

Media Release

Nov. 12, 2010 – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Jenni Williams

Phone: 352-271-4655

E-Mail: jlwilliams@havenhospice.org

Fax: 352-379-6286

Hospice care is a celebration of life

(GAINESVILLE) - During National Hospice Month, Haven Hospice invites you to learn how hospice care celebrates life. Hospice is about having choices, and the time to learn about them is now—before you or your family need to make critical decisions at the end of life. Nothing can fully prepare you for loss, but knowing how hospice care helps can bring a sense of calm before a storm.

At Haven, we believe that everyone deserves compassion, care and comfort, and at the end of life, we believe that no one should suffer. Haven began serving patients and their families 32 years ago with the belief that each of us has the right to die pain-free and with dignity, and that our loved ones will have the support they need during our end-of-life journey. During the last three decades, hospice care has come to mean not just a place to die or a way of dying, but a celebration of life. It symbolizes the belief that every day is a gift.

We hope you'll tell your family, friends and neighbors why it's important to know about planning for the end of life.

First, be clear about your wishes before you are unable to speak for yourself. "An advance directive is one of the best gifts you can give your loved ones," said Haven Hospice President Tim Bowen. "When you think you don't need an advance directive is when you need it most. Haven Hospice is a proud supporter of National Healthcare Decisions Day and distributes advance directives in all the communities we serve."

Haven Hospice offers a free, easy-to-use advance directive called "Five Wishes." To request a copy, visit www.havenhospice.org and click the "Five Wishes" button on the left, or call 800.727.1889.

Second, at Haven, we believe that hospice is about living, not dying. By relieving pain and symptoms, hospice care helps patients continue to celebrate their lives with their loved ones. In the more than 30 years that Haven has been caring for the people of North Florida—more than 50,000 patients and their families over an 18-county service area—we remain committed to providing quality care that helps people to feel stronger and be active longer.

Third, as we celebrate Veterans Day, be aware that if you or a loved one is a veteran, your benefits include hospice care. You have earned the right to comprehensive, compassionate care at the end of life. Haven is proud to care for our veterans who have bravely served our country.

Now that you know three important ways hospice care can help, remember: So many of the families we serve say they didn't know hospice could do so much and wish they had asked for help sooner. Remember that every day is a gift, and every day of hospice care is a gift that will leave lasting memories and peace.

About Haven Hospice

Haven Hospice is North Florida's expert in end-of-life and palliative care and is one of three 2008 Circle of Life Award[®] winners nationwide to be recognized as leaders in improving the care of patients near the end of life or with life-threatening conditions. Haven Hospice has also been recognized as a Florida Pacesetter for its leadership in promoting living wills. Haven Hospice has served more than 50,000 patients and families since 1979 and has been licensed in Florida as a not-for-profit hospice since 1980. For more information, visit www.havenhospice.org or call 800-727-1889.

###