

For Immediate Release

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Hospice of Santa Barbara Offers Advice to Navigate Grief During the Holiday Season

***Light Up a Life* Ceremonies to be Held in Goleta, Santa Barbara and Carpinteria**

November 29, 2010, Santa Barbara, CA--Retailers have begun to set up for the holidays and our neighbors are starting to hang holiday lights and decorate with festive cheer. Radios are playing all the old songs, and the TV is filled with images of loving families. The sights and sounds of the holidays are inescapable.

During the holidays, the memories of those close to us who have died can haunt us with ever more poignancy and our feelings can seem discordant with the world around us. The emotions of sorrow and loss can be powerful and overwhelming, especially for those of us who may still be in the grieving/mourning process.

Everyone grieves, in their own individual way, and it is important to acknowledge and tend the process. The holidays are a time for well-wishing and open heartedness, even to the past.

Hospice of Santa Barbara is offering some helpful ideas for those who have experienced the death of a loved one, to make it through and even bring some joy back into the holiday season. Here are a few suggestions:

- Find a way to incorporate the one you loved and lost into the holidays.
- Understand that the holidays will never be the same as they were before the loss.
- Make new traditions—for example, take the family on vacation if you usually stay at home.
- Help others—take a meal to a homebound person or volunteer in a shelter.
- Buy gifts online or through catalogues if the idea of going shopping is overwhelming.
- Make donations in the name of your loved one.
- Accept invitations that sound the most appealing and avoid the ones that feel more like an obligation.
- Don't hide your feelings (especially not from children).
- Don't accept every invitation—be selective about the activities you choose.
- Don't isolate yourself.
- Don't conceal your emotions.

Each year in December, families and friends gather for *Light Up A Life* in Goleta, Santa Barbara and Carpinteria for a ceremony celebrating the life and the joy of remembrance of our loved ones. At this time, a memorial tree is illuminated with hundreds of sparkling lights and stars, each symbolizing a tribute to a loved one. Stars will be available at each ceremony for a donation of \$10 for those wishing to personalize a star and hang it on the tree. All proceeds benefit Hospice of Santa Barbara, Inc. – A Volunteer Hospice Organization.

Light Up a Life dates and locations:

Saturday, December 4, 5:30 p.m. – Camino Real Marketplace, **Goleta**

Sunday, December 5, 5:30 p.m. – Lobero Theater front lawn, **Santa Barbara**

Saturday, December 11, 5:30 p.m. – Linden House, 789 Linden Avenue, **Carpinteria**

The mission of Hospice of Santa Barbara, Inc. is to provide care to anyone experiencing the impact of a life-threatening illness, or grieving the death of a loved one. For more information, please call (805) 563-8820 or visit www.hospiceofsantabarbara.org.