



**With Love, Since 1981**

*Providing end-of-life care  
for eight Mid-Columbia counties  
in Oregon & Washington*

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**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**Become a Hospice Volunteer**  
***Hospice of The Gorge Offers Volunteer Training***

*April 15, 2008* – Hospice of The Gorge, a non-profit end-of-life service agency, invites any community member with an interest, to learn how to become a hospice volunteer.

This free training program is open to anyone in the Hospice of The Gorge service area, consisting of eight Mid-Columbia counties in Oregon and Washington: Hood River, Wasco, Sherman, Gilliam, Morrow, Wheeler, Skamania and Klickitat.

Training takes place over two weekends at the Hospice of The Gorge administrative center in Hood River, from 6 to 8 pm on Friday, May 2, and from 8 am – 4 pm on Saturday, May 3 and 10.

The training gives people who want to volunteer with hospice, the overall tools to understand hospice philosophy, and how to provide direct service to patients and families. The training also provides the basis with which to serve in administrative and other types of volunteer roles.

Christine Jones, Volunteer Coordinator for Hospice of The Gorge, explains that hospice volunteers who work with patients help in a variety of ways, but mostly on a social level.

“Often they help out in the home while the caregiver takes a break; or they may spend time talking with or reading to a patient. Sometimes what really matters is just having someone to talk to outside the family — to share a laugh, to watch old movies with, or to look at photo albums together.”

Occasionally, hospice volunteers offer a special skill or service. Jacquie Hashizume of The Dalles, for instance, helps patients relax through a form of energy massage known as Reiki.

Jones offers some insight into why people volunteer for hospice, and what constitutes the typical volunteer.

“Generally our volunteers have some kind of personal connection with death. Often they’ve experienced the loss of a loved one themselves, and feel a very deep sense of commitment about wanting to help others through the process.”

Still, Jones says, the ideal volunteer would not have just recently experienced the death of a loved one. “We want to be sure people have healed from their own losses before they become hospice volunteers. We would be cautious about asking people to volunteer too soon after a loss, because we need them to be fully present for other people.”

Jones says that the time they spend with a patient or family varies depending on circumstances. “Our goal is to make a good match between the needs of our patients and families, and what a volunteer can offer.”

## Volunteer Shares Healing Art of Reiki

Comfort and caring comes in many forms. For hospice patients seeking relaxation and stress reduction, volunteer Jacquie Hashizume offers the Eastern form of energy work known as Reiki.



Reiki (pronounced “RAY-key”) is a Japanese word meaning universal life energy. This gentle, hands-on method uses the energy known as *prana* in India, *chi* in China, and *ki* in Japan.

“My intent is to help patients relax so that their treatments or medications will work better,” says Jacquie, a Reiki Master who moved with her husband from Los Angeles to The Dalles three years ago. Soon after, she began sharing her time and talents as a volunteer with Hospice of the Gorge.

“Some people say they feel a warm or tingling sensation during a session,” says Jacquie. “Even if a person doesn’t feel something, it doesn’t mean it doesn’t work.” Following a treatment, many patients report a sense of well-being and calm and enjoy a deep, restful sleep.

A session, which usually lasts 20 to 45 minutes, can be done with or without touch, in a chair, recliner or bed. Patients remain fully clothed during the treatment.

“Jacquie is great,” says Hospice volunteer coordinator, Christine Jones. “She is so willing, eager and wanting to do and be there for our patients.”

Jacquie is one of more than 50 volunteers at Hospice of the Gorge who provide a range of services from visiting with patients to helping with office work and events. She also volunteers

elsewhere in the community and teaches Reiki classes in her home and at Columbia Gorge Community College.

For more information about volunteering at hospice, call Christine Jones at Hospice of The Gorge, 541-387-6449, or at [cjones@hospiceofthegorge.org](mailto:cjones@hospiceofthegorge.org).

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Hospice of The Gorge is a non-profit organization that has provided compassionate end-of-life care, *with love, since 1981*. The oldest and largest hospice in the Mid-Columbia region, it serves eight counties, including Hood River, Wasco, Sherman, Gilliam, Morrow, Wheeler, Skamania and Klickitat. It is certified by Medicare and the State of Oregon, is licensed in Washington, and is a member in good standing with state and national hospice associations.