



# Voices of Choices

Compassion & Choices Arizona Newsletter

Previous Issues at: [www.choicesarizona.org](http://www.choicesarizona.org)

Issue #4 - 2006

Compassion & Choices Arizona (formerly known as Hemlock Society or End of Life Choices)

P. O. Box 12126, Tucson, AZ 85732 \* Toll Free 1-877-535-3600 \* Email: [info@choicesarizona.org](mailto:info@choicesarizona.org) \* Web: [www.choicesarizona.org](http://www.choicesarizona.org)

## JOIN US!! MARCH FOR HUMAN FREEDOM & DIGNITY ON JANUARY 24, 2007

Join us for the next "Million Geezer March" for Human Freedom and Human Dignity. This event will coincide with the submission of a bill to support the measure by Linda Lopez, District 29 House Representative, Arizona Legislature.

The march will run from 11:30 AM to 1 PM including a press conference and a picnic.

The last march generated a great deal of media coverage and gave C&C a chance to cite the statistics indicating that up to 70 percent of voters support each individual's right to die free from government control.

We will have FREE buses from Tucson, Green Valley, and Northwest Valley (Sun City and Sun City West). The NW Valley bus will have wheelchair accommodation.

## JOHN ABRAHAM STEPS DOWN

C&C AZ Executive Director takes another job

John Abraham, Executive Director for Compassion & Choices Arizona, resigned in September to focus on his other position with a Hospice in Prescott.



The state Board of Directors of C&C accepted his resignation at the September '06 board meeting and members of the board stepped up to accept responsibilities formerly held by Abraham.

The state board also voted to notify all those who had made pledges to support the Executive Director position that they may choose whether or not to complete the pledges now that Abraham has stepped down.

"Of course we would appreciate receiving all the pledges," said C&C state

board president Margot Champagne. "Those funds will significantly enhance the operating budget allowing us to serve our state chapters more effectively as we pursue the three aspects of our cause: Advocacy, Education and Legislation."

Members or Chapters with questions concerning the pledges and/or donations made to support the Executive Director may get further information by contacting Stanley Steinberg at 520-529-0461.

### Board takes on duties

Among the designated duties given to the board, the newsletter production/layout and final editing was taken over by Deborah Darby, VP of the state board and Sedona Chapter leader.

You'll note some changes in the format and overall content of the newsletter beginning with this issue. Please contact Darby at [wordcraftaz@msn.com](mailto:wordcraftaz@msn.com) with your comments, questions or ideas for content.

**To reserve a place on the bus in Tucson or Green Valley, contact Peter Smith at [peterd@laposadagv.net](mailto:peterd@laposadagv.net) or 520-648-8487. For NW Valley contact Irene Weitzman at [ireneweitz@aol.com](mailto:ireneweitz@aol.com) or 623-214-6552. Give your address, phone number or email so specific instructions can be provided later.**

# TO CONTACT YOUR LOCAL CHAPTER OR STATE LEADERSHIP

## CHAPTER LEADERSHIP

### **Casa Grande - Francene Haskins**

**(520) 836-9272**

1268 E. Crown Circle, Casa Grande, AZ 85222

### **Cochise County - Billie Stockl**

**(520) 803-9285**

3305 E. Mohawk Drive, Sierra Vista, AZ 85650

Email: bstockl@cox.net

### **Flagstaff - Severy Partridge**

**(928) 774-5105**

P. O. Box 22003, Flagstaff, AZ 86002

Email: partridgebird2@yahoo.com

### **Flagstaff Alt. Arlene Begay**

**(928) 527-3160**

7701 Slayton Ranch Road, Flagstaff, AZ 86004

### **Green Valley - Peter Smith**

**(520) 648-8487**

685 S. La Posada Circle GH 1604

Green Valley, AZ 85614

Email: peterd@laposadagv.net

### **NW Valley (Carefree, Cave Creek, Glendale, Litchfield Park, Peoria, Sun City, Sun City Grand, Sun City West, Surprise)**

#### **Irene Weitzman**

**(623) 214-6552**

15187 W. Gunsight Drive,

Sun City West, AZ 85375-2928

Email: ireneweitz@aol.com

### **Phoenix/Scottsdale/Tempe**

#### **Need a Chapter Leader!**

#### **Contact: Marshall Lindsay**

**(602) 493-0266**

4233 E. Coolbrook, Phoenix, AZ 85032

Email: dwdchoice@hotmail.com

### **Prescott - Need a Chapter Leader!**

#### **Contact: Margot J. Champagne**

**(928) 776-3025**

P. O. Box 3896, Prescott, AZ 86302-3896

MJCesq100@aol.com

### **Sedona - Deborah Darby**

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### **Sun Lakes - Bob Wallace**

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9306 E. Crystal Drive, Sun Lakes, AZ 85248

Email: joyrobwall@wbhsi.net

### **Tucson - Cherie Esser**

**(520) 825-2219**

Email: jcbesser825@yahoo.com

### **Yuma - Mary-Anne Chaulk**

**(928) 344-1508**

3094 S. Arizona Avenue, Yuma, AZ 85364

Email: itsonlyMAny@aol.com

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## STATE LEADERSHIP

### **Compassion & Choices Arizona Board**

President: Margot Champagne, Prescott

Vice President: Deb Darby, Cottonwood

Secretary: Cherie Esser, Tucson

Treasurer: Stanley Steinberg, Tucson

Public Relations: Peter Bergsneider, Sierra Vista

David Brandt-Erichsen, Tucson

Marshall Lindsay, Scottsdale

Billie Stockl, Sierra Vista

Bob Wallace, Sun Lakes

Irene Weitzman, Sun City West

### **Newsletter Editor**

Deb Darby (send info: wordcraftaz@msn.com)

### **Advisor to the Board**

Monte DuVal, M.D.

Founding Dean,

U of A College of Medicine

### **Compassion & Choices Arizona**

#### **Medical Advisory Group**

Dr. Monte DuVal

Dr. Robert H. Furman

Dr. Harvey Turner

## IS A BALLOT PROPOSITION THE ANSWER?

The lack of success in getting our bills through the AZ legislature (and not just here; see page 7 for info on California legislative efforts) led your state board members to discuss ballot initiatives at the last meeting (and since, via email). Is recent success in getting various initiatives passed in AZ a harbinger? Here are a few pros and cons of going the ballot initiative route:

### PROS

Oregon did it!

Stats say that up to 70% of voters approve of the concept

### CONS

We would have to gather thousands of signatures; could cost \$\$ to hire help

We would need big bucks for an effective media campaign to counter opposition

Perhaps there are those among the membership who have ideas, comments or experience on these issues. We welcome your input! Please let us know if you have constructive ideas or a strong urge to help as we strive to find the most effective way to further our Legislative efforts!

**Million Geezer March for Human Freedom and Human Dignity  
Wednesday, January 24, 2007**

## WHAT WE DO: LEGISLATION

**WE PARTICIPATE** in supporting Oregon-type laws to allow physician aid in dying.

**WE WORK WITH LEGISLATORS** to introduce various legislation here in Arizona to allow physician aid in dying. Example: The Patient Comfort and Control Act and an Oregon-type law.

**WE WRITE, TALK WITH, AND MEET WITH LEGISLATORS** to enact humane legislation for those who are terminally ill and dying.

**AND WE MARCH!** Statistics tell us that up to 70 percent of voters support the right to die and would support such legislation. We need to let our legislators know that we -- and our friends -- are among that 70 percent!

**PLAN NOW TO JOIN US AT THE MILLION GEEZER MARCH FOR HUMAN FREEDOM AND HUMAN DIGNITY ON JANUARY 24, 2007.**

We will march, meet with the media and be a powerful show of support when the legislators break for lunch.

**IT'S ABOUT TIME THAT OUR STATE GOVERNMENT BEGINS TO UNDERSTAND THAT WE -- NOT THEY -- ARE IN THE MAJORITY ON THE RIGHT TO DIE ISSUE.**



## WHY DO WE NEED TO MARCH FOR FREEDOM & DIGNITY?

**HERE'S WHY WE MARCH: WE ARE ASKING THE LEGISLATURE FOR RELIEF OF THAT "INTERFERENCE BY THE GOVERNMENT" IN OUR CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT FOR THE "PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS".**

**The government does not have the right to impose "unhappiness" in the form of unnecessary pain and suffering. The government does not have the right to impose agonizing torture at the end of our journey through life. That is unwarranted government control.**

**That we are asking for the removal of those government imposed shackles that force us, against our will, into a death with indignity.**

**We are marching for our constitutional rights.**

Thanks to Peter Bergsneider

## FORMER WASHINGTON GOVERNOR TO HEAD

### "ASSISTED DEATH" INITIATIVE

Suffering Parkinson's Disease, Booth Gardner to put his personal popularity on the line for his beliefs



Former Washington State Gov. Booth Gardner, who has battled Parkinson's disease for 15 years, is recovering from two deep-brain surgeries and is raring to get to work on a statewide "assisted death" initiative similar to Oregon's.

The former governor, 70, underwent innovative deep-brain surgery that included implanting a type of pacemaker that helps restore control of his body.

The former governor said he is still on target to lead a statewide campaign in 2008 for an "assisted death" initiative patterned after Oregon's.

Gardner wants a system in which at least two doctors concur that a patient is terminal, in the final months of life. He said doctors would provide a drug cocktail, but the patient would administer it. The decision to request assisted suicide would have to be made while the patient was clearheaded.

Gardner said he's convinced that it will pass this time. He wants to run the initiative in 2008, the presidential and gubernatorial election year, thinking it will draw the largest possible voter turnout and increase the chances of passage.

**B**oth sunset and winter have been compared to death throughout history. Modern man found ways to overcome the dark with artificial light and to tame winter by taming heat sources.

But we haven't really stopped the dark of night, nor have we managed to stop the seasons from turning. What we have done is to make ourselves artificially comfortable in the face of nature. Making ourselves comfortable at the end of life is a natural desire. Turning ourselves -- or our loved ones -- into machine-sustained contrivances is abnormal on every level.

In our technological age we invent all sorts of unnatural ways to circumvent death, turning the end of life into a defeat rather than a perfectly natural event. Physicians are trained to stop death, to thwart it at every turn. In America few of us are capable of celebrating our inevitable departure from the physical body. Partly because of fear and partly because of a separation from all things natural, we deny and demonize death.

A few of us have what I call Inner Knowing, an innate peace with end of life. Our friends think we're strange and the world calls us fatalists, but they all turn to us when death approaches.

Most of us did not ask for this Knowledge, it is our Calling. And personally, I'm grateful to have found my purpose: to be the one who is comfortable with death

and dying in my circle of friends and family.

If we do our job, death will once again be a natural, family-and-friend-centered function. Until then, we'll need to keep doing our work and carrying the banner: Let Us Die in Peace!

**Thanks to Valencia Bathe**

### BOARD MEETING

**The State Board of Directors of Compassion & Choices Arizona will meet on Saturday, March 24, 2007**

### A Flaw with the Oregon Law: Logic that's Hard to Swallow

**W**hile watching the video of Bill Moyers' PBS mini-series "On Our Own Terms: Moyers on Dying" (2000), I realized one of the reasons why I regard Oregon's "Death with Dignity Act" as seriously flawed.

In Episode 2 we meet Kitty Rayl, an at-home Hospice patient who belongs to a group we can call "the able-bodied terminally ill." Her cancer pain controlled with drugs, Rayl can walk around her house using a cane, eat, read books and enjoy visits with her daughters and grandchildren. She does not want to lose a single worthwhile day. And that is why her life has become -- to use Moyers' term -- "a gamble."

Rayl is eligible for a lethal drug prescription -- but only as long as she can swallow. If she waits too long and becomes incapacitated, she will lose the right to ask for a hastened death.

...continued on page 5

## Flaw in Oregon Law, continued

Thus the law might be increasing her stress during her last days: forcing her to monitor her symptoms closely, ever-watchful for the danger signs of approaching incapacity.

Such a law defeats one of the stated purposes of allowing hastened death: to prevent "premature suicides," i.e. instances where people think, "I'd like to go on living a while longer, but I'd better kill myself now, while I'm still able-bodied enough to do it!" What, after all, do we usually fear the most? We fear the condition of being confined to a bed, hardly able to move, bereft even of the power to end it all swiftly. Yet that is exactly when the law disempowers patients.

Its framers evidently followed the reasoning of Dr. Timothy Quill. In his 1993 book *Death & Dignity*, Quill explains why his suggested policy would allow "physician-assisted suicide" but exclude "voluntary euthanasia."

He recognizes that "this exclusion occurs at a cost to those competent, incurably ill patients who are unable to swallow or to move" (pg. 160), but believes nonetheless that euthanasia carries too much risk of "error, coercion, and abuse" (pps. 159-160).

While Dr. Quill's concern about coercion is very important, he seems unaware that his policy shifts the danger of coercion from the incapacitated onto the still-able-bodied.

Under the Oregon law, it is

not hard to imagine cases where family members (or even doctors), terrified at the thought of having a complete invalid on their hands, would pressure a patient to go "before it's too late."

Of course, one can argue that once a patient has lost the ability to swallow, there is a simple way out: refuse artificial hydration. That is what my 82-year-old father did in June 2006; and he died at home, under Hospice care, with my mother at his side (I, unfortunately, was unable to be there). By today's standards it was a good death. Yet it took 12 days -- three times as long as expected -- from the day he stopped eating and drinking; and my mother says he was getting frustrated at how long he was dying. He even talked about trying to hasten the end by taking high (albeit permitted) doses of morphine, especially since his immobility caused him increasing muscle pain.

Ironically, in PBS Frontline's 1995 episode "The Kevorkian Verdict," Dr.



Quill admits that a gradual, medicated death by dehydration is one that many people would find humiliating. He was talking in reference to Thomas Hyde, an ALS patient who could no longer swallow easily and died with the aid of Kevorkian. Had Dr. Quill changed his mind since his book came out in 1993? For

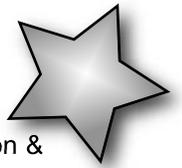
by its standards, he would have condemned Hyde to just such a humiliating death.

There are technological ways to make "reasonable accommodations" -- to use the language of the Americans With Disabilities Act -- to empower the disabled terminally ill. In *Last Rights*, journalist Sue Woodman describes how, in Australia, Dr. Philip Nitschke connected syringes of lethal medication to a computer program, which delivered the fatal doses only after the patient repeatedly asked for them (pg. 129). Presumably, there would be a technician present to make sure the computer didn't malfunction. Also, we can require disinterested witnesses to be present, as well as documented discussions between physician and patient, advance directives, and other evidence that the patient had not wished to continue life when he or she had reached a certain level of incapacity.

Although the Oregon law has helped some people, it has potential to do more harm than good. It subtly encourages premature suicide, and discriminates against the disabled terminally ill. Just imagine the outcry if any other needed or wanted procedure were denied if it could not be completely self-administered! We cannot deny patients their rights for the sake of their protection.

**Thanks to Tucson Chapter Board Member, Raya Fand**

# Yes, I want to join Compassion & Choices!



I understand that this automatically includes national membership and state membership privileges in Compassion & Choices Arizona and membership in my local chapter as well. Please make checks payable to Compassion & Choices.

## Membership Options

- Individual Membership (one year): \$45       Life Membership for Individual: \$450  
 Couple Membership (one year): \$60       Life Membership for Couple: \$600

Remember! If you join for a year, the membership needs to be renewed annually.

- I want to support the cause. Here is an extra \$ \_\_\_\_\_ contribution. Keep up the good work!

## Please send my newsletters (national and state) to:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Send a check or money order along with this form to:

Compassion & Choices

P. O. Box 101810

Denver, CO 80250

To join with Credit Card: Call 1-800-247-7421 (National Compassion & Choices)

To join online: <http://compassionandchoices.org/>

Any questions regarding membership must be directed to the National Office at 1-800-247-7427 (ask for "membership").  
Our state no longer handles membership issues.

**If you or a loved one would like to be memorialized in a crypt in the Mausoleum of Peace at the beautiful East Lawn Cemetery in Tucson, please contact us! We have a crypt that was donated to help Compassion & Choices Arizona raise funds.**

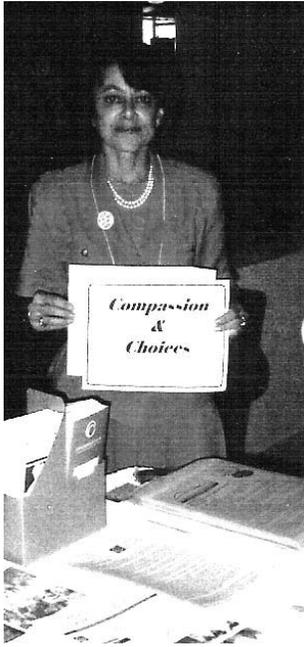
The crypt space is at eye level, indoors and includes many extras. It has a retail value of \$7,090.

We are selling this space to the highest bidder.

Please call the state toll free number for further information or to make a bid!

**1-877-535-3600 or Email: [info@choicesarizona.org](mailto:info@choicesarizona.org)**

## COMPASSION & CHOICES ARIZONA STATE BOARD PRESIDENT MARGOT



**CHAMPAGNE...** spent a day in late September representing C&C at NACOG's 15th Annual Elder issues Conference.

Standing beside her in a show of support, Severy Partridge, president of the Flagstaff Chapter, also volunteered a day's time to spread the word about Death with Dignity and how C&C supports each person's right to decide when they want to die.

### CALIFORNIA VOTES DOWN PROPOSED LEGISLATION:

Organized opposition trumps majority support

By Steven Harmon, TIMES SACRAMENTO BUREAU

Allowing the terminally ill to end their own lives is generally a popular notion among Californians. It is also not likely to happen anytime soon. The most recent setback in the right-to-die movement -- a Senate judicial committee rejected proposed legislation -- once again illustrates the power of a highly motivated coalition of opponents that has defeated four attempts since 1992. Advocates of assisted suicide insist the issue is around to stay but that it is too early to say how or when they may bring the emotionally charged issue back.

Wayne Johnson, a Republican strategist who served as a consultant to the opponent coalition said, "...this is a niche issue, one of those odd little issues that don't have a large constituency who probably aren't the most organized."

***It's time we proved people like Mr. Johnson WRONG!! We are not an "odd little issue" and in fact we do have a large constituency! Show up at the Million Geezer March!***

## EDITOR'S CORNER

ALL VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION



Deb Darby

Now that our Executive Director, John Abraham, has resigned, C&C AZ is once again an All Volunteer Organization. That means that we need your help more than ever!

Although each member of our leadership donates their time (and time is money!) we still need funding from our members for the work we do such as getting the newsletter printed and mailed, printing and mailing the screaming yellow cards and telephone costs. I intend to donate my time and expertise to make this the best, most informative newsletter ever. Like you, I was semi-retired until I became involved with C&C. Now I have taken a part-time job so that I have the money to pay the bills AND continue to support the work about which I am passionate: **ADVOCACY, EDUCATION AND LEGISLATION FOR THE RIGHT TO DIE.**

We need each member to step up in terms of helping make their own Chapter successful.

Make the commitment ***I'm not asking you to get a job... I'm only asking you to show up!*** to serve on your local Chapter Board of Directors if called upon. In my short experience with C&C I've noted that some people just come to get the information they want and then gradually withdraw their support.

We implore our membership to take the long view on our vital efforts:

**WE NEED YOUR CHILDREN...**

**AND YOUR GRANDCHILDREN!!**

**We must expand our membership to a younger generation.** That is an important part of our education outreach. Bring your children and grandchildren to the next public meeting. Ask them to walk beside you in the Million Geezer March for Human Freedom and Human Dignity! Help us make sure that we have the funds to support all three arms of our mission: Advocacy, Education and Legislation.

# UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS!

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 24, 2007, STATE CAPITOL - 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM. MILLION GEEZER MARCH FOR HUMAN FREEDOM AND HUMAN DIGNITY.** More info in our January legislative mailing and on our website. **FREE BUS SERVICE:** To reserve a place on the bus in Tucson or Green Valley, contact Peter Smith at peterd@laposadagv.net or 520-648-8487. For NW Valley contact Irene Weitzman at ireneweitz@aol.com or 623-214-6552. The NW Valley bus will be wheelchair accessible and will stop in Sun City West and Sun City. *Give your address, phone number or email so specific instructions can be provided later.*

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2, SUN LAKES - 10:00 AM.** Guest speaker Lorrie A. Ratto, Ph.D., Counselor at Sojourn Care Hospice, will speak on DYING TO COMMUNICATE: CONVERSATIONS WITH THE TERMINALLY ILL. Location: Sun Lakes Phase One Club House. For more information, call Bob Wallace, 480- 802-4327.

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2, GREEN VALLEY - 10:30 AM.** Our Annual Holiday Luncheon follows the speaker, Dr. Stephen Uhl, who will speak on his book *Imagine No Superstition: The Power to Enjoy Life without Guilt, No Shame, No Blame*. A former priest and now a married psychologist, Dr. Uhl deals with how we are responsible for all of our life. Location: The Country Club, 77 E. Paseo de Golf, Green Valley. **NOTE:** A confirmed, prepaid luncheon is mandatory for this event. Cost is \$16 inclusive, with a choice of Cobb Salad or Chicken Salad Croissant. Mail check to: Compassion & Choices Green Valley, P.O. Box 397, Green Valley, AZ 85622. For questions call Elinor Rose at 520-393-6658 or Perce Wilson at 520-625-9271.

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9, TUCSON - 10:00 AM.** Guest speaker Jane O'Mahen, RN, will speak on "What Hospice care is currently doing to ease end of life issues." Location: Casa de la Luz Hospice, 400 W. Magee Road, Tucson (NW corner of Oracle and Magee). For questions call Cherie Esser at 520-825-2219.

Please make sure we have the information about your Chapter events at least six weeks in advance to assure that your event gets good coverage on the website, in the newsletter and with the screaming yellow cards we will prepare and mail to your constituency!  
Send info to: [info@choicesarizona.org](mailto:info@choicesarizona.org)

COMPASSION & CHOICES ARIZONA SUPPORTS OPTIONS FOR  
THOSE WHO ARE 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.

Please Check your Renewal Date

**SEND YOUR  
RENEWAL TODAY!**

Compassion &  
Choices Arizona  
P. O. Box 12126,  
Tucson, AZ 85732

**THANK YOU!**

20070125

ctr=G

Jane Doe  
123 Smith Street  
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