



Friendships formed through hospice service last a lifetime

They call themselves the “Moldy Oldies,” yet they’re anything but moldy and they’re certainly young at heart. Their bonds of friendship were forged through their time in service to Pikes Peak Hospice & Palliative Care, and this informal group continues to gather on occasion.

A group of roughly 25 of these former PPHPC employees and volunteers came together in mid-September to share their experiences over lunch in El Pomar Town Hall at PPHPC’s headquarters while also hearing organizational updates from President Dawn Darvalics and touring the new Inpatient Care Center.

Many who gathered that day had worked for PPHPC for 20 years or more. Some were among the very first volunteer class in 1980 and then went on to get their nursing licenses! They remembered an era before digital communications – sharing just one land-line phone and one pager, even documenting directions to patients’ homes and the location of the nearest pay phone. Some shared stories of beloved Samantha the cat, who

comforted patients at the inpatient unit in their final hours.

But most of all, those enjoying the time of camaraderie shared of a lifelong love of their work. As one person recalled: “It was the best job I ever had,” to the knowing nods of many in the room. To them, their hospice work was personal. “We deal in relationships,” one attendee pointed out. “The others deal in crisis.”

Thank you to this passionate and dedicated group who has given literally decades upon decades of service to hospice patients and families in our community.

**For more information about
employment at PPHPC, go to
pikespeakhospice.org/careers/**

**For more information about volunteering
at PPHPC, go to
pikespeakhospice.org/volunteer/**

Welcoming Dr. Melanie Stickrath as Medical Director

Pikes Peak Hospice & Palliative Care is proud to welcome Dr. Melanie Stickrath as our new Medical Director, bringing nearly 20 years of experience in internal medicine and palliative care to her role.

Stickrath most recently served with Colorado Permanente Medical Group, where she established and led the Supportive Care Clinic in Colorado Springs. She also has been recognized as one of Colorado Springs' "Best Doctors" in Hospice and Palliative Medicine.

Her expertise and compassionate approach are a natural fit with PPHPC's mission to provide comfort, dignity, and peace to patients and their loved ones.

"Dr. Stickrath's skill and dedication will greatly benefit the patients and families we serve," says Dawn Darvalics, president of PPHPC. "She is deeply committed to ensuring that every individual receives the highest quality of care at the most vulnerable times of life."

For Dr. Stickrath, joining PPHPC is both a professional and a personal calling. "Hospice and palliative medicine allow me to walk alongside patients and families during some of the most meaningful moments of their lives," she said. "I feel honored to be part of a team that is dedicated not only to excellent medical care, but also to listening, supporting, and providing comfort when it matters most."

In her role as Medical Director Dr. Stickrath provides medical oversight and direction for all hospice and palliative care patients. She leads our hospice and palliative medicine providers and interdisciplinary team members including nurses, social workers, spiritual counselors and CNAs, all of whom are experts in caring for patients with advanced and terminal illness.

As a nonprofit organization, Pikes Peak Hospice & Palliative Care is grateful to serve a community whose support makes it possible to attract and retain highly skilled and compassionate physicians like Dr. Stickrath. Thanks to your generosity, we can continue to ensure that every patient and family receives expert care during life's most challenging moments.

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Remember a loved one this holiday season

Remember a loved one this holiday season with a commemorative Trees of Life Ornament. The 41st Annual Trees of Life Celebration will take place Saturday, Nov. 15, on the south side of the Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum. All are welcome at this gathering to hear inspirational music and remarks, enjoy warm beverages, listen as the names of loved ones are read, and be inspired by the lighting of trees on the museum grounds. You can support the vital work of PPHPC and honor a loved one this holiday season by purchasing a commemorative ornament, ranging from paper ornaments symbolizing a light on a tree to personalized glass ornaments. For more information and to place your order, go to pikespeakhospice.org/trees-of-life/.



Join Us

What: 41st Annual Trees of Life Celebration

When: Saturday, Nov. 15, 4:30 p.m. hospitality, 5 p.m. program

Where: Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, 215 S. Tejon St.

For More Information: pikespeakhospice.org/trees-of-life/

Parking in the garage at Colorado and Nevada or streetside. A few spaces will be reserved on Vermijo for those with limited mobility.

Thank You To Our Trees of Life Sponsors

Presenting Sponsor



Thank You To Our Annual Sponsors



2026 Sponsorship Opportunities Available

Planning ahead for 2026? Pikes Peak Hospice & Palliative Care's 2026 Sponsorship Kit is now available, providing a range of opportunities to position your company alongside one of the region's most respected nonprofit brands. Annual Sponsors and Event Sponsors support the vital work of Pikes Peak Hospice through events such as our Illuminations breakfast, Trees of Life, Annual Butterfly Release and Zoo Getaway Day. Our sponsors are true partners in advancing compassionate care for patients and their families in life's most tender moments. We are happy to discuss customized opportunities to best fit your company's needs and target demographics. Check out 2026 sponsorship opportunities at pikespeakhospice.org/2026-sponsorship-kit/.

In the community

Pikes Peak Hospice & Palliative Care staff support events of our partners. Recently, we've joined in The Gazette's Senior Expo, the Walk to End Alzheimer's, and the Honoring the Brave Breakfast for Home Front Military Network.



Save the dates

Nov. 1-2: Dia de Muertos at the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center demonstrates remembrance, love and respect for those who have gone before us during these two days of music, dance, hands-on art activities, food and more. Pikes Peak Hospice is proud to partner with the FAC as this year's Community Ofrenda sponsor. Ofrendas (or offerings) are altars created to honor those who have died and are traditionally filled with photographs, food, flowers, and candles. All are welcome to bring these elements or others that celebrate someone special in your life who has passed. A digital printer will be available for those who wish to print a photo during the celebration. The festival is free, but RSVPs are strongly encouraged. Learn more at fac.coloradocollege.edu/events/dia-de-muertos/.

Nov. 2: The Concert of Remembrance features the inspiring voices of the Soli deo Gloria Choir in this special All Souls Day performance at First Lutheran Church. Pikes Peak Hospice is proud to partner as presenting sponsor. The one-hour performance will feature great melodies known and new; admission is free but seating is limited, so reserving a seat is advised. Learn more at solichochoir.org/events.

Nov. 27: The Empty Stocking Fund campaign kicks off for the holiday season, supporting Pikes Peak Hospice and 19 other health and human service agencies through this catalytic community fundraising campaign. Learn more at EmptyStockingFundCo.org.

Dec. 9: Amplify your gift to Pikes Peak Hospice by donating on Colorado Gives Day to leverage additional incentive dollars. Learn more at coloradogives.org.



GIVE ONLINE:

pikespeakhospice.org/donate-today

GIVE BY PHONE:

Call 719.457.8104

- ☐ My check is enclosed.
(Please make checks payable to Pikes Peak Hospice)



I would like to make a gift to Pikes Peak Hospice Foundation:

☐ \$35 ☐ \$75 ☐ \$250 ☐ \$500 ☐ \$1500 ☐ \$2000 ☐ Other _____

This gift is in memory of: _____

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Name on Card

Phone Number

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Pikes Peak Hospice Foundation **does**
not rent or sell its donor lists.

☐ Please remove my name from your mailing list.

Designate my gift to:

- ☐ Area of Greatest Need
☐ Center for Grief & Loss
☐ Charity Care
☐ Sentimental Journeys
☐ Patient Special Needs
☐ Other: _____

- ☐ I wish for this gift to remain anonymous for publication purposes. (if given in honor or memory of, the family will be notified)
☐ I wish for all my gifts to remain anonymous.
☐ I have included PPHF in my Will or Trust
☐ My company has a matching gift program (paperwork enclosed).

Gifts of 250+ are acknowledged in the Annual Report. Please list your name as you would like it to appear in next year's publication. _____