

# Hearts *for Hospice*

SPRING 2025

*Memories Blossom in a  
Garden Tribute*

## Dr. Joseph Pino

*A Lifelong Commitment  
to Hospice Care*

**Totally Pawsome!**  
**2025 Pet Pageant  
Winners**





# Memories Blossom

## in a garden tribute

Harold first met Georgia in kindergarten. They rode the same bus but at different times of the day, so they only briefly crossed paths. Their story didn't end there, though. Years later, they'd find each other in the same chemistry class, on the same team. "We had some of the best-written reports," Harold recalls, his eyes tearing up. It wasn't just the science experiments that filled the air; the chemistry between them sparked a love that spanned six decades.

Georgia had a passion for gardening, and she poured her heart into their butterfly garden at home. It was her sanctuary, a place where life blossomed and transformed. During her stay at the Rucki Hospice Care Center, Georgia fell in love with the Butterfly Memorial Garden there; it felt like home. Harold said the staff at the Rucki Center provided a sense of comfort during the



*Georgia's paver in the butterfly garden*



most difficult time of his life. "They seemed to be right there when you needed them," he said, his voice filled with gratitude.

When Georgia passed away, Harold found solace in the same garden where Georgia spent her last days.

---

## The Butterfly Memorial Garden is a symbol of transformation, a reminder that memories can last

---

To honor her love and passion, Harold chose to place a paver there in her memory. Now, every visit to the butterfly garden brings Harold a sense of peace, knowing her name will always be part of it. The Butterfly Memorial Garden is a symbol of transformation, a reminder that memories can last forever, and a testament to Georgia's enduring presence in his life.

Harold often visits the garden, finding comfort in the quiet space where Georgia's memory lives on. Each time he walks its paths, he is reminded of the love they shared and the moments that defined their life together. The garden, filled with life and beauty, offers a peaceful retreat—a place where love endures beyond loss.

For Harold, the simple act of dedicating a paver was a way to ensure Georgia's legacy lived on. It wasn't just a marker with her name; it was a reflection of the life they shared. And with each donation, each new paver added, more stories like theirs become part of the garden's tapestry.

Make a lasting tribute to someone you love. By dedicating a paver in the Butterfly Memorial Garden, you create a space where memories bloom, where love endures, and where stories continue to be told. Your contribution not only honors a cherished life but also supports the compassionate care that families like Harold's receive every day. Let their names be part of something beautiful.

## Legacy of Love

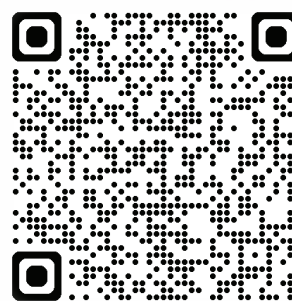
### Honor a Loved One in the Butterfly Memorial Garden

---

- **Create a Lasting Tribute** - Dedicate a paver in memory or honor of someone special.
- **Personalized Engraving** - Your loved one's name and a message of remembrance will be etched in stone.
- **Support Compassionate Care** - Your donation helps provide comfort and care to hospice patients and their families.
- **A Place of Peace and Reflection** - Visit the garden and find solace in a space filled with beauty and remembrance.
- **Easy to Get Started** - Contact Gulfside Hospice today to reserve a paver and make a lasting impact.

Make a meaningful tribute today!

### SCAN TO DONATE



**GulfsideGarden.org**





# A Lifelong Commitment to Hospice Care

*A conversation with Dr. Joseph Pino*

**D**r. Joseph Pino's journey into hospice and palliative care started long before he even knew it. Losing his mother to cancer at the age of 14 shaped the way he saw life and, eventually, medicine. If you ask him, he'll tell you that back then, there were no hospice services or support groups ... just loss. That experience stuck with him and became a driving force behind his work today.

When he moved to Florida to open his family medicine practice, he quickly saw the need for more geriatric care. Gulfside Hospice was just starting, and back then Dr. Pino said they were using an actual house as an inpatient hospice unit. He made it a priority to follow his patients wherever they needed care - at home, in nursing facilities, and at Gulfside hospice home. Over time, his practice naturally shifted toward geriatric and end-of-life care, and later in Hospice and Palliative Medicine, leading him to become board-certified in geriatric medicine in 1994.

Over time, Dr. Pino looked for opportunities to leave a lasting impact on the hospice community. When he learned about Gulfside's plans to expand and open a new hospice center in New Port Richey, he was thrilled. "The old one lacked capacity and was dated and I thought the area needed a new hospice center," he says.

As Gulfside's expansion was underway, Dr. Pino wanted to be involved in improving the setup - making it the comfortable and peaceful sanctuary for those who will need it, when that time comes. He took the opportunity

to make a capital campaign donation in memory of his mother. He decided to honor his mother by naming something in the new center in her honor. He chose the garden fountain because he feels that the peace and serenity of the moving water will offer solace to patients and their visitors. He said although his mother would have been honored to have the fountain named for her, she likely would have wanted the fountain to be named for her family and not just for her.

"To do this for the community and to honor my mother is truly a blessing," he says. Once completed, the new garden will bear the name "The Pino Family."

While leaving a legacy through this donation was important, Dr. Pino's biggest impact continues to be on training the next generation of hospice and palliative care physicians. Through the fellowship program, which he partners with Gulfside Hospice, he ensures that compassionate, patient-centered care will continue for years to come. The fellowship program he leads is affiliated with the graduate medical education programs of HCA (Hospital Corporation of America) and is located at HCA Bayonet Point Hospital. Dr. Pino, the faculty, and the Fellows and Residents that train there are all part of HCA's graduate medical education programs.

## Q & A with Dr. Joseph Pino

### How does the fellowship program work?

**Dr. Pino:** The program is accredited by the ACGME (American Council for Graduate Medical Education)



and through this process it is determined how many fellows we will have in the program. Right now, we train two per year, but I'm pushing to expand that to three. We also have two fellows in our Geriatric fellowship at Oak Hill hospital in Brooksville. Fellows complete at least 25 home visits during their fellowship. My preference is for them to do those visits with Gulfside because most hospice patients are cared for at home. They need to see that firsthand.

### How does Gulfside Hospice support your program?

**Dr. Pino:** One of the key ways my team works together with Gulfside is through hospital-based hospice care. If a patient in the hospital is at the end of life but too unstable to transfer to an inpatient unit, we convert their hospital bed into a hospice bed. My team takes over their care right then and there, handling everything, including terminal extubation if necessary. It allows patients to receive hospice support without having to move, and it's a vital part of our training program ... actually a requirement for their learning. Before we could even start this program, we needed a committed hospice to work with, and your CEO Linda Ward, and her team stepped up. Gulfside has been an incredible partner.

### What do you want your fellows to learn from your practice?

**Dr. Pino:** Well, you can't learn compassion. They have to have that and they can't learn empathy so when I pick them, I try to pick people with sincerity. If they had that quality, they would be good physicians, number one, and excellent palliative care physicians but we teach them to respect patient autonomy and that families and the patient are one unit. We teach them that we don't make the decisions, we present them with the facts and the family has to make that decision. We teach them patience and tolerance.

Hospice and palliative care are all about education. People hear



"hospice" and think it means giving up, but that's not true. The earlier a patient comes to hospice, the more it helps. That's why it's so important that we educate both doctors and the public on what hospice really is.

### How does your support help improve hospice care?

**Dr. Pino:** I want to make sure that there are resources in the community so families that are impacted by cancer, specifically families with children, will have a resource in the community that they can go to for help, for counseling. Gulfside provides resources that simply weren't available when I was young, and I want to make sure those services continue to grow.

Those of us in palliative care need to educate our fellow physicians and the community so that patients and their families will have a better understanding of palliative care and end of life care. They are not always the same. Patients with chronic illness can have palliative care with the goal of living comfortably and for as long as possible.

*Dr. Pino is a Board certified in Family Medicine, Geriatrics and Hospice and Palliative Medicine and a Fellow of the American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine. He is an Assistant Clinical Professor HCA Healthcare/ USF Morsani College of Medicine.*







Enzo & Arlo



Bowie




Teddy Bear


## Keeping Best Friends Together

The **Pet Peace of Mind®** program helps ensure that patients never have to choose between getting the care they need and keeping their beloved pets by their side.

Donations help Gulfside provide pet food & supplies, veterinary care, dog walking & pet sitting, and help with permanent rehoming if needed.

### Ways to donate:

 800-561-4883

 [katya.guillaume@gulfside.org](mailto:katya.guillaume@gulfside.org)

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

# Totally Pawsome



## 2025 Pet Pageant winners announced

The results are in, tails are wagging, and paws are in the air. Gulfside Hospice's 2025 Pet Pageant was a furry success! This annual fundraiser, hosted by the Women for Gulfside, raised almost \$4,000 for the Pet Peace of Mind® program, which helps hospice patients care for their beloved pets through the end-of-life journey.

This year's pageant welcomed a lineup of adorable contestants, including dogs, cats, even a guinea pig, and a duck. Thanks to community support, votes poured in, and donations followed, helping us raise funds to ensure no patient has to say goodbye to their pet due to illness or limited resources.

## And the winners are ...

### Most Popular

*Enzo and Arlo* – two playful Whippet puppies took the crown for raising the most in donations, supported by their human, Lisa.

*Bowie* – an affectionate, hand-holding pup who came in a close second, earning him the runner-up spot with incredible support from friends and family.

### Most Photogenic

*Teddy Bear* – a 4-year-old Shih Tzu and fan favorite from 2023, charmed the judges once again with his picture-perfect smile and soulful eyes.

Each winner received a custom gift basket filled with pet goodies, stylish accessories, and a sash to celebrate their big win — all made possible through generous in-kind donations and the support of Cydne Pie Creations, who sponsored the winner's sashes.

A heartfelt thank you goes to our sponsors, whose generosity is now helping hospice patient pets throughout the community:

### Leader of the Pack Sponsors

- MyPets Funeral & Cremation
- Claws and Paws Animal Hospital

### Fur-Ever Home Sponsors

- Caring Paws Animal Hospital
- Faithful Friends Pet Cremation
- Planned Pethood

These business supporters, along with countless others who donated items, promoted the pageant, or voted for their favorite furry friends, played a key role in raising awareness and support for Gulfside's Pet Peace of Mind® program.





# In Loving Memory

*Recognizing gifts received between January 1 and March 31, 2025*

Sally Abare  
John Amaral  
Patricia A. Anderson  
Phyllis Baugh  
Eleanor H. Beausoleil  
Robert W. Black  
Charles Boardley  
Mildred Bogdanowich  
Austin P. Bondi  
Colleen E. Brodie  
Michael Casino  
Margery L. Caster  
Woodrow Clark  
Lawrence S. Cobb  
Emma J. Comini  
Jerry C. DeBolt  
Louis Dosh  
Elbert G. Dotson  
Sara A. Dunigan  
Arlene Ehrich  
Walter Frantz  
Maria Fratto  
Mae Fritzsche  
Julia Fullerton

Gary W. Funk  
Marilyn Guzzardo  
Ashleigh Halfacer  
Truman F. Hankins  
Lynn E. Harrington  
Norman T. Harvey  
Judith Hearn  
Robert Hembel  
Charles Hill  
Morene Horvath  
Kathryn Hovis  
Jean Jackson  
Barbara H. James  
Coula Kaleyias  
Charles Karpus  
John Knowles  
Ann T. Kolebar  
Michael Kolebar  
Lavina Kowolaski  
Alvin Lachapelle  
Ballard Lambert  
Nancy A. Lankenau  
Judith A. Lee  
Harold J. Levey

Beverly Livingston  
John Loftus  
Symone D. Loyd  
Eunice MacAvoy  
Clifford Matela  
Robert W. Mayfield  
Joyce H. McDuffie  
Jerry M. McLeod  
Antonio Mendonca  
Philip M. Mikoda  
Jimmie L. Morgan  
Robert Morse  
Paul P. Mulrenin  
Joseph Muzzillo  
Susan O. Phelps  
Rachel Polashock  
Joyce Pranske  
James D. Proffitt  
Cindy Pushard  
John M. Rabb  
Gerald K. Radick  
Rondal Revels  
Leo H. Riding  
George Rigney

Mary Riles  
William Russell  
Clarita Sanchez  
Thomas L. Schafer  
Dwayne Scott  
Robert Selfridge  
James Shaheen  
Oneil Simard  
Patricia Sims  
Louise Slingerland  
Mabel E. Smith  
Terry L. Smith  
Helen Stowe  
Karolea A. Streeter  
Florence J. Tedder  
Jess Torres  
Jitendra Trivedi  
Carole A. Turenne  
Donna Vitanza  
Matthew G. Walsh  
Thomas P. Walsh  
Leonard Wasilewski  
Donald R. Weissberg  
Leo G. Whaley

## Volunteer with Gulfside

At Gulfside Hospice, our volunteers are essential. With a big heart, a helping hand, and a compassionate spirit, you can make a real difference in the lives of patients and their families.

There are many ways to get involved:

- ♥ Patient Support
- ♥ In-Patient Center Assistance
- ♥ Office & Reception
- ♥ Kitchen Help
- ♥ We Salute Veterans Program
- ♥ Pet Peace of Mind
- ♥ Music, Crafts & More



**Getting started is easy — just visit [Gulfside.org](https://Gulfside.org)/volunteer to apply, or scan this QR code.** We'll guide you through the process and provide full training for your chosen role.

Apply today and bring your heart to the Gulfside team!

## Introducing Gulfside Giving



**LIKE / FOLLOW / SHARE**



[facebook.com/gulfsidegiving](https://facebook.com/gulfsidegiving)



[instagram.com/gulfsidegiving](https://instagram.com/gulfsidegiving)



Gulfside Healthcare Services  
2061 Collier Parkway  
Land O' Lakes, FL 34639

Non-Profit  
Organization  
US Postage  
PAID  
Tampa, FL  
Permit No. 6342

MAILING LABEL GOES HERE



**SPRING 2025**

## **INSIDE THIS ISSUE:**

- Memories Blossom in a Garden Tribute
- Dr. Joseph Pino: A Lifelong Commitment to Hospice Care
- Totally *Pawsome*! Pet Pageant Winners
- In Loving Memory

