

SERENITY HOUSE

10TH ANNIVERSARY



What a difference a decade makes!



PHOTO BY SCOTT GIBSON



Dear Friends,

What an extraordinary difference you have made in our community.

We are celebrating 10 years since Serenity House opened on the Mesa overlooking beautiful Santa Barbara!

So many of you were instrumental in making the dream a reality, and so many of you continue to ensure it stands as a beacon of hope and comfort.

What a gift you have given to Santa Barbara families — a place where their loved ones can transition with dignity and comfort at the end of life. It's a place unburdened by the demands of daily life; a place to gather with family and friends; a place for cherished pets to visit; a place where tears flow, hugs soothe, and prayers are offered. It is a peaceful space for all to be held.

Through the generosity of our Santa Barbara community, VNA Health maintains this vital resource so that everyone has access to a peaceful and dignified passing, including those without adequate financial resources or insurance.

Thank you...

VNA Health remains committed to offering this treasured hospice home to our community. As we move into the present decade, support for Serenity House is more important than ever. Today, as the community emerges from the COVID-19 shutdown, we are experiencing a surge in patients and a corresponding increase in financial assistance applications (nearly 30% of all Serenity House patients receive financial assistance). From this pandemic, we learned two valuable lessons: How we can't take anything or anyone for granted — and how much we need each other.

We invite you to make a gift today to express your gratitude for this past decade of care, and to ensure that our community's hospice home continues to serve our friends, neighbors, and families for years to come.

Please visit vna.health/SerenityHouseAnniversary to make a gift.

Thank you for supporting our commitment to families in our community and believing in our work.

With gratitude,



Lynda Tanner, RN, MSN
President & CEO



Michael Bordofsky, MD
Hospice Medical Director



Rebecca Benard, MBA
Foundation Executive Director

PS: Without Serenity House, many families would have few, if any, options for quality and compassionate end-of-life care for their loved ones. We deeply appreciate your kindness and generosity.





VNA Health Board and Capital Campaign Leadership in 2009 at the groundbreaking ceremony of Serenity House: David Spainhour, Pat Snyder, Eileen Bunning, Jane Habermann, Steve Lew, and Dr. Roger Dunham. Frank Schipper Construction broke ground on the approximately 27,300 square foot facility following a careful planning and design process led by PMSM Architects who supervised the project.



Serenity House Chef Fabio Hidrobo



to the building
of our new
herb garden.





Barry Berkus, visionary architect whose work was recognized locally and throughout the world



Jack Engle, an aerospace engineer, devoted husband, and father

Caring for our
community,
from family...

"My father had a peaceful passing, and Serenity House was a centerpiece for that."

STEVE BERKUS, SON



Steve Berkus and Dana Engle Berkus

"It is a peaceful place and we were able, as a family, to move from worried attention to loving attention for our father. We are incredibly thankful for Serenity House."

DANA ENGLE BERKUS, DAUGHTER



to family.

Elizabeth Ann Yossem-Guy with husband Osbourne and their daughters Zenzele and Jahzara

From our
extraordinary
physicians and
our amazing
care teams...

\$6.6M

SUBSIDIZED CARE



Michael Bordofsky, MD
Hospice Medical Director



Natasha Marston, MD
Associate Medical Director of
Serenity House



Michael Kearney, MD
Hospice Associate Medical Director



Eric Trautwein, MD
Hospice Associate Medical Director



to our 100+
volunteers.

24,000+
VOLUNTEER HOURS

C. Scott Eschbach

Recognized as an outstanding hospice volunteer in 2018 by the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization, Scott has been a hospice volunteer at VNA Health for a decade, including with the 'No One Dies Alone' program. Scott participates in our We Honor Veterans program pinning ceremonies which present a personalized certificate, American flag pin, and American-themed quilt (specially made by the Coastal Quilters Guild) to patients who are veterans. VNA Health is honored to be a 4-Star Level Member of this national program.



Handler Sandy with Darla



Handler Arlene Stepputat with Gracie

From the pet
therapy visits...

3,000+

VISITS FROM OUR FOUR-LEGGED
CARE TEAM MEMBERS



Bunny Axel Rose brings a smile to patients, staff, and volunteers



to the pets
that visited.

PHOTO BY EMILY HART-ROBERTS

From birds to dogs, from cats to frogs, our patients' loving companions are welcomed

From ongoing renovations and upgrades...



Restoration of entry fountain



Maintenance of beautiful grounds and gardens



New outdoor window awnings



New outdoor patio furniture



Coffee and tea refreshment bar

to safety and
comfort for all.

\$564K
IMPROVEMENTS



Ongoing upgrades to systems,
cybersecurity, and internet access



New durable flooring throughout the
patient rooms and lobby



New convertible sleeper chairs in all
patient rooms



Beautiful coverlet, made by the Coastal Quilters Guild, is used during body blessings.

From the sacred
ceremonies held...

2,456

PATIENTS RECEIVED LOVING CARE

**"Serenity House is the
pathway to heaven, providing
peace and comfort in the last
days of life as we know it."**

LOIS M.



The Memorial Wall at Serenity House received the "Best Architectural Feature" award from Santa Barbara Beautiful in 2012.

From the music
that graced
thousands
of peaceful
passages...

1,100+
MUSIC THERAPY VISITS



VNA Health Music Therapy Program Coordinator Stefana Dadas MT-BC



Jeanne Martin, PhD, Certified Therapeutic Harp Practitioner



VNA Health Home Health Aide Lucia Figueroa

to the soothing
therapeutic touch
that brought
comfort and joy
to so many.

7,562

INTEGRATIVE THERAPY VISITS

From the countless
hands held...

6,429

PEOPLE SUPPORTED
THROUGH BEREAVEMENT CARE



to the promise that
life continues.

**"Serenity House cares for not
only patients, but also their
families. They're like family."**

ANGEL SPEIER

Angel Speier and her children, Jase and Alina, were glad to have Serenity House be their home away from home as husband and father, Kevin, spent his final months in the loving care of the Serenity House family.



PHOTO BY RAFAEL RAMIREZ



Robert "RJ" Plummer and Leslie Gomes

Serenity House is a unique care option for hospice patients whose needs cannot be managed successfully at home.

After operating a six-bed Serenity House since 1994 on the Valle Verde campus, VNA Health opened its 18-bed hospice home on the Mesa overlooking Santa Barbara in 2011. It is the only facility of its kind within 150 miles (and one of 14 licensed in California).

Each private room provides families and friends the opportunity to spend time with their loved ones in a serene setting away from the demands of home. Guests can gather in the family room, take walks on the scenic paths, and be with their loved one even overnight.



Front row: Fabio Hidrobo, Rocio Diaz, Leticia Vides, Lillian Kurosaka, Cheryl Donkin, Michelle Gunsolley; Middle row: Dorothy Jarrell, Cathy Austin; Back row: Sam Leer, Kathy Schwertl, Jesus Luevanos, Susan Clark

The Serenity House staff focus on quality of life for patients and their families through medical, emotional, and spiritual support. The hospice team includes physicians, registered and licensed vocational nurses, certified aides, medical social workers, spiritual and bereavement counselors, chaplains, certified music therapists, pet therapists, integrative therapy aides, a registered dietician, a chef, and hospice-trained volunteers.

Most insurance policies cover the medical benefits of hospice care. Room and board, however, are typically paid for by the patient. VNA Health's charitable mission, however, ensures that no one is turned away due to financial hardship.

Thousands of Santa Barbara residents have experienced loving and compassionate care at Serenity House. VNA Health is grateful to maintain this vital resource through the generosity of the Santa Barbara community.

From the initial dream, to the reality.



VNA Health opened Serenity House on the Mesa overlooking beautiful Santa Barbara on August 19, 2011



PHOTO BY RAFAEL RAMIREZ

To all of you who have supported Serenity House, what a difference you have made. Thank you!

“Serenity House is a unique and incomparable gift — an irreplaceable resource that deserves our highest levels of support. As an oncologist in this community for more than three decades, I have a profound appreciation of the vital importance of Serenity House to our community’s healthcare.

FRED KASS, MD



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PHOTO BY SCOTT GIBSON

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VNA HEALTH HAS EARNED THE
JOINT COMMISSION'S GOLD SEAL OF
APPROVAL® IN HOME HEALTH CARE,
PALLIATIVE CARE, AND HOSPICE CARE.