



The Hospice House challenge continued...

“We will have two beds in the hospital that have a 550-pound capacity that are used on a regular basis,” Hagerty explains. “We are getting a new operating table that will hold 800 pounds. There is actually a need now for that kind of equipment.”

To help keep the community involved in Pat’s challenge, he will be writing on a blog to track his journey: <http://pats35challenge.wordpress.com>. Standing 6 feet 1 inch and weighing 235 pounds, Pat officially began his journey on Aug. 4 and to date has lost over 14 pounds.

Hagerty encourages people to follow his blog, and to be inspired to begin their journey towards a healthier life and to help out the hospice house campaign.

You can find links to the Samaritan Evergreen Hospice House web page as well as areas to leave comments and your own stories on <http://pats35challenge.wordpress.com>.

Hospice House Tally as of Aug. 13 2010: \$1,787,279 million raised for building goal of \$4.33 million (includes over \$29,000 new gifts)

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The Journey

News from Samaritan Evergreen Hospice

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“I would like to take this opportunity to tell you how much I appreciate the work that hospice does and what you have meant to me. I would like to dedicate my gift to my wife.”

E. J., Albany donor

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100 year-old gift a new treasure for future hospice house

Patients and visitors at the Samaritan Evergreen Hospice House will be treated to the sound of music from a special piano – its songs lifting spirits and bringing loved ones together.

Celebrating the piano’s 100th anniversary this fall, the family of Annette Weatherford Cowgill, an Albany resident for most of her life, has donated her piano to the future hospice house, where it will grace the family room and be available for volunteers to play throughout the day.

On her 10th birthday in 1910, Annette was given a brand new piano, which was to become the most prized heirloom of her family – a family that dates back to William Bradford, the first governor of Massachusetts, who came to this country on the Mayflower. Annette’s family helped establish the Weatherford-Thompson law firm in Albany — the oldest family-run law firm in the Pacific Northwest, and Weatherford Hall at Oregon State University where Annette graduated.

After school, Annette married Thomas Griffith Cowgill and instilled a love of music in their children and grandchildren. One grandson, Mike Cowgill, is a partner in the family law firm today.

story continues on page 2...



Donating Grandma’s piano to Evergreen Hospice House was a Cowgill family decision. Left to right: Tom, Carolyn, Mike, Mary and Veda (seated), Don, Bob, Mark and Linda.



35 lbs. for \$100,000 – The Hospice House challenge

The challenge is simple: better your own quality of life and help those on their end-of-life journey receive quality care. Patrick Hagerty, local dentist and current Chairman of the Board for Samaritan Albany General Hospital, loses 35 pounds and a generous local philanthropist gives \$100,000 to the hospice house capitol campaign.

But this challenge is really just the icing on an already sweet gift. The quiet donor has already pledged \$500,000 in matching funds to the hospice campaign. As of June 15, 2010 any gift given to the hospice campaign will be matched, up to \$500,000.

“Taking care of ourselves has huge impacts beyond just our personal lives,” says Hagerty. “We help our community to be a healthier place.”

As a major contributor to the medical community in Albany, and having practiced dentistry for over 23 years, Hagerty has seen an alarming increase in the rate of obesity. This is another area that the generous donor is involved in — preventing obesity and promoting healthy living.

story continues on back...



Patrick Hagerty, Albany dentist and hospital board chairman, weighs in at 235 pounds to begin the \$100,000 weight-loss challenge.

100 year-old gift continued...

At age 86, Annette decided she wanted to give the piano to Carolyn Cowgill, her granddaughter in Lincoln City; but first she wanted to have it refinished. The work was done by a piano specialist in Portland, Or., who stripped off the paint and discovered a beautiful piece of woodwork underneath. Carolyn was so excited about the finished product she began practicing right away.

A few days later, Carolyn called her grandmother and asked her to listen while she played for her over the phone. Both women were thrilled at the gifts they had given each other. Carolyn treasures that memory all the more because her grandmother passed away the next evening.

In 2009, a storm damaged Carolyn’s home, and there was no place for the piano.

“I didn’t want to sell it and I didn’t want to put it in storage,” Carolyn said. “I really wanted to get the piano back to Albany because Grandma loved Albany.”

Then, Cousin Mike came up with the idea of donating it to the hospice house. The family now believes that Annette is smiling about her piano serving as a source of warmth and joy for years to come.

The family provided this tribute to the piano and Annette:

Where she was, she radiated friendship – Warm, reassuring, gentle, sincere.
Another gift to us, one that is everlasting,
Like a gift from an angel it was to be remembered and treasured.

Getting more from what you do

Across the board, hospice volunteers say they give their time because they want to help others; it’s not about them, according to Karen McLain, coordinator of the 40-member volunteer group at Samaritan Evergreen Hospice.

Volunteers soon realize that they get just as much out of it as the patients they serve — sometimes more.

Hospice volunteers spend one to four hours a week with terminally ill patients, serving as a companion, providing information to nurses and physicians and offering respite for caregivers.

“People die the way they live, and we have to accept that some issues in their lives and families are not solvable,” McLain tells volunteers. “All we can do is provide an outlet and support for them.”

McLain says that just being present for a patient can be extremely powerful.

In any given week, hospice volunteers work with 75 to 80 patients throughout the mid-valley in private homes, nursing homes, adult foster care and assisted living facilities, and hospitals.

Hospice volunteers work as part of a team that also includes physicians, nurses, bath aides, chaplains, therapists and social workers.

“As volunteers, we try to give people at the end of their lives an opportunity to reflect, forgive and make their time left what they want it to be.”

Auxiliary shop steps up as first room sponsor

The patient rooms in the Samaritan Evergreen Hospice House will be warm, inviting places for patients and their families to spend quality time together. Recognizing the importance of this environment, the Auxiliary at Samaritan Albany General Hospital became the first sponsor of a patient room in the new facility, with a \$75,000 donation to the hospice house campaign.

“The hospice house is a necessity for our community,” said Dolores Haslem, manager of the gift shop. “We are excited to take a leadership role in building it.”

Proceeds from the shop help fund medical scholarships and projects like the hospice house. The shop is owned by the hospital auxiliary, who decided in 2009 that the shop would sponsor a room.

“This year we completed our pledge and paid the \$75,000. Now we’re thinking about funding for the private garden adjoining the patient room.” Haslem said.

There are 15 volunteers who help run the successful shop. Evelyn Drake has been working in the shop for over 10 years.

“I volunteer because of the people I get to work with, and the money goes to good causes,” Drake said. “It’s a lot of fun to be a part of.”

Haslem said she hopes the gift shop sponsorship moves other people and groups to sponsor rooms at the hospice house.

“It’s an excellent way to support the community and to be recognized, Haslem said.”



Gift shop manager Dolores Haslem and volunteer Evelyn Drake display hats and scarves for sale.