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Cancer Survivor Author and Towne Center Bookstore Team Up to Support Hope Hospice

DUBLIN, CA - (June 11, 2009) In a true story documenting Stan Goldberg's experience as a hospice volunteer, *Lessons in Living* tells the story of what the author learned at the bedside of people at the end of life. In bringing Stan's story to the public, Judy Ditter-Wheeler, independent bookseller and owner of Towne Center Books, 555 Main Street, in Pleasanton, California, will host a book signing on Monday, June 22, 2009 at 12 noon, with a portion of the proceeds going to Hope Hospice, a local non-profit organization.

Goldberg's book highlights his time spent alone with a dying person. In the early days of hospice care, sitting vigil with a patient was a regular part of a volunteer's role. Such helpers, at a most sensitive time of life, can reduce anxiety and fear, provide respite and companionship to the patient, family, and caregivers, and provide balance during a time of transition and change. The Vigil Volunteers at Hope Hospice are on call to bring a quiet presence during a person's final hours and to offer support to their family members. Volunteers help patients reflect on their lives by listening to their stories, asking gentle questions, and encouraging patients to share what is important to them. At Hope Hospice, there is an opportunity for people receiving hospice care to video record their life stories so they can pass on their legacy to future generations by gathering photos and stories to tell in their own special way.

Since volunteers are a critical aspect of compassionate care, the stories of "forgiveness, gratitude, and courage" featured in the book mirror similar experiences of many of the volunteers working at Hope Hospice in Dublin. "My first experience as a Vigil Volunteer," said Teresa Morgan, "made it real for me to know what it means to be present to someone. My role was very peaceful." Pradeep Joseph, another volunteer shared that being a hospice volunteer was one of the most meaningful experiences he's had in life in being present during a patient's final journey. "I've learned so much about life and relationships through this," Joseph said.

People often ask hospice volunteers what it is that motivates them to spend their valuable time in such an unusual way. In *Lessons of the Living*, Stan Goldberg says, "I do it because a day doesn't go by when, after I leave you (his patient), I don't learn something about myself." According to Wendy Celeste, Volunteer Coordinator at Hope Hospice, "Our hospice volunteers are living examples of a positive approach to life, flexibility, empathy, compassion, a willingness to help others and to work as a member of the hospice team. We are very fortunate to have many dedicated 'heroes' who give of themselves to improve the lives of others."

About Hope Hospice

Hope Hospice provides end-of-life care to patients and grief support to families in the San Ramon Valley, Tri-Valley, and Castro Valley areas. A proven leader in hospice care since 1980, our mission is to provide compassionate care, insight, and guidance as families navigate through the end-of-life process. Our team of health care professionals, many with hospice and palliative care certification, provides emotional and spiritual support and state-of-the art methods of pain and symptom control to maximize quality of life. We serve families in Alamo, Blackhawk, Castro Valley, Diablo, Danville, Dublin, Livermore, Pleasanton, San Ramon, Sunol and the surrounding communities in the East Bay of San Francisco.

Hope Hospice, a 501 c (3), non-profit organization, is accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations, licensed by the State of California Department of Health Services, and Medicare/Medi-Cal certified. For more information, visit www.hopehospice.com or contact us at (925) 829-8770.

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