

Hearts for Hospice

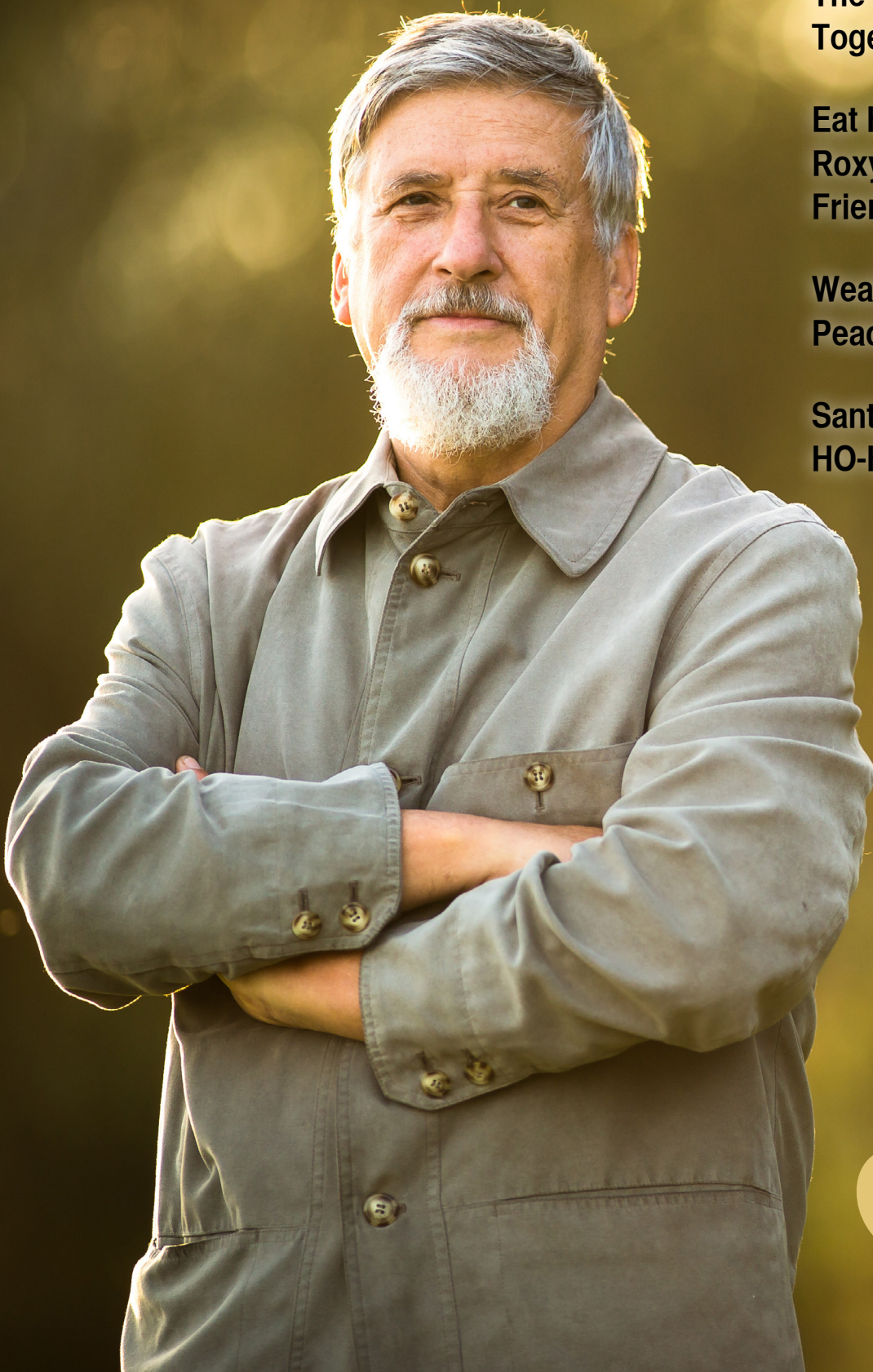
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WEATHERING THE STORM

Finding Peace in Preparedness

The Dalai Lama once said, “A tree with strong roots can withstand the most violent storm, but the tree can’t grow roots just as the storm appears on the horizon.” This sentiment proved true as Hurricane Irma hit Pasco County this September. The violent winds tore branches from trees, caused fences to topple, and forced many Pasco County residents to seek shelters or evacuate. For those close to the Gulf, the need to seek shelter was of even greater importance.

Able-bodied, healthy people were able to protect their families without hesitation. However, some hospice patients and their families faced greater difficulty when it came to finding protection from the hurricane. Preparedness on the part of Gulfside Hospice helped them weather the storm.

As Hurricane Irma approached the area, Linda Ward, President and Chief Executive Officer of Gulfside Hospice, enacted Gulfside’s Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan. Gulfside Hospice staff contacted every patient to ensure they had the medical supplies and medications they needed in order to manage their symptoms and stay safe during the storm. Patients at the Gulfside Center for Hospice Care at Heather Hills were evacuated from New Port Richey to the Gulfside Center for Hospice Care in Zephyrhills. This 9-year-old facility is a certified hurricane shelter capable of withstanding a category five hurricane.

The evacuated patients and their families were kept safe and comfortable during the storm. When the power went out at the Gulfside Center for Hospice Care in Zephyrhills, backup generators responded within three seconds to restore power to the building. This kept important medical equipment functioning, the air conditioning running and the lights on for the duration

of this violent storm. Food and drinks were in plentiful supply so that patients, their families, and the staff working during the storm could stay in good spirits despite the dangerous weather outside.

As we all work together to recover from Hurricane Irma, our team will continue to support our patients and our community as a first priority.

With 11 Gulfside locations across Pasco County that were each directly hit by Hurricane Irma, our team has a ways to go in our recovery and rebuilding efforts. However, we continue to be grateful for the amazing support we receive from the community, without which we could not do what we do. As we all work together to recover from Hurricane Irma, our team will continue to support our patients and our community as a first priority.

To support our mission as we rebuild after the storm, donate online at GHPPC.org or call 727-845-5707. With your help, we will always be ready to care for those who need it most and support them through their storm.

Gulfside’s Emergency Management Team worked to implement the established emergency plan, ensuring the safety of all our patients and staff as a top priority.



Spotlight on Giving

Santa and Mrs. Claus have a Ho-Ho-Home in Zephyrhills



Dressed up as a beloved symbol of the holiday, Louie truly embodies the spirit of giving that the holiday is all about.

At first, Darlene and Louie Colandria seem like an ordinary couple. They live in a cozy home with their friendly little dog on a quiet street in Zephyrhills, Florida. They have a lot of friends in the community and Louie plays bingo regularly. They met at Walmart in Dade City and had their first date at Village Inn in Zephyrhills 28 years ago. That all sounds completely normal, right? However, the Colandrias have a big secret. They're actually Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus.

Seventeen years ago, Louie chose to play Santa. However, as Louie shares, he's not Jolly Old Saint Nick in the style of Tim Allen in the film *The Santa Claus*; he is adamant that he actually becomes Santa. "Seventeen years ago I had red hair," Louie says, "then it suddenly became pure white. So, I knew I was meant to be Santa." Since then, Louie has been Santa at several local and family events and, for the past five years, at Busch Gardens. His dedication to being Santa is so great that he paid \$100 to convert his Busch Gardens-issued Santa glasses to his prescription strength so that he could read the kids' Christmas lists easier.

Louie is a well-known Santa in Pasco County and his wife Darlene comes along as Mrs. Claus for local events. Dressed up as beloved symbols of the holiday, Louie and Darlene embody the spirit of giving that the holiday is all about. A few years ago, the Colandrias donated two bikes and autographed pictures of Santa for some children who normally received little at Christmastime. They plan to continue donating toys to children every year for as long as they can.

Why do Louie and Darlene bring joy and hope to children every winter? Because they want to see the smiles on the children's faces! Louie shared that a little boy once asked

him if Santa received any presents on Christmas. Louie asked the boy to smile. When the little boy showed him his biggest grin, Louie told him, "Thank you. You just gave Santa the best present."

Louie and Darlene's selflessness and kindness toward others extends beyond just the Christmas season. When Louie isn't Santa, he coordinates services for veterans at local organizations. An Army veteran for seven years who served in Vietnam and earned two Purple Heart awards, Louie continues to serve his country today by caring for his fellow veterans as a service officer. Louie helps veterans make VA medical claims, go back to school with veteran education programs, and helps veterans' families access veteran death benefits.

Louie and Darlene show incredible kindness and compassion for hospice patients too. After experiencing the difference hospice made in the lives of their loved ones, Louie and Darlene committed to helping Gulfside Hospice. They donate when they're able and have been a huge help to hospice patients and their families. So, if you see Santa and Mrs. Claus when you're in Zephyrhills, be sure to give them your biggest grin. It's just one way to thank Louie and Darlene Colandria for all they do for hospice patients, the kids, and the community they tirelessly serve.



***Louie Colandria,
age 10, sitting on
Santa's knee.***

EAT HER DUST

Chrome Diva Roxy Talks Fundraising, Friendship, and Fun

Every year, hundreds of motorcyclists ride across Pasco County to participate in the Hittin' the Road for Hospice event in support of Gulfside Hospice. Members of the Chrome Divas have been participating since the event began in 2012. One of the Divas' fearless leaders, Roxy Philip, has been a constant presence at the event and an inspirational fundraiser for Gulfside Hospice. She is not only a cool biker chick, she's also a natural when it comes to fundraising. When asked how she'd describe the Chrome Divas of Trinity, Roxy Philip said, "We are a female riding organization that's all about going out and having fun; and if we can help people out along the way, that's gravy."

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The motorcycle organizations that take part in Hittin' the Road for Hospice often fundraise on behalf of Gulfside Hospice in competition with one another to earn recognition at the event and bragging rights for being the top fundraising organization of the annual event. The Chrome Divas of Trinity have an impressive winning streak of being the top fundraiser. This year, they became the first recipients of the Wings & Wheels Award, a giant trophy awarded in the same style as the Stanley Cup, where winners hold onto it for one year before returning it to be presented to the next year's winner. The Chrome Divas will get to hold onto the trophy for a year to commemorate their victory.

When asked how the Chrome Divas managed to pull off this victory, Roxy shared her secret. "We hit up friends and family on Facebook, asked our coworkers to support us at work, and then took advantage of a corporate matching gift program." Roxy said. "The Pall Corporation matches 100% of employee donations up to \$3,000 per employee. We accept donations and get it matched by Pall to double every donation we receive." Social media and the ability to match gifts give The Chrome Divas of Trinity an edge on the competition. This past April, The Chrome Divas raised \$5,260 for Gulfside Hospice's patients and their families.



The Chrome Divas of Trinity won the Wings & Wheels Award for being the top fundraising club at the 2017 Hittin' the Road for Hospice.



Roxy and other members of The Chrome Divas first began supporting Gulfside Hospice when they were asked to join the very first Hittin' event committee. They've continued to fundraise for Gulfside's patients because some of their own family members have experienced the benefits of hospice over the years. Roxy shared that her stepfather passed away on hospice two years ago and it affected her profoundly. She recalled that, "the hospice workers were so caring they seemed like extended family."

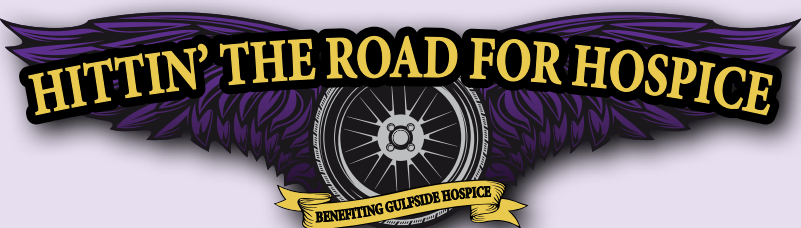
The Chrome Divas are a close-knit group with a lot of heart. Because they only have five members, they have formed long-lasting friendships with each other. When describing the other members of her organization, Roxy said, "even if we don't ride every day, we talk a lot. When

This past April, The Chrome Divas raised \$5,260 for Gulfside Hospice's patients and their families.

we get together, we're able to just pick up right where we left off." That is the definition of true friendship.

If you want to fundraise with the skill of the Chrome Divas of Trinity, start by asking your employer if they match donations employees make to non-profits. If so, take advantage of their matching gift program. Roxy also has more advice to help you replicate her success. "Think of asking for donations like you're an actor going in for a part. You may not have done your own stunts before, but you've got to be confident and say, 'I can do that.'"

**RIDE WITH THE CHROME DIVAS AT THE
6TH ANNUAL**



MOTORCYCLE POKER RUN

SAT., FEB. 24

START: Harley-Davidson of New Port Richey

FINISH: Fraternal Order of the Eagles Zephyrhills #3752

www.HittinTheRoadForHospice.org

ABOUT THE WINGS & WHEELS AWARD

- Awarded like the Stanley Cup, winners hold onto the trophy for the year, then return it for the next award presentation.
- The Chrome Divas were the first winners of the Wings & Wheels Award.
- Top fundraising organizations for Hittin' the Road for Hospice are eligible to win the award.



Roxy's 3 Tips for Fundraising Success:

1. Ask your friends, family and coworkers to support you.
2. If your employer has a matching gift program, take advantage of it.
3. Most importantly, have confidence and believe in yourself.

The Family That Gives Together Stays Together

Courtney Urban had a wish. She wanted to spend more time with her grandmother, Carol Antrim, but they both had busy schedules and it was hard to find time to be together. That's when a wonderful idea came to them – they could work together. Carol was already volunteering at Gulfside's Thrift Shoppe in Lutz and so Courtney decided to join her. This way they could talk and bond while helping Gulfside together. Sorting through boxes of books, clothes and jewelry, Carol and Courtney found joy in making a difference and creating special memories shared between just the two of them.

“Volunteering with Gulfside is an experience that I'll remember and feel good about forever.”

Courtney's love for her grandmother was the reason she started volunteering, but the work led her to a surprising discovery - she was passionate about hospice too. Getting to know the other volunteers, Courtney heard how the organization changed their lives, and she soon fell in love with the mission of Gulfside Hospice.

Now, Courtney regularly volunteers with Carol at the Lutz Thrift Shoppe every week. Well-loved by customers and volunteers alike, they are missed when they're not there. Their devotion to helping Gulfside Hospice patients and families together motivates everyone around them to do their best to make their community a better place too. Showing the same volunteer spirit as her grandmother Carol, Courtney has inspired friends to follow in her footsteps and volunteer with local organizations whose missions speak to them.

Courtney's passion to help others has expanded into other areas of service as well. She has been a volunteer camp counselor for two of Gulfside's children's bereavement camps and participated in a tea party fundraiser as a server.



Courtney (center) with her grandmother Carol (left) and mother Suzette (right) at Gulfside's Thrift Shoppe in Lutz.

“Volunteering with Gulfside is an experience that I'll remember and feel good about forever,” said Courtney.

Courtney and Carol's volunteer work has had a tremendous impact on the lives of patients and their families. Even though they don't see Gulfside's patients, their work directly benefits them. In the last year, Gulfside's Lutz Thrift Shoppe has raised \$195,000 to support patient care and bereavement programs for patients' families. This translates to funding 1,300 days of patient care using this store's profits alone!

Now a nursing student in college, Courtney still makes time to volunteer with her grandmother, Carol. Their commitment to family and community is truly inspiring and reminds us all - the family that gives together stays together. This September, Courtney's efforts were recognized at the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization's 2017 Interdisciplinary Conference in San Diego. Nationally selected from nominees across the United States, Courtney was presented the Young Leader Award for the dedication and compassion she has shown to the patients and families that benefit from the volunteer work she does. Her spirit and dedication are an inspiration to us all.

Volunteering at Gulfside Hospice's Thrift Shoppes is just one of many ways to help hospice patients at Gulfside Hospice.

To learn more about volunteering at Gulfside's Thrift Shoppes, contact Tammy Johnson, Director of Thrift Shoppes, at 800-561-4883 or tammy.johnson@ghppc.org.

Visit GHPPC.org for other volunteer opportunities.



In Loving Memory

Gulfside offers a variety of ways to remember loved ones on our Walls of Caring, in our Butterfly Gardens and with memorial gifts.

During the last quarter, generous donations were given to Gulfside Hospice from families and friends in honor or memory of the following loved ones, who will remain in their hearts forever:

Walls of Caring:

Arnold Rosen
Janice L. Schubert
Arlene V. Schwingel
Jeanne M. Wehrman

In Honor or Memory:

Audrey Anderson
George R. Anderson
Dorothy M. Anderson
Darwin A. Babcock
Gail L. Backman
Rickey Bandig
Robert Bartz
Robert J. Bearns
William J. Beck
Christopher J. Bittmann
Charles Bliss
Richard H. Britton
Patricia A. Caruthers

Robert P. Cissney
Elsia A. Clough
Roger Collyer
Glenn Cooke
David S. Corbett
Ronald P. Dattilo
George A. Davenport
Lillian DeFiore
Eleanor R. Dempsey
Rose Doane
Wandalea B. Filipietz
Harry M. Finefrock
Robert H. Franklin
Joseph Fratus
Harvey W. Friedman
Harry Galowitsch
Michael J. Garcia
Robert O. Gaston
Pat C. Gaston

Carolyn Gaylor
Antonio J. Gonzalez
Maida I. Hale
Betty J. Haley
Lynn E. Harrington
Kingdon Helie
Karen L. Hile
Carlton Hill
Mary Hutchinson
Arthur L. Johnson
Alex Jones
Gerald Joslin
Juanita T. Kellas
John A. Kline
Emil M. Kovac
Charles R. Kunde
Patricia LaFountain
Alfred LaPlante
Joanne Lawson
Martin J. Luppino
Laurene A. MacDonald
Frances C. Mallett
Walter J. Mallett

Josephine Maples
George E. Marshall
Glenn E. McDonald
Base C. McKnight
Patricia A. Miller
Menetta L. Modica
Benjamin S. Morrison
Gerald E. North
Thomas H. Paaso
Rosalie M. Panebianco
Laurette E. Penton
Norman E. Pepper
George C. Presson
Gerald K. Radick
Chester Rakowski
Naomi P. Ratliff
Duane Richendollar
Norma B. Schiebold
Lavina M. Schletty
Arlene V. Schwingel
Leonard L. Skibicki
William N. Skinner
Gynne Smith

Jerrold P. Smith
Wanda I. Snyder
Sylvia A. Stafford
Ronald D. Stafford
Neva J. Stanfield
Kareen Stromberg
Patrick Tellekamp
Dorothea Tillman
Ronald G. Timmons
Violet Torres
James F. Traver
John M. Trenter
Frank E. Tunget
Marie Turro
Francis H. Vance
Velma Vandine
Harry R. Venard
David J. Weber
Jeanne M. Wehrman
Walter G. Weixler
Eleanor L. Willner
Terrie A. Winters

Save the Dates!

Join us at our upcoming fundraising events.
For event or sponsorship information, call 727-845-5707.



Sat., Jan. 27
in New Port Richey



SAT., FEB. 24
STARTING IN NEW PORT RICHEY



Sat., Mar. 24
in Spring Hill



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Land O' Lakes, FL 34639

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