

LIGHT UP A LIFE — Celebrations lift spirits, honor loved ones

The ornaments are fastened lovingly to the tree. Slowly, one by one, the names are read aloud. It's an emotionally powerful moment that allows family and friends an opportunity to remember and honor loved ones in a way that brings families together.

Thanks to the communities in which Optimal Hospice Care serves, this happens every November and December as people celebrate lives lived and support the Foundation by filling the Trees of Life with lights representing loved ones.

Pat Roberts, Optimal Hospice Bakersfield bereavement counselor, said, "Our ceremonies are a way for family members to honor their loved ones and keep them in the forefront, especially when life gets busy at the holidays. These remembrance events are a way to outwardly recognize their loved one."

Light Up A Life celebrations began at Hospice of Petaluma in northern California in 1985. If you did an online search, you would find that Light Up A Life events are held



The candles are lit at a Light Up A Life Celebration at Sierra View Cancer in Porterville.

around the world mostly in November and December for the holiday season. While the makeup of each organization's
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Save the date for our Community Celebrations

Light Up A Life information will be mailed the first week of November and also can be found on our website: OptimalHospiceFoundation.com

BAKERSFIELD

Wednesday, December 7
6:30 p.m.
Bakersfield RV Resort*
5025 Wible Road

BAY AREA

Saturday, November 19
2:00 p.m.
Centers for Spiritual Living
1195 Clark Street, San Jose

FRESNO

Thursday, December 8
6:00 p.m.
Fig Garden Village*
Palm & Shaw Avenue

KERN RIVER VALLEY

Sunday, December 11
4:30 p.m.
Kernville Circle Park*
Kernville

LONG BEACH

Thursday, December 15
7:00 p.m.
Huntington Terrace
18800 Florida Street

MODESTO

Tuesday, December 13
6:00 p.m.
Bethel Assisted Living
2345 Scenic Drive

PORTERVILLE

Wednesday, December 7
6:00 p.m.
Roger S. Good Cancer Center*
456 West Putnam Avenue

STOCKTON

Wednesday, December 14
6:00 p.m.
Commons at Union Ranch Manteca
2241 North Union Road

TAFT

Thursday, December 15
6:00 p.m.
The Historic Fort
915 North 10th Street

TEHACHAPI

Sunday, December 4
3:30 p.m.
Kelcy's
110 West Tehachapi Blvd.

VISALIA AND TULARE

Tuesday, December 6
6:00 p.m.
Café 210*
210 Center Avenue,
Visalia

Light Up A Life,

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event may be unique, they all have one common focus: honoring and remembering loved ones.

Optimal Hospice Foundation's Light Up A Life Celebrations began 25 years ago in Bakersfield and include a personal reflection by a hospice family member, the reading of loved ones names by hospice staff and volunteers, candle lighting, inspirational music, and the lighting of a Tree of Life. The Tree of Life is adorned with ornaments representing a light in memory and honor of loved ones and friends.

Pat continued by saying that for many it may be the first year without his or her loved one, and with several holidays right in a row, most feel the need to be in the holiday spirit. But for those who have lost someone it can be hard. Having our event in November or December allows people to be involved in the holidays and to set aside a specific time to honor their loved one.

He added, "It is important to talk about our loved ones to keep our memories alive. Traditions are important especially at this time of year. We can't give our deceased loved ones a gift or have them over to our home, but we can honor their legacy with a gift to the Foundation."

When asked about his favorite part of the Light Up A Life Ceremony Pat stated, "The reading of the names. Simply hearing our caring staff and volunteers saying the name out loud brings the loved one to mind."

Many of our staff and volunteers attend our celebrations as an opportunity to reconnect with family members. "I am just thankful that I can be there helping them heal," Pat added.

Optimal Hospice Foundation holds Light Up A Life Celebrations in 11 communities in November and December. Porterville Oncologist Dr. Owen Kim said the Foundation holds a Light Up A Life Celebration at Sierra View Cancer Center where he works. He



The smiles seen at this Light Up A Life Celebration in Visalia are what we hope to bring to all participants: an uplifted feeling that can carry them through the holidays.

said, "I have been involved in hospice for about 25 years, almost as long my oncology career of 27 years. We have had this event here for about 10 years, and I have attended every one. We even have a singer that comes regularly and she does a great job."

"What I like about it," he said, "is that it is held during the holiday season, which is a season of appreciation, of families getting together and celebrating joy. It is hard to think of hospice as being joyful, but it is a celebration of a life well lived, bringing family members together, and they can appreciate the efforts that kept their loved one comfortable."

Dr. Kim said it is a nice celebratory event — partly somber and sacred — where loved ones can light a candle, experience inspirational music and hear a moving talk from a family who utilized hospice care.

Optimal Hospice Foundation's Light Up A Life Celebrations are free to attend and open to everyone, not just

those touched by hospice care. For a minimum \$10 donation an ornament with your loved one's name will be placed on the Tree of Life, and if received prior to the date of your local event, their name may be read during the celebration.

The Light Up A Life Celebrations provide an opportunity to be uplifted, celebrate loved ones and give back to the community.

The Foundation is a non-profit organization established to commit its resources to activities which are intended to ensure hospice care and other compassionate programs are available for families facing a life-limiting illness with particular emphasis on the underinsured/uninsured. Programs include hospice care funding & bereavement support including an annual Kids Camp for children who have experienced the loss of a love one.

All proceeds from Light Up A Life support the work of the Foundation.

Optimal Cares Halloween Car Show



Presented by



Saturday, Oct. 29

10 a.m. to 2 p.m.



at the Bakersfield RV Resort
5025 Wible Road, Bakersfield, CA 93313

Open to ALL Vehicles
Including Motorcycles

For event sponsorship, entry and vendor information, call the Foundation office at (661) 716-8000, email cshoemake@optimalcares.com or visit www.OptimalHospiceFoundation.com.

100% of net proceeds benefit Optimal Hospice Foundation



Thank you Kids Camp sponsors and donors

Kids Camp is for children ages 8 to 16 who have lost a loved one in the recent past. Our goal is to provide an opportunity to find healing and peace through games, activities and meeting others who are "just like them."

The 2016 camps were held in July and August at Gergen Ski Ranch, Camp Oakhurst and the Taylor Family Foundation at Camp Arroyo. Thanks to the generosity of our donors, this year a record 160 children were able to attend one of the four sessions.

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Golf in The Sun and Under The Stars 2016

The 25th Annual Golf In the Sun & under the Stars Tournament presented by Komoto Pharmacy was held on Friday, September 9, 2016, at Stockdale Country Club. The tournament teed off at 3:30 p.m. with 100 golfs who played the first nine holes *In the Sun*. Following the first nine the players and sponsors enjoyed a wonderful buffet dinner under the trees at the Country Club. During dinner a prize drawing was held that include the popular “Cooler of Cocktails” as well as Carrie Underwood tickets. After dinner players headed back to the course and played the final 9 holes *Under the Stars*.

A special THANK YOU to all of our sponsors, donors, players and volunteers who helped us raise over \$25,000 to further our Mission.

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2016 Optimal Cares Lakeside Wine Tasting Sponsors

Thank you to our Optimal Cares Lakeside Wine Tasting sponsors and attendees. Our inaugural event was held on Saturday, May 14 at the Quail Lake Club House in Clovis, CA, and raised more than \$9,000.

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Thank You for Your Support

The following individuals and organizations generously contributed to Optimal Hospice Foundation from January through June 2016. On behalf of the patients and families we serve, thank you for your support.

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Thank you to our generous Employee Giving Campaign donors who are listed annually in the Spring Newsletter.

FOUNDATION LOCATIONS

Foundation Office

1315 Boughton Drive
Bakersfield, CA 93308
(661) 716-8000

Community Offices

Bakersfield

1675 Chester Avenue, #401
Bakersfield, CA 93301
(661) 716-8000

Kern River Valley

6504 Lake Isabella Blvd, #E
Lake Isabella, CA 93240
(760) 379-5038

Bay Area

3375 Scott Blvd, #410
Santa Clara, CA 95054
(408) 207-9220

Fresno

6780 North West Avenue, #101
Fresno, CA 93711
(559) 320-8000

Long Beach

5000 E. Spring St., Suite 525
Long Beach, CA 90815
(562) 494-7687

Modesto

1101 Sylvan Avenue, #B-10
Modesto, CA 95350
(209) 338-9000

Stockton

3461 Brookside Road, #A2
Stockton, CA 95219
(209) 338-9000

Visalia

2439 West Whitendale Avenue, #B
Visalia, CA 93277
(559) 334-5120



1315 Boughton Drive
Bakersfield, CA 93308
(661) 716-8000

The Hospice Journey is published by Optimal Hospice Foundation

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Support groups available through Optimal Hospice Care

These groups are open to the public and offered free of charge.

Bakersfield

Tuesdays
10–11:30 a.m.
First United Methodist Church
4600 Stockdale Hwy., Room 4

Thursdays
6–7:30 p.m.
First United Methodist Church
4600 Stockdale Hwy., Room 4

Kid's Grief Connection

Call (661) 371-2102 for info.

Fresno

Mondays
3–4:30 p.m.
Fairwinds – Woodward Park
9525 Ft. Washington Rd.

2nd Thursday
5:15–6:30 p.m.
Somerford Place
6750 N. Marks Ave.

Lake Isabella

Wednesdays
1–2:30 p.m.
Optimal Hospice Care Office
6504 Lake Isabella Blvd., Ste. E

Madera

1st & 3rd Tuesday
10:30 a.m.–Noon.
Cedar Creek Senior Living
Center
500 N. Westbury Blvd.

Modesto

Last Thursday
4–5:30 p.m.
Optimal Hospice Care
1101 Sylvan Ave., Ste. B-10

Kid's Grief Connection

Call (209) 338-3000 or Stockton
(209) 670-8000 for info.

Porterville

2nd & 4th Thursday
10:30 a.m.–Noon
Sierra Hills Retirement Center
2500 West Henderson Ave.

Santa Clara

Optimal Hospice Care
3372 Scott Blvd., Ste. 410
Call for info: (408) 207-9222

Stockton

Last Friday
4–5:30 p.m.
Optimal Hospice Care
3461 Brookside Road, Ste. A2

Taft

Thursdays
1–2:30 p.m.
Chevron Valley Credit Union
1092 W. Kern St.
Community Room, outside
entrance

Kid's Grief Connection

Call (661) 371-2102 for info.

Tehachapi

Tuesdays
1:30–3 p.m.
Tehachapi Senior Citizens Center
500 East F St.

Tulare

Thursdays
6–7:30 p.m.
Evolution Healthcare Center
Conference Room
1425 E. Prosperity Ave.
This is an 8-week closed group.
Please call for start dates: (559)
280-7455

Visalia

2nd & 4th Tuesday
3–4:30 p.m.
Optimal Hospice Care
2439 W. Whitendale Ave., Ste. B