



compassion & choices arizona

...choice and care at the end of life  
support • educate • advocate

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FALL 2013

Dedicated to educating and expanding compassionate end-of-life choices for all Arizonans including the right of terminally ill adults to physician aid in dying as a fundamental civil right.

## COMMENTS FROM OUR BOARD PRESIDENT

### Freda Anderson



Only a few months ago, the residents of Vermont achieved Aid-in-Dying through legislative action. They represent the very first state in this country whose legislature was able to bring to fruition the goal and the vision of so many. Behind this hard fought victory stood many volunteers who continuously and tirelessly donated time and energy to achieve the end result.

Such victories are never quick, nor easy. They require years of intensive planning, education and lobbying.

In Arizona, we too are laying the foundation for future legislative efforts. Spearheaded by the vision and determination of Denny Flaherty, our organization's current Vice President, our "Supporter Survey" is featured in this newsletter. For those of you who have not yet completed it, details are on Page 3 so you can participate. This survey is the backbone for building a strong yet effective base in every voting district who can "make a noise" when the time comes.

While each and every one of us would cheer a legislative victory in Arizona, a sobering reminder that our state organization is comprised entirely of volunteers – some retired but leading full and

active lives daily, others still working fulltime. But all our volunteers have one thing in common...a shared passion for our cause and a determination to do whatever it takes to have Aid-in-Dying as a legal option for all Arizona residents as soon as possible.

While the number of our donors and supporters continues to grow, our volunteer needs increase proportionately too. Whether it's an occasional hour or two or a more frequent commitment, we need your assistance. As volunteers or Board members, each one of you brings a unique perspective and background to our organization. Every supporter who steps forward to volunteer will not only make a contribution to our collaborative efforts, but will be appreciated and recognized.

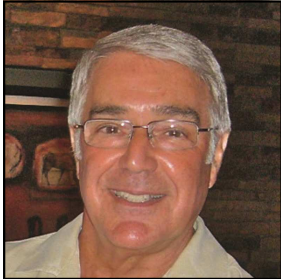
Personally I am painfully aware of how busy we are living our lives and that time is a precious commodity. Nevertheless, I fervently hope that many of you will be inspired to contact us and become an active participant in our statewide activities - whether starting a new community group in your area or simply being available on an "as needed" basis. There is ample room for everyone at the table.

**And do remember: "Volunteers are not paid – not because they are worthless, but because they are priceless."**

**Sherry Anderson**

## DENNY FLAHERTY

Vice President of AZ Board of Directors



I'm told I opened my eyes for the first time on November 24, 1940, in Columbus, Ohio. As a first-born, I enjoyed the only-child attentions of my Irish-Catholic parents until my world was turned upside down by

the arrival of my brother and two sisters. We were now a family of six. My father, in pursuit of a better job, accepted a photo-engraver position with *Collier's* magazine in nearby Springfield. Seven years later, *Collier's* folded which resulted in another move. We ended up in Rhode Island, where I would finish high school. We had no money for college and my grades weren't exactly scholarship-worthy. Obviously, it was time to leave the nest. And what better way for a fledgling to take wing than with the United States Air Force.

In 1958, I started on a path that would include 30 years of active military duty with the Air Force, specializing in communications-electronics. Nearly one-half of my military career was spent abroad on tours in the Middle East, Central Europe, the coast of the Mediterranean, Southeast Asia and two tours in the Pacific.

But let me back-up for a moment. In 1959, I met the rest of my life in Ankara, Turkey. She was a 17 year-old senior in the American dependents' high school and I was an 18 year-old two-striper without a penny to his name. Long story short, we later married in Germany, raised two sons, and recently celebrated our 51<sup>st</sup> wedding anniversary. Our travels eventually brought us to Arizona and Williams Air Force Base, near Mesa, where I retired from active duty in 1988.

After leaving the Air Force, I attended graduate school and obtained a master's degree in public administration. With my new degree in hand, I was pleased that the State of Arizona offered me

the opportunity of a second career. Over the next 14 years, I became an in-house management consultant specializing in strategic and quality management. But eventually, the long daily commutes from our home in Chandler to the state capital would take their toll. And in 2004, I decided to retire for good.

My epiphany regarding Compassion & Choices occurred while watching "*How to Die in Oregon*." I was explaining to one of our sons how strongly I felt about a legal option for aid-in-dying. He looked me in the eye and said, "Dad, you're retired. You've got the time. Why don't you get off your butt and do something about it!" So here I am, reporting for duty!

**Editors note: We thank Denny for his efforts in our "Supporters Survey." We encourage you to go online and complete the survey before the September 30 deadline. Please see the next page for further information.**

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### THANKS TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

We'd like to extend our grateful appreciation to the following volunteers who devoted considerable time and effort to assist with our recent "Supporter's Survey"

Thanks for stepping up:

Renee Barbaree - Tucson

Valerie Conforti - Tucson

Gary LaCroix - Tucson

Cherry Vasconcellos - Tucson

Jo and Bob Chanaud - Prescott

Sandy Schaedler - Avondale

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### NOTE FROM ENCI LAJOS

Due to medical issues, I have resigned from my position on the C&C AZ board of directors and as Phoenix chapter leader. I would like to thank the board members for the wonderful and valuable learning experience of the past couple of years. You are an exceptional and knowledgeable group of people and I know that your efforts will make a difference in our state, and I wish you the best of luck in the future. Enci Lajos

***We appreciate your service to C&C AZ, Enci***

## **SUPPORTERS SURVEY**

### **We Need Your Feedback Regarding Aid in Dying Legislation**

Compassion & Choices Arizona would appreciate your feedback about support for Aid in Dying legislation in our state.

For several months we have been conducting internet and telephone surveys of members, donors, and other supporters who have expressed an interest in Aid in Dying. We realize we have not contacted everyone. If you have not yet responded to the survey, here is your opportunity.

We need your feedback because responses to this survey will help us develop a list of active supporters in each legislative district in Arizona. We will use these lists whenever Aid in Dying legislation is introduced in the Arizona legislature. When that happens, we will alert all active supporters via email and ask them to (1) contact their state legislators, (2) identify themselves as constituents, and (3) voice their support for the Aid in Dying legislation.

This survey will take less than five minutes to complete. You will need the number of your state legislative district. If unknown, use the following URL address in your internet browser and then type in your address in the box provided.

[azredistricting.org/districtlocator/](http://azredistricting.org/districtlocator/)

When you know the number of your legislative district, you are ready to take the survey. Please use the following URL address in your internet browser.

[surveymonkey.com/s/aidindying](http://surveymonkey.com/s/aidindying)

This survey will close on September 30, 2013. Thank you in advance for your participation.

## **ARIZONA LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS TO STUDY END-OF-LIFE CHOICES**

At their annual meeting in Tucson, the League of Women Voters Arizona voted to undertake a study of end-of-life choices. Our board member, Margot Champagne, is preparing a paper focused on the pros and cons of the Oregon model law. This study is not intended to result in the organization taking a position at this stage. The paper will be circulated to their state units for discussion. It may or may not lead to more formal action.

## **WHY DONATE TO COMPASSION & CHOICES?**

*What motivates our members to donate? We'd like to share this story sent to us recently by Arizona member Betty Sanneman.*

Our family has just made a contribution to Compassion & Choices in honor of Netta Capetz, the mother of Nikki Capetz who recently became a member of Compassion & Choices.

We consider Nikki a member of our extended family and we witnessed the loving care Nikki gave her mother during the last few years of her life. Her mother lived in Minnesota and Nikki traveled there, got Netta set up with a good doctor and an adult care home with only five or six residents. Nikki was very particular in selecting the home, wanting to make sure it would give her compassionate care and be just the right place for her Mom. She then traveled back and forth to Minnesota every few months and stayed several weeks to monitor her situation and to participate in her care.

Being there so often gave Nikki a good understanding of her mother's condition, her medical needs and her degree of suffering.

Netta had a Living Will and she had chosen Nikki as her Power of Attorney but when Netta's condition deteriorated to the point that Nikki believed her mother would no longer desire further treatment, the doctor and the adult care home owner would not honor her mother's wishes. This caused more suffering for Netta and led to Nikki's determination to do everything she could to prevent needless suffering for others at the end of their lives.

She found Compassion & Choices the perfect vehicle for her to work for her cause. You are doing great work and it is for this reason that we chose to make a contribution to your organization to honor the life of Netta Capetz and the devotion of her daughter, Nikki.

Betty Sanneman  
David and Debbie Sanneman  
Elaine and Rob Miller

**Your donations are always welcome: Please send your donations to Compassion & Choices Arizona, P.O. Box 14556, Scottsdale AZ 85267**



Compassion & Choices  
P.O. Box 101810  
Denver, CO 80250

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## Upcoming Events & Chapter News

Please check the Events tab on our website [www.choicesarizona.org](http://www.choicesarizona.org) for updates

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5 — ANNUAL MEETING OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS AT 2 PM** at the Burton Barr Library, 1221 North Central Avenue in Phoenix. Members are welcome to attend.

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17— TUCSON COMMUNITY GROUP GET-TOGETHER** for those interested in actively helping to re-establish our Tucson group. The meeting will be held at 2pm at 5545 N. Entrada Ultima, Tucson. One of our members has graciously opened her home as a venue for this meeting. RSVP's to Gary LaCroix at [glart13@aol.com](mailto:glart13@aol.com) appreciated but not required.

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19 — SEDONA CHAPTER OF COMPASSION & CHOICES AZ** will meet at the Verde Valley Manor in Cottonwood from 10 AM until 12 PM for a "Death Café." It's based on the idea that talking about death is important and helpful, but that we don't often make time to do it. Hence the Death Café, a dedicated and safe space for doing so. So come share your thoughts on death, with formatted topics as well as free-flowing discussion. Oh, and we'll be serving cake! Free and open to the public. For more information, contact our Sedona/Verde Valley Chapter President at 928-274-1391.