

ALPENGLOW  
HOSPICE  
FOUNDATION

3200 E. 19TH STREET  
SIGNAL HILL, CA 90755  
(562) 494-7687  
(FAX) 494-7817

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# Alpenglow Quarterly

June 2011

## A Message from Our Spiritual Counselor - Paul Bartley

Whenever our loved ones are sick there is concern by family and friends; but when they receive a terminal diagnosis the concern often becomes a family crisis. The individual's perspective on *what really matters in life* take on a whole new meaning. Family and friends are not immune to this *rearranging of life's priorities*. This may be the first time in their life that they have seriously considered Spiritual matters.

Spiritual care is an important part of overall Hospice care. Sometimes there is a misunderstanding of what exactly a Spiritual Counselor does. The Spiritual Counselor makes assessments with a focus on providing support to both the patient and the family in a manner that they are accustomed and comfortable. Very often we contact the patient or the family's Faith Community to get their own priest, pastor or rabbi involved; whereas we would simply support your own clergy's visits if you so desired.

Rather than a pre-set program of support; we assess the present support system and formulate a "care-plan" where each person is encouraged and comforted right where they are.

We try to tailor our support to fit the individual. We don't believe in the *one size fits all approach* as each person's spirituality is unique to themselves. Our goal is to provide spiritual support that is comforting, reassuring and familiar to their chosen spiritual path. Some people are more comfortable with a religious approach such as prayer; scripture readings etc., while others for example, find a walk through their garden or browsing through family photos a spiritually meaningful and uplifting activity.

We also provide Bereavement support to the families and close friends of our patients. Both Spiritual Counselors and Social Workers are involved with our on-going (13 months) Bereavement support after their loved

one has passed. Families can receive information on grief and bereavement through mailings we provide. In addition, we can connect the bereaved with a *Grief Group* for further support. We also provide grief counseling when there is a need. Our team stands ready to assist patients, families and loved ones with compassion, care and dignity.



## Sparkling Survey of Alpenglow by Joint Commission

Alpenglow Hospice is accredited by the Joint Commission; an independent, not-for-profit, national accrediting body that oversees the safety and quality of health care programs in the U.S. Arguably considered the premier accreditation body, the Joint Commission conducts a thorough survey of each agency at minimum every three years.

Alpenglow Hospice prides itself on meeting the regulation requirements and patient safety goals mandated by the Joint Commission. In March 2011, Alpenglow Hospice completed a full survey and has received accreditation status until March 2013. This result was achieved through strong management of the agency's clinical and adminis-

trative functions as well as through the efforts of Quality Management Coordinator Judy Regotti, RN. Congratulations to the team on a job well done.



## Hospice and Palliative Care Education Series Available To All

Much of what we do as hospice professionals is provide education to patients, family members and caregivers. As part of Alpenglow's community outreach, we are offering several informative classes specifically designed for staff at residential facilities and skilled nursing environments. Facility staff benefit tremendously from continuing education in palliative/hospice care provided by our experienced hospice staff. In fact our nurses often become a primary

resource in accessing patients needs and appropriateness for hospice care. The most frequent comment we read in letters from patient families is that they wish they would have considered hospice earlier. Recognizing signs and symptoms early and contacting a qualified hospice professional is the key to providing the maximum benefit to the patient. Because family members are often overcome with the emotion of a terminal diagnosis, the responsibility

to seek hospice care counsel often falls on the shoulders of the resident's caregiver. Our "Hospice 101" and "Care for the Caregiver" can be used for continuing education units ("CEU") and are only a phone call away. Contact Vicki Hallaian, RN (pictured below) at (562) 494-7687 for further information.



## Shop at Ralphs Grocery to Help Alpenglow Hospice Foundation

Last year Alpenglow Hospice Foundation ("AHF") partnered with Ralphs Grocery to assist in our fund raising efforts. As part of Ralphs Community Contribution Program, AHF is eligible to receive rebates on its supporters purchases at Ralphs or Food 4 Less stores. This program is a separate matching fund and will not affect the members "Ralphs Rewards" account or other discounts. By simply identifying Alpenglow Hospice Foundation using the Organization Number (92360) linked to your rewards card, you will be contributing to the cause with each purchase. Ralphs will match a percentage of the money spent and send the money to Alpenglow on a quarterly basis. Go to [www.ralphs.com](http://www.ralphs.com) to sign up today. You may also sign up for the program at your local Ralphs store by providing our Organizational Number (92360). If you have any further questions please contact Eric Lenore at Alpenglow Hospice Foundation (562) 494-7687. Thank you for helping us provide quality hospice care to our community.

## Employee Spotlight - Elizabeth Mestaz

Elizabeth "Liz" Mestaz has been with Alpenglow since April 2008 and was originally hired to head up our Medicare billing function. She has since become proficient in many other administrative aspects of the agency including customer service and information technology "IT". Liz is our resident IT Guru and spearheads training and troubleshooting of our computers and mobile technology devices. She is also largely responsible for our in-house accounting and billing system. Whether generating reports for management or assisting the marketing department with print and electronic media, Liz is always willing to help wherever needed. In fact, one of the warm pleasant voices that answers the phones at Alpenglow is that of Liz as she connects our patients, their families and referral sources with the proper field support staff. A strong multi-tasker and generalist, Liz is no doubt a valuable asset to Alpenglow and a huge part of our success. We expect she will continue to expand her broad based skill sets and further enhance Alpenglow as a premier provider of hospice services. So it is with great pride we present Liz Mestaz as our Alpenglow Spotlight Employee of the Quarter.

