

## Cordt Kassner

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## Hospice Provider News

### [Hospice office still has holiday cheer after real-life Grinch](#)

*WRDW-TV (Augusta, GA), 12/22/23*

Augusta, GA—Someone stole a Christmas tree from the lawn of the Affinis Hospice office on Walton Way. They moved into this location in November, and since they had a nice front lawn, they decided to spread Christmas cheer into their new neighborhood. “We were really excited to put the Santa Claus out there. We had a tree we had all sorts of, but we even decorated the tree with ornaments and lights,” said Community Care Liaison for

Affinis Hospice, Sara Simmons. They put up everything on Friday. The tree didn't even last for a weekend. "We came in Monday morning, and our tree was gone. So somebody swiped the tree," said Simmons. She said that evidence around the scene showed the tree was stolen. "I was furious," Simmons said. "We put so much into getting these decorations, and we were so excited to be in this brand new neighborhood, new area and somebody took our tree." ... "We thought if somebody else needed that tree, maybe there's others who also need trees," she said. They've been working as a middleman to get people whatever they need to brighten their holiday season. "If people have extra trees, which they were already offering to us, you're welcome to bring them here. And then we'll advertise and let other people know 'Hey, you're welcome to come here and get whatever you need.' We're here for you," she said.

### **[La Marque man engineered iconic Tree of Lights](#)**

*Galveston (TX) Daily News, 12/23/23*

Hospice Care Team's Tree of Lights has illuminated the island's holiday skyline from atop *The Daily News'* building for more than 30 years, but the story of how it came to be often isn't explored. Back in 1989, Hospice Care Team, a nonprofit that provides hospice services without regard to client's ability to pay, was looking to establish a fundraiser and came up with the idea of creating a Tree of Lights, on which donors could purchase bulbs to honor someone's life. Great idea, but how to accomplish that? Enter Stanley Duitscher, who owned D En gineers Inc. in La Marque. ... "We had to be able to lower the tree when it's not in service," Duitscher, 91, recalled this week. "So, I incorporated a boat lift with a cable to raise it and lower it." The tree is pretty much a ship's mast with strands of lights draped off the top in the shape of a pine tree. The tree also had to be designed so that it would lie flat when not being used, so as not to be damaged by storms or even struck by lightning. His daughter, Minda Scherer, said his design fee was probably pretty reasonable. "He thinks he did it for charity, because he can't find an invoice for the work," she said.

## **Clinical News**

### **['Memory Makers' helps grieving children and teens in Augusta](#)**

*WRDW-TV (Augusta, GA), 12/22/23*

Augusta, GA—A new program is giving kids and teens a better way to handle grief, and it won't cost you anything. The holidays can bring on heavy emotions, not just for adults who've lost a loved one, but for children too. The program is called Memory Makers. It's held at Affinis Hospice on Walton Way, and it's for ages 4 to 17. Volunteer Coordinator Jessica Hands says she started Memory Makers because her father died when she was 15. Her goal is to help create a safe space so young people can give their pain a purpose. "This space kind of gives them the opportunity to scre am. We scream. We have torn paper up and thrown it to let our anger out. We laugh, we cry. It gives them a space to do all of that without worrying about how it may impact someone else's emotions," she said.



# Accelerate Results Accelerate Growth Accelerate Learning

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## **Share your story of grief with USA TODAY**

*USA Today, 12/24/23*

*[USA Today is offering readers the opportunity to share their personal grief experiences by completing a two-page survey.]* We know so many people are grieving losses of all kinds: children, parents, pets, jobs, identities. It can help to talk about it—and sometimes writing can be an outlet. We encourage you to share your story with us.

## **Project welcomes veterans 'Home for the Holidays'**

*Valdosta (GA) Daily Times, 12/23/23*

Valdosta, GA—Home Instead, Heart of Hospice, and Chick-fil-A of North Valdosta recently hosted “Welcome Home for the Holidays Veterans.” The event was held at the Winn Dixie entrance located on North Ashley Street. Veterans were recognized for coming home for the holidays as many of them did not receive a warm welcome home from Vietnam. The first 50 veterans who walked out of Winn-Dixie were given a gift bag that included a Chick-fil-A free breakfast sandwich, an American flag and a flag lapel.

## **Artist paints ornaments for staff at Hospice after doing many for annual fundraiser**

*Orleans Hub (Albion, NY), 12/22/23*

Albion, NY—After painting and donating 45 Christmas ornaments for Hospice of Orleans’ annual Light a Life fundraiser, local artist Carol Culhane wanted to do something for the staff at Hospice. Early in her career, Culhane worked in the nursing field and continues to have a lot of compassion for those who are ailing and their caregivers, especially at Hospice. This year Culhane decided to paint enough ornaments for the entire staff at Hospice, and she delivered them on Wednesday. “I’m hopeful this will encourage people to consider a donation to Hospice, perhaps when a loved one dies, instead of sending flowers, send a donation to Hospice or purchase an ornament in their loved one’s name,” Culhane said. “This is a nice way to remember a loved one and help a worthy organization.” [Administrative Assistant Bonnie] Reigle said Hospice is very grateful for what Culhane does for them.



# HOSPICE ANALYTICS

TURNING DATA INTO INFORMATION – TO IMPROVE PATIENT CARE

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## [\*\*We're Thinking About Pain All Wrong\*\*](#)

*New York Times, By Maia Szalavitz. Opinion Writer, 12/24/23*

For many years I've written about people suffering intractable pain, and how their agony and increased risk of suicide and death has been ignored in the rush to end the overdose crisis. ... Between five million and eight million Americans currently rely on opioids to treat chronic pain, and thousands need them for end-of-life pain at any given time. Despite their risks, opioids remain the best available pain treatment for many patients—and there is little evidence that addictions are prevented or treated by denying them to those who have already used them safely for years. Concerns about the harms associated with indiscriminate cutbacks have been raised by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Food and Drug Administration and major medical organizations. Nevertheless, doctors continue to abandon these patients while the overdose crisis worsens.

## **Public Policy News**

### [\*\*Third of patients given lethal drugs under right-to-die laws 'do not take them'\*\*](#)

*The Telegraph (England), 12/23/23*

More than a third of suicidal patients who are prescribed lethal drugs under right-to-die laws do not take them, data show. Just 1,905 of the 2,895 people prescribed assisted dying pills in Oregon, US, between 1998 and 2021 took them, according to the state's public health data. The figures are mirrored in the neighbouring state of California, where in 2021, 286 of the 772 people prescribed a fatal dose ultimately decided against using it. Even in Canada, where medically-assisted deaths are the most pervasive and accepted in the world, around 13,000 people of the 15,500 with lethal drug prescriptions in 2022 used them—and around 300 people changed their mind. Experts consider the Oregon model, whereby a doctor specialising in end-of-life care prescribes a deadly drug to be taken at home by a patient, as the best option for Britain, should MPs vote for a change in the law.

## **General News**

### [\*\*Carolina Caring empowers hospice patient to revisit favorite pastime\*\*](#)

*McDowell (NC) News, 12/22/23*

Carolina Caring's compassionate hospice and palliative care empowers patients to make the most of each day as they navigate serious illness. Our patient, Barbara, has been under hospice care with Carolina Caring and has shared much about her life with her favorite Nurse, Kelly Avery, and Social Worker, Megan Elmore. She shared that her fondest memories were of fishing with her family on Lake Hickory. ... Avery and Elmore coordinated with the Carolina Caring Volunteer and Foundation Departments to secure fishing licenses and gather together a spread of Barbara's favorite foods at Dallas Park & Recreation ponds.

## Other News

### Other Business Headlines of Interest

- Weekly: Amedisys (AMED: \$95.49) in top 1% performers of NASDAQ market in past week.
- Weekly: HCA Healthcare (HCA: \$269.99) decreases on thin volume.
- Weekly: Humana (HUM: \$453.06) keeps sliding: down 13% in 4 weeks.

## Today's Encouragement

**[Give one person a compliment today. Tomorrow, only if feeling wild abandon, give two.](#)**

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