

SOLADA-AGA to offer care circle meetings

BY HAYRIYA HEIDI HANSEN

Do you believe in a community model of compassionate care? Do you hope to age in place, either now or in the future? Are you aware that finding and affording in-home care in the event of an acute or chronic issue could be challenging? Perhaps you are a single person who feels alone and wonders how you will survive in such a situation, especially living rurally and totally on your own? Or maybe you have children but feel you don't want to depend on or be a burden to them? Many circumstances could create a need for help, from a hip replacement to an accident to a death in the family.

A Greater Applegate (AGA), SOLADA (Southern Oregon Living and Dying Alliance), and a representative of a local established "care circle" are teaming up to offer several informational meetings about creating local Compassionate Caring Circles, or "beehives," that could help families or individuals from having to resort to paid help or assisted living.

Here are some topics:

- Remaining informed about alternative care options
- Reducing or delaying paid help or assisted living by supporting each other
- Taking actions to establish local reciprocal relationships between friends and neighbors
- Preparing for the future from a community approach
- Developing mutual support systems around situations, such as medical appointments and transportation needs, bulk-meal preparation and delivery, combined errands, coordinated pet care, and patient advocacy.

We'll be holding introductory meetings on June 11 at the Ruch Library Community Room and June 12 at Dorothy Gale's Event Center in Provolt. Both meetings will start at 6:30 pm and end at 8 pm. Please arrive by 6:15 pm so you can settle in and we can begin on time.

We hope that you will choose to join us and learn about this valuable tool that can help you and those you love to live with community support, age gracefully, and die peacefully in the rural community you love. For questions, please call me at 541-787-7490 or visit our website at solada.org.

Hayriya Heidi Hansen • 541-787-7490

SOLADA Film Series: A focus on the end

BY TRESSI ALBEE AND DAVE LEVINE

This is a heartfelt invitation to Applegaters, neighbors, friends, and community members to join SOLADA (Southern Oregon Living and Dying Alliance) for our Summer Film Series.

Beginning in June, we are presenting the following selected films that address the issues that arise at the end of life:

- *The Last Ecstatic Days*, where we will explore the powerful story of Ethan Sisser's ecstatic dying and death.
- *Evelyn*, a documentary film that takes a deep, intimate look at suicide and its impact on a family as they heal and reconnect after a family member's suicide.
- *End Game*, a documentary about terminally ill patients in a San Francisco hospital.

Following each film there will be a discussion among community members, facilitated by members of the SOLADA Board of Directors.

So what is SOLADA? We are a group of community members who want to promote more comfort and accessibility with conversations about death, dying, and grief. We do this by maintaining an online directory of service providers for people at the end of life and grief support services. We host Death Cafés in Grants Pass monthly (the fourth Tuesday of the month at the Grants Pass Art Museum) and on a revolving basis in the wider rural communities (see our website for recent events at solada.org). Death Cafés are places where participants can gather and talk about death and dying without judgment or proselytizing. The Death Café conversations tend to be deep, meaningful, and insightful, and they have the capacity to build stronger community connections. We host classes and events for grief support, creating advance directives, panel discussions, and workshops devoted to the topics of death, dying, and grief, and we table at events to have conversations in the community.

So, what does it even mean to promote death and grief literacy? Well, let's start with the reality we all live with: each of

us is going to die. It is the one promise granted and kept with all life. And in our current US culture, death is quite denied, disavowed, and distorted. With our limited cultural capacity to even look at death, grief can become a tailspin of emotion that we feel woefully inadequately prepared to cope with. We all do it, we come into momentary consciousness about the need for end-of-life planning, advance directives, wills, trusts, all of our belongings, funeral arrangements, obituaries, our property, our pets, and our children. Then we find a way to shut it down, to quiet the terror of our own ending. More often than not, we just don't quite get around to it.

And all of that was just the logistical and material part of dying. What about the emotional or spiritual or psychological part of dying or witnessing a loved one die? And what about the endless quiet longing after the loss of a loved one? This is where SOLADA can be an invaluable support. Our website is a useful resource for events and classes as well as a directory of providers offering end-of-life and grief support care.

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Dave Levine • davelevine2@gmail.com

SOLADA Summer Film Series about death, dying, and grief

The Last Ecstatic Day

6-8 pm, June 26, 2024

Unitarian Universalist Church
129 NW E Street, Grants Pass, OR
\$10-\$20/sliding scale

Evelyn

6-8 pm, July 18, 2024

Dorothy Gale's Event Center
14458 Williams Highway Williams, OR
Donations accepted

End Game

6-8 pm August 15, 2024

Grants Pass Art Museum
229 SW G Street, Second Floor,
Grants Pass, OR
\$10-\$20/sliding scale

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD

Expressing thanks— and the need for a treasurer!

BY DIANA COOGLE

The most important thing to report is that we are still looking for a treasurer. If you are good with numbers and are looking for a way to serve your community, join us! See our notice on page 2 and contact me for more information.

The board is looking forward to our annual one-day retreat in September, when we will assess where we stand as an organization and where we want to go in the future. Thanks to Seth Kaplan for being our facilitator again this year.

This is a good moment for me to thank the many volunteers who help us keep the *Applegater* coming to your mailbox, free, on a quarterly basis—all the copy editors and proofreaders, the distributors, the writers and photographers, our webmaster Joe Lavine, and, most of all, our board members, who do the nitty-gritty work that is so vital in keeping a nonprofit organization working.

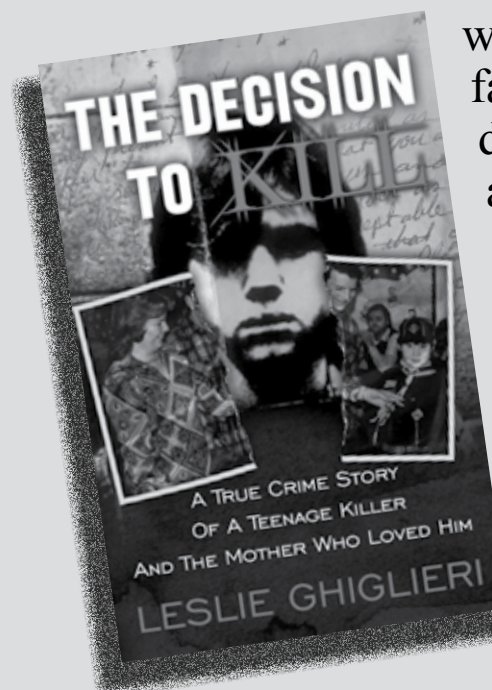
Thanks to you, too, readers, for reading and appreciating the *Applegater*, especially to those of you who express that appreciation with your generous donations.

And thanks to our advertisers. One way you, readers, can support the *Applegater* is by giving our advertisers your business.

We appreciate your letters to the editor and other feedback. What would you like to see in the *Applegater*? Let us know! What questions would you like to address to the community? Send them to us. We're here for you.

Diana Coogle, Chair
Applegater Board of Directors
diana@applegater.org

What happened in the APPLEGATE VALLEY...



when a Christian family is faced with drug addiction, a mental health disorder, and violence? An inspiring true story of the mother, Cherie Wier, as she struggles to understand and forgive her son.

Retired psychiatrist Dr. Sasser called *The Decision to Kill...* "A thought-provoking read."

Readers say...

"There are no words. Amazing true story. I cried. Hard time putting it down."

"Filled with love, addiction struggles, family, faith and forgiveness, this story is beautifully told."

Food 4 Less, Rebel Heart Books, Oregon Books, Barnes and Noble, and Amazon.
▶ A portion of each sale supports addiction recovery. ◀

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