



# Live Well

FALL 2021

SHARING STORIES OF  
SERENITY HOUSE



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mark Mattingly CHAIR  
Neil Levinson, Esq. VICE CHAIR  
Pamela Dillman Haskell SECRETARY  
Lynda Tanner, RN, MSN PRESIDENT & CEO  
Michael Bordofsky, MD  
Eusebio Cordova, Jr.  
Alex Craigie, Esq.  
Gregg Hackethal  
Karen Handy  
Fred Kass, MD  
Ken Kraus  
Ben Phillips  
Suzi Schomer  
Christopher Thrash, MD

## DIRECTORS EMERITI

Ed Brady  
Stan Fishman  
Herb Geary, RN  
Jane Habermann  
Christopher Jones, Esq.  
Steve Lew  
Michelle Martinich, CPA  
Judy Murphy  
Elna Scheinfeld  
James Stovesand  
Ted Thoreson, MD

## CONTRIBUTORS

Rebecca Benard  
Lailan McGrath  
Easter Moorman

## EDITORS

Rebecca Benard  
Maria Gordon  
Easter Moorman

## DESIGNER

Andrew Antone, AAexpressive

## PHOTOGRAPHERS

Rick Carter  
Scott Gibson  
Emily Hart-Roberts  
Rhianna Mercier  
Fritz Olenberger  
Eric Peterson  
Rafael Ramirez  
Barron Spafford  
Sigrid Toye

Published by VNA Health Foundation  
509 East Montecito Street, Suite 200  
Santa Barbara, CA 93103



VNA HEALTH, FORMERLY KNOWN AS VISITING NURSE & HOSPICE CARE, HAS EARNED THE JOINT COMMISSION'S GOLD SEAL OF APPROVAL® FOR HOME HEALTH CARE, PALLIATIVE CARE, AND HOSPICE CARE

# VNAHealth Live Well

FALL 2021

Dear Friends,

"I feel safe." We hear these words frequently from our patients — safe to walk again, safe to live independently, safe as they feel free of pain and comforted at the end of life. Safety is at the heart of everything we do at VNA Health.

In this **LIVE WELL** issue, you'll read about our patients, their families, our staff, and our donors. They tell us how feeling safe is fundamental to their wellbeing.

As much of life as we knew it shut down due to COVID and as it slowly gets back on track, VNA Health has understood all along what it must do: Keep people safe at home. It's what we do. Our nursing and rehabilitative therapies continue to get people back on their feet after surgery or illness, including after a COVID diagnosis. Our compassionate hospice and palliative care brings comfort and peace to patients and their families, which has been especially important during these times. Our "safety first" protocols ensure that none of our staff spread or contract COVID while caring for patients.

In "What does the Loan Closet mean to me?" you'll read how the Loan Closet helps local people achieve their goals of safety and successful recovery.

You can read, too, how our events went virtual to ensure the safety of all, and how we still produced engaging, fun, and informative experiences to connect with our generous and supportive community.

The legacy of Serenity House — a cherished safe haven of hospice care — is the kind of story that makes us proud to be part of our amazing community. We welcome your support, as we celebrate the 10-year anniversary of Serenity House.

VNA Health is the only home healthcare agency committed to Santa Barbara families through a charitable mission — one that provides Serenity House, the Loan Closet, subsidized healthcare, and a variety of community programs.

Since 1908, and through six generations, we've been caring for our community. We'll continue to be there, at your side when you need us, helping to keep you safe and living your best life.

In health and safety,

Lynda Tanner, RN, MSN  
PRESIDENT & CEO

Rebecca Benard, MBA  
FOUNDATION EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Every patient room at Serenity House has a private patio that opens to the natural beauty of the Santa Barbara Mesa.



**04 Sharing Stories of Serenity House**

Built by Our Community for Our Community

COVER Jane Habermann, Dr. Roger Dunham, and Linda Whiston stand in solidarity and support at Serenity House. Photo by Emily Hart-Roberts



**17 Angels Among Us**

**18 PHORUM: Music & Alzheimer's**

**20 Mother's Day Luncheon 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration**

**24 What Does the Closet Mean to Me?**

**26 Charity Regatta Exceeds \$2 Million Mark**



**28 A Strong Team, A Strong Culture of Safety**

**29 Serving with Compassion, Integrity, and Excellence**

**30 Our Golden Heart Winner**



PHOTO BY SCOTT GIBSON

## Sharing Stories of Serenity House... Built by Our Community for Our Community

The year was 1979. VNA Health\* was selected as one of 26 hospices from across the nation to participate in a federal demonstration program. The purpose: Determine if hospice care is cost-effective and how it should be delivered. It didn't take long for hospice care to become an insurance benefit, reinforcing that quality of death is as important as quality of life.

Hospice care focuses on living — living the best life possible given the circumstances. By choosing hospice care rather than seeking medical treatment for a life-limiting condition, people can stay at home and focus on quality of life, peace, and comfort. Family members experience peace of mind as the hospice team helps them understand, prepare for, and support one another through the end-of-life journey.

While most people receive hospice care at home, some require more care than can be sustained at home, and some do not have family or caregivers to assist them. Early on, VNA Health saw the need for a home-like hospice facility, and opened the original Serenity House in 1994 as a six-bed residence on the Valle Verde Retirement Community campus. Formerly called Leigh Block House as an initial collaboration between VNA Health and Hospice of Santa Barbara, it was renamed Serenity House in 2000.

To meet the growing need of patients requiring a home-like hospice option, the VNA Health Board voted in the early 2000s to build an expanded house. "We looked around the boardroom table and asked, 'With our commitment to the community, if not us, then who?'" recalled former Board Member Jane Habermann. With Jane and Dr. Roger Dunham as co-chairs leading the capital campaign, the community answered the call and raised \$8 million in three years. Five years later in 2011, Serenity House opened on the Mesa overlooking beautiful Santa Barbara.

The following stories illustrate the heart of Serenity House, and feature many dedicated members of our community who helped to build Serenity House, have served at Serenity House, or whose loved ones transitioned at Serenity House. They represent the spirit and character of everyone who has helped make Santa Barbara's hospice home a peaceful space for all as a life journey comes to an end.

\*VNA Health, known as Visiting Nurse & Hospice Care of Santa Barbara from 2002-2019 and Santa Barbara Visiting Nurse Association from 1908-2002.

## COMMITTED LEADERSHIP



Eileen looked up from the papers spread over her dining room table and started to cry. "We have to make this happen for the community," she said. "I'm young. I'm strong. I know what's going on here. I am prepared. I can't imagine other spouses going through this, especially those who are much older and more frail."

Eileen Bunning, then President & CEO of VNA Health, was poring over blueprints as she met with the architect and planner. She was also caring for her dying husband. She hadn't slept in days; John was getting close to the end. She had three phones in front of her during the meeting: John's cell phone, her cell phone, and the home phone. Their four children and 14 grandchildren were in constant communication: "How's he doing? Should we come now? Is it time?"

In her role as CEO during the initial decision and the \$8 million capital campaign, and as a consultant during construction, Eileen played a pivotal role in making the dream come true.

"I think every friend or family member who had someone cared for at Serenity House walks away with the same story: 'I didn't know dying could be like this.' By role modeling end of life care through hospice, we're teaching our society that death is not to be feared."

**Eileen Bunning, RN, BSN** FORMER PRESIDENT & CEO



I had just been hired as Chief Operating Officer of VNA Health, and I went to the site we had acquired for the new Serenity House. As I stood in a field of flowers on the hillside, my personal cell phone rang. My daughter Shelley told me that my beloved Aunt Shirley had just passed away. Days earlier, I had been with my aunt in Boise as her

health had declined significantly, and our family gathered around her. It was bittersweet, because she had encouraged me to take the new position, and we had planned to live together as a family in the Santa Ynez Valley. On that hillside, I felt her love and support; she was more like a mother to me than an aunt. Serenity House will have special meaning to me forever.

**Lynda Tanner, RN, MSN** PRESIDENT & CEO



**Since VNA Health's founding in 1908, its Board of Directors and management have been progressive leaders responding to the evolving healthcare needs of Santa Barbara families. Serenity House is a testament to VNA Health's leadership, its collaboration, and its generous community that understands the importance of caring for one another.**



## BEAUTY SURROUNDS



I was a nurse at the original Serenity House, and also worked in our home hospice before coming to the new house. If my home patient was transferring to Serenity House, I would tell them they were going to a very beautiful place. A lot of them had anxiety about leaving their home. I'd always come up at least one time, just to say hello, check in on them, and I'd say, "See,

I told you this was a beautiful place!" You know, not every city has this — it's a blessing for this community.

**Debbie Hensler, LVN** LICENSED VOCATIONAL NURSE



One of my best friends was at Serenity House. Many of my patients have experienced a dignified and peaceful passing, but it was different to experience it from that viewpoint, to sit with his family, and be there for him. I personally felt a level of security and comfort knowing that our team stepped in to do what they do so well. Things were getting harder

and harder at his home prior to him coming to the house, and it was so peaceful when he arrived. I recall sitting in his room, opening the doors to the outside panoramic view, and the weather was beautiful. It was a poignant contrast of letting in the light during a time that was so dark for him.

**Michael Bordofsky, MD** VNA HEALTH HOSPICE MEDICAL DIRECTOR, INTERNIST, AND MANAGING PARTNER FOR PALLIATIVE CARE CONSULTANTS OF SANTA BARBARA

**The new Serenity House, located on a hilltop with beautiful views of Santa Barbara, welcomed its first patients in August 2011. It has 18 private rooms to provide families and friends the opportunity to spend time with their loved ones in a tranquil 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.**

## COMPASSION AND DIGNITY FOR ALL



A young man came to Serenity House after living many years on the streets with severe addictions. His clothes were torn and disheveled, his hair was long, and his body was filthy. He was very withdrawn, distrustful, and bitter about everything and everyone. But the compassionate care, the care with dignity, the loving care during his stay at Serenity House

changed him. We could all see the transformation. He began to socialize, to laugh and smile. He told me something I will never forget. "Thank you for loving me and letting me die here." Everyone, no matter who they are, where they come from, whatever their background — everyone should be able

to die with dignity, and grace, and love, and compassion.

Serenity House is the only home of its kind in Santa Barbara. It's a beautiful, serene, home setting where patients receive comfort care with dignity, compassion, and loving kindness that is provided by an experienced and outstanding staff. Every VNA Health employee and volunteer plays a role in this beautiful place — doctors, nurses, social workers, chaplains, home health aides, administrative team, chef, and housekeepers. I've often wished everyone should be able to die surrounded by the love, the gentleness, the exceptional caring, and the beautiful serenity of Serenity House.

**Stefana Dadas, MT-BC** MUSIC THERAPY PROGRAM  
COORDINATOR AND CERTIFIED MUSIC THERAPIST

**Everyone, including those without adequate financial resources or insurance, has access to a peaceful and dignified passing at Serenity House. Most insurance policies cover the medical benefits of hospice care. Room and board, however, are typically paid by the patient. VNA Health's charitable mission ensures that no one is turned away due to financial hardship (nearly 30% of all Serenity House patients receive financial assistance). VNA Health is grateful to maintain this vital resource through the generosity of the Santa Barbara community.**





PHOTO BY SCOTT GIBSON, 2016

## HOSPICE CARE IS A CALLING



I was the companion on the end-of-life journey. To be fully present in the moment with no agenda but to be a loving, caring, affirming, accepting presence. To acknowledge the questions, the concerns, the feelings, whether anger, doubt, fear, anxiety, and to hear the stories. In a way, I was there to create a safe space for the dying and the circle of the loved

ones around the dying. Being in that role has only expanded my heart and mind to all people, to all faiths or no faith.

**Rev. Cheryl Donkin, MDiv** SPIRITUAL COUNSELOR (RETIRED)



I was fortunate to be a witness to profound transformations that a patient and/or their family members made. Physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual changes were sometimes dramatic. I learned that it's never too late — that it is possible even in the last hour of one's life to have an "Aha!" moment and find peace.

**Lillian Kurosaka**  
INTEGRATIVE THERAPIST (RETIRED)



I vividly remember a gentleman who led a solitary life, working as a manual laborer. He suddenly became incapacitated, and had no one to care for him at home. One of the first things he said to me was, "I don't want to live if people have to change my diapers. That's not life to me." I remember sitting by his bedside at Serenity House. He reached for my hand and said, "I

didn't know I could be cared for like this."

**Amy Lebolt, MSW, LCSW** MEDICAL SOCIAL WORKER

**Staff and volunteers are at the heart of Serenity House. Medical, emotional, and spiritual support is offered with a focus on quality of life for patients and their families. What the staff do goes far beyond their professional skills and licenses — it is a sacred calling.**



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 dietitian, a chef, and hospice-trained volunteers.



I remember she was tall, very beautiful — and had throat cancer. I went to visit her after she arrived from Cottage Hospital. I offered her something to eat. She was upset, and had a hard time swallowing. "I don't want to taste anything," she said. Then I said, "Let me make some soup for you. It is homemade and I call it 'Food for the Soul.' I will make it very creamy, so it is easy

for you to swallow. Please try and let me know."

I visited her almost every day. She was with us for almost two months, and every day she ate a cup of soup. After she passed, her sister and brother-in-law came to see me in the kitchen. I remember it was 2:45. Her sister was crying, and she came in and hugged me and thanked me for caring for her sister. Such experiences bring me a deep sense of our shared humanity.

**Fabio Hidrobo** CHEF



So many families, so many people have expressed the beautiful passing that their loved one had at Serenity House - the energy, and the love, and the peace, and the support that they experienced. It's the staff and volunteers who create that - along with the family and the patient. They are all co-creators in a dignified and beautiful passing. It can be hard on the staff...day

after day, patient after patient, family after family. They have to put tender boundaries around their hearts, while staying connected and present.

**Babetta Daddino, RN, MSN** SERENITY HOUSE DIRECTOR  
(RETIRED)



She was an 80-plus-year-old frail woman...very friendly and bedridden. I got to know her over a period of a few weeks. One day a nurse told me the patient was really anxious and not doing well. The nurse asked me if I would just go in and sit with her.

I went and sat with the patient. She wasn't very communicative, but I could see she was anxious. When that happens with patients, we know to sit at the bedside and maintain a quiet presence. We try to bring the energy of the room down from high stress to calm. As I was sitting, I held her hand and just sat by her bed for 45 minutes. Afterwards I told the nurse, "I'm not sure I did any good or not, but I was happy to do it."

The next day, the nurse called me over. She said, "After you left yesterday, I asked the patient how things went. She told me, 'Scott sat with me and held my hand. It was so peaceful. That's the way I want to die.'"

I thought I had done nothing, and yet that experience for her was everything. It's really not about whether I'm fulfilled. It's whether or not we gave the patient what they needed. Because ultimately, if we are not here on this earth to care for one another, I don't know why we're here.

**Scott Eschbach** VOLUNTEER

**Volunteers are a significant source of comfort to families and patients. Some volunteers train in pet therapy, bringing four-legged companions to provide unconditional love. Veterans connect with patients who have had military experience, which generates a special bond. Many volunteers develop a caring connection with both patients and families.**



PHOTO BY EMILY HART-ROBERTS, 2018

## MUSIC FOR THE SOUL



She was 92, and just as cute as could be. She loved to sing — she used to sing in a choir. It was Christmas time, so I would sing her a carol every time I went in and she would join me. One day, I went in and saw she was unresponsive, so I started singing a carol. I noticed her daughter recording me. The next day, I walked in and heard someone singing. The daughter

was playing the recording for her mom. It was so touching to see.

**Debbie Hensler, LVN** LICENSED VOCATIONAL NURSE



We had a young patient of only 17. She had a short prognosis, which was especially hard because of her age. As we got acquainted, she shared her musical interests were Lady Gaga and Alicia Keys. She told me, "Honestly, I've always wanted to learn how to play the piano, but I never did." I told her, "If you want to learn piano, I can teach you piano. How about we

set up some lessons?" She was so happy. I went to my office and created simple charts with pictures, visuals, and such... where to place her fingers. Over the weeks, she learned how to play one Lady Gaga song and one Alicia Keys song. She was so thrilled. We set up a mini-concert for her family — her mom, dad, siblings. She played the two songs just for them. It was so incredible and deeply moving.

**Stefana Dadas, MT-BC** MUSIC THERAPY PROGRAM COORDINATOR AND CERTIFIED MUSIC THERAPIST

**"Music is a beautiful connecting bridge — to help our patients and their loved ones connect and communicate, even when verbal communication is no longer possible," shares Stefana Dadas. Music therapy can also reduce anxiety and fear, improve relaxation, decrease pain, and create moments of joy, peace, and happy memories.**

## SOOTHING SUPPORT



I recall a patient who was a real loner — he was a tough cookie and difficult to get to know. But one of our night nurses would sit with him outside on his patio looking at the stars, and eventually he grew to trust her. He died in April, and the next month that same nurse was diagnosed with stage four metastatic colon cancer. She hadn't known she was sick or

anything. I met with her for early bereavement — counseling for her. I remember her well. She was a very soft-spoken, sweet, lovely woman. She was one of our own, you know?

She died two months later at Serenity House in the very same room as the gentleman with whom she bonded. For those of us who work here, we think they are the patients, but really, it could be any of us. We're all in this together.

People express profound amazement and gratitude that Serenity House exists at all. Everything from the atmosphere, the natural surroundings, the views, the space. They express such gratitude that their loved one was able to spend their last days here. Sometimes people arrive in unbelievable distress — really severe physical, spiritual, and psychological suffering. But when the Serenity House magic takes hold of them and is allowed to unfold, some people go through huge transformational journeys. They are able to die in peace, surrounded by the beauty of Santa Barbara.

**Dairine Pearson, MSW, LCSW** BEREAVEMENT COUNSELOR

**Bereavement care for patients and their loved ones is an essential part of hospice care. Individual counseling, support groups, workshops, and referrals for further care are provided for normal grief, anxiety, and depression.**



PHOTO BY SCOTT GIBSON, 2016



PHOTO BY RAFAEL RAMIREZ

## LEGACY OF LOVE



She was an eye-catching beauty, stayed at Serenity House long enough for all of us to think of her as our kid or younger sister. I think she was a senior in high school when she died. Her family and the whole house lined the hallway to honor her as she passed by, then we followed her family out to the awaiting funeral home van. That's when her father started to clap.

Moved us all to clap. Tears all around. When I think of her, I remember that the setting sun was magnificent. Deep rich purples, reds, oranges, and yellows tinted the clouds and the

sun lingered at the horizon just to prove it could. Very much like her.

It is my hope that the vision for Serenity House will continue to be its foundation: compassionate action, loving kindness, and patient focused. That's how lives can be, and have been, beautifully touched. Not just for the receiver, but for us as staff, as givers who also become receivers: The man who lived in his own joyous, magical world where he believed seagulls (not the aide) brought him Cheerios every morning; the horse who came to say goodbye to a dying woman; the teenage girl able to have pizza parties and her dream to be a model fulfilled; and how the dog who refused to leave the side of his deceased owner found a home. The breadth of how love can be shown - that's Serenity House's legacy.

**Lillian Kurosaka** INTEGRATIVE THERAPIST (RETIRED)

**VNA Health is the only in-home healthcare agency committed to Santa Barbara families through a charitable mission. As such, VNA Health maintains Serenity House through the generosity of the Santa Barbara community. Serenity House is one of only a dozen facilities of its kind in all of California, and the next closest one to Santa Barbara is 150 miles away. Without Serenity House, many families would have few, if any, options for quality and compassionate end-of-life care for their loved ones.**

## A SAFE HAVEN

We never know how our lives may connect and impact one another. When Evelyne Houdek settled in Santa Barbara in 1982 with her husband Larry, it wasn't long before Dr. Roger Dunham became their internist. The Houdek's daughter Linda had been living in Santa Barbara since the 70s. She and Jane Habermann were long-time tennis buddies.

Many decades after Evelyne made Santa Barbara her home, she spent her final days at Serenity House — the very house that Jane and Dr. Dunham had committed to make happen through the capital campaign they co-chaired.

Evelyne Houdek was the matriarch in her family, and a strong source of love and support. She remembered every birthday, celebrated every homerun, and acknowledged every achievement with a handwritten note, text, or even an Instagram shout out.

In late 2020, Evelyne began receiving hospice care at home from VNA Health. Her daughter Linda Whiston cared for her in their Carpinteria home. By February 2021, increasing needs led Evelyne to Serenity House.



Evelyne Houdek's centennial birthday party



Evelyne with daughter Linda

Thanks to VNA Health, my wonderful mother passed away peacefully and painlessly at Serenity House at the age of 100.

My mother had difficulty breathing because of pulmonary fibrosis. Over time it got worse and worse. I knew it was coming to the end, and it was scary. When she had those breathing attacks, I would give her a little morphine. And then, as time went on, I was having to give her more and more. We had oxygen tanks all over the house. My biggest fear was losing electrical power because mom couldn't last for 30 seconds without oxygen.

I finally realized I wasn't getting any rest. I was exhausted and I was afraid. I was afraid to go to the grocery store. I was on pins and needles, and it was hard. One night my mother had a really hard time. We had discussed going to Serenity House before, as we knew many people who had been there, so I asked, "Mom, what do you think? You think it's time to go to Serenity House?" She said, "Yes. I think it's time."

The nurse took care of everything. They had it all figured out within the day. It was such a relief because I was very upset. I followed the mobile transport to Serenity House, and by the time I got there she was already in bed, comfortable as could be. Her first words to me were, "I feel safe here."

That's exactly what I wanted — for her to feel safe and to know that if she had a crisis, it would be fine. From then on, I got to be her daughter again...to love her and be there with her.

**Linda Whiston** DAUGHTER



Jane Habermann Roger Dunham, MD

PHOTOS BY EMILY HART-ROBERTS

## VOLUNTEERS EXTRAORDINAIRE

She was the daughter of a country doctor. As she accompanied him on Saturday calls, she saw how people dying were cared for at home. For her, it always made sense that people could stay at home until the very end, receiving the care they need. She saw, too, that sometimes the need for care was greater than home could provide.

He had an initial year of college and then went on to become a nuclear submarine reactor operator with the Navy. Upon discharge, he pursued his dream of becoming a physician. For him, the oath to do no harm and help the sick guided his 40-year practice as a distinguished internal medicine physician in Santa Barbara.

Neither Jane Habermann nor Dr. Roger Dunham could foresee that one day they would join together, along with hundreds of community members, and live up to Margaret Mead's words: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

## JANE HABERMANN

From the beginning, I have always understood that we take care of one another.

My father was a country doctor in North Dakota. Growing up, I watched him care for our rural community. I would hear about babies born, neighbors ill, and friends declining. During his Saturday house calls, I would go with him. Families were so grateful to see him when he walked in and trusted him to care for them. I was deeply moved by these experiences.

Later in life, I had a strong connection with VNA Health as I witnessed the same in-home care that I had seen as a child. Home care at every stage of life has always made sense to me.

I remember the first little Serenity House — my mom cut the ribbon. There were just a handful of us there. We named a room in my father's memory. It meant a lot to us. I still have the plaque that hung on the door — it reads: "A country doctor for 40 years."

I recall various Board meetings when we discussed the growing community need for a larger facility. When the Board voted, I knew right away that I had to commit to the project and help raise the funds. With Dr. Dunham as co-chair, Pat Snyder as Foundation Executive Director, Board Chairs Ed Brady and later Steve Lew, along with each one of the generous board members and our incredibly philanthropic community — together we built the new Serenity House. I feel such immense gratitude that our community came together in a big way, and continues year after year to provide the necessary support to ensure Serenity House stands as a beacon of hope for everyone.

It's not often that a volunteer gets to stand back and see such a beautiful and serene place, hear the birds chirping, know there are patients and families in the rooms, and just be so grateful that Serenity House is there for all of us.

## ROGER DUNHAM, MD

After boot camp, I spent some reflective time by myself while on a month's leave from the Navy. I stayed at a motel near the surfing waters north of San Diego. Even now, I can recall every detail of that room as I wondered, "What am I going to do with my life?" I knew the Navy wasn't the career path for me. In that moment, I realized I didn't want to waste my life - that I wanted something meaningful to do. So I said right then, "I'm going to be a doctor."

As a physician, my commitment was to do no harm and take care of the sick (a condensed version of the Hippocratic Oath). Healthcare is complicated and often has competing priorities. Over and over, it was important for me to return to the basics: Take care of the patient. Address their essential needs, bring some comfort, allow them to exist in the most dignified manner possible.

I was at the Board meeting when the motion was made to build the new Serenity House. I recall Jane sitting across the table from me. I looked at her and we knew what to do. There were many at that table with us - and countless others in the community — who also knew what needed to be done.

Together, our community built Serenity House, and returned to the basics: Take care of each other.

Serenity House addresses the fundamental needs for humanitarian care of someone in their weakest of all moments. To be treated with dignity, to be comforted, and to live our final days in loving care — isn't this what we all want?

## Serenity House is a treasure...a gift made possible by the community, for the community.

It's been 10 years since Serenity House welcomed its first patients in the beautiful home nestled on a hillside overlooking Santa Barbara. Thousands of Santa Barbara families have experienced loving and compassionate care over this past decade.

VNA Health remains committed to offering this treasured hospice home to our community. Please join us today and make a gift in gratitude for this past

decade of care and to ensure Serenity House stands to serve our friends, neighbors, and families for years to come.

Thank you for making the beautiful story of Serenity House possible.

[vna.health/SerenityHouseAnniversary](https://vna.health/SerenityHouseAnniversary)



# Standing in Solidarity and Support of Serenity House

Together, VNA Health, Cottage Health, Sansum Clinic, CenCal Health, and all of our community's healthcare partners help patients and their families experience comfort and dignity at the end of life. To these partners and our generous community, thank you for supporting VNA Health so that we can maintain Serenity House as Santa Barbara's treasured hospice home for all our friends, neighbors, and families.

**SUPPORT SERENITY HOUSE**  
[vna.health/SerenityHouseAnniversary](http://vna.health/SerenityHouseAnniversary)



At Serenity House on the Mesa in Santa Barbara (L-R): Bob Freeman, CenCal Health President & CEO; Michael Bordorfsky, MD, VNA Health Hospice Medical Director; Lynda Tanner, RN, MSN, VNA Health President & CEO; Kurt N. Ransohoff, MD, Sansum Clinic CEO & Chief Medical Officer; and Ron Werft, Cottage Health President & CEO.

**Serenity House | 930 Miramonte Drive, Santa Barbara, CA 93109 | (805) 617-7777**



YOU ARE INVITED TO / ESTAS INVITADO



VNAHealth

# ANGELS among us

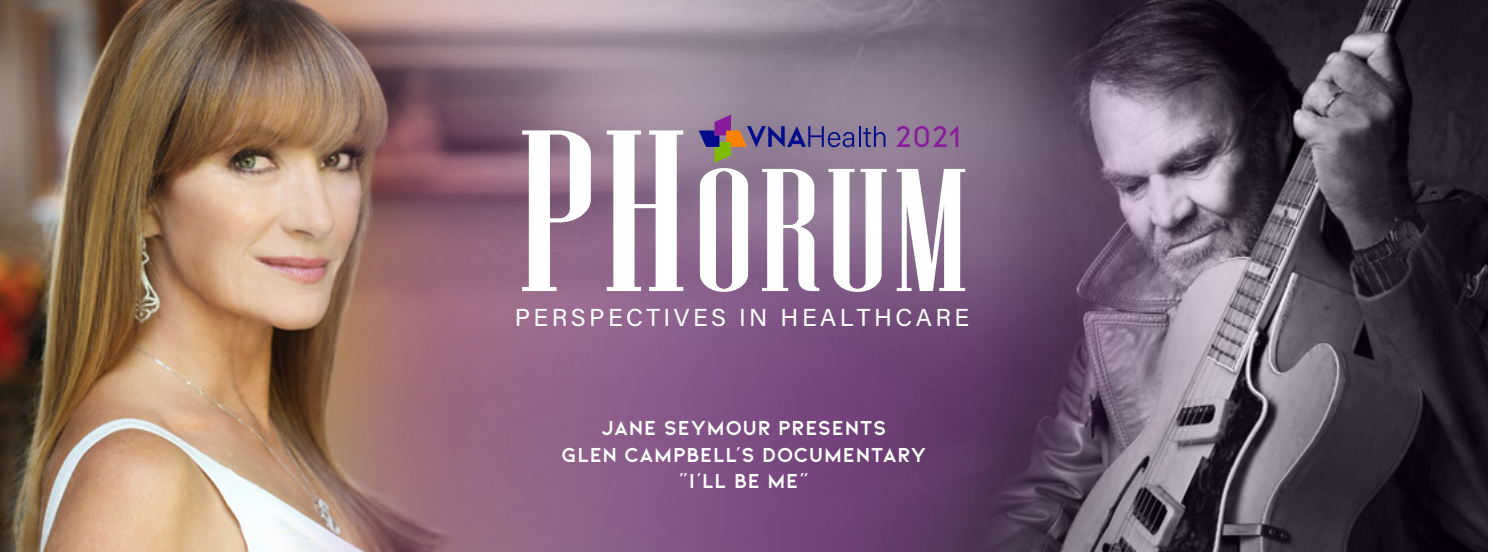
[vna.health/Angels2021](http://vna.health/Angels2021)

## JOIN US ONLINE DECEMBER 8 AT 6 PM

Please join us virtually as we come together as a community online for our annual **ANGELS AMONG US** remembrance service to say the name and honor those who have died and live on in our memories. We also invite you to join our **Candlelight Virtual Tribute** where the names of your loved one(s) will shine online from December 8th through the holidays, accompanied by music played by Certified Music Therapist Stefana Dadas. Please mail name(s) for your Candlelight Tribute in the enclosed envelope or go online to [vna.health/AngelsTribute2021](http://vna.health/AngelsTribute2021) by November 22.

## ACOMPÁÑENOS VIRTUALMENTE 8 DE DICIEMBRE A LAS 6 PM

Por favor acompáñenos para conmemorar juntos, en comunidad, nuestra celebración virtual de **ÁNGELES ENTRE NOSOTROS / ANGELS AMONG US**. Durante esta celebración, rendiremos homenaje diciendo en voz alta los nombres de los seres queridos difuntos quienes viven en nuestros recuerdos. También les invitamos a unirse a nuestro **Tributo Virtual a la Luz de las Velas**. Este será un lugar especial donde los nombres de sus seres queridos brillarán desde el 8 de diciembre durante la temporada navideña y será acompañada por música de Stefana Dadas, terapeuta musical certificada. Por favor, utilice el sobre incluido para proporcionar el (los) nombre (s) de sus seres queridos, o incluso puede ingresar los nombres en línea en la página web: [vna.health/AngelsTribute2021](http://vna.health/AngelsTribute2021) antes del 22 de noviembre.



# PHORUM

PERSPECTIVES IN HEALTHCARE

JANE SEYMOUR PRESENTS  
 GLEN CAMPBELL'S DOCUMENTARY  
 "I'LL BE ME"



In March 2020, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic and our Annual PHORUM: Perspectives in Healthcare was one of the first events in Santa Barbara to transform into an online event.

At the start of this year, COVID continued to challenge our lives; therefore, for our community's health and safety, VNA Health held the 2021 PHORUM as a hybrid virtual/in-person event blending technology with the experience of watching a movie at the West Wind Drive-In Theatre.

Emmy Award-winning Actress Jane Seymour presented the documentary, *I'LL BE ME*, a touching film about Glen Campbell — Oscar® Nominee, GRAMMY® Lifetime Achievement Award Recipient, and Country Music Hall of Fame member — and his personal journey with Alzheimer's Disease as he embarked on his nationwide "Goodbye Tour." In the film, Glen shared a unique perspective on living with Alzheimer's, and showed how music can loosen the grip of this disease.



Kathryn Cherkas, Lynda Tanner, Kim Campbell, and Dr. Kenneth Kosik

Following the documentary, VNA Health Hospice Medical Director **MICHAEL BORDOFSKY, MD** moderated a panel conversation with: **JANE SEYMOUR**, actress, artist, businesswoman and Executive Producer of *I'LL BE ME*; **KIM CAMPBELL**, Alzheimer's Disease advocate and widow of legendary singer and guitarist Glen Campbell; and **KENNETH S. KOSIK, MD**, internationally renowned Alzheimer's Disease researcher and Principal Investigator of the Kosik Neurobiology Lab at UCSB.

### WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR VNA HEALTH TO BRING PHORUM TO OUR COMMUNITY EVEN DURING A PANDEMIC?

Simply stated, to help each of us **LIVE WELL** through education and empowerment. PHORUM is our healthcare symposium where national, regional, and local health care leaders discuss relevant issues that impact the health and wellbeing of our communities. This year's PHORUM took an important look at Alzheimer's Disease from the perspective of music.

The Alzheimer's Association 2020 Facts & Figures Report indicates that more than five million Americans are living with Alzheimer's. In less than 30 years, this number is projected to rise to nearly 14 million. Alzheimer's impacts not only patients; it impacts their families and caregivers. There are more than 16 million Americans providing care for people with Alzheimer's or other dementias. Also, Alzheimer's is the 6th leading cause of death in the United States. Our Hospice Medical Director Dr. Michael Bordofsky has shared the unfortunate reality that people with Alzheimer's and other kinds of dementia have become the largest group of patients we care for at VNA Health.

Even when there is a cure for this disease, VNA Health will continue to provide care for Alzheimer's patients and their families. One of the life enrichment programs we offer is Music Therapy, which integrates with our hospice care

services. Music Therapy offers emotional support for patients and their families and provides an outlet for reflection and expression of feelings. Our Music Therapy is offered free of charge to our hospice patients. This program is supported solely through donations.

The VNA Health Music Therapy Program includes: Certified music therapist working closely with the health care team; personalized program to meet the needs and abilities of the patient; bedside visits including singing, playing instruments, and improvisation; and customized playlists for patients.

**To learn more about sustaining the VNA Health Music Therapy program, please contact the VNA Health Foundation at (805) 690-6290 or [foundation@vna.health](mailto:foundation@vna.health).**

PHOTOS BY RICK CARTER



VNA Health staff Vanesa Wendler, Lynda Tanner, Dusty Keegan, Diane Blair, and Denise Mann welcome guests to the drive-in.



Teen volunteers Jack Ransdell, Lauren Ferrarin, and Jonathan Moorman help with set-up and traffic flow.



Tailgaters enjoy a picnic before the documentary.



Families safely enjoy the film in their cars.

**PHORUM** VNAHealth 2022  
PERSPECTIVES IN HEALTHCARE

COMING SOON  
**March 2022**

# Mother's Day Luncheon

20<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

**Celebrating 40 remarkable women and one amazing couple who helped to shape the legacy of our community's character, health, and ability to live well**

Thanks to technology, innovative talent, and generous gifts, the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of our beloved annual Mother's Day Luncheon succeeded even during the COVID pandemic. You can still watch the video and experience the memories, laughter, and tears of joy at [vna.health/mothersday2021](https://vna.health/mothersday2021).



Hosts Andrew Firestone & Catherine Remak, 2008–2021



Host Erin Graffy, 2007



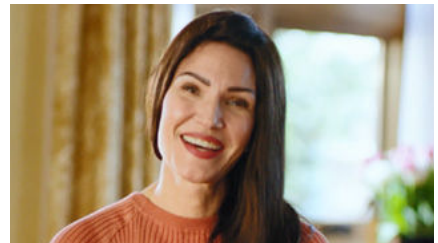
Hosts Larry Crandell & Debby Davison, 2002–2006



Lynda Tanner, VNA Health President & CEO



Rick Keith, former Foundation Executive Director



Pamela Dillman Haskell, Narrator and Speaker



Jane Habermann, Testimonial Speaker



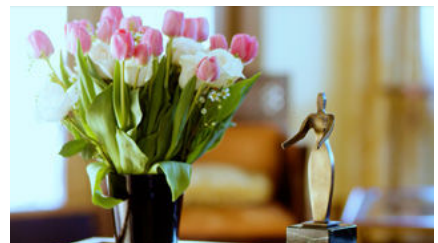
Jill & Neil Levinson, Testimonial Speakers



Judy Murphy, Testimonial Speaker



Peter Murphy Men's Night 2019



Caring Mother sculpture designed by Aris Demetrios



2002 Honored Mother  
Dorothy Bacheller



2002 Remembered Mother  
Virginia Lee Burton



2002 Surprise Mother  
Debby Davison



2003 Honored Mother  
Lady Leslie Ridley-Tree



2003 Remembered Mother  
Jane Crandell



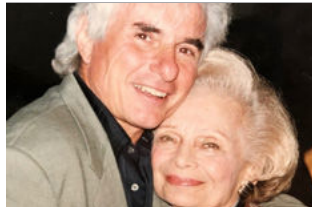
2004 Honored Mother  
Jane Thomas



2004 Remembered Mother  
Patty Whalen



2005 Honored Mother  
Anne Douglas



2005 Remembered Mother  
Yetta Rubinstein



2006 Honored Mother  
Anne Towbes



2006 Remembered Couple  
Edna & Harold Zimmer



2007 Honored Mother  
Irma Jurkowitz



2007 Remembered Mother  
Georgiana Porter



2008 Honored Mother  
Peggy Borgatello



2008 Remembered Mother  
Molly O'Daniel Danielson



2009 Honored Mother  
Jorgia Bordofsky



2009 Remembered Mother  
Anne MacDougall



2010 Honored Mother  
Regina Venegas



2011 Honored Mother  
Maryan Schall



2011 Remembered Mother  
Connie Toomey



2012 Honored Mother  
Susan Bridges



2012 Remembered Mother  
Annie Jacoba Schipper-Dooves



2013 Honored Mother  
Barbara Ireland



2013 Remembered Mother  
LaVerne Browning



2014 Honored Mother  
Jill Levinson



2014 Remembered Mother  
Barbara Ward Rollerson



2015 Honored Mother  
Sally Hall



2015 Remembered Mother  
Mercedes Eicholtz



2016 Remembered Mother  
Debby Davison



2016 Honored Mother  
Kate Firestone



2017 Honored Mother  
Jane Habermann



2017 Remembered Mother  
Leni Fe Bland



2018 Honored Mother  
Jelinda DeVorzon



2018 Remembered Mother  
Sally Fordyce



2019 Honored Mother  
Sharol Siemens

2019 Remembered Mothers



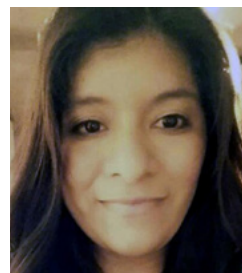
Alice Mitchell



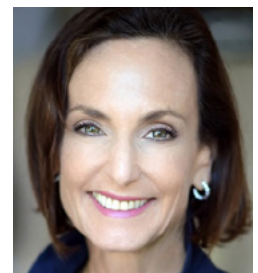
Faviola Benitez Calderon



Josie Gower



Marilyn Ramos Benitez



Rebecca Riskin



2019 Musical Performances: Fratelli Mens Chorus



Lauren Cantin with Andra Day



All-In Youth Choir with Frankie Fairweather Harman



The New Chordettes



Santa Barbara Dance Arts with Spencer Vincent



2020 Honored Mother Sue Birch



2020 Remembered Mother Adele "Chris" Dyer

## Thank You to the 2021 Mother's Day Luncheon Sponsors and Partners

### LEGACY SPONSORS

Peter Douglas

Christine and Reece  
Duca

Alixé and Mark Mattingly  
Nora Lynn Mattingly

Chris J. Toomey

The Wood-Claeyssens  
Foundation

### TRUSTED SPONSORS

Lady Leslie Ridley-Tree  
and Suzette Chafey

### HEART SPONSORS

Roberta and Stan Fishman  
Nora McNeely-Hurley and Michael Hurley  
Union Bank

### HEALING SPONSORS

Ginny and Tim Bliss  
Louise and David Borgatello  
Anna and David Grotenhuis  
Kimberly Schizas and Mark Linehan  
Montecito Bank & Trust  
Val and Bob Montgomery  
Mosher Foundation  
Sharol and Wayne Siemens

### BROADCAST PARTNERS

Verité Studios and News Channel 3, 11, 12

### COMPASSION SPONSORS

Bartlett, Pringle & Wolf LLP  
Casa Dorinda  
Cottage Health

Pamela Dillman Haskell  
and Chris Haskell

Chris and Bob Emmons  
Jane and Norm Habermann  
The Habit

HUB International  
Barbara Kummer

### LEGACY

Mission Wealth  
Alan Porter  
Paul and Shelley Schulte  
Rudi Schulte Family Foundation  
Warren Family:  
Robert, Kathy, Scott, Joy,  
Robert and Jason

### CAREGIVER SPONSORS

American Riviera Bank  
Bob Andrews and Margaret Wilkinson  
Judith and Mario Borgatello  
Sharon Bradford

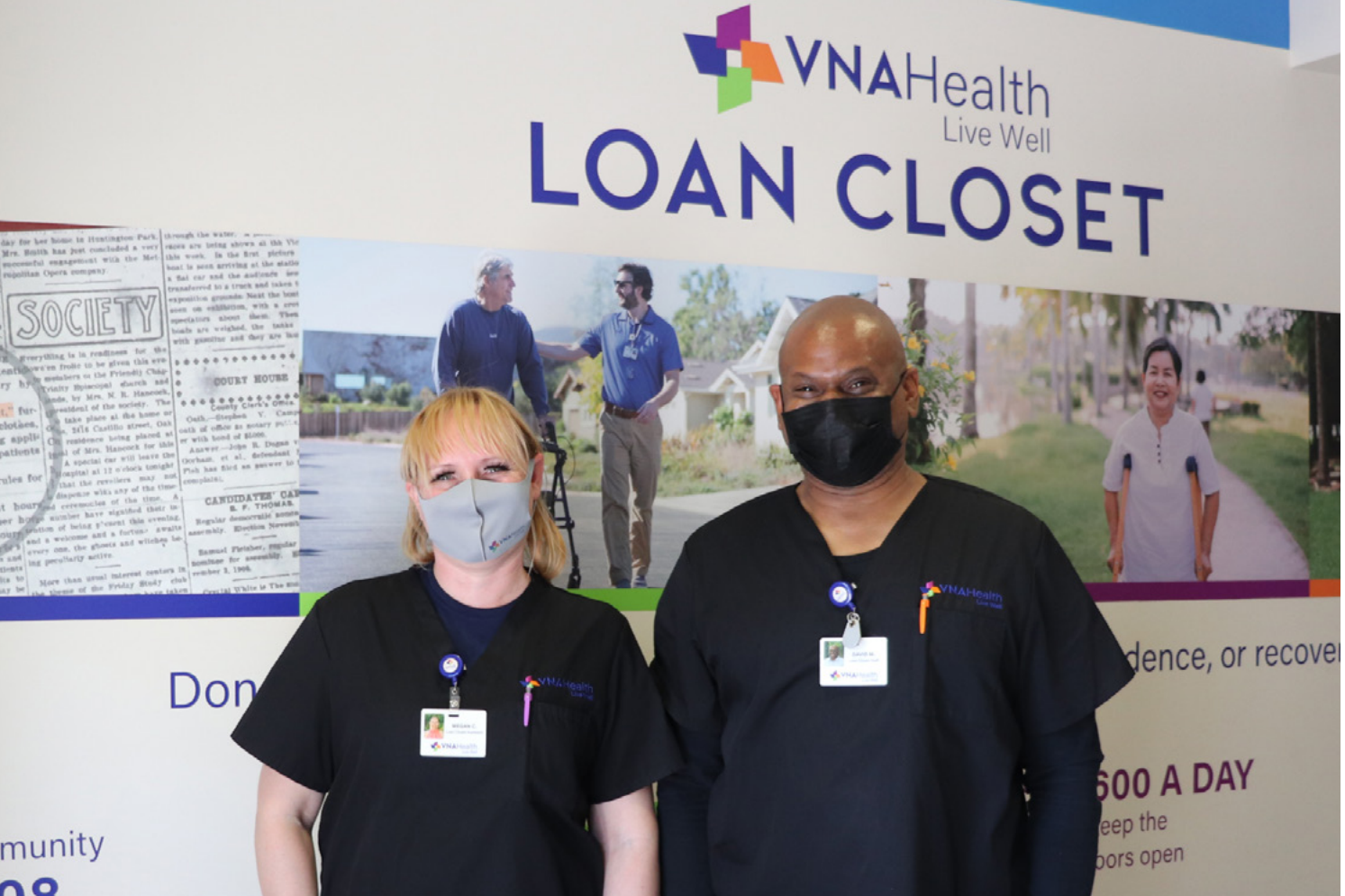
Brown & Brown Insurance  
CenCal Health  
Frank Ching and Charley Kearns  
Jelinda and Barry DeVorzon  
Jodi Fishman-Osti and Darren Osti  
Penny Jenkins and Gregg D. Hackethal  
Karen Kistler

Kenneth Kraus and Perry Gibson  
Nasif, Hicks, Harris & Co LLP  
Thomas Rollerson and Michael Erickson  
Maryan S. Schall  
Trudy Smith  
Anne Smith Towbes  
Janet and Bradley Stimson  
Village Properties (Renee Grubb)

21<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL  
*Mother's Day Luncheon*

SAVE THE DATE

**May 6, 2022**



Megan Cameron joined the VNA team in the fall of 2020 and fit right in immediately. Her caring heart and ready smile make everyone she meets feel better. The same is true of David Moorman, also with the Loan Closet since 2020, a Santa Barbara native and proud U.S. Navy Veteran who lives his motto that laughter is the best medicine.

## What does the Loan Closet mean to you?

The Loan Closet — owned and operated by VNA Health and serving Santa Barbara County since 1908 — is the exact opposite of most healthcare hassles. Staffed by the warm and welcoming team of David Moorman and Megan Cameron, the Loan Closet serves nearly 6,500 residents each year with free short-term loans of basic medical equipment, such as wheelchairs, crutches, knee scooters, walkers, shower seats, and more.

The Loan Closet is very gratifying. We get to share in virtually every emotion that our clients (very often friends, as well) experience. We celebrate their recuperations and recoveries, and we share the burden of sorrow when a family member passes. What we do has no socioeconomic boundaries — we help everyone. The Loan Closet is an invaluable resource that sets an example for every other community across the country, and I love being a part of it.

### David Moorman

There is nothing more fulfilling than serving one's community. At the Loan Closet, I get to do that on a daily basis. The team environment that we enjoy at work makes it fun, and everyday there is a new challenge, so it's always rewarding.

### Megan Cameron

Invaluable...one never knows when life turns upside down. When it happens, it is amazing to have you wrap your arms around me and my family. **Karla P.**

To have staff who are so knowledgeable, patient, and kind meant so much. **Myla K.**

To borrow expensive items needed for recovery is amazing and saves families a lot of money. **Anonymous**

It means one less giant worry at a time when you're already stressed out. **Rob R.**

We are blessed for such a resource! **Yolanda**



# Thank you Loan Closet!

## NEED MEDICAL EQUIPMENT?

The Loan Closet at VNA Health has durable medical equipment such as wheelchairs, walkers, crutches, canes, and bathroom safety items ready to lend to Santa Barbara County residents at no charge. To inquire about availability of equipment or to make an appointment, please call (805) 690-6235 or email [loancloset@vna.health](mailto:loancloset@vna.health).

It means the world. So nice to have one thing be simple and readily available when everything else in life is difficult!

Sabrina B.



# ¡Gracias Loan Closet!

## ¿NECESITA EQUIPO MÉDICO?

El Loan Closet de VNA Health tiene equipo médico duradero, como sillas de ruedas, andadores, muletas, bastones y artículos de seguridad para el baño, listos para prestar, sin costo, a los residentes del condado de Santa Bárbara. Para consultar sobre la disponibilidad de equipos o para hacer una cita, llame al (805) 690-6235 o envíe un correo electrónico a [loancloset@vna.health](mailto:loancloset@vna.health).

Significa el mundo. Es bueno tener una cosa ser tan simple y estar disponible ¡cuando todo lo demás en la vida es difícil!

Sabrina B.



PHOTOS BY ERIC PETERSON AND SIGRID TOYE

On Saturday, September 11, the Santa Barbara Yacht Club (SBYC) once again successfully held its annual Charity Regatta and raised \$313,000 — more than double its goal of \$150,000 — to benefit the charitable community programs of VNA Health.

In light of the summer’s COVID-19 surge and due to public health orders, the in-person Charity Regatta event was cancelled. The SBYC race teams still raced to raise funds to support VNA Health and also hosted its first Memorial Boat Ceremony in remembrance of 9/11 and of loved ones who have passed away. From the Memorial Boat, flowers were spread on the open sea while names of the remembered were read aloud.



Carol Kallman and Commodore Andra Escola holding flowers to be scattered at sea



Commodore Andra Escola welcomes the racers



David Gonzales sings *America The Beautiful*



James Watson plays *Taps*



Taylor Escola spreads flowers on the open sea for the Memorial Boat tributes



View Memorial Boat video at [vna.health/regatta](http://vna.health/regatta)



Chuck Bryson, Kyber Logue, and Nick Sebastian



Ross Harper and his steel drums



Richard Nahas and the Cordero kids pick the raffle winners

Tremendous thanks to the Santa Barbara Yacht Club for their steadfast dedication to support VNA Health's mission for 17 years, and for cumulatively raising more than \$2 million to help Santa Barbara families live in health and dignity through VNA Health's home health, palliative, and hospice care programs.



## Thank You to the 2021 Charity Regatta Sponsors and Donors

### ADMIRAL

Carolyn & Philip Wyatt

### COMMODORE

Ann & Ed Brady and the  
VNA Health Board of Directors  
Sheila & Thomas Cullen  
Hutton Parker Foundation  
Impulse Advanced Communications  
The Whimsie Fund

### VICE COMMODORE

Mary & Dick Compton

### REAR COMMODORE

American Riviera Bank  
B.P. Moser Trust  
Canterbury Consulting  
Karen Handy  
Diana Katsenes  
Mission Wealth

### STAFF COMMODORE

The Amgen Foundation  
Becky & Jeff Berkus  
Brenda Blalock & Alan Porter  
Brown & Brown Insurance  
Karen & Jack Byers  
Mr. & Mrs. Timothy Casey  
Eusebio Cordova, Jr.  
Heather & Alex Craigie  
Leslie & Scott Deardorff  
Pamela Dillman Haskell  
& Christopher Haskell  
Barbara & Shawn Fabian

Shari & William Guilfoyle  
Jane & Norm Habermann  
Christine & Michael Holland  
Penny Jenkins & Gregg Hackethal  
Kenneth Kraus & Perry Gibson  
Francie & Peter Lufkin  
Karen & Ed Marini  
Nasif, Hicks, Harris & Co  
Lil & Stan Nelson  
Helen & Ben Phillips  
Price, Postal & Parma

Santa Barbara Doctors  
Laura Schlessinger  
Seaside Wellness Gardens  
Nick Sebastian  
The Shevitz Family  
Debbie Snyder & Brian Johnson  
Cynthia & Ted Thoreson  
Kathy & Christopher Thrash, MD  
Judy & George Writer  
Gail & Bob Young  
Gina & Alex Ziegler

### 2021 CHARITY REGATTA COMMITTEE

Andra Escola  
COMMODORE  
Francie Lufkin  
STAFF COMMODORE AND  
CHARITY REGATTA CO-CHAIR  
Nick Sebastian  
CHARITY REGATTA CO-CHAIR  
Brenda Blalock  
Shari Guilfoyle  
Carol Kallman

Pat de Giorgio Lynn  
Maggie Mabuchi  
Lailan McGrath  
Richard Nahas  
Suesan Pawlitski  
Linda Seals  
Beverly Toole

### RAFFLE PRIZE DONORS

Thomas Dabny  
Farm Cart Organics  
and The Good Plow  
SBYC Board of Directors

### MEMORIAL BOAT FLOWERS DONATED BY

Hawaii Youth  
Opera Chorus  
Hogue & Co

### VIDEOGRAPHERS

Nick Sebastian and Peter Trowe



Registered Nurses at Serenity House: RJ Plummer and Leslie Gomes

## A Strong Team, A Strong Culture of Safety

**TEAMWORK** is a core value at VNA Health — and as a team, we live and breathe a culture of safety. Whether facing a fire, flood, or pandemic, we stay prepared and keep our staff and volunteers safe so that our patients and their families are protected at home.

Keeping up with the COVID pandemic, VNA Health continues its actions since the outbreak started:

- + Care for the overall wellbeing and safety of our patients, staff, and volunteers
- + Maintain regular COVID testing of clinical care teams
- + Keep the Loan Closet open to aid in people's recovery
- + Allow Serenity House hospice patients to safely spend time with their families
- + Provide telehealth care and remote work options
- + Maintain ample supply of PPE
- + Maintain special event and program guidelines to keep our communities safely connected
- + Collaborate with public health officials and healthcare organizations on COVID response

Through any crisis, your VNA Health team stands ready and prepared to help you and your family safely recover after an injury or surgery, live with a chronic illness, or find comfort at the end of life.

### COVID-19 RESPONSE

**\$2 million+**

SPENT IN SUPPORT OF  
COVID RESPONSE

**300,000**

PIECES OF PPE (PERSONAL  
PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT)

**4,000**

COVID TESTS TO KEEP OUR  
PATIENTS AND STAFF SAFE

**140+**

COVID PATIENTS RECEIVED  
CARE FROM VNA HEALTH

**0**

VNA HEALTH STAFF  
CONTRACTED COVID CARING  
FOR A COVID PATIENT

NUMBERS THROUGH AUGUST 2021

# Serving with Compassion, Integrity, and Excellence



## Neil Levinson, Esq.

VNA HEALTH BOARD VICE CHAIR

Neil Levinson previously served as a VNA Health Board member for 13 years; and returned to serve in November 2020. Mr. Levinson has been practicing law for more than 30 years, specializing in criminal defense. Before opening his private practice in Santa Barbara, Mr. Levinson served as a Deputy District Attorney for Los Angeles County. Passionate about being involved in the community, Mr. Levinson also serves as Board President for the Santa Barbara Tennis Patrons, and has served on the board for Social Skills America and the Music Theater of Santa Barbara. He has also been a coach for the mock trial teams at San Marcos and Laguna Blanca High Schools.



## Lynda Tanner, RN, MSN

TOP 50 WOMEN IN BUSINESS

The *Pacific Coast Business Times* named VNA Health President & CEO Lynda Tanner one of the Top 50 Women in Business. With more than 35 years of experience as a nurse and healthcare executive, Ms. Tanner started at VNA Health in 2008 as Chief Operations Officer, and became President & CEO in 2010. Under her leadership, VNA Health grew to provide quality care to more than 12,000 people annually across Santa Barbara County. Ms. Tanner increased VNA Health's delivery of home health services by 35%; opened a new branch office in North County; championed legislative change that increased the number of beds for the new Serenity House; oversaw the rebranding of the agency; and led the effort to achieve accreditation from The Joint Commission for all services lines (home health care, palliative care, and hospice care). Ms. Tanner serves on organizations locally, regionally, and nationally, including the Board of Directors for California Association for Health Services at Home (CAHSAH), LeadingAge California, and CenCal Health.



## Marcelle Coale, RN, MBA

CHAMPION IN HEALTHCARE

For the fifth time, the *Pacific Coast Business Times* has named a VNA Health leader as a Champion of Healthcare. Congratulations, Marcelle Coale! A dedicated and skilled healthcare professional, Ms. Coale brings a versatile nursing career developed through comprehensive experience in hospital, post-acute, and home settings. Since joining VNA Health in 2018 as Director of Serenity House, Ms. Coale has increased the utilization of Serenity House and led the renovation of flooring and furnishings at Serenity House. During the COVID pandemic, Ms. Coale has overseen the implementation of safety guidelines and protocols; and most recently, she safely led the full evacuation of Serenity House during the Loma Fire. A true champion of healthcare, working to ensure compassionate and quality care for patients and their families, Ms. Coale now oversees all hospice services as Senior Director of Hospice Care at VNA Health.





**Brandon D'Augustine, MOT, OTR/L**  
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST

**Respected Team Player Listener**

Brandon is the epitome of a team player and is highly respected by his colleagues. He collaborates with the Rehabilitative Therapy and Nursing teams for the betterment of patient care. Many patients and families send messages of appreciation in support of his therapeutic care. Brandon can always be counted on to do the right thing for both his patients and for VNA Health.

**WHY DID YOU CHOOSE OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY?**

I chose to be an OT in order to empower people who struggle. We all have unique challenges throughout our lifespan, and this universal struggle cements us together. Nothing brings me more happiness and fulfillment than helping people achieve their personal goals. It connects me to my community in a visceral and palpable way. This is what I do every day, and it's exactly what I hoped it would be.

**WHAT DOES "LIVE WELL" MEAN TO YOU?**

"Live Well" is a reminder that although we can't always choose the variables, we can always choose the mindset. That mindset will dictate how we see our situation, which will then influence our actions. Action changes the world in which we live. It's up to us to decide whether we want it to be for the better, or for the worse. I'm a practical optimist, and make it a point to step forward towards a better future each day.

**HOW DO YOU LIVE WELL AT WORK AND OUTSIDE OF WORK?**

Living well is all about achieving balance. The chaos of one's personal life is often balanced by the order of work. (Don't tell my boss, but sometimes it's even the other way around!) Outside of work, I find balance in travel, ceramics, culinary arts, teaching, Muay Thai kickboxing, and tinkering. I'm never bored!



I recently built a pottery studio with my aunt and uncle, and together we've created some really amazing work. It's great to see how we've all been able to develop new skills, tackle new problems, and create functional art under one roof.



**Our people  
make the difference.**

**Nuestra gente  
hace la diferencia.**

CARING FOR OUR COMMUNITIES SINCE 1908

805.965.5555 | [vna.health/joinourteam](https://vna.health/joinourteam)



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



509 E Montecito Street, Suite 200  
Santa Barbara, CA 93103

NONPROFIT ORG  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
SANTA BARBARA, CA  
PERMIT NO. 1215



Dennis and Soledad Morelos

## Belief in a Better Life

At 14, he decided he would better his position in life. Despite humble beginnings, Dennis Morelos built a fulfilling and financially successful life through hard work, thriftiness, and a little luck. In memory of his wife Soledad and to honor their wishes, his estate plan provides for VNA Health's Serenity House. Dennis has come full circle: having built a better life for himself, he is now able to help others better their lives.

A los 14, decidió que mejoraría su posición en la vida. A pesar de sus humildes comienzos, Dennis Morelos construyó una vida satisfactoria y económicamente exitosa a través del trabajo duro, la frugalidad y un poco de suerte. En memoria de su esposa Soledad y para honrar sus deseos, su plan patrimonial prevé la Serenity House de VNA Health. Dennis ha cerrado el círculo: habiendo construido una vida mejor para sí mismo, ahora puede ayudar a otros a mejorar sus vidas.

**GIVE THE GIFT OF A LIFETIME TODAY  
DA EL REGALO DE SU VIDA HOY**

Contact Rebecca Benard, Foundation Executive Director  
(805) 690-6222 | [rebecca.benard@vna.health](mailto:rebecca.benard@vna.health)