz’s main beneficiaries has been Frederick Health Hospice.

“A few years ago, the wife of one of our members was cared for by hospice,” Katie says. “We’re doing this to honor her and to support the organization that took care of them throughout that process.”

The car club’s first hospice benefit show was in July of 2023, and they held another one this past September. Between the two shows, Twisted Rodz has been able to donate almost \$14,000.

“The charity aspect is actually a huge draw,” Katie explains, gratefully. “Our registration fees are donation-based, and when people find out what we’re supporting, they always want to be generous.”



This photo displays cards from families expressing gratitude for the compassionate care from Hospice, highlighting the impact made possible by your generous support.

## Your Gift Matters

Did you know that Medicare and private insurance do not pay all costs of hospice care? Important services like the Veterans Program, Music Therapy, and Grief Support are not covered at all. Your generosity makes it possible for us to offer these programs at no charge. Thanks to you, patients and their loved ones receive the broadest range of services possible. Your gift today means no one faces serious illness or grief alone.

☐ **Yes, I want to make a tax-deductible gift to Frederick Health Hospice.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Donation Gift Amount ☐ \$500 ☐ \$250 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$25 ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

My gift is in memory of \_\_\_\_\_

My gift is in honor of \_\_\_\_\_

**Please acknowledge my gift to:**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Hospice will send a card to the family you designate, acknowledging your gift made in their name or in the memory of their loved one. No reference will be made to the amount of your gift.

☐ Check enclosed (Please make your check payable to Frederick Health Hospice)

☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ American Express ☐ Discover Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_ Security Code \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**To make a gift online, go to [frederickhealthhospice.org/donate](https://frederickhealthhospice.org/donate).**



**Your gift to Frederick Health Hospice is deeply appreciated.**

1 Frederick Health Way | Frederick, MD 21701

Scan here to  
make a gift  
today







# Community Grief Support Resources

The bereavement team hosts several support groups, workshops, and events throughout the year. These are for adults only and are held in-person.

If you are looking for a support group for a specific type of loss, please don't hesitate to contact us about your needs. Call 240-566-3030 or email [griefsupport@frederick.health](mailto:griefsupport@frederick.health). There is no charge for these events.



## Sailing Through the Winter Solstice

"Vasa," a boat to benefit Frederick Health Hospice is part of Downtown Frederick's popular "Sailing Through the Winter Solstice" now on display on Carroll Creek. Visitors can cast \$1 votes to select Vasa as their favorite boat, with the proceeds from the voting benefiting Hospice programs. Special thanks to Truist who sponsored the boat's construction.

**SUPPORT HOSPICE: There's still time to vote!**

[coloronthecreek.com/sttws/](http://coloronthecreek.com/sttws/)



Stay up-to-date  
with our Bucket  
List Book Club!  
Scan for details.



## Grief Camps for Children, Teens, and Families

**Teen Grief Retreat - Spring  
for Students in Grades 9-12  
March 15, 2025**

Thorpewood Retreat Center, Thurmont, MD

**Overnight Camp  
for Students in Grades 1-8  
May 16-18, 2025**

Thorpewood Retreat Center, Thurmont, MD



There is no charge for these events. For more information or to register contact us at 240-566-3030 or [frederickhealthhospice.org/campjamie](http://frederickhealthhospice.org/campjamie)

[frederickhealthhospice.org](http://frederickhealthhospice.org)

1 Frederick Health Way | Frederick, MD 21701 | ph 240-566-3030

Has your address changed? Or would you prefer to get the online version of this newsletter? Email [pjsmith@frederick.health](mailto:pjsmith@frederick.health)



## Wish List

### Kline Hospice House

- Coffee K-cups
- Single-serve creamers
- Bleach
- Laundry detergent (HE)
- Zep floor cleaner
- Furniture polish
- Paper towels
- General cleaner (Spic 'n Span)
- Trash bags (4/8/13/30 gallon)
- Toilet bowl cleaner
- Gift cards (Walmart, Food Lion, Amazon)
- New men's t-shirts (sizes: M/L)
- New women's nightgowns (sizes M /L)
- New extra long fitted twin sheets (white)

Additional items are available on our Amazon Wish List. You can donate by having items shipped directly to our Kline House through Amazon or you can drop them off to our office Monday - Friday, between 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM.

**Find our Amazon Wish List at**  
[frederickhealthhospice.org/wishlist](http://frederickhealthhospice.org/wishlist)

## Support Hospice with a Personalized Ornament



These beautiful hand-blown glass ornaments, delicately tipped with 22K gold on the wings and halo, can be lovingly personalized with a name and/or date. They make a heartfelt gift in memory or in honor of a cherished loved one, or a lovely addition to your own tree. Each ornament comes beautifully packaged in a satin-pillowed gift box, available for \$30.

**Scan here to  
purchase  
online or call  
240-566-3030**

