



NEWS RELEASE

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Nostalgic Hikers Exceed Goals for Hike for Hope

(SUNOL – May 1, 2010) Over 700 participants gathered at Sunol Regional Wilderness on Saturday, May 1, to participate in the first annual Hike for Hope benefitting the Hope Hospice Grief Support Center and other programs of Hope Hospice. The event, a coming together of local residents, volunteers, families, and Hope Hospice staff and board members, offered something for everyone: a hike in nature, a chance to remember a loved one, a great family outing. Groups participating included Palo Alto Medical Group and Chevron employees, the Tri-Valley Wine Club, the Tri-Valley Newcomers Club, and Nightingale Nursing.

The day began with hikers donning *Hike for Hope* tee shirts and lanyards holding the photo of the person they were remembering. Along the trail, Stan Goldberg, author of *Lessons for the Living*, serenaded guests with music from Native American and Japanese flutes, while *Hike for Hope* committee members distributed park-sanctioned seed packets inscribed with a special poem:

In the rising of the sun and in its going down,
We remember you.
In the blowing of the wind and in the chill of winter,
We remember you.
In the opening of buds and in the rebirth of spring,
We remember you.
In the blueness of the sky and in the warmth of summer,
We remember you.
(Author Unknown)

The *Hike for Hope* committee, a group of nature lovers and Hope Hospice supporters, worked tirelessly for six months to plan and promote the event. Committee members represented most of the communities in the Hope Hospice service area from Alamo to

Livermore and Castro Valley. Dolores Bengtson, chairperson for the Hike for Hope committee, was delighted at the turnout saying, "I hope everyone enjoys their time in the park including all that is in bloom and the wonderful views along the way." Dolores crafted educational brochures to help hikers recognize all the wildflowers in bloom at the time. Kathy Molinari, a committee member whose parents were both served by Hope Hospice, was also excited about the activities. "All the fun planning created a day that was perfection. As I handed out the seed packets with my sister, I knew my parents were with us in spirit." The concept for *Hike for Hope* was born out of the idea that a nature hike reflected most accurately the spirit of hospice work. Donna McMillion, Development Director, states, "We believe in making every moment count and in affirming life every step of the way. A hike in the hills among the oak trees, when nature is at its springtime peak, just seemed to make sense as a way for families to be together, enjoying the outdoors, and supporting a good cause."

Board and staff members brought their children. Dr. Peter Wong and Dr. Michael Malek, medical directors for Hope Hospice, were also in attendance. Kristin Barranti, board member, attorney and nurse, said, "Sunol is a beautiful location to hike to remember those persons who are no longer with us but received excellent care by the staff of Hope Hospice. As part of our Hike, we enlisted our five-year old son to sow the seeds of fundraising by teaching him to help others in need. It was a perfect day!"

Other Hope Hospice board members and their families included Dave Karlsson, board treasurer, James Kohnen, Susan Michelletti, and Dr. Steven Oppenheimer.

The working committee consisted of Becky Dennis, David Lunn, Kathy Molinari, Jim Kohnen, Sue Evans, Dolores Bengtson, Ayn Weiskamp, Joanie Fields, Rosie Yandell, Chuck Deckert, Rich Guarienti, and Jacky Poulsen,

Exceeding attendance and revenue goals for this first annual event, *Hike for Hope* promises to grow and to offer a wonderful day for participants to commune with nature, among family and friends, while remembering someone they love.

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About Hope Hospice

Hope Hospice, a 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization since 1980, provides compassionate care, insight, and guidance as families navigate through the end-of-life process. The hospice team, many with hospice and palliative care certification, provides emotional /spiritual support and state-of-the art methods of pain and symptom control to maximize quality of life. Hope Hospice serves 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.