

# Compassionate Connections

through Talbot Hospice

June 2016

## Executive Director *Appointed*

**Board President Susan Piggott recently announced the appointment of Vivian Dodge as Executive Director. Dodge has more than 34 years of experience in the healthcare industry, and most recently served as Director of Quality Management at Hospice of Palm Beach County the last 13 years. She has been serving as Interim Executive Director since February.**

“The Board believes that we have found in Vivian an Executive Director that has it all—deep knowledge about hospice, passion for the hospice philosophy, a team-builder, an excellent listener, a mentor, and a teacher,” said Piggott. “She brings great respect for our staff, for the hospice we have built, and for Talbot County. Staff members and our long-time, passionate volunteers have given Vivian very high marks.”

Dodge is a registered nurse with a bachelor’s in science and nursing and a master’s degree in business administration and health administration. She brings with her a comprehensive knowledge of Joint Commission standards, survey methodologies and tracers, survey preparations, resolving survey deficiencies, and accreditation surveys, as well as a demonstrated ability in education and training of staff. Her prior experience includes developing, overseeing, and implementing Quality Assurance and Performance Improvement (QAPI) and Corporate Compliance Programs to ensure compliance with Federal and State regulations. She has broad understanding of American Health Care Association (AHCA), Medicare and other regulations.



Executive Director Vivian Dodge

Dodge has presented on the topics of quality, compliance, performance improvement and risk prevention at the Florida Hospices and Palliative Care Symposium and at National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO) conferences and webinars. She has done clinical research for Bayer Corporation on infectious diseases in pediatric patients. She published “Measuring Quality through Patient Outcome Quality Assurance Programs” for an international conference on productivity and quality research.

Dodge is a member of NHPCO, National Hospice Quality Workgroup (NHQW), and served on the NHPCO Quality and Standards Committee from 2007–2013 and the Joint Commission Professional and Technical Advisory Committee Representing NHPCO from 2012–2015. She is a former member of the American Organization of Nurse Executives (AON), National Association of Orthopedic Nurses (NAON); and served as President of the Palm Beach County Chapter of NAON, 1990–1991.

“It became clearly evident early on that Talbot Hospice is a gem in this community,” said Dodge.



I am excited to be named as Executive Director and am committed to the work and initiatives needed to maintain Talbot Hospice as the premier hospice. We have a great staff and volunteers that make this such a special place.”

Dodge hails from Jupiter, Florida. Her interests include outdoor activities, the beach, biking, gardening and yoga.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Susan L. Piggott *President*  
Camille M. Passarella *Vice President*  
Patricia Roche *Treasurer*  
J.T. Smith II *Secretary*

Jack Anthony  
Childlene R. Brooks  
Rev. Kevin M. Cross  
Hynda Brody Dalton  
Addie C. Eckardt  
Kathleen H. Foster  
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Emilie Joshi  
Cece Z. Koons  
John R. Merceron  
Sheila B. Monahan  
Joyce R. Philip  
W. Lee Phillips  
Anthony J. Principi  
Diane Rohman  
William C. Rolle, Jr.  
Adrienne W. Rudge  
Lynn H. Sanchez  
Tom Decker Seip  
Albert L. Smith, *Director Emeritus*

## ADMINISTRATIVE AND CLINICAL LEADERSHIP

Vivian Dodge  
*Executive Director*

Kate Cox  
*Director of Development*

Rev. Jody Gunn,  
*Chaplain*

Molly Kirsch, RN, BSN  
*Clinical Director Home Care*

Shelly Kulp, LGSW  
*Bereavement Coordinator*

Lori Lantz  
*Director of Volunteer Services*

Lisa May MSW, LSCW-C, CT  
*Family Services*

Susan Oross, MBA  
*Director of Finance*

Caron Pons  
*Director of Marketing and  
Communications*

Lisa Rizia, RN  
*Intake & Home Care Manager*

Anne Shannahan, RN  
*Compliance Officer*

Michael Tooke, MD  
*Medical Director*

Wendy VanNest  
*Director of Pathways*

# This year Talbot Hospice Celebrates its 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary!



Since we became a general license hospice in November, 2014, we have cared for 232 patients and their families. Eighty percent of these patients prefer to be at home, so we bring our hospice team—nurses, physicians, social workers, chaplain, bereavement coordinator, volunteers, and home health aides—to them, wherever they call home. We make house calls!

In October, 2015, we cut the ribbon on our Hospice House renovation and expansion, which gave us the ability to add six more beds to our Guest Wing, for a potential total of twelve. We opened three of these new beds in October and there have been days when we were fully occupied. There appears to be a real need for these additional beds in Talbot County, and we have already begun thinking about opening all twelve beds sooner than we had imagined.

We send satisfaction surveys to every family that we have served, and the results have been strong. Over 90% of families served gave us a 9 or a 10 with respect to the care received, and would recommend Talbot Hospice to others. A sample of comments from the survey:

*“Talbot Hospice goes over and beyond...they anticipate every need...Mom died at home with Dad by her side; she was not in pain or afraid; who could ask for more...everyone involved was wonderful.”*

We continue to seek ways to be an end-of-life resource for Talbot County. This spring, to celebrate our anniversary, we began an initiative to encourage every adult in Talbot County to have a conversation with someone they love about their end-of-life wishes, and to complete advance directive paperwork. We invited Dr. Angelo Volandes, a member of the Harvard Medical School faculty, and author of *The Conversation: A Revolutionary Plan for End-of-Life Care*, to Easton for a free and open to the public presentation at the Avalon Theater on March 31. Over 350 people attended the event! The next day, 25 community physicians assembled in our new conference room for a private meeting with Dr. Volandes about how to help their patients with end-of-life choices. We will continue speaking about this initiative throughout the year. Trained volunteers are available once a month at Talbot Hospice to assist the public with how to have these conversations and in filling out advance directive paperwork.

Donations continue to be crucial for Talbot Hospice to provide high quality hospice services and initiatives that serve everyone in Talbot County, whether or not they are on hospice. Donations pay for our Hospice House, our community bereavement programs, our end-of-life resource initiatives, our Pathways program, and our pediatric hospice program.

Our 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary has caused us to look back to our beginning in 1981. We began as a grass-roots, community hospice, supported by the generous people of Talbot County. Your substantial support has sustained us to this day, and we are deeply grateful. On behalf of the Board of Directors of Talbot Hospice, thank you Talbot County!

*Susan L. Piggott*

Susan Piggott, President  
Board of Directors

232  
PATIENTS  
since Nov. 2014

over 90% of  
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# The Conversation



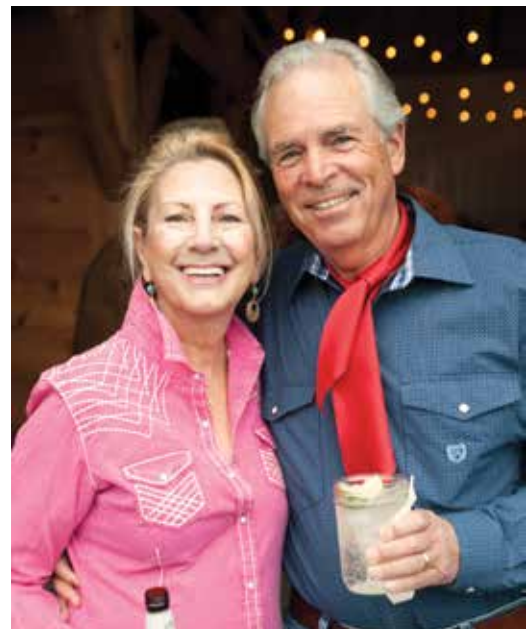
**The Conversation** (left): Dr. Angelo Volandes, on right, author of *The Conversation* with Talbot Hospice board president Susan Piggott and Medical Director Michael Tooke

**Barn Dance** (below left): Susie Granville and Jim and Judy Gieske (below right): Anne and Steve Slack *Photos by Tom McCall*

**Memorial Walk** (below left): Ray Appler (below right): The McHale Family



Barn Dance



TALBOT HOSPICE  
**MEMORIAL**  
Walk





# Taking Talbot Conversations to the Faith Community

By Amy Blades Steward

Throughout the year, hospice professionals and people of faith work together to support those who are nearing the end of their journey—a time that for many remains one of the most difficult and challenging of the human experience. Studies show that 90% of Americans believe it is important to have discussions with their families about end-of-life issues, yet less than 30% have done so. The consequences can be devastating, particularly when family members in the throes of emotional distress must make decisions while guessing what a relative would have wanted.

As an extension of its current work with spiritual leaders in Talbot County, Talbot Hospice has begun a new Faith Initiative which currently involves 12 churches and the synagogue with plans to expand.

In January, Talbot Hospice's Chaplain Reverend Jody Gunn and a group of volunteers began their outreach to the spiritual communities in the county. The goal of this initiative is to share advance directives information with their congregations and to encourage them to begin to have "the conversation" about their wishes with family members.

According to Reverend Gunn this initiative was a natural outgrowth of the Clergy Day presentation Talbot Hospice has done in the past with local faith leaders from our community.

Through this new Faith Initiative, Reverend Gunn and committee members are going to faith communities to present information on hospice services and to share the "Five Wishes" document with parishioners in hopes that members will complete their advanced directives.

“Our hope is for people to bring family members, who are their health care agents, to these information sessions, to initiate what will be a bigger conversation later with the extended family about their health care wishes at the end of life,” Reverend Gunn added.

According to Kathy Foster, a Talbot Hospice board member and committee member of the Faith Initiative, “This initiative provides an opportunity for family members to talk to loved ones about what they want done should they be in a situation of limited life expectancy. Because spiritual leaders work with families dealing with death and dying, faith communities are an ideal place to have this conversation.”

Foster also recently participated in Union Baptist Church Health Fair April 30 where she, Sandy Redd and Sylvia Potter talked with church members about the importance of documenting their end-of-life choices with the Five Wishes.

The first three groups participating in Talbot Hospice’s Faith Initiative have been St. Paul’s Lutheran Church in Cordova, Royal Oak Community United Methodist Church, and New St. John’s Church in Wittman. Ambassadors in each of these churches are helping to carry the hospice message to their congregations.

For Reverend Flavia Skilbred of St. Paul’s Lutheran Church in Cordova this has meant that a congregation member, who is also a nurse, has served as a liaison between her church and Talbot Hospice. Skilbred comments, “Hospice care makes death less frightening. Helping church members to know this is an option if they need it is very important because some people realize that they can’t do it alone anymore. Hospice can help family members deal with the dying process and to help them cope.”

For Reverend Chris Pettit of Royal Oak Community United Methodist Church, the Faith Initiative helped him to share the information about hospice and end-of-life care with his church members during fellowship time after church. He comments, “With the death of a few church members this year, I have seen the toll it takes on families when they have to make end-of-life decisions. The timing was good for our church to hear this information and for me personally. My wife and I have begun to have the conversation as well ourselves about our own Five Wishes.”

Reverend Pettit adds, “Talbot Hospice is a great organization and I know that from experience what they are doing is making a difference in end-of-life care.”

**If you would like to bring the conversation initiative to your faith community, or if you’re interested in becoming a volunteer for the Faith Initiative, contact Reverend Jody Gunn at 410-822-6681 or [jgunn@talbothospice.org](mailto:jgunn@talbothospice.org).**

## Talbot Conversations *continued...*

Following Dr. Angelo Volandes’s presentation to a packed house at the Avalon Theatre on March 31, Talbot Hospice has launched a community-wide and ongoing educational initiative called Talbot Conversations, the goals of which are to:

- *Educate* as many people as possible about their choices at the end of life;
- *Assist* them with understanding and completing their advance directive paperwork;
- *Encourage* them to share their wishes with their physician and loved ones.

Every second Tuesday of the month from 11 a.m.–12:30 p.m. Talbot Hospice staff and trained volunteers will be available to explain the benefits and burdens of care choices and to help individuals fill out their advance directive paperwork (as recommended by the Maryland Office of Attorney General) including the Maryland Order for Life Sustaining Treatment (MOLST). These sessions are free of charge and open to the public. **Please call 410-822-6681 to register.**

### CONVERSATIONS TO GO

Talbot Hospice staff and volunteers can bring the Talbot Conversations workshop to any interested group—civic organizations, churches, employee meetings, health and wellness fairs, etc. If you would like to bring this workshop to your organization, please contact Caron Pons, Director of Marketing & Communications, [cpons@talbothospice.org](mailto:cpons@talbothospice.org) or 410-822-6681.



## Advance Care Planning Now Covered by Medicare

Did you know studies have found that about 4 in 10 Americans ages 65 and older do not have advanced directives or have not written down their own wishes for end-of-life medical treatment? Research has found that most adults (90 percent) say they would prefer to receive end-of-life care in their home if they were terminally ill, yet data show that only about one-third of Medicare beneficiaries (age 65 and older) died at home.

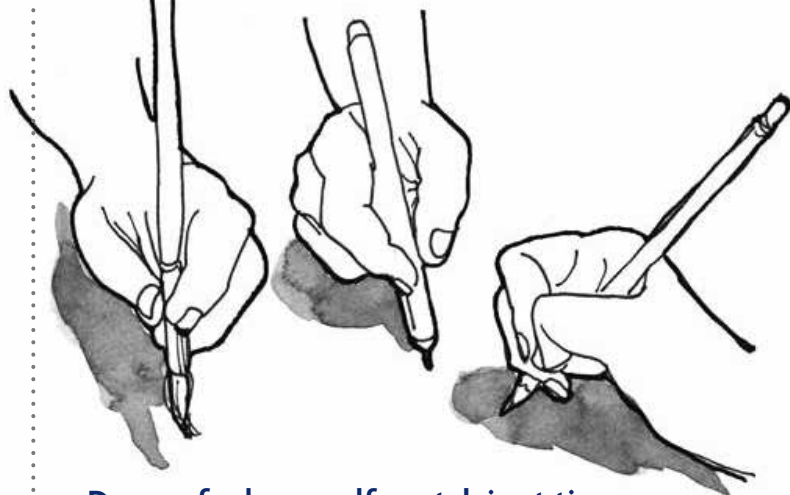
Last fall, regulations were finalized that allow Medicare to pay physicians and other qualified health care professionals (including nurse practitioners) for providing advance care planning to beneficiaries. Specifically, Medicare introduced two new billing codes that allow physicians and other health professionals to bill for advance care planning, as a separate service, as of January 1, 2016. Medicare will cover advance care planning provided in medical offices and facility settings, including hospitals. Previous Medicare coverage rules only allowed reimbursement for advance care planning under very limited circumstances.

As with most other physician services, Medicare beneficiaries are subject to cost sharing for advance care planning provided by their physician or health professional. The beneficiary will have to pay the 20% cost-sharing (after the Part B deductible) associated with using this service, as they would with other Medicare-covered services. However, if the beneficiary chooses to have this service in conjunction with an annual wellness visit (AWV), he or she will not have any cost-sharing liability (though the physician can bill Medicare for both the AWV and advance care discussion separately).

**The advance care planning benefit is open to anyone with Medicare and a person does not have to have a terminal illness to take advantage of this benefit.** In fact, it is better to discuss end-of-life care before a person is diagnosed with a life-threatening condition, when there is plenty of time to consider one's preferences.

Because Medicare often sets the standard for private insurers as well, in time more private health insurance companies are likely to adopt the same rules.

## Remember When...



**Do you find yourself nostalgic at times remembering the “good old days”?**

**Have you picked up a pen or fired up your computer to jot down some memories from your life?**

**Do you ever share the stories of your life with others?**

*The New York Times* cited the benefits of nostalgia in a 2009 article in the Science section. The following quote by Dr. Constantine Sedikides sums the healing nature of ‘remembering when’ as he recounts “... I ‘do’ live my life forward, but sometimes I couldn’t help thinking about the past and it was rewarding. Nostalgia made me feel that my life had roots and continuity...It provided a texture to my life and gave me strength to move forward.”

As a retired adjunct professor of English at American University, Anne McCormick translated the above as a call to write down those memories and share them with kindred travelers on the journey.

Join McCormick at Talbot Hospice for an eight week course in writing down some of the stories from our lives and sharing them with each other. The class will convene Tuesdays, August 23–October 11, 10:30 a.m.–12 p.m. and is free of charge and open to the public.

Anne McCormick, M.Ed, is the retired Associate Director of the Learning and Counseling Center and adjunct professor of English at American University, Washington, D.C. She is the co-author of two books and numerous journal articles about accommodating college students with disabilities. Since retiring to the Eastern Shore, Anne has co-offered numerous workshops in memoir writing, served on multiple advocacy boards for individuals with disabilities, and is a member of the Eastern Shore Writer’s Association.

Class size is limited to 10. Advance registration is required and can be made by calling 410 822-6681.

# Guthrie Award Recipients Recognized



Talbot Hospice Director of Volunteer Services **Lori Miller** (left top) and Chaplain **Jody Gunn** (left below) were recently awarded the Eugene and Elizabeth Guthrie Award for Professional Development. This annual award was created to honor and carry forward the commitment and passion of the co-founder of Talbot Hospice, Dr. Eugene “Buck” Guthrie and his wife, Betts. The purpose of the award is to educate Talbot Hospice staff in a manner that benefits both the individual staff member and the broader community. The award is for training above and beyond the usual requirements.



Miller will attend an intensive Doula workshop at the New York Open Center in 2017. An End-of-Life Doula is a trained volunteer who helps an actively dying patient and their family in the final hours of life.

The 18-hour training will enhance Miller’s knowledge of the dying process and teach her techniques and tools to utilize as a Doula. After the training, Miller will share what she learns with volunteer Doulas and staff through in-service trainings. “The Doula program at Talbot Hospice has become an important resource for families and patients,” said Miller. “I look forward to helping strengthen the skill set of our Doula volunteers.”

In January 2017 Gunn, who is pursuing a Masters of Divinity through Bethany Theological Seminary in Richmond, Indiana, will attend a two week intensive class called “Gospel of Peace” that explores biblical texts in relationship to peace and violence. After the coursework, Gunn will offer an in-service training for staff and volunteers on conflict transformation, mediation, peacemaking and working with families. Through her training and assistance, fellow staff members and volunteers will learn how to be a non-anxious presence, listening, reflecting and providing support through difficult interactions within families who are in the midst of losing a loved one.

“We are so pleased to provide Lori and Jody with these educational opportunities that will in turn help us better serve the patients and families in our care,” said Vivian Dodge, Executive Director of Talbot Hospice. “Dr. and Mrs. Guthrie’s passion for and commitment to providing excellence in hospice care is a high standard that we strive to achieve in our day to day work here at Talbot Hospice.”



## Final Appeal for Annual Fund

As our fiscal year comes to a close June 30, we hope to count on your support. With a gift to Talbot Hospice, you can make a difference in the end-of-life experience for our patients and their families.

Your gift will help provide services and programs without charge to those we serve, including:

- Bereavement services for all members of our community, including children
- 350 dedicated, professionally trained volunteers
- Pathways Program for long-term, chronically ill people
- Our nine-bed Hospice House residence at little or no cost to those who cannot afford the room and board fee. No one is ever turned away due to financial circumstance.
- Pediatric Care Program
- Honoring Veterans at the end of life
- Education to the community. Our newest initiative is TALBOT CONVERSATIONS: Make Your End-of-Life Wishes Known, to help people understand their end-of-life choices, discuss their wishes with their family and physician and document them with Advance Directives.

Gifts can be made through our secure website at [talbothospice.org/donate](http://talbothospice.org/donate) or by sending a check to 586 Cynwood Drive, Easton, MD 21601. Matching gifts and gifts of stock are welcome.

**JOIN THE GUTHRIE SOCIETY** with gifts totaling \$1,000 or more, and receive the annual report, special mailings and an invitation to a private party in the fall.

**JOIN THE HUMMINGBIRD SOCIETY** with gifts totaling \$500-\$999, and receive the annual report, a special education letter and an invitation to an annual appreciation event at Talbot Hospice.

**Questions? Contact Kate Cox, Director of Development, 410-822-6681 x15 or [kcox@talbothospice.org](mailto:kcox@talbothospice.org)**

On behalf of the patients and families we serve,

*Thank you  
for your  
generosity!*

## Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon



Clockwise: Ricka Robinson and Janet Granger  
Wendy VanNest and Grif Bates  
Ron Schlemer, Florence Lednum, and Bud Pine