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Home	Election '08	Contact	Classifieds	Archives	Advertise	Employment	Our Team	Place a Classified Ad
----------------------	------------------------------	-------------------------	-----------------------------	--------------------------	---------------------------	----------------------------	--------------------------	---------------------------------------

BREAKING NEWS
Feature
Calendar
Westside Watcher
Letters to the Editor
Editorial
Community Voices
Uncivil Liberties
Charlie's Neighborhood
Abandoned Vehicle
News
93268
Maricopa News
Cuyama News
Legislative News
Business
Obituaries
The Best of Taft
Taft Society
Around Taft
West Side Rec Report

Feature

Taft Women Donate Quilts to Hospice Care

by Kayleigh O'Neal - June 05, 2009



Hospice Volunteers at Maricopa Quilt Company in Maricopa

quilts to Optimal Hospice Care.

Alberta Procell, who has been a member of the Quilters for around four years, also volunteers her time for Optimal Hospice Care. She brought the idea of making quilts and bibs, or lap aprons, to her group, and the ladies were more than happy to oblige. So far they have donated sixteen quilts and five bibs. The quilts and bibs were made entirely of leftover material. No fabric was specifically purchased for the projects. While the quilts are smaller, not full size, they are perfect for laps or draping around shoulders, since hospice patients often get very cold. The bibs are all long with pockets at the bottom, which prevent food from getting on clothing and quilts, and therefore save having to wash garments all of the time.

The Quilters of the Midway Sunset have been around for about fifteen years with new members still joining. There are members from Maricopa, Taft and Cuyama. Though they started small, they have several regulars, who rarely ever miss a

Every week, a group of women who call themselves the Quilters of the Midway Sunset meet at the Maricopa Quilt company to socialize, sew and have a good time. They work on their own projects and for the most part, do their own thing. Recently, however, they took their projects much farther, donating several

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Wednesday meeting. Currently they meet at The Maricopa Quilt company and stay from 10 am to 2 pm.

The group has traveled all over in search of a place to meet and sew together. They started on center street and ended up in each others' houses after a while. Eventually they found their way to the museum in Maricopa, but it was too cramped there. When The Maricopa Quilt Company opened, the group decided to move.

The owner of the Quilt Company, Vicki Destrampe, does not charge the Quilters to use her shop, and even provides them with coffee and occasional sewing company. However, if anyone in the group needs something for their quilt, it's easy for them to simply purchase the needed item at the store, so both parties benefit from the meetings.

Procell describes the group as a camaraderie, that they have "a lot of fun and jokes" and often visit after the meetings by going out to lunch. They're all very close to each other and look forward to Wednesdays.

"We're one big family," Destrampe said. "These are all my ladies."

During a recent meeting, Procell invited Rhonda Frankhouser, volunteer and bereavement coordinator and Karen Budnick, volunteer coordinator assistant from Optimal Hospice Care to come to the Quilt Company and accept the donations.

After arriving, Frankhouser spoke to everyone about what hospice care really is about. Most people don't realize that hospice care isn't about giving up hope, or they believe that the patient will soon die.

Hospice care focuses on maximizing the quality of life of the patient, making them comfortable for as long as possible. Not only is physical pain eased, but mental and spiritual pain as well. It is entirely possible that a hospice patient may improve and be discharged. If they chose to return later, they're welcomed and insurance will cover the costs.

Patients chose where they live, where they feel most comfortable. Most of the time, the patient decides to live at home, but others may be treated in nursing homes or hospice centers. Patients of any age with life-limiting illnesses are accepted, and insurance, Medicare, Medicaid or Medical almost always cover the costs by one hundred percent, so long as they patient meets certain criteria.

Optimal Hospice Care also provides grief counseling for the families who have lost a loved one. Anyone who has lost someone may attend, the meetings are open to the public and free of charge. The grief support groups meet at the Chevron Valley Credit Union and the First Baptist Church.

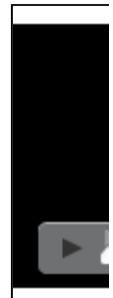
Volunteers like Procell may visit patients when needed and give the primary care giver time to get out of the house and relax a little or if the care giver has something they need to do. They may also run errands and can stay with a patient for up to four hours, but do not do any actual hands on work.

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There are about 200 hospice patients in the area, and volunteers are desperately being sought out. The group also needs professional volunteers to perform tasks such as cutting a patient's hair, or taking care of their lawn. Anyone interested in helping should call 661-716-4000 or email rfrankhouser@optimalcares.com.

Frankhouser and Budnick were thrilled to receive such donations for the hospice patients, and hope to find new volunteers soon. The ladies of the Quilters of the Midway Sunet were happy to donate the quilts. The ladies hope to donate more in the future.

"They know the need," Procell explained. "If they want to keep making quilts, they can."

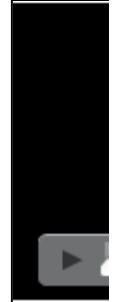
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