

## Hospice grant helps with animal issues



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The Oregon Animal Health Foundation has awarded \$5,000 to “Callie’s Fund” in support of Samaritan Evergreen Hospice patients and their families. The donation will be used specifically to address issues with domestic animals during a medical crisis.

The OAHF, established in 1983, is a nonprofit charitable organization that fosters and promotes animal welfare and the human-animal bond. It is funded primarily from veterinarians and through memorial donations.

Samaritan Evergreen Hospice served more than 700 families in Linn, Benton and portions

of Marion and Polk Counties in 2011.

The pet therapy program within Evergreen encourages families to be proactive about their pets when a loved one is facing death; fosters ongoing communication about the value of pet therapy in medical settings; offers pet food, boarding fees and supplies as needed for low income patients; and helps pay for the needs of therapy dogs on service.

Tracy Calhoun, RN, is one of the hospice nurses who coordinates the pet therapy program and worked with Albany veterinarian Tim Reid to secure the grant. “One of our goals is to establish a volunteer team willing to help communicate these issues and be available to families as needed,” said Calhoun. “This grant will help us produce materials to communicate issues around animals in hospice situations,” she said.

Callie’s Fund was established in memory of one of the first therapy dogs used in the delivery of hospice services. Callie was a frequent visitor to hospice patients and their families in their places of residence. Callie died just over one year ago of cancer and many of her favorite families encouraged the establishment of a fund in her memory.

For more information about the fund and its goals or how to volunteer, contact Calhoun, (541) 971-9598. To make a donation to Callie’s Fund, call the Albany General Hospital Foundation, (541) 812-4705.