

A Different Kind of Service

Rafael J. Sciuлло
President and CEO, Family Hospice and Palliative Care

*Family Hospice serves Veterans of all ages; these are just a few of those
Family Hospice has been privileged to care for.*

Two old friends made it a point to meet for coffee almost every morning. Like letter carriers, they didn't let rain, sleet or snow get in their way, because they realized the morning get-togethers were the perfect way to start the day.

Their conversations were wide-ranging, from sports to politics, from grandkids to gas prices, and from neighborhood gossip to what's on sale at the local grocery store. But one thing in particular is what formed their bond – they were Veterans. As a matter of fact, many of their discussions eventually focused on their shared experiences as servicemen.

Being fellow Veterans, the two old friends enjoyed a unique camaraderie, being able to recall events and share emotions that they knew the other would always understand. While many in our population genuinely appreciate the service of our Veterans, it is only our Veterans themselves that can fully relate and know the experience of comrades.

With that in mind, Family Hospice and Palliative Care is appealing to local Veterans to consider a different kind of service. We are inviting Veterans to serve as volunteers with our organization, specifically to work with our Veteran patients.

Volunteers have always been the foundation of Family Hospice and Palliative Care. They play a critical role in hospice care by always lending a hand or opening their hearts. Family Hospice is fortunate to have the services of over 400 volunteers in our nine-county service area. These dedicated individuals help our organization and patients by offering companionship, assisting in development planning and fundraising events, participating in bereavement support, and performing office work, just to give a few examples.

As Veterans, you can play a special role as hospice volunteers, as you have the



unique ability to relate one-on-one with Veteran patients receiving hospice services.

Our Veteran patients are served by Family Hospice's specialized program, **Operation Respect**. In light of the fact that Pennsylvania's Veterans population is one of the highest in the country (with one-quarter of the Veterans in our state right here in Western Pennsylvania), this comprehensive hospice and palliative care program is designed to meet the unique needs of our Veterans and their families.

Operation Respect provides care from a team of compassionate professionals, including physicians, nurses, social workers, spiritual care specialists and therapists specializing in speech, pet and massage therapy, and expressive art and music. The team develops an individual plan of care tailored to each Veteran patient and considers various factors that influence the Veteran's end-of-life journey: age, branch of service, combat or POW experience, and more. Veterans and their caregivers may be prone to such challenges as a reluctance to admit pain, the possibility of complications with medications, or post-traumatic stress disorder.

This is where you, as a Veteran volunteer, come in. Family Hospice welcomes those who have served in the military, to companion with their fellow Veterans – and training is provided free of charge. This special connection can be therapeutic, allowing for a sharing of experiences that some Veterans may otherwise deny themselves.

Think of the two old friends meeting for coffee. Sure, they enjoyed talking about last night's game. But it's their shared experiences in the Armed Forces that bound them together. Our Veteran volunteers have the same opportunity to connect, listen, share and provide meaningful companionship.



For more information on **Operation Respect** and volunteer opportunities, call **Family Hospice and Palliative Care** at **412-572-8800**, or visit **www.familyhospice.com**.

Rafael J. Sciuлло, MA, LCSW, MS, is President and CEO of Family Hospice and Palliative Care and Past Chairperson of the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization. He may be reached at rsciuлло@familyhospice.com or (412) 572-8800. Family Hospice serves nine counties in Western Pennsylvania. Its website is www.familyhospice.com.

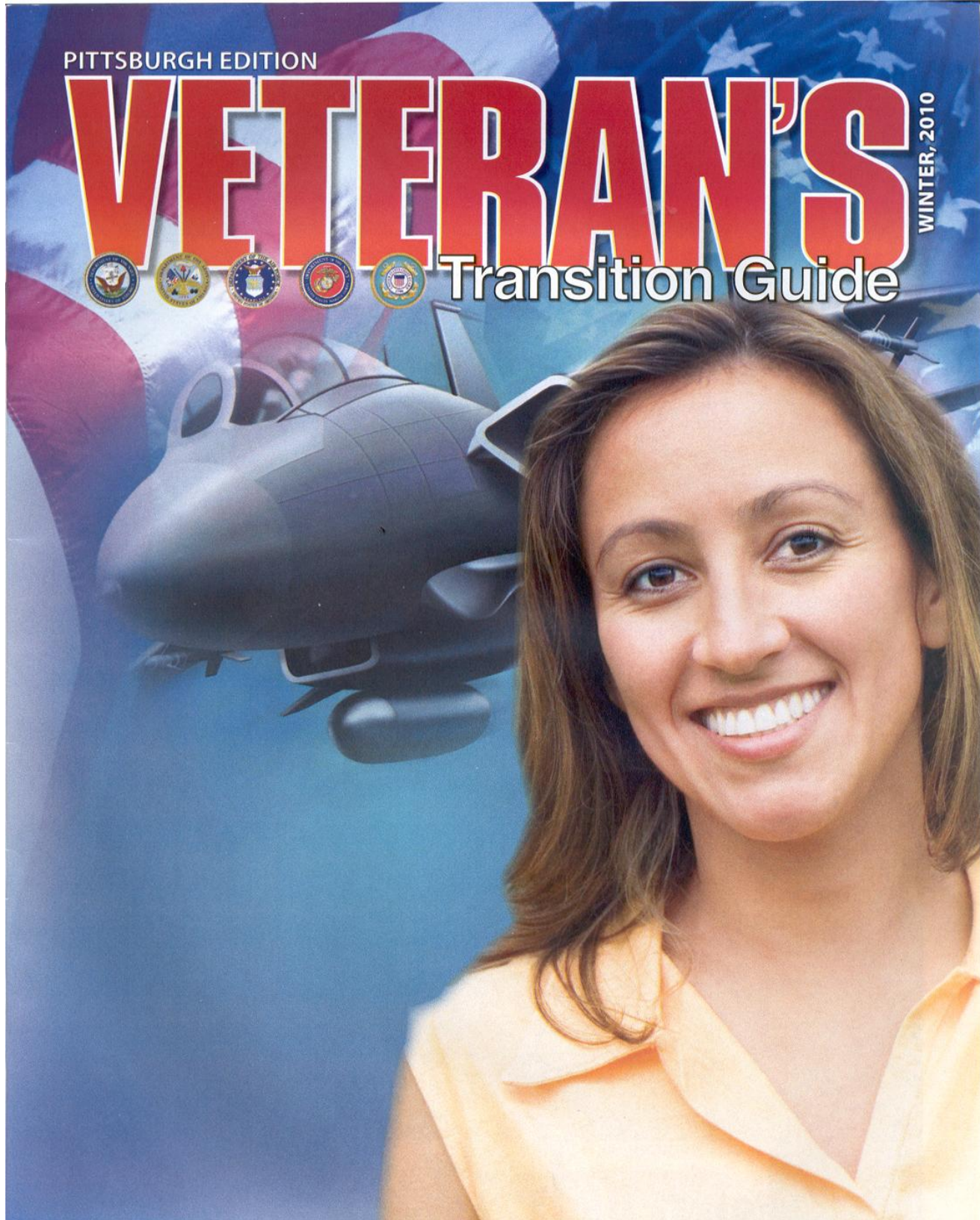
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