MJHS Celebrates Hospice and Palliative Care Month

Never is the MJHS statement “Caring every minute, every day” more apparent than during November, National Hospice and Palliative Care Month. During this time, MJHS proudly offers special events for hospice caregivers, staff and families. From continuing education to remembering loved ones, MJHS is proud to join with fellow New Yorkers and continue the spirit of caring that has defined the organization for more than 100 years.

Hospice Plays on Broadway
MJHS Foundation also revisits one of its most cherished November traditions: Hospice on Broadway. This year’s outing will give supporters a hilarious and unforgettable evening of theater with Relatively Speaking, featuring three one-act plays by three legendary writers: Ethan Coen, Elaine May and Woody Allen.

The performance takes place:
November 13, 2011 3 p.m.
The Brooks Atkinson Theater
256 West 47th Street
New York, NY 10036

Proceeds will help MJHS Hospice and Palliative Care provide culturally sensitive services to New Yorkers in need. Tickets are available now.

Contact the Foundation at (718) 630-2664 or visit www.mjhsfoundation.org to learn how you can be a part of the laughs and fun.

Biannual Service of Remembrance
Each November, MJHS Hospice and Palliative Care hosts a commemorative service for family members. As with the spring services, the Fall Service of Remembrance will bring New Yorkers together to remember their loved ones. Attendees sing, listen to musical offerings and inspirational words, as well as participate in a candlelight vigil.

Please call the Bereavement Center for further information and exact locations at (212) 844-5754.

Continuing Medical Education Symposium
Providing hospice and palliative care is an ever-evolving and improving endeavor. That is why MJHS is co-sponsoring, with the Department of Pain Medicine and Palliative Care of Beth Israel Medical Center, a continuing medical education symposium entitled “Hospice and Palliative Care: 2011 Update for the Specialist Team.”

Through an array of experts, the conference will cover topics of crucial interest, such as:

• Psychiatric and psychological issues
• Issues in symptom management

The all-day conference takes place:
November 29, 2011
New York Marriott Marquis
1525 Broadway
New York, NY 10036

The conference is geared to palliative care specialists, pain specialists, general practitioners, nurse practitioners, pharmacists, allied health professionals, fellows, residents and medical students.

For more information about the conference, visit www.chpnet.org/cme, or contact Kierston Gaston at kgaston@chpnet.org or (212) 420-4713.

www.mjhsfoundation.org
Menorah Hospice to Light Up Lives

MJHS’ Sixteen Lights campaign fittingly played host to many local Asian luminaries around the time of a famous Chinese festival, this autumn. On September 19, a few days after the Asian Festival of the Moon, MJHS hosted a luncheon and tour for 80 Asian community leaders at its oceanfront Menorah campus. Menorah is where MJHS will build, via a new inpatient unit for people of all faiths. It will be one of the only hospice centers in the region.

The Festival of the Moon is an important time, when Asian Americans gather to pay tribute to family and the bright mid-autumn moon that symbolizes it. This year, many also gathered to consider a bright new concept in hospice care.

“The image of lights is so appropriate,” says Lily Wang, MJHS Director of Asian Programs. “The new inpatient unit will light up the lives, and lighten the load, of grieving, beloved Asian families wringing to bring peace to loved ones whose illnesses need stabilizing. Patients and families will enter the healing process together, in an environment respectful of their traditions.”

The new inpatient unit will be medically intensive, multidisciplinary and culturally sensitive. It will treat not just patients’ bodies, but their hearts and minds.

The numerous services available—psychological, spiritual and medical—include music therapy, as written about in The New York Times. The music therapists will be versed in Asian music. Families will stay overnight. Staff will speak many Asian dialects and be trained in many Asian traditions.

“MJHS hospice is not about ending life, but about bringing life to the end of days,” says Wang.

MJHS has already cared for more than 600 families in its home Asian hospice program, which was launched in 2008. It now has eight staffers with special skills in Asian tradition, culture and medicine, including three RNs, a reverend, a community liaison, a team assistant, and a social worker speaking Mandarin, Cantonese and Fusan.

At the September luncheon, MJHS officials gave community leaders a tour of the oceanfront site. They illustrated some of the many ways MJHS hospice already serves the Asian community. Recently, the staff intervened for a hospice patient when U.S. Customs confiscated money sent to her, meant for her upcoming funeral.

Donor Spotlight: Every Day Brings Applause

As told by Jennifer Cecora

Years ago, a hurricane ripped through Coney Island. Shorefront Center for Rehabilitation and Nursing Care employees were prepared—long before a single raindrop fell or wind chimes clanged. Every single precaution was taken to keep residents and patients safe, comfortable, as well as calm. The dramatic experience strengthened the already close Shorefront community of caring. And one of the key players throughout all of this was the Medical Director: my late husband, Dr. Raymond Cecora.

I first met Ray in a hospital elevator. He was an internal medicine resident and I was a ward clerk. The elevator got stuck and we were the only ones in it. We married in 1979 and eventually had three wonderful boys.

Just Like Family

For nearly 25 years, Ray, known to all as “Doc,” was a respected Medical Director at MJHS. He spent his later years at Shorefront and had a way of making MJHS residents and patients feel like family.

Over time, Shorefront became an extension of our home. Our children visited with residents and enjoyed running along the world famous boardwalk. We enjoyed the family-oriented activities, especially the summertime BBQs.

When my mother-in-law suffered a stroke, she moved to Shorefront. The location was perfect. There she was under my husband’s medical care and received amazing rehab. Plus, Jane, my sister-in-law, lived close by and could visit regularly. Was my mother-in-law a VIP? Absolutely! And so is every other Shorefront patient and resident. Until her very end, she was comfortable and at peace. She is greatly missed.

I remember my late mother-in-law quite fondly. Often, her grandchildren took turns performing scales and sonatas on the beautiful baby grand piano. The music brought a sweet mix of laughter and love into her home on weekends and holidays.

After my mother-in-law passed away, the piano moved to our home. Ray and I didn’t really have space for it, yet having it made us feel close to the beloved matriarch.

I was sharing my story because I hope it will encourage more people to give in their own special way. It’s important to give back to a place that has given you or your loved one so much. Your contribution is the best curtain call.
The publication was referring to this summer’s 13th Annual MJHS Foundation Golf Classic, where high-spirited philanthropic golfers soared past all records to raise more than $945,000.

“MJHS’ altruistic athletes scored the biggest single day of fundraising in MJHS history,” said Golf Classic Co-Chair Randy Klein. “They honored the tradition of the four Brooklyn Ladies who founded this charitable organization in 1907 to help the poor and elderly. MJHS is enormously grateful for their vision and the vigor with which they have pursued it. They have helped make us one of the most expansive not-for-profit health systems in the region.”

Over 200 good-hearted golfers hit the putting green and driving range in the morning. At noon they teed off, while non-golfers swarmed, strolled around the club and played Texas Hold ’Em.

“There was a palpable electricity in the air,” The Jewish Voice noted of the moment when the guests entered the reception, which was designed to offer a warm thank you to donors, with its beautifully displayed carved sirloin, lamb chops and pastas.

During the reception, boxing heavyweight and living legend Gerry Cooney struck the classic fighter’s stance for photos alongside high-heeled fans, a pose he cheerfully adopted often on the course that day.

Legendary Super Bowl coach and MJHS Golf Classic Honorary Chair Dick Vermeil moved among the crowd, thanking all for their heartfelt dedication and humor. “I am being sincere when I say how much fun this is.”

A video was shown of Honored Guest Ike Assael, Chair of many MJHS boards, and MJHS Foundation Immediate Past Chair. Unable to attend due to a broken hip, Assael noted he would use MJHS Home Care, as he has in the past. “I’m proud of this amazing organization.”

Many awards were given. Peter Nussbaum, Saul Greenspan, Barbara Hiney and Joanne Scilla graciously accepted “Most Honest Scorekeepers.”

Taking first place was the Simione Consultants Team: David Hardy, Jared Shure, Bob and Bill Simione. In Second Place was the Unitex Team: Barry, Dan and Ellen Rothenberg, and Eric Rubin. In Third Place was the High-spirited philanthropic golfers soared past all records to raise more than $945,000.

Medstar Team: Rich Cotler, Steve Lieberman, Zeb Pirzada and David Rabbiner.

The Foundation is grateful to all who contributed, including Bistecca and Special Touch Home Care Services (Ace Level donors); Northwestern Mutual, TD Bank, and Allen Health Care Services (Eagle Level donors); Chem Rx (Birde Level donors), Stonebridge Medical, First Response Ambulance, and Cadwalader, Wickersham & Taft (Back Nine Level donors); Community Home Care Referral Service (Up and Down donor); and The Printing House (Rub of the Green Level donors).

For more on this, visit www.mjhsfoundation.org.
Action Seekers Wanted!

Movie stars do it. Star athletes, too. For many, it’s a tradition of family, faith or even school.

What is it? Volunteering! And MJHS Foundation needs lots of volunteers—for events, our website, administrative support, donor relations and more.

The time commitment is as much as you can offer: a couple hours a week or a few hours a day. In fact, if you’ve ever wondered how celebrity event planners make everything look so easy or have ideas on how we can better spread the word about MJHS, become a volunteer.

It’s important. Volunteers are the heart of our organization, starting with the Four Brooklyn Ladies who looked around their community, saw a need and created something remarkable. Their legacy is MJHS.

Ways to help: Volunteers enhance the talents of our small staff. New York is full of phenomenal people who are whizzes with numbers and spreadsheets or love operations and checklists. Many are creative geniuses. Plenty have a broad social network and are always getting their friends and family involved with great causes. Some just like to help out wherever and whenever they are needed. People who give their time to help share their talents have one thing in common: selflessness! We think that describes you.

Who: Anyone who is enthusiastic about, and dedicated to, the mission of MJHS and the Foundation—especially students; stay-at-home and actively working professionals; retirees; current friends of MJHS and all who are interested in philanthropy, events, accounting, donor relations and administration.

Time Commitment: A few hours a day or a few hours a week. Whatever your schedule allows.

Benefits: Students may be eligible for academic credit. Volunteering is also a great way to enhance your resume, learn the inner workings of philanthropy, (re)connect to the work environment and share your talents.

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Martin Marcus

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Thinking Ahead

Cutler: Our hospice memorial service is one of the most moving experiences I’ve witnessed. Family representatives share stories, beautiful music is performed, and the spiritual element anchors participants. In time, family members even become volunteers and donors.

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Marcus: In addition to our medical expertise, our organization is often lauded for being empathetic and sensitive to people of all backgrounds. Our ability to consistently do so for everyone, during what is often a time of great stress and pressure, makes people feel respected and valued. Although I’m new to MJHS, compassion, dignity and respect are obviously first-tier priorities, along with quality of care and patient satisfaction. Everyone at MJHS—regardless of title and role—knows their work really matters. And the Brooklyn Ladies have captured people’s imagination, as well as defined what it means to care.

About Dr. Suzanne Cutler and Martin Marcus

At the time of her retirement, Cutler was an Executive Vice President of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, in charge of the Bank’s Corporate Group. She was also the Bank’s Contingency Officer and a member of the Bank’s Management Committee. Marcus is president of Marcus Brothers, a leading designer and importer of craft, quilting and other textile products, and manufactures product in five overseas countries.

Marcus: Board service has opened my eyes. Over the years, friends have chosen our hospice inpatient unit at Beth Israel as the place of care for their dying parents. I recall seeing our staff doing such remarkable work. Even during the most emotional times, patients and families genuinely appreciated our personal attention, our caring in action.

MEET THE BOARD: Leaders, Stewards, Supporters

Dr. Suzanne Cutler and Martin Marcus were honored last fall by MJHS Hospice and Palliative Care and MJHS Foundation. Their dedicated leadership, as well as outstanding stewardship, contributions and support—as Trustees of Jacob Perlow Hospice—helped create the new MJHS Hospice and Palliative Care. Today, both are members of the MJHS End-of-Life Care Committee.

In this interview, Cutler and Marcus discuss philanthropy, define hospice in personal terms and highlight some of the reasons why MJHS is one of the largest hospice and palliative care programs in the region.

About Philanthropy

Cutler: My family is philanthropic. We enjoy giving—as volunteers and donors. Few people know that hospice programs are required by law to have volunteers, distinguishing it from other types of care. This mandate is one of the many reasons why the MJHS Trustee role is the right fit for me.

Marcus: My father had eight siblings. His family loved modestly and gave generously. This culture of philanthropy continues to be passed from one generation to the next. I have supported health care organizations in one way or another for more than 20 years.

Getting Personal

Cutler: Like most people, I initially thought hospice was about dying. I have, however, witnessed the beauty of our hospice and how we care not only for the patient but the family and friends—both during and after their loved one’s death. Supporting family and friends at a difficult time, without stepping across a very amorphous line, is a unique skill of our program.

Our focus is on quality of living, and it helps make those last days and months very special and as pain-free as possible through a broad scope of services. People expect spiritual counseling but not, for example, music and art therapy. Excellent care is expensive though. Limited government funds make philanthropic and volunteer support critical. Our creative arts program is particularly notable because the cost of music and arts therapy; so valuable to patients, is primarily covered by private donations and grants to MJHS Foundation, not by Medicare, Medicaid or medical insurance.

www.mjhsfoundation.org
MJHS Foundation provides financial assistance for the charitable efforts of MJHS and its affiliated agencies.

The philanthropic spirit of The Four Brooklyn Ladies has been a cornerstone and guiding philosophy of MJHS for over 100 years. The culture of philanthropy they inspired led to the formation of MJHS Foundation, which has been instrumental in raising the funds necessary for the provision of charitable health care as well as the development of innovative services and programs to serve our growing community. The extraordinary efforts of MJHS would not be made possible without your generous donations to MJHS Foundation.

Support a great cause. Win a dream vacation.

Cabo San Lucas, Mexico
Win a vacation in a seaside luxury condo and airfare for two!

Visit www.mjhsfoundation.org or call (212) 356-5300 for tickets.
Drawing Date: November 13, 2011

Only 1,000 tickets and chances to win. Prize to be claimed in 2012 at mutually agreeable time for winner and property owner.