

# “VOICES OF CHOICES”

OUR NEWSLETTER

COMPASSION & CHOICES ARIZONA SUPPORTS OPTIONS FOR ONE WHO IS TERMINALLY ILL AND MENTALLY COMPETENT TO DETERMINE THEIR OWN LIFE'S END, INCLUDING FREEDOM FROM UNNECESSARY PAIN AND SUFFERING DURING THE LAST PART OF LIFE.

Fall 2006

COMPASSION & CHOICES ARIZONA (formerly Hemlock Society and End of Life Choices)

P.O. Box 12126 • Tucson, AZ 85732 • Toll Free 1-877-535-3600 • E-mail: info@choicesarizona.org • Web: www.choicesarizona.org



COMPASSION & CHOICES ARIZONA  
Compassion In Dying • End-of-Life Choices

## Our Name Change and More

We are now, officially, Compassion & Choices Arizona. And we are only this. No longer do we have the Fifth Freedom Foundation. We are now a non-profit, tax exempt organization to which donations are tax deductible (hint, hint). Prior to this we had two separate organizations, whereas now we are one. As such, our legislative activity is limited but still viable, and National Compassion & Choices has committed to help us with any needed legislative initiatives beyond our scope.

representative from each chapter, and do not have anyone presently from Casa Grande, Yuma, Flagstaff, or Green Valley. We are also seeking an attorney who will serve us on a pro-bono basis. If you are/know of any talented candidates to serve on our State Board, or know of an attorney who may help us, please contact the Executive Director.

We do anticipate having another “Million Geezer March” on the State Legislature this (legislative) year (actually, in early 2007), so look for more information forthcoming about that.

Last year several people commented that our title was sexist because “geezer” refers only to males. So maybe we should title the next one “Million Geezer and Old Biddy March”! Any suggestions? In any case: plan to join us!

This move to one organization consolidates our State Board of Directors and will, in the long run, eliminate confusion about which organization does what. Our now one Compassion & Choices Arizona does it all. Regarding the State Board, we would like to have a

## Talking About Death, Session Two

More than forty supporters of the right to die movement gathered in Sedona on Saturday, July 22 for a workshop hosted by Compassion & Choices, Sedona. The group came together to discuss a formerly taboo subject:

Death. Attendees from as far away as the Sierra Vista Chapter of C & C AZ listened and kept the discussion lively as the group addressed the topic of “Talking About Death, Session Two.”

Featured speaker, Aleia O’Reilly of Further Shore discussed the

*(Continued on page 2)*

Formerly known as

END OF LIFE CHOICES★ARIZONA  
Fifth Freedom Foundation

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www.choicesarizona.org

## Talking About Death *(continued)*

pre-hospice education programs available at her Flagstaff location. The workshops are held at a residential facility called Wayne's House and range from 24 to 48 hours during which participants work on facilitated sessions on a variety of topics related to death and dying. In a pristine location, Wayne's House is the result of Aleia's devotion to the memory of her best friend, who lived and died in the house before she bought it to facilitate Further Shore workshops.

Deb recently participated in a weekend workshop at Wayne's House and says, "It is difficult to describe the amazing energy there. I bonded with the other participants as we discussed issues, laughing and crying together. We also had art and nature projects, alone time and, of course, sleeping in the cool Flagstaff nights. All of this was supplemented by gourmet vegetarian food lovingly prepared by Aleia. I recommend looking into the workshops for anyone in this field as well as those who are approaching the end of life." To contact Aleia, go to <http://furthershore.org>.

Speakers from the two area Hospice organizations also made brief presentations at the Talking About Death event.

Eileen Scott from Northern Arizona Hospice and Joel Boyd from RTA Hospice each discussed their programs as well as the Hospice movement in general.

Deborah Darby addressed the group as well as acting as panel moderator. Deb is the president of the Sedona

Chapter and was recently elected as Vice President of the C & C AZ state board. She also serves as a Client Services Volunteer. Outlining the three focus areas of C & C AZ – education, legislation and advocacy – Deb gave an overview of C & C AZ and the mission of the organization.

The audience had many questions for the panelists and at least one new member was recruited for C & C AZ.

As participants filed out, several stopped by to say that this was "the best" workshop on the topic they had attended. Given that many of those present are regulars at the events, that was high praise.

"I want to thank Evadean and Shirley, from the Sierra Vista Chapter for making the drive, six



*Eileen Scott, Joel Boyd, Aleia O'Reilly*

hours each way, to attend this workshop," says Deb. "They helped with set up and asked pertinent questions. I appreciate their level of activism!"

Deb will join Aleia and other panelists in a similar workshop being held in Flagstaff in August. That workshop, arranged and hosted by Severy Partridge and Arlene Begay of the Flagstaff Chapter, is scheduled for August 26. ■

— *Deborah Darby*



*The Sedona audience is most attentive.*

# Upcoming Chapter Meeting

*(All meetings are free. Please bring your friends!)*

Bring a friend, bring your spouse to come with you too:

*The Northwest Valley Chapter of:*  
**COMPASSION & CHOICES ARIZONA**  
**Compassion in Dying. End of Life Choices**

**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2006, 1: 30pm**  
Coyote-Quail Room in the Sun City West Foundation Center  
14465 R. H. Johnson Blvd. Sun City West

Guest Speaker: **LORREE A. RATTO, Ph.D.**  
**Counselor, Sojourn Care Hospice**

Will speak on -

*DYING TO COMMUNICATE: CONVERSATIONS WITH THE TERMINALLY ILL*

REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED

For more information: Contact the NW Valley Chapter Chair or  
[www.choicesarizona.org](http://www.choicesarizona.org)  
[www.compassionandchoices.org](http://www.compassionandchoices.org)

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## Planning a Chapter Meeting?

When you plan a chapter meeting or Compassion & Choices Arizona event, we need at least 6 weeks notice to post it on our web site, have it for the newsletter, do yellow postcards to members, etc.

In short, the more advance the notice the better (please see newsletter deadlines on page 8). Please send such notices to the editor, John Abraham. Thank you!

### **BOARD MEETING**

**The State Board of Directors of Compassion & Choices Arizona will meet on  
Saturday, September 30, from 10:30am to 3:00pm in Sun Lakes.**

# ARIZONA CHAPTERS AND CONTACTS

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## COMPASSION & CHOICES ARIZONA PRESIDENT

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Dr. Monte DuVal, M.D., Founding Dean,  
University of Arizona College of Medicine  
Dr. Robert H. Furman  
Dr. Harvey Turner

## COMPASSION & CHOICES ARIZONA STATE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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## EXECUTIVE COORDINATOR - Ruthe Steinberg

## COMMUNICATIONS / PR DIRECTOR -

Jean Osborne

## ADVISOR TO THE BOARD

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# Visit the Official C&C AZ Web Site

See the great new design of our oh-so-excellent web site at: [www.choicesarizona.org](http://www.choicesarizona.org).

The Compassion and Choices AZ web site features information on local meetings throughout Arizona. Contact information for chapter leaders and board members is also available. By accessing the C&C AZ web site you can find ways to volunteer with C&C AZ and even access past printed newsletters online at your convenience. Thank you David!

## Thank You!

... to all who participated in the Bashas' "Thanks a Million Fundraiser!" We made \$120.67 from Basha's this past winter – about half of what we made last year.

### We're eligible for up to \$2,500!

Learn more and how to maximize this by going to:  
[www.bashas.com/charity](http://www.bashas.com/charity)

Be sure to sign up again this year starting September 1, and running through March 31, 2007. The next time you shop at Basha's store, you can link this number (27735) to your Thank You card by asking the cashier to enter your group ID number: 27735.

You only have to enter the code once and the link remains for the duration of the program. See [www.choicesarizona.org](http://www.choicesarizona.org) for details or contact our Executive Director.

**Donated to us is a crypt in the Mausoleum of Peace at East Lawn Cemetery in Tucson. This space is at eye level, indoors, and includes many "extras." It has a retail value of \$7,090.**

**We are selling this to the highest bidder.  
If interested, please contact our Executive Director.**



### **YES, I want to join Compassion & Choices!**

I understand this automatically includes national membership and state membership privileges in Compassion & Choices Arizona, and membership in my local chapter as well! Make check payable to Compassion & Choices.

#### ANNUAL CONTRIBUTION

\$45 Single    \$60 Couple    Single Life Member \$450    Couple Life Member \$600

You folks are doing a great job! Here's an extra \$\_\_\_\_\_ contribution to help the cause.

This is a yearly membership, renewable annually. Please send my newsletters (national and state) to:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail to:** P.O. Box 101810, Denver, CO 80250.

**Any questions about membership please call the National Office at 1-800-247-7421 and ask for "membership."  
Our state no longer handles membership issues.**

# Seven Religious Leaders Debate Issues of Death

On May 6 the Prescott Chapter of Compassion & Choices AZ sponsored a Clerical Roundtable on issues surrounding death and dying. The event took place on Saturday at the Prescott Congregational Church and leaders from 6 religions participated and answered questions from the audience regarding such issues as the church's approach to the last days of life, how ministers handle people from religious faiths other than their own, church rules toward issues surrounding death, and their personal experiences with death. Rev. John Abraham of Tucson, who is the state director of Compassion & Choices, moderated and represented the Episcopal Church.

The audience was particularly touched by the personal stories shared by the panel members. Rev. Kirk Anderson of Emmanuel Lutheran Church of Prescott Valley shared his work with hospice and pointed out that the time one spends in hospice can help us with reconciling ourselves in relation to family, friends and our life.

Rev. Nancy Cushman of Prescott United Methodist Church gave specific information regarding the church's support of medical technology to both extend life and ease suffering and said that there was no moral or religious mandate to continue

to use extraordinary methods. Decisions are based on thoughtful and prayerful consideration. She encouraged advanced directives and hospice care and said, "Be a loving act for your family so that they will not

*(Continued on page 7)*



## PLEASE CHECK YOUR NEAREST CHAPTER...

You are automatically a local chapter member (in addition to national and state) in these communities.

- Phoenix/Scottsdale/Tempe  Tucson  Green Valley
- NW Valley (Carefree, Cave Creek, Glendale, Litchfield Park, Peoria, Sun City, Sun City Grand, Sun City West, Surprise)
- Sedona  Cochise County  Sun Lakes
- Prescott  Yuma  Flagstaff
- I WOULD LIKE TO HELP START A CHAPTER

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

For more information visit our website ([www.choicesarizona.org](http://www.choicesarizona.org)) or call us toll free at **1-877-535-3600**.



**COMPASSION &  
CHOICES ARIZONA**  
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## Religious Leaders *(continued)*

have to make those difficult decisions.”

Reverend Bill Guise of Prescott Congregational Church (our host) noted that his journey with death began when he was orphaned at the age of 16. He worked as a corpsman in Vietnam, a paramedic, and later a chaplain in a hospital where he learned to help the dying reconcile with God through being a “ministry of presence,” a non-anxious presence during that time. Death, he said is holy ground, a mystery, something we can and should approach with less trepidation and fear.

Rabbi Yosef Zilberberg related experiences of being told, “Don’t bother with this patient, Rabbi, he is a vegetable.”

“I would hold the vegetable’s hand, recite the Jewish prayer, and then the alarms would go off and the person would gasp and die.”

Rev. Bill Guise nodded and said that it was his belief that the dying had a very high degree of consciousness.

Trish Lamb, from the Garchen Buddhist Institute in Chino Valley, shared the story of her father’s death, a very long, very difficult process. As much as she suffered with him, she could not assist him to end his life early. She explained the Tibetan Buddhist beliefs in Karma and that for them, to hasten death would impact the person negatively in the next life. Reverend John Abraham of Tucson said that the Episcopal Church encourages informed, prayerful decisions and that there is a wide diversity of opinion among different Episcopal Churches, each congregation developing their own position. He believes that “playing God”

is when one person abrogates a dying person’s god-given freedom to choose whether to live or die: it is an individual choice.

On the issue of hastened death, Rev. Kirk Anderson pointed out “Natural death is a relative thing. We use extraordinary methods at the beginning and end of life. Who is the judge of what is suicide?” To this, a member of the audience, Jim Coffroth of Prescott, pointed out, “Many of us effectively commit suicide due to our lifestyle of smoking, drinking, stuffing hamburgers down our throat and the like.”

The need for advance directives was emphasized by all, as was the need to respect the beliefs and understandings of the individual, whether or not the minister agreed with those beliefs. All agreed that it is a sacred privilege to work with a dying person and his or her family.

Dr. Sam Downing, a hospice doctor, brought up the need to have advance directives in order and to discuss them in advance with your doctor so you can trust in his or her

commitment to your wishes. Rev. Nancy Cushman suggested that you give a copy of your directives to each member of your family. Rev. John Abraham encourages having a designated medical power of attorney.

After the meeting, Lisa Staltari of Prescott commented that the event helped to desensitize her to death. “This is an important issue for those of us in our 30’s and 40’s. We need to have a more in-depth understanding and these discussions are a good way to achieve that.”

She especially enjoyed the information provided by Trish Lamb about the Buddhist approach, as she had no understanding of Buddhist practices, and appreciated the personal information regarding the ministers’ own lives and experiences with death.

Compassion & Choices, formerly known as the Hemlock Society, supports education, advocacy and support for the dying and their families. ■

— Liz Anderson



# Stroke: When Minutes Matter

Woman or man, young or old, take note. Stroke is the #3 cause of death.

Signs: You could be having a stroke if you experience:

- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm, or leg, especially on one side of the body.
- Sudden confusion or trouble speaking or understanding.
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes.
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination.
- Sudden severe headache with no known cause.

You are at a greater risk of having a stroke if you:

- Are age 55 or older
- Have had a stroke or TIA
- Have high blood pressure
- Smoke cigarettes
- Have diabetes
- Have heart and/or blood vessel disease
- Have high cholesterol
- Have a high red blood cell count
- Have sickle cell disease
- Have arterial fibrillation

Many hospitals have regularly scheduled FREE stroke screenings.

# Newsletter Schedule

Our Newsletter schedule is as follows:

Mailings on or about:

- ◆ November 1, 2006
- ◆ January 22, 2007
- ◆ April 1, 2007
- ◆ September 20, 2007

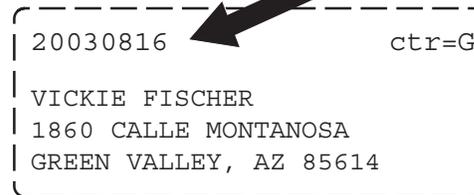
I welcome all news contributions!

Please submit your suggestions/articles to **John Abraham**, [john@choicesarizona.org](mailto:john@choicesarizona.org)

The **deadlines** for **submissions** are: September 1, October 1, January 1 and March 1—always the first of the month prior to mailing.

I'm looking forward to your contributions.

## Check your renewal date



If you are a member of Compassion & Choices (formerly Hemlock and End of Life Choices), your mailing label on this newsletter will say “M” or “L” (Life member), and show when your membership expires (year/month/day). Your chapter cluster code is at the right side.

**Give this newsletter to your physician and to interested friends who may want to join us. For additional copies please contact your local chapter leader or myself, John Abraham at 928-776-8586 or [john@choicesarizona.org](mailto:john@choicesarizona.org)**

Is Compassion & Choices Arizona-- in your Will?



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