

Hearts for Hospice

SUMMER 2025

In the Garden of Memory

Ivan & Sophia Abare's story

Small Gift, Big Impact

Recognizing Hospice Heroes

Letting Go and Leaving a Legacy

The Amarals on why they donated



Gulfside Update

Hello everyone! I am pleased to provide an exciting update for you on all the new happenings at Gulfside Healthcare Services. Our mission is to be the provider of choice through a continuum of care, and the employer of choice through a specialized team of talent and expertise. And because we continue living that mission, positive rewards have come our way.

First, our commitment to quality:

Last fall, Gulfside passed the Florida Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) survey with a perfect report, a rare and remarkable feat. And last month, we earned an impressive 98% score from the Joint Commission, a national organization that sets the gold standard for health care quality. Compliance and quality for a large healthcare system such as Gulfside is paramount, and we strive for excellence in patient care and community service in everything we do.

Next, our services:

Our Palliative Care program has expanded through a new care model. Hospital palliative care consults in intensive care units (ICUs), emergency rooms, and observation areas have grown our healthcare partnerships and served more chronically ill people with pain and symptom control. Telehealth, clinics, and assisted living facilities are also supported by our Palliative Care professionals, reaching more

patients in single locations and making it easier for patients to get the support they need in one place. Gulfside Hospice has grown and is now caring for 630 patients in Pasco County. And our Home Health continues to serve families across both Pasco and Pinellas Counties.

Finally, our growth and expansion:

Gulfside Hospice was awarded the Certificate of Need for Hillsborough County in June of 2024. Following the completion of a series of licensure requirements, we began serving patients in Hillsborough County on August 18, 2025. In addition to Hillsborough, Gulfside Hospice was also awarded the Certificate of Need for Pinellas County on June 20, 2025. We expect to receive our license by late October 2025 and to begin serving patients in November 2025.

The last exciting initiative is the upcoming grand opening of our new Inpatient hospice care center in New Port Richey. Dr. Jay Weil made a very generous donation to name the care center, and many generous donations aided to our ongoing capital campaign success. Please join us for the grand opening on September 19th!

As always, I sincerely appreciate your support.



Linda L. Ward
President and CEO



One small thank you. One big impact.

When her father passed, Rachel didn't expect to remember a laugh.

But months later, what still echoes in her mind is Nurse Andy, cracking the same cheesy joke every morning as he walked into the room, "Alright, Mr. Johnson, what kind of trouble are we stirring up today?"

Her dad would smile. Some days, even chuckle. And for Rachel, that moment of light made all the difference.

She remembers how Andy never rushed, how he answered every question, even the ones she didn't know how to ask. How he waited until she was ready to leave the room before turning off the monitors. And how, when it was finally time, Andy stood by her side. Quiet. Present. Human.

A few weeks after the funeral, Rachel sat at her kitchen table and wrote a note, "You probably don't even remember us. But I'll never forget you."

She included a small gift to Gulfside, asking that it be used to support the team, "especially the nurses like Andy."

**"You probably don't even remember
us. But I'll never forget you."**

- Rachel Johnson

That one heartfelt gesture led to something bigger.

Rachel's gift became part of Gulfside's Hospice Hero program, a special way for families to recognize the caregivers who made a difference during life's most difficult moments. Each Hospice Hero receives a certificate of recognition, a message from the donor, and a gold pin they can wear proudly. For Andy, it was a moment of gratitude that meant everything.

Thanks to families like Rachel's, the Hospice Hero program continues to grow, honoring nurses, aides, chaplains, social workers, and volunteers who go above and beyond to provide comfort, dignity, and peace.

Because sometimes the smallest thank you can have the biggest impact.

Your Gratitude Can Touch a Heart

You can recognize your Hospice Hero and share your story at Gulfside.org/HospiceHeroes.

Every tribute — whether a note, a story, or a donation — is hand-signed by Gulfside's President and CEO, Linda L. Ward, and delivered to the team member you honor with a gold Dove pin they can wear proudly.

And every word matters.

Because what they do
is unforgettable.



*Hospice Hero Alyssa Fraczek, APRN,
with her certificate and pin.*

In the Garden of Memory

A Dedication to Sally Ann Abare



Above, Ivan and Sophia Abare. Below, the paver dedicated to Sally Ann Abare, Ivan's mother.



When Ivan Abare talks about his mom, Sally Ann, there's a tenderness in his voice.

It's the kind of quiet strength that comes from having walked through something both heartbreaking and beautiful, all at once.

For years, Sally Ann lived in and out of nursing homes. Ivan visited, sat by her side, and made her laugh when he could. But over time, he started noticing a shift.

She wasn't just getting weaker. She was fading. Her spark, her connection to the world, was slipping away behind routines that felt more clinical than comforting.

"She hadn't been outdoors in what felt like forever," Ivan said. "I just wanted her to feel the sun again."

That simple hope, to give his mother one last moment outside, is what led him to Gulfside Hospice in Zephyrhills.

He picked up the phone and explained everything: how she'd been declining, how she loved nature, how he didn't want her last days to feel like just another sterile room.

"I asked, could you at least bring her bed near a window, maybe into the atrium?"

The woman on the other end paused and said, "We'll do better than that."

And she meant it.

Sally Ann's condition had changed. Her symptoms had become too difficult to manage at home so she was taken to Gulfside's Rucki Center for Hospice Care, where she could receive round-the-clock support and comfort during her final days.

But what Ivan and his family received went beyond medicine.

At the Rucki Care Center, Sally Ann wasn't treated like a task on a chart. She was seen. Known. Loved.

Her care team didn't just make room for comfort; they created a moment of magic.

They wheeled her outside, beside the pond, under the open sky.

"She felt the sun touch her skin", Ivan said. "The breeze moved through her hair, and for the first time in what felt like years ... it brought her back to us, even just for a moment."

Her care team didn't just make room for comfort; they created a moment of magic.

Inside her room, little things made a big difference. The nurses tucked her in with her favorite blanket from home. The chaplain stopped by to pray with the family. Even the housekeeper checked in with kindness. Nothing felt rushed. Everything felt intentional.

"It was like a fancy resort," Ivan laughed softly, "but filled with grace."

A Legacy in Bloom

After her passing, Ivan and his family placed a memorial brick in Sally Ann's honor along the garden path at the Rucki Care Center. Right near the Butterfly Garden, the same place where she felt the sun again.

For them, this wasn't about a donation. It was about remembering a moment. It was about preserving a feeling and letting other families know it's possible to say goodbye with dignity, peace, and beauty.

"She might've stayed in nursing homes, but when she passed," Ivan said, "but this place was like bringing her home."

Watch Her Story



See Ivan share his mother's story in his own words. Watch the video at https://youtu.be/izZc_Vq_BP8 or scan the QR code at left.



Ivan and Sophia Abare with family friends, in the Rucki Hospice Care Center butterfly garden.

Every name has a story. *Every gift helps tell it.*

Whether you choose a Butterfly Garden paver, a Wall of Caring plaque, or a simple tribute in honor of someone you love, your generosity creates a legacy that lives on.

Your gift helps us provide:

- Peaceful moments outdoors
- Compassionate bedside care
- A place that feels like home

Contact:

Katya Guillaume
Donor Engagement &
Advising Lead
(727) 845-5707

katya.guillaume@gulfside.org

SCAN TO DONATE



Why We Donated

The Amarals' story of love, letting go, and leaving a legacy

For Allison and Belinda Amaral, walking through the doors of Gulfside's Rucki Care Center in Zephyrhills wasn't just about their loved one receiving care. It was about being able to breathe again.

"We were no longer his caretakers," Allison said. "We were his wife and his daughter."

In those final days, they had time to laugh, cry, and be present. No more schedules. No more stress. Just family.

One afternoon, during a quiet walk outside the room, they paused at a bench. A simple quote carved into the seat stopped them in their tracks, a message from a stranger who had once stood where they stood.

Death leaves a heartache no one can heal,

Love leaves a memory no one can steal!

A wonderful Christian wife, mother, & grandmother

"It was exactly how we felt," Allison said. "We even read it at his celebration of life."



Allison and Belinda Amaral with their bench at the Rucki Hospice Care Center.

That moment inspired them to donate one of their own, hoping their words will now speak to another family, just when they need it most.

Hear Their Full Story

Watch Allison and Belinda share their experience on Gulfside's YouTube channel at

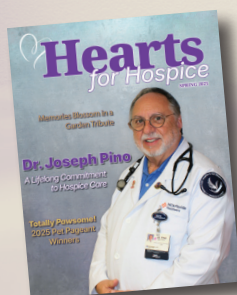
https://youtu.be/_ZKRRG7YyEO.

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

In Loving Memory

Recognizing gifts received between April 1 and August 31, 2025

Walls of Caring

Robert Ferris
Bernice Prendergast

Butterfly Memorial Garden

Shirley Anderson
Colleen E. Brodie
Robert Carpenter
June P. Dedrick
Maria Dreps
Sara A. Dunigan
Bertha Garzon
Marsha Hamilton
Jean Jackson
James Demetrios Koutsos
Daniel Leonard
Migdalia Marrero
Arnold Morgenstein
Ivah M. Styka

Memorial Donation

Michael V. Scherzi
Patricia A. Anderson
Paul V. Andrews
Orvilla E. Baker
Lieselotte Barooshian
Richard Bartus
Andre Bergeron
Andre Bergeron
Frederick Bocchetti
Raymond R. Bohannon

Carolyn Bolan
Jean Booth
Robert Bush
Jacqueline Cameron
John Carper
Joseph Caruso
Cecilia Clickner
Robert Cramer
Marion Crutcher
Joan Ann Curtachio
Richard D. Davis
Harriet J. Davis
Richard D. Davis
Vivian H. Davis
Elizabeth D. DeLeon
Joseph Dellutro
Ruth Desjardins
Marion Disney
Ruth Doles
Patrick Dunn
Joseph L. Edwards
Linda Fellows
William Fenton
Rafael Fernandez
Robert Ferris
Henry Folk
Edward Goldstein
Corrine Goodman
Helen Grimes
Ashleigh Halfacer
James Hansen

Wallace E. Heiden
James Heires
William Hickey
Charles C. Hill
Paul A. Hudak
William Hughes
Patricia Hunsicker
Graziella M. Ierardo
Valerie Jenkins
Connie B. Kiefer
Charlotte Kiefer
Donna Leatherman
James A. Leitzke
Jerry Lenox
Harold J. Levey
David Liedike
Beverly Livingston
William Lucas
Eunice MacAvoy
William Manter
Marty Martin
Robert W. Mayfield
Anthony Mazza
Paul A. Moore
Alfred Morhammer
Lena Morris
Jack Morris
Thomas Needham
Andrea Osborne
Frantjeskos Panaou
Joyce Pranske

Eleanor Puopolo
Mary Lois Purvis
Mildred Riley
Clinton Rockey
Francisco Rodriguez
Lowretha Rowland
Lloyd Rucker
Cecilia Saadeh
Mirriam Schumm
Beverly Scourtas
Madeline Shackett
Glen Shapley
Patricia Sims
Terry L. Smith
Ronald W. Sprague
Elizabeth Stafford
James Stone
Rosalee Stutts
Nancy Teeple
Marie Totten
Martin B. Trent
Linda Tullos
Karen Vickers
George Voorhes
Joe Watkins
Glory Wedge
George Wolszon
Evangeline Xeroteris
Jeanne Yarnell

UPCOMING EVENTS

**Sept
19**

**Grand Opening:
Gulfside Center
for Hospice Care**
5 - 8 p.m.
5299 Deer Park Drive, New Port Richey

Join us as we celebrate the opening of our beautiful new Care Center Tours, speakers, special presentation, and refreshments.

For more information please contact Carla Armstrong at carla.armstrong@gulfside.org or 727-992-7941

**Nov
16**

Paulie Palooza
11 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Downtown Zephyrhills

Join us for this annual music and street festival in downtown Zephyrhills! Food trucks, vendor tents, a silent auction, and local bands performing -- all benefiting Gulfside Hospice patients. Fun for the whole family!

Contact Marissa Hartley for more information at marissa.hartley@gulfside.org or 813-995-3058.

Gulfside Healthcare Services
2061 Collier Parkway
Land O' Lakes, FL 34639

Non-Profit
Organization
US Postage
PAID
Tampa, FL
Permit No. 6342

MAILING LABEL GOES HERE

Hearts *for Hospice*

SUMMER 2025

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Gulfside Updates
- One Small Thank You, One Big Impact
- In the Garden of Memory: Ivan & Sophia Abare's Story
- In Loving Memory