

## Compassionate Care when it TRUly Matters

*Caring for our community since 1976*

At TRU Community Care, our dedication to providing compassionate, comprehensive end-of-life care has made us the preferred choice of physicians, patients, and families. Since 1976, our team of specialists has touched thousands of lives with highly personalized care, enhancing quality of life at one of the most profound times. Our exceptional services exceed the recommendations found in the December 2014 issue of Consumer Reports', *Find the Right Hospice for You*. We offer the community:

- ✓ Nonprofit status, providing trusted, responsive, unparalleled care for over 38 years.
- ✓ Medicare and Medicaid certification. We care for all people regardless of ability to pay.
- ✓ Care at home, in nursing homes and in assisted living facilities.
- ✓ Inpatient Hospice Care Center for patients whose symptoms can no longer be managed at home.
- ✓ Hospice certified nurses and doctors on staff and available 24 hours a day.
- ✓ Palliative care consultants who can begin care immediately for patients needing symptom management.
- ✓ Social workers, chaplains and grief counselors. Our personalized, skilled, holistic support increases quality of life and decreases stress and symptoms.
- ✓ Community Outreach. Our highly trained presenters and counselors speak and offer support throughout our community.
- ✓ Dedicated volunteers to lend comfort and companionship to patients and their families.

*Our exceptional services exceed Consumer Reports' recommendations*



### *We appreciate your support.*

TRU Community Care relies on contributions from our community to continue our vital work of providing expert end-of-life services to everyone who needs them, regardless of ability to pay. We rely on gifts of financial support, volunteer time, and in kind services. As an independent, 501(c)(3) nonprofit, all gifts are tax deductible.

For more information call 303.604.5389 or visit [TruCare.org](http://TruCare.org).



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*TRU Community Care is a  
nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization*

## Compassionate Care when it TRUly Matters – TRU and Our Role in Managing Difficult Transitions

TRU Community Care delivers quality care well beyond the medical needs of patients or the emotional tensions which can surface with family members. TRU Hospice clinical and bereavement staff focus on the family as a whole, and create smoother, more peaceful transitions through the comprehensive care we offer as important parts of every TRU Hospice experience. The stories here illustrate patients and loved ones' experiences with TRU, and affirm what makes TRU the place our community turns to in times of some of life's most difficult transitions.

Our social worker, Anne shared: We all know the old saying "when it rains it pours". Sometimes when a TRU hospice patient and loved ones are dealing with a terminal illness, it can feel like a flood, a blizzard, an avalanche and every other natural disaster rolled into one. This was the case with Al and his wife, Susan as he went through his end of life process with prostate cancer.

Al was always a laid back, happy-go-lucky person, who loved his family dearly, and enjoyed spending time with friends. He was someone who embraced life to the fullest and employed humor as one of his coping mechanisms. As his illness progressed, he began to have cognitive issues, and more impulsive behaviors. He was agitated, resulting in behaviors such as throwing furniture, stuffing items in the toilet and trying to drive his car. It became extremely difficult for Susan to manage at home, and caused safety risks, even with the help of additional family members and TRU Hospice home interventions.

At the same time that these behaviors were escalating, Susan was suffering her own health issues. Our hospice nurse suggested the TRU Care Center for management of Al's pain and agitation. With Susan's consent, Al was transferred to the care center to get his symptoms managed. It was very clear that his wish was to die at home, and he returned home from the care center after two days, peaceful and comfortable on his medications.

However, Susan felt distressed. As may happen, she second-guessed her decision to send him to the care center, as she felt she had missed out on time with him. Due to her own illness, she was in a vulnerable and emotionally fragile state, and TRU staff and volunteers offered additional support to her. She received an early bereavement referral to TRU Grief Services at the time of his death, several days after his transfer home from the care center. Through Grief Services, Susan had access to a variety of support groups, including a Spouse/Partner Loss Support Group, and the option of 13 months of ongoing support from experienced grief counselors, including short-term individual or family counseling.

Another TRU patient, Donald, came under our hospice care and began a rapid decline. Aram, one of our chaplains, shares: Within days he was no longer verbally responsive. We (TRU staff) always tell families that hearing is the last sense to go, and to not shy away from speaking to patients, even if they receive no response. Tara, Donald's daughter and primary caregiver, asked if I could focus on her mother, Sharon, whom she was worried about. I sat with Sharon and she told me a bit about her life, her marriage, and her grief over her husband's rapid decline. Sharon clearly wanted to talk. Oftentimes at the end of life, family members tend to idealize the dying family member, sometimes out of a sense of respect, or to avoid the pain of facing the difficult parts of their shared life. Readily, Sharon shared "the good stuff" – wonderful memories she shared with her husband. Soon however, perhaps feeling

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more comfortable with me and feeling a sense of trust, she began sharing the “not so good” things about her marriage - the hard times, the disappointments, the anger. I reassured her that the best of marriages have such complexity, and that it’s never “either/or”, but always “both/and”. I could tell that the things she was sharing weighed on her, and she voiced a lot of anger at her husband; and just as quickly, I could sense she wanted to suppress it, not wanting to somehow “dishonor” him.

Given that Sharon’s husband was getting “really close”, I was concerned she might carry this anger and these hurt feelings with her beyond her husband’s death. So I suggested to her, if she felt so led, to consider if she wanted or needed to forgive her husband for the ways she felt hurt or disappointed by him. I barely finished my sentence when Sharon burst into tears . . . of relief. And she blurted out, “YES – I so want to do that! I so need to do that! Why didn’t I think of doing that before?”

My first visit to the home after Donald died, I saw Sharon sitting among family members, and when she saw me, she had this look of peace – even joy – as she blurted out: “Aram, I talked with him! I forgave him! And I feel so good that I did this!” It was shortly after her “talk” that Donald died. I can’t help but wonder if perhaps he got what he needed to go . . . and Sharon got what she needed to go forward.

Families trust that TRU staff and volunteers will deliver compassion and commitment each day as their loved ones navigate life’s difficult transitions. At TRU, we welcome the chance to help create the space and peace necessary to manage these transitions, because what is happening with you and your loved one is *what TRUly matters* to us.

*Names of TRU patients and loved ones have been changed to protect their privacy.*

## SAVE THE DATE

### PIZZAZ! 2015 - Another roaring good time heading your way this fall

Join us for PIZZAZ! 2015 on Friday, September 18th at the Denver Marriott Westminster. We will once again welcome you back to the Roaring 20s for a decidedly decadent feast and delicious drinks, lively music from the era, dramatic décor and people who love TRU and are ready to TRUly kick up their heels!

Contact Abigail at 303.604.5389 or [abigailsmith@trucare.org](mailto:abigailsmith@trucare.org) for more information on available sponsorships, tickets and how to donate items to our outstanding auctions. See you in September!



## VISIT OUR FACEBOOK PAGE

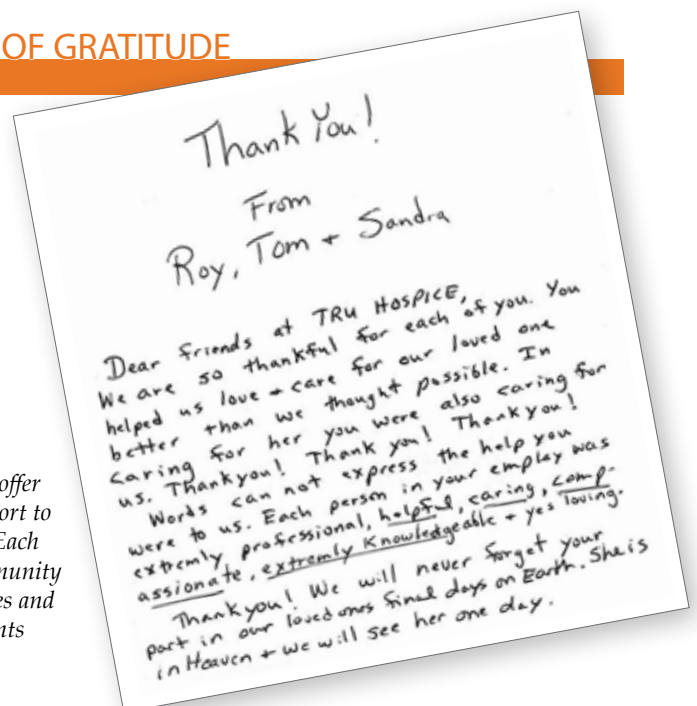


Go to [facebook.com/TRUCommunityCare](https://facebook.com/TRUCommunityCare) to view postings on such diverse topics as Hospice Care programs for Veterans, Glass Memories Teen Grief Group and Frontline’s recently aired “Being Mortal”. Meet TRU’s staff and volunteers, and learn about our partner hospice in Bumbuli, Tanzania. Benefit from our Grief Services Team’s encouraging thoughts on transitions. Experience “Moments of Gratitude”, and find out about upcoming events.

Our Facebook page serves as a dynamic, invaluable resource for Community Care ideas, information and support.

## MOMENTS OF GRATITUDE

*It’s a privilege to offer comfort and support to our community. Each week, TRU Community Care receives notes and letters from patients and families.*





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**VOLUNTEER VOICE**

**A** school counselor with early hospice training and a background facilitating Loss Groups for middle school students, after retirement Colette Heun naturally gravitated to TRU Grief Services. In her seven years as a volunteer, she has “translated her experience as a counselor” into a vital role as a Grief Group facilitator, while also contributing five years to the Bereavement Phone Bank.

For the Phone Bank, Colette made calls to family members and others, to acknowledge their loss of a loved one who had been in TRU’s care, remind them about available counseling resources, and “let them know we’re here for them”.

In addition to this individual outreach, TRU offers several drop-in and structured groups to anyone in need of support after the death of a loved one, whether or not they were cared for by TRU. While Colette has facilitated a variety of these groups, the Newly Bereaved and Eight Week Structured Groups are particularly meaningful to her. “People are just so raw, open, honest and appreciative. It’s not depressing at all. I can be moved to tears, but it’s still not depressing.”

For Colette, facilitating these groups is an honor and a blessing. She especially appreciates “watching people evolve, and seeing the bond that’s created among group members. Sometimes, they continue to meet after the group is over. This is good.”

*TRU grief support meetings, led by experienced bereavement group facilitators, include specific topics and optional personal sharing in a safe and accepting atmosphere. Please call 303.604.5300 for more information or visit [trucare.org/our-hospice-services/grief-support/](http://trucare.org/our-hospice-services/grief-support/) to view our Grief Support Newsletters and grief group listings.*



**Colette Huen**

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