

# Hospice Aids Life-Through-Death Needs

By MARGARET KOCH  
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The hospice can be traced back through almost 2,000 years of history to institutions which offered hospitality to travelers, orphans and "incurables."

Today, the concept of the hospice is that of a way station providing the supportive care offered to those who are making the journey from life through death.

"The interest in the hospice concept has grown with the awareness of how lonely and alienating dying tends to make one feel, and a desire to change that," notes Frank Lanou, who heads the local board of directors for the planned Santa Cruz County Hospice.

Julie Pitts and Marilyn Young are board members also for the charitable, tax-exempt corporation. There are no paid officers for the project which was conceived in November 1977, incorporated in April 1978 and recently com-

pleted the first training session for a group of 20 persons.

"We get 200 and more calls a day, asking if help is available yet," says Al Pedersen, who with his wife, Mickey, has spearheaded the local drive for a hospice.

"They will go out in pairs starting in June," he explained.

This first group of volunteers is trained to go to the terminally ill with a fresh, honest and humane approach to death and dying.

"Eventually we hope for a six-bed hospice in Santa Cruz," Pedersen says. "Right now, our greatest need is for an office where we can receive telephone calls and from which we can dispatch volunteers."

The hospice idea is telling the world that now is the time to help people who cannot get well, to help them die in comfortable and meaningful ways.

It hopes to reduce pain in all its manifestations and to promote personal growth and

a "good death."

It also hopes to allow the patient to take control and have a sense of meaning about his or her life and death.

Valuable support also is given to the patient's family. They are treated as a unit and the family is cared for in bereavement.

So far, the group has been meeting monthly in homes. The next meeting is Wednesday 31 at 7 p.m. at Dominican Hospital.

The hospice has taken three forms throughout the world: the free-standing which offers care to terminal patients on both in-patient and home programs; the hospital-based hospice, and the home-centered hospice.

The Santa Cruz County Hospice is a home-based hospice, with the initial contact to be made when a serious or life-threatening illness has been diagnosed; when a family is stricken by a sudden death experience, or a serious accident has occurred.

The client will then be matched to a pair of

volunteer workers best able to meet the emotional, social and spiritual needs of the family. The workers will be available for talk, listening, loving, caring and silent sitting up to the point of death and after death, for the family.

Volunteer workers are trained, then make a one-year commitment to attend continuing training and regular discussion meetings.

Persons wishing more information may call Pitts at 688-1286 or Young at 688-2721.

"People of all ages are needed for the second training period which will start in June," comments Pedersen.

So far, they have ranged in age from 20 to 69. Pedersen and his wife became involved after the death of a dear friend, Fred Wagner, Santa Cruz' earlyday blacksmith, helping care for him during his last years of life.

"We went to a meeting and it was all so great that we became very interested in it," Pedersen said. "It's a wonderful thing and there is so much need for it."



Arlyne Lewis and Gabriel Constans, right, who recently completed the Hospice training course, offer help to a bereaved person.

## Youth Camp Needs Volunteers To Help Youngsters In Reading

More than one-third of the young men at the Ben Lomond Youth Conservation Camp are "functionally illiterate," leaving them in a difficult spot when they go back into the community.

The estimate comes from camp teacher John Beresford.

vere" reading problems.

The inability to read—or at least to read above a sixth-grade level—hampers the young California Youth Authority students when they leave the camp and apply for jobs, try to attend schools, or just carry on the basic business of dealing

men are unable to effectively cope when released into the community.

A new program has been started at the CYC camp, called the "Right to Read" program.

It needs community volunteers to work with the 16 to 25



### Drafting Winners

Sue Constantini, a Harbor High junior, won this first place in the recent Hartnell College drafting contest, with Dave Perry, also a Harbor High jun-