

## Caregiver Appreciation



### Caring for the Caregiver

Cheryl French, *Volunteer*

Each year, my husband Charles and I enjoyed hiking parts of the Pacific Crest Trail until two years ago when a chronic illness with debilitating fatigue prevented him from doing anything that required his energy.

As his symptoms worsened, the reality that I was a caregiver set in. I lost sleep from worrying that I might not be up to fulfilling his needs and was scared about the "what ifs" of an uncertain future.

Aside from my love for him, I also experienced emotions that I tried to hide from Charles: the guilt I feel when I spend time away from him with my friends, my sense of isolation in this new role, and a kind of ambiguous anger that rises when I am tired, or my patience wears thin.

I sat down with experts at Celia's House—Executive Director Dwight Wilson and Board Member, former director of nurses, and geriatric case manager Jerrye Wright—to find out more about the emotional issues affecting caregivers. I learned from these wonderful people that most people in caregiving roles share most of my experiences.

Dwight and Jerrye both said that caregiving can often feel like an emotional burden because of continued isolation and the difficulty of acknowledging the loss of what was your life and your relationship with the care recipient.

They said that guilt is also a common emotion for caregivers who often feel they need to do everything perfectly and put their needs second to those of the care recipient. Both emphasized that caregiver well-being can be even more important than the care recipient's and that it is crucial that caregivers see their own needs as equal and vital to their health.

By the time a third person told me to set aside guilt and pay attention to my own needs, I started to believe it. That's when I joined a caregiver support group. There, I heard from others whose experiences gave a voice to mine. Sharing on a personal level in such a public way released a valve for the emotions I was afraid to express. Also, writing this article and having Charles read and edit it helped us share deeper conversations about our individual experiences.

With Jerrye's guidance, we are now working to develop a healthcare plan for our future that will include conversations about medical, financial, caregiving, and living arrangement decisions.

An article in a future issue will talk about these concerns, including how to find resources and support.

### Thank You for Joining us in Remembrance

Alexandria Castelo, *Development and Communications Coordinator*

On June 22, we hosted families whose loved ones we cared for in 2023 at our *Remembrance Ceremony*. We hold this meaningful event annually.

Our interfaith Chaplain, Mary Piper, led the ceremony. The evening featured the reading of the names of our 2023 residents by our RNs, Diane and Dorian, and spiritual care volunteers read moving poems and passages. The ceremony was graced by opera singer Janet O'Donovan and the beautiful voices of the Heartsong Singers—a group that has provided comfort through their songs at the bedsides of Celia's House residents and guests over the years.

After the ceremony, families reconnected with some of the caregivers who served their loved ones. Volunteers and kitchen staff made delicious appetizers and refreshments for our guests. Families had the opportunity to visit our Reflection Garden and view a memorial brick inscribed with their loved one's name. We hope that families and friends of the residents we lost find solace in the tranquil surroundings of Celia's House.

We thank everyone who joined us for this year's Remembrance Ceremony. It was a testament to the strong bonds within the Celia's House community. Thanks to our dedicated staff and volunteers who made this afternoon possible.

We invite everyone to visit Celia's House and our Reflection Garden. If you have questions about our Remembrance Ceremony or Memorial Bricks, please email [alexandria.castelo@southernoregonhospice.org](mailto:alexandria.castelo@southernoregonhospice.org).



### Special Thanks to all who Supported June in Bloom!

We cannot thank those of you who attended and supported this special day enough for your contributions. It was so meaningful to get together at a special place like Celia's House.

Congratulations to our 2024 Distinguished Service Awardees, Rocky Dalmaso & Nancy James!

Special thanks to our sponsors: Gates McKibbin, AllCare Health, Providence, Oregon Pacific Bank, People's Bank, Carole Kebrig, Naumes Suncrest Winery, and Celia's House RNs.

Celia's House is open and you are welcome to come by anytime this summer for a tour. Please reach out to our team at [info@southernoregonhospice.org](mailto:info@southernoregonhospice.org) if you would like to set something up.

We are overflowing with gratitude!

*Photos by Emily Kingsbury.*



### Thanks to all who Attended The HUB Art Sale!

Thank you to everyone for making The HUB Art Sale a huge success. Our volunteers and customers are fabulous! *Photos by Emily Kingsbury.*





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Store Hours:  
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- Donation hours: Tuesday - Saturday, 10:30 am - 4:00 pm.
- Interested in volunteering at The HUB? Please email [chalavinc@southernoregonhospice.org](mailto:chalavinc@southernoregonhospice.org)
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### Quotes from Families

“Celia's House is a place that hugs you...you feel it as soon as you walk through the door” -C

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**We are Here to Help. Please Give Us a Call.**

For questions regarding admission, please call:  
(650) 743-7997

For general information, please call (541) 500-8911 or email us at [info@southernoregonhospice.org](mailto:info@southernoregonhospice.org) [info@southernoregonhospice.org](mailto:info@southernoregonhospice.org)

217 S Modoc Ave, Medford, OR 97504 [southernoregonhospice.org](http://southernoregonhospice.org)

**Check Out Our YouTube Video Tour:**  
[Celia's House - An Inside Look at Resident and Common Rooms](#)

Every month, the following individuals make the Southern Oregon Friends of Hospice E-newsletter possible: Alexandria Castelo, Cheryl French, Dwight Wilson, Lily Herwald, Lara Knackstedt, Patrice Dean, Rebecca Reid, and Steve Roe.

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