

Hearts *for Hospice*

FALL 2025

A Vision of Compassion

Dr. Jay Weil

A Light That Never Fades

Where Every Candle Reflects a Memory

Good Vibes, Great Cause

Music, fashion, & community
come together to support
hospice care

A Light That Never Fades

Where Every Candle Reflects a Memory



There's a quiet shift that happens this time of year. The air cools, the evenings stretch longer, and suddenly the familiar rhythm of the holiday hums through the world again.

For many, that rhythm carries something more ... a gentle ache or perhaps a whisper of memory that returns with every change of season.

Maybe it's the way the sky looks just before dusk, the smell of cinnamon in the kitchen, or a song that finds you when you least expect it. Grief has a way of showing up like that, not to reopen wounds but to remind us of the love that still lives inside the spaces someone once filled.

Each November, Gulfside Hospice observes National Hospice & Palliative Care Month, a time to honor that love and the compassion that surrounds it. It's a month to recognize the quiet, extraordinary moments that happen every day in hospice care: the clasp of a hand, a final smile, a peaceful breath.

It's also a time to remember that behind every candle lit, there's a story still glowing.

That understanding inspired Light A Candle, a new community fundraiser and remembrance campaign created to help families reflect, remember, and give back.

Throughout November, supporters can visit gulfside.org/light-a-candle to make a donation in memory or in honor of someone special. Each gift lights a virtual candle that joins hundreds of others across Pasco County, forming a constellation of compassion, gratitude, and love that reaches every corner of our community.

Every candle tells a story.

- 🕯️ A husband remembering the laugh he fell in love with.
- 🕯️ A daughter missing the mother who made every Thanksgiving dinner sparkle.
- 🕯️ A nurse honoring the patient who taught her what courage really looks like.

One candle may seem small. But together, they form something extraordinary ... proof that love, once given, never truly leaves. Each flame represents comfort for another family, helping provide hospice care that feels like calm in the middle of chaos and dignity in the hardest of days.

This November, Gulfside Hospice seeks to raise at least \$10,000 through Light A Candle to ensure every local family facing life's hardest moments receives care filled with compassion, warmth, and peace.

So, as the nights grow longer and the memories grow nearer, take a moment to pause, to remember, and to let your light join theirs.

Because even in the quietest moments of November, love still finds a way to glow.

**SCAN TO
LIGHT
YOUR
CANDLE**



Did You Know?

- More than 1.7 million Americans receive hospice care each year.
- Most patients receive care in their own homes or assisted-living communities.
- Hospice teams include nurses, social workers, chaplains, and volunteers, all focused on comfort and connection.
- Gulfside Hospice cares for thousands of local patients annually, ensuring no family in the Tampa Bay community faces loss alone.

NATIONAL HOSPICE AND PALLIATIVE CARE MONTH

Every November, organizations across the country recognize National Hospice & Palliative Care Month. A time to honor the patients, families, and caregivers who bring comfort to life's final chapter.

This month reminds us that hospice care isn't about giving up hope; it's about finding peace, preserving quality of life, and supporting families when every moment matters most.

A Brief History of Hospice

The modern hospice movement began in the 1960s with Dame Cicely Saunders, who opened St. Christopher's Hospice in London.

Her philosophy centered on treating the whole person, addressing physical, emotional, and spiritual needs.

The first hospice in the United States, Connecticut Hospice, opened in 1974, laying the foundation for thousands of programs nationwide.

Gulfside Hospice first opened its doors in Pasco County in 1989, continuing this legacy of compassion for local families today.

What Is Palliative Care?

Palliative care focuses on comfort, not cure. It can be provided at any stage of illness, not just end-of-life.

- Relieves pain and manages symptoms
- Supports emotional, spiritual, and practical needs.
- Works alongside other treatments and doctors.
- Help families navigate decisions with dignity and clarity.

A VISION OF *Compassion*



Dr. Jay Weil has spent his career helping people see the world more clearly.

As a Board-Certified Optometric Physician and the owner of Absolutely Optical in Tampa, he is known throughout the community for his expertise, compassion, and lifelong dedication to helping others “see their best.”

So, when he learned about Gulfside Hospice’s newest inpatient center being built in Pasco County, something about the mission struck a chord. He wanted to see it for himself and, more importantly, understand the kind of peace it brings to families at the end of life.

During that visit, memories of his own parents came flooding back.

When his father became ill, hospice care made those final months peaceful and supported. But when his mother passed suddenly last year, in the chaos of evacuating during back-to-back hurricanes, there was no time for that same comfort.



**The loss of my parents
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entire family.**

— Dr. Jay Weil

That contrast stayed with him.

"The loss of my parents compelled me to want to help others receive the physical comfort and emotional support that hospice brings to those in need. I realized that hospice doesn't just help the patient ... it supports the entire family," Dr. Weil said.

It is that understanding that inspired him to make a transformative gift, one that will carry his compassion forward for generations to come.

On September 19th, guests from all over Tampa Bay arrived to 5299 Deer Park Drive and were welcomed by a beautiful white building with an American flag waving proudly overhead. They came to celebrate something new, something grand, something beautiful: the opening of Gulfside's newest hospice care center.

As they toured the new 24-bed inpatient care center, and oohh's and ahhh's filled the air, many didn't realize the quiet man amongst them who helped make this all possible.

That guest was Dr. Jay Weil, the same compassionate physician whose generosity helped bring this new care center to life.

When Gulfside's President and CEO, Linda Ward, revealed its official name – The Dr. Jay Weil Center for Hospice Care – the crowd burst into applause.

For Dr. Weil, it wasn't about recognition. It was about honoring his parents' journeys and ensuring that other families can find the same peace and support hospice gave his own.

His gift will continue to touch lives for years to come, allowing thousands of patients and families to experience comfort, dignity, and care when they need it most.



GRAND OPENING PHOTOS

Top: Dr. Jay Weil tours the Care Center.

Middle: Guests listen to speakers during the program.

Bottom: Dr. Weil gives remarks with Carla Armstrong and Linda Ward looking on.

In Loving Memory

Recognizing gifts received between September 1 and October 15, 2025

Walls of Caring

Thomas Mazza

Memorial Butterfly Garden

Kathleen Kietly

Jeanne Schaefer

Andrea Koloski

Memorial Donation

Donald Allen

Richard Atkinson

Raymond Beaudin

Austin P. Bondi

Pauline Chase

Richard Combetta

Naomi Cox

Edward Czys

Patti Dailey

Ann DeVito

Patricia F. Dickerson

Melvin A. Dilks

Linda Dilks

Darlene Dittoe

Robert Doughty

Michael Fera

Joseph Fernandez

Jane Fischer

KayJuan Fisher

Albert Fox

Judith A. Fox

Lloyd Furney

Mark Gelling

Lois Gilley

Edward Goldstein

Diane Grasso

James N. Hall

Norm Harrington

William Hickey

Mary Hill

William Hughes

Joanna Gallo Importuna

Valerie Jenkins

Ann Kile

Richard Kjeldsen

Alvin Lachapelle

Daniel Lassalle-Caban

Claire M. Leuschner

Harold J. Levey

Beverly Livingston

Eunice MacAvoy

Shirley Martin

Anthony Mazza

Barbara Mcknight

William D. Mooneyham

Miriam Murphy

Robert J. Murphy

Louis Perez

Ronald Prybylowski

Nancy Pybas

Gerald K. Radick

Steve Reis

Francisco Rodriguez

Helen Ryan

Joseph A. Salemi

William Schmidt

Richard S. Schoelkopf

Richard Simley

Patricia Sims

Louise Slingerland

Betty P. Smith

Melissa Stieber

Frederick Stoldt

Maria Tiliacos

Benjamin M. Turnbull

Margaret Turnbull

Marie Turro

Robert Waitkus

Jean Watson

Donald R. Weissberg

Regina Wilkes

Audrey Wolszon

George Wolszon

Francis T. Zuilkowski

Stories from the Heart

Real moments. Lasting memories. Healing words.

At Gulfside Hospice, every life we touch becomes part of our story, and we share stories from family members, caregivers, and community members whose lives have been impacted by hospice care.

These stories speak to the comfort, dignity, and love that your support makes possible.

- Want to be featured in a future issue? Call us at 727-845-5707 or email katya.guillaume@gulfside.org to share your story.
- Missed a past issue? You can read more Stories from the Heart online at gulfside.org/hearts-for-hospice.





SCAN
TO
LEARN
MORE



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TO
LEARN
MORE



Paulie Palooza: A Legacy of Music, Community, & Compassion

When Paul Correia lost his father under Gulfside Hospice's care in 2011, he didn't just say thank you, he turned his gratitude into a movement.

Paul watched nurses, chaplains, and social workers care for his father with the same tenderness they'd offer their own loved ones.

That experience changed him.

A musician and local business owner in Zephyrhills, Paul decided to use his gifts to give back in the way he knew best ... through music.

In 2012, he founded Paulie Palooza, an all-day music festival on Main Street in Zephyrhills that brings together local bands, vendors, food trucks, and families for a day of fun...all to benefit Gulfside Hospice.

What began as a small local concert has grown into a beloved community tradition and one of Gulfside's longest-running fundraising events.

Over the years, Paulie Palooza has raised more than \$181,000, enough to provide hundreds of patients in our local community, who otherwise couldn't afford it, with medications and comfort care.

Paul personally secures permits, sponsors, and vendors, often paying out of pocket to ensure every dollar raised at Paulie Palooza goes directly toward helping local hospice patients and their families.

This year's Paulie Palooza festival returns on Sunday, November 16, from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Downtown Zephyrhills will see live performances, food trucks lined along Main Street as far as the eye can see, and enough fun the whole family will be talking about for days ... all in memory of a father's legacy and a son's promise to keep giving back.

Learn more at PauliePalooza.org.

Coming Up Next: The Candace Glewen Charity Fashion Show

Seats are going fast! Have you reserved your table yet?

Join us for the Candace Glewen Charity Fashion Show on Tuesday, December 9, from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at Spartan Manor.

Enjoy a plated lunch, vendor expo, prizes, and stunning runway fashions, all while supporting hospice patients and families in Pasco County.

Looking for a meaningful way to showcase your business before the holidays?

Sponsor opportunities are still available:

- Runway Sponsor – \$10,000
- Couture Sponsor – \$5,000
- Vogue Sponsor – \$2,500
- Chic Sponsor – \$1,000
- Glamour Sponsor – \$500
- Model Sponsor – \$250

Each level includes promotional recognition and event-day perks plus the joy of knowing your support helps provide compassionate care for local families.

Reserve your sponsorship or purchase your table today!

GulfsideFashionShow.org | 727-845-5707 | marissa.hartley@gulfside.org

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 **Gulfside
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