



**For Immediate Release**     **PRESS CONTACT:** Chris Davis/Daniella Elghanayan 805/687-3322

## **El Dia de los Muertos Tradition Offers New Approach for Healing the Loss of a Loved One**

Patients, Clients, Volunteers, Staff, and Community Create Altar/Memorial at Hospice of Santa Barbara

**October 23, 2009, Santa Barbara, CA**—El Dia de los Muertos (the Day of the Dead), is a Latin American tradition to celebrate, remember and present special offerings in honor of those who have died. Loved ones create altars where “ofrendas” (offerings) such as bread, sugar skulls, figurines, candles, incense, yellow marigolds and photos. Offerings are often very personal such as photographs of the deceased and their favorite food items and flowers. The altar/memorial, located at Hospice of Santa Barbara, is available for staff, volunteers, supporters, and anyone in the community that would like to make an “offering.”

“What I particularly like about Dia de los Muertos is the positive approach to celebrating the life of someone with very personal acts,” said Steve Jacobsen, Executive Director of Hospice of Santa Barbara. “In this way, someone who is grieving from a loss can do something that is positive and active which is always an important key to healing. Dia de los Meurtos is also a natural occasion to talk about, reflect, and remember our loved ones who have died,” said Jacobsen.

“It’s humbling that while we at Hospice of Santa Barbara pride ourselves on our expertise in modalities related to healing from grief, this tradition has really brought an additional healing tool to us and we are thankful for that,” added Jacobsen.

The Hospice of Santa Barbara Dia de los Muertos altar/memorial is located in Hospice of Santa Barbara’s entryway and will be up through the end October. As with traditional Dia de los Muertos altars, patients, clients, staff, volunteers, board members, and anyone in the community who would like to participate are asked to place on the altar photos, candles, personal items, or whatever they feel best represents their loved ones. (NOTE: Items should be labeled and retrieved by owners.) Hospice of Santa Barbara is located at 2050 Alameda Padre Serra, Suite 100, in Santa Barbara and is open from 9am-5 pm.

The mission of Hospice of Santa Barbara, Inc. is to provide care to anyone experiencing the impact of a life-threatening illness, or grieving the death of a loved one.

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